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of
Courage





SPARKLING GEMS.



RUSSELL RICHARDS ON SC

BY MRS. MADELINE LESLIE.

Baker, Harriette Newell
" Woods.

Gem of Courage:

OR,

BARBARA AND BENA.

BY

MRS. MADELINE LESLIE.

"Be courageous." — 2 SAM. 13: 28.



BOSTON:
GRAVES AND ELLIS,
20 CORNHILL.

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LIST
OF
SPARKLING GEMS
FOR YOUTH.

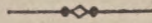


SERIES FOR GIRLS.

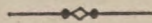


- VOL. I. GEM OF COURTESY.
“ II. GEM OF COURAGE.
“ III. GEM OF FAITHFULNESS.
“ IV. GEM OF NEATNESS.
“ V. GEM OF TRUTHFULNESS.
“ VI. GEM OF EARNESTNESS.

LIST
OF
SPARKLING GEMS
FOR YOUTH.



SERIES FOR BOYS.



- VOL. I. GEM OF UPRIGHTNESS.
“ II. GEM OF SELF-DENIAL.
“ III. GEM OF PERSEVERANCE.
“ IV. GEM OF TEMPERANCE.
“ V. GEM OF SELF-CONTROL.
“ VI. GEM OF GENEROSITY.

DEDICATION.



MY DEAR LITTLE HARRY:

I HAVE DEDICATED THESE SMALL VOLUMES TO YOU,
PRAYING THAT THE GEMS OF WHICH THEY TREAT, MAY
ADORN YOUR CROWN IN THE CORONATION DAY OF CHRIST'S
BELOVED.

Your affectionate grandmother,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.



THE author of these volumes recently attended the commencement of a seminary, in which sparkling crowns were placed on the heads of such of the graduates as had been distinguished for diligence, faithfulness, neatness and other virtues. Being very much pleased with the design, I have appropriated the idea in these small volumes.

On the illuminated title page, the teacher and pupils appear. He holds up to their view a sparkling gem, just taken from his cabinet. We may imagine him explaining to them, that these precious stones are used in the Bible as emblems of the different graces which adorn the character of Christians, even as God says: these graces "shall be as the stones of a crown," put upon their heads.

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GEM OF COURAGE.

CHAPTER I.

THE BLUEBERRIES.

“BENA! Bena Randolph! Stop a minute, I want to tell you something,” shouted a young girl, out of breath with running.

Bena stopped reluctantly, thinking of her mother’s last words:

“Hurry home, my dear, as soon as school is done.”

Barbara speedily overtook her, when Bena quickened her steps again.

“Don’t go so fast; I’m all out of breath,” cried her companion.

“I must, I want to get home.”

“What for? Has your cousin come?”

“No, not yet.”

“Well, I’m going down to Silas Jones’ marsh this afternoon. There’s oceans of high blueberries there. Our man found them when he drove the cows to pasture. I wouldn’t tell any of the girls, ’cause they’d all go; and we shouldn’t have any. You come to our house right after dinner; and we’ll pick a lot.”

“I’m afraid I can’t. I’d like to ever so much; but —”

Now, it would have been very easy for Bena to have said, frankly:

“Mother is going to the maternal meeting; and she wants me to stay at home with grandma;” but she knew,

or she suspected, that Barbara would say :

“ ‘ Fudge on the maternal meeting,’ or some such expression, so she wouldn’t give that excuse.”

“ Isn’t it wet in the marsh ? ” she asked.

“ Not very ; I shall wear rubber-boots, though.”

“ I don’t believe I can go.”

“ Yes, you can, just as well as not. If mother says no, at first, she always gives me leave when I’ve teased her enough.”

“ I’m sure mother will say I can’t. She’s going away herself.”

“ That’ll be all the better for you. When she’s off, run away. She’ll forgive you when she sees a whole basket full of berries.”

“ Oh, Barbara ! ”

“ Come, say quick. If you're such a fool as to refuse I'll ask Sarah Bradley ; but I won't speak to you again for a month.”

Bena's face flushed. “ I wish,” she said, in a timid, undecided tone, “ I wish I could go, but — ”

“ Bena Randolph, you're the most provoking girl, I ever saw. Why couldn't you say no, right out at first ; and then I could have got somebody else. Now the girls have all gone home. Catch me ever asking you again ! ” and off she ran in great anger without saying good bye.

“ Oh, dear ! ” sighed Bena, hurrying on towards home, “ now she's as mad as she can be. She'll tell the girls awful stories about me. I wish I'd

pretended not to hear her when she called. I guess if I did run away I'd never be forgiven, if I got a cart full of berries. I mean mother wouldn't forgive me any quicker for berries. She'd say:

“ ‘Yes, my child, I freely forgive you,’ just as quick as I asked her. I suppose, if mother knew what kind of a girl Barbara is, she wouldn't like me to go with her ; but I hate to tell tales of the girls.

By the time Bena reached home her face had grown very sober. She was naturally timid ; and she dreaded the effects of Barbara's tongue.

Mrs. Randolph was putting dinner on the table, and the first dish that Bena noticed was a fat pudding, thickly sprinkled with blueberries.

“You can’t guess where my berries came from,” said the lady laughing as she saw her daughter’s eyes rest on the dish.

“Did a boy bring them along?”

“No, your cousin Alfred has been here. He was passing through Silas Jones’ swamp, and he saw them. He didn’t know they were ripe. He threw his gun into the wagon, and picked all the ripe ones. He gave me three quarts, and he carried four home. He said his mother would laugh to see his birds that he went for, turned into blueberries.”

“I hope you made a sauce, mother.”

Mrs. Randolph laughed as she lifted the cover of a small tureen and displayed the rich foam.

“You had good success with your

pudding," said grandma. "It's as light as a feather."

"It's the best berry pudding I ever ate," exclaimed Bena, passing her plate for the second piece.

"I'm going right off after dinner," said Mrs. Randolph; "I want to make two or three calls before I go into the meeting. You can wash the dishes and clear up. Put everything in place and let me see how nicely you can make the kitchen look."

CHAPTER II.

THE IRRESOLUTE GIRL.

WHEN Bena went to school the next morning, Barbara was talking earnestly with two or three of the girls. When they saw her coming, they stopped abruptly and walked away, so that she only heard one of her companions say :

“How mean! Just like her!”

For several days her classmates neglected her. If she spoke to them they answered in monosyllables. Of course this made her very unhappy. She studied hard, and tried to forget her trouble ; and her teacher praised

her more than once or twice for her diligence.

At last her mother noticed that she was out of spirits.

Bena was the youngest of a large family, and the only one left at home. Her father's mother lived with them; and they were now expecting a cousin to spend some months. Mr. Randolph had gone to the city on business; and when he returned, Miss Henrietta Randolph would come with him.

This young lady was a teacher in an academy, and was glad to pass her long vacation on her uncle's farm, and among the friends she loved so dearly.

"What's the matter with Rubina," asked grandma one day, when the

little girl, with her satchel on her arm, had bid her good morning, and gone to school.

Grandma always gave Bena her full name ; and now she added :

“ I’m afraid the child isn’t well. I haven’t heard her sing for a week.”

