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The Work of one Weak Committee

BY DOVE MALTSBERGER.

It was a rainy, disagreeable day and Susie sighed a deep, discouraged sigh, as she drew from its hiding place a key and unlocked the door of the church. The small room which the Endeavorers used for a library was cold and gloomy, and on the table were scattered piles of magazines and papers which had been donated to the Good Literature Committee.

"The only one here!" murmured Susie. "I am just tired of doing all the work of the committee, simply because I am chairman. The others could come out in the rain just as well as I could. And there are all those papers to be as sorted, for we must get a bundle off to the penitentiary to-day. I did think Nell Dixon would be here, at least, but she isn't, and I may as well get to work."

She stood her dripping umbrella in a corner, and began to assort the papers. The last bundle was ready to tie up, when she heard a great stamping and scraping of feet, and looked out to find Nell Dixon's little brother at the door. "Here are some papers and a note sister sent you," said he. Sue took them and turned back to the room saying to herself that she would not bother with these until next week, as it was growing late. But when she opened the note it read:

Dear Sue:—I am so sorry to disappoint you, but mother is sick and I can't come to the church this eve. I send some Golden Rules, which I think will be good to put in the penitentiary bundle, for they contain so much general news, and might bring a message to some poor prisoner from his far away home, and perhaps in this way turn his thoughts to better things. I hope there will be some one there to help you this evening, and am very sorry I can't come.

Yours faithfully NELL DIXON.

Sue threw the note down on the table, hastily stamped the papers with the society stamp, tied them up with the others and addressed the bundle to the chaplain of the State Penitentiary. "I may as well take these by the office and mail them as I go home," said she. "Why what did I do with Nell's note? I must have put it in the stove with that waste paper. It is getting late and I must hurry home."

That night she lounged on the sofa in her mother's room and talked over all the troubles of the day. "I am so tired and discouraged mother. It seems as if the society had accomplished nothing at all this year, and yet we came back from the convention so full of enthusiasm and plans. I don't know why it is, but the enthusiasm all seems to melt away when it comes right down to personal work. It is so easy to be earnest and hopeful when we are at the convention, and are surrounded by all the favorable circumstances. A deep spirit of consecration seems to pervade everything; the songs are so inspiring; the reports so encouraging; we feel as if we could conquer almost any obstacle. But when we get home and there is so much to be done, so many who are cold and indifferent, and so few who are really ready and willing to do their share, then it is hard!" "Yes dear," said her mother, "I know it is hard; but you must not be easily discouraged. You must be willing to work faithfully and steadily and wait patiently for results. And when your committee fail you and you feel that you are bearing the burden alone, think of the Master. How much of his work was done alone. Even in the garden, when his burden seemed greater than he could bear, his trusted companion slept while he watched. Yet we have the same refuge left us that he had. He went to the Father in prayer, and received strength for the struggle. Try to remember

this dear, and make frequent use of the blessed privilege, for one poor human arm with God to strengthen it, is worth a great many working in their own strength. And now good-night little daughter, I hope to-morrow will be a bright day and there will not be so many worries." "Yes mamma, I hope so, and I am going to try to begin the day well by taking some flowers to Mrs. Dixon who is ill." "Is she indeed? Then I must go with you. Poor Mrs. Dixon! she was never very strong, and the years since Tom left home have been very wearing on her, she grieves so for him. Just imagine how she must feel, when they have not had a word from him for several years. We ought to be very thankful that we are all together, when we think of the wanderers far from home, and of those who watch and wait and weep for their with aching hearts. Let us remember them when we pray to-night, Susie."

Susie did pray long and earnestly that night, both for strength to be a better Christian herself, and for the joy of seeing some result of her service in the up-lifting of other lives. And an earnest plea went up from her heart that the society might be more useful in its work "for Christ and the church."

II.

