

### The Woman Who Adventured

The International Sunday School Lesson for April 29 Is: "Ruth, the Faithful Daughter."—The Book of Ruth.

By WILLIAM T. ELLIS

One day I was riding up from the Jordan Valley, through a rock defile, into the land of Moab. There came toward us a little company of the sort often seen in the migratory East. There was first the man, stout and without shoes and in poor raiment, carrying a staff. Beside him walked a donkey on which rode his wife and little child—a picture like that of Joseph, Mary and Jesus, fleeing to Egypt. We tarried for a moment of greetings by the way, and the man told us that his home was in Beersheba, but a local famine had driven him over into the fertile uplands of Moab, there to work and live until a harvest should be gleaned. Now he was on his way home.

The incident was so like that of Elimelech and Naomi and their two sons that it has stayed in my memory. Famine, which comes so quickly and easily to primitive people living always near the hunger line, had sent these Bethlehemites to the East. They had crossed the Jordan above the Dead Sea. On the high plain of Moab, where the winds blow chill in the mornings, there is to be seen a beautiful agriculture. I saw the farmers plowing with the same sort of crooked stick with oxen used in Elimelech's day. A fat land is Moab, and it gave succor and a home to the Bethlehemite immigrants.

**Life in a New Land**

Who knows the heart of an immigrant? Only he who has been a stranger in a strange land; and he is never heard to disdain the alien, he is ever so poor. The four Jews from Bethlehem made a home for themselves in the new land; and the two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, took to themselves wives of the Moabite maidens. It seemed as if the family had established itself permanently in the healthful uplands of Moab.

Death, that great nullifier of all plans, destroyed this prospect, for the father and the two sons died, after ten years of life in Moab, leaving three childless widows behind them. New ties were thus created for the survivors with the land which had so hospitably provided for them. The three graves were strong links.

Nevertheless, Naomi, the mother, and now the head of the family, found her grief-smitten heart turning back to Bethlehem and its hills. The famine was long since past. Fond memory called her to the home of her girlhood and young wifehood. What homesickness is filling the hearts of aliens in America, only the Comforter of the lonely knows.

In Bethlehem dwelt the past; and the best promise for the future also. Elimelech had property there, and there were kinsmen, ready to fulfill the obligations which the hospitable East, with its strong sense of family ties, always imposes. Sentiment and prudence alike called Naomi back to Bethlehem.

**The Woman Who Stayed By.**

What should be done with these young widows? The natural recourse was for them to return to their own people and make a new beginning in the Moabite life. Orpha so chose, respite her fondness for Naomi.

As we read the silly and cynical and

crude jokes about mothers-in-law, let us remember Naomi, whose character was such that she bound her dear ones in closest affection; and whose love for her daughters-in-law was so real and tender and abiding that one of them, Ruth, even made the great adventure of forsaking her blood-kindred, and the land of her birth, for the sake of cleaving to the mother of her husband.

Ruth and Naomi are among the most cherished personalities whom the Old Testament history has given to the world. They are an answer to the sneer that "women are never loyal to women; and that there cannot be a true and noble friendship between women. Everybody knows instances of love and loyalty between women as beautiful as that of Naomi and Ruth; and a fair counterpart for the friendship of David and Jonathan. Blessed for both is the reciprocated affection of an older woman for a younger. Ruth prized Naomi's love above her life's old ties.

So she cried, when unselfish Naomi would have parted from her, in that spirit of self-sacrificing love which marks human nature at its highest level—and the beautiful cry of Ruth has given literature one of its richest her kindred, upon the possibility of a myriad hearts since to leave thee, and to return from following thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and whither thou lodgeest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God shall be my God; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried; Jehovah might but death part thee and me."

**The Great Decision.**

Courageously making choice, Ruth dared all consequences. She had turned her back upon her old home, upon her kindred, upon the possibility of a second husband from among her own people, upon her ancestral faith; and she had elected to share the fortunes, good or ill, of a lone widow. Naomi's people, Naomi's God, were henceforth to be as her own.

