

Two Sales.

(By W. R. King.)

Several young men came into the store. They were an awkward, laughing, tumultuous group, seeming very much out of place among the ribbons, laces and yards upon yards of dainty fabrics displayed upon all sides. As they negligently lounged on the counters or subsided, in picturesque attitudes in the chairs, eyeing everything with amazement and ill-concealed amusement, one of their number took a minute sample from his pocket. He contracted his brow to recall some half-forgotten message.

Lena Chapman, a recent arrival among the employees in the establishment, was sent forward to wait upon them. It was 'awfully jolly,' she thought, helping this big pleasant fellow to match his sample with a spool of silk while all the others crowded around, looking very knowing and full of suggestions. They gaily bantered each other, and quite easily entered into conversation with her. Lena was not personally acquainted with any of them, but as this was a simple matter of business, she did not at the time think it wrong to freely smile or talk, and readily responded to their humorous raillery. At length the sample was satisfactorily matched. With many profuse thanks and a good deal of laughter, the young men went out.

It had required almost a quarter of an hour to accomplish the sale of a spool of silk, and the counter was in a bad state of confusion. Colors, numbers and sizes were apparently inexplicably mixed. While Lena was endeavoring to bring order out of this chaos, and still thinking of the pleasant young men, Miss Lang approached. This lady was the head of the department. As she spoke, the smile faded from Lena's face.

'I don't think it was necessary for you to be so sociable with the young men—did you know any of them?'

'No, Miss Lang,' responded Lena, discreetly saying as little as possible. Her cheeks began to burn. Several suppressed giggles told her that the other girls were appreciating her embarrassment. But Miss Lang calmly continued:

'I imagined that they were old friends—you seemed so glad to see and talk with them. Lena—in a kinder tone—there is such a thing as being too affable. Remember this, and not give your customers too much time or display goods so recklessly.'

At that moment she was called away, just as a hasty and thoughtless answer sprang to the girl's lips. The more Lena brooded over the incident, the more she believed that her superior had been over-severe, anxious to show her authority and humiliate her. Some of her companions made sport of the affair in a mild way, and this added to both her resentment and embarrassment. She went home that evening with the half-formed resolution of leaving the store. But a night's rest weakened the idea, and though she felt that she had been subjected to unnecessary ridicule, yet she determined to wait.

On boarding the car in the morning she was forced to occupy a seat immediately back of two young men. They were busily and loudly engaged in conversation. Lena drew her veil over her face.

'I tell you,' said one of the young men as though he had been contradicted by the other, 'she is easy to get acquainted with.' The passengers in front inquisitively looked around, while those in the rear of the car stretched their necks forward. Lena felt her cheeks redden. She was thankful the veil concealed her features.

'How do you know all this?' inquired the other.

'Oh, we fellows went into the store where she works. Ollie Fenwick had to match a spool of silk for his sister. Why,' he continued, laughing in an unpleasant manner, 'she was as bright and cordial as a fellow could wish. The next—'

At this stage in the talk they left the car and entered the grounds of the Bulkely High school.

When Lena entered the store the other girls wondered what caused her to be so quiet and obliging, so eager to do her full share of the work and assist generally as much as possible. At first Miss Lang, with a deep knowledge of that mystery—a girl's disposition—was suspicious, but she soon realized that Lena was sincere, was making an honest effort to please, and trying to recover the prestige lost the day before. So she was taken back in favor.

Several days later, the same crowd entered the store. This time they needed ribbon. Lena started to make a hasty retreat, but a look from Miss Lang caused her to change her mind. She quietly approached the customers, apparently not seeing their elaborate bows. The transaction was short and very businesslike. Lena maintained her dignity and self-possession, waited on them as quickly as possible, seeming not to hear their jests or see their smiles. The young men intuitively comprehended the situation; they soon went out, solemnly closing the door without looking back.

They were utterly discomfited. Lena returned to her work feeling that she had acted wisely, modestly allowed them to understand their mistake, and had learned a valuable lesson for herself.—*Christian Standard.*

Light in the House.

