

The Fireside.

Show Your 'Ligion By Your Works.

BY W. G. WILSON.

There was silence in the meeting,
Expectation on each face,
As "Brer Zekel," old and trembling,
Rose in his accustomed place.
Calmly looked he at his people,
Slowly laid his Bible down,
Wiped his glasses with precision,
Then with wise and knowing frown.

Said, "My deah belubbed chillun,
De subject we am gwine to took
An' try to 'spoun' to you tonight
Is, 'Show Your 'Ligion By Your
Wo'k.'

Talk is cheap, my 'lubbed brudders,
Mighty cheap, to pray an' sing,
But to wo'k an' give your money
Cert'n'y am annuder thing."

"Taint de shoutin' nor de prayin',
Nor de singin' dat you do
In dis worl' o' sin an' trouble
Dat's agwine to fotch you thu;
'Tis de wo'k dat you can 'complish,
'Tis de money dat you gives,
'Tis de way you treat your nabor,
'Tis de way de Quishton lives."

"Some o' you my 'lubbed sisters
Seem to think dat all de need
Is to holler hallelujah,
Thank de Lawd my soul is freed;
Others, when de Sperrit strikes em,
'Stead o' doin' deeds of love,
Overturn a dozen benches
An' perhaps knock down de stove."

"Yet dem werry same good sisters
When de 'lection plate come by,
'Pears to be areadin' sumpin'
Dat am written in de sky.
Den dars brudders who can sing
So loud 'twill jar de winders out,
Dat can pray an' talk 'bout 'ligion
Till de sinners want to shout;"

"But dese same loud prayin' brudders
Who can talk 'bout 'ligion so,
Knows so much about salvation
An' de way-we oughter go;
Owes de pastor nine yurss sal'ry,
Owes de lan'lo'd for de rent,
Owes de doctor, owes de grocer,
Owes thur wives for money lent."

"What's de matter now, my brudders?
Whyn't somebody say amen?
Is de gospel truff done choke you?
Speak right out an' tell it, den;
Hallelujah's werry 'citin',
Does us good to shout an' cry,
But, my brudders, keep de 'man'ments
If you ebber specs to fly."

"God don't want dese 'ceptions Quish-
tons,
Folks dat talk an' nebber do;
But he wants de pure in h'art
Dat sings an' prays an' labors, too.
Now we'll close dis 'lusteration,
An' de c'lection will be took,
When de plate come roun', my brudders,
Show your 'ligion by yo' wo'k."

AN UNEXPECTED LETTER.

BY A. F. CALDWELL.

"For me?" and Ethel Simpson reached
out her hand, dripping with dish water,
toward her sister Mary, who had just
come into the warm, stuffy kitchen with
a letter. "No; my hands are too wet;
you read it—and I can go on finishing
the dishes."

Mary laid on the old-fashioned round
red table—the only "heirloom" the
Simpson family possessed—some gro-
ceries, and then took the letter over to
the open window, where there was more
light.

"I don't recognize the writing; it's
stylish though—that straight-up-and-
down hand," scanning the businesslike
superscription. "Looks like a man's—
almost!"

"Well, see! I want to know who's
writing; perhaps its concerning the va-
cancy at Carol," and Ethel turned about,
one hand still submerged in the hot dish-
water. "It's time I heard from them
if I'm to have the place; I applied for it
three weeks ago yesterday."

Mary picked up a knife and carefully
cut open the square white envelope.

"My Dear Miss Simpson: If con-
venient for you I hope to call at your
home Thursday next, sometime in the
forenoon. I am unable to learn the ex-
act time the train arrives at Southport.

Very sincerely yours,
SARAH MASON THURSTON."

"Cousin Sarah!" and Ethel plunged
her hand at random into the dish-pan
for any still unwashed cups and saucers.
"To call—which means a month's visit
if it means a minute!"

"But what a peculiar letter for her to
write!" laughed Mary, not noticing her
sister's disappointed expression. "The
idea of her calling you 'Miss Simpson'—
why didn't she say 'Dear Ethel'? To
think of plain Sarah Thurston—father's
cousin—putting on all that formality!
And writing out her middle name, too—
I didn't know before 'twas 'Mason!'"

"Yes; or, that is, the initial is M; but
I supposed—though I never gave it any
particular thought—it stood for Marden,
grandmother's maiden name. But what
shall I do? Mother's away for two
weeks, and I'm expecting every day a
letter from Collinsville summoning me
there for an interview, and you're going
to Lulu Baxter's wedding Wednesday.

It wouldn't be treating her right, letting
her come and no one here to meet her!"

"No; but couldn't you—" It wasn't
easy for Mary to plan. "Couldn't you—"

"What?"
"I don't know—I was thinking." Then
unfolding once more the letter, "I have
it, Ethel; it isn't convenient, or it won't
be Thursday. I'd write this very day
and tell her not to come. I wouldn't
put it just that way—but it can be ex-
plained easily enough. Then if your
letter comes from the president at Col-
linsville you can go without having to
worry; that's what I'd do!"

