

curious marks at regular intervals from the top to bottom.

Over it, on a golden scroll, were the words: 'The measure of the stature of a perfect man.' The angel held in his right hand a large book, in which he wrote the measurements as the people came upon the calling of their names in regular turns. The instant each one touched the golden measure a most wonderful thing happened. No one could escape the terrible accuracy of that strange rod. Each one shrank from or increased to his true dimensions—his spiritual dimensions, as I soon learned, for it was an index of the soul-growth which was shown in this mysterious way, so that even we could see with our eyes what otherwise the angel alone could have perceived.

The first few who were measured after I came I did not know; but soon after the name of Elizabeth Darrow was called. She is president of the Aid for the Destitute Society, you know, and she manages ever so many other societies, too, and I thought:—'Surely, Mrs. Darrow's measure will be very high indeed.' But as she stood by the rod, the instant she touched it she seemed to grow shorter and shorter, and the angel's face grew very serious as he said: 'This would be a soul of high stature if only the zeal for outside works which can be seen by men had not checked the lowly, secret graces of humility and trust and patience under little trials. These, too, are needed for perfect soul-growth.'

I pitied Mrs. Darrow as she moved away with such a sad and surprised face, to make room for the next. It was poor, thin, little Betsy Lines, the seamstress. I never was more astonished in my life than when she took her stand by the rod, and immediately she increased in height till her mark was higher than any I had seen before; and her face shone so, I thought it must have caught its light from the angel's, which smiled so gloriously that I envied poor little Betsy, whom before I had rather looked down upon. And as the angel wrote in his book, he said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom.'

The next was Lillian Edgar, who dresses so beautifully that I have often wished I had such clothes and so much money. The angel looked sadly at her measure, for it was very low—so low that Lillian turned pale as death, and her beautiful clothes no one noticed at all, for they were quite overshadowed by the glittering robes beside her. And the angel said, in a solemn tone: 'Oh, child, why take thought for raiment? Let your adorning be, not outward adornment of putting on of apparel, but let it be the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price. Thus only can you grow like the master.'

Old Jerry, the cobbler, came next—poor, old, clumsy Jerry; but as he hobbled up the steps the angel's face fairly blazed with light, and he smiled on him, and led him to the rod; and behold! Jerry's measure was higher than any of the others. The angel's voice rang out so loud and clear that we all heard it, saying: 'He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.' 'Whosoever shall humble himself as a little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'

And then, oh, my name came next! and I trembled so I could hardly reach the angel, but he put his arm round me and helped me to stand by the rod. As soon as I touched it I felt myself growing shorter and shorter, and though I stretched and stretched and strained every nerve to be as tall as possible, I could only reach Lillian's mark—Lillian's, the lowest of all. I grew crimson for shame, and whispered to the angel: 'Oh, give me another chance before you mark me in the book so low as this. Tell me how to

grow; I will do it all so gladly, only do not put this mark down!'

The angel shook his head sadly:—  
'The record must go down as it is, my child. May it be higher when I next come! This rule will help thee: "Whatsoever thou doest, do it heartily, as to the Lord, in singleness of heart as unto Christ." The same earnestness which thou throwest into other things will, with Christ's help, make thee grow in grace.'

And with that I burst into tears, and I suddenly awoke and found myself crying. But, oh, I shall never forget that dream! I was so ashamed of my mark.

Do any of my readers know any girl who throws more enthusiasm into everything than into the most important of all—the growth of her Christian character?—*American Paper.*

### For and Against.

(By Anna E. Hahn.)

In a new town in the Colorado mountains two women sat in a plain room engaged in earnest talk.

'I'm much troubled about our meeting tomorrow,' Mrs. Mains said anxiously. 'I had looked forward to it with much pleasure until I heard of these infidel doings. But now I'm afraid it's going to be a failure.'

Mrs. Lentz flushed a little, but said gently: 'Not a failure, surely. Anyway the town is getting large enough to support two meetings at the same hour.'

'Oh, but you don't understand the situation,' explained Mrs. Mains. 'There are only two places in all the town in which public meetings can be held, the hall and the schoolhouse. Hearing that the few of us who are interested in such things had sent for a home missionary to come tomorrow and organize a church in the schoolhouse, the unbelievers, hoping to keep people away from our meeting, have sent for an infidel lecturer to come the same day and harangue in the hall. They say he's much more eloquent than our missionary and will draw the crowd to the hall, leaving but a handful at the schoolhouse.'

