

"That's a famous fire," said John, drawing nearer the generous blaze, "makes me think of old times."

"It ought to," said Daniel; "that hickory is from the big tree by the old swimming hole. The bank washed out under it time of the fresher, and I had to cut it down. I hated the worst way to see it go. Remember when you went up after the flying squirrels and got hatched on a stub?"

"And you cut me loose with your jack-knife and spoiled my new britches. Well, well; don't seem so long ago. How's that Jersey yearling coming out? Made up your mind to sell her?"

"Come out and see her," said Daniel, suddenly; and, lighting the lantern, the two men went out. This would be John Brewster's chance to accomplish his errand, but no words came to him, and, presently, they stood together in the big, dusty barn. Daniel set the lantern down and faced his neighbor. His voice was harsher than usual but steady with a sort of desperate determination.

"I s'pose you come over about that note, John. I'd thought to have gone to see you, but somehow I couldn't seem to bring my mind to it last year nor this. I've done my best, John, but I haven't prospered. Things seem to go against me. I can't pay it and I can't pay the interest, and you may as well foreclose one time as another. I've got my mind made up to it and I don't seem to care much. Since Lucy died, and Tom—went off, things don't seem to matter, anyhow. We thought there'd be Alice to work for, but Doc Landis says she can't live but a year or two, and she's going to be—she ain't right in her spine. Seems as though we couldn't have it so, but you have to take what's sent. I told Eunice we was bound to have one more old-fashioned Christmas, with a big fire, and the room trimmed up the way Lucy used to fix it, and the baby should have the handsomest present I could find. Eunice discouraged my getting the doll, but I guess if Lucy knows she'll understand. When I look at that little innocent creature and think what's before her I should like to give her the world. I sold Jersey to get the money—I'd a sold myself—"

"Shob, Dan'l!" interrupted John, in a most unnatural voice. "Don't you be upset by Doc Landis. He's an old croaker, anyhow, and 'way behind the times. We'll have Harding down to see the baby. And don't you worry about that note. I hain't needed the money. I was—I came over partly to speak to you about it."

"There's no chance of me paying next year than last. You've been forbearing with me, John, but it may as well come one time as another, and I don't mind you having the farm—just you fix it some way so's Eunice and me can stay on a spell. I don't know as mother could quite stand being turned out of her home—"

"What do I want of your farm, Dan'l Strong, with the best farm in all Essex county of my own, and nobody on the face of the earth to leave it to when Hannah and me are done with it? I declare, you kind of put me out of patience, Dan'l. You better come back to the house and see how the folks are getting on."

Daniel Strong turned to stroke the nose of the colt that sniffed inquisitively toward the lantern, and improved the opportunity to draw his sleeve across his eyes.

"I guess I be kind of upset," he admitted. "Eunice saw that old land shark, Rufus Dow, walking cross the intervals the other day and looking about, as if he was sort of a traveler tuggin' along, 'bout ready to give up, and the wolves follerin' close as they dared, ready to jump on him the minute he stumbled. I s'pose he keeps track of every mort-

gage in the county—smells 'em out as a crow does carrion."

Inside the house everything was bright and peaceful. The baby was asleep in her green bower, with her doll cuddled close on the pillow; Eunice and Hannah sat by the hearth in sympathizing talk, and on the table stood a dish of apples and a bowl of nuts—white, thin-shelled hickory nuts, such as two sturdy boys had often tramped miles to gather in the gray light of a frosty morning. Newer troubles were quite forgotten as the gray-haired men, comrades still, recalled old memories of far-off days or discussed the mysteries of clover and turnips and a succession of crops. And so the hours slipped by and the clock gave warning of its intention presently to strike nine, before John Brewster and Hannah rose to go. John drew on his mittens and then took them off, and drew two papers from his pockets.

"There's your note, Dan'l, and there's the mortgage. I want to make you a Christmas present of them and you'll take a big load off my mind."

"But, John," stammered Daniel Strong, "I—I can't—"

"Well, I can," said John. And stepping quickly to the hearth he tossed them into the very heart of the fire, that made short work of devouring them. Daniel dropped down by the table and hid his face in his hands, but Hannah went straight to Eunice and put her arms about her.

