

TWO WAYS.

BY LAURA J. KITTENHOUSE.

"Hurry up, Rachel, and peel the potatoes—it'll take a peck, at least, thrashers are always so hungry. I'm glad we picked the chickens yesterday, or I'd never a got the pot-pie done in time. And the beans and eggs is pickled, that's another thing, and the ham boiled and the pies made. I calculate we'll have about as good a dinner as they have over at Johnston's, at any rate," said plump Mrs. Hodge with housewifely pride.

Then, as she looked at her busy daughter, her eyes lighted up with loving approbation. "Dear-a-me, how thankful I am that you are home again, Rachel. Seems like I couldn't get along at all without you again. And I believe you fly around faster'n ever; fairly like a chicken with its head off. I don't care what they say, schoolin' didn't spile you."

"Of course not, mother. It never spoils any one with good, common sense, and I inherited that from you and father. I'm glad to be home, too. I never got over being homesick," said the girl tenderly.

"It's a real blessing to father and me to hear your voice a ringin' through the house all day as merry as a mockin' bird. But, land alive! it's nearly nine o'clock, and the beans are to string yet, and the cucumbers and onions to slice. We'll have to hurry or we'll be late."

Twenty minutes later Mrs. Hodge again addressed her daughter. "Run along, Rachel, and put on your hat and go down to the station after the beer father sent for. He wants some sent out to the barn at ten o'clock, to cool the men off a bit." And Mrs. Hodge bustled around cheerfully, quite enjoying the excitement of having "thrashers" to cook for.

Rachel's face grew serious. "Mother, father surely doesn't believe beer cools the men, does he? You wrote me that he never allowed any whiskey about the place since that lecturer was here, and I can't understand why he should have beer."

"That's a very different thing, Rachel. Beer is a regular temperance drink. Judge Oakley and Deacon Snyder both say so, and they ought to know, see'n's they're the smartest men about here."

"I can't help it, mother; they are both mistaken. There is nothing cooling or nourishing about beer, and there is alcohol enough in it to produce intoxication. I wish I could see father, I think I could coax him out of it. I've a notion to call him."

"You mustn't do any such thing, Rachel. Father's too busy to be bothered; besides, it wouldn't do a mite of good. You know how set he is; you'd just as well let alone what you can't help."

"But, mother, I can't get the beer. Don't you see this?" pointing to a white ribbon in her buttonhole. "I'm a member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and have pledged myself not only to drink nothing that can intoxicate, but also to do everything I can to keep others from drinking."

"See here, now, Rachel Hodge, if you've joined a society that teaches you to disobey your parents, the quicker you get out of it the better; you'd better read your Bible, especially where it says to honor your father and your mother," said Mrs. Hodge severely.

"I do read it, mother, and I read that we shall come to him who puts the cup to his neighbor's lips, and many similar things that I dare not forget. I do not wish to be disobedient or disrespectful, but I cannot get the beer," said the girl firmly.

Her mother looked vexed and ready to cry. "I don't see how you can be so unreasonable, Rachel. There is no one else to go, and your father will be dreadfully angry if the men are kept waiting. They are having a friendly race with the men over at Mr. Johnston's, and the hands will work as fast again if they have their beer."

Rachel got her hat, and without another word ran up to her room and took up her purse in which were two or three dollars she had saved up to buy a new dress. Then she ran down stairs and out to the gate where the old gray mare stood hitched to the buggy awaiting her.

She climbed in and took up the reins mechanically. She scarcely knew what she intended doing, but of one thing she was certain, and that was that she would not

take home the beer. She had never before wilfully disobeyed her parents, and the thought of doing so now made her heart-sick. She prayed silently as she drove along the shady country road, that some way out of the difficulty might be sent her, so she could be obedient and yet keep her pledge.

