

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PAGE

THE POOR-RICH, AND THE RICH-POOR

It was in the early dusk of a cold November day that a child, poorly clad and carrying a big bundle in her arms, knocked at the side door of a large house in F—. The door opened, and she was directed to a room upstairs, light and warm as summer.

There sat a lady in her easy chair, talking to two women sewing near her. A young girl stood fingering the rich silk upon which the women were at work, with an extremely discontented look, and cried angrily, "I can't go. I have nothing fit to wear, mother. I have nothing decent."

At that moment a servant came in and handed a paper to her mistress, who, after looking it over, said, "I have not a cent to spare, and do not bring subscription papers to me again, for I have nothing to give."

Nothing to wear, nothing to give! That is being poor, indeed.

Turning round, her eye fell on the little girl with the big bundle. "Ah, here comes Mrs. Brown's work; she is so prompt. Bring it along, Nellie." The child laid the bundle on the table, which she unpinned, bringing to view a great pile of children's clothes.

"So beautifully done!" she said.

Nellie looked gratified, and waited.

The lady looked up, as much as to say, "You may go!" But the child wanted something more than praises to carry home to her poor, hard-working mother.

At last she said, "Mother wants to know if it is convenient for you to let her have a little money."

"Ah! that indeed," said the lady; "but I'm afraid my purse is empty, Nellie. Can't your mother wait? Next week, tell your mother, I will satisfy her."

With a heavy heart the little girl turned to go, while her mother's employer said to her women, "I get this beautiful work done so cheap. Mrs. Brown is glad to do it at almost any price!"

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"Back quick, daughter," whispered a sick man bolstered up in a chair, when the child came in.

"I did not buy the things you wanted, father," she said, mournfully. "She did not pay me; she said she had no money."

"Oh," exclaimed Mrs. Brown, "and I hurried so to get it done. No money," she repeated bitterly. "What are we to do?"

"You forget that daughter has been to the poor-rich after money," said the father, smiling and warming Nellie's cold hands in his.

"Poor-rich, father?" she said. "That's funny; we are the poor."

"We are the rich-poor," answered he. "Yes, rich in having a precious Redeemer, rich in His grace, 'which saves to the uttermost all who come unto Him;' rich in a title to a 'house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' We are rich in God's promises. We can trust Him, who invites us to come to Him without money and without price. Yes, daughter, the world may call us poor, but we are among the rich-poor."

Mrs. Brown put the contents of her kettle on the table, a dish of rye pudding, which, with a pitcher of milk, made up their frugal supper. The sick man was drawn to his

place, and the little family sat down with hungry stomachs and thankful hearts.

"Oh, mother," said Nellie, "how old Mrs. Stark would like some of this. I am sure she has not had much today."

"Take her some, Nellie," said the sick man. "We have enough and to spare." And Mrs. Brown filled a small bowl and sent it to her poor neighbor.

"Mother, she was so glad she could say nothing but 'God bless you, child!'" said Nellie, bounding back from her angel errand.

In the evening there was a knock at the poor man's door. It was a friend come to say that arrangements had been made that they should receive a cord of wood and a sack of flour each month during the winter.

"Oh, God, how great is Thy goodness which Thou hast wrought for them who trust in Thee before the sons of men!" exclaimed the sick father, with folded hands. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee!"

"I would rather be rich-poor than poor-rich," whispered Nellie, leaning her head on the good man's shoulder.—Selected.

THE CARE OF GOD.

Do you see this lock of hair?" said an old man to me.

"Yes; but what is it? It is, I suppose, the curl from the head of a dear child."

"It is not. It is a lock of my own hair; and it is now nearly seventy years since it was cut from this head."

"But why do you prize a lock of your own hair so much?"

"It has a story belonging to it—a strange one. I keep it thus with care because it speaks to me more of God and of His special care than anything else I possess."

"I was a little child, four years old, with long, curly locks, which in sun or rain or wind hung down my cheeks uncovered. One day my father went into the woods to cut up a log, and I went with him. I was standing a little behind him, or rather, at his side, watching with interest the stroke of the heavy ax, as it went up and down upon the wood, sending splinters in all directions at each stroke. Some of the splinters fell at my feet, and I eagerly stooped to pick them up. In doing so I stumbled forward, and in a moment my curly head lay upon the log. I had fallen just at the moment when the ax was coming down with all its force. It was too late to stop the blow. Down came the ax. I screamed, and my father fell to the ground in terror. He could not stay the stroke, and in the blindness which the sudden terror caused, he thought he had killed his boy. We soon recovered from fright, and he from his terror. He caught me in his arms and looked at me from head to foot, to find out the deadly wound which he was sure he had inflicted. Not a drop of blood nor a scar was to be seen. He knelt upon the grass and gave thanks to a gracious God. Having done so, he took up his ax and turned to the log he had been splitting, and there was a single curl of his boy's hair sharply cut through and landed upon the wood. How great the escape! It was as if an angel had turned aside the edge at the moment it was descending upon my head.

"The lock he kept all his days as a memor-

ial of God's care and love. The lock he left to me on his deathbed. I keep it with care. It tells me of my father's God and mine. It rebukes my unbelief and alarm. I have had many tokens of a Fatherly love in my three-score years and ten, but somehow this speaks most to my heart. It is the oldest and perhaps the most striking. It used to speak to my father's heart; it now speaks to mine."—Selected.

Hartland Mission Station,
Natal, South Africa,
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Dear Children:

Last week I was called to visit a woman who needed an abscess lanced. It was very difficult for me to be spared from home, so I was glad to see our native preacher, Jona, come along, who is also a doctor. I gave him one of my sharp scalpels, and away he went with the woman's husband, who had come to call me.

Next day, however, I was again called, as Jona had failed. I found the poor woman in great distress, as her abscess should have been opened a week ago. At a glance I could see just where to make the proper opening; and what spurted out was too awful for description.

Both Jona and this woman's own brother, living alongside of her, are licensed doctors, and both miserably failed to relieve this distressing case. Her trouble had begun behind her ear, but the swelling was so great that both eyes were closed, while the entire face and head were much enlarged by the swelling.

This case I have described to illustrate the way these natives neglect their surgical cases, as their doctors use only medicines or witchcraft.

Many similar cases have been brought to our own door, while occasional calls come from sufferers who are often dying of neglect.

Some of this neglect, but not all, is from ignorance, for it is a marked native trait of character to be careless. People speak of the "careless Ethiopian." The little children more often than not, suffer from cold for the want of clothing. Often these people must get up at night and build a fire in their hut because of lack of cheap blankets.

Food, of course, they must have. But here we see the same carelessness. The father will remain home for months in idleness, until all the corn is finished. Then look about trying to get a loan of cash to buy food for, perhaps his three wives, each with small children. After securing more or less food he may go in search of employment at the coal or gold mines, or elsewhere. When the food finishes, and he is away, the wives must beg or borrow, or earn, or go live with some family that has food.

So the missionary among such a people has many problems to solve. He don't want to make beggars of the people; and, too, they generally have property in the way of goats or cattle or both. But for these there is almost no nearby market; and here are the innocent children and women suffering of cold and hunger because the men are lazy

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