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### Steal Away From Jesus.

BY ANNIE R. FITCH.

"Have you decided the question, Belle?"

"No, Mother, I haven't. You see I don't want to break with the girls and lose all influence over them. It is just six months since our pastor suggested that I take these four girls as my special work, to influence them in a friendly way and try to gain them over to Christ and the church. Thus far as you know I have taken the aggressive. I have called upon them, I have invited them all to tea with me at different times, and at my suggestion we have taken long walks together. Now the girls are beginning to respond. I have evidently found favor with them, and this is the first time they have asked me to join them in any of their pleasures. If I refuse I fear I may be closing the door to all further influence with them."

"What about the gentlemen of the party," asked Mrs. Clayton. "Do you consider them good company?"

"Well, mother, three of them at least are irreproachable, I think, but I am afraid the other two may be inclined to indulge a little in whiskey and cigars sometimes, and that is just the point that worries me. Of course Mrs. Robb, Ada's mother, goes as chaperon, that is all right, but after the drive to H—the plan is to stop at 'Allan's Hotel' for refreshments."

"Is it not possible that the young men may have temptation placed before them at this hotel? I believe Allen does not keep a temperance house."

"Yes, mother, there is a possibility, though I should think not a probability. Oh dear! there is just doubt enough about the whole thing to distract and puzzle me when I try to decide what is right. Tell me, mother, what shall I do?"

The mother longed to set the heart of her loved daughter at rest, and yet she felt that this must be a matter between the tempted soul and its succoring Saviour; so she merely said, "Have you told it to Jesus? He must decide for you my dear."

Belle made no reply, and the mother moved quietly about the room, singing softly, "Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus;" but Belle was by this time so busy with her own perplexing thoughts, that she heard the sweet words as in a dream.

Suddenly she was awakened from her dream. Five-year-old Benny who had been playing with his blocks in one corner of the room, raised his baby voice on high and was lustily singing the words, "Steal away, steal away, steal away from Jesus."

Benny's version of the beautiful words pierced like a sword through Belle's heart, and she hastened to correct him.

"Benny, you must not sing the song that way, it is 'Steal away to Jesus.'"

"Well, I don't care what it is. I think it's Steal away from Jesus, and I think it's right, too."

"But Benny, we don't want to steal away from Jesus, for he's our best friend, you know; we want to steal away to Jesus and tell him everything."

But Benny's opinions were not so easily changed, and on this point a concession was all that could be gained; so he remarked very sagely, "I only says 'Steal away from Jesus,' but I means 'Steal away to Jesus.' Do you mean Steal away from Jesus, when you say Steal away to him? I think mine's the best way then."

Benny continued to sing his song in his own way, and as Belle listened, her life for the past four or five months passed in review before her, and she saw where she had in many instances stolen a little away from Jesus, which at the time she justified as laudable concessions to keep friendly with the girls, that she might influence them for good.

Leaving Benny and his song which she felt she could no longer bear, Belle sought the quiet of her chamber, and there stole away to Jesus, more truly than she had been conscious of doing for many days. Confession was made, and his Spirit and strength sought to help her gain these jewels for him, without stealing away from his side.

The glow of renewed consecration in Belle's heart had by this time reached her face.

Hurrying down stairs she caught up brother Benny, and hugged and kissed the little fellow until he didn't know what to say or do, but, feeling that the situation demanded some return, he said as Belle was turning away.

"Belle, I guess I'll sing your song the way you likes it after this, if you want me to."

Belle lost no time in seeing the girls and explaining to them why she had decided not to go on the drive.

"You see, girls, I'm a Christian, my vows are made to the Lord, and I want to be true to them. It would not be right for me to join in placing temptation before any one; and as the girls listened so attentively to all she had to say, Belle found herself using the strength she had gained by stealing away to Jesus, and she begged the girls to join with her in resisting evil in Christ's name and strength."

Silence fell upon the little group when Belle ceased her pleading, and then Cora Bates said, "Girls we will go on the drive and come home to lunch at our house. I'm not a Christian exactly, but I haven't felt quite right myself about going to the hotel."

To this plan the girls, including Belle, agreed. Belle found in after days that her influence with these increased, from the time she took this decided stand before them; and a year had not passed before they were all earnestly working with her to gather in gems for the Master's crown.

### Light in Darkness.

BY EUNICE SHEERMAN.

We believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting, but there is nothing we realize so little. We grieve for lost good as if this life were all; and lay away our dead, forgetting the resurrection. At times some soul is found, strong to lay hold of the promise, to such a pilgrim, even the Valley of the Shadow into which no earthly ray can penetrate, may be aglow with the light of heaven.

An instance of this transforming power of faith came under my observation recently while I was spending a summer in the hill country of Connecticut. The little hamlet was one of those quaint, old places where half a dozen surnames suffice for half a hundred families, all the people are either "related" or "connected," and every neighbor is full of knowledge, interest, and sympathy for every other. The settlement had neither post-office nor railway station; so the daily mail with an occasional telegram, or express package, was brought by any man, woman or child whom business or pleasure despatched during the day to the large town, five miles distant. The small school-house served very well as a general distributing office.

Here, one afternoon, a yellow envelope was brought addressed to Miss Annie Robinson, and Mamie Heath was dismissed from school in view of the unusual exigency, to carry the message a mile further to her grandmother's house. She skipped gaily up the road, proclaiming to every one she met:

"Uncle Malcolm must be coming home. Nobody else ever sends telegrams to Aunt Annie."

