

Beardsley gave an embarrassed laugh. All the faces expressed surprise.

'But we are not members of the church,' said Mame, 'at least I am not,' with a glance at Will. 'It is not our place to pay the salary.'

'Why aren't we members?' asked John, from the depths of the easy-chair where he had settled himself after exploding his bomb. 'We are all members of the Christian Endeavor Society, and most of us profess to be Christians.'

'Who wants to join a church that is run like this one?' said Harry, with some heat. 'Mr. Reed asked me once to join, and I told him when he got a few of his members to do their duty I'd think about it.'

'What did he say to that?' asked Dick.

'Never said a word. He left me, and has not mentioned the subject since.'

'That is the way I have felt about it, though I never said so,' said Kittie, who had been studying her rings diligently for a few minutes. 'But it does not seem quite as good a reason to put into words as I thought it would.'

'That's just it; we all stand on the outside and kick instead of getting on the inside and doing what we can to help.' John's force exceeded his elegance somewhat, but then he was in earnest.

'I am a member of the church,' said Nora Gardiner, slowly, and with rising color. 'But I never thought of its being my duty to give for that. Papa gives me what spending money I have, and of course he always gives to all church work. I thought that answered.'

'It looks to me very much as if we had been calling other people hogs when we belong to the tribe ourselves,' Dick said, with a comical grimace.

'I tell you what I propose to do,' said John, emphatically, bringing his hand down with some force upon the arm of the chair. Usually, when John Dixon spoke, the young people smiled in anticipation of something amusing. Now his usual exaggerated pompousness was lost in a simple, direct earnestness, which made his words more impressive to his companions. 'Next Sunday is communion. I propose to unite with the church if they will have me, and then when I am a full-fledged member I'll see what can be done to set a few of these wrongs right.'

'I shall be glad to go with you,' his sister said from the opposite side of the room.

'I ought to, too, and I will,' Kittie Falconer added.

One after another expressed a like determination, with a sober earnestness never before seen at a Ten meeting.

'I move we prove our piety by passing a subscription paper here and now,' the treasurer suggested, with a laugh. 'That seems to be usually the supreme test. Where is there paper, Nora?'

The paper was produced, and in a few minutes, with considerable light-hearted banter and more of heart-searching and self-sacrifice than usually accompanies the passing of a subscription paper, fifty dollars were pledged and a part of it paid to the treasurer.

'Now, we surely can raise between fifty and a hundred more by entertainments this winter,' Mame said, enthusiastically. 'It is worth twenty-five dollars any day to hear Nora warble and Kit play. As for me—well, I think it must be worth at least ten dollars to hear me keep still.'

'It would be, if you ever did that thing.'

Mame replied to this brotherly candor with the silence it deserved.

Wednesday evening was preparatory service. Rumors of the number of applicants for admission, and a whisper of something else unusual—no one seemed to know just what it was—to be announced, brought a large proportion of the members to the midweek meeting. Mr. Reed's face was radiant. It was a joy indeed to receive into the church these young people for whom he had been working. And it added to his thankfulness to know that it had been a voluntary seeking for admission, rather than a reluctant yielding to his representation of their duty.

The names were presented, the candidates examined and voted in, some other business was brought up and settled.

'Is there any further business to be considered?' asked Mr. Reed. 'If not'—

Mr. Gardiner rose. He had enjoyed a full report of the last meeting of The Ten. 'I understand,' he said, 'that there is a considerable arrearage in the matter of our pastor's salary. I should like to hear from the treasurer a plain statement of this matter.'

Mr. Reed looked surprised, then a little embarrassed. 'With your permission I will ask Mr. Gardiner to take the chair.'

Mr. Gardiner complied, and the pastor left the church, preferring to be absent when that matter was discussed.

Then for the third time Will gave his report. Thirty-four dollars paid, with a balance due the first of the month of two hundred and twenty-eight dollars and fifty cents. Fifty dollars had been pledged toward this amount, and part of it had been paid into the treasury. It would all be paid before Sunday.

