

HER FIRST CHURCH SERVICE.

A bright-eyed little maiden,
With unaccustomed air,
She wondered at the organ,
And nodded during prayer;
She listened to the reading,
And watched the people, too,
For her first Sunday service
Seemed very strange and new.

And when the congregation
Broke forth in sacred song,
She stood upon the footstool,
And tried to help along.
She did not know their music,
And so she chose her own—
Of "little robin rebroke"
She sang, in cheery tone.

DEACON BATES' WIFE.

A STORY FOR FARMERS.

[C. M. Livingston, in N. Y. Observer.]

Mrs. Bradley had come up to Berkshire with her husband and many others to attend the annual convocation of their church. While she rested in her room after the morning session, she heard a conversation which interested her, between two men on the veranda just under her window.

Through the half-open blinds she recognized one of them as Deacon Bates, a sturdy farmer, elderly, who had shown much good sense in the few words he had spoken upon one of the resolutions in the business meeting.

"Whether farming can be made to pay or not depends a good deal upon the sort of wife a man has," Deacon Bates was saying, and this was the sentence which arrested Mrs. Bradley's attention.

"If he has to run the farm and the house too, and depend upon hired help he can't lay up anything. One of my neighbors is in that fix; his wife doesn't know how to work herself, she trusts everything to help, and spends her time gadding about. Things go at sixes and sevens; their butter and poultry are the poorest in the market. I am sorry for him. I believe I've got the best wife in the country myself. He went to the tippling back his chair against the house and, clasping his hands over the back of his head, 'she beats everything there is going for work. She tends to everything herself; it is up at daylight and something before, and her butter is tip-top; we get the biggest prices going. She's a splendid cook, too, I never need go away from home to get good victuals, now I tell you. Well, the fact is she is as smart as a steel trap at anything she sets her mind on. She makes all her own clothes and most of mine, and boards the farm hands, and once in a while takes some city boarders. I never would 'a' been so forehanded if it hadn't 'a' been for her. And she's always at home, summer and winter. I don't believe she's been off the place once to go to church this twenty years."

"Poor drudge!" Mrs. Bradley exclaimed to herself as the dinner bell put an end to the conversation.

It so happened that in the course of that summer Mrs. and Mr. Bradley, wishing to find comfortable quarters for a few weeks in the country, near enough to the city so that Mr. Bradley could go in and out conveniently, were directed to Berkshire and to the house of Deacon Bates.

It was not until she was seated at the tea-table in the cool dining-room of the Bates family one July evening, that Mrs. Bradley identified the deacon as the man with an extraordinary wife. Mrs. Bates did not look in the least like the busy bustling worker Mrs. Bradley had pictured. She was a small pale woman with grey hair and wistful brown eyes. Her low-spirited words were few, and her manner apathetic, as if life had lost its flavor if it ever had any.

During the next few weeks Mrs. Bradley had opportunity to prove that Deacon Bates had spoken truly of his wife. Her home was a model of neatness, her "victuals" were truly delicious, and each day she turned out an amount of work, assisted only by one other pair of hands, which was truly incredible. "A working machine," Mrs. Bradley thought as she watched the treadmill round of kitching, milking, churning, washing, ironing, cooking and washing dishes, beginning at sunrise and not by any means concluded at sunset.

Sometimes in the twilight the tired woman rested a few minutes, then Mrs. Bradley, pitying the narrow life, would try to awaken an interest in an article in the newspaper, or a bit from an amusing book; but the weary listener usually nodded in the middle of the first sentence, and then she would be fast asleep.

One evening after tea, she came upon Mrs. Bates, who was out under the apple-tree engaged in picking chickens. "You are at it early and late, aren't you?" Mrs. Bradley said, as she watched the swift fingers travel over the plump chicken. "I heard that you were perfectly remarkable, but I had not imagined that one so persistently industrious existed."

"You heard that of me?" Mrs. Bates exclaimed with more interest than she had ever before displayed. "How could you?"

"It was when the convention was held at Berkshire. I happened to overhear your husband talking your praise."

Mrs. Bradley hoped that at last she had found a key to open this closed heart, as a gleam of surprise flashed for an instant on the worn face of the farmer's wife, so she exerted all her powers of pleading; she praised the flower garden, remarked on the fine chicken, and admired the luxuriant vine that clambered over the woodhouse, but Mrs. Bates seemed absent-minded and less inclined to talk than usual. There was silence for a minute while she worked as if her life depended upon getting it done at a certain moment. Mrs. Bradley was just thinking how useless it was to try to get anything out of such a wooden woman, when suddenly Mrs. Bates, without lifting her eyes from her work, jerked out a question.