"I'll buy a lot of lemons and granulated sugar and make them lemonade instead," she said decisively. "That will really cool them off and do them no harm, either. Father surely will not be angry, for I'll use my own money and do without the new white dress. I'd rather a hundred times over, than to put temptation in a single person's way."

She sprang lightly upon the platform of the depot, and the station master came up to her wearing an air at once conciliatory and apologetic.

"I'm ever so sorry, Miss Rachel, but Mr. Johnston took the beer ordered for your father. Some one had torn off the address, and he declared that he had ordered four boxes instead of two, and said he would take the consequences. He's so anxious to get his wheat threshed out first, that he'd have taken half a dozen boxes of beer if he could have gotten them, I believe. I heard him chuckling over it, and telling his boy they were sure to beat with such a supply of stimulants on hand, while your father had none." And the man laughed, evidently thinking it a good joke.

"That is all right, Mr. Russ. We shall see which wins, after all; lemonade or beer," replied Rachel, greatly relieved at the turn matters had taken, yet hoping with Hodge loyalty, that Mr. Johnston's boast might come to naught.

She bought some lemons and granulated sugar from the one family grocery, and with a glad heart turned her horse's head homeward.

"Mr. Johnston took father's beer, mother, and I am glad of it. Lemonade and some of your nice fresh buttermilk will be much more refreshing."

Then she explained more fully to her indignant mother, while she was preparing the lemons and sugar, after which she drew some water from the well; water so cold that it seemed almost as if it must have some of the winter's supply of ice in it. A delicious lemonade soon rewarded her labor.

"Now, mother, won't you carry out a big pitcher of buttermilk, and I'll take the lemonade and a lot of cookies. I don't believe the men will grieve over the loss of the beer," she said cheerfully.

Doubtful and perplexed, Mrs. Hodge followed the buoyant steps of her daughter, half in sympathy with her, yet afraid to forego a long established custom. Mr. Hodge smiled as he saw them coming.

"Hold up a while, men. Here comes something to give you new strength, and to cool you off a little," he called to the busy men around him.

They needed no second bidding, and Rachel's heart gave a little flutter, half of fear and half of triumph, as she thought of the disappointment awaiting them. Her father frowned severely as he saw the lemonade.

"What nonsense is this, daughter? Where is the beer I sent for?"

Rachel explained, while the men muttered among themselves.

"I'll pay Johnston for this—see if I don't!" said Mr. Hodge angrily. "He thinks he's sure to get done thrashing first, now, and I reckon he will, but I'll get even with him, if it takes me a year."

"Father, there's no reason in the world why Mr. Johnston should win the race, and there's every reason why he shouldn't. The beer he has taken home to help him will probably be the means of his defeat."

Then, as the men, made good-natured in spite of themselves by the bright-faced, earnest-hearted girl, drank the lemonade and the buttermilk, and ate Mrs. Hodge's famous cookies, Rachel gave them such a scientific, sensible, practical temperance talk, in such simple yet forcible language, that they felt themselves convinced against their will.

Even Deacon Snyder, who had happened along, admitted that there was truth in what she said, and her father, who had listened with surprise and growing pride to his daughter, in his heart agreed with her.

The men went to work with a will afterward, feeling somehow, that lemonade was, after all, quite as refreshing as beer, and

threshed out such a large amount of wheat before dinner that when they came to that meal they had such voracious appetites, Mrs. Hodge's hospitable heart was fully gratified.

At five o'clock the threshing was finished, much to the surprise of the workers themselves, who had never before accomplished so much work in so short a time. As they sat on the wide porch waiting for their early supper, a man rode up in great haste, his face pale and his voice so shaken with excitement that he could scarcely articulate.

"There's been a terrible accident over at Johnston's. It seems he took home a big lot of beer, and half the men got drunk, the engineer among them. Two of the drunken men were overcome by the heat and came very high dying, and before the others had recovered from their scare, the boiler of the steam threshing machine exploded, killing the engineer, and badly wounding another man. It was all the result of that cursed beer—there's not a doubt of it. The engineer didn't know what he was doing."

