

THE
POOR WOODCUTTER,
AND
OTHER STORIES.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM ORIGINAL DESIGNS BY CROOME.

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INTRODUCTION.

WHILE several volumes in this series of books for the young are addressed to children as children, others, like this one, are addressed to them as our future men and women, toward which estate they are rapidly advancing, and in which they will need for their guidance all things good and true that can be stored up in their memories. Most of the actors are men and women,—and the trials and temptations to which they are subjected, such as are experienced in maturer years. The object is to fix in the young mind, by familiar illustrations, true principles and just views of life and its varied responsibilities.

THE POOR WOODCUTTER.

AS Mr. Edgar was leaving the breakfast room, one cold morning in February, his wife called after him, and said—

“Our wood is gone; we must have more to-day.”

“Not all gone!” returned Mr. Edgar, in a tone of surprise.

“Yes. Sally says there are only three or four sticks in the cellar.”

“I thought we had enough to last all winter,” said Mr. Edgar.

“The cold has been unusually severe, you must remember,” was replied.

“I know. But it is now only the beginning of February. A cord of good hickory

wood ought to have lasted all winter. Perkins says he doesn't burn but one cord in his air-tight stove from November to April."

"I don't know how it is," said Mrs. Edgar, a little fretfully; "I'm sure the nursery is never too warm."

"It's wasted by the servants in kindling fires in the range and heater, I suppose," remarked Mr. Edgar, as he closed the door after him, and went away.

Mr. Edgar happened to feel just at this time, particularly poor. His income was not large, yet ample, if dispensed with proper care, for the comfortable support of his family. A rather freer use of money than was prudent, all things considered, had drained his purse so low as to bring on, as just said, a feeling of poverty; and the thought of having to pay out four or five dollars for wood, when he had believed that there was fuel enough in the cellar to last until spring opened, was, in consequence, most unpleasant. It seemed little better than throwing so much money away. No

such feeling was experienced a week before, when he paid three dollars for concert tickets, nor when, a few days previously, he expended ten dollars in porcelain ornaments for the pier-table and mantel.

But it was in liberality of this kind that the poor feeling had its origin. Mr. Edgar found that money had been going too freely, and that the purse-strings must be held with a tighter hand. Too suddenly upon this resolution came the announcement that more wood was needed.

"I'll get only a quarter of a cord," said Mr. Edgar, as he walked along toward his office; "that, surely, ought to carry us through the cold weather."

But on reflection, seeing that it was only the first week in February, and that fire would have to be kept up in the stove for nearly three months, Mr. Edgar rather doubted the ability of a quarter of a cord of wood to afford the amount of warmth required. This conclusion of his mind was evidenced by a sigh. Instead of going di-

rect to the wharf and making the purchase, Mr. Edgar went to his office, where he gave up his thoughts to business until about half-past two o'clock. He then stepped down to the wharf, to purchase the wood previously to going home to dinner. He had settled the question as to the quantity that must be bought. Nothing less than half a cord would be sufficient.

The day was very cold; colder than he had supposed; for in his comfortable office but few evidences of the degree of temperature without was apparent. As he drew near the wood-wharves on the Delaware, the sharp wind came rushing by, causing him to shiver beneath his double-wadded coat.

"Any wood, sir?" inquired a carter, tipping his hat to Mr. Edgar, as that gentleman reached the wharves.

"Yes," was replied indifferently.

"May I haul it, sir?"

"I don't care."

“Do you wish it sawed?” eagerly asked another.

“Oh yes.” So that much was settled.

Into the little six-by-eight office of the corder, Mr. Edgar thrust himself. It was filled with men, poorly clad, and bearing about them many signs of extreme poverty. Most of them were there waiting for some job to turn up by which they could earn a trifle. The extreme cold had driven them into the office.

Mr. Edgar looked at these poor men, but he did not feel any pity for them. Not that he was indifferent to human want or suffering; but his mind was intent on knowing the price of wood, and he was somewhat worried at being compelled to expend money when he felt so very poor.

“What is hickory?” inquired Mr. Edgar, as he crowded up to the corder’s desk.

“Six dollars,” was the answer.

“Do you want it sawed, sir?” inquired a man in a quick voice.

“I have a sawyer,” replied Mr Edgar.

“ Shall I haul it for you ?” asked another.

“ Too late, Jack,” answered a man with a whip under his arm, smiling as he spoke ;
“ I’m ahead of you in that job.”

“ What is oak ?” inquired Mr. Edgar, who thought the hickory too high in price.

“ Five and a quarter.”

“ The difference is too small. I must have the hickory,” was replied.

“ How much do you want ?” asked the wood-merchant.

“ Only half a cord.”

“ Do you wish it split ?” inquired a man who looked as if he was acquainted with few of the comforts of life, and was not over-supplied with things necessary.

“ No,” replied the buyer, an expression of impatience escaping him.

“ Walk out and look at the wood,” said the corder ; “ you’ll find none better on the wharf.”

“ The price is high.”

“ Not for this season. Last year, hickory brought seven dollars.”

Mr. Edgar felt that six dollars was very high. Five and a half he had fixed as a maximum rate in his mind.

“Well, I suppose I must take it,” fell from his lips in company with a sigh. And he moved down toward the great piles of wood on the wharf, to look at the article he was purchasing. The carter and Sawyer were by his side. After selecting the wood, he inquired of the former as to the price of hauling.

“Three 'levies,” replied the carter.

“Too much. I have never paid over half-a-dollar a cord.”

“It's the regular price for half a cord of hickory,” returned the carter.

“What are you going to charge me for sawing?” asked Mr. Edgar, turning towards a poor Irishman, who stood by with his saw on his arm.

“How many cuts will there be?”

“Two. I want it sawed into three pieces.”

“That will be just a cord?”

“Yes.”

“Seventy-five cents.”

“What!”

“Three quarters is the price of sawing hickory.”

“I’m sure I never paid over half-a-dollar, or sixty-two cents, at most.”

“You may have got pine or oak sawed for that, but not hickory,” said the sawyer.

“Is three quarters the regular price?” inquired Mr. Edgar of the carter.

“Yes, sir,” answered the man of the whip, “they always get that. And I’m sure, sir, that if you were to run a saw through a cord of hard, seasoned hickory, you wouldn’t think yourself too well paid even at seventy-five cents.”