An hour later another story flew from mouth to mouth. Malcolm Robinson was ill—very ill, or no message would have reached the farm to disturb the aged mother. Every one knew how considerate he had always been of her, ever since his father's death, sixteen years before, had left him the head of the family. Young though he was, he had already attained a position of trust and responsibility in a large manufacturing house, and his salary kept the wolf from the door, while the younger children were growing up. He induced Hugh and Samuel to remain upon the farm, and incited them to new development of the resources. His watchful care snatched James from the danger of the city life into which at one time he plunged recklessly. His generously educated Harriet for the position she held in a flourishing seminary, and provided Jean and Cornelia with their housekeeping outfits when they married and settled in their native village. Annie, the youngest sister, had already received exceptional advantages of study and travel. Malcolm had never married; but it seemed as if the hard strain of his life were nearly over, and brothers and sisters all looked forward to the time when he should make a home of his own, prosperous and peaceful as he had made for them.

Now he was ill. Before sunset Annie was on her way to his bedside. Cornelia Avery came with her baby to take her sister's place at night; and in the morning Jean Heath left house and dairy in charge of her twelve-year-old Mamie, to care for and comfort the aged invalid mother during the day. And instructions were sent with Annie, and after her, to bring the sick man home to be nursed and revived by home care and love. Days passed and he came not. Annie's letters brought no encouragement. Only in the mother's heart, hope never died.

"Annie was young," she said, "and apt to look on the dark side. Cooler weather would bring relief." Anything rather than that Malcolm was dying. The others knew. It was no surprise to Jean Heath when she took from a passing neighbor Annie's brief message that all was over. But she leaned against the gate with a deadly heart-sickness at thought of breaking the news to her mother. She had tried to prepare her for the worst; and fear and pre-arranged had fallen upon unheeding ears. How could she say, "Malcolm is dead?" When she returned to the house Mrs. Robinson, overcome by the heat of the afternoon, had fallen into a quiet slumber. It was growing late. Jean stepped into the long kitchen and, swiftly and without clatter of dishes, laid the table for supper, then sat down on the door-step to await her brothers' return from the fields. They came at last, sturdy young men, slow of speech, used to hard work

but not to grief, and shrinking as their sister did, from sight of their mother's woe. And Samuel advised, "Let us wait for Cornelia, she has gentle, tender ways; she will know what to say."

But Cornelia came late, and hushing her sleeping baby in her arms. Neighbors dropped in, before and after, with words of sympathy or carefully spoken foreboding; and the old lady answered them with persistent cheer and the assurance that Annie would surely come with Malcolm in a few days at farthest. Then her early bedtime came, and all said:

"Let her sleep in peace; she will be stronger to bear it in the morning."

Night brought little rest to the stricken household. At intervals Cornelia stole into her mother's room and often found her restless and awake. The house was early astir, for the chores must be done and the hired men despatched to the day's work; though Hugh and Samuel would stay at home to prepare for the coming of the dead. From long habit Mrs. Robinson rose for her early breakfast. With trembling hands Cornelia dressed her and wheeled her in her armchair to the table. After breakfast Cornelia deftly covered the table and arranged the room for prayers. Then the hour had come. Hugh sat down as usual at his mother's right hand, and opened the Bible to read the allotted portion of the day. It chanced to be the Twentieth Psalm.

"The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee. Send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion."

He read through his tender prayer and the victorious response of the faith merging into prayer again: "Save, Lord, let the King hear us when we call." He closed the book and would have knelt when Cornelia's sweet, clear tones arrested the general movement.

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me."

She repeated three verses, paused and began again at the twenty-sixth verse, the promises of the Comforter, and went to the close of the wonderful chapter. Then she looked at Hugh.

"Pray," she said. Hugh was not gifted in prayer, but they all felt a great burden and a great need; and he expressed it in his quiet, halting speech. It was a cry for help and strength in time of trouble, an asking for the presence of the Comforter, a thanksgiving for the mansions into which the Saviour was gathering his own.

Mrs. Robinson, unable from her infirmity to kneel, had sat during the prayer with bowed head. She did not move at its close. Had she at length comprehended? Cornelia laid her gentle hands upon the gray head.

"Mother, 'The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble' Mrs. Robinson looked up and turned slowly from one to the other.

"Is family worship over?" she inquired. "Hugh has forgotten to pray for Malcolm."

"There is no need," he stammered, "since—yesterday afternoon—"

Cornelia's steadier voice went on: "He walked with God, mother, and he was not, for God took him."

A strange light came into the aged face as of transfiguration.

"God is merciful," she said slowly. "He knew I could not give up my first-born. I asked life for him, and he has given him length of days for ever and ever. I shall part from all the rest of you, but not from him." The old voice was calm and steady as Cornelia's. But the others who had kept strong feeling under control so long at last gave way. She looked with gentle surprise upon their grief—her only thought—that he who had labored so hard and long had entered into the Lord's rest, to which she was herself so near. Her thought became the thought of all. They laid him in the little churchyard, thanking God alike for his life and death. They had loved him fondly and contentedly when his days had been passed far from them in the bustling town, they felt that he was nearer and nearer, dwelling in the Heavenly City.—New York Observer.

### Make One's Self Necessary.

"If I were only necessary to somebody," lamented a girl, the other day, "I should have something to live for, but, if I were to drop out of the world tomorrow, it would not make any real difference to anyone."

"But there is your father," said an older friend.

"Yes, but he is away at his business all day, and often out of the city. Jane, our old cook, does the house-keeping, and he really could get along just as well without me. He is so wrapped up in his business anyway that he scarcely notices he has a daughter."

"Is Jane's housekeeping good?" asked the other.

"Not very. When father has to entertain his friends, he takes them to the club—but he would rather do that, anyway."

"Well," said her friend, "you are evidently making yourself as unnecessary as possible, my dear child."

"What do you mean?"