

## TO OUR READERS.

The attention of our readers is requested to the four extra pages of this number. Especially do we bespeak the co-operation of the temperance workers of Canada. The 'Northern Messenger' is we feel eminently fitted for distribution in Bands of Hope, Loyal Temperance Legions or any other society for temperance work among the young. Next month we hope to begin a series of temperance lessons especially prepared for this purpose. Every number of the 'Messenger' contains among its various other contents, much pronounced temperance matter. Said one active W. C. T. U. woman to a friend the other day, 'Among all the papers that come to my desk there is none I so thoroughly enjoy as the 'Messenger'.

All new subscribers sending in their remittances at once get the 'Messenger' free for the rest of the year. A glance at our supplement will show that we are offering this season better inducements to our workers than ever before. We are looking with confidence to the religious and temperance workers of our country to help us to still better results. We want the 'Messenger' in every family.

## HOW DOLLY DRAKE WAS CURED OF DANCING.

(By Annie A. Preston.)

'O Grandma, there is no fun like dancing!' cried Dolly Drake, prouetting around her grandmother's chair. 'I intend to dance until I am as old as you are, gran, and older.'

'You may have rheumatism,' and grandma looked down at the quilted satin slippers resting upon a pillow.

'Oh, dancing will ward off rheumatism and keep me young. I intend to dance at the weddings of my great-grandchildren.'

'You may not live to be blessed with children, even,' said a sweet voice from the arm-chair by the open fire.

'O Aunt Jane, you are always in the doldrums. I intend to live and to dance. Now, really, do you think this is very wicked?' and she spun around and around in a variety of evolutions to the music of her own 'tra-la-la-lá.'

'As gymnastics, with your grandmother and your great-aunt for critics, no. In a public ball-room, with all ages and conditions of men as onlookers, most decidedly yes; from its influence and suggestions not only improper, but positively wicked.'

'Oh, dear!' began the pretty young girl; but her great-aunt interrupted:—

'Does it ever occur to you, dear child, that you have an immortal soul, or that life was given you for a purpose?'

'Oh, yes, I have been telling you I purposed to dance; but, honestly, I would join the church, and the League, and be as helpful and as good as I knew how, if it would not prohibit my dancing. As it would, I must just go on as I am.'

This conversation was repeated by grandmother and Aunt Jane to the minister, and by him to the presiding elder when next they met at conference.

'I have some very hopeful cases, and this young girl ought to come forward with the rest, and would, were she not held by the devil of the dance.'

'Say nothing more to her about it—this is one of the freaks that grow strong by opposition—and caution her family to be very discreet in speaking to her of her folly.'

'What a time I shall have of it with Elder Swan!' said pretty Dolly, over and over. 'He will nag me about dancing, and I shall have to rack my brains for bright answers. Of course I shall horrify him, and if I tell him the truth that I am a believer and that I would go to the altar if I could do so without giving up dancing, I don't know what he would say.'

No one replied to her frivolous talk or remonstrated as she danced about to the sound of her own voice, and she began to wonder whether they found

her irresistible, or whether they had given up all hopes of her being a Christian.

When the elder came, instead of going to the parsonage for entertainment as usual, he came direct to Mr. Drake's.

'Such a privilege to have you here, as I cannot go out,' said grandmama, and she looked at the satin slippers.

'Poor little feet!' said the good man. 'They have been taking steps for the Lord these many years, as you were ministering to the needs of his servants. They must now rest while younger feet take the steps.'

'It is pleasant,' replied grandma, 'to stand aside and to watch the young feet walking in the paths of righteousness.'

'If he and grandma begin preaching and prosing, I know I shall feel just like dancing,' Dolly had said; but now she only thought,—

'How beautiful for an old saint like grandma to look back at long years of kindly deeds; it is like standing on top of Mount Hope at sunset and watching the shadows stretch away across the green, velvety meadows to the shining thread of the river.'

They all went to the church for the evening service, grandma insisting upon being left alone. 'I shall be happier so,' she said, 'for I shall be with you in spirit as I pray.'

The elder walked over to the church with Dolly, talking brightly and entertainingly of the joy of finding the Saviour in youth and taking up the work He left for His followers; but he did not say a word to her personally, and she found no opportunity to bring in the pert speeches she had been studying up; so just as they were going up the church steps, she gasped:—

'Perhaps I ought to tell you that I should like to be good, but everyone thinks dancing such a dreadful thing, and I do so love to dance.'

She attempted to speak with her usual glibness, but failed, and her companion said:—

'I have no right to decide whether you shall dance or not. Such matters are entirely between yourself and God. If you feel yourself to be a sinner, and that it is through Christ that you are saved, come to the altar. Do not allow any earthly consideration to keep you from the altar.'

Dolly went forward, and as she knelt the Holy Spirit so filled her heart that her only desire was to thoroughly consecrate herself to the Lord and His work.

When the elder came a year later, he said to grandma:—

'How about Dolly's dancing?'

