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## Home Missionary Fence-Corners.

(Grace M. Clark, in the 'Christian Endeavor World'.)

'How many of you have made your plans to raise money for home-missionary work?' asked Miss Brown of her Endeavorers one morning in May. Several hands went up.

'I'm going to work out the garden at five cents an hour,' said Jim.

'Nannie and I are going to sweep and dust the shop at twenty-five cents a week,' said the milliner's daughter.

'I'm going to mind the chickens off the garden,' said small Charlie, whose folks had just moved in, and had not yet built their fences.

All the Endeavorers reported some way of earning missionary money except one freckled-faced girl on the back seat.

'Don't you want to help, Priscilla?' asked Miss Brown.

'Yes'm,' said Priscilla meekly. She hadn't the least idea of what home-missionary work was, but she was used to helping with all sorts of home work as a matter of course.

Miss Brown spent a few minutes in telling the Endeavorers of the ignorance and the very wretched homes of the people she wanted them to help. Meanwhile she watched Priscilla's face, and saw a queer expression which she couldn't interpret, but she was glad to see any kind of expression there. The face had been discouraging in its irresponsiveness.

After the society was dismissed, Miss Brown had a little talk with Priscilla.

'Isn't there something you can do at home to earn a little money? Can't you take care of the baby, or sweep, or dust, or even work in the garden?' she asked.

'Yes'm, I do all that, of course,' said Priscilla; 'but they don't never pay me nothin' for it.'

'Where do you live?'

'At the head of Cow Bell Holler.'

'You have a garden? Couldn't you raise some sunflowers? I know a man that will buy all the seed you can raise.'

'Yes'm,' replied Priscilla.

'Then I'll come to see you pretty soon, and bring the seeds, and show you how to plant them. Good-by.'

Monday was a half-holiday for Miss Brown. Resisting an inclination to stay at home and sleep, she resolutely turned her face in the direction of Cow Bell Hollow. She had been in the mountains only a few months, and had been too busy with her typewriter to learn anything about them outside of her immediate neighborhood. Lickburg, where she worked, was a thriving little village that had come in the wake of a railway recently built up to the Contrary Creek coal-mines. Thrifty farms stretched along the creek as far as one could see; but that wasn't far, for the mountains closed in abruptly. But Miss Brown had got the idea during her short residence in Lickburg that the whole country round about was about as prosperous as the country from which she came.

To-day, however, as she went up Contrary Creek to Calaboose Branch, and up the branch



PRISCILLA PLIED THE HOE VIGOROUSLY.

to Cow Bell Hollow, and up the hollow to Priscilla Gorby's home, she ceased to wonder that the girl was hopeless as to raising home-missionary money. The little farm that Mr. Gorby 'tended' was tipped up edgewise from the creek bed to meet the sky, and great rocks on its upper boundary threatened to tumble down and demolish the little log house.

'Silly! Silly!' chimed a chorus of children's voices, as Miss Brown climbed the rail fence surrounding the yard; 'here comes a woman.'

'This is poorer than the homes I told the Endeavorers about yesterday,' thought Miss Brown. 'I wonder what Priscilla thought of me.'

Priscilla seemed glad to see her guest, however. She took her into the one stifling room, containing three beds and some chairs, and invited her to 'rest her hat.'

'I named it to papa about raising them sunflowers,' said Priscilla; 'but he 'lowed he needed all this scope of land to make a living off of.'

Miss Brown 'lowed so, too; but she said cheerfully; 'Maybe we can find some other way. May I have some of those ferns in the fence-corner?' she asked, looking out through the back door.

'Yes'm,' replied Priscilla wonderingly. Half her summer days had been given to rooting ferns out of the garden. What in the world could anybody want with them?

As Miss Brown gathered the ferns, a thought came to her.

'Your father doesn't use the ground in the fence-corner,' she said; 'couldn't we have that?'

'I reckon so,' said Priscilla doubtfully.

Mr. Gorby just then appeared, and graciously consented to donate the fence-corners for the home-missionary purposes. Priscilla brought a heavy, dull, short-handled hoe, and plied it vigorously, while Miss Brown pulled ferns, blackberry roots, sassafras, and poison ivy. The seeds were carefully planted, and Miss Brown, after courteously declining repeated invitations to stay all night, went home with tired muscles and rested nerves.

It would take a long time to tell of all the good that grew in those fence-corners, for Priscilla and others. Her big brother Scott, learning that the young merchant at Lickburg would buy sunflower seed for his chickens, saved a dime from tobacco-money to invest in seeds to plant. He and his father could not let 'Silly' outdo them in clean farming, and there resulted a decided improvement all over the place, enough, probably, to compensate for the draft the strong-growing sunflowers made on the shallow soil. Mr. Gatliffe, who owned the farm on which the Gorbys lived, went up to the upper end of his pasture one day to mow the sassafras and blackberry briars in his fence-corners. That night he said to his wife:

'I did 'low I wouldn't have Green Gorby on