

SUE'S SHADOW.

BY KATE SUMNER GATES.

There was something the matter with Sue Wilson, perhaps it was the spring weather; she tried to think that it was. At any rate, there was something the matter; something very unpleasant and disagreeable—at least that was the effect it had upon her. It all dated back to the social at Alice Denver's, which was, after all, only an informal gathering of the young folks at Alice's one evening. How did that so affect Sue? Well, I will tell you about it. It was only last winter that she, Sue, had come out quietly but decidedly for Christ, and had made public profession of her faith, and her desire henceforth to follow in his footsteps. She had been very happy, very, indeed, until that little social.

Edith Mason, a cousin of Alice's from New York, was there, and Sue thought there was no one like Edith. They had had impromptu charades, played "Pledgments," "Forty Questions," and everything else they could think of, when Edith sprang up; "Let's have a dance," she said; "there are just enough of us for two sets, and Grace will play, I know."

Sue flushed to her very temples; she knew some of them glanced significantly her way. Last year, when Edith was here, there was no one that enjoyed dancing any more than did Sue, but now—she had not thought of it before, but she felt that she ought not now; she knew instinctively that it was not expected she would by those who knew of her profession.

She had not spoken to Edith about the change she had experienced; she knew she ought, but somehow she could not—at least, she said she could not—though why I cannot tell, for she was able to talk on every other subject imaginable.

"I wish you'd excuse me," she said hesitatingly.

"Why, you're not sick—are you, dear?" asked Edith, pausing in the middle of the floor with the table she was pushing to one side.

"The rest half stopped. There were some who knew the cause of Sue's hesitation, they watched with some curiosity to see what she would do; the others, a trifle vexed at the delay, were puzzled to know what reason she could give for her, to them, unreasonable hesitation.

Of course the only thing for Sue to do was to say, simply but firmly: "I cannot, for I am the servant of the King of kings, and he would not wish me to."

She knew that was just what she ought to say and do, but she shrink from it.

"I cannot," she said to herself. "Besides, this is not the proper place for anything like that." But all the time she knew perfectly well that she would not hesitate a moment to say, "My mother and father would rather I did not." Why should she hesitate when it was her heavenly Father? But she must say something, for they were all waiting.

"I am not sick," she said, wishing most devoutly that it was, "but I would rather not to-night."

"Oh! well," laughed Edith gaily, "we cannot excuse you for any such excuse; you're too accommodating, I know, to spoil our pleasure for no better reason than that."

And Sue instead of telling them she had a far better reason, let them go on with their preparations.

"I cannot help myself," she said; "and I'm not sure that I ought, either, for it would be so unaccommodating, as Edith said, and would prejudice them all against religion."

"What is that to thee? Follow thou me," whispered a still small voice within; but Sue would not heed it.

"I will dance this time for the sake of accommodating," she pleaded mentally, "and then, when I have a suitable opportunity, I will tell Edith that I cannot do so any more, and why."

But the days came and went, and no such opportunity presented itself; there was always some reason why the time or place was not proper. And meantime, while she was waiting for it, there were other socials where she was needed to make up a set.

But, as I said, something the matter with her. She found herself too tired at night to read her Bible. In the morning, if she had time she read a few verses so hastily and inattentively that five minutes afterward she could not tell anything what they were about, and her prayers were mere forms; she took no comfort in them. She

knew she was wrong, but she could not help herself, she said. She felt wretched enough; but instead of bravely retracing her steps, she kept going farther and farther away from peace and happiness.

But at last the crisis came. Edith had proposed a German on Thursday evening, which was to be the last of her stay; and, alas for Sue! was also the regular prayer-meeting evening.

The morning of the day before, the girls were gathered in a little group in the Academy dressing-room discussing it—all unconscious that Sue was in the library, and the door was ajar.

"I say, Edith, is Sue Wilson going?" asked Georgie Dunham.

"Why, yes, of course; unless something unforeseen occurs."

"Well, then, all I've got to say is, that I'd take my name off the church-roll, if I were in her place. I'm no saint myself, as you all know, and I don't profess to be; but if I did, I'd live up to it; I wouldn't go hopping from one side of the fence to the other. I actually had half a mind to go and do likewise, she seemed so different at first; but I'm glad I saved myself the trouble, for she's just like all the rest of us now, for aught I can see; only it does not take much observation to see that she's more uncomforable."

Sue dropped the book she held in her hand, and went back into the school-room. The girls found her there with her head buried in her hands. She never forgot that morning. Never in all her life before had she been so utterly wretched; she went down into the depths of the valley of humiliation as never before. She had brought dishonor on her Saviour's name; she had professed to come out from the world, but she had not; she had turned one soul from him, and what a Christian bright, energetic Georgie would make. Perhaps, she thought, with a shudder of remorse, she had turned others among the girls also.

