

THE STORY OF ONESIMA.

IN the office of the Home Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church in New York hangs a pretty picture of a little girl.

A lady artist, travelling in New Mexico, wished to sketch some little Spanish face, but ignorant mothers, bound by that old Egyptian superstition, the fear of the evil eye, could not be persuaded to loan a child for a subject, lest disease or death should result from the ordeal.

Going into the Santa Fe Presbyterian Mission School, she chose for her subject Onesima, and happily caught the best expression of the bright little face which is now a prized trophy at the missionary headquarters.

The history of Onesima has been given as follows in the *Home Mission Monthly*:

"A missionary and his wife who were stationed in Southern Colorado had been visiting different points of interest in their own conveyance, the missionary choosing thus to spend his vacation.

"About the middle of the afternoon he reached a little hut on the plains.

"Here lived a degraded Mexican woman, of whom they had heard, and in whose eldest daughter they had already become interested, having put her under Christian influences, after gaining the mother's consent to her leaving home.

"Their purpose this afternoon was to rescue, if possible, the younger daughter, a little girl of ten.

"The mother finally gave her consent they should take the child to the mission school in Santa Fe; but the girl had but one dress, a thin cotton gown, and the mother had just washed it. It was getting late in the afternoon, there was no place to stop for the night; the missionary and his wife were obliged to go on, and so the half dried garment was put on the child.

"The wife of the missionary wrapped her in shawls, and she arrived at the mission without harm. She soon developed into a bright, earnest, sweet little girl.

"With her sister she went home to spend her vacation, and, finding the house filled with abandoned people, who were drinking and gambling, the two girls refused to stay with such companions, and taking their brother, went into the corn-field, making a little tent out of sheets and shawls, preferring to stay there.

"The mother (for she still had some remnants of a mother's love) was touched by this, and said if her house was not a fit place for her children to stay in she must make it so. She told the disreputable people, whom she had gathered about her, to leave.

"Having thus cleared her home, she went

out to the field and called in her children.

"At once they set about cleaning the house, making the poor little hut more comfortable. With the mother's consent, word was sent to the native evangelist that they would like him to hold religious services there. The next Sunday he came, and a little Sunday-school was held during the vacation."

How many little black-eyed maidens like Onesima are waiting for the hand of help, that they too may be lifted out of the mire, and then lead their wretched mothers also to a better life?

Shall they wait in vain?

KILLING TIME.

SPARE a copper, sir; I'm starving," said a poor, half clad man to a gentleman who was hastening homeward through the streets in the great city one bitter cold night—"Spare a copper, sir, and God will bless you."

Struck with the poor fellow's manner and appearance, the gentleman replied:—

"You look as if you had seen better days. If you tell me candidly what has been your greatest failing through life, I'll give you enough money to pay for your lodging."

"I'm afraid I could hardly do that," the beggar answered with a mournful smile.

"Try, man, try," added the gentleman. "Here's a shilling to sharpen your memory; only be sure to speak the truth."

The man pressed the coin tightly in his hand, and thinking for nearly a minute, said:

"To be honest with you, then, I believe my greatest fault has been in learning to 'kill time.' When I was a youngster, I had kind, loving parents, who let me do pretty much as I liked; so I became idle and careless, and never once thought of the change that was in store for me. In the hope that I should one day make my mark in the world, I was sent to college; but there I wasted my time in idle dreaming and expensive amusements. If I had been a poor boy, with necessity staring me in the face, I think I should have done better. But somehow I fell into the notion that life was only to be one continued round of pleasure. I gradually became fond of wine and company. In a few years my parents both died; and you can guess the rest. I soon wasted what little they left me; and now it is too late to combat my old habits. Yes, sir, idleness ruined me."

"I believe the story," replied the gentleman; "and when I get home I will tell it to my own boys as a warning. I am sorry for you; indeed I am. But it is never too late to reform. Come to my office to-morrow, and let me inspire you with new courage."—*Ed.*