

and her muscles sustained their burden firmly. Her hands were cut with the parcel cord, her arms ached with the weight; she was footsore; the fog choked her; her eyes smarted, and her head ached; yet something breathed in her air which forbade such facts to be guessed from it. It was that intangible all-victorious thing which we call spirit. The parcel was clearly too big for her—it was impossible she could carry it on for miles. Nevertheless, spirit does the impossible, deriding the brute force that would imprison her, and Grace walked on and on, the while unconsciously fighting bravely the interminable battle of will against the material universe.

She was now in the Euston Road, and still briskly stepping on, when there chanced a sudden accession of fog, and something like horror seized her. Every moment blacker and more hopeless, the fog walls pressed in upon her. She struggled on for a few minutes and then stopped in utter dismay. How many miles still lay between her and home, how many miles of horrible steps, or creeping inch by inch through this stifling blind nightmare world? A cab rumbled by close to her—she hailed—

"How much to Lowerbury?" She was heard, her voice, animated and clear, though not loud, carried well.

"Fifteen shillings," was the reply.

The wheels rumbled on again, for the man heard no more of the clear voice through the fog. She had not fifteen shillings in her purse, nor would she have spent them thus if she had. The cab was gone, and with it her last chance of succour. And now she discovered that, in turning round to hail it, she had lost her bearings and knew not where she was, nor which way to turn.

"Well, now I am in despair!" she exclaimed aloud. The tragic power of her tones suggested a comic side to her troubles, and she laughed—perhaps, according to a feminine fashion, in order to avoid crying; for a vision of the home parlour had in a dangerous manner begun to float before her eyes. At this moment the light of a lantern began to struggle towards her through the gloom, followed by a figure looming big in a great-coat. "A policeman!" she cried, ready to give any member of that gallant force a heartfelt welcome.

"Well, I'm not exactly a policeman," said a loud and hearty voice. "But who in the world are you that can laugh in this dreadful weather?"

The new-comer here flashed the lantern's light full on Grace, and the two looked at each other. The one saw a small creature, evidently a lady, weighted with parcels, and lifting up such great brown flashing eyes that nothing else of her face could be seen: the other a big brown-bearded fellow, evidently a gentleman, and looking down at her with eyes so kindly concerned that she at once regained her sense of human brotherliness, for which there had seemed no space in this unfamiliar and most unpleasant world.

"Hullo! why—I say—how did you get here?" asked the new-comer, gazing wonderingly.

"Perhaps it is more important to know how I am to get away again," replied Grace, merrily, and not at all as she was in the habit of addressing strangers. But weather will any day reduce men and women to their merely elemental tie of brotherhood, and holds their usual and proper conventionalities very cheap.

"Indeed, that is the question, as you continued, quietly taking Grace's parcel and tucking them under his arm in very good fashion. "Couldn't you come across a cab anywhere?"

"Cabs are impossible to-day," said Grace, accepting the services in as matter-of-fact a way as they were offered.

"Oh, they're quite safe; we'll find one somewhere. There's a cab stand within a couple of hundred yards of us, if I'm not mistaken."

Grace began to wish she had not met with her deliverer. In her sudden relief at finding herself in a friendly presence, she had not considered what was to follow. Her sensations of comfort diminished as she reflected that it was out of the question to allow this unknown gentleman to walk all the way home with her, and equally so to allow him to find her a cab. In the meantime they were steering along well, thanks to the lantern, and the hearty voice, pretty frequently instrumental in avoiding collision.

"What is to be done with you if we can't meet with a cab?" he exclaimed, at length.

"What, indeed?" said Grace; "you had really better leave me where you found me."

"No, that is the last thing I should do; but, seriously, I am really at a loss, and that's not very usual for me."

"Just before you came up I was getting along well, and should have been near home by this time had not the fog unfortunately thickened. But it is, no doubt, local, and if you will light me for a little way I shall manage the rest."

"Ah, well, we shall see. And what have you got in these bundles? I can't imagine how you carried them; why didn't you drop them on the way?"

"Drop them! why, they contain dresses and presents."

"I suppose you could have got more."