“ I’ve noticed her sober looks,” answered Mrs. Randolph. “ Sometimes I think her living with people so much older than she is, has something to do with her being so quiet. If she isn’t better after Henrietta comes, we must do something for her.”

“ I wonder what I’ve done to make all the girls act so,” sighed Bena a day or two after, as she walked slowly home. “ I heard Barbara say to Sarah Bradley : ”

“ ‘ I do like a girl that’s one thing

or another ;' and then she looked at me as angry as could be."

When she came in sight of home, she saw her father shutting the door to the carriage-house, and with a joyful cry :

"They've come! they've come!" she sprang forward to welcome the travellers.

The sight of her cousin for a few hours drove all Bena's sadness away ; but when they went up to the neat chamber they were to occupy together, Henrietta noticed that the child sighed often.

"It's early yet," she said, "and the moon shines so brightly we can dispense with the lamp. Come and sit by me, and tell me what makes you sad."

“ Oh, cousin, I would like that very much ! I want to talk to somebody ; you can tell me what I ought to do.”

She then repeated the circumstances I have related.

“ I don't see what I did that made her so angry,” she added, with another sigh, “ do you ? ”

Instead of answering this question, Henrietta leaned forward, and kissed her tenderly. Presently she asked :

“ Do you recollect, sweet coz, the visit aunt Matilda and her little boy made you a year ago ? ”

“ Yes, indeed ; and how naughty I was one day. Oscar teased and teased me to get out my best china set ; and at last I disobeyed mother. I didn't like to have him think me mean, you know.”

“ Shall I tell you how you might have saved all the trouble ? ”

“ Yes, please.”

“ I happened to be in the next room and I heard all that passed between you and Oscar ; and I longed to tell you then to be decided.

“ If you had spoken courageously : ‘ No, Oscar, I can’t do it because mother has forbidden me,’ he would have seen that no teasing would be of use ; but your manner encouraged him all the time to believe you would yield at last.

“ Now if you had spoken decidedly to Barbara when she first asked you to go with her :

“ ‘ No, I can’t go, because mother needs me this afternoon,’ she would have invited some other friend ; and

I think she would not have been angry.

“But Barbara don’t go to Sunday school. Her father is an infidel; and she would have made all manner of fun of the maternal meeting which is held weekly.”

“Then, my dear coz, I would quietly drop her acquaintance.”

“I can’t. She sits in the same seat with me at school. She’s real nice in some things. She always used to give me some of her lunch, though I told her I had enough, and she brings me beautiful boquets.”

“No matter for that when she makes fun of your religion. But we won’t talk about Barbara now; I want to talk about you. I wish to explain to you about courage, and

make you see into how much trouble the want of it leads you.”

“I thought little girls didn’t need courage, as much as boys.”

“There are two kinds of courage, my dear, one is called natural courage, and the other moral courage. I will try and make you understand the difference.”

CHAPTER III.

·KINDS OF COURAGE.

“IN a farm-yard there was once a brood of five chickens, nicely housed in a barrel turned on the side with a door of lathes in front. The hen mother with her head and neck stretched out between the lathes, watched the pretty little downy creatures as they ran here and there, crying, ‘peep! peep!’ and picking up the soft dough that had been spread on a board for their food. When Mrs. Biddy thought they were wandering too far away from their home she called out:

“ ‘Cluck! cluck! cluck!’ and the tiny feet came scampering toward the barrel, tumbling over each other in their haste to get safe under their mamma’s wing.”

“One day the sky was very blue, and the sun shone down upon the farm yard, making the little chicks feel very lively.”

“ ‘How I would like to take my brood out for a walk,’ said Mrs. Bidy to herself. ‘It’s tiresome staying cooped up in a barrel from morning till night. I could go down on the ploughed ground and find plenty of worms and grubs. I am fairly sick of seeing that old farmer shovel, shovel, from the cellar to his wagon all day long.’

“So she pushed as hard as she

could against the lathes ; but with her utmost strength she could only loosen one or two of them.

“ ‘ Sho ! sho ! easy there ! easy ! ’ said the good-natured farmer. ‘ Tired o’ being cooped up, hey ? Best for you, old biddy.’

“ Just at this moment, high up above the farm yard there was a little speck in the air. It grew larger every moment, and presently Mrs. Biddy, turning her eyes up to the heavens, caught a glimpse of it.

Every feather on her body bristled up in a minute.

“ ‘ Cluck ! cluck ! cluck ! ’ she called in such a loud, frightened tone that her little ones scarcely knew her voice, and ran here and there in wild confusion.

“ ‘ Cluck ! cluck ! cluck ! ’ shrieked the poor mother, and then she tried to break through again.

“ This time the loosened lathes gave way and running out of the barrel, she scrabbled the chicks behind her and prepared to give fight, to the enemy. For close at hand, sailing in the air directly over the coop, was a large, hungry hawk, ready to pounce upon her little ones and carry them off to his nest.

“ You would scarcely have known poor Bidy, she was so furious, with her feathers sticking out on every side and her loud cries for help.

“ The good farmer had seen the danger, too ; and while Mrs. Bidy was getting ready to defend her chicks with her life, if necessary, he went

into the harness-room and took down a loaded gun. Just as the hawk was within a few feet of the barrel there was a loud bang! and the great bird fell dead among the lumps of dough.

“‘Ha! ha! ha!’ laughed the farmer, taking up the hawk by the legs. ‘There, biddy, you did your part well. You did not mean to give up your chicks without a fight, did you? You see you’re safer in the farm yard than you would be meandering off in the fields.’

“Then the man brought a hammer and nailed up the lathes again, and Mrs. Biddy went willingly into the barrel, and put her babies to sleep under her wings.”

“That is a very pretty story, cousin Henrietta. I’ve seen our hens stand

up and scream many a time when a cat or dog went near her nest. Her beak is very sharp, too. That is what she fights with."

"What kind of courage did that mother hen show, Bena?"

"Why that was natural for her to do. I suppose it was natural courage."

"Yes; but aren't you tired? I just heard the church clock strike nine."

"Oh, no, indeed; not a bit tired. I do love to have you talk to me, you make everything so plain. I suppose Felina, my great maltese cat, showed natural courage when she hissed, and spit, and scratched so to defend her kittens from a strange dog. She had one eye almost put out; but she

wouldn't give up till the dog went off with his tail between his legs. I had to bathe her eye ever so long."

"Almost every kind of animal will defend their young from danger. God gave them this instinct; and it is beautiful to see how courageously they do it, entirely forgetful of themselves.

"Look, Bena, did you ever see prettier pictures than the moon is making through the leaves on the floor? Watch how they change when the breeze moves the branches of the tree. I love dearly to sit in the moonlight."

"I like it ever so much. Can't you talk a little more?"

CHAPTER IV.

AN ILLUSTRATION.

“THERE was once a little girl” said Henrietta, smiling to herself, “who had a babe committed to her care for a few hours. It was a wee, helpless babe ; and the child, whom I will call Ida, though that is not her real name, received a great many charges to be very careful of her.”

