

**The Silent Searchers.**

BY HENRY RIPLEY DORR.

When the darkness of night has fallen,  
And the birds are fast asleep,  
An army of silent searchers  
From the dusky shadows creep;  
And over the quiet meadows,  
Or amid the waving trees,  
They wander about with their tiny lamps  
That flash in the evening breeze.

And this army of silent searchers  
Each with his flickering light,  
Wanders about till the morning  
Has driven away the night.  
What treasures they may be seeking  
No man upon earth can know;  
Perhaps 'tis the home of the fairies,  
Who lived in the long ago.

For an ancient legend tells us  
That once, when the fairy king  
Had summoned his merry minstrels  
At the royal feast to sing,  
The moon, high over the tree-tops,  
With the stars refused to shine,  
And an army with tiny torches  
Was called from the oak and pine.

And when, by the imps of darkness,  
The fairies were chased away,  
The army began its searching  
At the close of a dreary day;  
Through all the years that have followed,  
The seekers have searched the night,  
Piercing the gloom of the hours  
With the flash of their magic light.

Would you see the magical army?  
Then come to the porch with me!  
Yonder, among the hedges  
And near to the maple tree,  
Over the fields of clover,  
And down in the river-damp,  
The fire-flies search till the morning,  
Each with his flickering lamp.

**EDNA MORTON'S EXPERIENCE.**

BY FL RENCE YARWOOD.

THE crimson flush of sunrise was slowly colouring the eastern sky, as Edna Morton started up from her pillows with the words: "To-day is my birthday. I am fourteen years old to-day;" and the next moment she was up, combing her fair hair, and hurriedly fastening her dress.

Presently there came a gentle tap at the door, and the next moment a lady entered with a book in her hand. She kissed Edna, as she said: "My dear, I wish you the best of joys, the best of blessings, on this your birthday. Accept this book, as a token of my love; may it ever be precious to you, is the prayer of my heart," and she handed her a handsome bible.

"Thank you, auntie; it is very kind of you to remember me," said Edna, as she took the book; and the dear, kind auntie—who had been both auntie and mother to Edna ever since her mother died, ten years ago—did not know that in her heart Edna secretly wished that the book had been something else besides a bible.

"Why we have half a dozen of them in the house now, and more, too," thought Edna to herself, "if she had only bought me a nice story-book how much better pleased I should have been," and the handsome bible, bearing her name in letters of gold, was thrust somewhat hurriedly down in the farthest corner of her dresser.

"How beautiful the sunrise is this morning!" said auntie. "When I first looked out of my window there was only just a glimmer of light, but now the whole eastern sky is flushed, and even the clouds are fringed with its golden hues. It makes me think of that scene on Calvary's height," continued auntie, her voice lowering to a whisper, "You know, when Jesus was dying the sunshine faltered and all earth grew dark."

"Whittier describes the crucifixion beautifully," said Edna, who was quite well versed in poetry, and in a soft voice she repeated the words:

"Sunlight upon Judea's hills!  
And on the waves of Galilee—  
On Jordan's stream and on the rills  
That gather to the sleeping sea!  
A few more hours—a change hath come  
Dark as a brooding thunder-cloud!  
The shouts of wrath and joy are dumb,  
And proud knees on to earth are bowed."

"Yes, that is beautiful," said auntie. "The sunshine faltered when Jesus was dying, and all earth grew dark, but there came forth from that darkness a perfect, risen, glorified Saviour, whose blessed light is for every one that cometh into the world. Edna, dear, when are you going to turn to that light? What a

glad, happy birthday it would be for you if you decided to have your name recorded in heaven to-day!" and the patient blue eyes looked very tenderly down into Edna's dark ones.

"Oh, auntie, I'm not old enough to think of such things yet. There will be plenty of time for me to be a Christian when I am older," and Edna turned abruptly away and ran down the stairs, where her father kissed her, and slipped on her finger just the kind of a ring she had so longed to possess, while her brother Ralph handed her a volume of Tennyson's poems.

"Oh, how thoughtful of you, Ralph, to remember my love of poetry! Now I shall dream over 'The Queen of the May' all day to-day; I think it is so beautiful."

At seven o'clock that evening the village church bell began ringing, softly and sweetly on the still night air. Revival services were being held in the Methodist church.

Edna had been attending them regularly, but this evening she felt half-tempted to stay in her own room and read her book of poetry. But auntie's gentle words: "It's such a lovely night, you had better go, dear," caused her to change her mind, and hastily putting on her wraps she was soon on her way to church.