This was a form of argument that carried with it a convincing force. Mr. Edgar disputed the charge no further. While he yet stood musing over the great price his half-cord was going to cost him, the man who had asked if he did not wish it split, and who had followed him along the

wharf, said, as he touched his hat respectfully—

“I’d like to split it for you, sir.”

Mr. Edgar remembered, by this time, that he had no one at home who could split the wood after it was sawed. So he inquired as to the cost, remarking, at the same time, that, as it was for an air-tight stove, not more than half of it would need to be cleft, and that only into two pieces.

“I’ll do it for half-a-dollar,” said the man.

“Half-a-dollar!” returned Mr. Edgar, in surprise; “why you ask more than the cost of hauling. Oh no! I shall give no such price as that—I’ll split the wood myself, first. If you choose to do it for a quarter, you may. Not one half of it will have to be touched with an axe.”

The man shook his head, and said that he couldn’t walk over a mile and split half a cord of wood for twenty-five cents, even if he was very poor.

“You’re doing nothing,” remarked Mr Edgar.

“Though I may get a job before night worth a dollar, instead of a quarter.”

Mr. Edgar felt, as he looked at the man, whose clothes were poor, and above whose thin face masses of gray hair were visible, that it was hardly generous to beat him down so low for a job of work that it would take him at least a couple of hours, if not more, to perform, so he said—

“The wood is merely to be thrown into the vault beneath the pavement. If you will pile it after it is in, I’ll give you half-a-dollar.”

“Very well,” replied the man, “I will do it.”

Mr. Edgar next obtained his bill from the corder, and paying it, started home to dinner.

It was nearly four o’clock when the wood arrived. Half an hour afterward, Mr. Edgar sat down in his parlour with one of his children on his lap, and glanced out of

the window. The wood-sawyer, a hearty-looking Irishman, was working away with an energy that brought the perspiration to his face, although the thermometer was within five degrees of zero; but the other man, who was splitting the wood and throwing it into the cellar, was slower in his movements, and appeared to be suffering from the severity of the weather. As Mr. Edgar sat at the window of his warm and comfortable parlour, and looked out at this poor man, who swung his axe slowly, he noticed his countenance more particularly than he had done before. It was marked with many furrows, worn into it by toil or suffering, and had something subdued and sad, as if affliction and disappointment had been his attendants at some part of his journey through life. As Mr. Edgar looked at him, marking the slow progress he made in his hard work, and then thought of the many comforts he enjoyed, a feeling of pity came into his heart.

“Poor man! You have to work hard

for so small a pittance," he said to himself, as he sighed and moved from the window. He made an effort, in doing this, to turn his thoughts from the man; but this was not so easily accomplished. In thinking of him, he could not help contrasting his own labour and its reward, with the labour and reward of the woodcutter.

"It will take him at least two hours to get through with this work," said he mentally; "and what will the hard labour yield? Fifty cents! And, in all probability, he has a wife and children at home. Ah me! the condition of the poor is hard enough."

With these thoughts came an inclination to pay the man more for his work than he had agreed to give him. This, however, was met, instantly, by an opposing argument that arose in his mind almost spontaneously.

"A half-dollar for two hours' work," said he, "is very good for a labouring-man. Why, that would be two dollars-and-a-half for a day's work of ten hours."

To meet this came the thought that splitting and piling wood was not steady work; and that, in all probability, the half-cord upon which the man was now engaged, was his only job for the day. This view of the case was not so pleasant.

A recollection of some business at his office which required attention on that afternoon, caused these thoughts to retire.

“When the man is done piling away the wood in the cellar, pay him half-a-dollar,” said Mr. Edgar to his wife, as he was leaving the house to proceed to his office.

It was after six o'clock when Mr. Edgar returned home. The wind rushed and moaned along the streets, and the cold, which had increased by several degrees since midday, penetrated his warm garments, and caused him to shiver as the chilly air seemed to pass through them as if they were but gossamer. On arriving at home, Mr. Edgar was rather surprised to find the man he had employed still cutting

wood in front of his house, although it was getting quite dark.

"A'n't you done yet?" said he, as he stood at his door.

"Very nearly," replied the man. "I have only a few sticks more to split, and it won't take me a great while to pile it up in the cellar."

Mr. Edgar went in and joined his family, who were gathered in the parlours awaiting his return. His children were all well clad, healthy, and happy, and both he and his family were in the enjoyment of every comfort. As he sat down among them, he could not help thinking of the man at work before his door, nor was he able to repress a faint sigh, as he thought of what would be the condition of his beloved ones were he able to earn only the pittance he had grudged to the poor labourer.

But these thoughts gradually retired, and the man was not again remembered until they were all assembled in the dining-room to partake of the evening meal. Then, the

room being in the basement, Mr. Edgar could hear him piling the wood below. It was full three hours since the work was commenced, and yet it was not completed. He was in a warm, bright room, clad in his dressing-gown, and with his family around him, while the poor woodcutter was in the cold cellar, alone, toiling by the light of a dim lamp, with his thoughts turning, perhaps, upon his little ones who awaited his coming that they might divide the loaf he would bring them.

As he thought thus, Mr. Edgar felt how small was the price that awaited the completion of the poor man's task.

"I will pay him more," said he, in his own mind. But the moment this was concluded, he remembered that, to do so, would increase the price of his half-cord of wood. The poor feeling came back, and he said—

"I can't afford this. If I were to overpay every one after this fashion, I would find myself badly off by the end of the year. The carter and wood-sawyer are just as

much entitled to a higher rate of payment as this man. They have the fixing of their own price, and if they are satisfied, I am sure I ought to be."

But, for all this, humanity kept urging the claims of the woodcutter in the cellar. Sometimes Mr. Edgar would determine to act generously, and hand him seventy-five cents on the completion of his work. But that would make his half-cord of wood cost nearly five dollars.

"If I were to increase all my expenses at this rate," he argued with himself, "I would be in debt several hundred dollars at the end of the year."

And then he would fall back to his original state, and content himself with the reflection that fifty cents was enough for the job.

"A smart man could have done it in half the time it has taken him."

This thought laid the matter to rest; but the rest was only temporary. Thought is the form of the affection; and sympathy

for the poor woodcutter clothed itself, spontaneously, in generous thoughts.

