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Unselfishness always has an attractive side to other people. Even those who are moved by greed appreciate this fact, and try to present themselves as lovers of their fellows instead of mere lovers of self. A tradesman ordinarily wants you to think that he is carrying on his business for your benefit, rather than from motives of gain. This idea is illustrated in a delicate and tactful manner in the sign over an expensively finished liquor saloon in one of our large cities: "Ladies' Thirst Parlor." The rum-seller seems to sink himself out of sight, in his generous desire to provide refreshment for thirsty ladies. What a philanthropist!

Thieves are said to think themselves honest so long as they have no chance to steal. But the principle involved in the saying is of wider application than to thieves. One reason why we do not seem to be such unqualified sinners as in sermons and prayers we profess to be, is that we are conscious of not doing many wicked things. We forget, however, that at such times we are under no special temptation to do them, and hence, like the honest thieves, we account ourselves righteous. But all the while we may be

harboring an ill-will against some one, cherishing an evil desire, which for the time being is out of sight simply because we happen to be viewing ourselves as the non-doers of evil things which we are not tempted to do. It is a serious question how many of us belong to the class of thieves who do not steal.

Burdens we all must bear, but superfluity is a superfluous burden from which we may rightly ask to be excused. We labor under a superfluity of "meetings," of addresses, speeches, sermons, anniversary exercises. The writer and the speaker are superfluous in words, as well as in articles and in addresses. It is not alone the physician and the nurse who are in danger of killing by the overdose. Says a French writer: "We live in an age in which superfluous ideas abound and essential ideas are lacking." The time is now near at hand when charity institutions and Sunday-schools and churches will be "getting up" anniversaries and entertainments. Times of festivity are, in more ways than one, testing times. While the chief burden of planning and executing falls on a few, this few are too busy to feel the burden of superfluity which will fall on the many,—especially the children. How would it do to plan an entertainment which should have as one of its principal ends the demonstration that such things can be done without being overdone?

Writing as a means of learning is wellnigh as old as the race of man. It was in vogue long before paper or parchment was invented. Wax-covered tablets and tablets of clay were in use by school children in Babylon and in Egypt before the days of Moses or of Abraham, and there has never been a time since then when writing was not a prominent agency for the elementary instruction of children. In the Sunday-school, as well as in the secular school, class slates have been a popular aid to teaching for several generations. When The Sunday School Times began the issue of its Scholars' Quarterly, in 1876, one of the "special features" of this lesson-help was its "plans for writing." With each lesson there were questions to be answered in writing by the scholar; and he was told that the writing out of the required answers would increase his interest in his study, would give him a clearer knowledge of his lesson, and would aid his memory of facts and truths, while it would help him to express his thoughts properly, and would give him a permanent record of his gain in a series of lessons, for subsequent review. For a number of years a special list of questions, with blanks for their written answers, was issued in conjunction with the Scholars' Quarterly; and this line of work was pursued until a change in the business plans of The Sunday School Times led to an interruption of the publishing of its Scholars' Quarterly. Many teachers have, however, continued, in all these years, to request from their pupils written answers to previously specified questions, or to have their pupils follow their teachings, pencil in hand, for the jotting of brief answers to specific questions. In view of this fact, it is something amusing to note the claim made by the proprietor of the "Blakeslee Graded Lessons," that the use of pencil and paper in the Sunday-school class, in such ways as this, "is a new

feature in regular Sunday-school lesson work, and was invented and first used by the author of these lessons." It will now be in order for some enterprising explorer to discover America for the first time. Meanwhile, as an aid to those teachers who have continued the use of this "new" method for many years, and as a help to those who would try the "old" method over again, special questions for answers in writing will be given by Professor Amos R. Wells in connection with his Question Hints, week by week, in these pages during the coming year.

HAVING THE MIND AND SPIRIT OF CHRIST.