Almost a year had passed, and Sue was in her room getting ready to go to the Junior meeting, (for the society had greatly increased in numbers and had organized a Junior too) when she was startled by a quick rap at the door and Nell Dixon rushed into the room. Flinging her arms about Sue's neck, she told her, between the sobs of joy, that her brother Tom had come home. "And oh, Sue! it was all through our sending that bundle of papers to the penitentiary!" And then the story was told of how the wayward brother had fallen into temptation and sin. How he had served a term in prison, and, a few days before his release, a change had been wrought in his life by a Christian Endeavor paper.

He was sitting alone in his cell, thinking despondently that when he was set free there would be no one to care whether he began an honest life, or took up the old wicked career. "For, thought he bitterly, 'Mother and little Nell could never welcome a jail bird, and so I can never go home now.'" Just then the chaplain opened the door and handed him a paper. He glanced at it carelessly and was about to toss it aside when some stamped letter caught his eye. He looked closer and saw that it was from the Y. P. S. C. E. of his mother's church, in the town of his boyhood home. What a flood of sacred memories the name of that little church brought back to him! He unfolded the paper and opened it. What was this! A little piece of paper fell out! It was Nell's note to Susie; as he read the hastily penciled words, with their kindly mention of the poor prisoners who were far from home, and saw the name signed to them—"Yours faithfully, Nell Dixon," the tears welled up in his eyes, and he bent his head on the table and wept. "Dear little Nell! she sent this paper, and her heart was tender toward the 'jail-birds.' May be they would take me back after all; anyway I'm going to begin over again and be a man, and when I've proven myself trustworthy, I'll go back home and see."

The picture came to his mind of the happy by gone days and how his loving sister had pleaded with him to lead an upright life. He told the chaplain the story, and the chaplain told the Endeavor society of his church. When the day of his discharge came there were friendly hands outstretched to him. Employment was found and after a few months had gone by he began to be able to forget that he was a "jail bird," and even gained courage to apply for membership in the society. He had won the confidence of his employers now, and was getting very good wages, yet he dreaded going home. But the words of Nell's note troubled him. "I can't come because mother is sick." At last the longing to go and see how mother was overcame him, and he returned to the old home. Needless to say how glad was the greeting, and how his mother rejoiced over the return of her prodigal son, who, even though his name was stained with disgrace, was still dear to her fond heart.

Not long after his return, Tom was received into the church and became an active member of the Endeavor society. As he stood for the first time to testify in the meeting, he said, in a voice choked with emotion: "Endeavorers, I want to tell you to-night that God is using you to do a great work, and often when you are most discouraged, the good seed is taking root, though you do not know it. To-night I am by the grace of God, able to stand among you and say that through the work of the

Good Literature Committee of this society, I was led to begin a new life, and to accept my Saviour, to whom I have dedicated my life and loyal service from now henceforth.—Selected.

League Echoes.

The best gift we can give is ourselves for that includes all.—F. C. Hartley.

I would not be true to Christ if I withheld an acknowledgement of his goodness.—M. L. Gregg.

God wants our all.—Geo. Bolster.

Has not the failures of the past year been due largely to the forgetting of the first part of our pledge? Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for help!—T. A. Lindsay.

My faith grows stronger as the years go by.—Geo. Tapley.

We could not live long without anything to do.—Miss Robinson.

"Not my own, not my own, Jesus I belong to thee." I want to do my best and be my best.—A. Gertrude Hartley.

We must come down from the hill top of convention enthusiasm into the valleys where burdens are to be borne.—Gertrude Seely.

A kind word is often a great sermon.

Think over your pledge daily it will help you.

Begin the prayer meeting on time, close on time—it will surely help the meeting.

Take part in every meeting, if there is a pause let it be after you have taken part.

A good prayer meeting is always a certainty where every member feels the obligation of the pledge.

Do not be discouraged if your efforts do not always meet with success. It may be God's will to have them unsuccessful. Who knows?

The most important committee in the society ought to be the one you are on—regardless of name—you can make it so if you will—see if you can't.

