



THE FIVE POINTS MISSION ROOM

find how respectable we looked. Barring some bare feet, we would scarcely have been recognized as a Mission school. At eight o'clock we were seated comfortably in a commodious car, and started at a rapid pace for Hastings. We questioned the children around us, whether they had ever been in a car before. No! Had they ever been in the country? No! What pleasure there was before them—what entirely new scenes would greet their vision—how would their minds receive enlargement and elevation, when they gazed upon the clear blue sky, and saw nature in her glowing beauty! We looked beyond the mere day's pleasure, fully believing that some young hearts would receive impressions never to be erased, and which would in some way affect their entire future; that a desire, an ambition, would be awakened to escape the precincts of the Five Points, its degrading associations, which in this blessed land of light and liberty might be largely gratified. We had no trouble during the ride, and at half-past nine arrived at Hastings. We recollected that probably two-thirds of the children had not yet tasted food, so immediate preparations were made for breakfast. Mrs. B.'s kindness had provided amply for all, and we expended the first hour in supplying the wants of

one hundred hungry little rebels, who pressed around us wild with excitement and joy.

This task finished, they had permission to roam, under certain restrictions. Away they went with a shout, their superintendent keeping only a general supervision over their movements. After an hour or two, Mr. Perrigo, with a few who had gathered around him, commenced singing a favorite hymn; in five minutes he was surrounded by scores; he led them to a beautiful hill, arranged them in a semicircle on the grass, and for an hour the grove was vocal with songs of praise to God. This was the hour of deepest gratification to those who had the charge of that happy group. Gratitude for the past and present, and hope strong and believing for the future, took possession of our hearts, and we could but weep, and pray, and trust. Again they were disbanded, to roam at pleasure until three o'clock, when they were assembled and seated in ranks upon the grass, and treated to pie and cake.

At five, we again gathered them by singing. The Greene-street friends had some instruments of music, and aided us in this effort. They had been counted when we started, and it was now quite desirable to keep them still long enough to do the same; but this required considerable ingenuity on the part of their teachers,

for they had become almost uncontrollable from the excitement of their day's rambling. But by making soldiers of the boys, forming them in a line, marching and countermarching, and appealing to their military pride, we at last succeeded. We re-entered the car at six o'clock, and without accident or hindrance, arrived safely in New-York at dusk. On reviewing the day, the friends unanimously concluded that we had not had any more trouble with our Five Points than we would have had with one hundred children from any other quarter. Some were rather unruly; there was a little quarreling; but no bad words spoken, no marked and peculiar misconduct. And thus we learned anew the moral power of kindness. There was, there could be no authority than that which love created; and we found *that* sufficient, to control those who came from the homes where drunken parents raved, and uncontrolled passions had full sway.

Thanksgiving Supper at the Fine Points.

NOVEMBER 27th, 1852.

"When thou makest a feast, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the *poor* the maimed, the halt and the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."—JESUS.

MONTH after month rolled away in connection with this mission, burdened with anxiety and care, until even its warmest friends felt almost sinking beneath the pressure. Thanksgiving-day was appointed, and we resolved for a little time to lay aside our ordinary duties, and, by change of occupation, to find relief, and bestow gladness.

The view presented was formidable, for many obstacles were in our path. But there were warm Christian hearts, determined spirits, strong wills, and liberal donors, united in action, and what could stand before such a combination? We were not permitted to have the room in which we had held our festival the two previous years, so the Advisory Committee engaged the mammoth Tent of the City Temperance Alliance,

which was erected in the little park, opposite the Old Brewery, and known as Paradise Square.

The morning of Thanksgiving dawned in cloudless beauty, and as the day advanced, not a shadow dimmed the horizon. The cool, pure atmosphere, and the glowing sunshine, seemed to inspire every heart with courage.