As Grace was silent, he became thoughtful, and then remarked—

"I come from the Cape, and we don't think much of dress there, I expect, but I think you were very wrong not to take a cab. Walking from Regent Street in this weather! You are too small a thing to rough it in this way."

"That has nothing to do with it, allow me to say. Strength is not in size, as anybody will tell you."

"Ah, that explains the parcels. Hullo, you cab there, stop!"

"No, don't stop it, please," interposed Grace, emphatically. "I cannot afford it."

"Why, where are you bound for?"

"Lowerbury—please do not."

"But that's just where I'm going myself. Hullo! the fellow did not hear me, but we'll soon find another."

Grace was silent. Her companion looked at her. "Why don't you speak?" he asked. "Don't you feel all right?"

"No, indeed—I feel all wrong. You are intending to take this cab on my account, I am sure."

"There you are entirely mistaken. I am taking it for my own pleasure, and if you feel it any question of money, why, look here," and, with some difficulty, owing to his encumbrances, he pulled out a handful of loose gold from his pocket. "I could throw that into the mud and be none the worse off. If you haven't got as much, why not take some from me? It's only Christian, eh?"

"We are not Christians of that sort, now-a-days, and I expect it is only rich people who would like to be. But I do not want to make any silly fuss about it, if it is the best thing to do."

"No, that's right. It is not only the best thing, but the only thing to be done. It is out of the question that you should walk home. It was lucky that I met with you. I don't know what you would have done. It was a very unpleasant position for a lady."

As they now walked on for some moments in silence, Grace stole some more minutely observing glances at her companion, and found him a man rather under thirty, perhaps, of a strong build, with complexion tanned to a red brown, gray eyes, with long lashes, and a bushy beard.

Grace thought it a good face; and it was no small comfort to find that her sense of security was increasing under the influence of the stranger's words and looks, for no lady could have been in her circumstances entirely without misgiving, in spite of her first instinctive impression that he was a man to be trusted. Her condition had indeed been desperate, and she had accepted help impulsively; but scarcely had she done so before the alarmed question arose whether it would not have been wiser to have gone through any straits rather than accept help from an entire stranger. But, whether wisely or foolishly done—and Grace now felt it was the latter—it seemed now too late to draw back, and she had better be sure also that her rashness had met a better fate than it deserved.

What an extraordinary adventure this was for her, Grace Norris, who never made a new acquaintance from year's end to year's end! It was certainly comic, and not altogether disagreeable since it could not now be helped. She would remember this kindly face for some time to come. But at home there should be much fun made of it. So reflecting, she broke involuntarily into a low ripple of laughter. Her companion turned sharply, and, seeing her face, laughed himself.

"That's the second time I've heard you laugh. I don't know what amuses you, yet I can't help laughing myself. I haven't laughed much lately—one can't laugh by oneself."

"It's a trick of mine; I am quite ashamed; no matter where I am, something will amuse me."

"Tell me what amuses you now, won't you? perhaps it will account for my laughing, too."

"Well, I suppose it is because I am hungry and tired, and want to get home, and shall soon do so in such a very odd way."

"Ah! those seem remarkable things even for a woman to laugh over—except, perhaps, the last. Lucky it would be for men if such were laughing matters in general."

"Oh! I know nothing about men," said Grace, with a touch of scorn.

"Indeed! have you no father or brother to enlighten you?"

"No; we are only three girls living with our mother."

"Poor things!"

"Poor! not at all."

But at this moment her companion succeeded in arresting the attention of the driver of an empty cab, who accordingly drew up close to the pavement.

"What is your address?" asked the stranger, when Grace was seated within.

"Please put me down wherever you want to go, and I will walk from there."

"Yes, but what is the address?"

"No. 47, Barbara Street, Lowerbury."

He shut the door, raised his hat, and then mounted the box beside the driver, leaving Grace with a mind divided between regret that he should thus face the weather on her account and appreciation of the delicacy of the action, which seemed to be confirmation of her impression that he was thoroughly a gentleman.

It was not long before Grace recognised the familiar streets of Lowerbury, the fog being much less thick in those regions. She hoped to find the cab stopping at some unknown destination, and felt some curiosity as to where and what it would be, but she found herself by-and-by turning into Barbara Street.