Definite committee work is what counts. Plan some special work for your committee to do, and then use your best efforts to see that it is accomplished.

Keep constantly in mind that the Endeavor society was organized for the salvation of souls. A society that falls short of effort in this direction is not what I would call an ideal society.

"God bless you" I heard an old grandmother say one day to a young man who shook hands with her and her grandson as she was passing out the church door. Who knows what a blessing that hand shake invoked.

Don't overlook the Associate members, it is a grave mistake if we do, as every Endeavorer should work faithfully for the salvation of the associate members, for whose spiritual welfare we have a peculiar responsibility.

The most active societies are always those where each individual member has some work to do. See to it that every member has some work to do and you will solve the question how to increase interest in the society.

Encourage the weak and timid members in your society, show them you are interested in them, speak to them after the meeting, thank them if they took part, show them in this way you appreciate their efforts. It is not much for you to do but means a great deal to them.

When you have a business meeting—have a business meeting—and conduct it in a business fashion. Plan it before hand, have some business to bring up—some ideas to suggest, and by all means have written reports from all committees. If a committee have nothing to report, let them say so. The society wants to know and ought to know what their committees are doing.

He Said No.

The great Young Men's Christian Association Convention recently held in Boston brought delegates from all parts of the world to testify to the value of the Christian religion as the highest rule of conduct for a practical life. It was natural, as the delegates met each other, for them to exchange vital experiences. The following was told by one who had travelled eight thousand miles to attend the meeting:

My father was a rancher on a small scale in Australia. He had only a thousand sheep or so and a couple of square miles of run for pasture. He was an English emigrant of sturdy yeoman stock, and while the free life of a shepherd had taught him tolerance and kindness, he remained true in principle

to the strict lesson of his early years.

The nearest neighbor or station was ten miles away, but the ranchmen used to think nothing of riding twenty or forty miles to a centrally located farm on Saturdays to spend the night in carousal, and ride back on Sunday.

The isolation was so depressing and the heat so exhausting that when the men came together once a week in this way drinking and gambling seemed inevitable. In the kindled passion and excitement of these coarse pleasures they thought they might forget for a few hours the suffering and privation of their lot.

At last it was my father's turn to entertain. He must invite the herders of the kraals and ranches within a radius of nearly fifty miles.

Boys, he said to his sons, my brother and myself, it's the parting of the ways. We either live as we have lived, simply in the fear of God, minding our business, paying our debts if we can, saving our money if possible, and being cut by every man round here, or we fall into the ways of our neighbors, and drink and gamble ourselves into perdition. I am not going to break your mother's heart, and I say No, even if they burn us down.

It was the critical moment of our lives. I could have fallen at my father's feet and worshiped him when he made that decision. He looked like a god—determined and invincible.

So it came about that my brother and I divided the circuit between us, and I rode to the north and he to the south. To every ranchman this message was: Father invites you for Saturday and Sunday as usual. There will be no cards or liquor—only a quiet talk about old England and the welfare of the colony.

We waited that Saturday afternoon with trembling, not expecting a single guest. But suddenly one rode up, and then another, until the whole section was represented. There never had been so large a gathering. They came in curiosity and with respect.

With another opposite him, father said grace at table, and we boys saw tears flow down rugged cheeks. That night the men talked long about bushmen and rabbits and fences and drought, and how to stand by each other.

The next morning, as he did every Sunday morning, father conducted prayers, this time before fifty of the roughest men I had ever seen assembled; and there was singing of hymns, broken here and there by sobs and by tears. When they parted, my father, although a recent comer, was the acknowledged leader of the community.

That section became the most prosperous section in all the country round. And I thought if Christian courage could accomplish that, it was good enough for me to live and die by. My father's 'No' was the one thing needed to save the community, and it saved it.

Don't Be Selfish.

