

ABIDE IN ME.

"Abide in me, I pray, and I in thee:
From this great hour, oh! leave me nevermore:
Then shall the discord cease, the wound be healed,
The life-long bleeding of the soul be o'er.

"Abide in me; o'ershadow by thy love
Each half-formed purpose and dark thought
Of sin;
Quench, ere it rise, each selfish, low desire;
And keep my soul as thine, calm and divine.

"As some rare perfume in a vase of clay
Pervades it with a fragrance not its own,
So, when thou dwellest in a mortal soul,
All heaven's own sweetness seems around it
Thrown.

"Abide in me. There have been moments blest
When I have heard thy voice and felt thy
power:
Then evil lost its grasp; and passion hushed,
Owned the divine enchantment of the hour.

"These were but seasons beautiful and rare;
Abide in me, and they shall ever be:
Full! at once thy precept and my prayer;
Come and abide in me, and I in thee."
—Mrs. H. B. Stowe.

"WHAT IS THAT TO THEE?"

OR, THE CHURCH CARPET.

"Ethel Gray, I never was so angry in all my life. The idea of old Mrs. Jackson acting like this. A pretty Christian she is," and Ruth Hudson emphasized her remarks with an almost tragic gesture, which set her bangles jangling like so many weapons of war.

Ruth was what her brother called "a jingling girl." When she walked, countless jet ornaments danced upon her gown, and all her movements were accompanied by the flutter of ribbons, and the bobbing of aggressive bows. Just now her eyes snapped, and her short, straight bang bristled with indignation.

Ethel Gray looked at Ruth quietly. She never became excited over anything, and perhaps for that reason Ruth made her the confidante of all her rages and ecstasies.

"Why, Ruth," she inquired, gently, "what has old Mrs. Jackson done?"

"Done? she has done enough to disgust me with religion, and trying to help people. I don't care, it's no use trying. I am going to be as selfish as I can. It is just as May Raymond says, you always get into trouble if you join any religious society."

"May Raymond does not speak to half the girls in school, and you know, Ruth, you don't like her yourself."

"That may all be, yet she was right when she advised me not to join the Christian Endeavor, and I wish I had never heard of the old!"

"Girls, what is the matter?" cried the sweet, cheery voice of Miss Grayson, the teacher of rhetoric. "It is not to-morrow's lessons that you are discussing so eagerly, I know."

Ruth was too excited to stop. "I know you will think I am wicked, Miss Grayson, and I suppose I am, but I can't help it. I am tired of being good and benevolent and charitable, and all the rest of the ought-to-be."

Both Miss Grayson and Ethel laughed heartily, and a faint smile began to twitch the corners of Ruth's mouth, and soon developed into the irresistible little chuckle peculiar to herself.

"There, now I feel better, and will tell you all about it," she said, brightly. "To begin at the beginning, I joined the Christian Endeavor Society in our church last fall. I tried hard to keep all the rules, and for quite a time I felt that I was really getting good. I enjoyed the meetings, and was encouraged about myself. We girls thought it would be nice to save our money, and fix up the Bible class-room. You know, Miss Grayson, what a shabby-looking place it is, and the carpet is not decent. Well, we met, and voted to use our funds for that purpose. Grace Brown and myself were appointed to select a carpet, and Tuesday we walked all over town to find the prettiest one we could. We both gave up going to Jessie Lee's party Monday night so we could spare the time from school work. At Dobson's, we found just what we wanted, a dark blue ground, with gold-colored figures. It is perfectly lovely, and cheap, too, because when we told Mr. Dobson what it was for, he let us have it at a reduction. Mamma was going to send our Kate to clean the floor when old Mrs. Jackson found out

what we were doing, and made such a fuss. She went to Mrs. Holden, and told her that my mother ought to be ashamed of herself encouraging the girls in such extravagance; that she thought the old carpet was good enough, and if we were really anxious to help the church, we had better apply our funds to paying off the interest on the debt. Then she said that she did not believe in young people having meetings of their own, and they were fast crowding the older ones out, and, just think of it, Miss Grayson, that the Christian Endeavor was skim-milk religion."

"Who told you, Ruth, that old Mrs. Jackson said this?"

"Mrs. Holden; she was very indignant, and told mamma that very day; but old Mr. Jackson is a trustee, and made a time at the Board meeting, so some of the gentlemen wanted to know if we would be willing to wait a while before fitting up the room."

"What reply did you make?"

Ruth's face flushed as she said, emphatically, "We told them that we would give up the whole thing, Christian Endeavor and all, and that old Mrs. Jackson might run the church into the ground or anywhere else she pleased. My mother says she thinks it is shameful, and I am tired of Christians, and I wish that old woman would trip on the carpet and break her neck, and!"

"Wait a moment, dear," said Miss Grayson's gentle voice. "I want to ask you one question. Granted that Mrs. Jackson made all these unkind speeches, do you think she did so because she is a Christian?"

