mother with all her stories, and who insisted that she was like all the nice heroines.

"No, Jack. I never was placed in such a strait; but I regret to say I must leave Lizzie in it, for I hear your father's step. You must wait till to-morrow for another chapter."

(To be continued.)

THE "GIRLS' OWN" CLUB.

FLORRIE BENNET lived on the outskirts of one of our large manufacturing towns. The particular district was eminently respectable, but within a short walk of her home lay a neighbourhood which, for squalor and misery, would rival the worst parishes of the East-end of London.

The inhabitants, consisting principally of cobbemongers, street hawkers, and the lowest class of factory girls, when not engaged in following their respective callings, begged the time by fighting, drinking at their favourite public-house, or, if money were short, lounging at the door, hoping some acquaintance would come along who could stand treat.

Lately, however, some gentlemen connected with a neighbouring church had resolved to take steps towards improving this part of the parish, which was justly considered a disgrace to a Christian land. They had started a coffee-house, where all sorts of entertainments were provided for the men, in the hope of attracting them away from the public-houses.\n
With this was connected a night-school for boys, which they seemed to appreciate; and quite recently a small "mothers' meeting" had been opened.

This was all very good, as far as it went; but it occurred to Florrie Bennet that it would be rather hard for the girls that they alone should be left friendless, and that many of them would have to seek their entertainment to several acquaintances who were existing themselves in the neighbourhood. But they all answered that, though what she said was quite true, the really had set of girls liked their liberty too much to consent to come regularly to a meeting, or anything of the sort. She next appealed to a Bible woman, but met with the same discouragement. She had tried it herself, the good woman said.

A lady had started a Bible-class in her room for them, but, after one or two attempts, it had clamed away to nothing.

With all these authorities against her, Florrie was nearly concluding that the poor girls must be left to their fate. Not quite, though. It is hard to give up anything on which one's heart is set, just for want of a little sympathy, so the idea kept simmering in her brain.

Then she talked the matter over with her sister Jessie, and gained her promise to aid and abet in whatever was done.

At length they decided upon holding a "Girls' Own" club, and there was the really exciting thing to keep

The first meeting was to include a sumptuous tea, always a powerful inducement. This was held, and was a success. About a hundred girls came, and they were invited by reason of their extreme poverty or bad character.

After tea the girls were entertained by part-singing from some of the helpers, and a few short and lively addresses. The speaker then undertook to describe the proposed weekly meeting, and he put the matter in a form so attractive that it was hoped nearly all present would come regularly.

On the following Monday Florrie and Jessie went early to the room, arranged one table with a tempting array of pictures and illustrated magazines, while on another were some bottles of ink, and a few pens and copy books. In case there should be a great rush of girls they had also provided some simple reading-books, and a few gramophone records, so on.

They were determined that, since the mere mention of Bible-classes and " preaching" seemed to frighten the girls away, the club should be conducted in as free a manner as possible, and that it would be advisable to have a mixture of a school and a mother's meeting, without the mothers, hoping to be able to introduce religious teaching by degrees, and to influence the girls for good through many different channels.

When everything was arranged, the two sat down to await the arrival of their scholars; but they waited in vain. The time slipped on till half-past eight came, and not one girl arrived; and, to add to their chagrin, the Bible woman arrived, and said, "I am sure I am very sorry for your disappointment, Miss Bennet; but I told you how it would be. I am sure I wish you success; but you will never get them to come."

In very low spirits they packed up their things again, and went home. Of course everyone asked eagerly how they had got on, and, when told of their failure, though they did not all say so, they all looked unsurprised.

But Florrie had made up her mind to get the girls somehow, and, though she had had a fresh refusal, she went straight on with her plan.

Her next scheme was to have a number of cards printed with the following inscription in brilliant blue and red lettering:

"The Girls' Own Club. 1. Snagboat-street. You are invited to attend a meeting of this club next Monday evening at seven o'clock. She distributed a number of these herself, and persuaded a few friends to do the same.

The next meeting was an improvement considerably, for one solitary girl sidled shily into the empty room and was alarmed at finding two teachers all to herself, but though no companion joined her, they had a very pleasant time, playing games and telling stories, till the scholar became confidential and promised to bring some friends with her the following week.

From that time the numbers slowly but steadily increased. The poor girls certainly never came in the crowds that had at one time been hoped for, but when a year had elapsed and the helpers thought upon their labours, they found that there had been an average of one new girl every week.

Of course there were many difficulties to contend with, but they were willed to conduct with none of that kind, or indeed of any other kind, can be conducted without such. Some of the new girls who came in were loisbenous and unruly, and never having been accustomed to discipline of any kind, strongly objected to submit to the regulations. Others came for the avowed intention of "having a lark," which they could do, and a rule by which the unsuspecting teacher was thrown off her guard, till an opportunity occurred to tip over a form, or turn out the gas, or any other favours, tricks which, when carried away, always rank so think irresistably funny, and which invariably sent the whole class into roars of laughter and disorder, which it required the utmost tact and judgment to get the girls to take the trouble to come. A few of the quite unmanageable ones were turned out, as they stirred up insubordination amongst the others, but Florrie's heart yearned over them, and she could not bring herself to expel till she had exhausted all her eloquence in trying to persuade them into being good. The class soon became more than the two sisters could manage alone, and they found the truth of the old saying, that "nothing succeeds like success." Now that the difficulties about starting the class were over, and there was no doubt as to its prosperity, there appeared plenty of volunteers to help.