At length the work was done. Mr. Edgar heard the man's slow, heavy tread, as he ascended the cellar-stairs. Now came the struggle between humanity and the poor feeling from which he had suffered all day. More than a dozen times, before the servant came in and said that the woodcutter had finished his work, did he alter his mind. Now he had seventy-five cents in his fingers, and now fifty.

"Half-a-dollar is enough—it is all he asked," he would say, as he commenced drawing his hand from his pocket with only the single coin in his fingers. "But he is poor, and has worked very hard. A quarter of a dollar is a little matter to you, but much to him," would cause the hand to dive down again into the pocket, and take up an additional twenty-five cent piece. But from the other side would come a word, and then only the half-dollar remained.

“The man is done,” said a domestic, opening the door of the dining-room, while this debate was still going on.

The time for the decision had arrived; yet the question was not settled. Regard for another's good had not been able to gain the victory over selfishness. There was still an active struggle. But the necessity for an instant determination caused a slight confusion in the mind of Mr. Edgar, and in this state the half-dollar was handed to the domestic, who took the money and retired. He heard her close the door after her—heard her speak to the man in the entry, and heard the man walk away; while a painful conviction that he had not done right in the case before him impressed itself upon his mind. Now that it was too late to recall the act, he deeply regretted what he had done, or rather what he had neglected to do, and felt that in saving the fourth of a dollar, he had gained only a disquieted mind.

“To think,” he murmured to himself,

“that I could have let the saving of such a paltry sum restrain me from the performance of an act of humanity. I spend dollars in the gratification of my senses, and part freely with the money in doing so; but when the question of compensation to a poor labouring-man comes up, I chaffer for the value of a few pennies, and beat down to a minimum price, instead of taking a pleasure in paying liberally. Ah me! what strange inconsistency!”

Leaving Mr. Edgar to his not very pleasant reflections, we will follow the woodcutter. His name was Harlan. He had been better off than now—owning at one time a small farm near the city, from which he derived a comfortable support for his family. In an evil hour he was induced to sell this farm and remove to Philadelphia, for the purpose of keeping a store. The result was as might have been expected. Knowing nothing of business, he was not able to conduct it successfully. By the end of three years, he found himself unable

to go on any longer. Losses from trusting out his goods, and from unwise purchases, added to the greatly increased expense of his family from residing in a city, consumed all that he had, and he was forced to close his store, sell off his stock, and settle up the business. If, after this, he had been even with the world, it would not have been so bad. But debt was added to the burden of his troubles.

The question, "What next to do?" was now more easily asked than answered. Mr. Harlan had no trade at which he could work, and was comparatively a stranger in the city. His chances for getting employment were, therefore, small; and as winter was closing in, he might well begin to feel deeply troubled, especially as his family consisted of his wife and three children. In order to meet some of the most urgent of his creditors, who were not satisfied when they saw the man broken up in business, and every barrel, box, and package of his goods sold off, and the proceeds distributed,

but still clamoured for their pay and threatened all manner of consequences if the money did not come, he sold the best of his furniture—thus depriving his family of many comforts, and reducing himself to a still lower position.

“What shall I do?”

Ah! how often and anxiously was that question asked, and how silent was all around after its utterance. Bread must be had for his little ones, and no man was more willing to work for it than he; but who would give him work? By a neighbour who had dealt in his store, and with whom he conferred on the subject, he was advised to try and get a place as labourer in one of the stores on the wharves. Acting on this suggestion, he visited the store of every merchant from South to Vine streets, and asked for work; but without success. The fall business was over, and many were dispensing with regular aid instead of employing more.

“I must do something,” said the unhap-

py man, in this crisis of his affairs. "I will saw wood—do any thing for my children. How does Gardiner manage to get bread?" he asked of the neighbour before mentioned. He spoke of a poor man living not far off.

"By picking up odd jobs along the wharves," replied the man. "He splits and piles up wood, carries bundles, and does little turns of one kind and another for people who may happen to need his services."

On this hint Harlan acted. He went on the next day to the wharf, with an axe under his arm, and came home at night as poor as he had gone out in the morning. Several opportunities had offered for obtaining work, but more eager seekers for employment thrust him aside and secured even the jobs for which he had half bargained. On the day following, he was more successful, and earned a dollar. From that time he went to the wharves regularly in search of work. Sometimes

he did not earn half-a-dollar during the whole day; at other times he did better. But the average of his gains was not over four dollars a week. This sum he found altogether insufficient for the wants of his family. Many privations were the consequence. Sickness came at last to add to the distress of the unhappy man. For two weeks he was confined to the house—most of the time to his bed—and had it not been for the kindness and charity of some neighbours, his family would have suffered for food.

As soon as he could get out again, and before he had so far recovered his strength as to be really able to go to work, he was on the wharf, seeking employment. He earned but a trifle on the first and second days, and on the third day his only job was that obtained from Mr. Edgar. The splitting and piling of half a cord of seasoned hickory wood was work beyond his strength. It took him full three hours to perform it, and when he received his wages and turn-

ed his steps homeward, his head was aching violently; he felt feverish, and almost staggered as he walked.

Mr. Edgar, as has been seen, was far from feeling happy. He could not get the thought of the poor labouring-man out of his mind, try as he would, nor help feeling that, even though he had paid him the price agreed upon for his work, he had not dealt by him fairly. So occupied was his mind with this idea, that he was not able to sleep for nearly two hours after retiring for the night. With the morning came back the same thoughts. He felt troubled and ashamed. On going to his office, he found himself still haunted by the man's image. Finally he determined to go to the wharves, search him out, and pay him half-a-dollar more, in hopes thus to ease his conscience, or lay the troubled spirit that was haunting him. Acting up to this resolution, Mr. Edgar went down to the Delaware, and walked along the wood-wharves for ten or fifteen minutes, in hopes

of seeing the man. But his search was not successful. As he was about going away, he met the sawyer who had been at his house on the day before, and remembered him.

“Have you seen any thing of the man who split my wood for me yesterday?” he asked of the sawyer.

“He hasn’t been on the wharf to-day,” was replied.

“Where does he live?”

“In Federal street, near Seventh.”

“Do you know his name?”

“Yes, sir. His name is Harlan.”

“Is he very poor?”

