

wife, cheated a man out of eight dollars, and have never had a chance to kill a mad dog, or a gorilla. I'm a dangerous companion for boys. Parents have no business to buy pistols for the careless handling of passionate boys."

Just here somebody gave me a vigorous shake, and mother said: "How sound you do sleep, John! Will you never wake up this morning?"

When I went down, father asked me if I still wanted a pistol. I told him no, I'd rather have a tin rattle.

"But if you should meet a mad dog, or a gorilla, what would you do with a tin rattle?"

"About as much as I would do with a pistol; throw it down and run."

I am now forty years old. I never did own a pistol, never had any use for one. I have never met either a gorilla, or a mad dog. I'm thankful that Mr. Pistol came and told me the story of his adventurous life, or I might have owned a pistol and been a murderer.—*The Housekeeper.*

#### AT THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL CONVENTION.

BY MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON.

The Winstead church entertained the convention so prettily, serving the dinner at small tables set in a circle about the commodious conference room, so that the delegates gained as much, perhaps, in the familiar chat over methods of work as they did by the public exercises.

"The classes in our Sunday-school are too large, but I don't know what we can do about it," said Mrs. Douglas of Springbrook. "I am fond of teaching, but at present my class is a trial to me. It is very hard to interest from twelve to twenty young women when only a few of them are willing to be interested, and when the brightest girl in the class puts herself on a level with the silliest one, and by laughing at her attempts at wit succeeds in demoralizing the whole class at every session."

"How many would you enjoy having in your class?" asked Mrs. Miller, from the opposite side of the round table.

"Four or five or six unconverted girls, or boys and girls together, I should not mind. I should feel as if there was a possibility of my doing something with a class like that."

"Do you not think it best to have church members in the same classes with those who are not?" asked an elderly lady at Mrs. Miller's right.

"Not as a rule. It is easier to do personal work in a small class, and you feel more free to press the subject of salvation to the unconverted when there are no Christians present to criticise your methods."

"I can appreciate that," said another member of the small circle, modestly. "In my class there are three unconverted girls, much younger than the other members of the large class, all of whom are professing Christians. For some time I have been anxious for a little talk with these three girls, and last Sunday I thought I was to have my opportunity as the others went immediately after the preaching service to attend a funeral, but presently, to my sorrow, the most volatile girl in the class came straggling in."

"Oh, my pencil!" she exclaimed in a loud whisper. "I've lost my pencil! My kingdom for a pencil! I want to draw a picture of the superintendent in that new high collar. Oh, I'm hungry!" and so on to the end of the lesson, not answering a question or following the lesson so as to be able to find her place when called upon directly. She soon had my three little girls laughing; all the good influence of the lesson was lost, and I went home and cried until I had a sick headache."

"Why did you not reprove her?"

"She would have taken immediate offence. There was nothing for me to do but to submit and endure."

"But to pray for her."

"Oh, do you think I have not done that for all the years that she has been a constant annoyance?"

"Perhaps you would like to know what my teacher was led to do in a somewhat similar emergency," said the only young girl in the little circle. "Ours is a very large class, and dear Miss Hopkins, our teacher, is often sadly tried with them, I know. I like fun and am just as jolly as

the other girls at a proper time and place, but I have too much respect for myself, too much love for my teacher, and too much reverence for God's day and house and Word to behave in Sunday-school as if I were at a sociable.

"One hot Sunday last summer the girls did behave dreadfully, worse than you would think it possible for nice, well brought up young women to behave. Two of them persisted in sitting so far back that no one could tell whether they considered themselves members of the class or not, and then were impertinent in their complaints because they could not hear what was said."

"Miss Hopkins looked altogether discouraged, and I was so indignant that I could hardly control my voice to answer the questions that came to me. During the closing exercises and the singing of a hymn, Miss Hopkins wrote a little note on a slip of paper, and as we were going out she handed it to me."

"Oh, Miss Hopkins, haven't you a note for me?" cried Tilly Lane, the girl who was the ringleader in the mischief.

