

THE OVERSIGHT.

"Give me, this day, dear Lord, I cried,
"Some blessed station near thy side!"

"Some work in very deed for thee
That I may know thy need of me."

Thus pleading, praying, up and down
I wandered, searching field and town,

Intent on task, the very best
Eluding still my eager quest.

And morn to noonday brightened; night
Drew slowly toward the fading height,

Till I, low kneeling at the throne
With empty hands, made weary moan:

"Thou hast not any room for me:
No work was mine, dear Christ, for thee!"

Then suddenly on my blurring sight
Swept majesty and love and light.

The Master stood before me there
In conscious answer to my prayer!

He touched mine eyes. In shame I blushed,
In shame my weak complaining hushed;

For, lo, all day, the swift hours through,
The work, Christ-given, for me to do

In mine own house had slighted been,
And I, convicted so of sin,

Could only lift my look to his,
The grace of pardon ask for this.

That I had wandered far and wide,
Instead of watching at his side;

That I had yet to learn how sweet
The home tasks at the Master's feet.

MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

BOB'S CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

BY ERNEST GILMORE.

School number 20 had just closed for the day. A group of boys from ten to fifteen years of age were hurrying up Grafton avenue, their books strapped to their backs or tossed about in the book-nets hanging from their arms. They were laughing and talking in noisy glee, for they not only felt the reaction arising from the change to "out-doors," with the fresh air blowing and the green things growing, from the confinement and duties of "in-doors," but had also in anticipation a great delight. A wonderful ball-game was about to take place at Luffington park, and every one of the boys expected to be there.

Suddenly around a corner came an old lady dressed in old-fashioned attire and carrying a heavy satchel and a faded umbrella. Her face wore a distressed look and her eyes were red as if with weeping. She hurried along until she met the group of boys. Then she stopped, and said in a quick, nervous tone,

"Boys, where's my Jamie? I can't find him."

Some of the boys laughed derisively, muttering, "A crazy old creature!" and they passed on.

Others laughed but said nothing. They passed on too.

One of them, taking off his hat and making a ridiculous bow, said, "I haven't the honor of knowing your 'Jamie,' madam," and then he too, with a laugh, passed on.

But one boy lingered, the youngest of the group. He neither laughed at, ignored, nor mocked the troubled old lady. Instead he asked gently,

"Have you lost a little boy, madam?"

"Yes," her voice quivering, "my little Jamie."

"Come on, Bob!" called some of the boys.

But Bob did not respond to the call, being too much taken up with the stranger to even hear the boys. He wished she would hurry and tell him where she had first missed "Jamie," for then perhaps he could get some one to hunt him up, for he did want to be on time at the ball-game. "When did you first miss him?" he asked with the eagerness of haste.

"Eh?" she responded in a dazed way.

"Can you tell me where you lost the baby?" he questioned kindly.

"Whose baby?" looking surprised.

"Jamie."

"Oh!" with a long, quivering breath. "My Jamie; I didn't know he had a baby; I'm so glad. Where is it?"

Bob did not know what to make of the queer old lady. Evidently, if not actually

"crazy," as some of the boys had remarked, she was sadly confused. The boys meanwhile had disappeared in the distance. No hope of being "on time" at the ball-game if he should stay where he was another minute. Something glistening brightly on the lapel of his coat met his eye; it was his gold Christian Endeavor pin.

"I can't leave her," he resolved instantly. "He wouldn't like it," and he gave up all thought of catching up with the boys.

He took the heavy satchel from the tired old arms, and the cumbersome umbrella too.

"Come," said he kindly, "I'll help you look for Jamie. Which way do you think he went?"

She was standing on the corner, so she could see north and south, east and west. She looked around as if endeavoring to collect her thoughts. To the north and south were wholesale business houses—they did not look inviting to the old lady's weary eyes; eastward the street was crowded, but as she glanced westward a faint smile broke over her pale face.

"I think my Jamie went that way," she said eagerly; "we'll find him there I guess, my little lad."

She spoke hopefully now; for she felt already much relieved. The burden had been taken from her tired hands by the "little lad," and he seemed to have taken some of the burden from her soul by his ready sympathy. They walked slowly along the beautiful street, Bob keeping pace with the feeble steps of his companion. Presently they passed some boys of his acquaintance. They looked surprised. One said,

"Halloa, Bob! Got company?"

