

were growing up without feeling their deprivation. The Christian Endeavor society was small, and certainly their problem was large.

For some time they got no farther than 'Is there anything that we can do?' After a time they advanced, and said, 'What is there that we can do?' And then, one day, they took great strides and said, 'We must and will do "something."' Of course, then there was a sense in which it was as good as done.

You know, without my telling you, that it required sacrifice. All things worth doing seem to have their roots centred in that word.

One young woman, a lover of good books, was made chairman of the committee. She was a farmer's daughter. By patient denial of many little luxuries dear to youth and cultured taste, and by the firm lopping off of some branches that had been falsely named 'necessities,' she had, through the years, saved money enough to buy occasionally a choice book and hold it as her very own. None but those who truly love books can appreciate what pleasure there is in such ownership.

It was on the day when they had voted that they must and would do 'something' that she almost took their breaths away by immediately doing it. She gave every one of her cherished volumes—not many—as a nucleus, and behold the 'public library' was started! On a small scale, you think? In one sense it was; in another it was a very large scale. How much does self-sacrifice weigh, I wonder?

Through that winter were added fifteen more books, gifts from those who were stimulated, by example, to like endeavor.

Then came a plan for a 'book reception.' Invitations, accompanied with careful explanations, were sent out in all directions. Each guest was to be admitted by book instead of card. The book was to be new, purchased expressly for the public library; and, if it cost as much as seventy-five cents, was to entitle its donor to a year's use of the library without charge. Its title and the name of the author were to be reported to the committee before the book was purchased, and no book would be received that had not been favorably passed upon by every member of their reading committee. This rule was at once recognized as having its roots in common sense. For no committee would have a right to agree to be responsible for reading-matter that they had not themselves examined. Of course, those who chose to bring the price of a book, leaving the selection to be made by the committee, had a right to do so. These, and many other plans connected with the reception, were carefully matured long beforehand.

A choice literary programme was prepared for the entertainment of the guests. At first, with only local talent to depend upon, this was thought to be impossible; but afterwards the committee eschewed the use of that word 'impossible,' and found, to the surprise of many, that local talent is capable of a great deal, if there are those wise enough to call it out. Given a committee that means to succeed, and it succeeds.

That book reception was voted a complete success, viewed from whatever standpoint one looked at it. A large number of choice books was added to the little 'nucleus,' and interest and co-operation were enlisted from people who before this had not so much as known whether there was a Christian Endeavor society in their neighborhood.

A Change of Heart.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

(By Abby Felton, in 'Union Signal.')

CHAPTER I.

In a western city one morning in early summer, a little flower-vender took her timid stand at a corner where one of the principal business streets of the town forms the limit to a side street in which the dwellings are of the meanest description, and which straggles off at the farther end into the merest slums.

The girl is not, like so many street vendors, a dark-eyed Italian with stringy, elfin locks, tied under a red kerchief or checkered shawl, bare, brown feet, and a look of age and weariness already stamped upon her small features. A tiny, delicate child of ten, with a fair, sweet face shaded by a cloud of long, golden curls, eyes of softest blue, garments patched and faded but tastefully made and beautifully neat, and an aspect and bearing indicative of high breeding—a fact which is promptly recognized by a troupe of boys strolling idly along the side street, alert for the mischief ever awaiting the idle boy's arrival.

'Rah for the 'ristocrat!' shouts the foremost of the troupe, in the jubilant tones of a discoverer who has found a prize rich beyond his wildest expectations.

'Does yer dear mammy know yer eout?' mocks another, leering impudently into her face.

'Give us a posy for a button-yere!' cries a third, as he ruthlessly plunders the basket, selects a choice rose, and with smirks and grimaces fastens it to his threadbare coat.

'Prithee, fair maid, presint thy willin' knight one leetle curl from thy bloomin' 'ead, me daisy,' pleads the Tom Sawyer of the group in a ridiculous mixture of dime novel patois and schoolboy slang, as he elbows the others aside, seizes a shining tress and threatens to sever it with his open pocket-knife.

