

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST.

A TRUE INCIDENT.

In a lonely Irish cabin,
No friend or kindred nigh,
An outcast, and a wanderer,
Had laid her down to die,
So young, so fair to look on,
So worn, so old in sin;
Yet He who saved the Magdalene
Had stooped, and drawn her in.

I sat by the lonely bedside
And spoke of the wondrous love
Of the Saviour, who brings the sinner
To his home of light above.
While lit with a holiest presence,
Grew that chamber poor and dim,
And our voices sank to silence,
In our quiet talk of Him.

Then the dying face grew radiant,
And the dying eyes grew bright,
As though some vision tarried,
Hid from our earthly sight:
"Oh, sweet," she said, "is the story
Of the Cross of Calvary,
But dearer far, the knowledge,
That Jesus died for me."

"Oh, sweet is the free salvation
To every sin-sick soul,
But dearer far the knowledge
Jesus has made me whole.
Come nearer while I tell you
(Praise to His blessed name!)
What Christ Himself has taught me,
And how the lesson came."

"Last night, when all was silent,
And quiet here I lay,
The darkness seemed to vanish
Before the light of day:
A glory filled my chamber;
A strange and heavenly light,
Fairer than sun at noon-day,
Burst on my dazzled sight."

"And then a strange sweet music
Of voices glad and free,
Like those who sweetly sing the song
Upon the crystal sea:
I longed to catch the chorus,
To hear one word of love,
Brought by the blessed angel band
From their bright home above."

"And while I longed and listened,
Five words, most sweet, and clear:
'The Precious Blood of Jesus,'
Fell on my wondering ear.
'The Precious Blood of Jesus!'
Gone was the heavenly ray,
The sunshine and the singing,
The glory, passed away!"

"But, oh! those words, they lingered,
They could not, could not go,
And they will linger with me
On to the end I know,
And when I cross the river
And join the white-robed throng
'The Precious Blood of Jesus'
Shall be my only song."

"Dear Lord, I prayed, as slowly
I took my homeward way
From that still bed of suffering,
That quiet autumn day,
'Dear Lord, if in thy wisdom,
(For all my life is thine),
The sunshine and the singing,
The joys of life decline."

"If in thy love's appointment
Thine own sweet gifts must be
All yielded up, that in my heart
No guest may reign but Thee:
Yet here I rest, my anchor sure,
My confidence, my trust,
My peace, my home, my glory this,
'The Precious Blood of Christ.'

"Yes; here I rest, all fear dispelled,
My longings satisfied;
All service sweet, all burdens light,
Touched with that crystal tide;
And when I pass within the veil,
To know as I am known,
To see the lamb who once was slain
Upon his kingly throne,
The burden of my song shall be
That gift of gifts unprired;
While angels echo back the strain,
'The Precious Blood of Christ.'

—The Christian.

A LITTLE LEAVEN.

It was an August afternoon. The sun poured mercilessly down upon the men mowing the large meadow which belonged to the Hanaford farm. Down there in the meadow, enclosed as it was by low hills, it seemed as if the very air stood still, so intense was the heat; but upon the hill near the old-fashioned farm-house the cool breeze and the shade of the apple-trees made it a very comfortable spot in which to spend an afternoon.

So thought Sarah Hanaford, the only daughter of the house, for almost every day she might be seen sitting in a low rocker in the shade of the trees, sewing or reading. Just now she was doing neither, though an open book lay in her lap; but she seemed to be in deep thought. As the blended and indescribable scent of the flowers, the earth and the new-mown hay came to her, filling every sense with enjoyment, she half-consciously repeated the words of the Psalmist: "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is full of Thy riches."

As she sat there thinking so intently, her attention was drawn to a piece of newspaper fluttering about in the breeze. It was a much-soiled bit of paper, and looked as if it had lain out in many a rain storm, but out of mere curiosity Sarah picked it up. These are the words she read, and they were engraved on her heart for years afterward: "O ye women of America, can you realize what it is to be without a Saviour in this world and without any hope for the next? Can you realize what it is to live in abject slavery because the customs of the country require it? No, you do not realize this; if you did, you would not be so uninterested in foreign missions, uninterested in your own suffering sisters. Oh, what if the Lord Jesus had been uninterested in you, when, burdened with sin and suffering from its effects, you cried to Him for help!"