The duty of being like minded with Christ, and the danger of lacking a likeness in spirit to Christ, are both emphasized in the New Testament teachings. Paul says to believers: "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ;" "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus;" "The God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one toward another according to Christ Jesus;" and his unqualified declaration is, "If any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Peter says: "Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps." And John adds: "Hereby know we that we are in him; he that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk, even as he walked." With the supreme importance of having the mind and spirit of Christ so clearly brought before us, the question is a practical one for all, What is it to have the spirit of Christ, and to be like minded with him?

The gospel story of Jesus shows him to have been an active worker for others. His mind and spirit did not center in self; but they centered in God, and went out toward all of God's creatures in sympathy and love. Even from a child, as he grew in years and in wisdom he grew in favor with men, as well as with God. And when he entered upon his public ministry, he did not shut himself away from the world in order to promote his spiritual nature, but he walked among men as a man, "eating and drinking" in social life as though he were one with his fellows in needs and sympathies, and he found and improved opportunities of serving others. He healed the sick, he gave sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf; he cleansed the lepers, he gave strength to the palsied, and he preached glad tidings to the poor. He walked up and down the land of his pilgrimage with weary feet, and he was hungry and cold and homeless in his effort to bless his fellow-men at any cost to himself. His life was peculiarly a life of toil and self-denial, and of untiring activity. Surely the spirit and the mind of Christ must show themselves in well doing for others, in a generous outlay of one's powers in deeds of beneficence.

But mere well-doing in behalf of others is not a sure sign of Christlikeness in mind and spirit. Jesus himself says that in the day of final account some who have been prominent workers in his cause will be disowned of him: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out devils, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess

ances, to be paid in bread and in oil, were in arrears, and, as he roundly asserts, had been embezzled by the priests of the temple where they served.

We need not go into the details of these quarrels, which are about very small matters, and yet occupy a host of officials, disclosing to us an amount of "red tape" not to be exceeded in any modern administration of affairs. The curious feature to us is, that this Ptolemy was a recluse or monk in the temple of Sarapis at Memphis, bound by his vows not to leave its precincts. Unfortunately he does not tell us one word concerning his religious duties or vows, beyond the fact that he had come there voluntarily, had been already there fifteen years, and still retained his property, which he managed through the agency of a younger brother. The twins whose case he advocates were Egyptians; he was a foreigner, a Macedonian, secluded in a temple of Egyptian gods,—though Sarapis may, perhaps, be considered a hybrid deity.

We also know, from a parallel case, which I shall now cite from the same collection, that, as these vows were voluntary, so they were also terminable. We have two letters (one preserved in the Vatican) addressed to a certain Hephæstion by his immediate relatives, concerning his sudden disappearance from his wife (or sister) and his child, who could not discover his whereabouts till news came to them that he had taken refuge as a recluse in the very same Serapeum we have already mentioned. The letter of the lady, though full of anger and disappointment, is couched in the kindest language. Indeed, all the letters extant in the Greek papyri are remarkable for their uniform politeness. The Vatican letter, from the brother-in-law, is more outspoken, and worth quoting here:

"Dionysius to his brother Hephæstion, greeting: If you are well, and things are otherwise satisfactory, then you are as I wish you. I too am well, and Eudæmonis and her children, and Isias and your child, and so are all the household. Having received your letter, in which you explain that, having escaped from great dangers, you are now in retreat, I thanked the gods for your safety, but wished that you had come back to the city, as Konon did, and all the other men who were caught [or arrested], in order that Isias, having saved your child from the extremest danger, and having undergone all manner of hardships, now at least might again see you, and obtain some relief; for you ought not to stay away because you are poor, until you can procure and bring with you some means. But every man is anxious, when he escapes from danger, forthwith to return and embrace his wife and children and friends. You will do well, then, if not absolutely prevented, to endeavor at once to return, and take care of your health. Good-by. Year 9, Epeiph 30."

