

LETTY'S SACRIFICE.

Letty Trent sat with the paper she had been reading in her hand, and gazed at it in thoughtful silence for a long, long time; so long an interval that her mother at length came to notice her abstraction.

"A penny for your thoughts, my dear," she said pleasantly.

Letty looked up with a bright smile and blush. "I don't know that they're worth so much, mamma," she said, "but you're welcome to them. I was thinking of something I've been reading about."

"That isn't very definite," said Mrs. Trent, smiling too, "when I don't even know what paper you have there, Letty."

"It's the *Advocate*," Letty made haste to answer. "And it tells about some good people—at least I think they must be good people or they wouldn't care for poor folks, when they're so rich and can go where they please—who give money to make what the paper calls a 'Fresh-Air Fund.' And they use it to send poor little children into the country to stay a week or two with any one who is willing to take them. Oh, mamma, just think! There are lots of those children who never in all their lives picked a flower or felt the green grass under their feet—that is what the paper says. Just think of it, mamma!"

Letty's whole loving heart shone in her face, as she stopped, waiting for encouragement to proceed, but Mrs. Trent only smiled in a thoughtful way.

"I can't help thinking what if it were I, mamma, or Teddy, who had been penned up in those great tall tenement houses all our lives. How we would long for a breath of nice, fresh, sweet, country air, and I know my eyes would ache for a sight of the green fields spotted all over with daisies."

Mrs. Trent smiled once more, bending over her sewing. "Yes, my dear," she said, "no doubt of it."

There was a minute's silence, which every thing kept but a cheery robin singing outside the open window.

"Mamma!"

"Well, Letty?"

"The name of the secretary of the association is here, and it says that any one who is willing to take one of their poor little children for a week, or two weeks, or even longer, will please write to him. And then it says:—'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my little ones ye have done it unto me.'"

How the robin sang then, fairly flooding the air with his jubilant carols! Letty's eyes glistened.

"Mamma, couldn't we—don't you think we might take one or two of them?"

She had reached it at last—the very point she had been aiming at all the while. Mrs. Trent did not speak for a moment, but stiched away, with a serious face. Letty watched her rather anxiously.

"Don't you think we might, mamma?"

"I cannot say, without considering the matter, Letty. It would make a good deal of bother, to say nothing of the extra expense. The trouble of it isn't to be extended, of course, but—you heard what your father said this morning, Letty?"

Yes, Letty had heard it, and her face fell. She didn't see why this dreadful bank need have gone down, carrying with it all the surplus earnings of the farm for half a dozen years.

"We shall have to cut off all we can," her father had said, smiling in a grave way, as he heard the news of the failure. And then, catching sight of an anxious pucker between Letty's brows, he had laughed outright. "But I think we may let the lawn-party flourish," he added, "oh, Letty!"

It was to be Letty's lawn-party—and a birthday party besides—and she had been promised it a year before. She was ill on her last birthday—this lawn-party was to make up for the long, lonely day she had spent then, and she had looked forward to it for weeks and months.

Now she felt grieved and disappointed. Her eyes were full of tears. She had felt so sure, you see, that her mother would receive her little project with enthusiasm—at least, that she would approve of it. And now she could not resist a feeling that came very near being resentment.

"I should think you'd be glad to have them come, mamma," she said; "those poor little children!"

"And so I would, my dear," her mother answered, "very glad indeed, nothing could please me more. And perhaps we can think of something that can be given up—"

"I'd be willing to give up anything!" cried Letty, with sparkling eyes and glowing cheeks. Then suddenly the bloom faded, and the brightness of her eyes was dimmed with tears. "Oh, mamma!" she cried, her voice trembling sadly, "I didn't mean—I meant almost anything. Oh, mamma!"

A smile flitted over Mrs. Trent's face—a loving sympathetic smile.

"My little girl must satisfy herself," she said. "I haven't a word to say."

"But you don't think I ought?" pleaded Letty, anxiously. "Oh, just think, mamma to give up my lawn-party, when I have told all the girls I was going to have it, and even asked some of them! It wouldn't be right to disappoint them so, would it, mamma?"

It would be breaking the Golden Rule—because I wouldn't like to be done so by—I know I wouldn't."

"Not even for the sake of those poor little city children who have never seen the daisies growing?" queried Mrs. Trent, with an inward smile over this girlish sophistry. "I can't believe my little daughter would be so selfish. You might explain it to the girls, dear, if you wished."

"But I can't," persisted poor Letty, with tears of trouble just ready to fall. "Oh, dear, I can't give it up—how can I?"