"Mrs. Bradley, I should like to know—would you mind telling me—what it was Daniel said that day up to Berkshire?"

"Who? Mr. Bates? Oh, he said he had the best wife in the whole country." And then, searching her memory, Mrs. Bradley gave a faithful report of what she had heard.

It was curious to note the effect of her words in the light which came into the sad eyes, and the faint flush which stole over the faded cheeks.

"Did Daniel say that?"

The wistful tone and the starting tear were pitiful to the other woman, who affected not to see or hear anything. She broke off a spray of flowering currant and said, as she tucked it in her belt and moved away:

"Yes, he did, and I quite agree with him," and then remarked to herself: "Poor creature, she has a heart after all."

It was an hour later when Mrs. Bradley sat alone on the front piazza, that Deacon Bates, his chimes all done, came and sat on the upper step. He was a man of much shrewd intelligence, who read his weekly religious paper from end to end, and liked occasionally to discuss an article or a doctrine with a bright woman like Mrs. Bradley.

His wife was still busy in the kitchen, as the rattling of the milk pans occasionally testified. Mrs. Bradley's thoughts followed the tired worker; her kind heart longed to make the weary life of this woman different. If only somebody would speak a few plain words to her husband, she reflected, and get his eyes opened.

"Why not that that yourself?" said her inner voice. She shrank from that, though, telling her conscience that perhaps she would sometime if she got a good opportunity.

The deacon, taking off his hat, ran his fingers meditatively through his grey locks, and opened up an article he had read that afternoon on the comparative merits of a trade or profession compared with farming.

"In my opinion," he declared, after decanting at some length upon the subject, "the farmer has the best of it every time; it's a healthy, independent sort of life, and he doesn't have to work like a slave the year round. In the winter he can get time to tinker at odd jobs and do a night of reading besides if he is so disposed."

Then Mrs. Bradley could not resist saying:

"And the farmer's wives? They too, have a good rest in the winter—fairly idle, aren't they?"

"Oh, no, there's plenty of work, but it isn't hard. In the fall, after the berries are put up, comes the drying of apples and pumpkins. Then there's sausage to make, and lard and tallow to try out. When all that's done there's lots of sewing and knitting and carpet-rags. My wife makes her own carpets, and my clothes and the boys' all but our Sunday coats. Then it takes a lot of cooking to keep three or four healthy appetites going, and we don't have any help in winter."

His listener could scarcely keep indignation from her tones as she replied: "Is it possible that this is the advantage of the work of the summer? I do not wonder that, according to statistics, a large proportion of the women confined in lunatic asylums are farmer's wives. It is a dreary life, making a woman into a perfect drudge."

"Well, I don't know," the farmer answered musingly, "we must earn our bread by the sweat of our brows. The Bible says that work's good for us; I guess it is, and a wise provision of Providence. I don't know what's any worse for women than it is for men."

"But it seems to me that the lot of the farmer's wife is less desirable than that of her husband. According to your own account she has less leisure; and then she seems to have more variety in her work, and it is relieved by small pleasures. In summer her work is mostly out of doors; then he jumps into his wagon and is off to town two or three times a week on errands; and his neighbor often happens along and leans on the fence and talks. At noon he takes a nap in his chair or reads his paper a few minutes. But according to my observation a farmer's wife is a drudge. She seems to have no time for these little rest-pauses, and the consequence is, all is dreary and monotonous. It is no wonder she loses her mind; it has paralysed, for her work is never done."

Deacon Bates sat silent a minute while he thoughtfully stroked the grey stubble on his chin. Then he said slowly: "I don't know, maybe it's so. I never thought of it just that way. Mrs. Bates came round the corner of the house just then and took down some clothes from the line in the side yard. Her husband watched her mechanically as she folded and placed them in the basket.

"Your wife is a marvel to me, accomplishing all she does," Mrs. Bradley said as she watched her. "But she looks worn; she will break down some day suddenly, I fear. It would make a wonderful difference to her house if her busy hands and feet still forever, wouldn't it?"

The deacon turned and looked at Mrs. Bradley half wildly, as if such a thing had never crossed his mind. Then he got up, strode over to the line just as his wife was about to lift the heavy basket of clothes, and taking it from her, carried it into the house. She followed, amazed.

