

What the Initials Meant.

BY LILY MANKER ALLEN.

Mamma smiled to herself as she saw Beatrice and Vi slip into their room with something in their hands and close the door. "I wonder what they're up to," she thought, but happy in the knowledge that she would know sooner or later she applied herself to getting breakfast.

Saturdays were always busy days at the Armstrongs', but this was a particular busy one. An unusual combination of circumstances had brought all the sweeping and dusting in with the baking, and Howard's new suit was to be finished.

When the girls came out again, mamma noticed they had decorated themselves with flowers, but little Howard discovered that each girl wore a letter H of rose leaves, and a large M of geraniums.

"What can we do for you, mamma?" cried Beatrice and Vi, so nearly together that it sounded like a double voice, and then they fell to setting the table as blithely as if it were jump-rope.

After that there was another appeal for something to do, and Baby Paul was dressed and the room tidied.

By this time breakfast was ready and there was a little leisure to guess at the mysterious letters. "You don't mean to say you're going to have Measles, do you?" inquired mamma, in mock alarm.

"I guess they'll have some Happy Moments," said papa.

"I think they want Hot Muffins," was Howard's venture. Grandmother said she thought from the way they had been doing things, their motto must be *Hurry More*. All sorts of ridiculous combinations were suggested, but the girls only laughed and shook their heads, promising to divulge the secret at supper time; but they couldn't forbear pouncing upon papa just as he was going out the door with "What do you really think it means, papa?" Whereat papa, who had been keeping his eyes open all the morning, laughed out "Help Much."

"What do you think it means, mamma?" cried the girls as they hurried about clearing the table and getting the dishwater.

"Well," said mamma, slowly and reluctantly, "I suppose it must have something to do with helping—Help More."

"But who does M stand for in this family?" persisted Vi, and mamma, with a great show of surprise, said "Help Mamma! Why didn't I think before?"

There was a burst of hilarity at this, and then Beatrice said: "We aren't going to let you know till supper."

All the morning mamma went about with a little prick in her mind. "I might have put them off somehow—I needn't have guessed it so easily. It may mean something else after all," but the familiar duet, "What can I do to help you?" repeated so often that busy morning took away any lingering doubt that there might have been as to the correctness of her guess. At dinner time the sweeping and dusting and baking were done. Paul had had an airing and was settled for a nap, and mamma could take up her sewing.

The girls were to help papa that afternoon. There were so many things they could do to help get the church on the corner ready for Sunday. They could distribute singing books, place the tiny red chairs around the low tables in the primary room, sweep the steps, and even help sometimes with the dusting.

"Mamma heard Vi ask Beatrice, 'Shall we have the same letters this afternoon?' 'No,' said Beatrice, decidedly. 'We'll have F. M.'"

"O, yes!" cried Vi, clapping her hands and running after Beatrice to get some flowers to change the letters.

"F. M.," said mamma, as they came in to show her. "That must be Forsake Mamma, or perhaps, since it's your papa you're to help, it means For a Man, but I should think you'd have chosen H. P. instead." This sent the girls off laughing and promising again that she should know at supper time.

At intervals during her sewing that afternoon mamma's thoughts wandered in a hazy way to the mystic letters. "What can F. M. mean I wonder. It would please them so much if I could only guess somewhere near it without getting too close, as I did this morning. I'm so sorry I let them know I guessed it. That takes the fun out of it; perhaps I'd better pretend a little uncertainty yet about the H. M."

At supper time everything was done, the home work and the outside work, and a tired happy family gathered at table.

"Well," inquired mamma, with an effort to be eagerly anxious, "what does H. M. stand for?"

"Home Missionaries!" was the surprising answer, and if mamma's sudden confident sense of relief hadn't bewildered her, she wouldn't have needed to ask the next question, "And F. M.?"

"Foreign Missionaries," responded the double voice, promptly.—The Congregationalist.

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All communications for this department should be sent to Rev. J. W. Brown, Havelock, N. B., and must be in his hands at least one week before the date of publication.

Daily Bible Readings.

Monday, May 19.—Revelation 2:18-29. "Hold fast till I come" (v. 25). Compare I Cor. 4:5.