We feel ourselves, not in heathen, but in Christian, Egypt, when we read these documents; and yet there is no doubt whatever that they date a century and a half before the birth of Christ. It was common enough, in the early ages of Christianity, and in the middle ages, when the world was decayed and depraved, for men to fly from their homes, their families, and their duties, as we should understand them, to save their souls from judgment to come, in fierce asceticism amid the rocks and caves of the desert; and in no part of the Christian world was this anchorite spirit stronger than in Egypt. The Nitrian desert was the earliest great home of monasticism. But now only do we learn that this spirit had its origin, not only in the preaching of early Christians, who inveighed against the world and its temptations, but in the heathen habits of the Egyptians and the Greeks who occupied the land for centuries before. It is but another instance of the general law that apparent novelties, starting up suddenly in human societies, have their causes, long latent in the habits of the people.

The case of the recluse Ptolemy showed us that his devotion to the god Sarapis did not exclude an eager concern about the safety of his property and the welfare of his family and his friends. We can show that this combination also lasted into Christian times, and that Christian monks in Egypt were very careful concerning their worldly interests. Many contracts for the sale of cells, or lands about monasteries, show this feature, and the luxury of conditions, saving clauses, synonyms, prove that the lawyers of that day were accustomed to disputes, chicaneries, evasions, and sought to guard against them by precautions as pompous and as tedious as those which Rabelais scoured in his immortal satire, or Dickens in his popular novels. I will select one striking instance of this growth of formulas and precautions, this, too, elucidated by the new documents which have been recently given to the world.

No portion of the Petrie papyri excited more interest than the series of wills, which I deciphered and published in my first volume on the subject. The phrase which disclosed to me their meaning after much conjecture, was "of sound mind and good understanding," applied in each case to the testator. Every one of these wills runs in the following form: After the full and explicit recital of the date and place, A. B., son of X., of such a country and rank, of such an appearance (tall, short, bald, scarred, etc.), being of sound mind and good understanding, made the following testament: "May it be my good fortune to live on and manage mine own affairs; but should any accident of human life befall me, I bequeath, etc., and nothing to anybody else. And I choose as my executors the king and queen, and their heirs [or some private person]." Then follow immediately the names and descriptions of the witnesses. There is not an unnecessary word, not even a religious reflection, not an imprecation against those who may annul the testator's wishes. The many bureaus and clerks who already made legal business so cumbrous seem not yet to have invaded this department; and with all their red tape we seem still far from the condition of modern men, who are always told that nothing is so unsafe as for a man to make his own will.

But now let us come down to the will of a Christian bishop, published in facsimile in the recent volume of the British Museum. It is the testament of Abraham, bishop of Hermonthis, and head of the monastery dedicated to the saint and martyr Phœbammon, near Thebes. The testator did not know Greek, but dictated it in Coptic from which it was translated. The date (eighth century) and a few words are missing at the commencement. "... death being [the sure end?] to all, and failing in the condition of my body, lest I may suddenly and unexpectedly leave this life, since the future is uncertain, for which reasons I have determined on this written irrevocable last will, secured according to the law, openly produced and published. In the which I declare that of mine own accord and persuasion, apart from all wile, intimidation, violence, deceit, from any constraint or legal exception, or dextrist or other device, without any doubt or ill-will, but of mine own choice and spontaneous intention and voluntary desire, in my sound mind, firm faith, complete mastery, and full liberty of action,—I bequeath to you, persuaded in full conviction, living, of sound mind and good understanding, being strong of intellect, and able to reason with full accuracy, walking upon the earth, and appearing at the market-place, where we dictated this last testament in the Egyptian tongue, but ordered it to be written out in Greek, worded according to the just and pious laws. May it be my lot to live and have good health, and enjoy all my moderate means! But if, what I deprecate, I may suffer something human and end this life, I desire and direct that, after my departure, you, the aforementioned Victor, my most devoted elder and disciple, shall enter upon the heritage of all that is left of my modest property, and shall be my heir in things movable, immovable, and self-moving, of every kind and species, quantity or quality, in gold, silver, vestments, bronze, clothes, books, lands, both arable and with buildings."