We met in the office of the Old Brewery, formerly the liquor store of the establishment. This was a low, long room, with cracked and stained walls, its only furniture, besides the Missionary's bookcase, being some benches, and the boxes of clothing supplied by our kind friends from abroad. Provisions began to arrive, and soon it presented a most ludicrous aspect. Turkeys, chickens, and meats of every kind mingled in sweet confusion with cakes, pies, fruits, &c.—evergreens on the floor, crockery on the window-sills and benches, huge piles of clothing waiting for distribution, visitors pouring in, childish faces peeping through every window and open door—commands, opinions, directions issuing from every quarter.

The tent is sixty feet in diameter, and very lofty. It is circular in form, and around it were tiers of seats, meeting at a small platform, where the speakers stood,

at the temperance meetings, and on the Sabbath, to preach.

Eleven o'clock arrived, and notice was given that the tables in the tent were ready for the ladies. The seats had all been removed, and four tables, nearly the length of the tent, and about three feet wide, had been arranged, two on either side of the furnace, leaving wide passages between for the visitors. Soon the evergreens were festooned around by the gentlemen, then the floor was strewn with clean straw, and table-cloths of white muslin laid over the tables. By this time, hundreds of ragged, dirty children, had collected around the tent and Brewery. The food, all gathered in the Brewery, had to be removed to the tent. A door-keeper was stationed at each place, a passage-way cleared, and then ladies and gentlemen were transformed into carriers and waiters, (we could not trust any of the little rebels to help, though we had plenty of offers.) As they passed through rank and file of the hungry watchers, loud cheers were given for each successive turkey, and three long and loud for a whole pig with a lemon in his mouth, and it was difficult to conclude whether it was most appropriate to cry over the want displayed, or laugh over the temporary plenty provided.

During the time of these preparations, others of a different character were transpiring. The ladies were trying to select, first our Sunday school children, and next any who seemed hopeful. These were washed and dressed, and then each received a ticket which admitted them to the Mission-room, where friends received and entertained them. In the tent was a scene of activity—gentlemen carving the meats, ladies cutting the pies and cakes, and forming them in towering pyramids, the younger girls filling paper bags with candies and fruit, workmen hanging the lamps, others filling a large wicker-stand with dolls and toys of various kinds. At half past four all was ready. On our tables were sixty turkeys, with beef, ham and tongue, in proportion, and sundry chickens, geese, &c. Pies, cakes, bread, and biscuit, celery and fruit, and candy pyramids filled the slight intervals, and the whole presented an appearance inviting to the most fastidious appetites. Plates and cups were arranged around for more than three hundred; the lamps were lighted, and the signal given. Hundreds of visitors stood in silent expectation, and in a moment the sound of childish voices was heard, and they entered in regular procession singing—

"The morn of hope is breaking,
 All doubt now disappears,
 For the Five Points are waking
 To penitential tears;
 And many an outcast, feeling
 Bowed down by sin and shame,
 Finds pardon, peace and healing,
 In the Redeemer's name.
 Peace! peace! peace!
 In the Redeemer's name.

"We children learn the lesson
 In our dear Mission-school,
 Then to our homes we hasten,
 And tell of Siloa's pool;
 And some have parents beading
 Before the God you love,
 Who feel his grace descending
 To fit for Heaven above.
 Grace! grace! grace!
 To fit for Heaven above."

They took the circuit of the tent, and were then arranged, standing around the tables. They stood, with folded hands, while all sang the doxology, and the Missionary asked a blessing upon the occasion. Not a hand was raised, not a voice was heard, until the ladies and gentlemen who had charge of the tables supplied their hungry visitors with food. Then all was glad commotion, and then was the time for joyous tears. Three hundred and seventy poor, neglected, hapless children, placed for an hour in an atmosphere of love and gladness, practically taught the meaning of Christian kindness, wooed and won to cling

to those whose inmost hearts were struggling in earnest prayer for grace and wisdom to lead them unto God. We gazed on them with tearful eyes, these

"Children, who seldom know a parent's care,
 In whom the woes of elder years are seen;
 Whose earliest steps must be upon a snare,
 Unless some watchful stranger intervene,
 And stand those frail young things and the dark gulf between."