And the other, before he got beyond hearing, turned around and sang mockingly,

"She's my sweetheart; I'm her beau."

The old lady seemed to be really enjoying herself now. Bob, however, was too bright a fellow to spend his time on a wild-goose chase. The old lady appeared less confused than when he had met her, so he said kindly, "How old is Jamie?"

"I don't remember exactly," she replied slowly, as if thinking, "I ain't seen him in a good while. He's growed up; he's a doctor; he lives here somewhere. What's the name of this pretty street, my little lad?"

"This is Courtney avenue."

"Yes, that's it," eagerly, "Courtney avenue. I remember, that's what Miss Smith told me when I set out to find my Jamie. You see, Jamie don't know I'm coming—it's a surprise—and Miss Smith said, 'Don't you fret, dear; Jamie'll be Jamie as long as the world stands; he'll never change. Even if your own flesh and blood desert you, Jamie won't; that's as true as gospel.' I know that myself, Jamie won't."

Her lips quivered again and her eyes filled with tears.

"Miss Smith said," continued the old lady, "she said, 'Now Miss Wells, be careful of yourself, and—'"

A bright thought flashed through Bob's mind.

"Then your name is Miss Wells?" he questioned.

"Yes; Jamie called me 'Aunt Nancy' always, but most folks except my own said 'Miss Wells.'"

"And is Jamie's name Wells, too?"

"Of course; wasn't his father my brother? And didn't I take Jamie right into my heart and home when he was left a poor little orphan?"

They were just approaching a beautiful Queen Anne cottage. A white dove was cooing on the roof. A rose-bush, which had climbed up to the eaves, was in full bloom. A fountain was throwing up its sprays of refreshing water in the midst of green grass. Flowers of rare beauty were growing in tasteful beds.

"Come in here, please," Bob said to the old lady, leading her to a cosy seat near the fountain, and putting the satchel and umbrella down beside her. "Please wait here just a minute. I have an errand at the house. I will be right back."

He ran quickly around the house to a side door, in front of which a physician's carriage was waiting. His quick ring was answered by the doctor's boy.

"Dr. Wells," he said excitedly, "is he in?"

Dr. Wells answered for himself.

"Robert, my boy," he said somewhat anxiously, for the family were warm friends of his, "no one sick, I hope?"

"No, sir; but I've brought you a visitor, sir; please come and see her."

Meanwhile the old lady, left again to herself, felt lonely and anxious. "It takes a dreadful long time to find my Jamie," she thought sorrowfully, "a dreadful long time." Tears filled her eyes.

"Aunt Nancy, my dear Aunt Nancy!" She looked up through a mist, and beheld a fine-looking gentleman regarding her affectionately. In another moment the poor old soul had found rest in strong, loving arms.

Bob, being released, lost no time in retracing his steps. He was greatly rejoiced to know that the old lady had found her Jamie. But he had not gone far when some one called him sharply. Lo! there was the "doctor's boy," Tim Hunter, a young fellow of sixteen, with the doctor's horse and carriage.

"Dr. Wells said I should ask you if you wouldn't like a ride," the boy said.

"Well, I should say I would," laughed Bob, scrambling into the carriage in great delight; "Dr. Wells is very kind."

"I'm thinking," said the doctor's boy mysteriously, "that he thinks some one else is awful kind. I judged so by what I heard him say. How would you like to ride to Luffington park?"

"Oh! I'd like that above all things!" the boy answered eagerly, his eyes dancing in joyful anticipation. "Perhaps we can get there in time to see a part of the game."

"We can see all of it, Bob; just see this horse go. Git up there, Cassar!"

And Cassar started off on a fine trot. It was two miles to Luffington park, but they reached it in time to witness the whole of the famous ball-game. On their way they passed the group of boys, who reached the park hot and tired, and worse than all, too late to get a good place.

"Bob beat us after all, didn't he?" said one enviously.

But he did not realize how far Bob had outstripped them all. God knew, however.

—American Messenger.

VISITORS IN THE PRIMARY CLASS.

BY JOSEPHINE PESINGER.

In a number of schools of which I have knowledge, the entrance to the sacred precincts of the primary class might appropriately bear the inscription, "No trespassing," as visitors are never permitted to cross its threshold. Is this right, and why not?

