

A MERCHANT'S DREAM

It was a brisk, clear evening, in the latter part of December, when Mr. Absum returned from his counting-house to the comforts of a bright coal fire and warm armchair in his parlor at home. He changed his heavy boots for slippers, drew around him the folds of his evening gown, and then lounging back in his chair, looked up to the ceiling and about with an air of satisfaction. Still there was a cloud on his brow. What could be the matter with Mr. Absum?

To tell the truth, he had that afternoon received in his counting-room the agent of one of the principal benevolent societies of the day, and had been warmly urged to double his last year's subscription, and the urging had been pressed by statements and arguments to which he did not well know how to reply.

"People think", soliloquized he, "that I am made of money, I believe. This is the fourth object this year for which I have been requested to double my subscription, and this year has been one of heavy family expenses, building and fitting up this house—carpets, curtains, no end of new things to be bought—I really do not see how I am to give a cent more to charity. Then, there are bills for the girls and boys; they all say they must have twice as much as before we came to this new house. Wonder if I did right in building it?"

And Mr. Absum glanced up and down the ceiling and around on the costly furniture, and looked into the fire in silence. He was tired, harassed, and drowsy; his head began to swim, and his eyes closed—he was asleep. In his sleep he heard a tap at the door; he opened it, and there stood a plain, poor-looking man, who in a voice singularly low and sweet, asked for a few moments' conversation with him. Mr. Absum asked him into the parlor, and drew a chair near the fire. The stranger looked attentively around, and then turning to Mr. Absum, presented him with a paper.

"It is your last year's subscription to missions", said he: "you know all the wants of that cause that can be told. I called to see if you had anything more to add to it."

This was said in the same low and quiet voice as before, but for some reason unaccountable to himself, Mr. Absum was more embarrassed by the plain, poor, unpretending man than he had been in the presence of any one before. He was for some minutes silent before he could reply at all; and then, in a hurried and embarrassed manner, he began the excuses which had appeared so satisfactory to him the afternoon before—the hardness of the times, the difficulties of collecting money, family expenses, etc.

The stranger quietly surveyed the spacious apartment with its many elegancies and luxuries, and without any comment took from the merchant the paper he had given, but immediately presented him with another.

"This is your subscription to the Tract Society. Have you anything to add to it? You know how much it has been doing, and how much more it desires to do, if Christians would only furnish means. Do you not feel called upon to add something to it?"

Mr. Absum was very uneasy under this appeal; but there was something in the mild manner of the stranger that restrained him, and he answered that, although he regretted it exceedingly, his circumstances were such that he could not, this year, conveniently add to any of the charities.

The stranger received back the paper without

reply, but immediately presented in its place the subscription to the Bible Society, and in a few clear and forcible words reminded him of its well-known claims and again requested him to add something to his donation. Mr. Absum became impatient.

"Have I not said", he replied, "that I can do nothing more for any charity than I did last year? There seems to be no end to the calls upon us these days. At first there were only three or four objects presented and sums required were moderate. Now the objects increase every day; all call upon us for money; and all, after we have given once, want us to double and treble our subscriptions. There is no end to the thing we may as well stop in one place as another."

The stranger took back the paper, rose, and, fixing his eyes upon his companion, said in a voice that thrilled his soul:

"One year ago tonight you thought your daughter lay dying. You could not sleep for agony. Upon whom did you call that night?"

The merchant started and looked up. There seemed a change to have passed over the whole form of his visitor, whose eyes were fixed upon him with a calm, intense, penetrating expression that awed and subdued him. He drew back, covered his face and made no reply.

"Five years ago", said the stranger, "when you lay at the brink of the grave, and thought that if you died then you would leave a family of helpless children entirely unprovided for, do you remember how you prayed? Who saved you then?"

The stranger paused for an answer, but there was a dead silence. The merchant bent forward as one entirely overcome, and rested his head on the seat before him.

