

When they found the long knife one of the men had dropped in his haste to get away, and an old overshoe, and when Dora had been coaxed into telling just what had happened, Mr. Turner shook his head, saying.

'Well, you're the pluckiest little thing in this country.'

The whole country voted her such whenever the story was told.

'Beats anything a body ever heard,' the women all said to one another.

Mr. Turner put a hundred dollars in the bank in Dora's name, and Mrs. Turner bought her the finest doll she could find, while the Turner boys made her all sorts of contrivances during the winter evenings when they played together in the big bright kitchen.

But none of these things made Dora as happy as the words the tall man said to her on his first visit to the farm.

'They've all been telling me about you, my little girl,' he said, again patting the stringy red hair, 'and I told them I knew I should be proud of you, and I am.'

It has been fifteen years since this all happened. Dora was twenty-three years old last fall. On her birthday she married one of the Turner boys, and is about the happiest person in the world, but she declares she's still afraid in the dark.

BELLE SPARR LUCKETT.

Marion's Weak Side.

'O wad some power the giftie give us
To see ourself as ithers see us,'

repeated Marion Upton in soft tones, as she shook her pretty head in mock mournfulness.

It was the noon recess in the Hinsdale High School, and the large hall was filled with a babel of sounds. Merry girls strolled arm-in-arm through the hall and loitered in the corners or by the windows of the spacious apartment. A group had gathered with Marion in the alcove library, and were discussing in animated tones the shortcomings of a classmate.

'What a revelation that would be!' laughed Belle Smith. 'I wonder if it would be at all improving to a person who shall be nameless.'

'She is, without exception, the most disagreeable, ill-tempered person I ever knew,' declared Ruth Holmes. 'They say the whole family is high-tempered and quarrelsome. It reminds me of the Spanish proverb, "Live with wolves, and you will learn to howl;" for if Kate doesn't actually "howl," she has the real wolf snap.'

'Well, she's snapped at me just once too often,' said Belle. 'I intend in future to let her severely alone. Perhaps by the time she is utterly friendless she'll come to her senses.'

'Poor girl! I can't help being a little sorry for her,' said Marion. 'You know she's an orphan, and I suspect she has a hard time in her uncle's family.'

'It's no excuse,' said Ruth, 'for allowing her ill-temper to run away with her. Her ugliness amounts to a vice.'

'Yes, I know,' said Marion, sadly; 'but then we haven't been very patient with her. It's Keats, is it not, who says, "There lives not the man who may not be cut up, alive lashed to pieces, on his weakest side." We have each a "weak side," although I'll allow we are all sweeter-tempered and better-mannered than poor Kate.'

'I should hope so, indeed,' cried Bella, scornfully; 'and pardon me if I inquire where your weakest side is?'

'I don't know,' said Marion, doubtfully; 'but I'll ask mother.'

Marion's words had given an unexpected turn to the conversation; and the girls, who were her ardent admirers, separated, each with a secret misgiving as to what 'mother' would say in her own individual case.

Marion Upton was a singularly sweet and high-minded girl, a church member too, in 'good and regular standing.' She had made some progress in the spiritual life; and calm and even-poised by nature, her girl friends were wont to consider her almost faultless. It takes a wise mother to detect the weak spot in a child's armor.

'Mother,' said Marion that evening, 'which is my weakest side, or, as the bible puts it, what is the sin which doth so easily beset me?'

Mrs. Upton looked into her daughter's honest, inquiring eyes, and answered simply in one word, 'Selfishness.'

Marion's face flushed; and with an expression of utter incredulity she exclaimed:

'You can't be serious, mother! Why, that's the one thing that I hate above all others, and I've been told so many times that I was kind and generous that I have really begun to believe it. And Marion laughed in spite of a suspicious tremble in her voice.'

'My dear child,' said the mother, tenderly, 'a person may be kind and generous, and yet be selfish. Does that seem paradoxical?'

'Yes, mother, it does,' said Marion.

'Shall I speak plainly, and prove the truth of my words?' asked Mrs. Upton, gently.

'Do, mother,' Marion replied; 'it's high time I made the acquaintance of my "weakest side."'

