

religious purposes. What I want to impress upon you now is that when you set apart any portion of your substance to Him, you shall henceforth consider it holy to the Lord, and that you shall see to it that you give it, really, truly, wholly, and directly, simply because it is supremely blessed to give to Him who has done so much for you. Never descend to that secular level, that you must be hired or coaxed by some attractive reward to contribute toward any object for which Christ first gave His precious blood."—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

Lucy, the Farmer's Wife.

By Charity Snow.

One morning last fall I ran into my nearest neighbor's on an errand. They were people almost in middle life, though they had not yet been wed a year.

Lucy had been my close friend for years, and as I knew her to have a very happy disposition and good health, and as Mark was "well-to-do," I looked for a very happy life for them. Judge of my surprise to find the dishes cooling in the kitchen sink, and Lucy leaning over the footboard of her bed with her face buried in her calico apron. She started up hurriedly, and dropping her apron disclosed very red eyes and cheeks and a more disturbed manner than I had ever seen before. My first impulse was to apologize and run home, but on second thought I decided to treat the matter jocosely, so said:

"Own up, now, Lucy, like a good girl. You and Mark have had your first quarrel?"

She smiled faintly, but said with some dignity, "Mark and I shall never quarrel. Because," she added more quietly, "it takes two to do that, and I shall never make the second."

"Then it must be you wanted seventy-five cents to buy a new calico wrapper, and Mark couldn't afford it, hence these tears."

She gave a little laugh at this, saying, "I've wrappers enough now to last me a reasonable lifetime, so you'll have to guess again. But come out and sit down while I finish my dishes, and I'll tell you 'certain true, black and blue,' as the children say. You know," she went on talking very fast as she wielded the dish cloth and the wiper, "that we, as well as everybody, have a great yield of apples this year, and Mark was saying this morning that as the best were only twenty-five cents a bushel, and many were not salable at all, we must dry a lot this fall. I stood aghast at the thought of spending my beautiful fall days quartering and stringing apples."

"Mark," said I, "father always says when apples are very cheap it is more profitable to give them to the hogs and cows than for mother and me to spend our time and strength over them, except what we want for our own use." I stopped short, for I saw Mark wasn't pleased that I should place him in unfavorable contrast with father.

"It would be a sheer waste to give them to the cattle when we could sell them dried for five cents a pound," he hastened to say. "Save when you're young to spend when you're old, Lucy."

"Mark," said I, under my breath, "what if we shouldn't live to be old? What if we should get worked out and fall by the way?"

"He looked at me a minute a little sharp and said, 'Lucy, are you sick or hystericky? Because I have always been particularly thankful that I had a well wife.'"

"Neither, Mark," I said, "but I am tired. You know that though I was brought up on a large farm like this, yet mother was well, and we always had help, so though I worked hard, I kept in good health, because I didn't overdo. But here it is different. All the men to cook and wash for, a large dairy to look after, and the care of your mother, who can help herself but little since she broke her hip, besides the spinning, knitting and sewing, and everything else that makes up the work on a large farm, and only these two hands to do it all."

"Well now, if you're only tired, get a girl for a day or two, and rest. I guess I can afford it rather than have my wife get sick. And Lucy," looking back as he was going out of the door, "you needn't hurry about the apples. There isn't more than thirty or forty bushels I calculated to have worked up that way, and we've got all fall before us. You and I can pare and cut evenings, and you can hang 'em up day times. I shouldn't think of asking the hired men,—they need their rest."

"I couldn't tell him that I had plans of repairing and beautifying our house a little, and had been hurrying with other work ever since we were married to get to it this fall. You know Mark lived without a wife so long, and his mother is an old lady and could only do what was absolutely needful, that the rooms look really shabby, so much so that it seems as though I could hardly be happy in them all next winter," she added a little more tenderly, "not even with Mark. But now that must all be given up, for I don't get my day's work done, ordinarily, till two or three o'clock, and

I must spend all the rest of the day and evening on apples."

She stopped long enough to catch her breath, then went on, and I didn't interrupt her, for I knew it would do her good to relieve her mind. She appeared not in the least aware of telling tales of her husband, or I should not have listened, but we were so intimate, it seemed more like talking to herself.

"The fact is, Charity, Mark, with his vitality and all the help he needs on the farm, can hardly realize the tax it is upon me to be confined so steadily to hard work. I have always thought I was well, but I can't answer for the result if I have to work on the 'clean jump' in all future time as I have since I came here. I know I took the place and took my husband 'for better or worse,' and I mean, God helping me, to be a good wife, but I cannot just see my way through," and her eyes had a far-away, troubled look, as she pressed her hand to her side, and leaned wearily against the pump.

"Lucy," said I, after pondering a little, "why don't you say just these things frankly to Mark, and tell him you must have help in your work as he does in his?"