“This she readily promised ; and then she took the baby out in a small wagon, down the road a short distance where every one thought there was no danger.”

“When she was out of sight of the

house, Ida saw a great dust in the street before her ; and soon she found herself in the midst of a herd of cattle. If she had been alone she would not have been afraid, for she had been accustomed to cows and horses all her life.”

“ Oh, Henrietta ! ” said Bena softly.

“ Wait, my dear, I haven’t finished my story. The little girl was afraid some of the cattle would run against the baby wagon and upset it. She glanced around to see whether there was a chance of getting out of the way ; but there was not.

“ All at once she heard a loud voice cry out :

“ ‘ Jump the wall, child ! jump quick ! Leave the wagon. Get out of the way. ’ ”

“No, he said. ‘Your cloak! your red cloak! It frightens the creatures. Get out of the way.’ But I didn’t know what he meant; and I wouldn’t leave the baby for anything.”

“Well now, Bena, that you have found out who the little girl was, you may tell the rest.”

“Oh, it was awful! It makes my heart beat to think of it. I saw a monstrous creature come at us with his horns down, bellowing and snorting. I thought we should be killed; but I wouldn’t leave baby, though I could have jumped the wall in a minute. I caught baby out of the wagon, and hugged her up as tight as I could; and then I said to myself, ‘we’ll die together.’ That’s all I remember.”

“One of the drivers caught the bull

by the horns when he was within a few feet of you. It was your red cloak, the man said, that made the creature furious. Another driver took you in his arms, put the baby in the wagon, and brought you home. He said he never saw such a courageous child in his life. He said most children would only have thought of saving themselves.

“Now I want you to tell me what kind of courage that was: Natural or moral?”

Bena reflected a moment, and then said:

“I should think it was moral.”

“No, my dear, that was natural courage, like the hen defending her chicks. It is a trait that every one admires; and, as you say, one that

we expect in a boy, more than in a girl. But a child may have a great deal of natural courage without having the love of God in his heart. A boy may, from a noble instinct, jump into a river to save the life of a companion, as that brave boy whom we read about in the papers last week, even at the risk of his own life ; but he may do this without a thought of God or of duty. This is natural courage.”

“ I know,” said Bena, “ that I never thought of it being right, I only thought that baby would be killed if I didn't take care of her ; but what is moral courage ? ”

“ I will give you an example of moral courage. A sweet little girl who has now gone to heaven, was at-

tending a boarding school, and was obliged to occupy a bed in a large room where a dozen girls slept. She knew that many of them never prayed; she feared they would laugh at her and make fun of her religion; her heart beat most painfully at the thought of kneeling before so many; but she had promised her dying mother that she would never go to rest without asking her heavenly Father to take care of her. So she knelt by her bed, hid her face in her hands, and asked Jesus her elder brother, to help her do right."

"Oh I couldn't! I wouldn't dare!" exclaimed Bena, under her breath. "What did the girls do?"

"That was moral courage, Bena. God gave the dear child strength to

face all the ridicule and opposition of her thoughtless companions. Some of them shouted, and laughed, and called her a little Methodist, till the teacher hearing the noise, went to her room.”

One little girl, whose mother long before had taught her to pray, but who had forgotten it, hid her face in the bed clothes, and sobbed. She afterwards became a fast friend to the praying child ; and they loved each other till the little one I have told you about, went to heaven.”

CHAPTER V.

BENA'S CONFESSION.

“ Now, Bena, you have proved that you have natural courage ; and I want you to cultivate moral courage. ‘ Dare to do right ’ is a good motto for girls and boys ; and here is another : ‘ The fear of man bringeth a snare, but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.’ Remember that verse the next time any of your companions ask you to do what you know to be wrong. Now we must really prepare for bed. As we have blown out the light, shall we repeat the twenty-third psalm ? I think you know it.”

“Does it begin : ‘The Lord is my shepherd ; I shall not want ?’ I know every word of that ; and then can’t we sing a verse ?”

They repeated the psalm in concert, and sang the beautiful words :

“Softly, now the light of day,
Fades upon my sight away ;
Free from care, from labor free,
Let me, Lord, commune with thee.”

After the singing, they knelt side by side, while Henrietta commended their souls and bodies to the care of the good Shepherd of Israel.

For a long time Bena had not felt so quiet and peaceful. She thought of the little girl who had not been afraid to pray in the presence of her thoughtless companions ; and she asked

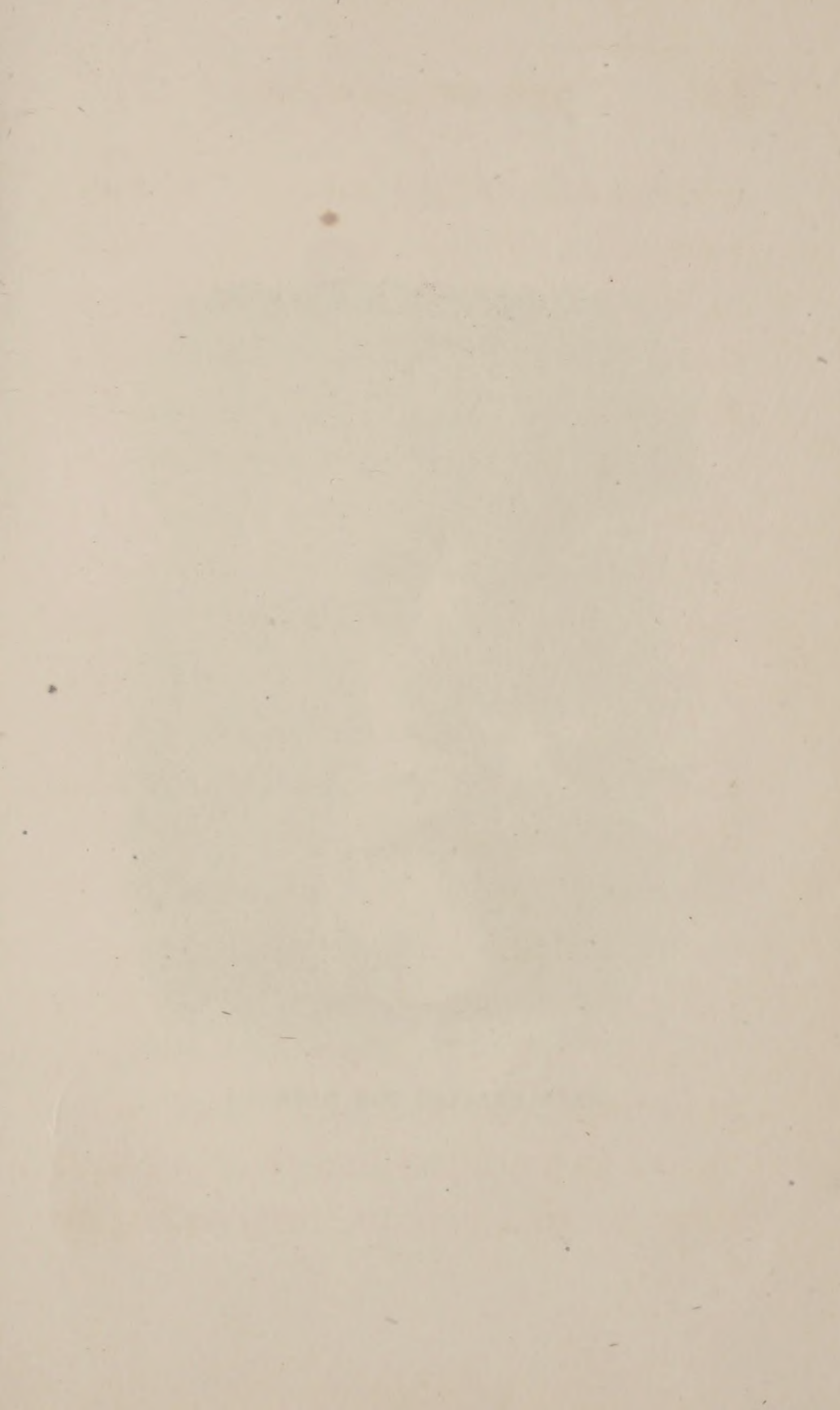
God to deliver her from the fear of man, which indeed had been a snare to her. Then with her cousin's hand tightly clasped in hers, she fell sweetly asleep.