'There are always plenty of people to run after an empty show,' Mrs. Lentz said sadly.

'I'm afraid I'll have to go to the hall with the crowd instead of to the schoolhouse with the handful as I desire. You know my husband holds infidel views, and he insists that I hear this lecture.'

It was Saturday afternoon, and Mrs. Lentz was visiting Mrs. Mains in her home. The missionary, who was also visiting there, happened to enter the room in time to hear the latter part of the conversation.

'Do not be troubled about the crowd at the hall and the handful at the schoolhouse,' he said earnestly. 'The work done at the hall will soon vanish away and be forgotten, but that done at the schoolhouse will last through the years, always strengthening and increasing.'

Seeing that the two ladies but half understood him he continued still more earnestly:

'There is all the difference in the world between working for God and working against him. The infidel may have a large crowd and may talk eloquently, but he will talk against God and his talk and work will come to naught. It will soon vanish away like straw and stubble and be forgotten. I may have only a small audience, and may talk only simply and plainly, but I shall talk for God, and my talk and work will last. While the infidel harangues, I will organize. Here in this new western town I will organize for God, and they that labor for him never labor in vain, although often the results are not seen for a time, or seem to be but small. The church to be organized to-

morrow may have only a few members, and may grow but slowly, but it will last and increase through untold years, doing a noble and much-needed work for God in this community. In it will be those who will hold its interests as a sacred trust; behind it will be a great denomination that will extend to it money and influence when necessary, and sympathy and prayers always; and round about it will be God who is mighty to bless, and who is abundantly able and willing to keep all that is committed to him, whether individuals or organizations.'

Both ladies were much impressed by the missionary's earnest words, and the next day when Mrs. Lentz sat in the crowded hall listening to the fluent infidel she kept thinking, 'He's flowery and eloquent, but his words are against God and will come to naught. His works are but straw and stubble and will soon vanish away and be forgotten.'

At the same time Mrs. Mains sitting with the little congregation in the schoolhouse, watching the organization of a church with only a handful of members, said confidently, 'It is only a small beginning, but it is for God and it will grow and prosper through untold years, doing a great work for him in whose name it is organized.'

And it did. A few years later the missionary again passed through the village, now grown to a goodly town. Seeing from the station a tall spire rising clear and comely towards the blue western sky, he inquired the name of the building. His heart leaped with joy at the reply, for the fine meeting-house belonged to the church he had organized that day when he had the handful in the schoolhouse and the infidel had the crowd in the hall. The church now had a costly building, a large membership and a larger congregation, and was the centre of much of the religious and social life of the town. It was faithfully keeping pace with the rapidly growing community and bravely holding its own with other pushing western institutions.

But the infidel had disappeared, his hall was now noted simply as an old landmark, most of his followers had gone over to the church, and the others were worse men than he had found them. He had worked against God and his work had come to naught.

The missionary looked back at the comely church spire as the train bore him away and said thankfully, 'I planted for God and he has given a rich increase. Truly they shall prosper that love thee, and they that labor for thee labor not in vain.'—*American Messenger.*

Mrs. M. A. Sangster remarks: 'A venerable friend, past her fourscore years, related this incident to me: She had a neighbor, fifty years ago, the widow of an eminent clergyman. This gentlewoman, struggling to bring up her family on very small means, found herself, one wild January day, in a bleak New England town, with a scanty supply of coal in her cellar. Had coal been plentiful, it would have been a comfort; and just then it would have done her little good, for the furnace was very much out of order. Covering the children up as warmly as she could, the mother sent them to school, and then went to her room and knelt by her bed in an agony of prayer. Even as her tear-wet face was bowed on her hands, a knock resounded through the house; and, going to the door, the lady met a stranger, who pressed upon her a roll of bills. "I haven't time to explain," he said "but, madam, it's an old debt I owed your husband, and here it is, with interest." The coal bin was supplied, and the furnace repaired, and around the father's bible that night mother and children knelt and acknowledged the goodness of their ever-loving, ever-caring God.'