

people seem to me not to have energy enough to be thoroughly interested in anything. I must try to wake her up.' It occurred to Lee that, to lend Lucy some books, with a few tactful hints regarding their reading, might be a step in the right direction. 'And after a little,' she thought, growing fascinated in her plans for her neighbor's development, 'I'll try to interest her in doing something for other people.' With her head filled with these kindly projects, and with several books under her arm, Lee ran across the street to her neighbor's one afternoon, on a purely missionary errand.

Lucy herself opened the door, and she blushed with pleasure at the sight of her visitor. But, as Lee stepped into the little hall, the customary embarrassment showed itself in the other girl's manner. 'I'm sorry, Miss Fergusson,' she said, hesitatingly, 'but I must ask you to come out to the kitchen.'

'Why, of course. Don't let me interrupt your work a bit,' answered Lee, with ready sweetness. But as she followed into the small, exquisitely neat room a surprise awaited her, for a three-year-old boy was sprawling upon the spotless floor, and a toothless baby, strapped into a high chair, dropped his rattle out of reach, and then shrieked for its instant return.

'Please sit down, Miss Fergusson,' said Lucy. 'Excuse me if I finish wiping these dishes. The children have kept me so busy that I haven't quite got through my work.'

'I didn't know you had little folks here,' returned Lee.

'O, they don't belong to us,' Lucy explained, looking amused. 'They're Mrs. Stein's children. You must know about her.'

'Why, yes, she does our washing usually. But she's sick now, isn't she?' Lee spoke almost timidly.

Lucy nodded. 'She's been at the hospital for the last fortnight. It was such a pitiful case. She knew she was likely to die if the operation wasn't performed right away, and yet she didn't know what to do about leaving her children. So I begged mother to let me take care of them. Mother was almost afraid at first. But we've got along nicely so far,' concluded Lucy, stooping to kiss the baby's soft cheek.

'And you've taken care of these two children, besides doing the house work!' Lee exclaimed.

'Why, they've been real company for me,' said Lucy, simply. 'Of course I've had to stay at home pretty close. I don't know as you've noticed that I've missed the meetings.'

Lee answered that she had, and Lucy looked grateful.

'That was the hardest to give up,' she said, 'but it won't be for three or four weeks longer. And I study over the topic and have a little prayer meeting by myself.'

When Lee submitted the books she had brought to Lucy's inspection her manner lacked its usual confidence. But Lucy examined the volumes eagerly. 'I've read these two,' she explained, 'but I've just longed to get hold of this other. You see, I read to mother after she gets home and we've had supper. But she's so tired that usually she goes to sleep before very long and then I have time for my study.'

'Study! Do you study as well as everything else?' Lee stared at this 'half alive' girl who was supposedly too stolid to be thoroughly interested in anything.

Lucy explained, 'You see I've always had an ambition to be a teacher. I don't know as I'll ever really succeed, though I do believe I'm gaining a little. The truth is, I'm

very slow at learning; I like to think,' said Lucy, dropping her voice, 'that being stupid is one of my crosses, and I can please Jesus by bearing it patiently.'

The afternoon was well advanced when Lee rose to leave. 'I'm going to slip out of the back door,' she said, with her hand on the knob. 'That will seem friendly, won't it, and I want to be friends with you.' She leaned forward impulsively and kissed Lucy. 'You've helped me very much, dear,' she said, and then ran away that the other girl might not see how near she was to crying.

Lucy went back to her work in a whirl of happiness. She had hardly heard Lee's last words, and, if she had noted them, she was too modest to accept them at their full value. But her beautiful neighbor had kissed her, and had asked for her friendship, and Lucy's cup of bliss was overflowing.

And so the two girls helped each other. And the best of it all was that neither realized what she had given, but only the blessing she had received.—'American Messenger.'

Dr. Hunt's Opinion.

(By Hilda Richmond.)

'What a pleasant office,' said Miss Hunt as she paused on the threshold and surveyed the light, airy rooms in which her favorite nephew had established himself.

'How do you do, Aunt Grace?' and a tall manly youth bent to kiss her. 'Take the easy chair and rest, for I see you did not ride down. These are pleasant rooms and I am sure they will suit me.'

'I saw you at church yesterday, but you left before I had a chance to speak to you.'

