

may never be godless and selfish; the factory ringing its bell as though it were a church-bell, and over the door of every factory, written in letters which the dumbest eye will see, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you;" the Nation free, the last remaining despot in the miserable past buried beyond hope of resurrection, and the Nation the master of its own destinies; not a fortification on our coast, nor a man-of-war in our waters; when men go wrong, love following after them to redeem them and bring them back to righteousness again; and, crowning all as the topmost stone, and underneath all as the foundation stone, home, with purity, with love, with hope, with faith there reigning. God grant it!



Church Centers

By Kate Bond

The growth of population in our cities has developed social problems which, because of their relations to individual lives and their influence upon the commonwealth, demand earnest thought and determinate action. To promote such thought and action, centers to represent purity of motive and sympathy in conscientious effort must be maintained. Such centers of righteousness exist always in the hearts of the God-loving and God-fearing in all communities. But men, be they ever so correct in principle and purpose, cannot, single-handed, fight successfully the hydra-headed enormities provoked by selfishness and vice. It remains for successful organization to associate and co-ordinate all the parts of conscientious individualism, until they become "mutually ends and means." With the truth accepted that sincerity of motive and conscientious activity are essential to helpful endeavor, let us look about us for individuals possessing these attributes. And if there are groups of such citizens, let us combine them for the definite work proposed.

The churches in our cities are composed of the best elements in society. Herein are associated citizens professing to be controlled by obedience to God. Such individuals, acknowledging allegiance to the heavenly Father, certainly represent the highest type of manhood. Therefore the groups of members in the churches represent conscientiousness, and need but to be organized to carry forward determinative work.

It is undoubtedly "the spirit that giveth life." But the body, religious or physical, "is a healthful, beautiful organization only when the principle of life acts generously through all its parts." The churches in the community possess yet another vantage-ground in the battle for the right. They stand for the good, even in the thought of those who reject Christianity and scorn its teachings. Recognizing, therefore, the vital power of the Church in the lives of her faithful adherents, and also her indirect influence upon the people at large, we believe that she needs to assert herself, and to demonstrate the principles of her life by adding to her religious work the consideration of secular issues. These organizations of God-loving men and women can successfully carry forward this enlarged plan of usefulness, because the Church will be impelled to great effort by the cumulative power of her reserved energies, and by the almighty influence of her Christian principles.

It is the opportunity of the churches of to-day to supply to thousands of people all that they may obtain from healthful social intercourse. For myriads among us have no home life beyond that which their association in the churches supplies to them. Therefore it is profitable that the churches should collect about their centers whatever work is pure and of good report, and that is calculated to uplift humanity.

Were this the accepted position of the churches, outside organization, now variously multiplied to promote education and reform, would be without reason for being. For Christian men and women would rally around the church centers, to do and to support effective work for the race. Why should Sunday-schools not have associated with them

the secular element of manual training during the week? If one church could not meet the expenses of this educational project, why should not the several churches of a neighborhood unite to give their Sunday scholars this chance to develop themselves for future support?

Why should not activity in scientific charity, in sanitary measures, in everything that may promote happiness in the home, or advance the welfare of the commonwealth, emanate from these all-powerful church centers?

Many churches deplore the absence of mature men from their congregations. And it is in others a serious problem how the young men and boys may be held to church attendance. Do not these conditions indicate that the churches have not yet recognized fully their opportunities?

Why should not the institutions which attract correct manhood gather about the church? Why should not civic clubs and Good Government clubs be led to hold their councils in the churches? Is there any duty more dependent upon Christian effort than the inculcation of good citizenship?

Is it enough for the church from its pulpit to warn men "to flee from the wrath to come," while it fails to gather about itself instrumentalities that shall appeal to its congregations and tend to educate and to uplift? Amid all efforts for good, the church should be the center of the system. She should shine as the sun in the midst of lesser lights. And she, by her own innate power, should be able to withstand antagonizing influences, and to hold the lesser powers in place. To-day it is possible for the church to establish collateral associations doing good work; but the day may come when it will be too late, and she may find her grasp upon human lives to have weakened, and discover that she is then unable to resist or to modify secular influences. For, after all, the churches are human in their visible organizations, and not controlled by irrevocable laws of permanency.

Let us then strengthen our religious hold upon the people, by centralizing good work for secular causes about the churches. "For our Church militant is engaged in a warfare with the world, the flesh, and the devil, or the combined powers of temptation and unrighteousness, in distinction to the Church triumphant in heaven."



