

at a time. I can't work up towards one great thing, I can only fit in, here and there, as I am needed.

The girls sat for some little time looking at each other, and it was still in the room. Then Margaret put her arm around Mary's shoulders, and drew her close.

'You have taught us all, dear,' she said, softly, 'to "fit in, here and there, as one is needed,"—that is to have one's life a plan of God.'—Mary A. P. Stansbury.

Nan—A True Story.

(By J. Harmon Patterson in the 'Dominion Presbyterian'.)

It was a day that I shall never forget: the day I first saw Nan. I had left the camp three days ago and for three days I had been very drunk. Even on that morning I was not quite sober. I was sitting in the park waiting for Paddy McGovern and Teddy Ryan who were to meet me there. We were to put in the day together and end up with drinking as usual.

She had evidently been shopping for she had a basket on her arm, and was walking briskly along when a bicyclist coming rapidly around a corner ran directly against her. She was thrown violently to the ground by the shock and the cowardly wheelman did not wait to see what damage he had done, but mounted quickly and rode away. I hurried over to where she lay and raised her up. She seemed badly hurt. At first she could not speak and I thought she might be dead. Very beautiful she looked as she lay there. She was about sixteen years of age and so fair that it seemed wrong for me to touch her. However, she soon recovered sufficiently to tell me where she lived; and hastily securing a conveyance I took her home. There was a sweet-faced old lady at the door and it was hard for me to tell her why I had come; but when I explained that the little girl was hurt, they made me carry her into the house. Then I hastened for the doctor, with whom I returned to learn if she was in danger. He relieved our minds by telling us that she would be all right in a few days. The lady thanked me very kindly and asked me to call again.

I thought I had done a very neat morning's work and deserved a treat in consequence. Somehow the idea did not please me; thoughts of that sweet-faced girl came to me as I walked over to the saloon, and I did not go in. Two of the boys met me on the street, and their wild profane greeting seemed to jar on me. I returned again to the park and sat on one of the benches considering the situation, which was this: I had worked hard in the bush all winter and now my wages would soon be spent, then I would go on to the drive, work for a few months, come to town and spend my wages as before, and now here I was no better than a tramp; but why the thing worried me I could not tell. Suddenly I was roused from my thoughts by Paddy and Teddy, who, failing to find me, had come to see if I were still waiting, so I went with them and this day shaped very much like the preceding ones.

When I awoke next morning my first thoughts were of the little girl, and I determined to go and see her, rough as I was. I knocked at the door, it was opened by the old lady. 'I came to see how the patient is this morning,' I said.

'Come in and see her.' On going in I found her pillowed up in a large chair. I had never seen such a beautiful picture. She was pale, and her face was framed by

a great wreath of dark hair; her eyes were very bright and seemed to fascinate me. I stood there awkwardly holding my hat in my hand; not knowing what to say. She soon put me at my ease by thanking me for my assistance on the day before.

'I am sorry I can't find the man who did it,' I remarked, 'I'd jolly well punch his head if I could.'

She laughed heartily at this, and enquired what advantage that would be to either of us. She asked me questions about the bush; and soon I was telling her stories of camp life. She seemed to be interested. 'You do not often get a chance to go to church,' she remarked. That rather floored me for I had not been inside a church for ten years. I told her that I did not often go. 'I suppose you go now that you are in town,' I remarked.

'Come along with me next Sunday,' she said, with a smile.

I looked at her doubtfully. 'I think I see you going to church with a low shanty-man,' I replied, 'I am a fine specimen to go with the likes of you.' And the idea of my going to church with a girl like her made me laugh, for I did not think she was in earnest.

'But I mean it,' she said, 'for I want you to come.'

'I couldn't do it; I have not been there for so long.'

'All the more reason that you should come now. I will expect you to-morrow morning at ten o'clock, and you will not disappoint me,' she replied.