Not since the first year of their married life had Dan offered to do any of her work. What had come over him?

When Deacon Bates had anything special on his mind he was wont to betake himself away to the orchard. He went there now and sat down on a low gnarled limb, and leaning his head against a tree, tried to think over the tormenting words Mrs. Bradley had spoken. They nettled him. He told himself she ought to mind her own business. But after all he had himself to blame. By his own confession his wife was a hard-worked woman. It was too humiliating! He had prided himself upon being kind to animals and considerate towards birds. Was it possible he had been cruel to his own wife? It must look like a good woman like Mrs. Bradley would not have spoken as she did.

The deacon was a good man. He was not going to spare himself now that his eyes were getting wide open. He went back to the house, and when he came to this farm, when "Cynthia" was young and bright. She used to talk and laugh then. What had changed her into the silent woman she now was? "If her

busy hands and feet should be still forever!" What awful words! He had no more than said in any change of mind than that the old eight-day clock, which had ticked on for forty years, should suddenly leave its place. And then, that dreadful thought about farmers' wives becoming insane. He had read enough to know that melancholy is one species of insanity. What if that should be slowly coming upon his wife; for certainly she grew more silent and sad year by year. It must be that she did work too hard, for when he came to reckon it up and said that to Mrs. Bradley, all the work she did summer and winter, it was more than he had supposed. How could she get any time for reading or going out? And now that he thought of it she never went anywhere, except to church, and not always that often, for she was too tired. How different it used to be! Once she frequently went to town with him, and they occasionally took tea with a neighbor or drove in to the sewing society. But of late years work had been pressing that there had been no time for going or inviting company. He had just gone on buying more land and more cows and employing more men, so adding to her labor, while she had but just the one helper they used to have. It was not good enough he had encouraged her to go on taking summer boarders occasionally, as she had herself suggested long ago, one year when the crops had failed. And he pretended to think she did it because she loved him. That was all stuff! He had seen her stand in the door and look after him, when he rode off to town on a pleasant afternoon, and he had heard something like a sigh just as he started. The dear patient woman had not complained or said sharp words; he was sure of that. But then, maybe her pig-headed husband might have seen things as they were. The truth was the love of money had taken possession of him, and he had sacrificed everything. He had not even hinted to his wife that she must spare herself, and he had forgotten to speak words of praise. He hated himself! For although he had been mean and selfish and grasping, he still loved the life of his youth. What would all the money he had scraped together be good for when he had laid her in the old burying-ground? The sturdy farmer, as he sat there thinking these sharp truths in the gathering shadows, realized for a moment the desolation of going out and praying with all his soul that he might be forgiven, and that he and his wife might go together, hand in hand, down the hill to the gate that leads out of life to life eternal.

The darkness had settled down when Deacon Bates got up and went into the house. He had gone over everything, had reconstructed affairs on a new basis and made several plans. He would have no difficulty in carrying them out, for his work had ever been law to him, and he would do anything he could to get out of his present predicament. It must surely be done, and this not on account of tyranny but because of the old-fashioned reverence for her husband as head of the family, which Mrs. Bates had always maintained, and instilled into the children. It was her unvarying decision.

It was not like Deacon Bates to say much about his new resolutions, but to proceed to put them into practice as rapidly as possible. There was no light in the sitting-room when he entered but he did not mind that. He went to the long window. He thought the room was empty till he caught sight of his wife asleep in her chair. Her mild pale face upturned in the white light sent a pang through the heart of the self-confident man. He went over to her, and laying his hand on her head, said:

"Come, mother, you better not wait up for the boys. I'd go right to bed if I were you." He continued to smooth her hair as he said it, and Mrs. Bates presently sat up staring and wondering. It was long since her husband had laid the habit of bestowing little endearments; he used often to do this very thing in the old days.

Was Daniel going to die? The next morning, soon after breakfast, Mr. Bates went away in his spring wagon, returning in the space of two hours with the strong, capable girl who assisted them on extra occasions, announcing, to the surprise of his wife, that Sophia Mills had come to stay till the end of the summer's work was over, "and mind you keep her busy," he told the astonished woman, "and you get some time to rest."