The stranger drew yet nearer, and said in a still lower and more impressive tone:

"Do you remember, fifteen years since that time when you felt yourself so lost, so helpless, so hopeless? When you spent days and nights in prayer? When you thought that you would give the world for one hour's assurance that your sins were forgiven you? Who listened to you then?"

"It was my God and Saviour", said the merchant, with a sudden burst of remorseful feeling. "Oh, yes, it was He!"

"And has He ever complained of being called upon too often?" inquired the stranger in a tone of reproachful sweetness. "Say", he added, "are you willing to begin this right and ask no more of Him, if He from this night will ask no more from you?"

"Oh, never! never!" said the merchant, throwing himself at the stranger's feet; but as he spoke these words the figure of his Visitor seemed to vanish, and he awoke with his whole soul stirred within him.

"Oh, my Savior, what have I been saying?" he exclaimed. "Take all—take everything! What is all I have, to what Thou hast done for me?"

—Michigan Christian Herald.

MORNING PRAYER

Another dawn, another day,
Oh, take me, guide me on my way;
Pulse of Thy pulse, to walk with Thee,
Through hours of duty, till Thy sun
In beauty and tranquillity
Proclaims another vict'ry won.

—Josephine Barry

QUARTERLY MEETING

The quarterly meeting of District No. 3 convened with the church at Black's Harbour, Sept. 3rd to 6th inclusive.

Thursday evening, Rev. H. S. Wilson brought a message from the text, "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the morn, clear as the sun and terrible as an army with banners?" S. S. 6:10.

On Friday evening at 7.30 p. m. the message was delivered by Lic. P. H. Green, of Wood Island, Grand Manan. Text from I. Sam. 28:13. "What sawest thou?" This was blessed to the hearts of five seekers who made their way to the altar.

Saturday afternoon 3 p. m. The business meeting was held with Rev. B. C. Cochrane in the chair.

Ministers present were Rev. H. M. Kimball, Rev. H. S. Wilson, Rev. B. C. Cochrane, Lic. P. H. Green, Lic. B. E. Tatton.

There were delegates present from Black's Harbour, Wood Island, Seal Cove and North Head.

The election of Officers was as follows: President, Rev. H. M. Kimball; Vice Pres., Rev. B. C. Cochrane; Treasurer, Brother Clifton Gaudet; Highway Agent, Rev. H. S. Wilson; Secretary, Lic. B. E. Tatton.

There were written reports from Calais, Crawford, Alexander, Seal Cove, Black's Harbour, North Head and Wood Island reported verbally.

The next quarterly to be at Seal Cove, Nov. 5th to 8th inclusive. A resolution passed to send letters to absent pastors. The meeting closed with prayer.

On Saturday evening, Rev. H. S. Wilson preached from "Prepare to meet thy God," Amos 4:12. Three seekers were at the altar.

Sunday morning, 9:30 a. m., Lic. B. E. Tatton used Luke 6:6: "No man when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it . . ." as a basis for a few remarks. God's blessing was upon the meeting in a very evident manner.

The preaching service at 10.45 a. m. with Lic. P. H. Green spoke from Eph. 3:11.

At 2 p. m. Rev. H. S. Wilson baptized five candidates in a beautiful and blessed service.

Rev. B. C. Cochrane preached with power in the evening service from "The wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God." Four seekers were at the altar at the close of our brother's preaching.

An altar service in charge of Lic. P. H. Green brought greater spiritual strength to our souls.

Thus ended our quarterly meeting. We give thanks to our Heavenly Father that it was not fruitless but was used to gather in souls for His kingdom. Twelve seekers responded during the quarterly.

We pray that God will bless them, as well as the entire Church at Black's Harbour with their pastor. And may the God of Peace fill the hearts of the four new members of their Church who were taken in near the first of the Sunday evening preaching service.

The very kind hospitality of our brethren and sisters in caring for us as visitors made us feel right "at home." May God bless them for it.

Yours in the Master's Service,
B. E. TATTON,
Secretary

Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. Heb. 12:2.