

missionary in his far-away home thought often of that morning in the Sunday-school, and was curious to know if the children had persevered. It had been with them pretty much as it is with us. Some had forgotten all about it before the next day, others had kept up for a month or so, and then grown tired, while others again were patiently dropping in their money week after week. Among the latter were our two little partners, and as Johnnie had conceived the charming plan of getting ten pennies for each dime, the box was becoming almost too heavy for the thin weak hand of the prayer partner.

Winter had come now with its snow and cruel biting winds; the dorstep was no longer a suitable resting-place, and they now kept close to the kitchen stove, discussing the amount, and wondering how many Bibles it would buy. One evening, at twilight, as they sat there waiting for mother to come, the door opened and Mrs. Beach hurried in. "Maisie, your mother's fell down and hurted herself," she said, "and they're bringing her home; you'd better get her bed ready." Then seeing the child was too much stunned to understand, she pushed her aside and began to get the bed arranged. Soon the tramping of feet was heard and some men carried in the mother, laying her gently down, and leaving her to the care of Mrs. Beach and a doctor whom they had called in. With hands clasped tightly together Maisie and Johnnie stood by the fire. Was mother dead? The doctor had shut the door and they could no longer see the pale face upon the pillow. Maisie's face was almost as white; but she never shed a tear. It seemed a year before the door opened and the doctor came out. Maisie caught his arm as he was hurrying by, and gasped out: "Is mother dead?"

"Dead! bless your heart, it's only a broken leg; but it was a bad fall and she's lucky to escape with so little. She'll be in bed a long time, though." And away he went, leaving relief and yet dismay behind him. A broken leg; that must mean mother would be on a crutch all the time, like Johnnie; bright, active mother, who moved so quickly about the house. There would be no one to work, and where would the food come from—already Maisie fancied she heard Johnnie crying for something to eat. He was crying really, softly and quietly; but it was because mother was hurt; poor mother whom he had never known to be sick before. But now Mrs. Beach opened that dreadful door, and they could see mother once more, pale still, but with open eyes, and a little smile for the two terrified faces peeping at her. At the sight of the smile, the terror vanished, and they hurried to the bedside.

"Mother," Johnnie said, "you ain't all broken in little pieces, are you? The doctor said something was broken, and you'd be in bed a long time."

"Heaven help us, my poor children," she said. "With winter here and no money to come, how will we manage?"

"Never mind, mother," Maisie said, bravely. "Me and Johnnie won't eat much, and I can cook real well, and clean up, too. We'll get along finely, you'll see." So she kept up a brave face, singing a little song as she bustled about getting supper; but as Johnnie passed her on his way to bed, she threw her arms around his neck and said, with a little sob, "Pray, Johnnie; pray harder than you ever prayed in your life before, that God will help us through."

What dreary weeks; how they dragged along, and yet how wonderfully Maisie managed. There had been a little money put away, so they had been kept from starvation, and from actual freezing; but the children knew for the first time what it was to go hungry to bed. One morning,

as Johnnie crept shivering into the kitchen, he stopped horrified to see a handful of coal burning in the stove, and the box empty.

"Don't tell mother, Johnnie," Maisie said; "but that's the last bit of coal, the money's all gone, and what are we to do?" and she burst into tears. To see Maisie break down, the strong, brave sister, was almost more than he could stand; but making one great effort to speak cheerfully, said,

"Never mind, Maisie, Spring's almost here, now. Maybe we won't freeze."

"Now, Johnnie Peters, don't talk nonsense. Spring won't come for two months yet, and there's no comfort in that. Something must be done. I've thought and thought, and there's only one thing." Here her eyes rested on the missionary box with its gay picture.

"Oh, Maisie, not that money, not the money we've saved and saved for the poor little Japan boys and girls. Oh, don't take that money; it ain't ours any longer, you know."

"I've thought of that, too, Johnnie, and all of this time when the money was going and going. I felt some thing would happen to keep us from spending that; but the money's gone, the coal's gone, and mother would never let us beg, you know; so what's to be done? Then, Johnnie, even if we do have to spend the money, the prayers will be there; that's some comfort."

Johnnie had reached down the box and was sadly looking into it. "Three dollars, Maisie; just think of it, and ten cents over, the last time you worked for Mrs. Beach. I believe it will break my heart to let it go."

Maisie's lip trembled, but her look was resolute. "If God wants us to give it to mother instead of to the Japanese, Johnnie, don't you suppose He knows best?"

"Yes, Maisie," Johnnie whispered, meekly; "and may be He'll send someone to help us right now."

"Pray for it, then, Johnnie, for I have prayed until there don't seem anything more to say."

And Johnnie, turning to go upstairs to the corner of the cold little room where was his sanctuary, nearly fell over a lady coming into the kitchen.

"Miss Alice, Miss Alice," Maisie said, throwing her arms about her teacher, "I'm so glad to see you," while Johnnie caught her hand, and looking up into her face, said, "Has God sent you to save the money for the poor little Japanese?"

Maisie would have stopped him, but Miss Alice's kind sympathy soon drew from them the sad little story. Touched by their sacrifice, she spoke encouragingly to them, and as she went away, held Maisie's hand in hers, while she said cheerfully, "Put the box away, dear, brave little girl, and wait a few hours longer for God's answer to your prayers."

That evening, a coal wagon rumbled into the narrow street, and deposited in front of the Peters' house such a goodly supply of fuel, there would be no lack of fire for many weeks to come; then later, a basket from the grocer, and another from the market, until the closet was full to overflowing, and Maisie's heart was full to overflowing, too; and once more she sang as she moved about her work, the little song which had died on her lips during those dreadful days of fear and trouble.

In a few weeks, Mrs. Peters was about the house, limping a little, but the doctor said that would soon pass away, and Maisie went back to work for Mrs. Beach, adding, week after week, with a joyful heart, to the stock of coin for the Japanese. When the year was out, and the collection was sent to the missionary, Miss Alice wrote him this little story, and he sent a letter to the