Deborah's Teapot

By Virginia W. Cloud

Deborah Knox was my grandmother's housekeeper and the champion and friend of my childhood. Unlike most housekeepers in stories, Deborah was a small, wiry woman, dark-eyed, keen-witted, and not given to much talking. She was the only child of a sea-captain, and had been left by him in the care of my great-grandmother, some years before my grandmother's marriage. But when she was of age, and her father was dead, Deborah, who fortunately possessed a good share of common sense, decided that to work under the shelter of my grandmother's roof was a better way of making a living than to go out into the world unknowing and unknown.

Scarce a memory of my grandmother's home arises without that of the small, quick figure of Deborah Knox, moving from spring-house to pantry and from storeroom to kitchen, with a white kerchief crossed on her breast, and the jingle of keys in her apron pocket. In looking back to my childhood and its association with Deborah, then an elderly woman, I can understand and fully appreciate her character. I remember once hearing her say that every one could find her place in the world, and stay in it, if she chose. And, apparently, Deborah had discovered her sphere and was happy therein; for, although my grandmother's interests were hers, and she had been the confidante of two generations, she fully understood her position in the house, and maintained it accordingly.

Deborah Knox also possessed a good memory for detail, until "Ask Deborah" became as much a byword as "Look in the Ginger Jar" was to the Rokey family.

One night Evelyn and I had asked grandmamma in vain for a story.

"I haven't time now," said she, balancing her pencil over the account-book, "but you might ask Deborah."

Away we ran to Deborah's room. It was at a remote end of the first floor, and had been built originally for an office. Deb-

orah had gladly taken it for hers because it was where she could "keep an eye upon things."

On this especial evening Deborah Knox sat by the fire knitting. Her feet were on the fender, and as we entered she did not look up, but said, "Shut the door. It's windy."

"Deborah!" we said, in a breath. Then I looked at Evelyn and Evelyn at me. My little sister slipped behind Deborah's chair and leaned against it.

"Can't play Old Witch to-night," said Deborah; "got my charity knitting to do."

"We thought maybe—" said Evelyn.

"Can't have any more ginger-cakes. Storeroom's locked," said Deborah.

"Everybody's busy, and we've nothing to do," said I.

"Then sit straight down there and turn out your toes and twirl your thumbs!" said Deborah, pointing to a box in the chimney corner.

It was cushioned and covered with turkey red, and we did as we were told.

"We thought maybe you would tell us a story, Deborah," said my little sister.

"I was thinking one at that blessed minute," said Deborah, looking upward to the high mantel shelf where stood a clock with a moon face, "but it's nigh your bedtime."

"No, *please* tell us, Deborah," said Evelyn, with her hand on Deborah's knee. Then Deborah resumed her needles.

"I was thinking of my silver vase, and wondering about the teapot," said she.

"What teapot?" we asked.

"My teapot," said Deborah.

"Where is it?" asked Evelyn.

"I wish I knew!" said Deborah.

"Oh, why didn't you lock it up?" I asked.

"I'll warrant 'twas locked up for a hundred years far tighter than a key could have locked it," said Deborah, "but I didn't do it. I never saw my teapot in my life!"

While we were wondering about this, she arose and went to a chest of drawers near by, and, taking out an object in a flannel bag, resumed her seat by the fire. Out of the bag she drew a sort of silver vase. Very quaint and queer it was, with strange carving around the brim, and several characters traced upon it, but we could not understand them.

"It's a spoon-holder, isn't it?" said Evelyn.

"That's as good a name as any," said Deborah, "but I mis-doubt it's ever having held a spoon. I'll tell you about it. Over there lived a sea-captain, who had an only child, a little girl named—"

"Yes, yes, I know!" I cried, clasping my knees in delight.

"Then go on and tell it," said Deborah, setting her lips.

"No, no, indeed we don't, we only *think*," pleaded Evelyn; "please go on, Deborah!"

"It's bad to think too much when a story's being told you," said Deborah. "Well, once there was a sea-captain who had a little girl and nobody else. When she was very small he often returned from a voyage and took her on his knee and told her tales the like of which you never listened to in all your days! For sailors know things nobody else knows, and hear things nobody else hears, and see things you wouldn't believe if you saw them with your own two eyes!"

"Well, one night he took his little daughter on his knee and said:

"I had a mighty fine thing to bring you, daughter. But it's left in a queer enough place—a place that beats the Crazy Jane's best sailing!"

"What is it, father?" said she.

"There," said he, drawing at his pipe, "we'll call it a teapot, for short," says he. Then she was very much surprised, for she had no earthly use for a teapot.

"Yes, teapot will do," said the Captain, with one eye closed; "it had a good bulk, and a lip to the main, and a lid to it, and it was solid gold. Yes, sir," and he brought his hand down on the chair arm, "solid gold, or I'm afloat in the Nor' Sea; and it's yours, my daughter, too!"