"Not this time, dear," replied Miss Hopkins, with her usual sweetness, at which Tilly giggled in a more exasperating way than ever.

"I could not imagine what the little note could be about, but I hurried along up the street and as soon as I was alone opened and read it. It was just a few sweet words to thank me for the help and comfort and inspiration my quiet, sympathetic demeanor as well as my carefully prepared lesson was to her, and asking me to pray with her for our thoughtless young friends. I can't tell you how surprised I was, for the idea of being a comfort to any one had never entered my mind, and I went along up the street with tears of joy dropping from my eyes."

"A summer shower! a summer shower!" some one cried, and Tilly, who had been hurrying to overtake me, asked: "What has she been blowing you up for? You hadn't done anything in particular only to sit there like a clam when you must have been dying to laugh at the way the others were cutting up."

"I handed her the note, and when she gave it back she said: 'Thank you. So that is the way she takes it, is it? I'll never bother her again.'"

"I was distressed at her reply and thought she meant to leave the class, but she has been faithful in every way since that day, and I am sure Miss Hopkins now esteems her as much as she does any one in the class."

"That," said Mrs. Miller, "proved to be the most effective personal work possible. Showing an appreciation of the good, instead of causing bitterness by reproving the bad."

"It might not have amounted to anything had this young lady not shown her friend the note."

"I acted upon impulse. I must have been led to do it, for had I waited until a calmer moment I might have thought it dishonorable; but I am sure Miss Hopkins' sweetness conquered the class, and by it they were willing to be set to work."

"Will you please to tell us in what way?"

"To take classes themselves. Soon after that episode our Sunday-school was re-organized, and all the girls in Miss Hopkins' class who were Christians were given small classes, and you don't know how nicely it works. Once a quarter we have a general examination conducted by the pastor, in which the superintendent, teachers, and members of classes are all alike, pupils; and it has brought our Sunday-school up to a higher standard than it has ever held before."

"There is a solution of your problem, Mrs. Douglas," said Mrs. Miller. "Re-organize. It is a mistake to let a school run on year after year in the same old rut. Make six pupils the limit of each class, but begin with a less number so that each teacher and scholar may try to bring in recruits. Put a Christian teacher over each class. Let each teacher give prizes for punctuality and regular attendance. Let us all try to encourage Bible study in our respective schools and to hold quarterly examinations, and let us all come to the next Sunday-school convention and report progress."

"Maple Corner," *Willington, Conn.*

#### HOW ROD WAS LED.

Two ladies stood by Sue Ingram's counter waiting for change.

"What delightful meetings we are having!" Mrs. Walker said.

"Indeed we are," responded Mrs. Currier. "It does my heart good to see the young people so delightful and earnest. I've been feeling so anxious all day about one in particular; Rod Carter."

She gave a little start as she caught the name, but neither lady noticed it.

"He used to be in my Sabbath-school class, you know," continued Mrs. Currier, "but he has not been much lately; he has gotten in with a set who do not help him much, I fancy. Some of our boys coaxed him into one of the meetings, however, and he is really very much interested. I hoped he would decide the question last night; I could see he was just halting between two opinions, but he was not quite ready to decide. The worst of it is he said he could not come to-night, as he had a previous engagement."

Sue started again at this, and looked a trifle conscious.

"I'm so afraid he will be drawn back again," she heard Mrs. Currier say next. "Somehow, I have a feeling that if he willfully stays away to-night, and puts off deciding until a more convenient season, the Spirit will cease to strive with him—now, any way. I am so anxious about it."

"Here's your change, madam," said Sue just then.

There were tears in gentle Mrs. Currier's eyes as she turned to take it.

"My dear," she said, obeying a sudden impulse as she glanced at Sue's saucy, piquant face, "my dear, don't forget your responsibility in influencing your friends and associates. It will be a dreadful thing at that last day to have any one say we led him astray, away from the right; will it not?"

She had no answer ready for this query, and the ladies passed out.