When Bena awoke the sun was shining in all the windows; and cousin Henrietta was looking out upon the green fields, while her fingers were skilfully braiding her long hair.

Instantly Bena's thoughts flew back to the talk of the night before; and she said earnestly :

“ You forgot to tell me what to do about Barbara.”

Henrietta smiled. “ Well,” she said, “ I don't see as you can do anything, at present. She will be tired of being cross bye and bye; and then you can show her that you are ready to forgive





BENA PRAYING FOR BARBARA.

her. But really I think you had better not be intimate with a girl who has no principle."

"When she's pleasant she's real pleasant," exclaimed Bena, her face all aglow; "and then I want to do her good if I can."

The last words were said softly, and a modest blush spread all over the child's face.

"The best thing is to pray for her," said Henrietta seriously. "Can you do that with all your heart?"

"I have prayed twice," was the murmured response. "I prayed too, that I mightn't feel angry any more."

"That is right, dear. Now give me a morning kiss, for I'm going down to help aunt Mary about breakfast."

For several days there was no opportunity for another good talk in the moonlight. Company called every evening to see Henrietta; and Bena was obliged to go to bed alone.

At last there came a quiet hour when the little girl could "have her cousin to herself," as she said, laughing.

"How does Barbara conduct herself now?" inquired the young lady.

"I've ever so much to tell you about her," exclaimed Bena. "And about myself, too."

"Well, begin," said Henrietta, letting fall the heavy braids which had been wound around her head like a crown. "Begin, and I'll be ready to sit down directly."

"You know you told me to pray

for Barbara. I had prayed before; but after that I prayed harder; and then I began to think God would make her a good girl. She likes to read stories; and I lent her that one you like so well, about 'Tim the Scissors Grinder;' and how he wanted everybody to be as happy as he was."

"The next day she brought me a bouquet, a beautiful one of pinks and roses and mignonette, and she seemed just as she used to."

"At recess we walked away together, arm in arm, which made the girls laugh, and shout after us. I had something to say to her; and I didn't want any of the others to hear.

"Now, cousin Henrietta, something

real queer happened. I don't know how it came about. I meant to talk to her about herself, and ask her to begin to read the Bible and pray; but when we got out under the shade of the great rock, I thought how foolish it was for me to ask her that, when I was such a poor weak thing myself, who didn't dare to say *no*, up and down, to what I knew to be wrong. So I just told her all about it, what a bad heart I have; and how I was trying to overcome my faults; and then I told her how I loved her; and how much easier it would be for me to be good, if she would help me, because she was naturally so much more decided than I.

“ Before I knew it, the tears were streaming down my cheeks, and Bar-

bara hid her face from me and cried too.

“Only think, cousin, she’s been trying to pray, too; and she says she was real miserable all the time she was treating me so. She said she sat up half the night reading ‘Tim,’ and she’d give all the world, if she could feel as he did.

“Oh, I’m so happy! I wanted to tell you right away. To-day we went to the rock again; and I told her all you said about two kinds of courage. I think Barbara has both.”

CHAPTER VI.

BENA'S PRAYER.

By the time Bena had reached this part of her story, her cousin had taken off her dress, and slipped on a loose wrapper, for the night was very warm.

“I am delighted,” she said, “to hear all this. I think I shall like Barbara almost as well as you do.”

“She says it's harder for her to be good than it is for me, because she has no one to help her. She says her father would be very angry if he knew how she had begun to pray; but her mother would only make fun of

her. I thought a great deal about it as I came home, and it seemed to me that God was very kind to give me Christian friends, for I have so little courage, — moral courage, you know, while she is so brave. I think she will have a great deal.”

“ Let me see ; to-morrow is Saturday. We must contrive to have Barbara here to tea. Perhaps I can help her in her new resolutions.”

“ Oh, that would be nice ! I'll ask mother now.”

“ No, to-morrow will be in season, my dear. Pass the Bible from the table ; and we will read together.”

Unfortunately for Bena's plan, the next morning at the breakfast table, Mrs. Randolph announced her intention of accompanying her husband to

the city, and spending the day with her sister residing there. The visit from Barbara was, therefore, postponed for a week.

On Sunday evening, there was a violent thunder-shower which prevented the family from going to church. Mr. Randolph had a fine tenor voice ; and his wife sung alto ; Henrietta and Bena carried the treble. After prayers an hour was pleasantly and profitably passed in singing devotional hymns and chants, each one making a selection in turn. It was still early when the books were put away ; and Bena begged her cousin to go to their chamber for a good talk.

Henrietta, ever ready to gratify her friends, cheerfully consented. "Well," she commenced, smiling, "here I am,

ready to enter on any subject. What shall it be ?”

“ Oh, cousin !” exclaimed the little girl. “ I’ve been thinking ever so much about Barbara. I do so wish she were a pious child. She’s just the right kind of a girl to make a real earnest Christian. If you knew her, you’d say so. I couldn’t help wondering about her while we were in church. You wouldn’t arch your eyebrows so at that, coz, if you knew how really I want her to be good. Wouldn’t it be nice to have a little prayer-meeting for her to-night ?”

“ Yes, indeed, my precious child ;” and the young lady drew Bena to her and imprinted a kiss on her cheek.

“ Shall we kneel now ? Will you ask God to help her love Jesus ?”

That was a sight upon which angels might love to look. Side by side they knelt, their arms interlaced, while from full hearts they poured out their desires before God, for the conversion of a companion.

“Dear Father,” plead Henrietta, “Open her eyes to the beauty of her Saviour’s character. May she draw near to thee, not as a God of terror, but as a God of love, who desires that all his children may accept of the mediation of his son Jesus Christ, and be happy forever. Give her courage to announce boldly to those around her a new resolve, the resolve to seek Jesus and serve him with all her heart.”