But the cruel pastime is shortlived. A passing lady, dressed in mourning garb, hearing the cries and suspecting mischief, comes to the rescue, and the graceless vandals take to their heels, flinging back gibes and jeers as they go.

'Poor little girlie! Why, child, where did you come from? What is your name?' questions the woman excitedly as her eyes rest upon the upturned face.

Mrs. Van Deren has encountered one of those instances of marvellous resemblance which, though curious, are not uncommon nor remarkable, since nature must fashion her countless millions from a limited number of types. Here on a familiar street corner has suddenly appeared a stranger so like the child she has lost that in the first instant of bewildered surprise she almost fancies she is looking into the vanished face.

'Mamma calls me Goldilocks, but my real name is Edna.'

'Edna!'

Mrs. Van Deren is now thoroughly interested in the beautiful and mysterious little stranger, who in both name and features seems to restore her own to her again. Learning that the girl's mother is ill, and observing a singular reticence on the part of the child concerning her father, she resolves to investigate the circumstances further.

In an upper room of a hovel fast falling into decay, at the farther and poorer end of the street, little Edna's mother was found. The bare, uneven floor, the worn and scanty furniture, the absence of every comfort, and

the wretchedness of the surroundings, all gave evidence of an extreme of poverty and privation and combined with the delicacy and refinement of the invalid to present a touching and pitiful scene.

Mrs. Van Deren related the singular circumstances through which she had become interested in 'Goldilocks,' expressed her own ready sympathy, and soon won her way to the heart and confidence of the sick woman.

The story is but a simple, oft-told tale.

Mr. Strong, reared in one of Boston's wealthiest and most aristocratic suburbs, in a home where wines and champagne were in daily use, had been taught by precept and example that it is a public confession of weakness to be afraid of or to refuse them, that a man is no man at all who does not hold himself free to use them in so-called moderation.

It was not until some years after their marriage and removal to the West that Mr. Strong became hopelessly enslaved by that love of wine which had been created and fostered in his father's house. By insensible but sure degrees, it had gained the mastery. Business neglected, then ruined; subordinate positions secured and lost; a precarious support obtained through Mrs. Strong's knowledge of music and embroidery, and her subsequent yielding to the mental and physical strain; the family reduced to penury; these were the successive steps by which they had been brought to that condition wherein the present was dark and bitter and the future hopeless.

Throughout her narrative Mrs. Strong had retained her self-control, but at its close, realizing anew the hopelessness of the situation, she burst into uncontrollable weeping, and Mrs. Van Deren could not but recognize that in a case like this arguments were out of place. Moreover, she now felt strangely averse to attempting any defence of customs for which until this day she had reasoned most valiantly. Subdued and thoughtful, she took her leave, and as she slowly and meditatively wended her way toward her own palatial home, she was conscious that new, though as yet hardly defined thoughts, were beginning to stir within her.

The morning's adventure produced a singular effect upon Mrs. Van Deren. She had, in fact, experienced an 'arrest of thought' upon the subject of wine drinking, and she now eagerly sought the seclusion of her own room where, undisturbed, she might think out her way to a clear and honest conclusion. As she turned the key in her door she was fain to acknowledge to herself that she had arrived at a 'turning of the ways,' and that before that key should be reversed in its socket she would have met and passed a crisis in her life.

Mrs. Van Deren was a thoroughly good, actively benevolent woman, but with very liberal views concerning amusements and wine-drinking. Her great force of character, social influence and abundant means made her an object of intense desire to the temperance forces of her city. Wine was an important and ever-present accessory to her table, both as a beverage and as a flavoring in sauce and pastry.

Mrs. Van Deren had a son, a bright, handsome fellow of eighteen—in his widowed mother's eyes the brightest, handsomest fellow in all the world—already a 'Soph,' and sure to be the valedictorian of his class. Although hitherto she herself would have been the first to scoff at the idea of danger to her son in the social glass, she now recalled, as she sat in the expectant silence of her room 'pondering all these things in her heart,' that more than once of late when he had re-