"I suppose I am weak and unduly sensitive, but Mark appears to place so much confidence in my ability and seems so utterly oblivious to the idea that I can need help more than 'a day or two,' that I hate to disappoint him. He has waited so long, poor fellow, his wife ought now to be all he has pictured her. I fancy if we had come together earlier in life, it would have been different, we should have sort of grown up together, so to speak, and assimilated in our purposes and tastes, while now we have each positive habits and ideas which one must of necessity yield sometimes to the other. Another thing, don't you see the difference between hiring help in doors and out? I have studied that all out. It reads thus: If a man employs workmen on his farm, it enables him to enlarge his operations, sufficiently to pay his help, and gain something more or less besides; while the money paid to a hired girl is entire loss, since only the housework is done, and if the wife can compass that year after year, so much is gained," with a touch of bitterness unusual in my Lucy. "But there, it's all right, I suppose."

"Indeed it isn't," I broke forth, "it's all wrong! Why, Lucy, you are not alone. There are hundreds and thousands of women in the same place and worse off than you are, with no end of cares and hard work, who drag on from year to year with poor health and poorer spirits, till they go down to their graves, victims of overwork, while their husbands talk about the 'dealings of Providence.' If I only had the strength, I have authority enough to make the ears of the world to tingle. I would cry, 'O husbands! fathers! men! is there no remedy for this? Must this wholesale slaughter of our sex go on, and is there no hope or rest but under the sod?' But Lucy," said I, seeing her grow pale, "I fear I am making a bad matter worse by this talk. You must either confide this matter to Mark, for redress or you must bear it with what hope or courage you may."

Well, all this happened months ago, and if you expect a tragic ending of my story I shall have to disappoint you, for the end is not yet. I didn't see Lucy riding or walking much, or sitting by her pleasant south window to sew, or making little fancy articles to adorn her rooms; but I did see many strings of drying apples. Every available place for drying, in and on the house and about the buildings was in use. Lucy would run in occasionally in her morning dress with a pan of apples which she would cut and core with feverish haste and then hurry away. In the midst of it all I went away for a while, and getting home a few days ago, I went over to Mark's last evening.

Mark sat in his easy chair, by the best chance to the one lamp, reading his weekly paper to himself, the most perfect picture of hearty enjoyment one could wish to see. Lucy, with her first pair of spectacles on, was at work on a difficult piece of dark sewing.

"Taking it easy, Mark," I said.

"Yes," he answered briskly. "Take your comfort long winter evenings, I say. Never had a better year for farming than last. Got a nice little sum of money in the bank. Everything is snug and tight, and so am I," helping himself to a fine Baldwin from the fruit basket. "I wish," looking a little regretfully at his wife as she bent silently over her work, "that Lute was more of my mind, but she will strain her eyes every evening sewing. Have an apple, Lute?"

"I am sick of apples, and, Mark, this sewing ought to have been done last fall." (I knew the wherefore of both assertions.)

"Lucy, I asked, as she followed me through the kitchen when I came away, "how did you come out on the dried apples?"

She smiled on me in a sober way, and replied with no animation, "nicely, I guess. We dried all ours, and then as I was 'so smart,' Mark said, he took ten bushels to dry at the halves, but it was a damp time, and all but three strings of our

half rotted. Mark says if they sell well, I shall have a dollar or two, I worked so hard. Shan't I be rich?" with a pitiful little giggle. "Perhaps I can have the rooms painted and papered then, buy a new chamber set, or hire a girl 'a day or two.' But, Charity, I have learned a few things. My calico wrappers are fast wearing out, and I have given up any little secret hopes I used to have of being petted a bit, and taken care of when I should be married, and I have learned that the lion's share of yielding must fall to me, and now," with a faint attempt at pleasantry, "I am waiting to learn the price of dried apples! Good night, dear," and she turned from me with no shadow of a smile on her face, and went back to Mark.

And, now, husbands, I came right home and wrote this out for you, and the Lord help you to make good use of it.

"But," say you, "we don't see as your story amounts to much. Lucy didn't die, nor even get sick, only kind of low-spirited, and now they have got all those dried apples to sell!"

That's just the trouble. You don't see. Neither does Mark. But this is only the beginning of the end. How many sad endings have we seen brought about by such beginnings. A little more of this, a little more of that, laid on the tired shoulders of the mother, wife, or daughter, till she sinks beneath the load; courage gone, hope gone, health gone, sometimes all love gone, and finally life gone.

Start right, young men; and turn over a new leaf, older men.—*Household.*

I WISH HE HAD LIVED.

The other day when a burly big driver of a cart backed his vehicle up to the alley gate of an old house in Detroit to dump out half a ton of coal, some children came out of the side door, and the driver beckoned them near and said:

"Last time I was here one of the wheels crushed a bit of a dog belonging to one of you. I heard agree crying out, but I can't be stopping to look out for dogs on the street."

The children made no reply, but as they watched him unload the cart they wondered if he had little children of his own, and if he ever spoke kindly to them. He may have felt the burden of their thoughts, for suddenly he looked up and said:

"Well, I own I'm a bit sorry, and being as I knew as I was coming up, I brought along an orange to give to the child who owned the dog. Which of you is it?"

"The dog belonged to little lame Billy in that house there," answered a girl. "It was all the dog he ever had, and when you killed it he cried himself almost to death. He didn't never have any plaything but that little dog."

