

**THE CARPENTER'S  
CHILDREN. A NEW  
ENGLAND STORY**

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The carpenter's children. A new England story by Christian Tract Society

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**CHRISTIAN TRACT SOCIETY**

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## PREFACE.

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THE following story was commenced for a Sunday School class, which was composed of the poorest children.

Its object was to shew them how they could be *religious every day*. There are hundreds of books in our Sunday Schools suited to the wants and capacities of the educated classes, whose path and duties in life are often widely different from their less favored companions in the same school, and we are fully aware how much we owe to very many of the stories written for these classes; yet we think ourselves justified in saying, that there are comparatively few of them calculated for the improvement of the poorer children.

Should this one be thought worthy of a place in our Sunday School libraries, the object of the author will be fully attained.

## THE CARPENTER'S CHILDREN.

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### PART I.

"**HEAR, Mary,**" said Mrs. Dutton, "take this bundle of clean clothes to Mrs. May, and ask her, if it is convenient, if she will send me the money for them; they will bring just fifty cents\*. I must make up my rent to-day, for it is Saturday, and Mr. Kent will call for it to-night. And won't you come directly home, for I am very busy, and shall want you?"

Mary put on her bonnet and tied on her cloak, and walked as fast as she could to Mrs. May's. She asked in the kitchen if she might see Mrs. May. The girl to whom she spoke went up stairs to her mistress, who sent for Mary to her chamber, for she was not very well.

"Well, Mary," said she, "have you my clothes with you?"

"Yes, ma'am, and mother wishes, if it is convenient, you would have the kindness to send her

\* The American dollar contains 100 cents, and is worth 4s. 3d. English; so that two cents are equal to about a penny, and 50 cents to rather more than 2s. of our money.

the money for them, which is fifty cents, for Mr. Kent will call for it to-night."

"And how much does your mother owe for her rent now?"

"She will owe two dollars and fifty cents to-night, ma'am."

"How much has she of it?"

"She has one dollar at home, and this fifty cents will make it all up except one dollar, ma'am."

"How happens it that she is so far behind-hand, Mary?"

"Because, ma'am, Henry, who always helps her, has been at home unwell for nearly two months, and some days he is so ill, that mother cannot leave him to go out to work, and sometimes all that she earns is spent for him."

"And cannot you help your mother? How old are you?"

"I am eleven years old, ma'am, and I should be very glad to help mother, if I only knew how I could."

"What do you think you could do, Mary? Can you sew?"

"Yes, ma'am, pretty well."

"Well, Mary, I have just cut out some coarse caps, and I will let you have one of them to make, and if you do it neatly I will give you ninepence\*, with which you may do what you please. Would you like to try?"

"Oh yes, ma'am, and I know very well what I shall do with the money. I shall give it all to

\* Ninepence in the money of New England is equal to about 6d. of ours, and a shilling to 8d.

mother, and then, perhaps, she will not look so serious when Saturday comes."

"Here it is, then, Mary, and here is a needle and some thread, and as soon as you bring it to me, you shall have ninepence; but I depend upon its being done neatly."

"Thank you, ma'am," said Mary, courtesying; "I will try to finish it very soon, and as you will like."

"Here is the fifty cents for your mother, and here are two oranges for Henry: they may refresh him when he is thirsty."

Mary again thanked Mrs. May, and taking the things she had given her, she ran home with them to her mother, and with a light heart, but gentle step, and low voice, she told her how good Mrs. May had been.

"And see, mother, she has given me some work to do, too."

"Given you work, Mary?" said her mother, "and do you think you can sew neatly enough?"

"I can try, and then—but you shall see, mother."

Her mother smiled, and told her that she must be more careful than usual if she expected to have more; and then bade her make haste and put away her things, that she might get tea ready.