"No," replied Ruth, in a somewhat puzzled tone.

"Did she not manifest an absence of the Spirit of Christ?"

"Yes," replied Ethel and Ruth most heartily, "she did."

Miss Grayson smiled, the emphasis was so great. Her next remark seemed very irrelevant to the girls.

"I have a message for you, Ruth and Ethel, and you cannot tell how the future usefulness of your lives depends upon the manner in which you receive it."

"Who is it from, Miss Grayson?"

Miss Grayson took from her pocket the little shabby Testament, with which all her pupils were so familiar, and read from it this question, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." This is the message, girls, from the Master, whom you are trying to serve. What is it to you what old Mrs. Jackson says or does? The important thing is, are you following Christ? Are you doing his work in his way, and in his spirit?"

Ethel said, almost reproachfully, "Miss Grayson, do you mean that we are to give up to that horrid old woman?"

"Do you think Christ would have done so, Ethel?"

"Oh, dear, yes! he would," replied Ruth, with a groan.

"It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master," quoted Miss Grayson, softly. Then, turning with one of her impulsive movements, she continued, "Girls, some people might tell you that this was a very unimportant matter, all this fuss and talk about a carpet, but I do not feel so. To me it means just this, are Ethel Gray and Ruth Hudson going to make two Christlike, Christian women? Are they going to do charitable work in the spirit of charity, or are they going to be satisfied to follow the example of old Mrs. Jackson, and work for Christ only when they can do it on their own terms?"

Ruth said, hastily, "I don't want to be like Mrs. Jackson, she is so sharp, and quick-tempered, and!" — Then she stopped, and looked conscious.

Miss Grayson went on without noticing the interruption, "As you grow older you will find much to discourage you in church and charitable work. You will be asked to serve on committees with unreasonable, disagreeable women. You will discover that those high in authority and influence have many serious faults. Criticism will dampen your zeal and make you feel, as you do this afternoon, that it is no use trying to be good. This is the time when the devil reaps many a harvest. When a young Christian feels that older Christians are unjust and cruel, when he or she can see that church work is often done for individual purposes instead of for the glory of God, the temptation is to stop

working for Christ, and to excuse ourselves by quoting the faults and mistakes of others. I remember a rough old man who once said, 'Folks that live on the sins of Christians have mighty poor fodder.' It is a starvation diet, spiritually, girls. You will save yourselves great disappointment and sorrow if you commence your Christian work in the right spirit, doing it as unto the Lord, not expecting the praise of your fellow-workmen, but seeking the approval of the Master. You will always find a Mrs. Jackson in every church, in every society, but, when you meet her, don't waste any precious time in opposing or resisting her authority, and, above all, do not let any disciple separate you from the Master."

Ruth's bright face was very serious, and Ethel's lips trembled as she said, "Thank you, Miss Grayson. I hope I shall never forget the message. Where is it, please?"

"In the twenty-second verse of the last chapter of St. John's Gospel. I wish you would take it for your text this year."

The Society of Christian Endeavor in the Second Church did not furnish the Bible class-room. Their funds were given to the payment of the yearly interest. Old Mrs. Jackson openly rejoiced that "her words had been spoken in season, and the young folks taught their duty."

One day, some months later, Ruth overheard the girls in school talking about her. May Leonard was saying, "I always admired Ruth Hudson, but, do you know, I was afraid of her. She is so smart, and used to say such sharp things; but lately she has changed; she is sweeter. I love her now."

Ruth's heart glowed. "It is true," she thought, "if we give up anything for Christ's sake, we do have a reward. It is all that carpet. I am so glad I gave up. I believe I feel sorry for old Mrs. Jackson."

—Helen Jay in Golden Rule.

A BEAUTIFUL EXPERIMENT.

The following beautiful chemical experiment may be easily performed to the great astonishment of many at a party. Take two or three leaves of red cabbage, cut them into small pieces, put them into a basin, and pour a pint of boiling water on

them; let it stand an hour, then pour off the liquid into a decanter. It will be of a fine blue color. Then take four wine-glasses; into one put six drops of strong vinegar; into another six drops of solution of soda; into a third the same quantity of a strong solution of alum, and let the fourth glass remain empty. The glasses may be prepared some time before, and the few drops of colorless liquid that have been placed in them will not be noticed. Fill up the glasses from the decanter, and the liquid poured into the glass containing acid will quickly become a beautiful red; the glass containing the soda will be a fine green; that poured into the empty one will remain unchanged. By adding a little vinegar to the green, it will immediately change to a red, and on adding a little solution of soda to the red, it will assume a fine green, thus showing the action of acids and alkalis on vegetable blues.—Selected.

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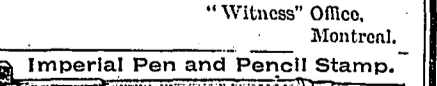
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