"I do not know, my child, it is for you to decide," Mrs. Trent answered, gathering up her work to leave the room. She paused when she came to Letty's chair, and stooping, kissed her fondly. "You must fight your own battle, dear," she said, "and may God speed the right."

All that day Letty contented sturdily with Letty's self. At sunset she went with Janet to the pasture to milk the cows. She often went in pleasant weather, but it was very seldom that she carried so heavy a heart. Her eyes were red, and her face was very serious indeed. "Oh, I can't, I can't," her rebellious self kept saying. "Oh, I can't!"

She forgot a little of her trouble, it was so pleasant wandering through the pastures. The breeze blew fresh and cool, the birds in the great elm were singing drowsy good-nights to the world, and the daisies were nodding sleepily. Ah, those daisies! Straightway Letty began to wonder how they would look to eyes that had never seen them—never! To her they were common things enough; she could see them everywhere—the fields were white with them. But they were pretty, for all that, with their yellow hearts and snowy petals, Letty thought, pulling one or two to pieces absent-ly, while she waited beneath the elm tree for Janet. And suddenly a bright idea struck her.

"I will! I'll let the daisies decide it," she cried; "just the way we tell fortunes." And so she selected a large blossom and began slowly pulling off the petals, saying as they fell, one by one, "Lawn-party—poor children—lawn party," her heart beating hard and fast all the while. And when, with the last petal, she said, "lawn party," she smiled triumphantly.

"Now, I hope you are satisfied," she said to nobody in particular, unless it were the cows.

But Letty wasn't satisfied. She walked home moodily, and that night she could not sleep. The full moon looked in at her window, long after the house was still, to find her wide awake. Poor Letty, it was a hard-fought battle.

But it was ended at last. In the gray silence of the dawn.

"Mamma," whispered Letty, "I thought I'd come and tell you that I've given up my lawn-party. I'm—I'm going to have the poor children. I'd a great deal rather."

"Bless you, dear!" her mother said, and there were tears of gladness in her eyes, if Letty could have seen them.

So they came in due season to the Trent farmhouse—a little boy and girl, brother and sister, whose wistful, sad, pinched faces told a story too sorrowful to be more than hinted at—came for a happy month in the fresh air and sunshine, among the green fields and the daisies, the bees and birds and butterflies. And in place of the lawn party they all had a picnic in the woods together one happy, happy day.

"It's been just as nice as the party could have been, and I think a good deal nicer," Letty whispered, with her lips close to her mother's ear that night. "It wasn't much of a sacrifice after all, mamma."

"My dear," said Mrs. Trent, pushing back the falling hair from the flushed, smiling face, and kissed it lovingly, "it seems to me

a sacrifice is not to be accounted great that is made for Jesus' sake."

And Letty softly breathed "Amen."

When the two waifs returned to the city you would hardly have recognized them as the two whose pale faces had attracted so many glances of commiseration on their trip out. With fresh thoughts and new hopes they took up their old work again and every morning they may be seen with their neat piles of papers, the boy crying out and attracting customers, whom the girl hastens to supply.

Letty Trent, back in the country, little realizes how much more worth living life seems to her two she sacrificed for, but there is One who does know.—*Ada Carlton, in Conqueror's Herald.*

HINTS TO TEACHERS ON THE CUR-RENT LESSONS.

(From *Peloubet's Select Notes.*)

April 12—Acts 27: 27-44.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

Review briefly the previous lesson by aid of the map.

Subject, God's promises fulfilled. I. The night of suspense (vers. 27-29.) Picture out the discomforts, and dangers, and fears of this night.

Apply this as an illustration to our dark days, and the hours it seems as if God had forsaken us. As to those on this ship, so to us there come two kinds of winds: the "soft south wind" of flattery, worldly pleasures, prosperity, with its peculiar dangers, and the "contrary winds" of adversity, hardship, misfortune, opposition.

II. Songs in the night (vers. 30-38). The discord that led to one of these songs was an instance of selfishness on the part of the sailors, followed soon after by equal selfishness on the part of the soldiers. Contrast these acts with the unselfish thoughtfulness of Paul. His wisdom in overcoming the plot; his good cheer for the bodies and souls of all. Note in how many ways Paul brought good cheer to the ship's company.

Illustration. In Mammoth Cave, after we had gone some little distance into its depths, one of the guides mounted a high rock and called our attention to a short sermon he wished to preach. The sermon was, "Keep close to your guide, and you are safe." And we soon found that in the utter darkness of the cave, and its 200 miles of labyrinthine paths, and the many dangers if one turned aside from the path, the only safety was in giving careful heed to the guide's sermon. And we found too that the best place was near the guide, where we could hear most plainly what he said. So Paul was safe in following close to Christ, in hearing his voice, and obeying his word. There was peace and light as well as safety.