Tuesday, May 20.—Revelation 3:1-13. I will write upon him. . . mine own new name (v. 12). Compare Rev. 2:17.

Wednesday, May 21.—Revelation 3:14-22. I will give to him to sit down with me (v. 21). Compare II Tim. 2:12.

Thursday, May 22.—Revelation 4. Worthy art thou our Lord and our God (v. 11). Compare Rev. 5:12.

Friday, May 23.—Revelation 5. Unto the Lamb be blessing, honor and glory (v. 13). Compare Rom. 11:36.

Saturday, May 24.—Revelation 6. The Lamb opened one of the seven seals (v. 1). Compare John 1:29, 30.

Prayer Meeting Topic—May 18.

Practical Consecration. Romans 12:1-21.

A LIVING SACRIFICE.

Under the law of Moses the dead body of a lamb without blemish was laid on Jehovah's altar; under the Christian dispensation the living bodies of the saints are to be presented to God. When these bodies are free from indwelling sin they are acceptable and well-pleasing to God. He wishes them to be alive and full of energy, not sapless and dead. Our minds are renewed day by day, so that we may discern the good and perfect will of God. Thus the whole man, body and mind, becomes the property of the holy God.

RIGHT USE OF GIFTS.

It is the will of God that we should employ all the gifts he has bestowed upon us with a view to building up of the body of Christ. Our first duty is to discover and estimate at its true value the special gift which has been imparted to each one of us. We are prone to think too highly of ourselves, and hence to neglect those lowly offices for which we have real qualifications. The one who ministers or serves should give himself to his ministry, the teacher to his teaching, and he who knows how to stir men up to do their duty should not neglect the gift of exhortation. All service to the brotherhood is enhanced when performed in the right spirit. Whoever imparts should do it with simplicity and singleness of purpose, not counting on any reward; he that leads in Christian work should be very diligent; and a deed of mercy is doubly helpful when cheerfully performed.

A GUIDING PRINCIPLE.

Rules of conduct cannot make a strong and symmetrical Christian character, unless they take deep root in a fertilizing principle. Unfeigned love will always guide one aright. Genuine love for the brethren will cause all the unselfish graces to blossom and bear fruit. Humility, industry, fervor, cheerfulness, patience, prayerfulness, generosity, hospitality, forgiveness, sympathy, peaceableness—these and all other active and passive virtues thrive in the soil of brotherly love. Only love thy neighbor as thyself, and thou canst not intentionally wrong him. The humblest brother will not be beneath your notice, and from your life a thousand rills of blessing will gladden other hearts.

A GOLDEN RULE.

Principles are greater than rules; but rules may help us to do our full duty. Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." The Christian cannot well be a pessimist; for he believes in the final triumph of good over evil. Inspired by this sublime faith in the inherent and eternal superiority of right over wrong, the follower of the lowly Christ fights evil with good. He is not foolish enough to fight the devil with fire; for Satan is quite at home in that element. Persecutors are attacked with words of blessing and deeds of unselfish kindness. Christians depend upon the artillery of heaven in their battle with wicked men. Should we not seek to attain the highest skill in the use of our heavenly weapons? Victory is assured in the end.—John R. Sampey, in Baptist Union.

Moving Things.

BY A. T. BOWSER BV, PH. D., LL. D.

One of the finest sights in the world is that of an immense engine standing at a depot, hitched to a train of cars. There is a full head of steam on, and as you watch the rush of smoke and steam from the smoke-stack you are impressed with the fact that there is a tremendous fire on under the boiler. You feel the throb of that great machine, and every few seconds there is a deafening escape of steam from its iron cell. That engine seems to you like some living being, which is impatiently waiting to rush away with its heavy load. It seems to know what it is expected to do, and nervously awaits permission to lay hold. In a moment the valve is drawn open

a little, and, like a willing horse in the collar, it strains under the load; the valve is opened a little more, and the large drive-wheels spin around upon the rails, but soon it has recovered itself, and that train is flying along like a bird in the air.

SOME PEOPLE ARE LIKE STEAM ENGINES.