“Dear God,” whispered an earnest voice, when the young lady’s prayer

was ended, "please do everything for Barbara that my cousin has asked in her prayer, and give poor, weak, trembling me courage to do everything that I ought, for Jesus' sake, Amen."

"Henrietta," questioned Bena after a few moments' silence. "Is it wicked for me to wish to be somebody else? I don't like myself at all."

"Who, for instance, would you be like!"

The child hesitated. "Why — I mean — Now, cousin, you know how very silly and afraid I am. I would like to be real courageous in doing good; and if Barbara was a Christian I think she would be; so I should love to be like her. She dislikes mean girls, and the other day she saw one of the older scholars taking more than

half the lunch from one of the little ones. I saw it too, and was as indignant as she was; but I didn't dare to say a word. Barbara spoke right out:

“ ‘Aren't you ashamed, Matilda Jones. If you want somebody's lunch, take mine; or ask one of your own age to share with you, and not bully one of the little tots out of her cake, and when it's her dinner, too; and you go home for yours.' I would have given anything to have a child look at me as gratefully as little Lucy did at her. Oh, I wish I weren't so foolish! ”

“ Half the trouble is over, Bena, when you are aware of your fault. Ask your heavenly Father to help you conquer it; and he will certainly

answer your prayer. Do you remember my brother Frank?"

"Yes, indeed. Why, he stayed here over night on his way to college only last summer. It was just after you had gone back to your school."

"Oh, yes! Well, Frank had a friend in school a few years ago, whom he loved very much. He told me a great deal about Arthur Blackley until I felt a deep interest in him.

"Won't you please to tell me, coz?"

"I'll tell you one incident that occurred while they were together, because it illustrates this very subject of moral courage and truthfulness. You can judge for yourself whether Arthur possessed these traits when I have related the story."

CHAPTER VII.

THE LOST PENKNIFE.

“ARTHUR BLACKLEY was left an orphan at an early age; but as he had an unconquerable desire to acquire an education, his uncle sent him to school nine months of the year, the lad working hard in his armory the other three, which were the summer vacation. His great ambition was to be a teacher. Even in his first year he used to help the boys who were younger and more ignorant than himself.

“On one occasion the principal of the school, whose name was Adams,

overheard him explaining some rule in arithmetic to a little group of youngsters who had been sent to their seat in disgrace because they didn't know their lesson. He was so patient in going over the explanation again and again, till they all understood him ; and so clear in his manner of telling them, that Mr. Adams never forgot it. After this he often requested Blackley to teach the younger class. At last Arthur summoned courage to tell his master his circumstances, and asked advice about his future course.

“ Mr. Adams was greatly interested, and gave the young student encouragement to go on with his studies, promising if he did well to befriend him. He even suggested that there might be a place as usher in his own

school by the time Arthur had graduated.

“The two friends, Frank and Arthur, were in their last term before graduation, when the incident occurred which I shall relate.

“There was at that time a lad in the junior class named Oscar Edgerton, to whom the master had taken a great dislike on account of a ludicrous caricature of himself which he discovered on the boy’s slate.

“Oscar was only fourteen years of age ; but he was a great, overgrown fellow who stood almost six feet, and was as clumsy, and awkward and indolent, as any specimen of a boy you could find. But in spite of this Oscar had not been in school three months before he was an im-

mense favorite with everybody but the master. From the first usher down to the colored shoe-black, all liked Oscar, and hailed his appearance with a laugh. Indeed, Frank said he was so thoroughly good-tempered and obliging, so running over with fun, no one could help it. If any of the scholars were in trouble, Oscar was the first with his sympathy; and if money was needed, his purse, with all it contained, was at their service.

“If the master had only known the circumstances connected with the making of the caricature, he might have felt differently, especially if he could have seen the great blue eyes, dimmed with penitent tears, as Oscar clumsily erased the picture.

“‘I wish I’d been in the Fejee islands, before I did such a thing,’ he said to one of his companions. ‘I’m provoked with myself, and deserve a horsewhipping ; that I do.’

“ But Mr. Adams knew nothing of this ; and as he had taken great pains to befriend the boy, coming as an entire stranger to the school, he considered him ungrateful and disrespectful in the extreme.

“ Oscar was well aware of the master’s dislike, and it made him more shy and awkward in his presence. He could never act himself ; and if he tried to say anything to please, he expressed himself so clumsily that he only increased Mr. Adams’ want of confidence in him.

“ It happened one day that the

Principal broke the blade of a favorite knife, and expressed his regret in the hearing of Oscar, who instantly resolved to spend a greenback, just received from home, in the purchase of a new one to take its place. He consulted Frank on the subject under a solemn pledge of secrecy, for he did not wish to be known as the giver.

“A few days later Mr. Adams, on opening his desk, found a neat box addressed to himself, which, on unsealing, contained a beautiful pearl-handled knife with four blades. On a card within the box were merely these words:

“FROM A GRATEFUL PUPIL TO HIS
RESPECTED TEACHER.”

“This was in Frank’s penmanship, written with great reluctance, and with an effort to disguise his usual hand, after having in vain begged Oscar to write it himself.

“Just before the close of the school the teacher said he wished to thank one of his pupils who had in such a delicate manner made him a gift of a knife, holding it up to view, while his eyes were fixed full on Frank’s, as if to say, ‘I am well aware to what pupil I am indebted.’

“If he had happened to glance in the direction of Oscar’s desk, he would have seen the boy with his mouth puckered for a whistle, his face as red as a blaze, and with an air of profound indifference to the whole proceeding. But he did not

look that way, and Frank's conscious blushes made the master sure he was the giver.

“Frank instantly went to Oscar, and told him he must be released from his promise, for he would not continue in the false position in which he was placed; but Oscar would only consent on condition that the master thanked Frank in private, or said anything to prove that he ascribed the gift to him.

“‘In that case, then,’ urged Frank, ‘I shall tell him the whole story.’”

“A day or two later, Frank received a summons from me to come home to mother's sick bed, and was absent for nearly two weeks, by which time she was considered out of danger.

“In the meanwhile, the knife mysteriously disappeared from its box in the master’s desk, and unfortunately for all concerned, the master when announcing the fact to the school caught a glimpse of Oscar, whose face from pure astonishment, looked the very picture of guilt.

“Mr. Adams was a good man; but like many other good men, he had faults, one of which was a stubbornness of opinion which it required a great deal of evidence to change. He instantly made up his mind that Oscar was the thief, and that he should be punished severely for the offense.

“The next day he told the scholars that he would give them till night to confess the crime, for it was certain

that the knife had been taken by one of the school.

“If no one confessed it, then a regular trial would take place ; and the thief should be expelled from the school.

“As the master said this in a loud voice, striking the desk violently, to emphasize his words, he fixed his gaze on Oscar with such severity that all present knew whom he suspected.”

CHAPTER VIII.

THE THIEF.

“THE moment the morning school was dismissed, the boys gathered in groups, eagerly discussing the affair.

“‘I do wonder,’ said one little fellow, ‘whether the thief will confess it.’”

“‘I wouldn’t dare to confess,’ said Willie Adams in a low voice. ‘It would take too much courage for me.’”