III. The morning of deliverance (ver. 39-44) Picture out the escape. Note how God's promises are fulfilled through human agency. The ship's company could work out their own salvation because God had been and was working for them.

Illustration. In my father's factory there was one room where two bands passed from floor to ceiling, one ever going up, the other ever going down. And yet, contrary as they seemed, they were really one and the same band. By going into the rooms above and below, it was easy to see how the apparent contradiction was realized. So it is with the apparent contradiction between God's purposing and man's free will.

A MARKED YOUTH.

Years ago, there lived in the interior of New York a boy, the son of a farmer, who also worked at the trade of a painter. The boy was a marked youth, because he would do with might whatever he undertook. He was a leader in the ordinary sports of boyhood, and whenever the farm or the pottery relaxed their hold upon him, he would be found repairing some damaged article, or devising a new implement.

His father was poor; the farm was small and could only be enlarged by clearing up the primeval forest. The boy was anxious to acquire knowledge, but his services were so necessary to his father that he could not be spared to attend the winter term of the common school.

But the boy was in earnest. With the aid of his brother, one year his junior, he chopped and cleared four acres of birch and

maple woodland, ploughed it, planted it with corn, harvested the crops, and then asked, as his compensation, to be allowed to attend school during the winter. Of course, the father granted his wish.

When the boy was seventeen, the father's pottery business had so increased as to demand a more extensive factory. A carpenter was hired to build the new building, and the boy assisted him.

So familiar did he become with the tools and the trade, that he determined, with the aid of the younger brother, to erect a two-story frame dwelling house for his father's family.

The two boys cut the timber from the forest, planned and framed the structure, and then invited the neighbors to assist at the "raising." They came from far and near to see what a lad of seventeen had done. When every mortise and tenon was formed to fit its place, and the frame was seen to stand perfect and secure, the veterans cheered the young architect and builder. From that day he was in demand as a master-carpenter.

That boy was Ezra Cornell, the founder of Cornell University.

"Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before obscure men."

The meaning of this old proverb is that the man who has done well in little things shall be advanced so that he shall not waste himself on work to which obscure men are adequate. Ezra Cornell illustrated the truth of the Oriental saying.—*YOUTH'S COMPANION.*

DEATH FROM CARELESSNESS.

A lady had an inveterate habit of dropping needles on the floor while at work, and neglecting to pick them up, and became a victim to her own carelessness. One morning she stepped upon a rusty needle while she was dressing. It penetrated her foot, a large piece broke off in the flesh, and could not be drawn out. She did not think of danger, but in a little time lockjaw set in, and she died in great agony.

A Catholic priest, not long ago, suffered from similar carelessness. He was accustomed to put away his steel pens with the points upwards after using them in writing. Friends had often remonstrated against this want of neatness, and its possible danger, but he laughingly replied:

"It is my way, and doesn't trouble me."

But one evening in the dusk, he struck the palm of his hand, inadvertently, against a pen, and it penetrated deep into the flesh. The next day he felt unwell. The doctor was called, and said it might be blood-poisoning from the pen. The day after the hand and arm began to swell, and occasioned great pain, and in eight days the man was dead. The careless habit had proved fatal.—*Golden Censor.*

Question Corner.—No. 7.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

A DUMB MESSENGER.

This messenger never had existence except in a certain man's sleeping thoughts, and was only enabled to deliver its message to him through another man's lips. By the same man's lips, also, though without his knowledge, it delivered a message of great importance at the same time to other men that stood by. More singular still, in this same roundabout manner, it said, at that time, to one of these two: "In reality, I belong to you." Finally, it may be said to have afterward become a messenger of death to countless numbers of the oppressors and enemies of the people of God. What "messenger" is intended? To whom did it speak? What did it signify? And what did it finally do?

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN No. 5.

1. Phillip, Acts 21: 8.
2. Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, Acts 21: 29.
3. In connection with the stoning of Stephen, Acts 5: 1.
4. By Festus to Paul, Acts 27: 24.

- ACHROSTIC.—*The Psalms.*—1. Thorns, Thistles 2. Husks, 3. Emeralds, 4. Palm, 5. Rose, 6. Olive, 7. Dates, 8. Juniper, 9. Gourd, 10. Almond, 11. Lilies, 12. Spiceneard, 13. Unions, 14. Nettles.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

Correct answers have been received from Albert Jessie French, Hattie J. Judd, Josie Koney, Alma L. Heacock and Bella F. Christie.