Shall I go on? The document winds its way through this interminable phraseology for a couple of pages more, and the text would make a separate article. It will at best be a model for American citizens to avoid. For can anything be more idle than to shackle dishonesty by saving clauses, or to imagine that evasion of words is more difficult or more dreadful to any miscreant than evasion of duties? "In the multitude of words there wanteth not folly." And it would doubtless be far easier to find a loophole in this exuberance of verbosity than in the direct simplicity of the Ptolemaic wills. Yet the conviction that men can bind others by cunningly devised and exhaustive phrases, seems ineradicable from the human race.

Trinity College, Dublin.

THE AITKEN BIBLE.

BY PROFESSOR ROBERT ELLIS THOMPSON, S.T.D.

In colonial times the printing of the English Bible in the colonies was not permitted. The King's Printers possessed a monopoly of the Authorized Version, that resembled the perpetual copyright which exists in China. The justification for this was the plea that if the book were left at the disposal of every kind of printer, it would be issued in editions whose inaccuracy would amount to blasphemy. But the consequence in the seventeenth century was that foreign editions printed in Dutch printing-offices, where English

was not a familiar language, and the proof-reading was badly done, were imported into England in great numbers. They became very popular because they were very cheap, very neat-looking, and very compact, so that they could be carried at the girdle in an age when pockets were still in the rudimentary stage. We find Selden in the Westminster Assembly disputing the accuracy of quotations made from these little Bibles which his opponents carried at their belts.

Tradition of rather a vague kind tells of an English Bible printed secretly in Boston in 1752, at the press of Kneeland and Green, and with a London imprint to conceal its real origin. But no copy of such a Bible has ever rewarded the search of our Bibliomaniacs, although it is asserted that between seven hundred and eight hundred were printed. Until a copy is found and identified, this Kneeland and Green Bible must be treated as a myth.

As the prohibition applied only to the English Bible, the book was printed in John Eliot's Indian version at Cambridge in 1664, and in Luther's German version by the elder Christopher Saur in 1743, at Germantown, now a part of the city of Philadelphia. The number of German Bibles of that date with Saur's imprint might seem to put this fact beyond doubt. But some hypercritics have suggested that Saur merely imported the sheets from Germany, possibly from the Orphan House printing-office at Halle, and prefixed a titlepage of his own. To this it may be answered that Saur's edition corresponds to none of the German editions of that time, that the type used is that found in his other German publications, and that the prospectus printed in his weekly religious journal shows that the work was done throughout in Germantown. Nor was Christopher Saur the man to play any trick upon his public. He was a pious mystic, of intense religious fervor, and he had shown his conscientiousness as a printer by surrendering the patronage of the Ephrata community, rather than print what he thought a blasphemous utterance of its founder, Conrad Beissel.

It was not until near the close of the War of Independence, and as a declaration of the liberation of the colonial press from the monopoly of the King's Printers, that an English Bible was printed. In 1782, James Aitken, a Scotchman by birth, and a printer doing business "at the Pope's Head, three doors above the Coffee House, in Market Street," issued proposals for such an edition. Already, in 1777, Dr. Allison, the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, had memorialized the Continental Congress to take steps for a supply of Bibles. A committee had been appointed to confer with the printers of the city, with the view of having an edition of thirty thousand copies printed. But the lack of paper and of type prevented the undertaking, and the committee reported a recommendation to import twenty thousand copies from Holland, Scotland, and elsewhere. This also was found impracticable, from the interruption of commerce by the war, and probably also by the unstable condition of the public credit.

No doubt Mr. Aitken's undertaking was the outcome of the agitation of the question in the Continental Congress. He certainly memorialized that body for their support in it, with the following result:

By the UNITED STATES in CONGRESS assembled:
September 12th, 1782.

The Committee to whom was referred a Memorial of Robert Aitken, Printer, dated 21st January, 1781, respecting an edition of the Holy Scriptures, report: That Mr. Aitken has, at a great expense, now finished an American edition of the Holy Scriptures in English; that the Committee have from time to time attended to his progress in the work; that they also recommended it to the two chaplains of Congress to examine and give their opinion of the execution, who have accordingly reported thereon, the recommendation and report being as follows:

Philadelphia, 1st September, 1782.