The cab stopped. The stranger jumped down, took out the parcel and bag, and helped Grace to alight. There was a pause.

"I suppose we must say good-bye," he said, ruefully.

"Yes, of course," said Grace, lifting her eyebrows a little; "it would indeed be rude if I did not, when you have been so kind. Thank you very, very much indeed."

She ran up the steps, the door opened immediately, and she disappeared.

The stranger turned to the cabman, and said sharply—"To the Latham Hotel, and be quick, will you?"

(To be continued.)

LITTLE SERMONS FOR LITTLE PEOPLE.

BY AUNT EFFIE.

The text for to-day, dear children, is so short, that I am sure everyone of you will remember it.

The heart of a sermon is the all-important part, and if that is secured, you cannot help being benefited. "Be Courteous."

This is God's command, entrusted to the fiery, rash Peter, who, you will remember, cut off the ear of the servant of the High Priest, when his divine Master was taken.

Afterward, when suffering had purified him, and Christ was his constant guest, he was employed to write a portion of the Holy Bible.

Some very good people, I am afraid, have not studied the Epistle of Peter. "Love as brethren"; "Be pitiful"; "Be courteous." They have never read or have forgotten. Brusqueness, even rudeness, they practise proudly they think, calling it "plain speaking."

Courteous people are always charming, for courtesy is one of the flowers of Christianity.

A rude, selfish child is never beloved, never welcomed, go where he may. When love fills the heart its overflow brightens all around. The very spirit of the loving Jesus often dwells in the heart of a little child, and very early, hands, feet and lips are used for Him.

Little children of the Great King are courteous, for He, whom they copy, was so. There was no selfishness, no rudeness, no unkindness in the divine Saviour, who so loved the world that He gave His precious life to save it from death eternal.

Such a sacrifice is not required of you, dear children; only obey the commands of our loving Saviour, and no matter how low people have fallen, "be pitiful, be courteous."

Among your equals, remember that no beautiful dress, no diamonds, no accomplishments will compare with courtesy.

So if you will, as the Apostle Peter says, "be courteous," you will not only be beloved, but happy.—Selected.

THE MISSIONARY WORK OF THE TRACT SOCIETY.

THERE are many persons who enjoy the publications of the Religious Tract Society who have but little idea that it is not only a trading society but a great missionary organization as well. It is not a limited company of traders for profit, who annually spend a happy Christmas through the division of the spoils—the happy privilege of many publishers. The profits of the society last year were close upon £20,000, and the whole of this sum was placed to the credit of the missionary account. The society also received from the public, in the form of contributions, legacies, etc., £28,000, making a total of £48,000, which was wholly spent in their missionary work. That is to say, that tract literature to the value of nearly £1,000 a week, in 172 languages, has been sent on its way to readers throughout the world. So far as the society is concerned, not a penny is paid for distribution. Everybody knows the unseemly way this is done by those who run the risk of insult if but the good seed may fall into kindly soil. Scotland is no stranger to the good offices of the society. More than half a million of tracts were last year sent free to the little land that lies north the Tweed. These were received in districts so far north as Shetland, so far south as Dumfries. The Rev. R. Stewart, of Glasgow, alone had 60,000. Over a hundred consignments were also sent to Scotland at low rates, Mr. J. A. Murray, of Glasgow, being at the head of the list with 38,000 tracts, and the late lamented Rev. D. Graham, of Campbeltown, second with 24,000. The veteran missionary to seamen, Capt. Donald Brochie, of Greenock, of world-wide reputation, boarded more than a score of emigrant vessels at the Tail of the Bank and ministered both the spoken word and the silent messenger to more than a thousand passengers. This the society enabled him to do. The inmates of twenty-five Scottish hospitals and infirmaries received the greetings of the society on Christmas morning in the shape of suitable literature for the day; and the list may not be closed until we acknowledge on behalf of nearly two hundred Sabbath School libraries belonging to all denominations large and beautiful additions to their shelves. It is surely a pleasant thing for subscribers to know that by their kindly assistance the working men's library in Iona was assisted—a little acknowledgment of Britain's debt to the holy isle; that a Bible-class in Skye was considerably helped; and that the spiritual wants of the fisher lads at Braefoot, Campbeltown, were supplied from Paternoster Row. It is no longer "a far cry to Loch Awe." For the present we forbear mentioning the foreign fields in which other and similar missionary work is materially assisted, but there is one feature of home work which deserves prominence, since in various degrees it is capable of being universally imitated. In 1876 Mr. Francis Peck, then a member of the London School Board, handed over £5,000 to the Religious Tract Society, on condition that interest at five per cent. should annually be devoted to the purchase of prizes, consisting of Bibles, New Testaments, and books bearing upon the study of the Scriptures for competition among the London scholars. The society devoted a similar sum to the scheme; so since then £500 worth of this literature is distributed every year. More than 192,000 children presented themselves for examination this year. We have pleasure in saying, by the way, that the gentleman who was appointed to take the oversight of the whole examination testifies in his report that the scriptural instruction imparted at the present time in the board schools of London is given in a very thorough and efficient manner. The society also takes part in work of the same character in connection with the board schools of Bristol, Plymouth, Widnes, Hornsby, and other places. The value of this work cannot be over-estimated. We need not here refer to the products of the trading departments, as our literary columns very frequently show how highly their issues are appreciated by us. But may we draw the attention of those who purchase their publications, including the journals, to the fact that they invest in the G.O.P. and the B.O.P., that they are indirectly contributing to missionary funds which are expended in the dissemination of Divine truth throughout the world. Justly has it been said that the productions of the Religious Tract Society have crowded out many a bad book and many an immoral picture; have warned many a sinner, helped many an enquirer, and comforted many a saint.—Christian Leader.

