

Sandy, who had been steadying Dandy while that interesting broncho was attempting with great success to balance himself on his hind legs, came to say 'good-bye. 'Come and see me first thing, Sandy.'

'Ay! I know; I'll see ye, Mr. Craig,' said Sandy earnestly, as Dandy dashed off at a full gallop across that clearing and over the bridge, steadying down when he reached the hill.

'Steady, you idiot!'

This was to Dandy, who had taken a sudden side spring into the deep snow, almost upsetting us. A man stepped out from the shadow. It was old man Nelson. He came straight to the sleigh, and, ignoring my presence completely, said—

'Mr. Craig, are you dead sure of this? Will it work?'

'Do you mean,' said Craig, taking him up promptly, 'can Jesus Christ save you from your sins and make a man of you?'

The old man nodded, keeping his hungry eyes on the other's face.

'Well, here's His message to you: "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."'

'To me? To me?' said the old man eagerly.

'Listen; this, too, is His Word: "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." That's for you, for here you are, coming.'

'You don't know me, Mr. Craig. I left my baby fifteen years ago because—'

'Stop!' said the minister. 'Don't tell me, at least not to-night; perhaps never. Tell Him who knows it all now, and who never betrays a secret. Have it out with Him. Don't be afraid to trust Him.'

Nelson looked at him, with his face quivering, and said in a husky voice, 'If this is no good, it's hell for me.'

'If it is no good,' replied Craig, almost sternly, 'it's hell for all of us.'

The old man straightened himself up, looked up at the stars, then back at Mr. Craig, then at me, and, drawing a deep breath, said, 'I'll try Him.' As he was turning away the minister touched him on the arm, and said quietly, 'Keep an eye on Sandy to-morrow.'

Nelson nodded, and we went on; but before we took the next turn I looked back and saw what brought a lump into my throat. It was old man Nelson on his knees in the snow, with his hands spread upward to the stars, and I wondered if there was any One above the stars, and nearer than the stars, who could see. And then the trees hid him from my sight.

(To be continued.)

Brief life is here our portion;  
Brief sorrow, short-lived care,  
The life that knows no ending,  
The tearless life is there.

\* \* \* \* \*

There grief is turned to pleasure;  
Such pleasure, as below  
No human voice can utter,  
No human heart can know.  
And after fleshly scandal  
And after this world's might,  
And after storm and whirlwind,  
Is calm, and joy, and light;

\* \* \* \* \*

The light that hath no evening,  
The health that hath no sore,  
The life that hath no ending  
But lasteth evermore.

—Bernard of Cluny.

## Cricket and Carving.

(The Christian.)

'You've got hold of the women, but I must do something for those lads who are always lounging about the place,' remarked my brother, one Saturday afternoon, as we were returning from a ride. 'They look as if they hadn't an interest in life, dawdling their time away like that,' pointing, as he spoke, to a knot of boys of fifteen, sixteen and seventeen, who were sheepishly watching us from a distance. A few minutes' silence, then he added, 'I have it—I'll manage it somehow, though it'll be a bit awkward to run, when I'm so busy; still, you must help,' and A— might help also, — mentioning a young friend who stayed with us just then. 'We'll have two things for them, one to keep their heads out of mischief on Saturday afternoons, and one to do the same on week nights.' By the first of these other 'things,' I found my brother meant a cricket club, with himself as president and captain and trainer. In a paddock belonging to the grounds of the old manor house where we were installed, there was space enough to allow of a good cricket pitch without annoyance to anyone. And this was forthwith handed over to the club which was to be.

In a month the club was an accomplished fact; and a very great boon it proved, not only to the lads, but to many of the older men in the village as well. Fives, rounders, bowls, hockey, and other games were gradually introduced, and the vicar was so greatly struck by the improvement in the street lounging, that this plan had caused, that he started prize-giving on his own account, to such an extent that the recreation club ran a danger of becoming utterly spoilt!