God blesses the daring High faith and nobly loyalty are not forgotten by Him. He favors those who are brave enough to make decisions and to adventure new enterprises. He seems particularly a God of pioneers. The splendid fortitude of Ruth was not to go unrewarded. For to her it was to be given that, in the new land, she should become an ancestor of Israel's great king, and of the world's Prince of Peace. We hear never another word about Orpha; she sank back into the commonplace prosperity of the majority who take no risks.

Back to Bethlehem (what a place of personalities that little old town has been, and is to this very day!) we follow the two widows. The unknown writer of this beautiful story vividly pictures the welcome given Naomi by her old neighbors and kinsfolk:

"So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and the women said, Is this Naomi? And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi (pleasant), call me Mara (bitter); for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and Jehovah

hath brought me home again empty; why call ye me Naomi, seeing Jehovah hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?"

**In the Hard Days.**

Loyalty is more than a matter of beautiful sentiments. It costs. The genuineness of loyalty is tested when it is required as it always is, to descend from the high plane of noble words to the dead level of humdrum living. Protestations must be supported by practice. The ecstatic mood of swearing fealty had to be followed in Ruth's case by providing a livelihood for herself and her mother-in-law.

Gleaning after the reapers—how art has seized upon the picture—Ruth gathered the stray straws of grain that remained, to provide food for her companion and herself. The pictures of the soen are romantic, but was back-breaking, wearisome and monotonous work with the label of poverty attached to it. Thank God for the men and women, the world around, who are daily repeating the Ruth story and bearing the day's dreary load uncomplainingly, all for love's sake.

While about this lowly task, in the field of duty, Ruth won the notice of Boaz, a wealthy landowner and a kinsman of her husband's father. The tale ends in story-book fashion for rich farmer and poor gleaner were married, and that union was blessed by a son, Obed, the grandfather of David, the great king. The woman who adventured became the woman who won.



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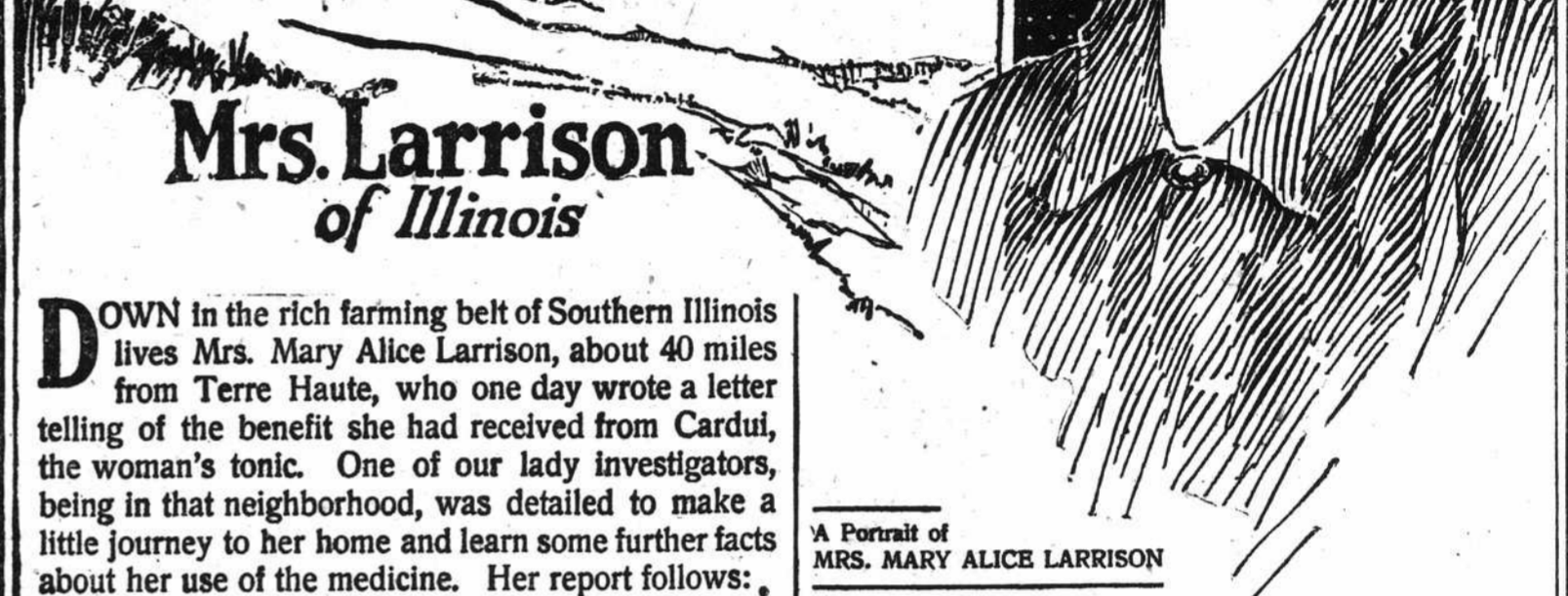
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# LITTLE JOURNEYS