As she reached the church door she met her friend, Addie Mason, so they went in and took a seat together.

"Don't you think that girl ahead of us has a nice hat on?" whispered Edna to her companion.

"Yes, very," said Addie. "It must have cost a lot."

"I tried to make my feathers on my hat stand up like that, but I couldn't do it," said Edna.

"Mrs. Arlington has a new jacket on, hasn't she?" whispered Addie.

"Yes, and I think it's time. She's worn that old one of hers about twenty years, I guess."

"And that bonnet of hers must have come out of the ark," said Addie.

Then both of the girls giggled, and auntie looked at Edna in a surprised way.

This was rather strange talk to indulge in in church, but I fear there are more than one Edna Morton and Addie Mason who carry on a similar conversation in the house of God.

The meeting opened by singing that beautiful hymn:

"I heard the voice of Jesus say:  
Come unto me and rest,  
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down  
Thy head upon my breast."

Edna listened attentively but could not join in the singing, for she could not tell why the words made her feel so sad.

A great longing crept into her heart for rest—the rest the Saviour gives, and in her heart she knew that she was not too young to be a Christian. She knew that that was one of Satan's excuses.

The minister's text was solemn—oh, so solemn! "It is appointed unto man once to die, and after death the judgment."

Those words made her feel very uncomfortable, and she heartily wished she had remained at home reading Tennyson's poetry. She firmly resolved that she would not attend church another night that week.

Ah, Edna! Your words proved too true. It will be many weeks ere you can go again, however much you may desire to do so.

Towards the close of the sermon the minister invited all Christians, and all who desired to give their hearts to Jesus, to come up to the front.

Edna saw Ralph, her tall, handsome brother, go up with the rest of the Christians.

"But, dear me!" thought Edna to herself, "Ralph is sixteen, past. I'll be a Christian, too, when I'm that old."

Oh, Edna, if you were sure of those two years before you!—but you are not sure of them.

Then they sang these beautiful words:

"I will go and tell my Saviour  
How I long his child to be,  
At the cross I'll seek and find him—  
He's waiting there for me."

Edna knew that Jesus was knocking at the door of her heart, and she felt half-tempted to go right up to the front where many more anxious souls were seeking Him.

"If I only had some one to go with me," she thought to herself, and she looked at Addie.

But Addie was chewing gum in delicious unconcern, and did not look as if she knew exactly where she was, her thoughts were evidently so far away.

Girls, don't chew gum! Don't! don't!—not if you ever want to be a lady in the highest sense of the word.

When the meeting closed there were tears in Edna's eyes.

"What's the matter?" whispered Addie. "Got the toothach?"

Edna shook her head and passed silently out.

Ralph and a host of other young people joined her outside, and Ralph said: "We have arranged to have a little skating party back on the farm in honour of your birthday, Edna. The girls and boys left their skates in our barn on their way to church; so come on, we'll have a fine time."

It was a beautiful, moonlight night, and Edna's spirits rose, as she joined her young companions with mirthful hilarity.

But their enjoyment in the course of the evening, was unpleasantly interrupted.

The pond was safe enough. There was not deep enough water to drown any one, but Edna slipped into an air-hole, and the next moment she was dripping wet.

Strong hands helped her up, and she was borne landward. She laughingly protested she was not hurt at all, but they all insisted that she must go at once to the house and get on dry clothing.

This little incident might have been forgotten in a short time had not serious results followed it.

Next morning Edna was in a high fever, her mind wandering, and all through her long illness the words she most frequently spoke in delirium were, "After death the judgment."

I will not weary you, dear reader, by giving you a detailed account of her long, tedious illness, but one morning, when she was slowly recovering, she took auntie's hand in hers, and said: "Auntie, I have given myself to Jesus. I am not too young to be a Christian. If I had died during my illness I would have been lost, I know."

And that bible—her birthday gift, is now her choicest treasure.

Ms. Salem, Ont.

**NEVER TOO YOUNG TO LOVE CHRIST.**

REV. DR. JOHNSON relates this incident, illustrative of the duty of parents to draw their children's hearts to Jesus:

"Mother," a little child once said, "how old must I be before I can be a Christian?"

The wise mother answered: "How old will you have to be, darling, before you can love me?" "Why, mother, I always loved you, I do now, and I always shall; but you have not told me yet how old I shall have to be." The mother replied: "How old must you be before you can trust yourself at all times wholly to me and my care?" "I always did," she answered; "but tell me what I want to know." And she put her arms around her mother's neck. The mother asked again: "How old will you have to be before you can do what I want you to do?"