FOR HIS SAKE.

How many times during the last week have we undertaken to do any definite and distinct service for "Christ's sake"? We do much and many things which, no doubt, God is pleased to accept. We do not stop always to question our motives. We have become habituated to the doing of Christ's work, and we do it naturally, and without much thought. We go to church and Sabbath School. We preach and we teach. We visit the sick now and again. We help some poor person, and do many things which are right and good in themselves. But do we not often do them more because we have formed the habit of doing them, or because we feel sorry for the people we do some act of kindness to than with the distinct thought of doing something for Christ? No doubt, inasmuch as we have done it unto one of the least of His little ones, we have done it unto Him. He is pleased to accept it as being so done. Nevertheless we have found it sweet and delightful once and again to do something distinctly and definitely for Christ's sake. It seems to bring us nearer to Him and give us a fresh baptism of His love in our hearts. Moreover, we believe our Lord is pleased when we once in a while put Him before every other motive and do something definitely and distinctly unto Him. We would add to this that it is good for the soul that it comes thus into a single-hearted service of Christ again and again. We are sure that if any of our readers will start out on some service with the definite motive and purpose of doing it for "His sake," they will return with a new sense of His love in their hearts.—Words and Weapons.

The writer heard, recently, from the lips of Francis Murphy, the leading advocate of total abstinence at present before the public, the following memorable statement—"My first temperance address was delivered at Portland, Me., April 3, 1870, and since that time I have traversed in the cause nearly the whole of the United States and Great Britain, and I have not known one drinking man, in whom the appetite was fairly rooted, to be permanently reformed, except through the grace of God in his heart."

Sabbath School Work.

[In order to bring the date of the S. S. Lesson nearer to the date of the current issue the Lesson is omitted for this week.—ED. REVIEW.]

THE EPIDEMIC AT MONTREAL.

