

upon her work.

Miss Craig put on her hat and gathered up her handkerchief and purse.

"May I trouble you to post these, Miss Craig?" said Christy, giving her a handful of letters. "Thank you. Good afternoon."

She laid her letters down on the mantel-piece, while she opened her purse, which was shapely but thin. Out of it she took a dollar bill, leaving some silver, and put it in the money box.

Christy had started up to expostulate. He sat down to recover.

"She was as calm and matter of course about it," he gasped, "as if it were only natural for poor working girls to help evangelize China out of their slim wages!"

During the next two or three days much notice was taken of the missionary box.

The notice was diverse in kind. The curiosity of some was quickly satisfied. Some stared politely. Others openly scoffed. One fashionable club man put in a penny. "To see how it feels," he said.

"The shock can't be very great," observed Christy, "even to so new a subject as yourself."

"But you know," said the club man with grin, "comes on top of finding you running the machine. My nerves are all gone."

A clergyman who coughed gave liberally. "If I could have guessed that he was coming," said Christy with chagrin, "I would have covered the thing up. Some men can no more pass a collection basket than a drunkard can a corner saloon. But they are few."

A hard-headed merchant furtively dropped in a gold piece.

"I got it in change," he apologized, when he met Christy's gaze. "It is well to make some special use of it before I pay it out for a quarter."

A circuit judge lifted the box in his hand and read the verses as Christy had done. When he set it down again he stood before it in silence, while Christy looked up, wondering, and did not disturb him.

At last the judge aroused himself. He made a large donation.

"My daughter was interested in all these things," he said.

Christy remembered then the young girl who had died the year before.

In one way and another Jim Perry's missionary box grew heavy. Then it was full.

Christy took it apart, put the money in a pigeon-hole in his desk, and set it back into place. He did not allow himself to comment.

On the same afternoon Chippy Black, the errand boy, was waiting in the office for a note. Chippy was a new boy; Christy did not feel sure of him. Lifting his head now to give directions, Chippy was caught in the act of "hefting" the missionary box.

"Ah!" said Christy to himself with vexed enlightenment. Hunting office boys was a bore.

"Why this is empty!" said Chippy, facing round on him and holding out the box.

"Did you send it off?"

"No," answered Christy uncertainly. "It was full. I took the money out."

"I see," said Chippy. There was relief in his voice and in the clever dark little face.

He plunged his hand into his jacket and brought out a small newspaper parcel tied with twine.

"I promised Lin to bring it to you," he said. "It would have been too bad if I'd been too late."

"What is it?" asked Christy, receiving

the packet with no show of distrust of its dinginess. And he was fastidious. "Who is Lin?"

"It's money. She's my sister," answered Chippy. "She wants it to go with the rest."

Christy pushed a chair toward him.

"Sit down," he said. "Tell me all about it. Take your time."

Chippy crossed his knickerbockered legs, and by tilting forward a little, managed to keep one toe on the carpet.

"There's two of us boys home," he began. "And there's Lin. My brother Bob and me are like lots of other fellows. But Lin is extry, I'd call her quite extry, myself. She's like—well, she's like Lin. That's all I can say."

"I have seen one or two such persons," said Christy.

"One Sunday night one of those foreign preachers was talking about the heathen."

"If it hadn't been for Lin," said Chippy, "we'd have forgotten all about them inside of a week. But Lin was bound that something had got to be done. 'There's such a many of them, Lin,' says Miss Loretta Pease. (Miss Loretta lives on the next floor to us; she's educated.) 'They're a multi-toode,' she says. 'You can't ever reach 'em.' 'Not all of them at once,' Lin says to her. 'Not just us alone by ourselves. We ain't expected to do only our part.'"

"Miss Lin is sagacious," said Christy.

"It ain't any more than right for us to do our part," she told Miss Loretta. 'And for one I won't back out of it.' Nor you may be sure she didn't. Lin is the sort that wouldn't."

"An uncommonly good sort," said Christy.