Her bonnet and cloak were hung in their proper place, not thrown down upon a table or chair, and her shoes were exchanged for a lighter pair, that she need not disturb Henry, who was asleep; and having arranged the tea-table, and put the teapot by the fire, she prepared one of the oranges, and placed it on the little table that stood by Henry's



bed. "It is but little," thought she, "that I can do for mother and Henry, but that little makes me believe what my catechism tells me, that to be happy we must be good and useful, and it is true, too, that we all have the power of doing good in some way or other." At that moment she heard Henry cough; she was at his side in an instant to offer him something to drink: "Or will you have a piece of orange?"

"Orange, Mary!" said Henry, "how came I by an orange? It is just what I should like."

"Mrs. May sent it to you, for she said she thought you might like it if you were thirsty," said Mary, giving him a piece.

"Yes, it is very good, and you must thank Mrs. May for thinking of me. What! you have been out and home again, and got tea ready without disturbing me! How still you have been!"

"Because you seemed to sleep so quietly I could not bear to waken you, so I have been stepping round on tiptoe; but you must not talk any more now, for Dr. A., you know, said that you must be kept very quiet; and by and by, if you would like, I will read you my Sunday lessons, and from a book which my teacher lent to me."

Henry thanked her, and was willing to lie still, for his head ached very much. Mary went to her mother to do any thing she might wish, and to see that her clothes were in neat order for Sunday. She found her mother very busily sewing upon some coarse work which would bring in a little more money towards her rent, and she was therefore trying to finish it, that she might send it home before dark. She looked pale and thin, for she

had worked very hard the last week, and had not slept much, for Henry was very restless at night; but she never complained of being tired, nor spoke impatiently to Mary or Henry, though sometimes Mary gave her a good deal of trouble and care, for she was not always a good girl.

"Can't I help you to hem the end of this sheet, mother?" said Mary. "Henry is going to sleep, and you look so tired, I do want to help you."

"Yes, dear, you may; I shall be glad to have you, for it must be done before seven o'clock, or it will be too late for you to carry it to Miss B.'s." (Mary's Sunday School teacher) "and I must have the money for it to-night; this, with the pillow-cases, will make up the rent, all but fifty cents."

Mary, happy at the thought of helping her mother, went for her work-basket, which was always placed upon the same shelf, when she had done with it, so that her thimble, needle, scissors, pins, and thread, were always to be found when wanted. She had but two needles and a few pins, yet by putting them in their places they lasted a long while.

She seated herself by her mother, and they sewed so steadily, that before seven o'clock the work was finished, and Mary was on her way with it to Miss B.'s.

She received the money for the work, with the offer of more on Monday, or, if her mother preferred it, Miss B. told her that she could procure her a day's washing: upon telling her mother which, she said the washing would be out of the question, for she could not leave Henry.

"But if you will let me stay from school, mother, I am sure I can watch Henry, and sew upon my cap, too."

Mary knew that if she staid away from school on Monday she should lose the prize which was to be given on that day, and she was at the head of her class; but she would rather do this than neglect her mother or brother, being sure that she should in reality be a better girl by losing it, than by gaining it under such circumstances.

Sunday was a bright and beautiful day, and Mary arose earlier than usual, not sleeping longer because it was Sunday; but she did not waken her mother, for she knew that she could do all that was necessary in getting breakfast; and when all was ready, she awoke her mother, who seemed refreshed by the rest which she had taken. Having done so much before breakfast, she had time, before going to the Sunday School, to read over the chapter they were to hear explained.

She passed a pleasant hour there, and returned in time for her mother to go to church, while she remained with Henry. When her mother came home, she looked so quiet and happy, and smiled so kindly on Mary, and seemed so much pleased to find the dinner neatly arranged upon the table, and Henry quietly asleep, and her daughter well employed, that Mary thought she had never felt happier in her life.

The next day was passed with Henry, while her mother went to do the washing; but the day after she went to school, though not until she had done all that could be done for her mother and brother.

As her mother had no work ready for her, with