

'I feel as though we ought to mark this Christmas by some special thank offering,' said Mrs. Allison, one day not long before the time came.

Mr. Allison took up the thought. 'You are right,' he said. 'I have been thinking the same thing. What shall we give? Shall we fill your box for you this time, Madge? Full of big gold pieces?'

Margaret sat silent, the strange look on her face deepening. The moment had come for which she had watched. Her heart beat so that she could hear its throbs. She sat silent a moment, then she said slowly:

'Do you mean it, father? Would you and mother like to give a thank offering that will cost you something? Then—will you give me?'

Evergreen and holly decorated the room where the missionary society met on that Christmas Eve. Peace and good will were in the very air. They sang again:

'As with gladness men of old,
Did the guiding star behold,
As they offered gifts most rare,
At that manger rude and bare,
We our choicest treasures bring,
Christ, to Thee, our heavenly King.'

The pastor was present, and he rose as last of all Margaret advanced to the table to lay there her golden gift and detained her.

'We have each done our best to-night to bring a worthy offering to Christ on his birthday, but this dear girl has done more than we. She has found out the heart of Christmas. Beside the gift in her box such as the Wise Men brought, she has given another gift more precious—herself. Margaret is going as a foreign missionary from our church.'

A Happy Hour.

Ralph wanted to go fishing. Uncle Jim had sent him a fine new rod, line and a hook, and he was eager to try them. But—'of course there's always a "but" in the way,' he thought crossly.

One look into his mother's suffering face drove all the anger away, for he really loved her.

'Now, mamsy dear, I didn't know your head ached so hard. I'll take Alice down to the bench in the garden and keep her still.'

Poor mamma gave Ralph a rather tearful smile, and went to her room to rest.

A whole hour and a half passed happily before Ralph knew it, and sister Sue was home from school.

'It isn't too late to try your new rod now, Ralph,' she said.

When Ralph came home at supper time with his string of fish, mother met him with a loving kiss. The pain had all gone, thanks to the little boy who really loved his mother.—'Western Christian Union.'

Special Clubbing Offer.

'World Wide' and 'Northern Messenger,' one year each, only \$1.00 for both. Postage extra for Montreal and suburbs or foreign countries excepting United States and its dependencies, also Great Britain and Ireland, Transvaal, Bermuda, Barbadoes, British Honduras, Ceylon, Gambia, Sarawak, Bahama Islands, Zanzibar. No extra charge for postage in the countries named.

Grandma's Tumble

'I do not think it suitable for such an occasion; besides, it is your best and only nice dress for the winter, and you would be sure to ruin it at the skating party. Your blue flannel is more appropriate in every way, and—'

'I won't hurt it, mamma, indeed I—'

'That will do, Doris. Say no more about it, for mother knows best. Now run up to grandma's room and see if she has the tape-measure.'

With tears in her eyes and rebellion in her heart, Doris rose to obey.

'I've a good mind to wear it, anyway,' she thought. 'Mamma'll be over to Aunt Annie's all that day, and will never know. I wouldn't hurt it the least bit, for I'd be ever so careful. I'll do it, I just will,' she decided, as she slowly mounted the stairs.

'Has Doris come to help grandma sort her pieces for patchwork?' inquired grandma, smiling over her spectacles.

'No; mamma wants the tape-measure. But I'd like to help you, and I'll come back soon 's ever I can, for I just love to see all those old-fashioned pieces.'

Doris was back again in a few minutes, and her blue eyes sparkled with pleasure as she saw the large pile of pieces on the bed.

They worked busily for a long time, and it was hard to tell which was happier, Doris or grandma.

'Who had a dress like this?' asked Doris presently holding up a scrap of pretty red merino.

'That, dear, is a piece of the first short dress your father ever had.'

'How funny, that papa was once a little baby! It doesn't seem 's if he ever could have been so little, does it, grandma?'

There was a tender, far-away look in grandma's eyes, and the little girl received no answer.

'And this piece! O, isn't it pretty? And those darling little forget-me-nots! Who did have a dress like that?'

Grandma took the dimity from the eager little fingers, and smoothed it lovingly, while a look half-sad, half-amused, flitted across her face.

'There is a story connected with that dress, Doris. Let me see—'twas just 55 years ago to-morrow that Honor Rollins gave her party. It was her twelfth birthday, and twelve little girls, I among the number, were invited. It was my first party, and, of course, I wished to look my best. My new dress—that dimity is a piece—had just been finished and hung in the best-room closet, and, until the day of the party, I had expected to wear it. But when I went downstairs that morning, mother said: "The Feaderson baby is very sick, and they've sent for me. I can't tell how soon I'll be back. You may wear your organdy and pink ribbons to the party. I think you can dress yourself alone without any trouble, can you not?'

'I felt a choking in my throat and could not answer, as I thought I couldn't wear the old dress. It was clean and whole, to be sure, but made over from one of my Aunt Delight's. It was white, and covered with bright-green polka-dots that I had always thought hideous.'

'Poor grandma,' said Doris, sympathetically, thinking to herself, 'her mother was lots like mine, and I wonder if grandma was ever had like me.'

'We children,' grandma continued, 'were brought up to obey without question; but this once I broke the rule, and begged to be allowed to wear my new frock.'

'No, Prudence,' said mother, "the old one is plenty good enough. Be a good girl, and remember that pretty is that pretty, does."

'Doris, I did a very naughty thing. After mother had gone, and my stint was done, I went to the best room, got out the dress and put it on. I had not meant to wear it, but it was so pretty I hadn't the heart to take it off. So, stifling my conscience with the thought that I'd get home early, and mother'd never know, I slipped quietly out of the house, and sped away to the party.'

'I was very unhappy, and only once forgot my misery all that long day.'

'Poor, dear grandma,' whispered Doris, patting her grandmother's hand lovingly.

'After we had played all we cared to in the house, we went to the barn to play at hide-and-seek.'

'What a funny game to play at a party, grandma.'

'Not in those days, dear. Everything has changed since I was a little girl, you must remember.'

'Course they have, I didn't think; but go on, grandma, I won't interrupt again.'

'We were having such a good time that I had forgotten all about my dress, when, running across the hay-strewn floor, I felt something give way, and I fell down, down—'

'Where, grandma?' cried Doris, quickly, forgetting her promise not to interrupt.

'Into the pig-pen under the barn. The four big pigs ran up and began to root all around me and chew my dress. I screamed with fright and Mr. Rollins, who was working near by, ran to my rescue.'

'Well, if you ain't a sight,' he said, as he picked me up.

'Kind Mrs. Rollins wanted to wash me and change my dress, but I begged to go home at once just as I was, so they let me have my way. Mother met me at the door with a look of surprise and dismay on her face.'

'Prudence—Delight—Armstrong!' was all she said.

'I sprang into her arms, and sobbed out all my misery and penitence, and was forgiven. My pretty dress was ruined, though, and I was obliged to wear the despised organdy all that summer. Mother said that was punishment enough.'

'I think so too, grandma,' said Doris, looking very red. 'And I've decided to obey mamma always. May I have this piece of cloth to keep to help me to remember?'

And grandma never knew of the lesson she had unconsciously taught, nor did her mamma know, until long years after, why Doris so willingly wore the blue woollen gown to the skating party.—Minnie B. Caldwell, in 'Chicago Record.'

Expiring Subscriptions.

Would each subscriber kindly look at the address tag on this paper? If the date thereon is Dec., 1903, it is time that the renewals were sent in so as to avoid losing a single copy. As renewals always date from the expiry of the old subscriptions, subscribers lose nothing by remitting a little in advance.