“Yes, sir; and he’s been sick. He wasn’t able to undertake such a job as he had yesterday, and I’m afraid it has put him back.”

“Has he a family?”

“Oh yes. He has a wife and children.”

Mr. Edgar stood musing for some moments. Then he asked particularly as to

the man's residence, and on being told, went away.

In a small room, in the third story of a house in the lower part of the city, sat a man in a deeply desponding attitude. Three children were near him, the oldest not over seven years of age; and a woman stood by the fire of a few coals that scarcely took the chill from the air of the small apartment, washing. The woman worked on in silence, and the man sat with his eyes gloomily cast upon the floor.

"Indeed, Jane," said the man, "I must go out and earn something to-day. All that I received yesterday is gone; and when our dinner is eaten, there will not be a mouthful of food left."

The man, as he walked across the room, staggered, and had to lean against the wall to support himself. He was very pale, and his eyes were drooping and dim.

The wife left her washing instantly, and going to her husband's side, took hold of his arm and drew him towards the bed

that was in the room, saying, as she did so—

“You must lie down, Henry. Indeed you must; for you are sick. Don't think of going out. You are not able to work, and the attempt will do you harm. I am sure you could not walk a square.”

While she yet spoke, she had drawn him to the bed, upon which he sank down, murmuring—

“Heaven help us!”

Just then came a knock at the door. On being opened, a man stepped in and said—

“Does Mr. Harlan live here?”

At this inquiry, the sick man started up, and recognised in the visiter the person for whom he had done the job of work on the day previous, that had proved too much for his strength. Hope instantly came into his despairing heart, and he cried—

“O sir—save my children!”

All night the man had lain in a raging

fever, and his pulses yet beat quickly and irregularly. He had little more strength than a child. The excitement caused by this sudden and unexpected appearance, was too much for him, and he fell back, on making this almost wildly uttered appeal, so exhausted that he panted like a frightened child who had shrunk trembling upon its mother's bosom.

Mr. Edgar, for he was the visiter, felt deeply moved by what he saw and heard. Sitting down by the bedside, and speaking a word of encouragement to the poor man in order to quiet his mind, he proceeded to make inquiries of the wife as to their circumstances and the causes which had led to their present destitution. The narrative affected him much.

"No, no," said he, after the wife had finished her relation, which ended with a reference to her husband's wish to go out and look for work on that day, "he must remain in bed, and I will send him a physician. Here is more than he could earn ;"

and he handed the woman a couple of dollars. "Get necessary food for yourself and children. To-morrow I will either see you myself, or send to know if Mr. Harlan is better. In the mean time, don't let your minds be troubled. Better employment can be had for you, I am very sure."

"If we were only back in the country again!" sighed the woman.

"Oh yes," said Mr. Harlan; "if we were only on some little place in the country! It was a sad day for us when we turned our thoughts towards the city."

"The way may open for you to get back," returned Mr. Edgar; "at least, hope for the best. You have evidently reached the lowest point in the descending circle of fortune, and it is but fair to think that the movement will now be upward."

When Mr. Edgar retired, it was with a deeper feeling of sympathy for the poor than he had ever known; and his cheek burned as he called to mind the many in-

stances in which he had paid them their small wages with a grudging spirit, and meanly beaten them down in their prices for work, when these prices were already so low as to be scarcely sufficient for the commonest necessaries of life. He thought of the many times he had chaffered for a sixpence or a shilling with a porter or poor labourer, and after gaining a trifling advantage at the expense of justice, thrown double the amount away in some foolish expenditure. All this was humiliating, but salutary. It was a lesson in life not soon to be forgotten. In Mr. Harlan's case he took an active interest. He saw that his family were properly cared for until he was able to go to work again, and then obtained for him the place of overseer on the farm of an acquaintance who wanted a competent farmer. When spring opened, Harlan went back to the country with a hopeful spirit, and Mr. Edgar went on his way through life more thoughtful than he had been, and far more considerate of the poor.



AN EVENING AT HOME.

AN EVENING AT HOME.

“NOT going to the ball?” said Mrs. Lindley, with a look and tone of surprise.

“What has come over the girl?”

“I don’t know, but she says she is not going.”

“Doesn’t her dress fit?”

“Yes, beautifully.”

“What is the matter, then?”

“Indeed, ma, I cannot tell. You had better go up and see her. It is the strangest notion in the world. Why, you couldn’t hire me to stay at home.”

Mrs. Lindley went up-stairs, and, entering her daughter’s room, found her sitting on the side of the bed, with a beautiful ball-dress in her hand.

"It isn't possible, Helen, that you are not going to this ball?" said she.

Helen looked up with a half-serious, half-smiling expression on her face:

"I've been trying, for the last half-hour," she replied, "to decide whether I ought to go, or stay at home. I think, perhaps, I ought to remain at home."

"But what earthly reason can you have for doing so? Don't you like your dress?"

"Oh yes! very much. I think it beautiful."

"Doesn't it fit you?"

"As well as any dress I ever had."

"Are you not well?"

"Very well."

"Then why not go to the ball?" It will be the largest and most fashionable of the season. You know that your father and myself are both going. We shall want to see you there, of course. Your father will require some very good reason for your absence."

Helen looked perplexed at her mother's last remark.

"Do you think father will be displeased if I remain at home?" she asked.

"I think he will, unless you can satisfy him that your reason for doing so is a very good one. Nor shall I feel that you are doing right. I wish all my children to act under the government of a sound judgment. Impulse, or reasons not to be spoken of freely to their parents, should in no case influence their actions."

Helen sat thoughtful for more than a minute, and then said, her eyes growing dim as she spoke—

"I wish to stay at home for Edward's sake."

"And why for his, my dear?"

"He doesn't go to the ball, you know."

"Because he is too young, and too backward. You couldn't hire him to go there. But, that is no reason why you should remain at home. You would never partake of any social amusement were this always to

influence you. Let him spend the evening in reading. He must not expect his sisters to deny themselves all recreation in which he cannot or will not participate."

"He does not. I know he would not hear to such a thing as my staying at home on his account."

"Then why stay?"

"Because I feel that I ought to do so. This is the way I have felt all day, whenever I have thought of going. If I were to go, I know that I would not have a moment's enjoyment. He need not know why I remain at home. To tell him that I did not wish to go will satisfy his mind."