“Arthur stood near, and going behind Willie, said softly:

“‘I know who took the knife; and I advise him to confess at once.’”

“Willie was silent, and grew very

pale, while the boy near by exclaimed in an excited tone :

“ ‘ Arthur knows who the thief is. He says so. Oh, I would not be the guilty one for the world ! ’

“ Arthur quickly retired to his chamber. He was very angry with himself for saying that he knew. You must remember that he was just about to graduate ; and he had received great encouragement to hope that Mr. Adams would give him the place of third usher which was vacant. Then he could go on with his studies during his leisure hours, and with strict economy be able perhaps in a few years to enter college.

“ He, in common with the others, knew that Mr. Adams suspected Oscar. He knew well how thor-

oughly the master disliked this boy ; and he felt sure the gentleman would eagerly seize any good excuse to expel him.

“ As he rapidly paced his small chamber, his brows knit into a deep frown, he said aloud :

“ ‘ What a fool I was to meddle with it ! Mr. Adams will hear of my speech in less than an hour. At the trial I shall be summoned to testify. If I tell the truth I shall lose all chance of the place I’ve been working for these three years. If I do not — I mean if I refuse to give my evidence, Oscar will no doubt be condemned, for he will never justify himself, and I shall appear to coincide with Mr. Adams in regard to his guilt.’

“ Arthur had long before this consecrated himself, soul and body to Christ; and he did not for a moment intend to be guilty of falsehood; but he grew exceedingly pale and faint as he contemplated the result. He struck his hands together as he exclaimed:

“ ‘ Too bad! When I was almost sure of succeeding and becoming independent of my uncle. I should have spent my summer vacation here; and how much I could have studied. Now, if I tell all, I must go into the world to seek my living, without one farthing in my pocket.’

“ The bell rang for dinner; but Arthur was too much absorbed to hear it. Gracious promises from the good Spirit had been suggested to

his mind: 'Fear not, be of good courage, I will be with thee.' 'Be courageous, I will not leave thee, saith the Lord.' 'Commit thy ways unto the Lord and he will direct thy steps.'

"One of his class in passing his door gave a loud rap, and then opened it to see whether Arthur had gone down. He saw him standing in the centre of the floor, his face colorless; but with a light in his eye which spoke of peace within.

"'What is it, Blackley? Are you ill?' eagerly inquired his companion. 'Come, or we shall be late.'

"The boys were already seated when they entered the dining-hall; and Mr. Adams was about to say grace.

“There was little talk during the meal, for the frowning, severe face at the head of the table forbade the usual flow of conversation.

“Immediately after the dinner the boys crowded around Arthur, urging him to tell what he should testify at the trial.

“‘You will know soon enough,’ was all he would say. His mind was all in a tumult again; and he longed to be by himself where he could hear once more the comforting words of his Father in heaven. In the noise and confusion of the school-room, he could hear nothing that cheered him.

“At last the bell rang for the afternoon session. Arthur was slowly walking through the hall to his place, when he saw Willie Adams hurrying

stealthily through the back door to his mother's sitting-room.

“At the risk of being late Arthur resolved to make one more appeal to the boy. The thought suddenly occurred that there might be a way of escape for him from his dilemma.

“‘Willie, Willie!’ he called.

“The boy stopped, hesitated, and then ran toward Arthur, clutching his hand nervously and gazing in his face in a most piteous manner.

“‘Poor child!’ said Arthur much affected. ‘You had better confess.’

“‘I can't; I don't dare!’ whispered the child, glancing behind him.

“‘Would you have your father expel another boy for a crime you committed, Willie? Could you ever be happy after that?’

“ ‘ I don’t believe Oscar would care. He’s such a big boy. I’m awful sorry; but I daresn’t confess.’

“ ‘ What have you done with the knife ?’

“ ‘ Hush ! somebody will hear you. I’ve thrown it away.’

“ Without another word the boy ran off; and Arthur returned to the school-room, sadly disappointed.

“ Mr. Adams will insist on my testimony; and when I tell him that his only son, his pet Willie, is the thief, he will never forgive me. These were the thoughts that caused such a gloom to spread all over his face.”

CHAPTER IX.

UNJUST SUSPICION.

“ A FEW recitations were hurried through; and then the bell struck for the school to be called to order.

“ ‘ You may put aside your books,’ said Mr. Adams in a stern voice. ‘ We have business of far more importance than study. A criminal is among our number, a hardened one I fear, for he cannot be induced to confess his crime.’

“ With a shudder Arthur glanced toward Willie’s seat. It was almost a relief to see that it was vacant.

“ ‘ You have all heard the proverb,’

continued Mr. Adams, that one black sheep corrupts the flock. This is so in a school. The influence for evil that one vile, hardened sinner may exert on his companions is incalculable. I am resolved to clear my flock of such an influence. I shall call upon every scholar in turn to walk to the desk and answer the questions I may put to him.'

"They walked out in regular order, beginning with the youngest. When it came Willie's turn, his father discovered that his seat was vacant, and sent for him.

"The messenger returned with a reply from his mother that Willie had a violent headache, and was trying to sleep. Unless it was very necessary she asked to have him excused.

“To every one the same questions were proposed.

“‘Do you know anything about the knife or the boy who took it?’ The answer of all was the same.

“‘No, sir, I know nothing.’ When Oscar answered this, the master’s face flushed with anger, as he exclaimed, ‘I will talk more with you.’

“Arthur was in the highest row. His seat and Frank’s vacant one were the last. When Arthur’s name was called, every boy turned to look at him, walking down the aisle. He met Oscar’s blue eye fixed upon him, and was impressed with the dignity which the awkward boy had suddenly assumed.

“When the question was put to him, ‘Do you know anything about the

knife, or the boy who took it?' there was a breathless silence.

“‘Yes, I know who took the knife from the box in your desk.’

“‘What do you know?’

“‘I know that he is not a hardened lad. It was a sudden, childish impulse, which he has regretted ever since.’

“‘Why has he not confessed his regret to me?’ asked Mr. Adams, in so stern a voice that it made the little ones tremble. ‘To me, the owner of the knife, the teacher of this school? There is not one here who is ignorant that I attached particular value to the gift as a token of affection from a grateful pupil; but the loss is nothing when compared to the sad knowledge that we have a thief

in our midst. Must we go about with keys in our pockets? Must we carry with us, wherever we go, a conviction that nothing we have is safe? No, Mr. Blackley, I cannot admit your plea that it was a childish impulse, instantly regretted. The crime must and shall be punished. I demand the name of the thief.'

"For a minute Arthur turned so pale that it seemed as though he would faint. Not a sound disturbed the stillness as he approached a step or two nearer the desk and said in a low but firm voice :

"'I decline, sir, to give the name in this public manner. I still believe the offender has suffered so much that he will never offend again.'

"Mr. Adams was fearfully angry.

He noticed that Oscar bore himself very erect; and he thought there was an air of triumph in his calm face. He brought his hand down on his desk with great force as he exclaimed in a raised voice :

“ ‘I command you, Arthur Blackley, to speak or forfeit my approbation forever.’