REVEREND GENTLEMEN,—Our knowledge of your piety and public spirit leads us without apology to recommend to your particular attention the edition of the Holy Scriptures publishing by Mr. Aitken. He undertook this expensive work at a time when from the circumstances of the war, an English edition of the Bible could not be imported, nor any opinion formed how long the obstruction might continue. On this account particularly he deserves applause and encouragement. We therefore wish you, Reverend Gentlemen, to examine the execution of the work, and if approved, to give it the sanction of your judgment, and the weight of your recommendation. We are, with very great respect,

Your most obedient, humble servants,
(Signed) JAMES DUANE, Chairman in behalf of a Committee of Congress on Mr. Aitken's Memorial.

Reverend Doctor WHITE and Rev. Mr. DUFFIELD,
Chaplains of the United States in Congress assembled.

REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,—Agreeably to your desire we have paid attention to Mr. Aitken's impression of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Having selected and examined a

variety of passages throughout the work, we are of opinion that it is executed with great accuracy as to the sense, and with as few grammatical and typographical errors as could have been expected in an undertaking of such magnitude. Being ourselves witnesses of the demand for this invaluable work, we rejoice in the present prospect of a supply; hoping that it will prove as advantageous as it is honorable to the gentleman who has exerted himself to furnish it, at the evident risque of private fortune. We are, gentlemen, your very respectful and humble servants,

(Signed) WILLIAM WHITE,
GEORGE DUFFIELD.

Philadelphia, September 10th, 1782.

Honorable JAMES DUANE, Esq., Chairman, and the other Honorable Gentlemen of the Committee of Congress on Mr. Aitken's Memorial.

Whereupon,
RESOLVED,

That the United States in Congress assembled, highly approve the pious and laudable undertaking of Mr. Aitken, as subservient to the interest of religion, as well as an instance of the progress of arts in this country, and being satisfied from the above report, of his care and accuracy in the execution of the work, they recommend this edition of the Bible to the inhabitants of the United States, and hereby authorize him to publish this recommendation in the manner he shall think proper.

CHA. THOMSON, Secretary.

The Aitken Bible is not a specially beautiful piece of work. It is printed on dingy paper, with brevier type, and in small duodecimo form. As a piece of book-making it is far inferior to either the Eliot or the Saur Bible. But its rarity, and the high interest which attaches to it as the first English Bible printed in America, have imparted to it a factitious value. There are but a score of known copies of it,—fewer than of the Mazarin Latin Bible of the fifteenth century, which is supposed to have been the first book printed with movable type. Some years ago a copy which had been in the library of Mr. Simon Gratz was sold in Philadelphia for over \$650, and was secured by the Library of Congress. It was not originally a perfect copy, but had been completed, possibly from other imperfect copies. One unvarying result of this high price is the existence of spurious copies. Old fonts of type are still to be had, and a quantity of old paper dating back to the first years of the century was found in the neglected corner of an attic in Letitia Street, next door to what was called the Penn Mansion. By this means, and with ink treated with sepia to make it appear faded, a duplicate of the Aitken titlepage and the introductory matter, which includes the action of the Continental Congress, has been produced. This is bound up with an early Bible Society edition, and passed off as an Aitken Bible. The fraud is detected by the presence of paging. There is no numbering of the pages in the Aitken Bible, while those of the Bible Society are numbered.

I have seen a copy of the Aitken Bible, in possession of Mr. John Joseph McVey of this city, which he found in a Lancaster farmhouse. It is unique in its perfection, having the original leather binding, and all the introductory matter, which is wanting in many of the other copies. In many respects it is an interesting monument of the importance attached to the Bible by the founders of the American republic.

Philadelphia.

THE TEACHER A PERPETUAL COUNSELOR.

BY L. SANDYS.