"I shall not urge the matter, Helen," Mrs. Lindley said, after a silence of some moments. "You are old enough to judge in a matter of this kind for yourself. But I must say, I think you rather foolish. You will not find Edward disposed to sacrifice so much for you."

"Of that I do not think, mother. Of that I ought not to think."

“Perhaps not. Well, you may do as like. But I don’t know what your father will say.”

Mrs. Lindley then left the room.

Edward Lindley was at the critical age of eighteen; that period when many young men, especially those who have been blest with sisters, would have highly enjoyed a ball. But Edward was shy, timid, and bashful in company, and could hardly ever be induced to go out to parties with his sisters. Still, he was intelligent for his years, and companionable. His many good qualities endeared him to his family, and drew forth from his sisters toward him a very tender regard.

Among his male friends were several about his own age, members of families with whom his own was on friendly terms. With these he associated frequently, and with two or three others, quite intimately. For a month or two Helen noticed that one or another of these young friends called every now and then for Edward,

in the evening, and that he went out with them and stayed until bedtime. But unless his sisters were from home, he never went of his own accord. The fact of his being out with these young men had, from the first, troubled Helen; though the reason of her feeling troubled she could not tell. Edward had good principles, and she could not bring herself to entertain fears of any clearly defined evil. Still a sensation of uneasiness was always produced when he was from home in the evening.

Her knowing that Edward would go out after they had all left, was the reason why Helen did not wish to attend the ball. The first thought of this had produced an unpleasant sensation in her mind, which increased the longer she debated the question of going away or remaining at home. Finally, she decided that she would not go. This decision took place after the interview with her mother, which was only half an hour from the time of starting.

Edward knew nothing of the intention

of his sister. He was in his own room, dressing to go out, and supposed, when he heard the carriage drive from the door, that Helen had gone with the other members of the family. On descending to the parlour, he was surprised to find her sitting by the centre table, with a book in her hand.

“Helen! Is this you! I thought you had gone to the ball. Are you not well?” he said quickly and with surprise, coming up to her side.

Looking into her brother's face with a smile of sisterly regard, Helen replied, “I have concluded to stay at home this evening. I am going to keep you company.”

“Are you, indeed! Right glad am I of it! though I am sorry you have deprived yourself of the pleasure of this ball, which, I believe, is to be a very brilliant one. I was just going out, because it is so dull at home when you are all away.”

“I am not particularly desirous of going to the ball. So little so, that the thought

of your being left here all alone had sufficient influence over me to keep me away."

"Indeed! Well, I must say you are kind," Edward returned, with feeling. The self-sacrificing act of his sister had touched him sensibly.

Both Helen and her brother played well. She upon the harp and piano, and he upon the flute and violin. Both were fond of music, and practised and played frequently together. Part of the evening was spent in this way, much to the satisfaction of each. Then an hour passed in reading and conversation, after which music was again resorted to. Thus lapsed the time pleasantly until the hour for retiring came, when they separated, both with an internal feeling of pleasure more delightful than they had experienced for a long time. It was nearly three o'clock before Mr. and Mrs. Lindley, and the daughter who had accompanied them to the ball, came home. Hours before, the senses of both Edward and Helen had been locked in forgetfulness.

Time passed on. Edward Lindley grew up and became a man of sound principles—a blessing to his family and society. He saw his sisters well married; and himself, finally, led to the altar a lovely maiden. She made him a truly happy husband. On the night of his wedding, as he sat beside Helen, he paused for some time, in the midst of a pleasant conversation, thoughtfully. At last he said—

“Do you remember, sister, the night you stayed home from the ball to keep me company?”

“That was many years ago. Yes, I remember it very well, now you have recalled it to my mind.”

“I have often since thought, Helen,” he said, with a serious air, “that by the simple act of thus remaining at home for my sake, you were the means of saving me from destruction.”

“How so?” asked the sister.

“I was just then beginning to form an intimate association with young men of

my own age, nearly all of whom have since turned out badly. I did not care a great deal about their company; still, I liked society, and used to be with them frequently—especially when you and Mary went out in the evening. On the night of the ball to which you were going, these young men had a supper, and I was to have been with them. I did not wish particularly to join them, but preferred doing so to remaining at home alone. To find you, as I did, so unexpectedly, in the parlour, was an agreeable surprise indeed. I stayed at home with a new pleasure, which was heightened by the thought that it was your love for me that had made you deny yourself for my gratification. We read together on that evening, we played together, we talked of many things. In your mind I had never before seen so much to inspire my own with high and pure thoughts. I remembered the conversation of the young men with whom I had been associating, and in which I had taken pleasure, with something like

disgust. It was low, sensual, and too much of it vile and demoralizing. Never, from that hour, did I join them. Their way, even in the early stage of life's journey, I saw to be downward, and downward it has ever since been tending. How often since have I thought of that point in time, so full-fraught with good and evil influences! Those few hours spent with you seemed to take scales from my eyes. I saw with a new vision. I thought and felt differently. Had you gone to the ball, and I to meet those young men, no one can tell what might have been the consequences. Sensual indulgences, carried to excess, amid songs and sentiments calculated to awaken evil instead of good feelings, might have stamped upon my young and delicate mind a bias to low affections that never would have been eradicated. That was the great starting-point in life—the period when I was coming into a state of rationality and freedom. The good prevailed over the evil, and by the agency of my sister, as an angel

sent by the Author of all benefits to save me.”

Like Helen Lindley, let every elder sister be thoughtful of her brothers at that critical period in life, when the boy is about passing up to the stage of manhood, and she may save them from many a snare set for their unwary feet by the evil one. In closing this little sketch, we can say nothing better than has already been said by an accomplished American authoress, Mrs. Farrar :—

“So many temptations,” she remarks, “beset young men, of which young women know nothing, that it is of the utmost importance that your brothers’ evenings should be happily past at home, that their friends should be your friends, that their engagements should be the same as yours, and that various innocent amusements should be provided for them in the family circle. Music is an accomplishment chiefly valuable as a home enjoyment, as rallying round the piano the various mem-

bers of a family, and harmonizing their hearts as well as voices, particularly in devotional strains. I know no more agreeable and interesting spectacle, than that of brothers and sisters playing and singing together those elevated compositions in music and poetry which gratify the taste and purify the heart, while their fond parents sit delighted by. I have seen and heard an elder sister thus leading the family choir, who was the soul of harmony to the whole household, and whose life was a perfect example of those virtues which I am here endeavouring to inculcate. Let no one say, in reading this chapter, that too much love is here required of sisters, that no one can be expected to lead such a self-sacrificing life: for the sainted one to whom I refer was all I would ask my sister to be, and a happier person never lived. To do good and to make others happy was her rule of life, and in this she found the art of making herself so.

