

food on this table. Signed, Edward Porter, Mary Porter, Harry Porter, Helen Porter, Elizabeth Porter."

"If that isn't the strangest agreement I ever heard read!" exclaimed Aunt Margaret, who had come in unexpectedly for lunch. "How did it come about?"

"Oh, we've had it for a month or more, and the box is nearly full," said Helen. "For the first day or two, cents just poured in, but now father can eat salt butter and drink weak coffee without a word. He's almost heroic. Mother always was a martyr; nothing but tough beef-steak ever made her complain, and she would swallow shoe leather now and smile. I suppose Harry and Bess and I are to fill the box; we're no saints yet."

"But," said Aunt Margaret, "you haven't told me why you began to have a grumble-box?"

"I'll tell you," said Mrs. Porter. "Don't you remember some of the times you have been here to lunch or to dinner when everything was wrong on the table? The soup was either too hot or too cold, the beef was overdone, the vegetables either too salt or not salt enough, the bread was dry, or the toast was burnt."

Aunt Margaret smiled.

"I've known such things to happen in other people's houses, too."

"So have I," said Mrs. Porter, "but don't you remember, too, the blessing father so often asks before meals: 'O Lord, for the food that Thou hast given us give us grateful hearts?' We would bow our heads and listen and then grumble over every mouthful."

"You didn't, mother; you never did. It was the rest of us."

"Well," continued Mrs. Porter, "one beautiful Sunday morning we all went to church and heard an unusually good sermon. Then we came home and sat down to a very good dinner, but it was worse than ever, and before we left the table father stopped us and said: 'I've been thinking, children, it would be just as well not to ask a blessing on the food any longer. We have such poor things to eat we cannot feel grateful.'"

"I tell you, that took the breath out of us!" said Harry.

"Yes, but it opened our eyes,"

said Helen. "We couldn't believe that we found so much fault with everything."

"It was father who thought of the box," said Harry. "He said it would help us keep a good resolution if we had to pay for breaking it."

"I've got some pennies in, too," said little Bess, "'cause I cried for more sugar on my oatmeal."

"And what are you going to do with the money when the box is filled?" asked Aunt Margaret.

"We don't know yet what kind of heathen are to have it?" answered Harry; "Chinese, Siamese, Japanese, Indian, or plain American. It will go from the heathen to the heathen."

Aunt Margaret rose to take her departure.

"Must you go, Margaret?" asked Mrs. Porter. "I am so glad you came in for lunch. I am only sorry we did not have a better meal to offer you."

"A cent, mother! A cent from you!" exclaimed the children. "That is a genuine out-and-out grumble."

And Mrs. Porter laughingly slipped a coin into the grumble-box.—*Our Sunday Afternoon.*

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