In the afternoon Mr. Bates drove to town, and as Mrs. Bradley had the day before said she wanted to match some worsteds, he took her along, taking the occasion to say as they were well on their way:

"I'm much obliged to you, Mrs. Bradley, for giving me a hint about my wife last night. I've been blind and dumb as an old bat. 'Nough said. Things'll be different. Now I want to ask you another favor. I wish you'd pick out a dress for my wife—a nice one, that'll do for best. I'm going to take her out West to see her sister when the crops are all in. She don't know a word about it yet."

Mrs. Bradley was delighted; she would be glad to help. What would he like?

"O, you must settle that, something sort of lady-like, black, I guess, and get some of that soft white stuff such as you wear, to go round her neck, and some ribbons and all the trimmings."

A more dazed woman than Mrs. Bates could not be found, when her husband, that night, after everyone else had gone to bed, presented her with a roll of handsome black cashmere.

"And Cynthia," he said, "you must have it made up nice like Mrs. Bradley's, with some ribbons a-fluttering in the wind."

"What's the matter with you, Dan?" his wife asked anxiously. "Whatever does all this mean?"

"It means, little women, that I've been an old brute. I've let you slave your self 'most to death with not a mite of help thrown in. Now it's going to be stopped. I'm going to take care of you the rest of the way. What would you say now to takin' a trip out West next month to see your sister Hannah?"

It was too much. Mrs. Bates could only cry and cry as if she would never stop, while her husband murmured as he stroked her hair:

"Women are curious. I looked for you to laugh instead of cry, Cynthia."

TO A LITTLE TROUT.

(St. Nicholas.)

Tell me, tell me, little trout,
Does your mother know you're out—
That you're truant from your school,
Playing hooky in this pool?

As you see, my little trout,
I desire to draw you out.
In the brook noise so abounds
That I cannot catch your sounds.

(If that joke he do but see,
Any trout should tickle be.)
Would you take the point so fine,
If I dropped you just a line?

Don't they teach it in these creeks
That when one above you speaks,
First, before a sole replies,
It is meet that you should rise?

Blithely, as becomes a trout
(I'm not angling for a pout),
Quickly take things on the fly,
For I've other fish to fry.

Thank you, thank you, little trout,
Schools are in but you are out;
School and pool alike forgot—
This is hooky—is it not?

Learning a Business.

A gentleman who had induced a large publishing house to take his son as boy into its employ at a moderate rate of pay, not long since, was especially anxious in his request that the young man should be made to work and learn the business.

This instruction was needless, as although modern fashion had done away with much of the janitor and porterage work of old times, yet the young man found the selection of stock for orders, packing the same, entering charging ditto, and occasional errands kept him actively employed for about ten hours a day, with an hour out for dinner.

At the end of three weeks' time he failed to put in an appearance, but the master waited until he was informed that the information that John would not return to the position.

"Why not?" asked the publisher.

"Well, John has to have his breakfast at half-past seven every morning to get ready, and then he is not used to carrying bundles, and sometimes he's been sent with books right up to the houses of people we know socially. My son hasn't been brought up that way, and I guess I won't have him learn this business."

He did not, and what's more, has never learned any other business.

Now let us look at another actual picture, that of the son of a wealthy mill owner desiring to become a manager of the mill.

"But that is impossible," said the father, "unless you practically learn the business."

"That is what I would like to do," said the son.

"But to become a superintendent or manager, you must be a man who has risen from the ranks and understands the mechanical department and the ways of employees."

"Let me begin in the ranks," then, replied the young man.

The father assented, stipulating that no favor should be shown the son, but he should actually begin the work at regular labor in the mechanical department.

Not only was this done, but the young man went and boarded at the manufacturing town at a workman's boarding house, and went in and out of the factory at bell call. In three years he was foreman of one of the departments, and a former classmate and well-known society man, who had been over to her, and laying his hand on her head, said:

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The Railway of the Future.

Few doubt that our present railway system is on the eve of a remarkable development. Splendid as the record of the present system is, it is guilty of killing and wounding about 35,000 people per annum in the United States alone; it carries passengers at an average speed of twenty-five miles an hour, and it burns coal enough to carry from one to six tons more for each passenger.

Mr. Oberlin Smith, ex-president of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, writing in the *Engineering Magazine*, holds that the ideal road-bed is a metallic tunnel in which the car can be confined like a piston in its cylinder. In favor of tunnels it must be remembered that they lose much of their unpleasantness when brilliantly lighted by electricity, and when no fire, smoke, steam, water or gas is permitted within them.