“Sisters should always be willing to

walk, ride, visit with their brothers; and esteem it a privilege to be their companions. It is worth while to learn innocent games for the sake of furnishing brothers with amusements and making home the most agreeable place to them.

“I have been told by some, who have passed unharmed through the temptations of youth, that they owed their escape from many dangers to the intimate companionship of affectionate and pure-minded sisters. They have been saved from a hazardous meeting with idle company by some home engagement, of which their sisters were the charm; they have refrained from mixing with the impure, because they would not bring home thoughts and feelings which they could not share with those trusting, loving friends; they have put aside the wine-cup and abstained from stronger potations, because they would not profane with their fumes the holy kiss with which they were accustomed to bid their sisters good-night.”



"WHY, ANNA! WHAT IS THE MATTER?"

Page 66.

THE TEMPERANCE MEETING

IN STEVE MILLER'S BAR-ROOM.

THOMAS LE ROY was a mechanic, who by industry and economy had saved enough to buy himself a neat little cottage, with ground for a garden and pasturage for a cow. Early in the mornings, before he went to his work, he gave an hour or two, during the spring and summer months, to improving and beautifying this little homestead. All his fences were in perfect order; the shrubbery nicely trimmed, and the vines trained in the neatest manner. Every one said that the grounds around his cottage were better kept than any in the neighbourhood.

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When remarks of this kind came to the ears of Le Roy, which was frequently the case, he felt highly gratified, and was stimulated to increased efforts.

But the mechanic, with all his industry and thrift, had one fault, and that a very bad one, for it was a fault that increased by indulgence. He would take his glass occasionally; and would visit, at least two or three times a week, the village tavern, to meet a few acquaintances and talk over the news. This habit troubled his wife, who had, in her own family, seen and felt the evil effects of intemperance, and shrank with an instinctive fear from even the shadow of the monster. Once or twice she had hinted at the character of her feelings, but the effect produced on the mind of her husband was surprise and displeasure. He felt in no danger, and was hurt that his wife could even dream of such a thing as his falling into habits of intemperance.

At first, Le Roy's visits to the tavern were rarely oftener than once a week, and

then he never drank more than a single glass. He went more for the pleasant company he found there. But, in process of time, two evenings in the week saw the mechanic at the tavern; and it generally took two glasses of an evening to satisfy his increasing desire for liquor. Three evenings and three glasses were the next progressive steps; and so on, until he felt no longer contented at home a single evening in the week.

The tavern-keeper, whose name was Stephen Miller, had commenced his liquor-selling business some ten years before, and was then about the poorest man in the village. He was poor, because he was too lazy to work steadily at his trade, which was that of a house-carpenter. At first he opened, in a miserable little shanty of a place, with a few jugs of liquor, and some bad groceries to tempt people to his shop. He didn't seem to do a great deal, but somehow or other, at the end of a year, he was able to buy the furniture of one of the

taverns in the village, which was sold at the death of the owner, and assume the responsibility of a public-house for the entertainment of travellers. People wondered. They could not understand it. How a man who never seemed to have more than fifty dollars' worth of things in his shop could save up three or four hundred dollars in a year—the amount of cash paid down by Miller—passed their simple comprehension. None but he knew how many glasses and pints were sold in a day, nor how much profit was made on every dram.

Two years after this the tavern-stand was sold. Miller was the purchaser, and paid down a thousand dollars of the purchase-money! It was a mystery to every one how a man who had been before so thriftless should now be getting along so fast.

A couple of years more and Miller bought a farm in the neighbourhood, which one of his best customers, who had fallen into intemperate habits, had neglected, and who,

in the end, found himself obliged to sell out. Some people began to open their eyes after this. It was plain enough that Jones had lost his property through drunkenness; though all did not see so plainly that, in becoming its owner, Miller had not rendered back to the community in which he lived any equivalent use. Not long after this, the house and acre-lot of another good customer went into the hands of the sheriff, and Miller was the purchaser.

“What was Steve Miller looking about here for, this afternoon?” asked Mrs. Le Roy of her husband, one evening when he came home to supper?

“I’m sure I don’t know,” replied the mechanic. “Looking about here?”

“Yes, he came along with another man, and stood and looked at the house, and talked for some time; and then they both went round, and looked over the fence into the garden. I was ashamed to have them do so, for every thing is so neglected to what it used to be.”

Le Roy made some indifferent answer, merely to satisfy his wife, who seemed worried by the incident. But the fact mentioned produced an unpleasant impression on his mind.

“I wonder what business he has spying about my place?” said he to himself. “I don’t owe him any thing.”

The satisfaction with which he uttered the last part of the sentence was rather diminished by the recollection that his bill at the store had been suffered to run up until it amounted to over sixty dollars, and that he owed the shoemaker nearly twenty more. Debts like these had never before been permitted to accumulate.

After supper he was led by his inclinations, as usual, to the bar-room of Miller, which was always well filled with pleasant companions. His wife saw him depart with troubled feelings. She was, alas! too well aware that he had entered the downward road, and that his steps were on the way to ruin.

Just off from the bar-room of Miller's tavern was a little parlour, and Le Roy, not feeling very social on that particular evening, took his glass of liquor and newspaper and sat apart from the rest of the company, at a table close to the door of this parlour, which stood ajar. He became directly aware that the landlord was in the next room, conversing with some one in an undertone, and as he heard his own name mentioned, he felt excused for listening attentively to all that was said.

"Things don't look as tidy around him as they used to," remarked the person who was talking with Miller.

"Not by any means. I was told that this was the case, and walked over to-day to see for myself. Evidently he is running down fast. I asked Phillips about him a little while ago, and he told me that his bill at the store was sixty dollars. In former times he never owed a cent."

"He'll go to the dogs before long."

"I presume so. Well, I shall keep my

eye on that little place of his. I always had a fancy for it, and would like to get it at a bargain when it goes off, as it will have to before a great while."