She went home into her own room, and down on her knees, she sobbed out her grief and penitence. Then, by and by, when she was calmer, she took up her Bible—her neglected Bible—and searched it eagerly for comfort. It opened to Acts, and her eyes fell on Peter's name. She was glad of that; she would like to read something about him, for he, too, had denied his Lord. She will always remember that fifteenth verse of the fifth chapter of Acts—how they brought the sick into the streets, and laid them there, that perchance Peter's shadow, as he passed by, might overshadow them.

She put her Bible down. Could it be possible that the shadow she had cast could be made to bring healing also?

There was a long hard struggle. The downward path was tread so easily is hard to retrace, but Sue was in earnest.

The girls were all there when she went into the Academy the next morning, and as usual Georgie Dunham was the centre of an interested circle.

It seemed to Sue that for an instant her heart stood still, but she went bravely up into the very midst of them all. "Girls," she said, "I have something to say to you. You all know that last winter I professed to have found my Saviour, and publicly confessed my intention to follow him; but instead of acknowledging him in all my ways, I have dishonored him; I have done things I know he would not wish me to, but I have asked his forgiveness, I believe it has been granted, and I ask yours now. And one thing more, girls; don't look at my life, at the very best it is so imperfect, but just look at Him. You can't find anything in His life to criticise unfavorably, and there is something in His religion, though my life may not show it."

Georgie Dunham winked briskly for a minute or two, then, jumping down from the desk where she was sitting, she put out her hand and said frankly: "I'm right glad to hear you say so, Sue; I didn't like the way you were doing, and I've more faith in you now than ever before, for there must be something in it, or you would not say this."

No one but Sue herself knew how thankful she felt when, a few weeks later, Georgie, half laughingly, half tearfully, but wholly in earnest, avowed herself on the Lord's side henceforth and forever. But Sue never forgot how near she had been to turning this soul away from Christ rather than to him, and the memory caused her to be always very humble, vigilant, and also very pitifully charitable toward others.—S. S. Times.

HINTS TO TEACHERS ON THE CURRENT LESSONS.

(From Edouard's Select Notes.)

February 25.—Acts 5: 1-11.

ILLUSTRATIVE.

I. "Initiatory battles." Somewhere in the beginning of every life Satan makes an attack upon the soul, as he tempted Christ in the wilderness, when he was entering upon his public work as the Messiah. On the success or failure of this introductory battle depends the whole after life. As Satan came to Adam and Eve in the garden; to Cain, the first born man; to Nadab and Abihu, at the commencement of Israel's national life, and afterward to Achan in the first establishment of Israel's power in Canaan; and above all, as without effect he came to Christ at the very outset of his personal ministry; so now and here, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them. He would fain use the time of inexperience and feeble faith to detach one and another, and so undermine the power and destroy the life of the Church of Christ.—Glenworth Butler.

II. "Illustrations of hypocrisy." Hypocrites resemble looking-glasses, which present the faces which are not in them. How desirous are men to put the fairest gloves upon the foulest hands, and the finest jacket on the rottenest posts! Hypocrites are like counterfeit coin; a curious cloth on a dusty table; a sailor in a leaky ship; a lamp without a light.—From William Secker. Christ compares them to wolves in sheep's clothing; to serpents adorned above, but full of corruption; to dishes cleansed without, but foul within. St. James likens them to clouds without rain.

PRACTICAL.

1. Verse 1. God often teaches us by contrast, setting the good and the bad side by side.

2. God will use us to aid his kingdom, as examples or as warnings, as lifeboats or as wrecks on dangerous rocks. It is for us to decide which.

3. Verses 2-4. Sinners are continually keeping back part of the price, unwilling to give all to God.

4. Whoever is ambitious for honor rather than usefulness, and desires to seem rather than to be, is on the verge of hypocrisy.

5. An ill man is always ill, but he is then worst of all when he pretends to be a saint.—Lord Bacon.

6. I know nothing more criminal, more mean, and more ridiculous than lying. It is the production of either malice, cowardice, or vanity, and generally misses of its aim in every one of these views.—Lord Chesterfield.

7. Fraud and hypocrisy are certain to be detected.

8. We see here the guilt of attempting to impose on God in regard to property. There is no subject in which men are more liable to hypocrisy; none in which they are more apt to keep back a part. Christians profess to devote all that they have to God. Their property, as well as their bodies and their spirits, they have devoted to him, and they profess to desire to employ it as he shall direct and please. And yet, it is not clear that the sin of Ananias has not ceased in the Church? How many professing Christians there are who give nothing really to God; who contribute nothing for the poor and needy; who devote nothing, or next to nothing, to any purposes of benevolence; who would employ "millions" for their own gratification, and their families, "but not a cent for tribute" to God. The case of Ananias is, to all such, a case of most fearful warning. If God punished this sin in the beginning of the Christian Church, he will do it still in its progress; and in nothing have professed Christians more to fear his wrath than on this very subject.—A. Barnes.