One morning, many years since, a missionary was busily employed giving away tracts outside some barracks, and, speaking a word here and there to one and another who would listen. Some jeered and laughed, but a few appeared to receive the word with gladness.

Among these was a fine young fellow, with a sparkling and intelligent countenance, who came forward and said he had been deeply impressed by the missionary's serious and affectionate exhortations. 'I should be glad to have a Bible,' added he naively; 'but indeed I have not a penny left in my pocket.'

'Never mind that,' said the other kindly. 'If you desire a Bible so much, I will give you mine'—and, with a smile, he held out his own, which he much prized, to the young soldier.

No sooner had he done so than the surrounding comrades broke into loud laughter, which the young man echoed as he cried: 'You are nicely sold, my fine fellow! I bet a pot of beer that I could soft-soap you, and I've done it, too'—emphasizing his words with a sneer.

The gentleman stood aghast at the other's audacity; then, turning towards him, he said sternly, 'Give me back my book; its pearls shall not be cast among swine. You would trample its precious truths under your feet, and make a mock of my Master. Shame upon you!'

The young man appeared silenced at first by these words; then, recovering himself, with a volley of oaths he broke out again. 'What!—you would give a present and then wish it back? No, you shall not have it. A gift is a gift, I vow'—and he began lighting his pipe with its pages.

'Keep it—keep it,' said the gentleman; 'but

remember, those are the words of him who cannot lie. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God! You despise his words now, but there will come a day when he will laugh at your calamity and mock when your fear cometh, unless you repent. He is a consuming fire to the blasphemer.' With these holy words the preacher left the barracks.

Years passed away, and the circumstance was almost erased from his memory. He was traveling by the night mail to the north. The train stopped at a busy junction, and a man got in—a bearded soldier, who looked as though he had seen foreign service. Scarcely had he seated himself when he started, and gazed at his companion in astonishment.

'Sir—sir,' he said, seizing the other's hand, 'don't you know me?'

'No; I have not that pleasure,' said the gentleman in great surprise, regarding the newcomer earnestly.

'Oh, but I can never forget you, sir, and all I owe to your goodness. Don't you remember the soldiers in the barrack-room at C— ten years ago?'

'Yes, I do,' said the other, having a faint recollection of the man's face.

'I am that man who insulted you, sir; but, thank God, the same, and yet not the same, for I am a new creature in Christ Jesus.'

'How is this, my friend?' cried the gentleman, eager now in his turn, returning the handshake with interest. 'Tell me all about it.'

'Well, sir, after you left, I went on worse than ever, and made a blasphemous mock at sin. I tore nearly all the leaves out of your Bible, at one time or another, to light my pipe, and then threw the rest of it into my locker, and thought no more about it. A year afterwards I fell ill, and was very near death. 'Twas then that the thought of my sin preyed heavy upon my mind; but I durst not tell anyone, and as I grew better I became even more wretched, if possible, than before. One day, as I was turning over my kit, I came upon the torn Bible. The first words that caught my eye were: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief." Chief, thought I; then there is a hope for me. Thank God, I am not too bad to be saved; and I read on. It was peace, life, and joy. I took God at his word; I believed that my sins, which were many, were all forgiven—I got out at the next station.'

'My dear fellow,' said the gentleman, 'our acquaintance must not end here. Give me your address. Your story is balm to my soul. I shall go on my way rejoicing with more faith and courage than heretofore.'

'If we sow, we shall also reap, if we faint not.' Blessed are they that sow beside all waters; yea, in season and out of season. 'Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it again after many days.'—Annie M. Lainsou.

When Frances Willard was conducting a great campaign in one of the states on the issue of license or no-license, a liquor dealer said to his supporters, 'We are bound to win; we have the drinking men on our side; we have the foreigners on our side; we have the money on our side; and money is power, and don't you forget it.' Two nights later Frances Willard said in the same hall, 'We are bound to win; we have the women on our side; we have the Christian Church on our side; we have God on our side; and God is power, and don't you forget it.'