"You are like that, too, ain't you?" said Chippy, looking over at him kindly.

"Miss Loretta came round all right after Lin had worked over her awhile. She ain't obstinate. She's genteel. So Lin fixed it up that we was all to chip in together and make up a purse for the heathen. So we did it. And there it is."

He nodded proudly toward the newspaper parcel.

"You must have worked hard," said Christy.

"It's savings mostly. I mean our part of it is, Lin's and my brother's and mine. Lin got off the neighbors, too, you know; it's all there together."

"You saved yours?" questioned Christy.

"Yes sir, Lin is grand on saving. She scatters it. She don't bunch it all on one thing till it 'pears like nothing else but just that was worth eating. First it's sugar, and then it's sausage, and then it's something different again. And sometimes it ain't anything at all. You don't hardly miss it that way."

Chippy slipped still farther forward on his seat and felt for his cap. He glanced at Lin's unfolded note.

Christy got out an envelope and dipped his pen in the ink. Then he let it rest over the edge of the desk, where it dried.

He picked up the roll of money.

"You must have been collecting this for some time."

"All summer," said Chippy. "There's a good deal of it. 'Lin and Miss Loretta had just begun to talk about where they would carry it when you first began to take up money here. I told them about it and I told them that, so long as this was where I worked, I thought you'd ought to get it. So after a bit they decided on that."

Chippy plainly felt that the bestowal of Lin's patronage was no light thing. Christy agreed with him.

"I am very much obliged to you," he said heartily. "This will help me along splendidly. Let's put it in at once."

He pulled at the twine string, which was tied in a very secure knot, and laid open the board.

It was made up of all the original pennies and nickels; there was also one dime among them. The sum total was \$2.11.

Christy handed Chippy a nickel and held one himself. He brought the missionary box.

"Now drop yours in," he directed. "Then I will drop mine. We will take turn about." Chippy was eager. His interest grew with every rattling coin until the last was safely inside. Then he straightened himself with a long breath.

"Lin said she was going to do it, and she's done it," he said.

"And she doesn't know how much she has done," said Christy soberly.

"That's so," answered Chippy, with quick perception. "That's the best of it, I s'pose. The best of everything, Lin says, is what the Lord can make out of it. Anything will go twice as far with Him, she says. You talk a great deal like her."

Christy lifted the box.

"It's about full," he said. "It is just about ready to empty again. But there is a little space yet. We will leave it. I shall be glad to see what gift will be put in on top of this."

The weeks passed. Several times over the missionary box was emptied into the pigeon-hole. On a foggy December afternoon a Mr. Richards was alone with Christy in the office. He had brought the young man a windfall of \$1,000.

"It is by happy strokes like these," said Mr. Richards, "that a man grows rich."

Many such strokes of various kinds had come in the way of Mr. Richards during a long life.

"I have built up my own fortunes," he continued, "from the stub. From what I see of you, Mr. Morton, I predict your success."

He regarded Christy with a glint of favor on his iron-gray face, as he added in climax. "You are very much like I was at your age."

"You are like myself."

Christy was rather silent. When he was left alone he thought of Jim Perry. He often thought of Jim now. His late visitor and his classmate stood up side by side before his mind.

"There is wealth and wealth," he mused. "Mr. Richards has one kind, Jim has another. I am not so awfully pleased," he thought resentfully, "with my likeness to Richards. I don't fancy being a cash-register. All the man's fortunes are in money."

Christy looked down at the cheque in his hands; he looked at Jim's box.

"I said that the real Christmas was forgotten. I said that all the missionary spirit of the present resided in the missionaries and me. I doubt whether Mr. Richards at my age was such a fool. Poor Richards! He is old. I shall have a good part of my life yet, I trust."

He wrote on the back of his cheque and folded it small.

"Richards and Jim and Lin and the others have spoiled my taste a little for happy strokes, however innocently come by. The mission shall enjoy this one."

He pushed the cheque through the slit in the money box, which was getting frayed and worn.

Christy met Mr. Richards on the street soon afterwards.

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