Teachers, strive to retain your influence over your Sunday-school scholars after they leave your classes. Do not think that, because for one reason or another they cease attending, they have become indifferent to your influence for good over them, or to the study of God's word, but be to them always their Sunday-school teacher.

My heart aches for the boy whose teacher says indifferently, "Oh, I have lost all trace of him since he left my class!"

Scholars look for religious counsel from their teachers, and I recall an incident which opened my eyes to this fact. One evening one of my boys came to say goodby to me, as he had accepted a position in a distant city. The room was filled with callers, so, though I had a nice little chat with him about his prospects, nothing was said on religious subjects. After his departure, I was told that he had said to a mutual friend that he had been disappointed in his visit, as, there being so many present, he had not been able to have a word with me. Well, I was surprised, for I had devoted myself to him during his visit, and could not conceive what he meant,

until the conviction forced itself upon me that he had expected something more from me than the usual kindly inquiries about his worldly prospects,—hence his disappointment.

This thought haunted me, and, finally, not without a vague misgiving as to how it would be received, I wrote him a long letter, telling him what I thought would be his special temptation, reminding him that he must look to and ask for higher aid to keep him from falling into the many temptations he would meet with, and telling him how sorry I was that I had not had an opportunity of saying all this to him before his leaving.

This was the first break in my class, and my heart sank within me as week after week went by and I received no answer. I could only pray and wait. One day it came, and tears of joy filled my eyes as I read: "I have written many letters since I got yours, but they did not require the same depth of thought or frame of mind that was requisite in answering your welcome letter; for I could not write a common-place, every-day kind of answer to you."

Ah! fellow-teachers, can you not sympathize with me here? Was it not better to have him think for weeks over my letter than answer it immediately, and then forget all about it?

And now, while we are on the subject of answering, let me impress upon you that there are some scholars who will never answer your letters. But that is no reason why you should conclude that yours are not welcome, and cease writing. Of course, there is always an awkwardness in a one-sided correspondence; but I have found that a very easy way to remedy this is to write a letter that does not require an answer; for example, with a brief introduction, such as "I was thinking of you when preparing this lesson," give him a brief explanation of it, concluding with a sincere expression of interest in his spiritual and temporal welfare. In this way, knowing your scholars' special weaknesses and temptations as you do, a door of influence is open to you as to no one else outside of the home circle,—a door which neither time nor distance need ever close. Beware how you shut it!

Chatham, Ont.

FOR CHILDREN AT HOME.

THE JOURNEY OF A BUNDLE OF PAPERS.

BY S. JENNIE SMITH.

Madge and Kitty sat beside a table on which were spread several illustrated weekly papers. It was a rainy Saturday, and they had not been allowed to go out; so they were looking over these, laying aside what they had read, and finishing the stories in others. First Madge read aloud, then Kitty took her turn, and in that way they managed to spend a very pleasant and profitable morning indoors. Suddenly Kitty looked up and exclaimed:

"Why, there comes Caroline!"

"Sure enough," said Madge. "She'll help us read."

Caroline was a girl who lived next door, and, as she had no sister to play with, she spent a great deal of her time in the society of Madge and Kitty. As soon as she appeared, she was set to work; that is, she helped sort the papers, and read when her turn came. But she joined in heartily, for she thought it was more like sport than labor. During a pause in the reading she asked:

"Where do you get all of these?"

"Some from Sunday-school, and some we subscribe for; then Aunt Kate sends us papers very often."

"Yes, you get a great many. I have a few, of course; but you have much more. What do you do with them?"

"After we have finished them, we lay them aside until we have a little bundle, and we used to give them to Jenny Dunn; but she moved away last week, so we gave them to Mrs. Briggs, our washerwoman."

"Does she like them?"

"Oh! I—don't—know," answered Madge slowly and thoughtfully. "I have sometimes thought they were wasted on her; for washerwomen don't have much time for reading."

"And they can't have much taste, either," added Kitty.