'Oh,' replied the beautiful old saint, 'it seems as if all our prayers for the dear child have been answered. She has been so filled with the spirit of loving service, and her feet have been so busy doing errands for the Lord, that she has never spoken of dancing since. All her levity seemed to slip off her; never once has she prouetted about my chair even.'

'The way to overcome is through the power of the Spirit,' said Aunt Jane.

This is a true sketch, told me by a member of the church in New York State, where the incident occurred.—'Zion's Herald.'

## HOW THEY USED TO FIX ME OFF FOR SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

(By Bishop John C. Keener.)

Seventy years ago I attended the first Sabbath-school that was started in Baltimore. The school and I were about the same age—that is, five years old. It was held at the Lancastrian school-house, at the head of Calvert street. My father was superintendent. This school took in at nine o'clock and held till church time; then in the afternoon took in at two and held till five. The boys were taught reading, writing and the Bible. I first learned to write there. The school was addressed a good deal by visitors, and spent no little time in singing and prayer. The principal end in view was to teach the Bible, and to get as much Scripture as possible committed to memory. The boy who recited the largest number of verses received the best premium.

I was at that time a little boy with very poor memory. It took a full week for me to get ten verses. My father

had no higher ambition than to see me full of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; but though the oldest boy, and the hope of the family, I made painful progress in this direction. By the time that the ten verses were securely lodged in me, the whole family knew them, for all had sympathized and taken some part in instilling them into me. We got through about Saturday. I received no premium during the years that I was at this school, excepting a Bible with a red Morocco cover. I suppose that it was for some kind of merit. So much for the inner man.

The main preparation was a Saturday night's wash. It was a matter of conscience with my mother. Whatever dirt had escaped her notice during the week, now came to light. Castile soap and a wash-cloth literally scorched my entire surface, and seemed to be looking for something under the skin. (I will here mention gratefully that the water was warm.) My hair was the color of a carrot, my eyes blue, my skin white, and my face freckled; but as I scarcely ever looked in a glass, that was of small moment.

My coat was a roundabout, with a small, canary-colored, stiff waistcoat, sewed to the jacket, for it was only a 'make-out' waistcoat with only pocket welts. I was thought to be too young for a real waistcoat; besides, my mother had adopted a theory that pockets were demoralizing to boys. So I had none. These clothes were put on the chair by my bed, and kept expressly for Sunday wear. As I remember, there was no effort to entertain small or large boys at Sabbath-school. Everything went on from square methods. We sang old hymns and old tunes, such as grown-up people used. Sabbath-school libraries came long after.

We all went to church, Indian file, and sat with our teachers in the gallery during service. We heard good preaching. A boy swinging his feet, and hearing at intervals, and looking at everything but the preacher, was blessed under such a Gospel as rang up to heaven from that altar, and from those men of God who ministered in old Light street. The Sabbath-school would have been a poor affair, apart from its herding and holding the children at church. True enough it was a long Sunday—five hours of teaching and two of preaching—but all survived it. Children were supposed to be capable of all that you could get into them in the way of religious instruction, and of defending themselves against any excess by thinking of something else. At any rate, an enormous quantity of Scripture was lodged in them, and they were enriched for life by its precious store of divine truth. Some boys committed a hundred verses, and recited them each week at the Sabbath-school. We have not got beyond this result with all the improved methods of the present day. I know that, in my own fragmentary way, the verses then learned are the best known of all my Scripture knowledge, and are valued beyond price. A necklace of pearls, or a casket of diamonds, would have been a poor substitute for them if presented to me for attendance at that early hour of my young life, and would have been spent long since; but 'Wisdom is above riches,' as I now value it, and it still abides.

Another common sense result of those old-fashioned, dingy surroundings was that a great many boys were truly converted. The mourners' bench was in the school, and on certain afternoons children were invited to come up. They were soon taught that religion was no child's play, no holiday affair, but a matter of life and death, and that the sooner a boy sought Christ and pardon for sin, the sooner Christ would be found of him, and he be removed from the fear of death. Children, then as now, were susceptible to divine truth, not any more so, but they had opportunity. Teachers were not slow to set before them the claims of the Son of God for their hearts and their lives.

I was not converted at a Sabbath-school, but at a meeting at Wesley Chapel; that largely was the result of previous Sabbath-school services, for I was a teacher long before I professed religion.

At that day this Wesley Chapel school raised five hundred dollars missionary money of itself, so that, in the great

matter of advancing the cause of Christ in the world, it was by no means antiquated. The church had in Sabbath-school numbers made rapid strides since those early times of which I first spoke, and it is still pressing on. The glory of methods must not hide from us the greater glory of results. How many children are brought to Christ? how many are confirmed in the love of the Saviour? how many are growing up in the service of the Master, who find joy enough and delight enough in him who is the chiefest among ten thousand, who was begotten as the dew from the womb of the morning, in the beauty of holiness?—'Sunday-school Magazine.'

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