"I dislike to that. She hasn't been
here since—I don't know how long it's
been. But why didn't she write to
mother or wait till she got home? That
seems a little peculiar."

"She probably knew through Aunt
Helen or some one that mother is at
Downfield—but I wouldn't mind. You
mustn't lose the position at Carol Insti-
tute, and you might if you failed to go
when they sent for you."

"I know," and Ethel took up an arm-
ful of dishes and carried them to the
dining room. "I wish I knew what's
best!"

"Decided?" asked Mary, later, as she
began setting the table for dinner.

"No; if I conclude to write her, to-
morrow will be time enough—today is
only Monday, and if I get a letter this
afternoon or in the morning I shall have
time to go and get back before she
comes."

"Possibly; but I wouldn't run any
chances."

To teach in Carol Institute had long
been Ethel Simpson's pet ambition. And
now, having completed her college
course and received her domestic science

diploma, a vacancy had unexpectedly oc-
curred in her special line of work at
the popular and progressive institution.

"I think you may be able to obtain
the situation," wrote a trustee, an old
friend of Ethel's father. "It all depends
upon the recommendation of President
Thurston. If the president is satisfied
with your qualifications you will have
the unanimous support of the board."

In reply to her application, three
weeks before, Ethel had received only a
note from the secretary of the faculty,
acknowledging her testimonials.

"Before the matter is finally acted
upon," it read, "a personal interview may
be desired by the president."

That afternoon there was no word
from Collinsville; nor was there any
mail the next morning.

"You'll have to write her not to
come," declared Mary, positively.
"Somehow I feel you'll hear from Carol
either tomorrow or Thursday—I don't
know why. And if you go and the pres-
ident meets Ethel Louise Simpson, her
name will appear in the next catalogue
—I'm sure of it!"

"Mary, dear!" and Ethel's cheeks
flushed slightly, "don't you suppose, you
little goosie, there are others just—"

"As good! No; you're perfection in
your department—doesn't that sound
professional?—as the coffee, rolls, and
steak which we had this morning for
breakfast can testify! Write her not to
come—not till mother gets back. It
must be posted today—sure!"

"Per-haps—no!" This last after Mary
had left the room. "It would seem like
running away from duty. And it's pos-
sible they won't write me at all—they
are under no obligations to," and Ethel
rearrange the doilies on the dining
table.

"I'll do just the best I can for her, and
if I get my letter it can wait—I've had
to—till Mary gets back! Cousin Sarah
—no; I won't slight her; she's old and
lonely. I'll get up just the nicest dinner
I know how for Thursday—a tender
juicy roast, some of my fruit salad,
cream potatoes, rolls—just the sweetest
surprise! It would be—well, I couldn't
tell her not to come—father's cousin,"
generously.

"Perhaps the letter may come—O,
well, perhaps it won't!"

Ethel arranged the table the first thing
she did on Thursday morning. The old-
fashioned china on the delicate drawn
work never showed off to better advan-
tage, while the gracefully drooping
flowers in the centre harmonized per-
fectly with the figured dishes.

"It does look pretty if I do say it,"
and Ethel turned around and surveyed
the table before closing the door. "She'll
like it; I know she will!"

The clock struck ten.
"I wonder what train she's coming
on," thought Ethel, busily preparing her
fruit salad. "The next one isn't due till
11.05—hope she hasn't missed it."

By 11.25 everything was in readiness
for the twelve o'clock dinner. Ethel
was getting anxious.

"I'm afraid she isn't coming after all;
and I've had such splendid success—not
a thing gone wrong!"

She waited five minutes.

"There's a carriage; it's stopped!"
In a moment the bell rang. Laying
aside her gingham apron, Ethel hurried
into the hall.

"Good morning, Cousin—" Ethel
stopped short in surprise. There on the
porch stood a fashionably dressed wo-
man, years younger than Cousin Sarah!

"Miss Simpson—is she at home?" in
a cultured, musical voice. "And you
were expecting me?" smiling.

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"I was expecting—Miss Thurston," re-
plied Ethel, quickly recovering from her
embarrassment.

"I thought it would be as well for me
to see you here, and save you the need-
less expense of meeting me at Collin-
sville, since I was obliged to pass through
Southport. But my train, I find, was
over an hour late."

Then she's President—President
Thurston of Carol Institute," thought
Ethel quickly, "and not Cousin Sarah!
Their names are alike; and she's the one
who wrote!"

"I'm really much chagrined, Miss
Simpson; I'm obliged to leave at 1.10,
so had to come directly here. And at
dinner time, unannounced; I hope you'll
pardon me! Its being positively unavoid-
able is my only excuse."

"It's a pleasure to have you dine with
me, I assure you," and Ethel, thorough-
ly self-possessed, took Miss Thurston's

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