"You buy a good deal of property?"

"Yes."

"What did you pay for Shriver's place?"

"Nine hundred dollars."

"No more?"

"No; Shriver refused, once, to my certain knowledge, sixteen hundred for it."

"He let it run down shamefully."

"Oh yes," replied the tavern-keeper. "He became a mere sot, and neglected every thing. I wouldn't trust him, now, for a three-cent glass of whisky. His place was sold, of course, and I bought it at a bargain. I wouldn't take, this hour, an advance of four hundred dollars on the purchase. It's always best to buy property that has been suffered by a drunken fellow to run down for a few years. It gets to look a great deal worse than it really is, and you're sure to buy a bargain."

"No doubt, you'll have Le Roy's place, in the end, under this system."

"To a moral certainty. In about two years he will have to sell; and see if I am not the man who buys. I want that place for my daughter Jane. As soon as I get it, I will pull down the little kitchen, and build a dining-room twenty feet square where it stands. Half of the garden I will put in a green lawn, and make an orchard of the pasture-ground. You'll hardly know the place in a year after I'm the owner."

Le Roy waited to hear no more. Rising up quickly, he left the bar-room without speaking to any one, and started on his way homeward.

"Have my place!" he muttered to himself as he hurried along, clenching his fist and setting his teeth firmly as he spoke. "Have my place! We will see!"

On reaching his home and entering suddenly, Le Roy found his wife sitting by her little work-table with her face bent down and buried in her hands. She looked

up quickly, at the sound of his footsteps, and he saw that tears were on her cheeks.

“Why, Anna! what’s the matter?” he inquired.

“Oh, nothing,” she replied evasively, trying to force a smile.

Le Roy looked at her for some moments, earnestly, and as he did so, the truth flashed over his mind. She, too, saw as clearly as the tavern-keeper, that he was on the road to ruin!

“Anna,”—Le Roy spoke seriously, yet with earnestness, and in a tone of affection and confidence,—“Anna, I have found out why Steve Miller was spying about here to-day.”

“Why?”

“He wants this place for his daughter Jane.”

Mrs. Le Roy looked bewildered.

“He thinks that, in about two years, I will run it down, so that he will be able to get it for about half its value. He was looking to see how much progress I had

made in the road to ruin, and thinks the prospect for his getting the place in about two years very fair. He will tear down the kitchen, and build a handsome dining-room in its place, and so improve the ground that it will hardly be known as the same spot in a year. But, Anna, he'll find himself mistaken! I've got my eyes open. Not while I am living shall Steve Miller own this property!"

Tears of thankfulness gushed from the eyes of Mrs. Le Roy, as she said—

"Oh, what a mountain you have taken from my heart!"

On the next day, Le Roy related to every acquaintance he met the conversation he had heard while in Miller's bar-room; and these told the story to others. So that, before evening, it was all over the village.

"Let's go there in a crowd to-night," suggested one, "and organize a temperance society in the bar-room."

The suggestion struck the fancy of all

who heard it That night the bar-room of the tavern-keeper was filled to overflowing. Miller was at first delighted, though a little surprised that no one called for liquor, and at the air of business that sat upon every countenance.

“I move that Le Roy take the chair,” said one.

The mechanic was handed to the post of honour, when he related minutely the occurrences and conversation of the day previous; and then said that the object of the meeting was to organize a temperance society, and thus prevent the tavern-keeper from getting all their property. “I can assure the gentleman,” he said in closing, “that his daughter Jane will never live in my place while I have breath in my body.”

“My hand to that!” was echoed around the room by a dozen voices.

The society was regularly formed, the pledge signed by every individual present, and a vote of thanks to the landlord passed

for the use of his bar-room. Five minutes afterward he occupied it alone.

Stephen Miller's affairs were never afterward as prosperous as they had been; but fewer estates run down in the village, and fewer families are reduced to beggary.

And so it would be in hundreds of towns and villages, if the inhabitants would act as Le Roy and his friends did in this case.

I'LL SEE ABOUT IT.

MR. EASY sat alone in his counting-room, one afternoon, in a most comfortable frame, both as regards mind and body. A profitable speculation in the morning had brought the former into a state of great complacency, and a good dinner had done all that was required for the repose of the latter. He was in that delicious, half-asleep, half-awake condition, which, occurring after dinner, is so very pleasant. The newspaper, whose pages at first possessed a charm for his eyes, had fallen, with the hand that held it, upon his knee. His head was gently reclined backwards against the top of a high leather-cushioned

chair; while his eyes, half-opened, saw all things around him but imperfectly. Just at this time the door was quietly opened, and a lad of some fifteen or sixteen years, with a pale, thin face, high forehead, and large dark eyes, entered. He approached the merchant with a hesitating step, and soon stood directly before him.

Mr. Easy felt disturbed at this intrusion, for so he felt it. He knew the lad to be the son of a poor widow, who had once seen better circumstances than those that now surrounded her. Her husband had, while living, been his intimate friend; and he had promised him, at his dying hour, to be the protector and adviser of his wife and children. He had meant to do all he promised; but, not being very fond of trouble, except where stimulated to activity by the hope of gaining some good for himself, he had not been as thoughtful in regard to Mrs. Mayberry as he ought to have been. She was a modest, shrinking, sensitive woman, and had, notwithstanding her need of

a friend and adviser, never called upon Mr. Easy, nor even sent a request for him to act for her in any thing, except once. Her husband had left her poor. She knew little of the world. She had three quite young children, and one, the oldest, about sixteen. Had Mr. Easy been true to his pledge, he might have thrown many a ray upon her dark path, and lightened her burdened heart of many a doubt and fear. But he had permitted more than a year to pass since the death of her husband, without having once called upon her. This neglect had not been intentional. His will was good, but never active at the present moment. "To-morrow," or "next week," or "very soon," he would call upon Mrs. Mayberry; but to-morrow, or next week, or very soon, had never yet come.

As for the widow, soon after her husband's death, she found that poverty was to be added to affliction. A few hundred dollars made up the sum of all that she received after the settlement of his busi-

ness, which had never been in a very prosperous condition. On this, under the exercise of extreme frugality, she had been enabled to live for nearly a year. Then her scanty store made it but too apparent that individual exertion was required in order to procure the means of support for her little family. Ignorant of the way in which this was to be done, and having no one to advise her, nearly two months more passed before she could determine what to do. By that time she had but a few dollars left, and was in a state of great mental distress and uncertainty. She then applied for work at some of the shops, and obtained common sewing, but at prices that could not yield her any thing like a support.