THE terrible pestilence, which, for several months, has been raging in the beautiful city of Montreal, carrying away thousands of its inhabitants, teaches a painful lesson of the malign consequences to a community of ignorance and superstition when strong enough to set at defiance the resources that intelligent experience has furnished to arrest its progress. It is not as if the people had been struck by some new and mysterious disease before which they were powerless. It is not as with plagues of former ages when nothing was known that could be done to arrest them. The saddest aspect of the Montreal calamity is not that multitudes have been swept into untimely graves, but that this vast mortality could have been avoided. That smallpox is practically a preventible disease is established; but to what purpose, when all the apparatus of self defence in a civilized community is completely paralyzed? A comparatively small element of the population, ignorant, prejudiced, and pious, makes a blind and desperate resistance to the only measures that can bring relief, and the resort to penance, invocation of saints, prayers to Heaven, and solemn processions, to arrest the course of contagion, over which these have no more influence than they would have to arrest the course of the St. Lawrence! The chief ravages of the disease have been confined to that portion of the French Canadians who were unvaccinated, but such has been the passion of religious fanaticism, and the intensity of race-hatred, that this small minority made a fight stubborn enough to defeat all effectual public action. There have been defiance of authority and constant danger of mob violence which have intimidated the controlling officials and so diminished their effectiveness. The authorities in charge of the leading hospital of St. Roche are said to have favoured neither vaccination nor sanitation, and such was the inefficient and horrible condition of that old establishment that many advocated burning it down.—From *Elector's Table*, in *Popular Science Monthly* for December.

TOO LATE.

A story is told as authentic of a young man in the Highlands of Scotland who became a drunkard, a gambler, and in the expressive Scotch phrase, "a ne'er-do-weel." His father owned a small farm which had been in the family for two hundred years. But to save Jock from the consequences of his misdoing, he was obliged to mortgage it, far beyond the possibility of redemption.

The old man sank under the disgrace and misery, and died, leaving his wife, two or three children, and worthless Jock. But the shock of his death brought the boy to his senses. He foreswore cards and whiskey, came home, and turned in to hard work. He toiled steadily for years. At last his mother was "struck with death."

Jock, now a middle-aged, grizzled farmer, stern and grave, was sent for in haste. He stood in silence by her death-bed a moment, and then brot forth—

"Mither! mither! gin ye see feyther there, I'll him the farm's our own agen. An' it's a' richt w' me!"

The story reminds us of Dr. Johnson, who, when he was an old man of seventy to stand in the market-place of Uttoxeter, his gray head bare of the pelting rain, in bitter remembrance of some act of disobedience to his father on that spot when he was a boy.

But of what avail are these tears or acts of atonement when the old father or mother whom we have hurt and slighted so cruelly is dead? Do they see? Do they forgive? Who can say?

"It is only," said a mother lately, "since my own children speak to me with rudeness and contempt that I understand how great the debt was which I owed to my own mother, and how poorly I paid it."

Many a gay girl who reads these words, who treats her mother as a member of the family who does the work of a servant without a servant's wages, or a lad who flings about the money which his old father is fast spending his feeble life to earn will waken some day to utter their remorse in an exceeding bitter cry; to which, alas, there can come no answer!—*Youth's Companion*.

AN OFFICER WHO NEVER DRANK.

WHEN General Grant was in command of the army before Vicksburg, a number of officers were gathered at his headquarters. One of them invited the party to join in a social glass; all but one accepted. He asked to be excused, saying that he "never drank." The hour passed, and each went his way to his respective command. A few days after this the officer who declined to drink received a note from General Grant to report at headquarters. He obeyed the order, and Grant said to him, "You are the officer, I believe, who remarked the other day that you never drank." The officer modestly answered that he was. "Then," continued the general, "you are the man I have been looking for to take charge of the commissary department, and I order that you be detailed to that duty." He served all through the war in that responsible department, and afterwards when General Grant became President, the officer who never drank was again in request. The President needing a man on whom he could rely for some important business, gave him the appointment.—*Christian Leader*.

THE TETOTALLER.—There was a soldier down in Tennessee when I was there—a great, strong, hearty fellow, who was a teetotaler. One day when the army was going on a long march a man offered him a drink of whiskey.

"I am a teetotaler," was the reply.

"Never mind that. You're in the army now; besides, you need stimulant to help you on this long march."

Taking out a pocket-Bible, he held it up before the face of his tempter, and said:

"That is all the stimulant I want."—*Moody*.

THE MINISTRY.—There are two great dangers connected with the ministry in these days. One is that they shall be afraid of the condemnation of their hearers; and the other quite as great an evil, that they shall be ambitious of their commendation. I don't know which is the greater.—*Dr. Pierson*.