Then the child whispered, half guessing what her mother meant: "I can now, without growing any older." Her mother said: "You can be a Christian now, darling, without waiting to be older. Don't you want to begin now?" The child whispered "Yes." And in this simple fashion the greatest of lessons was learned.

**HE GOT IT.**

A GRAPHIC incident in the life of a spoiled child is well told by a writer in an exchange: Among the passengers on the S. Louis train recently was a woman accompanied by a nurse-girl and a boy about three years.

The boy aroused the indignation of the passengers by his continued shrieks, and kicks and screams, and viciousness toward the patient nurse.

Whenever the nurse manifested any sharpness, the mother chided her sharply.

Finally, the mother composed herself for a nap, and about the time the boy had slapped the nurse for the fiftieth time a wasp came skimming in and flew on the window of the nurse's seat. The boy at once tried to catch it.

The nurse caught his hand and said, coaxingly, "Harry mustn't touch. Bug will bite Harry."

Harry screamed savagely, and began to kick and pound the nurse.

The mother, without opening her eyes or lifting her head, cried out sharply:

"Why will you tease that child so, Mary? Let him have what he wants at once."

"But, ma'am, it's a—" "Let him have it, I say."

This encourage I, Harry clutched at the wasp and caught it. The yell that followed brought tears of joy to the passengers.

The mother awoke again.

"Mary," she cried, "let him have it!" Mary turned in her seat and said demurely, "He's got it, ma'am!"

**A QUEER WITNESS.**

A GENTLEMAN who lived in one of our Southern States some years ago owned a beautiful mocking-bird of which he was very fond. One day the bird disappeared. It had been stolen, and every effort was made to find it. At last the gentleman heard that a man from the North, who had been visiting in the city, was about to return home with a very wonderful mocking-bird. The gentleman hurried off to the vessel, and there found the man with a bird that he recognized at once as his own. The new owner would not listen to him, and so the gentleman went to a magistrate. In the magistrate's office the gentleman who claimed the bird said he would whistle a tune, and if the bird did not take it up and follow him, he would give up his claim. All agreed to this, and he began whistling "The Star Spangled Banner." The bird listened a moment, took up the air, and finished it. The magistrate thought that settled the question, and the bird was given up.

**KATIE'S SATURDAY.**

BY JESSIE MACMILLAN ANDERSON.

"Oh, dearie me!" sighed Katie, when she got up that Saturday morning. "What can be the matter?" said mamma, laughing at the doleful little face.

"Oh, there's thousands and millions of things the matter!" said Katie, crossly. She was a little girl who did not like to be laughed at.

"Now, Katie," said mamma, this time seriously, "as soon as you are dressed, I have something I want you to do for me down in the library."

"Before breakfast?" said Katie. "No, you can have your breakfast first," mamma answered, laughing again at the cloudy little face.

Katie was very curious to know what this was, and as perhaps you are too, we will skip the breakfast and go right into the library.

Mamma was sitting at the desk, with a big piece of paper and a pencil in front of her.

"Now, Katie," she said, taking her little daughter on her lap. "I want you to write down a few of those things that trouble you. One thousand will do!"

"Oh, mamma, you're laughing at me now," said Katie; "but I can think of at least ten right this minute."

"Very well," said mamma; "put down ten."

So Katie wrote: "1. It's gone and rained, so we can't play croquet."

"2. Minnie is going away, so I'll have to sit with that horrid little Jean Bascom on Monday."

"3. —"

Here Katie bit her pencil, and then couldn't help laughing. "That's all I can think of just this minute," she said.

"Well," said her mother, "I'll just keep this paper a day or two."

That afternoon the rain had cleared away, and Katie and her mamma, as they sat at the window, saw Uncle Jack come to take Katie to drive; and oh, what a jolly afternoon they had of it!

Monday, when Katie came home from school, she said, "Oh, mamma, I didn't like Jean at all at first, but she's a lovely scatinato. I'm so glad, aren't you?"

"Oh!" was all mamma said; but somehow it made Katie think of her Saturday troubles and the paper.

"I guess I'll tear up that paper now, mamma dear," she said, laughing rather shyly.

"And next time," said mamma, "why not let the troubles before you cry about them? There are so many of them that it's very pleasant, if you'll only wait to see."