## to the Homes of Friends of

# CARDUI



Mrs. Larrison of Illinois

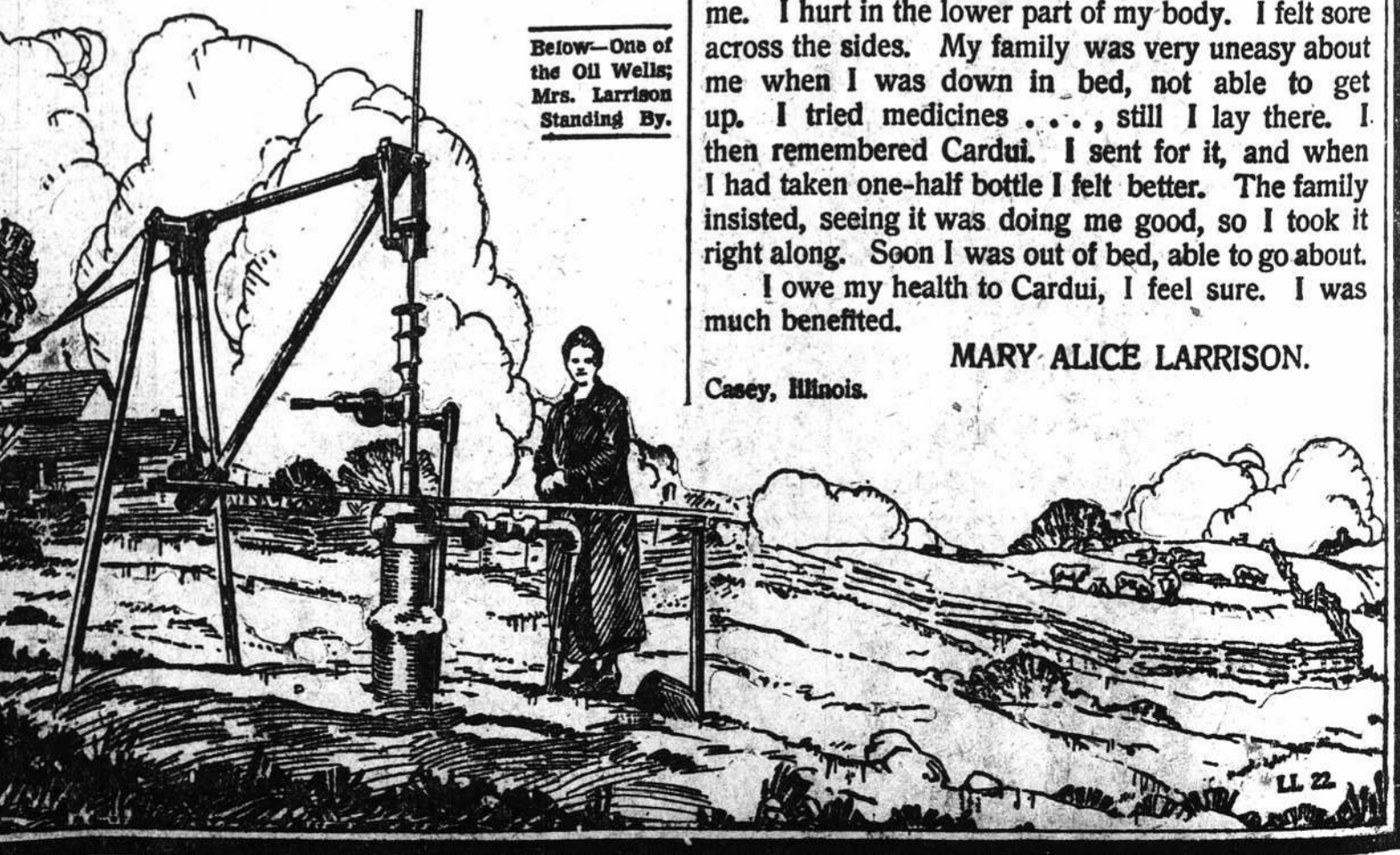
**DOWN** in the rich farming belt of Southern Illinois lives Mrs. Mary Alice Larrison, about 40 miles from Terre Haute, who one day wrote a letter telling of the benefit she had received from Cardui, the woman's tonic. One of our lady investigators, being in that neighborhood, was detailed to make a little journey to her home and learn some further facts about her use of the medicine. Her report follows:

Casey, Illinois, where Mrs. Larrison lives, is a picturesque little town on the Pennsylvania Railroad. Twelve miles from Casey the Larrison farm lies amid wide-spreading fields dotted with bursting barns, cribs of corn, herds of fine white cattle and hogs.

We drove out to the farm—to a white house with green window shutters and a wide porch. A little terrier, followed by two spotted pups, greeted us and summoned Mr. Larrison. We were cordially invited in, and I introduced myself to Mrs. Larrison. She said she had been expecting a rich aunt, and whenever she saw a stranger coming imagined the visitor might be the long-looked-for relative. I hastened to assure her how I regretted that she should be disappointed again, since I had only called to inquire about her use of Cardui and to take some pictures, if she would permit, to print with her statement. She replied that, in this case, she was as glad to see me as if I had been the wealthy "lost" aunt herself.

Some twenty-odd years ago, Mr. and Mrs. Larrison bought the farm on which they now live. It has been the childhood home of their fourteen children, the youngest of which is 14 years old. Mrs. Larrison told me that care for her large family had called for millions of steps "and many corners to turn to give them what they needed," but happily she had come through it all with sound, robust health, due partly, so she said, to Cardui.

About sixteen years ago when oil was struck in Clark County, Illinois, wells were drilled on the Larrison place. While they did not come in gushers, or even yield a heavy flow, they have withstood steady pumping for sixteen years, and probably will hold out many years longer. I went out into the back yard with Mrs. Larrison and examined and photographed one pump which was pounding away.



Below—One of the Oil Wells; Mrs. Larrison Standing By.

She pointed out several others, out in the fields, some of which we visited. These not only yield a substantial income to the Larrisons, but one furnishes natural gas for kitchen fuel, a great convenience.

The back yard was full of chickens, and out on the pasture I saw upwards of 100 hogs. Some dozen or more big porkers were enclosed in a barnyard lot for special feeding. They were enormous. I saw several pens of yellow corn that was to be fed to the hogs, and there was scarcely an ear that looked less than a foot in length. They also had large stores of potatoes and apples, cord after cord of furnace wood, a room full of books and a newspaper every day—why should they worry that it was winter, snowing, and twelve miles from town!

#### What Mrs. Larrison Says About Cardui, The Woman's Tonic

**A**BOUT 20 years ago I was in very bad health. I had some nervous trouble. I was weak. I couldn't rest. I was never hungry, but always tired; couldn't sit down contented and still not able to go about—a dragging, tired feeling like I had weights on my feet, and I would give out.

I heard of Cardui and what a help it was for weak women. I sent for six bottles. I had not taken it long till I felt stronger. I would eat and it seemed to help the nervous, tired feeling. I grew stronger. I took twelve bottles in all and for a long time I never knew what it was to feel bad.

When change of life began with me, down I went again—nervous, depressed, sick all over. I was so weak . . . it looked like life was ebbing out of me. I hurt in the lower part of my body. I felt sore across the sides. My family was very uneasy about me when I was down in bed, not able to get up. I tried medicines . . . still I lay there. I then remembered Cardui. I sent for it, and when I had taken one-half bottle I felt better. The family insisted, seeing it was doing me good, so I took it right along. Soon I was out of bed, able to go about.

I owe my health to Cardui, I feel sure. I was much benefited.

MARY ALICE LARRISON.

Casey, Illinois.

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