And many a resolve was formed to be more zealous with, and for them, than they had ever been before. They ate and drank without restraint until all were satisfied, then again formed and commenced singing. In the central aisle was placed the stand containing the toys and cornucopias of candy, and another filled with oranges and apples. By these, two ladies were seated. The children marched by them, in as much order as the dense crowd would permit, singing as they went, "We belong to this band, hallelujah," and in each hand the ladies placed a gift as they passed, until all were supplied. Then all the children left the tent.

There was now an interval of a few moments. The tables were hastily replenished, and then notice was given to the visitors, that the company now about to assemble were the "outsiders," about whom we knew nothing, save that they were poor and wretched, and

all were warned to take care of their watches and pocket-books.

They came in scores, nay in hundreds; they rushed in and surrounded the tables, men, women, children, ragged, dirty, forlorn. What countenances we read:

"Victims of ceaseless toil and want and care,
And here the sterner nature that will dare
To live, though life be bought with infamy;
Who law, or human or divine, defy—
And live but to perpetuate crime and misery."

And the children who accompanied them, miniature likenesses, both physically and morally. Alas! alas!

"It needed no prophetic eye to see
How many yet must the same ruin share."

And we could scarcely hope to snatch these from the vortex. We spoke to them words of kindness and encouragement, and they partook until not a fragment was left, and then quietly left the tent.

We felt as we looked upon them,

"Tis fearful to look around and see this waste
Of human intellect—the dark lines traced,
Where every mark of mind the withering breath
Of ignorance hath from the brow erased;
The apathy that shows a moral death,
The worse than death that lurks an eye of fire beneath."

Our weary company now hastened over to the Brew-

ry, which was illuminated from every window, and again, with joy, we anticipated the hour when from our Mission-room a light would emanate, both mental and moral, of which this illumination would be only the foreshadowing and the faint emblem.

Thanksgiving Supper.

NOVEMBER 24TH, 1853.

"Send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared."

NEHEMIAS.

Every great moral enterprise has its outward and its inward history. These act and react upon each other, giving coloring, direction and stability to the whole; yet are so intermingled or entwined that it is oft-times difficult to decide which is the most predominant or even the most important part.

Deep in some human mind the germ first struggles into life. Revolved and re-revolved, it takes form; it gathers strength; it becomes too powerful, even for the capacious heart that conceives it. It is spoken. The thought responsive awakes in thousand other hearts. Discussion succeeds; the interest deepens, and concerted

action is the result. That action, that visible exponent of invisible thought and determination, is the epoch of the enterprise. It is *the fact* which embodies past thought, desire and resolve; and from which we start anew with more expansive thoughts, more intense desires, more vigorous resolutions, and with far deeper and more extended plans of action.

The purchase of "the Old Brewery" was *that fact* to the Ladies' Home Missionary Society, the inhabitation of the new mission building was its sequel and the crowning point of its outward success.

If our readers will refer to the account of the last Thanksgiving supper, they will realize why thoughts like these rush in upon the minds of those who can trace the cause and effect of events which have occurred since the commencement of their Mission in this place. The links of the chain are visible to their internal or external vision; and while ever and anon they present some isolated fact to their interested friends, it is the *great whole*, so stamped with providential care and direction, which makes *them* grateful for the past, strong for the present, and hopeful for the future.

Last year, on this "festive day," we convened in the liquor store of the Old Brewery to make our preparations for the annual feast. It was a happy day—for

the famed old place was ours. Ours by purchase, by possession. Even then it was renovated. Redeemed souls inhabited it—happy children gambolled through its decaying rooms; the song of praise and the voice of prayer nightly reverberated through its dark apartments; but the future filled every mind and warmed every heart. We had plans that could not be prosecuted—hopes that could not be realized until the new Mission building should arise upon that firm foundation.

We had watched the demolition of the old building, and then the gradual rise of that which was to give our Mission stability and place, with feelings akin to exultation. We had witnessed the completion of the Mission House, and its dedication to the highest interests of humanity, with deep and solemn emotion. Revolving months had realized the success so fondly anticipated, and on *this* festive day, as we stood in our Chapel, or descended to the school rooms, or exchanged glad words with Christian friends,

"Thoughts upon thoughts, a countless throng,
Rushed chasing countless thoughts along,"

and we are sure our readers, our Christian readers, will enter into, and sympathize with, feelings too deep and full to find utterance in words. To such we dedicate our long digression.

