

mother is a kind of map of the world—sort of gives you the lay of the land, you know," said Ruby, with a tender expression.

"How do you like town society?" asked the girl with the white-blue eyes.

"It's just as pap said; dogs and town young'uns are alike."

"How's that?" asked the girl, piqued by the comparison.

"Oh, he says, let a country dog come to town and all the dogs pitch into him," answered Ruby, nonchalantly.

This was a telling truth, and some of the girls had a moment of honest shame, but the questioner turned red with resentment which turned quickly to spite. "I saw a wild girl at a show one summer. Your sister, I suppose?"

"Shame!" exclaimed several girls under their breath; but Ruby was capable of fighting her own battles, her very innocence and honesty being her best shield.

"My sister just as much as you are a lady-like town girl. Some folks think if they wear kid gloves and a feather bo-wor, they is a lady. My mother don't know much book leaning, but she's a lady at heart, and if you was to go to our house she would treat you like a lady," said Ruby, looking the girl calmly in the eye.

"There, Clare, that serves you right and you brought it upon yourself!" one girl exclaimed.

"Come, girls, she had better be one of us," said Blanche Masters, thinking that one so gifted in repartee would better be mustered in at once.

"If you think I am going to join you and help pick on to new scholars, you're mistaken. I won't do it. I'll head 'em off every time," said Ruby, soberly.

"Oh, we don't mean any harm! It's only in fun," exclaimed one, feeling ashamed to be reproved by this untaught country girl.

"Queer fun it must be, to torment one another."

"Oh, come, Fatty. You are voted in, and you and I being opposites, will look nice together. You are solidity and I am frailty," said Ella Pratt, offering a thin little hand with an air condescending in the extreme. Ruby gratefully took the hand and let her keen eyes wander over the girl's form, then in a tone of kindly concern, asked,

"Have you always been that way? Don't you get enough to eat? Well, you should go home with me and live on cream a while."

Ruby looked blankly at the girls; not understanding the laugh that pealed forth.

"She's pretty good fun after all, and the 'sounding committee' have to take a dose of their own medicine, for once," said Jennie, laughing quitely.

Here the school-bell called them in-doors.

For several days Ruby avoided the "charmed circle," as they flatteringly called their special group, and played very contentedly with the little girls. It was seldom that one of the 'big girls' deigned to notice the little ones, but Ruby had not only called upon all the little house-keepers ranged along by the high board fence, but she introduced new plays into their imaginary houses, and helped them to have a good time.

In school hours Ruby gave her whole attention to her studies and had already shown remarkable advancement in them. She was a comfort to her teacher, for she gave heed to her instructions and never had to be told the same thing twice. By-and-by it began to dawn upon the older girls that Ruby was purposely avoiding them, and they had a curiosity to discover why. So at recess, one day, Jennie and Blanche linked arms in hers, and asked her to join them in their play. Ruby gently freed herself, and slowly backed away.

"Excuse me, but I'd rather play with the little girls."

"Don't you like us?" asked one.

"My folks are very strict about the company I keep. They are always telling me not to go in bad company, but to choose such as will help me to be good," said Ruby thoughtfully.

The girls looked at each other aghast. "Bad company!" and they from some of the best families in town! Preposterous! Yet this simple-hearted, backwoods girl honestly believed that they were undesirable associates.

"You think we would harm instead of help you, Ruby!" asked Jennie, with a serious face. Ruby slowly glanced around the group, then nodded reluctantly.

"You see," she explained, "my folks say we get to be like those we go with—and—and—I want to learn manners and how to do things proper, like Miss Barber. I never had much chance, and I want to grow up the best woman I can. The little girls don't make fun of other girls nor of their teacher, nor make faces and be sly, so I guess I'd rather play with them, if you'll excuse me," and Ruby walked happily away with half-a-dozen little children clamoring for her help.

"There girls!" exclaimed May Lewis, "we have had an honest mirror held before our faces, and the reflections ought to be good for us. We see ourselves as others see us. We are looked upon as "bad company," and I don't wonder. We have behaved shamefully. "Bad company!" and May laughed bitterly.

"I for one am ashamed of myself, and I mean to win that girl's respect yet," exclaimed Jennie, contritely.