'You enjoy doing a kind act,' said Mrs. Upton. 'You respond gladly to a call for help, and give cheerfully a cup of cold water, so long as you can do so without any great physical inconvenience. But, if there was only one cup of cold water, and you were very thirsty, I fear you would drink the water yourself in preference to bestowing it upon any one else.'

'Ah, me, mother,' cried Marion, 'what a poor opinion you have of me! Now bring forward your proofs. What has led you to think so badly of me?'

'I noticed that evening after evening you appropriate the most comfortable chair in the room, as if it were yours by right; that you arrange yourself at the most comfortable possible angle to receive the light, with little thought for the convenience of the other members of our circle. I notice that your own tastes and whims are always gratified, and that you rarely, of your own accord, deny yourself for the sake of ministering to the comfort of another. Straws show which way the wind blows, and straws like these indicate to me the high value which you place upon your own personal comfort.'

'You are right, mother,' said Marion, tearfully. 'It is a good thing for me to see myself as my mother sees me. I never thought of these things before.'

'Many of our faults come from want of thought,' said Mrs. Upton. 'We have all weak points and strong points of character; and I believe that we should study ourselves and bring to bear God's forces and our own forces at the point where we are most defenceless. Thus, we should build ourselves up to the ideals to which we aspire, and having on the whole armor of God, we should be ready to do efficient service.'

'Girls,' said Marion, at the noon recess next day, 'I have been investigating a new

and interesting topic, and have received some valuable information.'

'Don't keep us in suspense. Out with it!' cried Ruth.

'I find that I have a very "weak side."'

'Humph! try a plaster,' retorted Ruth.

'No levity, if you please, Miss Holmes; for I am dead in earnest. I think we are apt to study the faults of others, while we are blind to our own deficiencies. This is my case, and there has been so much gossip of late about one of our number that I feel moved to recommend a study of self as a new class measure.'

'By way of antidote, I suppose,' said Belle.

'Exactly,' said Marion.

Marion possessed the essential qualities of a leader; and her brave, outspoken words had full weight. 'Perhaps we have been a little hard on Kate,' thought the girls; 'perhaps we have each a side as weak as hers, although its weakness may be less apparent to others.' Kate's shortcomings ceased to be the topic of conversation, and the girls began to treat her with a more kindly and forbearing spirit. There was a gradual change in Kate. The girls were surprised to find her a pleasant companion.

'Kate is really coming round,' said Belle one day.

'Was she ever square?' asked Ruth.

'Nonsense,' said Belle. 'You know what I mean.'

'It's all owing to the new class measure,' declared Ruth. 'It has worked inward and outward, and bids fair to subjugate the unruly member.'

'In more senses than one,' said Marion; 'for I think we have been more guarded in the use of our tongues since I suggested the propriety of each one's studying herself. A view of our own faults has made us more patient with Kate, and kindness and forbearance have brought to light some unsuspected virtues in our friend.'

'Moral,' said Ruth, 'instead of holding a council of war and hauling somebody over the coals, meditate upon your own badness, and try "something" with a double dose of sweetness. I suppose Kate thought we were all down upon her, and she would have regarded us as her natural enemies till the day of her death if it hadn't been for you, Marion and your weak side.'—'The Advance.'

Keep a Clean Mouth.

A distinguished author says: 'I resolved, when I was a child, never to use a word which I could not pronounce before my mother.' He kept his resolution, and became a pure-minded, noble, honored gentleman. His rule and example are worthy of imitation.

Boys readily learn a class of low, vulgar words and expressions, which are never heard in respectable circles. Of course, we cannot think of girls as being so much exposed to this peril. We cannot imagine a decent girl using words she would not utter before her father or mother.

Such vulgarity is thought by some boys to be 'smart,' the 'next thing to swearing,' and yet 'not so wicked;' but it is a habit which leads to profanity, and fills the mind with evil thoughts. It vulgarizes and degrades the soul and prepares the way for many of the gross and fearful sins which now corrupt society.

Young readers, keep your mouths free from all impurity, and your 'tongue from evil;' but in order to do this, ask Jesus to cleanse your heart and keep it clean, for 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.'—'The Standard.'