“ Arthur drew nearer still and said a few words in his ear, then turned proudly and walked back to his seat :

“ Mr. Adams wrote a card with these words :

“ ‘In my study, half an hour after the close of the school.’

About twenty minutes were given to an address, pointing out the sin of yielding to temptations; and then the order was given to break up.

“Arthur shook off his companions who crowded around him, and was walking away when he saw Oscar standing awkwardly by himself, the object of suspicion to many. He turned, placed his arm in Oscar’s and went away with him, to the unbounded surprise of every one.

“‘I mean to go home,’ said the youth, ‘I can’t bear it any longer. If Frank were only here.’

“‘I know,’ said Blackley, ‘that you did not take the knife. Only be patient, and every one will know it soon. It is hard to be suspected of crime; but not half so hard as to be guilty of it. You may stay in my room till I return from Mr. Adams’ study, where I am going presently; but you must be quiet.’

“Oscar tumbled into a chair and scarcely breathed, while Arthur walked back and forth trying to brace himself for the dreaded interview, and the destruction of all his hopes.

“‘I have forfeited his favor forever,’ he repeated to himself; ‘but I think I have done right. If so, I have still the favor of God.’ Then he offered a silent prayer for courage and strength to do his duty to his master, to Oscar, to Willie.

“It was now time to meet his appointment. He turned to Oscar, saying :

“‘Stay here,’ and left the room.”

CHAPTER X.

THE REAL THIEF.

“NEVER had Arthur’s teacher met him with so angry a countenance. Mr. Adams motioned him to a seat, saying in a reserved tone :

“ ‘I am waiting to hear what excuse you have to offer for direct disobedience to my command, a line of conduct I certainly did not expect from you.’

“ Arthur rose from his seat and stood directly in front of the gentleman. In a voice trembling with suppressed feeling, he said :

“ ‘ When you know all, sir, you will

understand why it was impossible for me to tell you the name of the boy who took the knife. I cannot even here, tell you what I saw without the deepest pain, and I implore you to treat him leniently. I believe it is his first crime.'

“‘ I have said that he should be expelled, and I shall keep my word. Justice to my other scholars demands this. I may here say that I am not wholly surprised, at this new development in the character of Oscar. He,—”

“‘ You are mistaken, Mr. Adams, in thinking Oscar the thief. He is a boy of firm principles, far above such a crime.’

“‘ I have every reason for suspecting him ; but if not he, who is it?’ Mr. Adams was angry again.

“ ‘ If he were my own brother,’ faltered Arthur, dropping on his knees ; ‘ I could scarcely feel more pain than I do now, in telling you it was Willie, your own son.’ ”

“ The blow struck, the father sank forward, his arm and head dropping on the table, as if paralyzed ; his mouth and eyes wide open, his face the hue of death.

“ ‘ It was under circumstances,’ Arthur began ; but Mr. Adams feebly waved his hand, saying :

“ ‘ Not now ; call his mother.’ ”

Arthur was hastily leaving the room when he heard his teacher murmur the words :

“ ‘ God forgive me. My poor Willie ! ’ ”

“ Nothing more was seen of the



“GOD FORGIVE ME, MY POOR WILLIE!”

Principal till the next morning. He walked into the hall leading Willie by the hand; the boy's face swollen with weeping.

“ ‘ Before we ask God's blessing,’ said the teacher, trying in vain to clear his voice, ‘ my poor boy has a confession to make.’ He then sat down, and Willie, amid tears and sobs, confessed that he stole the knife from his father's desk.

“ ‘ You remember, boys, what I told you yesterday,’ continued Mr. Adams. ‘ You remember, too, what was urged by Mr. Blackley of the sorrow of the guilty child. I believe Willie has deeply repented of his crime, and has asked the forgiveness of his Father in heaven, as well as of his father on earth. It is for you to

say, now, whether he shall still be a member of the school.

“‘Let him stay.’ ‘Please forgive him;’ ‘I’m sure he’ll never do so again;’ cried out one and another of the scholars.

“Mr. Adams bowed gratefully to the school, then called one of the ushers to read the chapter in course.

“The early train after breakfast carried Frank back to his studies, where he no sooner heard what had passed, than he asked Oscar to his room, and after a short interview, went to Mr. Adams’ study, just as a boy brought Arthur a note from the teacher.

“It contained these words:

“‘A young man who has courage to do right in the face of the destruc-

tion of all his wishes, is the man I need. You are hereby appointed to fill the place of usher now vacant, and your salary will commence from this date.'

"Scarcely half an hour later, Oscar came rushing to Arthur's room in great excitement, and throwing himself into a chair, burst out crying like a great baby.

"'I shall never get over it, never. He's too good. Only think of his asking my forgiveness. Oh, its too much! I'll be the best boy after this, that ever came to the school. I'll never forget it, never.

"Frank arrived just in time to explain to Mr. Adams that it was Oscar's affection which prompted the gift; and he also explained many things in

Oscar's character, proving to the teacher that he had wholly misunderstood him. After this there was not one in the school more devoted to his teacher than Oscar, or more appreciative of a good scholar in the rough, awkward boy, than Mr. Adams."

CHAPTER XI.

TRIAL OF COURAGE.

BENA was so intensely interested in her cousin's story, that she quite forgot her promise to her mother not to be up late. When she heard steps on the stairs, her first impulse was to jump into bed with her clothes on, and leave her mother to infer that she had kept her word. But she suddenly stopped short, and then ran out into the entry, saying :

“ Oh, mother, Henrietta was talking so beautifully, I forgot all about my promise. Will you forgive me ? ”

“ Yes, indeed, ” answered the lady,

smiling as she kissed her daughter. "But how happens it that you came to tell me. I should have gone to my room supposing you were quietly sleeping."

Bena held down her head for a minute, and then said in a humble voice :

"I'm trying to be a better girl, mother. For one minute, I thought of getting into bed quick ; but I said to myself : 'That will be deceiving.' So as I have resolved to be courageous, I came out to tell you."

"You have given me more pleasure, Bena, than I can tell you," said the lady softly. "Only be brave to do what your conscience tells you is right, and you will be all that I wish."

Barbara was much pleased with her

invitation for the next Saturday, and readily obtained permission from her mother to accept it. During the week she appeared very serious, as though she were revolving some great question in her mind, as indeed she was.

Henrietta happened to be at the door when Barbara arrived at about three o'clock on Saturday afternoon, and was much pleased with her appearance. She was larger and taller than Bena, though only a month or two older. Instead of looking bold, as the young lady had expected, there was an air of humility about her which was very pleasing.

After an hour, Bena invited her guest into the chamber where her cousin sat embroidering a pair of slippers.

“Now, Henrietta,” said the young girl, “I hope you’re not very busy, for we want to have a nice talk.”

When Barbara was seated near the window where she could smell the flowers from the strip of garden underneath, the young lady drew from the stranger all her late unhappy feelings. After reading of Tim’s conversion, she began to long to be like him. She could say from the heart his simple prayer; “I am a sinful child; but I want to be holy. Help me to love thee, and serve thee with all my heart.”