"Then he went on to tell his daughter of a voyage he had made, I forget just where, but to a heathen country where the best-dressed people wore snake fangs and shell necklaces, with alligator teeth for Sundays. And, to cut a long story short, they did some trading and sailed for a night and a day to the north-west, and in seas where the Captain had not been before.

"Just at sundown the Captain bade Jack McGuire look through his glass.

"Land to leeward!" said the Captain. Jack McGuire, who was the Captain's friend, and had sailed with him for many a year, took the glass and gazed a while.

"There's no land on the chart hereabouts," said he; "nor do I see any. But if you say so, it's there, Captain."

"And although the Captain declared he saw land plainer and

plainer, it was a long time before Jack McGuire could see it. Then the Captain ordered a boat lowered, and the anchor cast, and bade Jack follow him, and they put off to skirmish about a bit. The crew, being used to the Captain and Jack McGuire taking a look at strange coasts occasionally, thought nothing of it. And now mind you"—Deborah Knox leaned forward and tapped her needle on her knee—"I'm going to tell the facts as the Captain told me—"

"We knew it was you!" said Evelyn.

"It's bad to know too much when you're listening to stories," said Deborah, impressively.

"The Captain and Jack McGuire rowed outward to where they discerned land, visible as if through a fog and yet apparently near. It proved to be a small island in mid-sea. It was apparently covered with dwarf, scrubby shrubbery and low rocks overhanging the sea. Here and there they discerned flame-colored flowers, growing low to the ground, and vines with some strange sort of fruit. But of human life there was not a sign. They tied the boat and went ashore. Then they observed that the sea had crept up the sandy tract in little channels almost to the entrance of the caves or openings in the rocks which jutted outward. As they made their way up the sandy bank, and paused at the cliff, Jack McGuire, who was naturally keensighted, spied something cut in the side of the rock near one of those openings, and it proved to be the shape of a spear or arrow, with a star above it. This arrow pointed towards the opening in the rock, and the two men straightway made their way therein, knowing that some one had been there before them, and had for some reason marked this especial cave. Within, the cave was smooth, with a pebbly floor. Jack McGuire struck a match and looked around, and there was nothing to be seen. The match sputtered and went out, but the Captain quickly struck another, and pointed to a white patch, about a foot square, in the wall of the cave near the roof, or about on a level with his head. It was apparently a sort of cement, grown very hard with age, and beneath it, cut in the rock, was the same spear and star which they had noticed outside. Under the spear were several Spanish characters, or so Jack said (for he had lived all over the world and had a language at every finger end). So, while the Captain held matches aloft, Jack McGuire examined the letters.

"Somebody's been here a many a year ago, sir," said Jack McGuire, "and to my mind he's hid something here and never got back for it."

"Then he and the Captain went out and hunted pieces of brushwood, and lighted them on the floor of the cave, that they might see the plainer, and then without a word they went to work with their jackknives to cut into the plaster. It was hard work, for it was about as solid as the rock itself, but by and by they found that there was evidently an opening in the wall of the cave, filled in by a rock, and then the crevices covered by the plaster. After an hour's work, the Captain and Jack McGuire dug around until they loosened the stone, and a little more and they were able to draw it out and throw it on the floor of the cave. This exposed the opening in the rock. Jack McGuire, who was a little fellow, got on tiptoe and peered in, and exclaimed aloud. Then he thrust his hand in and drew out this very thing"—Deborah held up the silver vase. "Green with mold it was, but Jack felt its weight and knew that it was something valuable.

"Reach in, Captain! Reach in!" he cried. And the Captain, reaching his hand in turn, drew out a bundle in oilskin that was well-nigh dropping to pieces.

"They sat down by the light of the fire, and unwound it. I doubt not that it was a pouring vessel of some sort, and, as the Captain said, best called a teapot, *but it was solid gold!*" Deborah Knox leaned forward impressively in the firelight. "Solid gold, as I live, and weighty with something packed to its lid. They forced the lid off, and there was a piece of moldy skin on the top, and underneath it—well!" Deborah drew a deep breath. "Jack McGuire made a space with his arms on the floor of the cave, and the Captain poured the contents of the teapot therein, and what do you think it was?"

"Money! gold!" said Evelyn and I in a breath.

Deborah shook her head.

"Jewels! Precious stones, cut and uncut, the like of which you'll never lay eyes on in *this* country! Jack McGuire knew all about them. He held them one by one to the light, and called them by name, and gathered up a handful, and told the Captain that his arithmetic couldn't calculate the fortune he was holding. And then, so the Captain said, Jack McGuire just up and danced a hornpipe on the floor.

"Then they examined the hole in the wall, but there wasn't another thing there. They put the stones back in the teapot, and then sat down again and studied what to do. There were strange men among the crew, and they did not dare carry a treasure aboard, and as they were to row back such a distance