They chose out three of their friends who seemed to them best suited for the undertaking, and arranged the work as follows. The doors were opened at seven o'clock. There was no formal greeting, as the girls came in so haphazard, many of them leaving their respective occupations, being unable to come punctually. Jessie took her station at once at a little side table, where she remained during the whole meeting, ready to give money for the savings bank and clothing club, and exchanging library books. These latter were very much appreciated, and the greater punishment of a median upon a wayward scholar was to refuse her a book for a week.

In the meanwhile one of the assistants was present over the writing class at a long table, another had a class for arithmetic, while the third conducted as many reading classes as happened to be required.

Florrie herself was fully occupied in welcoming new comers, taking down their addresses, and asking them to join the savings bank or clothing club, or in coaxing a refractory spirit into good order.

Besides this, there were numbers coming in who, being "very good scholars," did not care to continue their education, and for whom books and other necessaries were sent to. The two sisters managed to arrange the spare moments were given to assisting any teacher who had rather more than she could manage.

This went on till eight o'clock, when the monitors, two of whom were chosen for their good behaviour from each class, cleared away the books, slates, and copybooks, and assisted to re-arrange the forms in a large semi-circle.

As soon as all were seated again Florrie pinned up before them a large coloured picture of some Bible subject, and gave a short Bible lesson. It was quite practical, and never exceeded ten minutes; after which she taught them a short text bearing on the subject, which she kept repeating after her till all knew it perfectly.

The large basket of work was then brought out. Each girl belonging to the clothing club had a bundle of tarts with their name on them, and these they picked up with the help of their bundle, and as Florrie stood calling out the name on each, one of her assistants handed it to the owner.

When the helpers were sent round, showing each girl how to go on with her work, Florrie took those who wanted any garment cut out to a side table, where she not only explained how they were made but also showed them how to do it themselves at her direction.

The cutting-out finished, and all settled at their work, some singing followed, the girls reading the words and tunes of hymns.
These were always selected with a view to simplicity of words and meaning, coupled with lively and pretty music; and for the benefit of those who could read, Florrie always wrote out a copy of the words in very large letters, and pinned it up before them.

After this one of the teachers gave ten minutes' address on some domestic subject, either cookery, house cleaning, health, or needlework; but the favourite subject of all was cutting out. The whole class was instructed at once in the following way. Having announced her subject, the teacher first gave directions for measuring, to ascertain the quantity of material required. She then described the method of folding and cutting it out, illustrating the description by roughly sketching each portion on the blackboard. When this was thoroughly understood, she reversed the position of things, made herself the scholar, and cut out the subject of the lesson in newspaper from the girls' directions. She always took down with her a number of pieces of newspaper, which she gave to any girls who wished to practise cutting out; but it was necessary to make them bring their own scissors, as the supply vanished mysteriously as long as the girls were at liberty to borrow. The demand for paper to make patterns to take home and keep was great, and as an inducement to remember what was taught, two prizes were offered, to be given in three months' time, to the girls who cut out the best patterns of each article of underclothing.

The remainder of the evening was filled up by reading aloud, with occasional singing, either by the girls themselves or by the teachers, and the evening closed with a repetition of the text just learned, and a very short prayer.

Before leaving, Florrie went round, notebook in hand, to make a list of the new work required for the following week. If any girl wished to make herself a garment, Florrie bought the material for her, and showed her how to cut it out and make it at the meeting, whilst it was paid for by weekly instalments, and no garment was allowed to be taken home till the whole price was paid.

The majority of the girls put a little money into the bank, apart from this clothing club. Jessie simply took charge of these deposits, giving them back whenever required, after a week's notice, without paying any interest, as it was found that the depositors did not appreciate it, and seemed quite satisfied to have their money saved without any bonus.

A register was kept, in which the attendance was entered, so that absentees might be inquired after. This gave an opportunity of visiting their homes and learning something of the domestic affairs of the girls.

It had been originally intended to start a Band of Hope in connection with the meeting, but as there was a large one very near, it was thought better that the teachers should use all their influence to persuade the girls to join the already existing one, rather than create any feeling of rivalry by starting another.

If on any occasion a tea or entertainment were given them, the girls subscribed towards the expense themselves, bringing a halfpenny a week for four or five weeks beforehand. And instead of being a check, this little plan appeared to enhance the enjoyment of the treat, which were perhaps more successful than the completely free ones are sometimes.

So the Girls' Own Club went on and prospered. Sometimes the numbers fell off without any assignable cause, again they would increase rapidly, and equally without cause. But Florrie and Jessie have learnt not to be discouraged by those gloomy people who are always predicting failure, nor even by temporary want of success; for they know they are doing the will of the Lord, and that their work is to sow the seed, leaving the result to Him who has promised that if we cast our bread upon the waters we shall find it after many days.

I have written this account, which is strictly true, except that the beginning was far more discouraging than I have been able to describe, in the hope that some of the readers of this paper may be induced to begin a similar work. There is a class of girls such as those of whom I have been speaking in nearly every large town, and there is no set of people so much neglected. Who will help them if you girls will not?

Dora Hope.