She looked at the paper for a moment, then read it again; and there came such a revelation to the girl as shook her very being. She went into the house and upstairs to her own chamber, and falling on her knees, poured out her soul to God: "O God, I have been very selfish and very ignorant, but I thank Thee for opening my eyes and showing me these faults plainly! Dear Lord, I consecrate myself anew to Thy service, and will not ask for Thy forgiveness until I have done something for my sisters who do not know the preciousness of having a Saviour. Help me in anything I undertake, and to Thee I will give all the praise."

"Yes, it was a fact. Sarah, though she had led a good life in every other respect, saw all at once how careless and neglectful she had been in this line of Christian work. This was hardly to be wondered at, for her father and mother, who should have been living examples to the girl, were not Christians, did not subscribe for any religious paper, and had few interests in life beyond their farm and the village in which they lived. These things, and the fact that there was no Woman's Foreign Missionary Society in the one village church, made this neglect seem pardonable and even reasonable in Sarah.

She rose from her knees inflamed with this new desire—to do something for missions. But how? She must have money to help, and how was she to get it? "I can't leave home to earn it, because I'm needed here," she said, thinking of her mother who was almost an invalid, and who depended upon her so much. "There isn't a mill or factory around where I can obtain work to do at home, so what in the world can I do?"

"Sary, Sary, are you up stairs?" called her mother. "It's five o'clock, and time to start the fire."

"Sarah Hanaford, your duty just now is to make biscuits for supper; and if you're reaching out for something beyond your duty, and overlooking the things your hand findeth to do, you're all wrong," she said to herself as she hurried down stairs.

"Where have you kept yourself this afternoon, Sary?" was her mother's greeting. "Belindy Patnam has just gone home. She wanted to borrow the sacque pattern of your sprigged muslin dress, and I searched high and low for it, and couldn't find it."

"Belindy was tellin' me Mis' Carruth, the parson's wife, has had three new bunnits this summer. One was a black chip with lemon-colored trimmings on it, and after

that two light straws with long, droopy feathers. Belindy ran into Mis' Smith's a minute on the way up here, and she found her in a great trouble. It seems Hosea Smith, that harum-scarum youngster of her'n, was helpin his father unload the hay when he fell clear through on the barn floor and broke his arm in two places. Then her girl had word tellin' her to come right home, for her ma was sick, so off she went. And Miss Smith's left with all that work on her hands and that boy. But the wust of it is, they expect two gals from the city Saturday, that are comin' out here for country air and quiet. One's kinder sickly, and her sister's comin' along with her for company. Mis' Smith says she can't take them nohow the way things is goin', and they've got to get another place."

"Mother, why can't I take them?" said Sarah suddenly, as if a brilliant idea had just entered her mind. "We could put just in the east room, and if you will only say yes, I'll see they don't make you any trouble."

"Sarah Hanaford, what be you goin' to do with boarders?"

"Well, I'll tell you, mother. I want to help the foreign missions a little, and I don't see how I can do this without money. You know I can't go away to earn it, so why can't I take these two girls, who probably will be willing to pay me a fair price?"

"Furrin missions! furrin missions!" exclaimed Mrs. Hanaford, who seemed to be lost in amazement over Sarah's plan. "Ain't that a new wrinkle you've got, Sary? But here comes your father to his supper. I'll speak to him about it."

They sat down at the table, and the meal proceeded in silence, as was generally the case, unless Mr. Hanaford and his two men discussed the various matters on his own and the neighboring farms. To-night, however, Mrs. Hanaford was too full of Sarah's project to keep still long, so she said:—

"Father, our Sarah wants to take them two city boarders that was goin' to Mis' Smith's. She says she wants to earn some money to help the furrin missions along, and she can't think of no other way to get it."

"Yes, father, it is so," said Sarah, while the stare of four pairs of eyes, and the feeling that each individual mentally set her down as a fool, sent the blood mounting to her temples.

"Well, Sary," her father said, after a long pause, "your mother and me ain't got no objection, provided you take all the care and trouble on yourself. But I tell you what it is, you're a fool for givin' away your money to ministers and missionaries and such like. The heathen have ails gal along so far without hev'in' the Gospel preached to them, and I reckon it won't hurt them to git on the rest of the way. And as fur your ministers and missionaries, they just take that way of makin' a easy livin'. They don't know what work is—never done a stroke of it in their lives!"

Mr. Hanaford, like a great many other people in this world, had the idea that a man who did not labor with his hands did no work at all; therefore all professional men came under his condemnation. However, Sarah was made so happy by his consent, she did not call for his opinion on such matters just then.