'May I ask from whom this fifty comes?' asked a trustee. He had cause for surprise, for that amount ordinarily meant ten dollars' worth of hustling on his part. 'From The Ten,' answered the treasurer, briefly. They all knew The Ten.

'I am instructed to say further for The Ten'—John Dixon rose for his first speech in church meeting, and his speech was a model one—that the church may depend upon us for one hundred dollars more towards the salary this year, to be paid in twenty dollar instalments the first of each month.'

You might have heard a pin drop. This was a surprise even to the chairman. The silence was intense for a moment, and then the prayer meeting room became a very noisy place indeed. The applause seemed to start from Deacon Lamson's corner, but as such a demonstration is hardly decorous in church it probably originated with someone else. Anyway, the clapping of hands and the nods and smiles of congratulation and felicitation did not cease until the chairman rose to speak. He said a few words of thanks to the young people, commended their association of business principles with religion, then called for further remarks on the subject of the pastor's salary.

Dear, old, white-haired Deacon More stood up. His hands and voice usually trembled with weakness; now they shook with emotion.

'Our children put us to shame,' he said. 'God knows we needed the lesson. We have kept the Lord's money for our own use; we have been dishonest in the sight

of God and men. We do not deserve this blessing. I am ashamed. But let us learn the lesson God intends to teach us. Let us redeem ourselves. Let us welcome an opportunity to give for the Lord's work. I am ready.'

He soon had the opportunity he coveted, for it was decided to pass a subscription paper then and there, and pledge for immediate payment, enough, if possible, to meet the back salary. The work was soon done. Nearly two hundred dollars were promised before Sunday, and someone volunteered to see the absent members. A committee was named to raise the salary for the remaining five months of the year, and they adjourned, having held the most satisfactory business meeting the church had known for years.

One and another of the members called upon or hailed Mr. Reed on the street during the next three days, with regrets and apologies for their past neglect of business. He heard a partial account of what occurred after he left Wednesday night, so he was not surprised when Will asked him to call at the store Saturday afternoon to take charge of a little money that had been paid in. But he was surprised when his account was squared to the first of the week, with the promise of prompt payment the first of every month in the future.

Strange to say, his first thought was not of the badly worn sole that he might now replace with new shoes, nor of the coal that he needed, nor yet of his board bill. It was of Nora that he thought all the way back to the empty parsonage and up to his study. He tipped back in his chair, locked his hands behind his head, gazed out of the window, and still thought of Nora. Then he left the study and made a tour through the parsonage, examining the state of the walls and ceilings, and estimating the size of rooms; and still his thoughts were of Nora.

Sunday was a day of joy to church and pastor. They said he preached as he had never preached before. Mr. Reed walked home with Nora that night. He did not return to the parsonage until he had an amicable interview with Mr. Gardiner, and had spent an unconscionable time in saying good-night to Nora.

WHAT A MINISTER SAID.

A Christian Minister, at Winnipeg, Man., who has cause to know Vitae-Ore from what it has accomplished in his family, a few Sundays ago made use of the following expression:

'Brethren, this Christian Religion is a great deal like this Vitae-Ore we are hearing so much about in this city and seeing so frequently spoken of in the Public Press. It steals on you like this medicine, is sapped into your veins until it becomes a part of your being, always doing good; its influence grows and grows upon you, and you feel so good about it that you want to tell another, so he may enjoy its benefits and get to know it as you know it.'

Readers of this paper who have used Vitae-Ore know this to be true. The proprietors of this remarkable remedy desire every reader of this paper who needs such a medicine to test it at the company's risk, so that each reader may know and feel 'its influence' as spoken of in the pulpit. They do not ask for cash, but desire each person to use the Ore for thirty days' time before paying one cent, and none need pay unless positively benefited. The offer, headed 'PERSONAL TO SUBSCRIBERS,' which appears in this issue, is certainly an original one, and can be read and accepted with profit by every ailing person. The company is reliable and will do as they agree.