They have within them a mighty force, and they are keen for every opportunity to employ it. They seek heavy tasks, great undertakings, and burdensome toil, and with a zest they "make it go." It must go, for they have so willed it. To be idle or listless would have a withering effect upon them; would make life a gloomy fog, and rob their hearts of every vestige of good cheer. There are others, however, who are ambitionless, and whose lives are aimless. To live and crawl will do them quite nicely. They have no objective point, no desire to accomplish anything worthy. They will be glad to keep the stomach full and the head empty, and are quite content to graduate nobodies. A lazy youth will be a lazy man. A crooked sapling will be a crooked tree. The great mass of thieves, paupers and criminals in general have come to what they are by being brought up to do nothing useful. Laziness grows upon people; it begins in cobwebs and ends in iron chains. I knew a man who thought that he was too weak to walk. He lay around on a lounge for years, and the result was that his muscles all deteriorated and disappeared. He really had no muscle; and when he realized what had happened, it was altogether too late to repair the injury, and he died through the very stagnation of his life.

THAT FOOLISH MOUSE.

Probably you have heard the East Indian fable of the mouse. A mouse that dwelt near the abode of a great magician was kept in such distress by its fear of a cat that the magician, taking pity on it, turned it into a cat itself. Immediately it began to suffer from its fear of a dog, so he turned it into a dog. Then it began to suffer from its fear of a tiger, and he turned into a tiger. Then it began to suffer from its fear of hunters, and the magician, in disgust, said, "Be a mouse again. If you have only the heart of a mouse, it is impossible to help you by giving you the body of a nobler animal."

There are some mouse-hearted people and they will never act the part of a lion. Fortune, success, fame, position, are never gained, but by piously, determined, bravely sticking and living to a thing until it is fairly accomplished. Determine to carry a thing through; believe that you were made for the matter, and that no one else can do it. Put forth your whole energies. Be awake, electrify yourself and with firm purpose lay hold of your work. When it has been accomplished you will think better of yourself; others will think better of you. Drive right along in whatever you undertake. Consider yourself amply sufficient for the deed and you will succeed. To lose courage is but to fall ignominiously. No man has the right to expect good fortune, unless he goes to work and deserves it. A self-made man once said, "Luck! I never had any luck but by getting up every morning at five and working as hard as I could." A brother of the distinguished Edmund Burke was found in a reverie after listening to one of his most eloquent speeches in parliament, and being asked the cause replied: "I have been wondering how Ned has contrived to monopolize all the talents of the family; but then I remember, when we were at play he was always at work." Hannibal, the great Carthaginian general, was planning a campaign in Italy against the Romans, and he had decided to march his ponderous army all the way there, when one of his generals interposed the remark, "Oh, but the Alps."

"THERE WILL BE NO ALPS."

was the quick reply. He would have no insurmountable obstacles; he would know no hindrances to the accomplishment of his purposes, and he led his armed hosts over the ledges, and through the defiles. At his command and behind his heels they clambered over dangerous crags, and crawled along dizzy heights, and leaped yawning seams and crevasses, until in triumph, and hardened by the toils and dangers of the journey, they dropped into the sunny clime of Italy and defeated Roman chivalry at Cannae.

The noblest man on earth is he who puts his hands cheerfully and proudly to honest labor. "Labor is a business and ordinance of God." It is a labor which makes music in the mines, and on the furrow, and on the forge. Lazy people take the most trouble. There was a man in a certain town, who, being lazy-minded, used to steal all his firewood, instead of working for it. He would get up cold mornings and take it from his neighbor's wood-piles. A computation was made, and it was found that he spent more time and worked harder than if he had earned it in an honest way. There is a law of nature to the effect that unused organs will ultimately disappear. This has been shown by the eyeless fish in a dark cave in Italy. These fish have never had any light, and as the eyes have been unused throughout many generations of them, they are now there as a species of eyeless fish. This seems to be God's law in nature, and only expresses the same thought as that of the parable of the fruitless tree. When the master of the vineyard came and looked for fruit, he felt that he had a right to expect an abundance. This right was based upon three things: (a) The nature of the tree. It was supposed and calculated to be a fruit bearing tree. (b) The time and care expended upon it by his paid gardener. (c) The amount of room which it occupied in a valuable spot, and the strength that it drew from the ground. He was very disappointed and angry. "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?"—Baptist Union.