Then the messenger rode off, while Mr. Hodge and his men looked at each other in horrified silence.

"Boys, I feel like we orter thank God and Miss Rachel that we're all alive and well here this evening," said one man solemnly.

"We've done the biggest day's work I ever see done, without a drop of nothin' stronger'n lemonade and buttermilk, and we're as fresh as daisies, every man of us. It shows there's two ways of doin' the same things, and Miss Rachel's way has the best of it," said a fatherly old farmer.

"So it has—so it has. I think all this temperance meetin' needs is to pass around the pledge, little daughter. I'm ready to sign, for one," said Mr. Hodge in a voice that was husky.

"So am I," was echoed by all the others, so Rachel wrote a simple, binding pledge that was signed by all of them: a pledge which inaugurated a new and better way of living in that neighborhood, and eventually uprooted the false and pernicious idea that health or strength can ever come from beer.—*Union Signal.*

A MISSIONARY AMONG PIRATES.

The following stirring account of a young missionary's adventure with Chinese pirates will be read with deep and prayerful interest. The letter is addressed to his father:—

I started for Swatow yesterday morning by Douglas Lapraik's S.S. "Namoa" of which Captain Pocock is skipper, a most godly and pleasant man. At one o'clock we went below for lunch, and had barely started when we were surprised to hear reports of revolvers just above our heads. In a few minutes shots were buzzing all around us. We sprang from the table and took shelter in the cabins. Some Chinese had risen and got possession of the ship, and were potting at us through the skylight and from the companion ladder. They then throw what are called stink-pots down—these explode and fill the place with sulphurous smoke. We were absolutely helpless, not having a single revolver amongst us. We got the native cook to ask what they wanted; to which they replied, the passengers' money (there were five European passengers and about 300 Chinese; these latter were returning home with the savings of years), and asked that the captain should go up and make terms, which he did on their promising not to shoot him. He was no sooner up, however, before we heard two shots fired, and he was fatally wounded. They then sent down to say that if all the Europeans would go into the captain's room and remain there, they would anchor the vessel, and leave her at eight o'clock at night. At it was certain death to resist, we went up, ten of us altogether, but from different parts of the ship. The captain was laid upon his bed, but shortly afterwards died. One passenger was killed, two native seamen were also killed, while one of the mates, one of the engineers, and four seamen were wounded.

The next business was placing pistols at our heads, and demanding all valuables. My beautiful gold watch and chain went, with £7 in money. Then they battened us down and set an armed watch over us;

quietly going about their work of ransacking the ship. My things have been forced open and all the contents scattered on the floor, but I don't think much has been taken, as they would be so easily identified. Altogether they got about 30,000 dollars. At eight o'clock at night they dropped anchor. Several junks came alongside, and, having knocked holes into the bottom of all our boats, they gathered up all their loot and took their departure about nine o'clock. It was eight hours' horrible suspense. They had played the captain false, and might just as easily have done the same with us. And when we heard the boats being smashed we made sure they were either going to sink or burn, but "it was not permitted."

After they had left we soon broke open the windows and doors, and a rush was made to get the fires, which the pirates had put out, relit. Fortunately there was enough steam left to carry us on till the fires were up, and so, slipping our anchor, we were soon under weigh. We reached Hong Kong again this morning, when the naval authorities, police, and a doctor came on board, and we hope soon to make a fresh start.

It is very wonderful how real one's religion is at such times, and how marvellously precious is the felt presence of Christ in the soul, filling it with perfect peace and giving one the happy consciousness that "to live is Christ, and to die is gain," and making it so easy to say, "Thy will be done." It has pleased the Lord to give me, as it were, a new life, and I can only trust more completely all for him than before. I would not have mentioned the matter, only I know you must hear of it from other quarters. It is only a proof of the loving care God takes of his children.—*G. M. Wales, in Word and Work.*

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