That night she walked over to Mrs. Smith's and offered to take the two girls. Of course Mrs. Smith was only too glad to dispose of them with so little trouble. Sarah learned that they were young ladies whose parents were very wealthy and moved in the best society. Indeed, the elder sister had been quite a belle for the last three seasons at the fashionable summer resorts, but had given it up this year for the sake of her sister, whose health was very delicate.

So that it was Dora and Eunice Lyman came to spend the summer at the Hanaford farm. They arrived on Saturday, in the early afternoon. Sarah drove to the depot to meet them, and before they were half way home, knew, with her quick perception, which would be her favorite.

Dora was a tall, fine-looking girl with black eyes and hair; but if she had a kindly heart it was hidden beneath her proud and haughty manner. Eunice, almost like a child in her ways, was a delicate looking, fair-haired girl, who completely won Sarah during that homeward drive. She was so innocent and beautiful in disposition, seeming to have an interest and love for everything and everybody in the world.

When they arrived at the house, Sarah

at once ushered them through the wide cool hall, up the stairs, and into the east chamber. "Oh, what a beautiful room!" exclaimed Eunice, as Sarah left them. "It does me good just to look at it. It is so cool and restful."

It was a pretty room. Sarah had draped the windows with delicate muslin curtains. These, and the spotlessly white bed, gave the chamber a look of quiet and purity. The pretty toilet set made by her own hands, and the old-fashioned table with claw feet, on which stood a vase of flowers, also added an air of daintiness.

"It is quite possible for backwoods taste," assented Dora graciously. "But what a plain-looking girl that is, and how shockingly her dress fits! It actually makes me shudder to see any one so carelessly dressed."

"She isn't pretty, that I must admit, Dora. But there's something more than beauty, and she has a face with a soul in it, which is better than mere prettiness. Her dress looks as if she didn't spend much time on it, but probably she's too busy. I'm wondering, Dora, if there isn't something more to live for than just dressing to make oneself look as nicely as possible; it seems as if there must be."

"Well, you're a queer girl, Eunice. I told mamma I hoped you would stop some of your wonderings before you were much older; if you don't, you'll never be a success in society. Dear me! What sort of an existence would it be without any dressing, or dancing, or parties? I, for one, couldn't endure it."

This conversation was interrupted by Sarah's summoning them to supper. To both of them, but to Eunice especially, this supper was that introduction to an altogether new life. On that first evening she made the acquaintance of every living thing on the farm—the men, the horses, the cows and hens; while Dora sat on the front porch and wondered how her sister could be so unlearned.

The Sabbath was a glorious day—and both girls accepted Sarah's invitation to walk with her to church; Eunice innocently, as she did everything, and because that was one of the ways of her new life; Dora, because, as she remarked, "One must have a chance to show one's dresses somewhere, even if people don't appreciate them, and the church seems to be the only place."

As they reached the church, the minister, an earnest, plain-spoken man, was just beginning to read the story of the man who was born blind, and who was restored to sight by doing what the Lord commanded. As Eunice sat listening to that chapter, and saw how very plain it was made, she wondered how the Bible ever seemed hard to understand. To be sure, she had not made a business of studying or even reading it, very often. She remembered there was one in her home in the city on a small stand; but it was such a grand affair with its magnificent gold clasps and gilt-edged leaves, it always seemed to her more for ornament than for use. Then she thought of her mother's words before it was bought: "Really, Samuel, we must have a large Bible for our back parlor. They are quite the rage now. The Duleys and Whites both have one, and I understand Mr. Samson has ordered his. Of course we must keep up with our set, and it seems absolutely heathenish to be without one."

Then the minister's reading again caught her attention: "Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?" and so on to the end of the chapter. Eunice heard not a word of the prayer that followed for her heart was echoing to the verse, "Who is He, that I might believe on Him?" Strange to say, the preacher arose and announced for his text those verses. The sermon to her was wonderful, and the general ideas it contained impressed themselves on her mind: "Unbelief exists because of spiritual blindness. The person so blinded never knows how dark the state in which he has been living until the light comes. If at first the light is dim, there should be a seeking after a brighter; and never yet was there a persistent seeker who did not finally reach the full and glorious light. 'Who is He?' Jesus the Son of God, who came into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. And then the old story of Christ's great love for us. Did I say old story? It was blessedly new to one person there, and that was