But she added with a burst of tears, “My parents are not like Bena’s; and I have no one at home to help me be good. My father is very kind. He would give me anything I asked

for, if he had money enough ; but I know he won't let me be a Christian."

Henrietta turned to the sixth chapter of Ephesians, and read : " Children, obey your parents in the Lord."

She explained that this meant that just as far as the parents' commands are consistent with God's revealed will, they must be obeyed.

" Now, Barbara, God says to you : ' Give me thine heart.' He says : ' Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.' Christ commands : ' Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' If any father or mother says you shall not keep these commands, who shall be obeyed, God or man ? "

" I want to go to Sunday school,"

said Barbara, avoiding the first question ; “ but I dread to ask father. I know how angry he would be.”

“ My dear Barbara, Christ our elder brother knew just how you would be situated ; hear what he says to you.” She opened the Bible and read :

“ Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul : but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

“ If they saw me going out, they wouldn't think of the Sabbath school. I might manage that way,” suggested Barbara.

“ But, my dear child, if you are determined to set out in the path to heaven, the sooner you tell them the

better; and the sooner you can hope that your prayers for them will be answered.”

“Oh, if I could see my father a good man!” exclaimed Barbara, clasping her hands, “I wouldn’t care what became of me. I will try to tell him to-night; but I’m afraid.”

“I will answer you, Barbara, in Christ’s words to St. Paul, ‘Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace. For I am with thee.’”

Bena seized her companion’s hand, and held it tightly in her own. She kept saying to herself:

“Oh, if it were poor, timid me, what would I do?”

CHAPTER XII.

REWARD OF COURAGE.

THE next morning as Henrietta and her cousin were going to Sunday school, Barbara joined them. Her eyes were red ; but her face was calm and decided. She said nothing until they had walked some distance, then she turned abruptly to Henrietta and said :

“ He gave me leave to go to-day ; but he said it must be the last time. ‘ Sunday,’ he said, ‘ is my only leisure day ; and I won’t have you take up notions that will interfere with your keeping it as I please.’ ”

“I told him I would do anything for him that God would let me. I said I loved him and mother since I began to pray better than I ever did; but I must obey God.

“‘You *must* obey me, Barbara,’ he answered, and his voice was very angry.”

“Don’t worry,” whispered Bena, as Barbara’s tears began to flow again. “You see God has helped you so far. I think it was real nice that he let you go to-day.”

Henrietta had taken a class for the summer, and she invited the young girl to join it; and through the whole lesson she tried to say what would help and comfort poor Barbara.

As they went home they passed a high bank, on the top of which grew

a weed called life-everlasting. Barbara climbed up with some difficulty, and picked a large bunch.

“Father likes to smell of it,” she explained.

When they parted, Henrietta and Bena promised to pray for her every day.

Back of Mr. Windsor’s house there was a fine, smooth lawn, with croquet wickets upon it. After dinner during which the young girl was as affectionate as possible, Mr. Windsor said :

“Come, Barbara, there is just time before the sun gets round on the lawn for a game of croquet.”

She stared at him a moment, blushing crimson ; but he took no notice. Almost every Sunday through the summer she had played with him ;

but then she did not feel as she did now.

He went to the closet, took out two mallets and two balls, and going down the steps, called out again :

“Come, what are you waiting for?”

She rushed after him, caught his arm, and exclaimed :

“Oh father, please excuse me! I can't play to-day. It's Sunday.”

“And why can't you play on Sunday as you always have I should like to know?” he asked, his eyes flashing.

“Because it would be wicked. God says : ‘Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.’”

Mr. Windsor threw off his daughter's arm, and said sternly :

“And the same book says : ‘Honor

thy father and thy mother.' I command you to take the mallet; and let me hear no more of such nonsense. This is what I get by letting you go to church this morning."

He held the mallet out to her; but she did not take it.

She said softly, "I can't, father; I can't disobey God."

He raised his hand to strike her, but restrained himself, and said angrily:

"Go to your room, and don't let me see you again to-day."

"What a silly girl you are!" said her mother, following her and pulling the handkerchief from her eyes. "If you didn't want to play croquet why didn't you tell him you'd rather sing, or turn him off some way."

Barbara cried till her head ached terribly ; and her father in the study where he had shut himself, did not feel much better. He couldn't understand what the child had got into her head ; but he would soon cure her of disobeying him.

After a cup of sage tea which her mother carried to her room, the poor child felt better, and began to read in her Testament. Then she kneeled by her bed, and told her Father in heaven all her trials. With tears running down her cheeks, she besought God to touch the hearts of her father and mother, and make them willing she should act as her conscience approved.

During the week Mr. Windsor watched his daughter. He saw that

she was more obedient and affectionate than ever. She clung to him, ran to meet him as he returned from his office, and did everything in her power to show that she loved him. He could not help confessing to himself that there was a great improvement in her character.

One morning he heard Barbara confessing to her mother her sorrow that she had forgotten something she had been told to do.

“You’re a heedless girl,” said the lady angrily.

“I’m very sorry, mother, I do mean to try and improve.”

The next Sunday Barbara dressed for church and was going out when her father stopped her.

“Didn’t I tell you a week ago, that

Sunday must be the last time?" he asked.

"Please let me go, father."

"Will you play croquet with me this afternoon?"

"Oh, father! I'll play every other day!" Then thinking what her mother had said, she exclaimed:

"I'll sing, I know some beautiful new tunes. Please let me go."

"Go then; but if you choose to disobey me, you must never come back."

She looked in his face a moment, started for the door, rushed toward him, threw her arms around his neck, and with a passionate burst of tears, exclaimed:

"I love you, father; but I must go where I can learn to be good. Then

she went down the steps crying as though her heart would break.

When she came out of church, not knowing where she should go, she found her father waiting for her.

“I did it to try you,” he said. “If you are so anxious to go, you may; but I can’t understand it.”

In the afternoon, instead of playing croquet on the lawn, she read to him the book about “Tim the Scissors Grinder,” which had so deeply impressed her own mind.

“Dear father,” she exclaimed in a coaxing manner, winding her arms around his neck. “Wasn’t he almost the happiest man you ever knew? If you would only let me go to church and Sunday school; and oh, if you and mother would go with me, I

should be as happy as he was. Won't you, dear papa ?”

“ I can't understand it ;” he said, as though speaking to himself.

But Barbara had begun to hope for herself, and she wanted those dearest to her to enter into her joy. She began to pray earnestly for them, and at length was rejoiced to know that her prayers had been answered.

On the morning of the day when Mr. Windsor with his wife and daughter were to make a public profession of their faith in Christ, he said to his daughter :

“ I thank God who gave you courage to leave your home for conscience' sake. I shall never forget the pang that darted through my heart when you went down the steps weeping as

though your heart would break, and yet with these words :

“‘ I love you, father ; but I must go where I can learn to be good.’

“It was your bravery in standing up for what you considered right, which first led me to think seriously of my own ways, and finally brought me to Christ.”

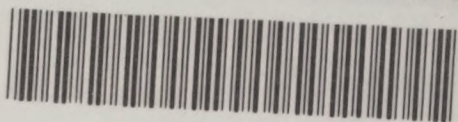








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