I left the house feeling as though I was caught, somehow, but I fully decided to go to church, come what may, it couldn't hurt me, anyhow. So I entered a clothing store to make myself presentable. After I had arrayed myself in new clothes complete, on looking into the glass I was quite charmed by the reflection I saw there. Then I took a new hotel so as better to avoid my old companions; for, to tell the truth, I felt as if they were not good enough for me now. I had risen in the world, and as I sat in front of the best hotel in town, talking to a gentleman it seemed to me that most of my life was a dream; for no matter what a man may be, to know that he is as well dressed and as decent-looking as the average, is a source of satisfaction to him.

Well, I went to church; it was not the finest in town, for which I was duly thankful. I felt very awkward for a time. It seemed to me that everyone was looking at me and at me alone; but soon I became interested in the sermon and forgot all else. The minister was an old man and appeared to be very much in earnest. I shall never forget what he said. It was the old story of the prodigal son, and he seemed to know all my past life, for he told the whole story. I listened in breathless attention, and when he came to where the poor scamp went back home again and the old father was so glad to see him, a great longing came over me to go back to the old home which I had not seen for so many years, and to gladden the heart of my father, whom I knew mourned for his son as for one dead. Tears came to my eyes, for I saw all my life as it really was. All my years of wild recklessness and sin came up before me, and I felt like crying out, 'I will arise and go to my father.'

The sermon was over; the organ burst into a grand triumphant strain which floated over my sin-sick soul as the joyful song of heaven over the repentent sinner. I felt a choking sensation in my throat. I

could not endure it any longer; and it was a great relief when I saw the people rise to go out. I did not speak to my companion, nor she to me, but when we reached the gate and I said good-bye, she asked me to come again, which I promised to do.

I did not go home. I wanted to get out into the woods where I could think the matter over to myself; so I walked into the country, found a little grove and sat down to reason on the question. My meditations were not pleasant by any means and the more I thought on the subject the more uncomfortable I became. At last I determined to go back to town, hunt up the boys, and forget all about it. So I returned; found Paddy and Teddy, feeling ashamed of myself for showing such weakness. They greeted me gladly and geyed me on my clothes, wanting to know if I had been to the Salvation Army; and Sunday as it was we managed to get a quantity of liquor. I was the most reckless of the trio, for I wanted to forget the events of the day. That night I was carried to bed in an unconscious state. So much for a start.

I awoke next morning in the old hotel, and feeling very badly indeed. Not all the persuasions of my two companions could induce me to taste the eye-opener they had prepared for me. As they were seasoned vessels the vile stuff we had drunk the night before did not seriously affect them. After a time I got up but could not take any food, my head seemed bursting, while my nerves were all on a quiver. In such a state one naturally feels somewhat repentant and inclined to swear off; though promises made in that condition are not apt to result in much lasting good. But as I sat on a lumber pile by the river I did make a solemn promise that in the future I would not touch, taste or handle, and that I would go at once to the little girl and ask her to help me to be good.

Now I knew well enough in my heart of hearts, that this was not the way to begin; I knew that the God of my fathers was the only one to keep me safe from the awful temptation in store for me; for well I knew of the fiery trial that I was to undergo. Somehow a great longing came over me to be good, to live a sober life and be respected by my fellow men. Then came before me the sweet face of that little girl; her mild eyes, which seemed to speak to me of holy things and it helped me to make up my mind. I could do anything if she would only be my friend. I had not a friend like her for such a long time that it seemed to take me back to the days when I was sober and respected.

My mind was at last made up. I went up the quiet street on which the girl lived. She was sitting on a veranda in a rocking chair, and seemed quite pleased to see me. I felt ashamed, for I knew that my red-face and blood-shot eyes would tell the tale, but she did not seem to notice.

After a while she asked me how I had enjoyed the sermon last Sunday.

'Miss—I do not know what to call you,' I began.

'Call me Nan,' she said.

So I told her the whole story; I did not spare myself a bit. She looked very sorry and her eyes grew large as I told her of what I had done the night before. Then I said, 'What I came here for is this:—I have sworn off for good and I want you to help me keep it.'

'I would like to do so,' she said very gently; 'but I am only a sinful creature myself; so how could I help anyone else, There is One, however, who can keep you