9. Verse 5. The punishment of the guilty is for the good of the many.

10. Verse 11. It is well when Christians are afraid of sin, but afraid of nothing else.

11. They who are filled with the Holy Spirit are safe from being filled with Satan.

12. When Christians are afraid to sin, and sinners are afraid because they have sinned, then the Gospel will prosper.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

Here is an excellent opportunity to warn against one of the commonest of sins among the young—Lying, one of whose forms is Hypocrisy. (1) The story of these two liars,

verses 1-4. What their sin was; their motive in it. These people were warnings—as Barabas was an example. Which shall we be? (2) The punishment, vers. 5-10. Why it was not too severe. The punishment of all liars, and why they cannot enter heaven. (3) The effects, vers. 11, and the following verses. Awe was upon all, sinners repented, the Church were purified, and saved from their greatest danger.

Question Corner.—No. 3.

BIBLE STUDY.

A name that in the Bible is applied to a biped and to a quadruped. With it there comes into my mind a king, a palace, royal state and surroundings, subterranean passages, grapes, honey, eggs, poultry, birds, fishes, Indians, cobblers, a river, Quakers, an historian, a volume the perusal of which tries heart and nerve, a statesman, &c., &c. I also think of a judge in Israel, and of Prophets, and of our Lord and Saviour.

What is the name? To what biped is it attached?

What is its association with the various objects, and what judge in Israel do I mean?

How is the word associated with Prophets?

How with our Lord?

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

The first and last letters spell the names of two brothers, sons of a king, both slain by the Philistines.

- 1. The son of Nunn.
2. A prince of the Midianites who was slain upon a rock of the same name.
3. A widow from Bethlehem-Judah, who said that the Lord had dealt bitterly with her.
4. A Levite, of whom the Lord said: "He can speak well."
5. The name of a woman who was full of good works and almsdeeds.
6. A king who is said to have stretched forth his hands to vex the church.
7. A Jew, born in Pontus, with whom St. Paul abode for some time, because he was of the same craft.
8. The oldest son of a high priest who died in offering strange fire before the Lord.

VALUABLE POSSESSIONS.

Peter tells us in one of his epistles "If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." What things does he refer to, and where is the passage to be found?

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN NO. 1.

CHRISTMAS PUZZLE STORY.

Be ye kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love. Evening. Julia. Egg. Piece of silver. Grandmother. Beauty. Both not behave itself unseemly. Seeketh not her own. Is not easily provoked. Unloved no evil. Rotten. Basket. Piece of silver. Can two walk together except they be agreed? Fig. Raisins. Nuts. Almonds. Apples. Trees. Wood. David. Bunches. Paper. Candles. Knocking at the door. Rhoda opened not the gate for gladness. Twelve. The poor. Wortheth willingly with her hands. The streets and lanes of the city. Gladness. Give and it shall be given you, &c., &c.

BIBLE STUDY.

ARK. Noah's ark, and the Ark of the Covenant. My thoughts are of the earth, and the flood of waters; the people and animals preserved in the ark, the Ark of the Covenant, the acacia tree, the gold that covered it, and the purple pall. Also of the old preacher of righteousness. The anguish is that of a drowning world. The mirch is from the little children as they play with toy arks.

Bible references: Gen vi, 14; vii, 7; 2 Peter ii, 5; Exodus xxv, and xxviii.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

To No. 21.—Abbie Duncan Burr, 11 ac; Alexander George Burr, 11 ac.

CRUST COFFEE.—Cut in two and brown evenly in an oven, Graham biscuits or bread crusts; pour boiling water to these and let boil a few minutes; strain and season with cream and sugar, and you have a most palatable drink for the sick.

SAUCE FOR FISH.—Two ounces of butter, one-half cup vinegar, one teaspoonful ground mustard, one teaspoonful salt, a little pepper; let this boil, then add one cup of milk and yolks of two eggs. Let this just boil, stirring all the time.

GRAHAM COOKIES.—Shave two cups maple sugar, stir with one of butter, one egg, one cup sour milk, one teaspoonful soda, Graham flour. Use white flour on the mixing board; brown sugar may be used.

TI scho and a the liber espe of th to gi card who high kind stitcl orph Ar cloth lortu and; to as inten Sund untar of ho tatter a smi the h what lessor I p that t serve the a qualiti eyes, both pocke One Florr. adjoin for se hands who v pretty polon with l blue s were ornar feathe brune ecru c her h somer little the cit "Sh asked the m poor childr "H asked, Mabel watch "Pl her, s too p some o Emi the tw snc at anoy; somet word i chatte; Emma seeme class; only to pupils The and ch yet M