"Now I understand," said May after a thoughtful silence, "another way by which Ruby has been measuring us—it is by the expression of Miss Barber's face. She has taken Miss Barber for a model, and well she may, for she is a lady, and I begin to see that we have not treated Miss Barber well, either. I have often noticed that when one of us has annoyed or worried her, Ruby would look so indignant, and no doubt mentally placed a black mark after our names, and so has decided to avoid us. So the only way we can win her friendship will be through Miss Barber, by making teaching a pleasure instead of a burden to her."

"Then I mean to be so good that Miss Barber's face will be wreathed in smiles when I'm in school," said Jennie, with a little choke in her laugh.

"Girls!" exclaimed Blanche, impulsively, "let us all agree to turn over a new leaf, and be good and make our influence be felt for good."

"Who votes for the new leaf?" said May, holding up her hand. Hand after hand went up, even the tow-curls joining.

Miss Barber was certainly amazed at the sudden good behaviour of her 'special trial' as she mentally termed the 'charmed circle.' Being girls looked up to, their ways were copied by others of their age. There was no more sly fun in school-hours, and their attention to the work in hand helped their teacher to give them of her best. Ruby began to regard the girls in a more favorable light. Her genuine nature and honest-heartedness had so attracted them that each felt a desire to 'grow up the best woman I can,' and Ruby little dreamed that it was herself who had awakened in them this desire.—"The Advance."

Will you, not, before venturing away from your early quiet hour, 'commit thy works' to Him definitely, the special things you have to do to-day, and the unforeseen work which He may add in the course of it?—F. R. Havergal.

An Unexpected Visitor.

(Sunday-school Messenger.)

Seated at the dinner-table some time ago, an intelligent lady told the writer an interesting story; all the more interesting because it is true. Family connections of the lady are descendants of the hero of the tale.

It was a great many years ago, in France, when the Huguenot Christians were being severely persecuted, that a Christian minister was arrested and put in prison for his faith. It was the intention of his enemies to starve him to death. He was accordingly shut up in a solitary prison cell, which had but a single very small window to give air and light. Here he was left to perish by the slow agony of starvation. Can you imagine the feelings of the prisoner, who well understood the purpose of his captors?

But God had a way of escape prepared for him. On the next morning after he was put into the cell, when he had already been many hours without food or drink, what was his surprise to see a hen hop upon the ledge outside of his cell window, and settle herself as if to lay an egg. Sure enough this was madam hen's intention, and presently the poor prisoner looked through the grating of his window and found his breakfast waiting for him outside. Could he reach it? We may believe that he was not long in making the attempt, and to his delight he found that by a careful and painful use of his fingers, thrust through the bars, he was able to roll the precious egg into the cell. A half-inch further away and he could not have reached it. The next morning the hen returned, and the next and the next. Every morning the appointed visitor came, and left the prisoner's daily food.

How must he have felt as day after day he offered the petition of the Lord's Prayer, 'Give us this day our daily bread,' and saw how surprisingly that prayer was being answered for him! It was like manna sent from heaven. To be sure, it was not a very abundant meal, but it was enough to keep soul and body together. The wonderful nutritive qualities of the egg, especially of the raw egg, were in his favor. The albumen of the white, the nitrogenous and fatty matter of the yolk, served to maintain his strength to a remarkable degree. The egg was not only food, but also drink to him. Nor was the shell, even allowed to go to waste. He pulverized it and ate it with the rest, and the shell, with its lime, its magnesia, its phosphorous, its sulphur and its iron, added to his daily support.

After many days his persecutors appeared, expecting of course to find a dead body for removal. Insetad, they found their prisoner, though without visible means of support, well and strong, seeming to have suffered but little from the starving process to which he had been subjected. Suspecting that friends were in some mysterious manner keeping him alive, they determined to prevent all outside assistance. The prisoner was taken out of his cell and placed in a small boat without sail, oar, or rudder, and set adrift on the open sea. Days passed by, days of exposure, days of danger. Many times, no doubt, the solitary man, floating on the wave, wished himself back in his prison cell, fed by his daily visitor.

At length he was picked up by a passing vessel. The vessel was bound for America. He landed in one of the New England States, and, little worse for his strange adventures, soon gained a foothold in the new land, where he continued his labors as a minister of the gospel. For many years he preached as pastor of a New England church and his