'Yes, several people asked me to join Bible classes and societies belonging to the church, so I just slipped out and went home.'

'How did you like the sermon?'

'Fairly well,' answered Dr. Hunt, carelessly. 'The music was fine. The soprano has a beautiful voice and I enjoyed her singing more than the sermon.'

'I suppose you will place your letter in the church now that you are at home to stay,' said Miss Hunt.

'To tell the truth, aunty, I have the same letter that I had when I went to college. I never joined any church in the city, for I don't like their methods. They care for no one but themselves, and it is getting to be that churches are more exclusive than the so-called "best society." What the world needs is less theory and fine preaching and more practical Christianity.'

'Of course churches are not perfect,' said Miss Hunt, who seldom argued with any one, 'but I am afraid that criticism will never make them more practical.'

'They spend their time in socials and entertainments for the benefit of the heathen when a little timely help would keep many people from being heathen,' went on the young man. 'Now, take that young lady who sang so divinely yesterday. She would not lift her white hand to assist some poor wretch unless it was by a fair or other questionable device and yet she stood there looking as the angels must look and sang about "Working for the Master."'

Just then the door bell rang and Miss Hunt arose, saying, 'I am going to provide your first patient. My washerwoman sent me word that I could not have my clothes till Thursday because one of the children is sick and I would like to have you call this afternoon and as often as is necessary, for Mrs. Burns has been very un-

fortunate. I will pay the bill, and if the child needs anything let me know. They live at 214 Miller Alley.'

'If there were more Christians like you, aunty, the world would be reformed in short order,' said Dr. Hunt, opening the door for her to pass out. 'But I am sorry to say there are not enough to go around to all the starving poor.'

He had no trouble in finding Miller Alley, and was soon assuring poor Mrs. Burns that little Johnnie would soon be well again. As he rapidly made the poor child comfortable and gave directions about the medicine, a sweet voice was singing softly in the next room, a little merry song. Every time the voice was silent a chorus of childish voices begged to hear just one more song, and with a little laugh the singer began again.

There was something that sounded familiar to Dr. Hunt as snatches of song floated through the half open door and he determined to see who was in the next room.

'I'll just go out and get some fresh water to bathe Johnnie's face,' he announced, and before Mrs. Burns could go instead he was in the hot little kitchen face to face with the soprano of yesterday. She was rapidly ironing sheets and pillowslips and the smooth pieces on the rack beside her told of several hours' work. A row of clean little ones were perched around her listening to her songs and stories, for Agnes Sloan's tongue and brain were as nimble as her fingers. She looked very different from the white robed singer of the day before, but the most critical observer could find no fault with her, for her neat dark lawn dress was suited to her occupation, and her abundant dark hair was dressed with the same care she would have bestowed on it had she been calling or shopping, only that it was plainly braided and coiled around her shapely head. Doctor Hunt was so much surprised that it was with difficulty he explained his errand.

'I'll get the water for you as soon as I attend to my bread,' said the young lady, lifting some huge brown loaves out of the oven.

The doctor watched her admiringly as she deftly handled the bread and then placed a large crock of beans and pork in the oven to bake.

'You are the first lady I ever saw doing such work in all my life,' he said at last.

'I am afraid you have a very limited acquaintance, then,' said Miss Sloan, lightly dusting her beans with pepper. 'How do you know I am not working for Mrs. Burns?'

'I saw you in church yesterday and heard you sing; besides, any one would know at a glance that you did not work for a living.'

'There are plenty of girls who earn their own living and yet are cultivated and refined,' said Agnes, warmly.

'Be it far from me to dispute your word,' said Dr. Hunt, taking the shining tin pan she had filled with cool water, 'but I know very few young ladies who would work in this hot kitchen all the afternoon.'

Miss Sloan was giving all her attention to the youngest Burns who was trying to swallow a glass marble, and paid no heed to his remarks.

'I am so glad Johnnie is asleep,' said Mrs. Burns, as the tired child, soothed by the cool water, closed his eyes in refreshing sleep. 'I want to go and finish the ironing myself for Miss Agnes will be smothered out there. She comes down every day and helps me since Johnnie has been sick. Some people think rich folks have no sympathy for the poor, but they are mistaken.'