On November 23d, the day preceding Thanksgiving, the "Five Points" was rife with life and activity. Hundreds of hearts were beating in pleasant anticipation of the approaching holiday, and sundry preparations gave due notice of its approach. In the Chapel were many young ladies, employing their time and exercising their taste in decorating it with evergreens. Men and women were performing the more menial services, which a very rainy week had made particularly necessary, and the Missionary taking note of the provisions which were already flowing in from various quarters. The usual speculations respecting the weather were freely indulged in, and that "it could not rain on our Thanksgiving," seemed to be the universal decision.

True to prophecy, and to hope, the 24th dawned in brightness upon our expectant host. We hastened to the Mission House, and there apparent confusion reigned. It looked as though the famed magician wand would be necessary to bring order out of such chaos, but past experience had taught us to smile at apparent impossibilities.

The wardrobe rooms were reserved for the preparations, and soon on every side, geese, turkeys, chickens, beef, salt and fresh, bread, biscuits, pies, cakes and

crackers, were placed in heterogeneous order, and scores of busy hands were carving, cutting and arranging them for the tables.

In the adjoining large school-room, the seats had been removed, and three tables, about fifty feet long, and capable of accommodating two hundred children, were ready for the feast. The school-room is particularly light and cheerful in its aspect; the bright sun shone through the clean windows, notwithstanding the scores of little heads and faces, which were peering in at every open spot to watch the preparations; and the inscriptions made of evergreens by the young ladies, contrasted agreeably with the white walls on which they were suspended. Arched over the teacher's platform we read, "I was naked, and ye clothed me, hungry, and ye fed me;" the authority and encouragement of our labor of love.

By one o'clock, the tables were laden with substantials, while the extras were held in reserve until a later hour. Visitors by scores now flocked in to express their interest, leave their donations, and then hastened with lighter hearts to their own annual gatherings, in their respective homes. 'Twas pleasant to realize how many kind hearts were sympathizing with the poor and needy, on whom no festive day would ever shine,

were it not created by the dwellers in happy homes, by those on whom the God of Providence had showered gifts so abundantly, and who had pondered until they practically believed the glorious truth: "It is mere blessed to give than to receive." In the Chapel, many hands were busy in completing the arrangements for the evening. It is a lofty room, with large arched windows, a plain pulpit, a neat carpeted altar, and a commodious back gallery. The wood is painted dark, and grained to resemble black walnut, while the walls are still in their pristine white.

High over the pulpit, forming a semicircle, was written in evergreen:

 * "Go ye into the highways and hedges." *
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Under this was placed the banner of the school of the society, giving the date of its organization, &c., as follows:—

 * Old Brewery, 1850. *
 * Day and Sabbath School of the *
 * Five Points' Mission *
 * Of the Ladies' Home Missionary Society. *

The pulpit itself was neatly wreathed with evergreens, and a large table in front of it was covered with an innumerable variety of toys.

At half-past three, the children of the school were admitted into the gallery of the Chapel—two hundred clean, well-clad and rapidly improving children. We pause to make a remark. On the last Thanksgiving day, we were obliged to make preparations to have the children washed and dressed under our supervision. Wearisome hours were spent ere two hundred could be made ready. At the laying of the corner stone we advanced a step. The clothes were all fitted the day before, and made into bundles with the names of the wearer attached. The children were directed to come washed and combed. Many of them were sent home, two or three times, ere our ideas of cleanliness were realized. Such as could be trusted, then received their bundles, the others were dressed in the Mission room. On the Tuesday of this week the society had been favored with a concert by "the Hutchinsons," and many of the children had at that time been supplied with the needful winter clothing; seven hundred and fifty garments having been distributed. They were now simply informed that they must come clean and well dressed from their homes or they could

not come to the supper, and without any further intervention of the ladies, two hundred came from cellars and garrets, from habitations too miserable for any to picture, who have not had some ocular demonstration of such scenes. They came, as we have said, all clean and happy, and to the observant mind there is a most encouraging fact behind this outward improvement. *The mothers* are reached, or this could not have been, and this is universal, or so great a number could not have thus appeared. Is not "the leaven working, which shall eventually leaven the whole lump?"