Who are usually the visitants of this department? In nine cases out of ten they are the parents of the little ones who find it necessary to accompany their children a few Sundays, until they become accustomed to the class and will attend alone. Occasionally a neighboring primary-teacher, looking for suggestions in her own work, may be present; in which case the teacher of the class ought to feel complimented, realizing that her fame in some special line of teaching has become known. A primary teacher can always rely on having the sympathy of her adult listeners.

One excuse for debarring visitors is that the situation of the class room may render it inconvenient to accommodate them; but the primary-class visitor will not complain of incommensurable surroundings, if only allowed to enter. A second reason offered is the natural timidity of the teacher who, while she enjoys the confidence of every child before her, hesitates to speak before adults. As an assistant in a primary class, how frequently do I hear the expression from the lips of the mother of some little scholar as she greets the teacher at the close of the session with the words, "I have received more good from these simple exercises this afternoon than from a dozen sermons." Are not such remarks worth making special efforts towards overcoming timidity? The children will not mind answering before strangers, or, if diffident at first, will soon overcome it. The visitors being seated on the sides or in the rear of the room, the class will hardly realize their presence.

But instead of proving a hinderance, it is a positive advantage to have the parents attend occasionally. While the teacher may use her utmost endeavors to simplify her statements, some child will be sure to misunderstand them. A mother remarked to me recently that she could not tell what was required of her little boy before he was entitled to library books; and he also spoke about a Scripture Union Class on Friday afternoon, but just what that was, and who were expected to attend it, she could not clearly comprehend from his explanations. After accompanying him to two sessions of the class, she became familiar with its workings, and immediately taught him the necessary verses for library books, and induced him to join the week-day children's meeting and become a member of the Scripture Union, by which he expressed his intention to read daily the selected portion from the Bible, this plan being arranged especially for children. Of course this difficulty can be obviated by a personal call or note from the teacher; but, in a large class, these will require more time and effort than the average teacher can give during each week; besides, when parents are interested enough to attend and become familiar with the methods employed so as to be able to converse intelligently on school topics, how much more ambitious are their children to learn!

The following incident is only one of many similar experiences of parents who accompany their children: In Brooklyn a gentleman reared in a Christian home, a member and regular attendant at church, became interested in politics, through which he was brought into contact with a celebrated infidel lecturer, the result being that he soon found himself a most ardent believer in those negations. Church services ceased to have any attraction for him, and his seat in God's house was in consequence always vacant. Severe sickness overtook him, and while very appreciative of the ministrations of his pastor, to whom he was personally warmly attached, yet they failed to cause a return to his former belief. Recovering his health, he moved to the West with his wife and little boy, four years of age. The latter, becoming acquainted with other little fellows who talked so much of their Sunday-school, asked permission to attend also. A loving father, anxious to please his child, took him to the school, returning for him at its close. This continued for a month, when one Sunday the question was put to him, "Papa, my teacher says that she would like to have our mamas and papas come to Sunday-school some time; won't you come in with me to-day?" To which he replied in the negative; but the importunity of his little one made him yield, and he entered, taking a seat on the side. At the earnest words of the teacher, memory brought vividly before him his early experience, and made him feel very uncomfortable. The next Sunday came the same question from the child with the same result, and what followed? At the cordial words of welcome from the teacher he could not refrain from telling the story of his past life, and her words were the means of causing a complete surrender of himself to Christ. A few years after found that man the assistant superintendent of the school and an officer in the Church. Surely, "a little child shall lead them."

Primary-class teachers, open wide the doors of your class-rooms to visitors. Do not let them feel out of place, but, on the contrary, cordially welcome, and more jewels may be added to your crown of rejoicing.—Sunday-School Times.

THE THREEFOLD POWER.

The teacher of the smallest infant class, as well as the superintendent of the largest primary department, needs a threefold power—power to influence, power to interest, and power to instruct. If we do not influence the child-heart and interest the child-mind, we have little power to teach the truth it is our commission to impart. The interest to be aroused in the child, should be threefold also. He should be led to have a genuine, sincere interest in his school, in the truth as revealed by our heavenly Father in his holy word and in the world of nature, and in his own life—his manner of learning and living out that truth.—S. S. Journal.