

## LITTLE JOE'S GIFT.

GRANDPA and Grandma Stebbins had the Bible in their home, but they seldom read it. It lay upon an upper shelf, and the dust was often allowed to collect upon it. They were so intent upon gathering together this world's goods that they found little time to think of the world to come. Joe, their grandson, was a brave little boy, and they laid by every penny they could spare in order that they might educate him. It was for Joe that they toiled early and late. When he first went to school, how proud the old couple were of the reports of his behaviour! No boy gave less trouble to his teacher, nor was more loved by her.

This teacher was a Christian, and she told Joe of Jesus, and the boy's tender heart was touched, and that evening he ran all the way home in his haste to tell grandpa and grandma the story. The aged parents had long been familiar with it, and they listened, not untouched by the child's enthusiasm.

Joe kept the story in his heart, and pondered often of the blessed Jesus, who died for sinners.

While Grandpa Stebbins was never idle, yet he had not prospered as many another, and his heart hardened as he thought of what he would, but could not do for his boy. When vacation came, Joe, who was bright and active in work as well as study, said: "Grandpa, I'm not too young to lend a hand."

So, when grandpa went to the woods with his axe to hew down trees, Joe went too, determined to help. The old man was proud enough of the little man who ran by his side; and grandma, as she watched their departing forms from the window, smiled as she resumed her knitting—a pair of warm stockings for Joe.

Grandpa never could tell how it happened, but when the oak at which he was hewing fell, Joe fell too, crushed beneath its trunk. One leg must be taken off, the surgeon said, and the little fellow clung to grandma's neck, striving vainly to smother the sobs which shook his frame.

It was a sad household, and Joe, as he lay upon his bed, strove vainly to cheer the hearts of his grandparents. "Don't cry, grandma," he would say; "I can get around on one leg, and there's lots of things a boy with one leg can do."

He made it a rule to speak to them each day of Jesus. In his sufferings, the dear Lord was very near to him, and he thought often and wonderingly of the life and death of his Saviour.

One day his teacher brought him a missionary magazine, and in it was the story of a child who worshipped idols, and when told of Jesus wept for joy, and said, "Tell father, too." and turning from the wooden image he bowed his knee to the living Jesus.

Joe's form daily wasted, and his dear ones saw that his earthly life was short. "Grandpa," he said one day, "have I cost you much?" The old man hid his

face and sobbed. "I want to know, grandpa," Joe continued, "just how much I cost you in a year?"

"Not much, my boy, not much; not more than a few pounds."

"Well, grandpa, I am going home soon, and I want you to give that money to some other boys to teach them of Jesus, that they may come to the same Home where I am going."

Grandpa sobbed "yes," and the boy stroking the white hairs of his head, said: "Won't you and grandma come too?"

This is how Joe performed his work for Jesus, and brought his grandparents into the kingdom.

Soon the wasted form was laid to rest, but the aged couple never forgot their promise to little Joe. The Bible was brought down from the shelf, and each year into the mission fund there came the offering of some pounds, bearing the words, "Little Joe's Gift."

"SUNBEAM."

## A TRUE STORY.

SOME time in the forties, the British Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society fell short of funds and got in debt. They did not know what to do, until some one said, "Let us ask the children to help us!" So they printed little collecting cards, and asked the children to give and collect from their friends a Christmas Offering. I do not know what they raised that year, but they astonished the ministers who had set them to work for missions for the first time. Ever since the children have been helping. What is now the Conference of N. B. and P. E. I. was then a part of the British Conference and some were sent out here. In a remote country place in New Brunswick the resident minister gave a card to a little girl of seven years, and he also gave her some little books about the work and about the heathen children. Books were very scarce in those days, and children's papers were eagerly and carefully read, and the missionary spirit was awakened in that little heart, and although the people were poor, and money was scarce, she presented her little card to all her friends and collected nearly seven dollars for the missionary society. What a happy little girl she was when she heard the minister had spoken of her effort in the public missionary meeting! The missionary thus awakened is still alive. She is an enthusiast in the missionary cause, although more than fifty years have passed since then, and she has seen and rejoiced over the growth of the parent society and the formation of the W. M. S. and the Mission Bands.

Now, dear Band workers, if such meagre information and so little chance for work has had such an effect, what should we do with our advantages? What ought fifty years of experience to do for our Bands? Who ever may be spared to work for missions for fifty years ought to do great things for the cause in New Brunswick.

York Co.

NELLIE.