"My dear," she said, "my dear!" and kissed her on both cheeks.

John Brewster and Hannah went home through the woods almost in silence; but as Hannah untied her hood she looked at her husband with love and pride in her eyes and said in her quiet fashion:

"I think, John, there has been a leading."

John Brewster laughed and patted the little woman on the shoulder as he responded:

"I guess I have, Hannah. I suspect I've had 'em ever since I married thee."—*Epworth Herald.*

Do not hurry;
Do not worry;
Grip your purpose and be true.
Days must measure,
God's own pleasure
When this truth is plain to you.

Then be steady,
Always ready,
Never murmur, do your part;
Light each duty
With the beauty
Of a wholesome, happy heart.

BOBBIE'S QUESTION.

The scholars were standing in two little rows;
The sun through the window shone bright,
While soft little airs on the tips of their toes
Came tripping with April delight.
And Bobby looked up as they gently went by:
They'd told him a tale of the spring,
And talked of the clouds in the happy blue sky,
And all that the summer would bring.

He heard not the voice of the teacher at all;
His thoughts had gone out with the sun,
He stood with the others, his back to the wall,
Absorbed till the lesson was done.
"Now ask me some questions," the teacher had cried,
"Just any that chance to occur."
Bobby's fingers went up, and he solemnly sighed:
"How long till the holidays, sir!"

EATING HIS WAY.

Freddie despised the multiplication-table. It made you ache all over to say your tables. And you couldn't remember.

Mamma got up and went out of the room. When she came back, she had a glass jar of tiny colored candies. Sue was opening it, and pouring out a splendid heap on the tablecloth.

"Now," said she, brightly, "here are five little candy dots in a row. Here are eight rows. How many candy dots?"

"Forty," promptly.

"Yes. Now make seven times five and four times five and the rest. When you have made the whole table, learn it. When you have learned it, eat it!"

"Oh!"

It was the most splendid way to learn your tables. Freddie went to work with a will, and, when the teacher (that is, mamma) said, "Sch-o's out," he had learned his five table. He didn't eat it till after school.

The next day they went back and reviewed the two tables, and the next day after the three, and the next day after that the four.

One day the next-door twins' teacher was making their mother a call. Freddie was making one on the next-door twins.

"Don't you go to school, little boy?" the teacher asked him.

"Oh, yes," politely.

"Oh, you do? Well, I suppose you think the multiplication-table is perfectly dreadn't, too?" she asked, smiling.

"Oh, no'm," eagerly. "I'm very fond of mine."

"Inceed! How far along are you?"

"I've only eaten as far as seven times seven yet," said Freddie. And he went home, wondering why the next-door twins' teacher had opened her eyes so wide.

PHILOSOPHICAL TOMMY.

Did you ever hear about him? Grandma once knew just such a little philosopher, and he was the biggest little philosopher I ever knew. I do not think he ever cried; I never saw him cry. If his sister found her tulips rooted up by her pet puppy, and cried and cried—as all little girls will—Tommy was sure to come around the corner whistling and say: "What makes you cry? Can you cry a tulip? Do you think that every sob makes a root or a blossom? Here! let's try to right them."

So he picks up the poor flowers, puts their roots into the ground again, whistling all the time, and makes the bed look smooth and fresh, and takes her off to hunt hens' nests in the barn. Neither did he do any differently in his own troubles. One day his great kite snapped the string and flew away, far out of sight. Tommy stood still a moment, and then turned around to come home, whistling a merry tune.

"Why, Tommy," said I, "are you not sorry to lose that kite?"

"Yes, but what's the use? I can't take more than a minute to feel bad. 'Sorry' will not bring the kite back, and I want to make another."

Just so when he broke his leg.

"Poor Tommy!" cried his sister, "you can't play any more!"

"I'm not poor, either. You cry for me; I don't have to do it for myself, and I'll have more time to whistle. Besides, when I get well I shall beat every boy in school on the multiplication table, for I say it over and over again till it makes me sleepy every time my leg aches."

If many people were more like Tommy they would have fewer troubles and would throw more sunshine into this world. We must cry, sometimes, but try and be as brave as possible.—*Christian Work.*

Work is only done well when it is done with a will.—*Ruskin.*