"And will you take him this orange?"

"I can't sir, 'cos he's dead, and they're coming to take him to the graveyard pretty soon."

The driver looked up and down, seemed to ponder the matter, and then he crossed to the other house. The little coffin and its burden was in the front room, and two or three old women were wiping away their tears and talking in low tones. The driver put his hand on the closed coffin and said:

"I didn't know it was his dog—I didn't know he was lame and sick. God forgive me if I made sorrow for him!"

The vehicle sent to convey the body to the cemetery drove up at that moment, and the burly big man continued:

"If he was alive I'd buy him anything he could ask. I can do nothing now but carry him softly out."

He gently took up the coffin in his stout arms and carried it out, his eyes moist and his lips quivering, and when he had placed it in the vehicle he looked up at the driver in a beseeching way, and whispered:

"Drive slow; drive slow! He was a poor little lame boy!"

The driver wondered, but he moved away slowly, and the coal cartman stood in the centre of the street, and anxiously watched till he was off the cobblestones. Then as he turned to his own vehicle he said:

"I didn't mean to, but I wish he had lived to forgive me!"—*Detroit Free Press.*

HOW HE KNEW IT.

A Methodist Conference committee once had before them a backwoods preacher who knew little of books or theology, but who had a practical knowledge of Christ's salvation. "Brother," began one of the wise examiners, "will you please name some of the evidences of the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ?" The brother's face wore an expression of puzzled bewilderment, and he was silent. The examiner repeated his question: "What makes you think Christ is divine?" Now there was a response from the whole man. With his eyes full of tears he started to his feet, and stretching out his arms and hands, exclaimed: "How do I know He's divine? Why, bless you, he saved my soul!"—*Zion's Herald.*

THE meanest paymaster in the universe is Satan. He never yet employed a hand that he didn't cheat. Young man, engage your services to a better Master.

THE Scriptures venerated, yet not used, are no longer like the daily shower of manna to supply daily wants, but the pot of manna stored up with reverent care in the ark, as a curiosity.—*Whately.*

Question Corner.—No. 8.

Answers to these questions should be sent in as soon as possible and addressed EDITOR NORTHERN MESSENGER. It is not necessary to write out the question, give merely the number of the question and the answer. In writing letters always give clearly the name of the place where you live and the initials of the province in which it is situated.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

85. What king of Moab fought against two of the grandsons of Omri, king of Israel?
86. How many times is it recorded that God appeared to Solomon?
87. On what occasion did Solomon petition God to be favorable to his people in case they were ever carried captive by their enemy?
88. Which of the tribes quarrelled with Gideon because they were not summoned to join him in fighting against the Midianites?
89. What Jewish king was buried in his own garden?
90. In whose reign and for what reasons was the brazen serpent that Moses made destroyed?
91. Where were the children of Israel encamped when the spies were despatched to spy out the land of Canaan?
92. Who, when being punished by God, was allowed to choose between three punishments?
93. What man was forbidden by the king to leave Jerusalem?
94. What queen sent a message under a false signature?
95. What blind prophet received and recognized a disguised queen?
96. What prophet was sent to the Gentiles?

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

1. "Woe unto thee!" 'twas thus the Saviour spake, And named two cities; we the first one take.
2. Here the disciples Jesus' love rehears'd, Here it was men called them Christian first.
3. A church which had not yet the faith denied, But sheltered those who to serve Satan tried.
4. Tell whilst Apollos was to Corinth brought, In what great city Paul the Apostle taught?
5. To what famed place did Paul a prisoner come, And dwell two years in his own hired house?
6. Here men were pardoned when they turned to God, And this displeased a prophet of the Lord.
7. A place where heathen superstition trod, Where was an altar to the unknown God.
8. His land who could alike in good or ill, In health or sickness, "bless his Maker" still.
9. Four hundred shekels was the price he paid, And in this cave the patriarch's wife was laid.

The city's name in these initials given Was once exalted: as it seemed to heaven; But from its blest estate through sin it fell, And grace despised brought it down to hell.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN NO. 6.

61. See, 2 Chron. xxx. 10.
62. Nahash, 1 Sam. xi. 2.
63. Abiram and Segub, Josh. vi. 26; 1 Kings xvi. 34.
64. Ezra the scribe, Neh. viii. 4.
65. Moses and Caleb, Deut. xxxiv. 7; Josh. xiv. 2.
66. Araunah, 2 Sam. xxiv. 23.
67. Amaziah, 2 Kings xiv. 19.
68. Uzziah, 2 Chron. xxvi. 10.
69. Joash to Elisha, 2 Kings xiii. 14; Elisha to Elijah, 2 Kings ii. 12.
70. Moabites, Isaiah xv. 2.
71. For the free-will offering a blemished animal might be offered, Lev. xxii. 23.
72. Proverbs, xvi. 32.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

To No. 5.—Mamie Manning, 6; Wm. C. Wickham, 8; Howard McLellan, 9a.; Hattie Burnside, 2.