Visitors now flocked in, until the Chapel was crowded to overflowing, while the supper-room was continually thronged. The children sang some of their best pieces, and then the audience were addressed by Mr. Joseph Hoxie, an old New Yorker, whose emotions seemed almost uncontrollable at finding himself at the Five Points on such an occasion. He remarked that "he had spent fifty" Thanksgiving days, but that this only seemed worthy of the name. That never had such feelings crowded upon him, and that the audience must excuse his want of calmness while making his unexpected speech. He addressed the children affectionately, encouraged the society to persevere in their

work of love, and with much power exhorted the audience to aid to the utmost this glorious work.

Father Gavazzi was also present, and addressed the audience for the space of fifteen or twenty minutes. His enthusiasm was awakened by the scene, and the work going on there called forth his eloquence. At the time of his remarks, the Chapel, aisles, gallery, doorways, and every available spot within hearing, was crowded. After prayer by Rev. Mr. Luckey, the former pastor of the mission, "The Maine Law Song" was sung by the children, and a collection taken up, Father Gavazzi being one of the plate bearers.

At 5 o'clock it was announced that supper was ready. Stewed oysters, pyramids and ice-cream had been supplied (all sent as donations), and the tables presented an appearance of great abundance and luxury. The children descended from the gallery led by the missionary, all singing to a lively tune,

"Children go, to and fro,
In a merry, happy row,"

and making the circuit of the tables, until all were arranged. Grace was said by the Rev. Mr. Hatfield, and then commenced 'the tug of war.' Ladies and gentlemen, young and old, served as waiters to these Five Points gentry, and the visitors gazed upon the

scene with varying emotions. Some laughed, for it was ludicrous to hear the general refusal of beef and other common things, and the pleading tone of "I want turkey, or chicken, please ma'am." But many wept in hope and fear, for the future of this multitude of children was yet unwritten, and while these fostering influences were around them for good, yet evil influences were also pressing upon them with fearful power, and uncertainty was stamped upon their earthly and eternal history.

They ate until all were fully satisfied, and then reascended to the Chapel, and took their seats in the lower part of the room, to await the distribution of the toys, which filled two tables in front of the pulpit. These had been watched with longing eyes for many hours, and were now distributed, with candies, &c., according to the best judgment of two of the ladies.

During this interesting scene in the Chapel, another was enacting in the supper-room. The tables had been hastily cleared and replenished, and then the doors were thrown open, and the "outsiders," to the number of two hundred, men, women and children, rushed in and surrounded them.

What a scene? how can it be described? Have not our readers in their daily walks, sometimes met *one* man or woman, or child, so abject, so haggard, so

pitiful, that their inmost nature has been stirred to its depths, as they have seen how low humanity could fall, how nearly the Maker's image could be defaced? Imagine then two hundred such, casting furtive glances around, as if engaged in some unlawful work, and eating with a voraciousness which could not be appeased, while aught remained within their reach to satisfy it. Yet they were quiet, subdued, and left the room, when satisfied, as orderly as our more trained band. Others again partook, and when the last had departed, nought remained of our abundant stores.

We gazed on the last guests at our tables, with deepest interest, for these are the 'material' for future operations. We hope thus to make them feel that some are caring for them, even amid their utter degradation—and when the hour of penitence or of sickness comes, they will know where to look for counsel and for aid. We hope thus to draw the children, and therefore we view our annual Thanksgiving feast, not merely as a gratification of physical appetite, but as an important moral influence.

The anniversary has passed, but its pleasures will not soon be forgotten; and we indulge the hope that during the coming year, many, very many, will place themselves within the reach of those higher influences, which will eventually prepare them for 'the great supper of the Lamb.'