Some people seem to be here in the world just on their guard all the while, always so afraid of doing wrong that they never do anything really right. They do not add to the world's moral force; as the man who, by constant watchfulness over his own health, just keeps himself from dying, contributes nothing to the world's vitality. All merely negative purity has something of the taint of the impurity that it resists. The effort not to be frivolous is frivolous itself. The effort not to be selfish is very apt to be only another form of selfishness.—Phillips Brooks.

Lay not up against your neighbor the sin of yesterday. He may repent of it to-day.

Hagyard's Yellow Oil is a useful remedy to have in any house. It is good for man or beast. Relieves pain, reduces swelling, allays inflammation, cures cuts, burns, bruises, sprains, stiff joints, etc. Price 25c.

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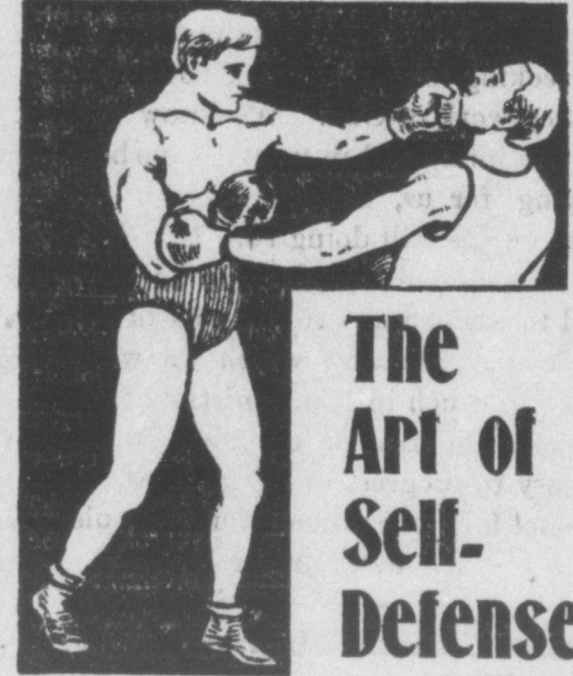
Buckingham's Dye for the Whiskers is the best, handiest, safest, cleanest, most economical and satisfactory dye ever invented. It is the gentleman's favorite.

A Beautiful Answer.

The story is told of a little girl in England who, when rain water was scarce, saved up as much of it as she could and then sold it for a cent a bucket. In this way she earned nearly five dollars, which she brought to the Missionary Society. She was a modest little girl, and when the secretary of the Missionary Society asked for her name, she hesitated and failed to answer. But I must put down where the money came from, said the secretary. Call it rain from heaven, replied the little girl.

What does God think of sin?—not what does man think of it, but what does God think of it? Human reason, the very best human reason—all human reason collectively,—is inadequate to a comprehension of sin, as God sees it. Human conscience, the best instructed human conscience, and all human conscience collectively, is inadequate to decide on the deserts of sin as God views it. Not our opinion, but God's own utterances consultate our guide.

The highest manhood resides in disposition, not in mere intellect.—H. W. Beecher



The Art of Self-Defense.

The popular idea expressed in the phrase, "the art of self-defense," shows the opinion that the chief enemies a man has to defend himself from are visible and external. But the real danger of every man is from minute and often invisible foes. In the air we breathe and the water we drink are countless minute organisms leagued against the health of the body.

The one defense against these enemies is to keep the blood pure. Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery thoroughly purifies the blood, removing poisonous substances and accretions. When the blood is pure there is no harborage for the germs of disease which find a lodging only when the blood is impure and corrupt.

"I consider your 'Golden Medical Discovery' one of the best medicines on the face of the earth," writes Mr. Wm. Floeter, of Redox, Montgomery Co., Iowa. "While in the southwest, three years ago, I got poisoned with poison ivy. The poison settled in my blood and the horrors I suffered cannot be told in words. I thought I would go crazy. I tried different kinds of medicine, tried different doctors, but all the relief they could give me was to make my pocket-book lighter. I then began taking Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. Took four bottles without relief. Kept taking it. I took in all ten bottles and got entirely cured."

Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets cure constipation.

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