

MAY'S SACRIFICE.

MAY walked over the potato patch, where she had been talking with her uncle, picked up her school books and lunch-bag from an old stump, and started for school.

Ten years ago she had come to her uncle's, a homesick little orphan. Her homesickness gradually wore away before the kindness of her aunt and uncle and the jollity of her cousins—six boys, all younger than herself. To go to the city, thirty miles away, where she had never been, was the ambition of her heart; and after much waiting she ventured to ask her uncle. "I wish you could, May," he had said, "but you see how it is; we can't spare the money for you to go on the cars, and I never thought it a girl's place to drive in on top of a farm cart; but may be we'll be able to send you some day."

"I didn't mean for you to send me, Uncle; would you be willing for me to go if I earned the money myself? A return trip is only \$1.50?"

"If you did what?"

"Earned the money myself."

"An' how would you do that?"

"Oh, I have thought all about that, if you'll only please say I can go. Please do, Uncle," and she stroked his rough shirt-sleeve, by way of emphasis.

"An' how would you earn the money?" he persisted, hoeing the potatoes very hard to hide the twinkle in his eye.

"Why, the field daisies are all out now, and I could easily fill a basket with small bunches. You're going to town day after to-morrow; would it be very much trouble for you to sell them while you're selling the garden stuff?"

"Well now! I think not; you just go to work to-morrow and pick all you can; get out at recess if you want to."

"Oh, thank you," and she skipped away.

How slowly the next few days went by, and how anxiously she watched for her uncle's return.

"Do you think he could get a \$1.50, Auntie? The trip is only \$1.25; would it not be splendid if he did?" She set the table very carefully that night, then went out to pick a cup of strawberries for her aunt and uncle's tea. After tea her uncle put a small envelope in her hand, and hurried out to milk the cows. She paused a moment before opening it.

"Auntie, do you suppose that it's a \$1.50?" Then she broke the seal, and out fell a crisp dollar bill, and fifty-five cents.

"Aren't you glad? aren't you glad?" shouted Johnnie, capering round her, and upsetting a bowl of milk, while Dick picked up the fifty cent piece, remarking

gravely, "That would make a good end for the little engine papa is making for me; the piece of tin I got was too small."

At noon, next Monday, as the girls were eating their lunch under a tree, a horse and buggy drove up with two ladies. One the girls all knew—Mrs. Reid, a city lady, who was spending the summer in the quiet village, and was the girls' Sunday School teacher—the other an older lady they did not know.

"Girls," said Mrs. Reid, pleasantly, "can you come up to my house to-morrow afternoon and stay to tea? I want to tell you something." Then she drove off, leaving the girls in a maze of curiosity.

"What do you suppose she wants us for?"

"Who was that lady with her? She isn't half as pretty as Mrs. Reid."

"Wasn't it nice of her to ask us all together?"

"Won't we have a fine time?"

"Well girls, I suppose you want to know what I want to say to you. I don't want to say anything. It is this lady. I told her if she came out here she might find good material for a mission band, and I hope you won't disappoint her."

Then the strange lady came forward. She had a pleasant smile, that won the girls' hearts to her in a minute, and before long they were won to a mission band too, as she talked in a sweet, sympathetic way about the needs of our heathen sisters.

May sat a little from the girls by herself, and was very quiet, while all the others talked at once.

"The membership fee, only twenty-five cents, that's not much! The PALM BRANCH only ten cents, when you have a club; of course we will take that; it'll help tell what we're working for."

"Christmas offering, Easter Self-denial week, mite-boxes, will we have those?"

"Oh, of course! won't it be fine, just like earning one's own living. I'll clink my mite-box under Tom's very nose every time he goes to spend a cent he oughtn't to."

"I guess you'll have to get something inside of it to clink, before you do the clinking, Sally Baxter."

That night May sat alone in the quiet kitchen with her uncle; all traces of small boys had disappeared, except a pile of stockings, a blouse, and a coat, on the table, waiting to be mended. The door opened softly, and her aunt came in with May's gloves, hat, and her new print dress, on her arm.

"What are you going to do, Auntie?"

"Oh, I thought if you would help me mend the boys' things, I would mend that hole in your glove, fix your hat, and sew a piece of lace on your dress. Then you could start for the city Wednesday, and there would be no fuss and hurry at the last minute."

May turned her face away a minute; it was hard. "Auntie, you need not bother; I'll get that all done before Sunday, and—I'm not going to town."

Then she told what had been done in the afternoon, "And, Auntie, don't you think I could make that little sacrifice cheerfully, when so many are so much worse off than I am?"

L. M. R. D.

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