"So Rod is interested in religion, is he?" she thought, as she put things to rights. "Wonder, what Mrs. Currier would have said if she had known his engagement was to take me to the theatre. I suppose she would have besought me to let him off and send him to meeting. Perhaps, I ought; but I don't get very much fun, and I don't see why he can't decide before or after just as well. Still," and Sue fairly shuddered at the thought, "it would be awful if he should get over it at the play, and then blame me for it."

All day long Sue was perplexed and troubled, and as unlike her usual merry, saucy self as possible.

"Whatever in the world am I going to do?" she thought as she started for home at night. "I wish Mrs. Currier had gone somewhere else shopping. I don't see what earthly difference it makes; the meetings last a week longer, and Rod can go every evening for all of me, but if I give up the theatre to-night the dear knows when I'll get another chance to go. I guess if Mrs. Currier had to work as I do, and didn't have any more fun than I do, she wouldn't think it such a simple matter to give it up. It's all nonsense any way. I'm not responsible for Rod's not deciding. He has had time enough this week, but he hasn't improved it, and very likely he wouldn't to-night, even if he went to the meeting. I'm not going to give up my good time unless he asks me to; so, now!"

And having come to this decision, she hastened her steps and tried to think no more about it. But in spite of her best endeavors she felt anything but comfortable as she made preparations to go. She even kept Rod waiting fully ten minutes while she stood in her own room, hat and jacket on, and thought it all over again. It ended, however, in her coming down with a half-reckless look, and they started out.

But Sue found her companion very sober and absent-minded, yet, while it increased her own disquiet of mind, she apparently did not notice it, but laughed and chatted merrily.

"We've lost our car and will have to wait a few minutes," said Rod, as they reached the corner. "What got into you, Sue? I never knew you to keep anybody waiting before, especially when there was a good time on hand."

"Didn't you? Well, there always has to be a first time, you know," was Sue's

only reply; and then for a few minutes neither of them spoke.

Sue seemed to see Mrs. Currier's earnest face, and to hear her saying, "don't forget your responsibility; it will be a dreadful thing to hear any one say we led him away from the right."

Rod was trying in vain to quiet his troubled conscience.

"There's no use in my feeling so uncomfortable. I'll go to the meeting to-morrow night, and decide one way or the other, and be done with it."

But, suggested something within, suppose something should happen before then; things do to people many times when they least expect them. What if it should be too late to-morrow night?

Rod shook himself impatiently. "Here's the car," he said, with a look of relief; but just then they both heard the church bell. "Don't forget," it said to Sue; "Come now," it seemed to Rod to plead.

For an instant their eyes met, and Sue, with quick intuition, read the struggle in Rod's face. "It will be a dreadful thing to hear any one say we led him astray."

How those words rang in Sue's ears! "Yes," she said to herself, "it would be horrible, and I will not run the risk of it for all the fun in the world; if Rod goes away from the right it will not be my fault."

The car was close to them, and Rod put out his hand to help Sue, but she drew back.

"We won't go to the theatre to-night; we will go to the meeting, and if I were in your place, Rodney, I wouldn't hesitate any longer. I'd make up my mind for the right to-night."

Rod turned and looked at Sue, too surprised to speak.

"How did you know?" he asked presently.

"Oh, I found it out," she answered, as they went up the church steps. It was an intensely solemn meeting; the text was, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." It came to Rod like a command.

After the sermon, when the minister came down from the pulpit, and, looking anxiously in the faces before him, asked if there were not some who would choose now whom they would serve, Rod was one of the first to rise.

"I have chosen Christ for my master," he said, and there was a real ring of joy in his voice, "and, God helping me, I will serve him faithfully all the rest of my life."

"I can never thank you enough, Sue, for your help to-night," said Rod, as they walked home together. "I cannot tell you how happy and thankful I am that I have decided."

"I am very glad, also; but you need not thank me, Rod, for I think I helped myself to decide, as well as you," answered Sue. "I did not do anything worth mentioning for you, yet it made me happier than I ever was before, I think, to feel that I had helped even the least bit. If God will only accept and help me, I want to serve him, too."—*Our Youth.*

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