"Of course," continued Madge, "she thanked us very heartily, as if she did care for them; but she'd do that for politeness' sake,—don't you think so, Caroline?"

"Certainly she would."

"Then suppose we don't bother about giving them to her any more," suggested Kitty. "I've often thought it would be real fun to cut out the pictures and save them. We can throw away the parts we don't want."

"All right! let's do it now!" cried Madge. "Where are the scissors?"

"We'll all want a pair," said Caroline, "so I'll run into the house and get mine. Don't cut until I get back, girls."

"All right."

In a few moments the three of them were bending thoughtfully over the papers, and each held a pair of scissors ready to cut out the pictures that were voted good enough to keep. Caroline was enjoying herself very much, but somehow Madge and Kitty felt slightly uneasy when they at last made a decision about the one that was to come out first. They knew that their mother approved of the plan of giving the papers to poor persons who had none of their own; she was trying to teach her little girls how blessed it was to be unselfish, and they felt that she would hardly like what they were doing. To be sure, the papers belonged to Madge and Kitty, and they could dispose of them as they pleased; but they were always happier when they could win their mother's approval. However, they consoled themselves with the thought that such reading was of no use to Mrs. Briggs, and they were just about to cut into one of the papers, when a voice called out from the next room:

"It is clearing off, children, and I want you to go to the store for sugar and butter."

"Yes, ma'am," answered Madge. Then to the others she said, good-naturedly, "Well, that stops our cutting out for to-day. By the time we come back dinner will be ready, and then we shall be busy getting ready for Sunday."

"It's too bad," said Caroline.

"Oh! I don't care," remarked Kitty; "any time will do for cutting out pictures, and I'm glad it's clearing off, for mama needs that sugar and butter."

So the papers were laid away carefully on a shelf in the closet, and the three little girls started on their errand.

The next morning, in Sunday-school, when the regular weekly papers were being distributed, Miss Bartlett asked her scholars if they ever had any other papers at home besides the ones that they received there.

The ladies of the church were anxious to know if the parents of the children had the benefit of religious reading, and each teacher was requested to find out from her scholars.

Madge and Kitty were in Miss Bartlett's class, and they mentioned that they had a great many, and told the names of some of the illustrated papers that came to their home.

"We don't take any ourselves," answered one child, who was not very well dressed; "but last week some one gave Mrs. Briggs that lives by us a lot of awful nice ones, and when she read them she lent them to Mrs. Barker, and Mrs. Barker got through with them and sent them to us, and when we read 'em, Mrs. Crague is to have them, and after that Mrs. Briggs she's going to put 'em in the hospital box for the sick people to read; and she says we must be careful of 'em, for they mustn't be worn out for the sick folks. Mrs. Briggs, she says she thinks she'll git a good many more of them papers, and we're real glad, for we like to look at the pictures and read the nice stories. This Sunday-school paper we always git all read up Sunday afternoon."

"I am pleased to hear that somebody gives good reading to Mrs. Briggs," remarked Miss Bartlett, "for she is an intelligent woman, and is fond of such things, but she is not able to buy them for herself. When her husband was alive she had an easier time, but she still has good taste though she does go out washing."

Madge and Kitty had listened in surprise to the story told about their own papers. They looked at each other now, and their eyes said a great deal that nobody could read but themselves. Kitty looked a question at her sister, and was answered by a decided shake of the head. "It would seem so much like bragging to tell we did it," thought Madge, and she sent a warning glance at impulsive little Kitty.

On the way out of Sunday-school the girls were joined by Caroline, and they had a long talk with her as they walked down the road.

"My! wasn't it good that your mother sent us to the store that time?" whispered Caroline.

"Yes," said Madge; "but who would have supposed that our papers took such a journey as that? And the idea of making up our minds that Mrs. Briggs didn't like to read! Mama always says 'Don't jump at conclusions.' Why, I wouldn't keep those papers now for anything!"

"No, indeed," added Kitty, as she carefully folded the one that she had just received.

Syosset, N. Y.