For propulsive force, we must look to electricity. So rapid, however, have been the strides of electrical science that the mist of doubt is cleared away, and looming up in the clear atmosphere is a newly-created warlike steed, with fire in his nostrils, who has already slain his thousands of street car enemies, and is panting for a fray with the great iron horse himself.

It is probable, according to this eminent authority, that, before long, we may have built some form of elevated railway, with a vast dead weight in the track rather than in the rolling stock, without switches or crossings on which derailment is impossible. It will have running on it, driven by electricity, light narrow cars, either singly or in trains, which will be able to run in front and smooth upon the sides, after the manner of a bird, in order that air resistance may be reduced to a minimum. If the electricians succeed in perfecting an electric block system which should not be so physically impracticable for one train to approach another either before or behind it, within a predetermined distance, then there need be no speed limit except that due to the requirements of not braking a car so rapidly, within a given available stopping distance, as to throw passengers violently from their seats.

The actual speed which will be obtained is, of course, extremely problematical as yet, but there seems to be no inherent mechanical reasons why we should not, on long and absolutely clear stretches of track, obtain a velocity approaching two hundred miles an hour.

Such velocity, of course, to the men who are never satisfied that anything can be done until it is done, seems to be utterly impracticable; but with such an equipment as we have described, and with such a force as electricity, there does not seem to be any inherent improbability in the prophecy.—*Watchman*.

How Windows are Cleaned in St. Petersburg.

In this far-away capital of the vast Russian empire even the meanest houses are built with an honest thickness and solidity of wall fitted to withstand a Western wind. As the cold season threatens, double windows are inserted, and both inner and outer casements are hermetically sealed. No one considers it at all essential to ventilate the severity of the winter by any further means than that afforded in the frequent lighting and burning of immense oxygen lamps. Window panes, of course, soon get dirty and dingy, but with this closed-up and battened-down arrangement there is no possible method of cleaning them from the inside. This has promoted the existence of a unique business in St. Petersburg. There are several fully incorporated companies whose sole business is window cleaning. Offices are open to receive orders, and men are sent out with long ladders and the necessary appliances for window cleaning. It is funny enough to watch them scrambling up the *facades* of the yellow stuccoed houses, but one stops to think how cold and ungenial an occupation theirs must be.

In St. Petersburg many people among the lower classes encase themselves in shaggy sheepskins, looking quite the type, low-backed and unkempt, one learns to recognize in photographs of the Russian peasant. The warmth of this natural covering and the great power of endurance among these people make certain kinds of work which would kill European possible to them without injury. For instance, it is customary for the *conierge* (or porter) at nine o'clock to place a chair outside the great door of the dwelling, and on it he places himself, wretched mortal, for the long, cold night. He is there to ensure the safety of the house. Driving through the wonderful streets of St. Petersburg one sees by ten o'clock a black shadow tucked into the corner of every doorway, huddled there for the night. But these men make no complaint, their fathers did the same before them—a sufficient reason for every good Russian.—*Wide Awake*.

Why Do the Leaves Fall.

It is generally supposed that leaves fall in the autumn because they die. This is not a correct view. If we break off a leafy branch the leaves will wither, but not drop off. In fact, they will cling to the dried branch until the greater tenacity than when they were green and alive, requiring some force to wrench or twist them off. In tropical climates they remain green much longer than in temperate countries, and their fall is not so sudden. It is not just before the cold season, but during the hot dry season. Many of our own trees, as oaks and hornbeams, retain their leaves dried and withered till the pressure of the new distending bud in spring displaces them.

As in man, the seeds of his decay are born with him, so in the leaf but there may be discovered the rudiments of a very delicate layer of cells, whose plane is at right angles to the plane of the leaf. When the time comes this upright growth of cells enlarges, pushing from above downward, cutting through the woody fibres of the stem like a knife blade. Thereafter,

At every gust how the dead leaves fall!—*Harper's Bazar*.

—Jacob G. Locke, proprietor of Clifton House, Lockport, N. S., writes: "This is to certify that I had been suffering with dyspepsia for three years, having nearly all the different forms of that disease. After having tried doctors and different medicines which claimed to cure dyspepsia, I still found myself suffering worse than before. Having heard of K. D. C. through a commercial traveller and of it being highly recommended, I decided to try it. I was obliged to use a cane and crutch, everything which could be thought of was done without good result, until he began taking Hood's Sarsaparilla."

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For Fevers.

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