The other 'thing' which my brother had in his mind for the lads in the evenings was more of an experiment, and at first we were doubtful if we could get the boys to take an interest in the plan. Very simple lessons in wood-carving he had thought of, and this we tried to carry out—at first with very scant success; but, later on, with an abundant measure thereof. Both he and I could carve, and knew the fascination of the work when once entered upon, and we thought that if we could teach some of these village lads elementary carving we should not only be giving them a pleasant employment; but training them in eye and hand.

There was one drawback, however, to the plan, and that a serious one. Many tools would be needed. Tools were costly, and funds were not over-abundant among village lads: At least, the outfit for each boy would cost seven or eight shillings, and that would be quite beyond their powers. What should we do? Why not teach chip or Swedish carving, someone suggested, that only needs two or three tools, and since all the patterns are geometrical in design, the boys will be trained to greater accuracy of work. The force of this suggestion struck us both, and especially on the score of expense. We determined that the cost must be kept down as much as possible, and that it would be far better for simple work to be done, and done well and accurately, than to attempt anything very elaborate.

When next we rode over to the market town, not many miles distant, we went to a tool-maker and explained our needs. The latter, 'to oblige a class,' consented to make us the requisite chisels at a reduction in price, and accordingly we ordered a dozen

'spade' chisels, and a dozen 'veiners,' at ninepence each tool. With these two tools, let me say, it is marvellous how much and how good work can be done, and the exquisite results that may be obtained in the way of ornamental design. Twelve blocks of lime wood, a half inch thick and six inches square, costing sixpence each, were our next purchases, and a small hand-grindstone and oil-slip completed the lot. Two shillings accordingly covered the expense for each boy whom we taught, and by asking each of our pupils to pay twopence weekly during the twelve weeks that the class continued, we made the plan self-supporting. Compasses, pencils, and rulers we provided as common property. The designs I got from the School of Wood-Carving at South Kensington; the school publishes several sheets of these, graduated in complexity; and though, of course, it is perfectly easy, when the principle of chip carving is understood, to make one's own designs, these sheets save time and labor. I gummed them on to stiff cardboard, and cut them up, (as each sheet contained twenty or thirty designs).

We found it was much better to make every boy set out his designs with compass and ruler by himself, than to do it for him, and the first two lessons in carving that my brother gave to the twelve boys who formed the class were to give them a few simple rules and explanations as to the dividing up of circles and lines—in fact, the elements of geometry. Luckily, we had a magic-lantern, and, having hired some wood-carving slides, we were able to show the lads how they must begin, and what in the way of results they might hope to arrive at. Many more than twelve wanted to join the class, but we declined to teach more than these at a time, telling the others that they should have their turn when the three months was up, or perhaps, even, we might have a second class during the week. This last ultimately we did have. After a boy had covered his block of wood on both sides with designs, we let him try his hand on any box or stool or any other article which he could get hold of. Bellows, book covers, boxes, frames, etc., the lads covered with carving, and several of them got so proficient that they sold their work and got orders for more.

All through the winter, with strict regularity, the boys turned up on Thursday nights for their carving hour, occasionally whittling away a piece of their thumb or finger with the wood, but quite happy, for all that, especially as I had a stock of bandages and plaster on hand for such emergencies.

This wood-carving class did us good service in a deeper way than merely as a means of entertaining the village boys. By it we were able to get to know them individually and very well, and to win their love and respect. That won, the way was readily opened in many cases for more serious talk. We were able to draw them to attend a Bible-class, and to join us, when the shyness had worn off, in other religious gatherings.

## Clever Ants.

Among the curious inhabitants of Australia are a species of termites called 'meridian ants,' because they invariably construct their long, narrow mounds so that the principal axis of the dwelling runs exactly north and south. These mounds, when viewed end on, show a remarkable resemblance to a many-spired cathedral.—'Children's Friend.'