

fresh paint, neat muslin curtains had been put up in place of the shabby lace ones; and the well-worn table-cover had given way to another, just from the store. Over the neat matting, before study and easy-chair, rugs were placed for warmth and coziness.

And as a crowning touch, a beautiful etching, that was of itself an inspiration, hung on the wall opposite the pastor's seat at his study table. This was a personal gift from Hope Arnold. Care had been taken to have everything done before it should be time for the pastor and his family to arrive at the church, that they might not be so soon surprised at seeing a light in the house. But toward the close of the evening's exercises, Fred Johnson slipped over to the parsonage, and when Mr. and Mrs. Goodman stepped out into the wintry air they were startled by a gleam from the study windows.

"What can it mean!" cried Mr. Goodman in alarm. "Can it be fire?"

"I don't believe it is," Mrs. Goodman replied, cheerily, with a strengthening of the suspicion, which she had already entertained, but had not mentioned to her unsuspecting husband, that there might have been a special reason for their out-of-town visit on this particular day.

"We'll get home as soon as possible," she continued, "and see what it is. Come, children," and they hastened toward the parsonage, the pastor carrying the youngest child, his wife leading the next, while the rest of the sleepy, happy little group followed close behind.

The lower part of the house was dark, evidently there was not a reception on foot, Mrs. Goodman mentally decided.

Home was soon reached, and they hurried up stairs. A lighted lamp was on a stand before the study door, and against it leaned a placard, bearing the words, "Beware of paint," in large letters. Mr. Goodman carefully opened the door and entered the room, followed by Mrs. Goodman ushering in her brood with due deference to the warning without and the odor within.

The little folks chattered and exclaimed, and pointed out to one another the various changes, but for a few moments the pastor and his wife said not a word. Then Mr. Goodman took an envelope from the table. It contained a ten-dollar bill and a card, from which he read aloud in a rather unsteady voice:

"Please accept the alterations in your study as a testimonial of affection and esteem from the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, and use the inclosed for such further improvements in the way of books as it will make, and you may desire."

Mrs. Goodman sat down and cried. "Oh!" she exclaimed, "this study has worried me so! I've tried and tried to plan for having it fixed up, but there didn't seem to be any way to do it. Finally I gave up and just left it with the Lord, and since then I've been sure it would be done some day. And it is. Those blessed young folks! And ten dollars for books, too!"

"Yes," replied Mr. Goodman, wiping his own eyes, "I am very thankful for it all. It was Hope Arnold's idea. I am positive. She looked very determined when she left the study that morning she was here."

"Well, it is certainly a welcome Christmas gift, and a great surprise."

Then small Johnny Goodman, who had been regarding his parents in great perplexity, exclaimed, "I don't see what makes papa and mamma cry about it! I think it looks lots nicer than it did before."

A BIBLE IN A BARN.

St. Paul reminded Timothy that "the Word of God is not bound." More than once it has been known to reach and bless a pagan without missionary help.

Some years ago an ignorant but docile Japanese served as cook in an American family in San Francisco. His favorite resort, when at leisure from his duties, was a nook in the barn where a number of old books, discarded from crowded alcoves in the house, had been piled. He was trying to learn English, and the books stimulated his curiosity and busied him for hours with the study of words.

A fellow countryman visited him in his barn library, and soon became as inquisitive as himself. One book with gift-edged leaves attracted his friend. He opened it, and with the little knowledge they had between them the two spelled out "Holy Bible," and wondered what it meant. They agreed to investigate, and procuring an Anglo-Japanese lexicon, the cook and his companion met as often as they could, and pored over the pages of the Bible together, often by dim lamplight far into the night.

One evening, another fellow countryman, who was a student in a mission school in the city, and a Christian, made them a call. Surprised to find them reading the scriptures, he gladly translated for them several specimen chapters and texts, promised them in the future he would help them to understand the book, and then and there told them the story of Christ's life.

After such a beginning it is easy to guess what followed; but a commonplace sequel, as men see it, may be the first chapter of an eternal history.

The cook and the young student interested others of the nation in Bible study, hired an upper room and organized a Gospel Society. This resulted, in May, 1885, in the formation of the Japanese Presbyterian church.

In San Francisco the Christian Japanese now own a large building for Young Men's Christian Association work, and support an outlying mission. Of the three hundred and eighteen who have from time to time joined themselves to this church, several have returned to their native land, bearing with them their Christian character and testimony. One of them is the cook's friend, the man who found the Bible in the barn.—*Chris. Intelligencer.*

The one thing that brings comfort to a man's heart is to know that he is on the path of duty where God put him, and that if danger and peril and scorn meet him there, God, who sent him, must take the responsibility. When God sends his servants upon his errands he takes all risks; and when you are doing God's work, when you are on God's track, and you know you are pushing God's plan, his course across the ocean—then let the storm come. God is responsible for carrying you there, and you may sleep in the midst of it.—*F. B. Meyer.*

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Love will find its opportunity. As in the glad season of the spring-time the sun cannot see itself without quickening in seed and root the glad new life, and as in turn the new life cannot but unfold itself in leaf and bloom and flower, so it is that we cannot see the Lord without a quickening love, and love can only live in fuller, richer service. And love and service in turn do bring the revelation of the Lord.—*Mark Guy Pearse.*

Do Not Delay.—Do not let a cold or a cough fasten upon you as it will if neglected. Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil will break up a cold and cure a cough, and should be resorted to at once when the first symptoms appear. It can be disguised so that any unpleasant taste it may have will be imperceptible to the delicate. Try it and be convinced.

The mercies for which we are least grateful are often those which are of the greatest moment—health and freedom from suffering, and strength to perform our daily duties, the pure air and sweet sunlight, the laughter of children and the pleasant recognition of friends. If these common things are not great blessings, where will we find them?

I should count myself fortunate if my home were remembered for some inspiring quality of faith, charity and aspiring intelligence. — *Hamilton W. Mabie.*

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