Hiram, her oldest son, had been kept at school up to this period. But now she had to withdraw him. It was impossible any longer to pay his tuition fees. He was an intelligent lad—active in mind, and pure in his moral principles; but, like his mother, sensitive, and inclined to avoid obser-

vation. Like her, too, he had a proud independence of feeling, that made him shrink from asking or accepting a favour, or putting himself under an obligation to any one. He first became aware of his mother's true condition, when she took him from school, and explained the reason for so doing. At once his mind rose into the determination to do something to aid his mother. He felt a glowing confidence, arising from the consciousness of strength within. He felt that he had both the will and the power to act, and to act efficiently.

"Don't be disheartened, mother," said he, with animation. "I can and will do something. I can help you. You have worked for me a great many years. Now I will work for you."

Where there is a will there is a way. But it is often the case, that the will lacks the kind of intelligence that enables it to find the right way at once. So it proved in the case of Hiram Mayberry. He had a strong enough will, but did not know how

to bring it into activity. Good, without its appropriate truth, is impotent. Of this the poor lad soon became conscious. To the question of his mother—

“What can you do, child?” an answer came not so readily.

“Oh, I can do a great many things,” was easily said; but, even as he said this, a sense of inability followed.

The will impels, and then the understanding seeks for the means of effecting the purposes of the will. In the case of young Hiram, thought followed desire. He pondered for many days over the means by which he was to aid his mother. But, the more he thought, the more conscious did he become that, in the world, he was but a weak boy. That however strong might be his purpose, his means of action were limited. His mother could aid him but little. She had but one suggestion to make, and that was, that he should endeavour to get a situation in some store or counting-room. This he attempted to

do. Following her direction, he called upon Mr. Easy, who promised to see about looking him up a situation. It happened, the day after, that a neighbour spoke to him about a lad for his store—(Mr. Easy had already forgotten his promise)—Hiram was recommended, and the man called to see his mother.

“How much salary can you afford to give him?” asked Mrs. Mayberry, after learning all about the situation, and feeling satisfied that her son ought to accept of it.

“Salary, ma'am?” returned the store-keeper, in a tone of surprise. “We never give a boy any salary for the first year. The knowledge that is acquired of business is always considered a full compensation. After the first year, if he likes us, and we like him, we may give him seventy-five or a hundred dollars.”

Poor Mrs. Mayberry's countenance fell immediately.

“I wouldn't think of his going out now, if it were not in the hope of his earning

something," said she, in a disappointed voice.

"How much did you expect him to earn?" was asked by the storekeeper.

"I didn't know exactly what to expect. But I supposed that he might earn four or five dollars a week."

"Five dollars a week is all we pay our porter, an able-bodied, industrious man," was returned. "If you wish your son to become acquainted with mercantile business, you must not expect him to earn much for three or four years. At a trade, you may receive for him barely a sufficiency to board and clothe him, but nothing more."

This declaration so dampened the feelings of the mother, that she could not reply for some moments. At length she said—

"If you will take my boy, with the understanding, that, in case I am not able to support him, or hear of a situation where a salary can be obtained, you will let him

leave your employment without hard feelings, he shall go into your store at once."

To this the man consented, and Hiram Mayberry went with him according to agreement. A few weeks passed, and the lad, liking both the business and his employer, his mother felt exceedingly anxious for him to remain. But she sadly feared that this could not be. Her little store was just about exhausted, and the most she had yet been able to earn by working for the shops, was a dollar and a half a week. This was not more than sufficient to buy the plainest food for her little flock. It would not pay rent, nor get clothing. To meet the former, recourse was had to the sale of her husband's small, select library. Careful mending kept the younger children tolerably decent, and by altering for him the clothes left by his father, she was able to keep Hiram in a suitable condition to appear at the store of his employer.

Thus matters went on for several months;

Mrs. Mayberry working late and early. The natural result was, a gradual failure of strength. In the morning, when she awoke, she would feel so languid and heavy, that to rise required a strong effort; and even after she was up, and attempted to resume her labours, her trembling frame almost refused to obey the dictates of her will. At length nature gave way. One morning she was so sick that she could not rise. Her head throbbed with a dizzy, blinding pain—her whole body ached, and her skin burned with fever. Hiram got something for the children to eat, and then taking the youngest, a little girl about two years old, into the house of a neighbour, who had showed them some good-will, asked her if she would take care of his sister until he returned home at dinner-time. This the neighbour readily consented to do—promising, also, to call in frequently to see his mother.

At dinner-time Hiram found his mother quite ill. She was no better at night. For

three days the fever raged violently. Then, under the careful treatment of their old family physician, it was subdued. After that she gradually recovered, but very slowly. The physician said she must not attempt again to work as she had done. This injunction was scarcely necessary. She had not the strength to do so.

“I don't see what you will do, Mrs. Mayberry,” a neighbour, who had often aided her by kind advice, said, in reply to the widow's statement of her unhappy condition. “You cannot maintain these children, certainly. And I don't see how, in your present feeble state, you are going to maintain yourself. There is but one thing that I can advise, and that advice I give with reluctance. It is to endeavour to get two of your children into some orphan asylum. The youngest you may be able to keep with you. The oldest can support himself at something or other.”

The pale cheek of Mrs. Mayberry grew paler at this proposition. She half sobbed,

caught her breath, and looked her adviser with a strange, bewildered stare in the face.

“Oh no! I cannot do that. I cannot be separated from my dear little children. Who will care for them like a mother?”

“It is hard, I know, Mrs. Mayberry. But necessity is a stern ruler. You cannot keep them with you—that is certain. You have not the strength to provide them with even the coarsest food. In an asylum, with a kind matron, they will be better off than under any other circumstances.”

But Mrs. Mayberry shook her head.

“No—no—no,” she replied—“I cannot think of such a thing. I cannot be separated from them. I shall soon be able to work again—better able than before.”

The neighbour, who felt deeply for her, did not urge the matter. When Hiram returned at dinner-time, his face had in it a more animated expression than usual.

“Mother,” said he, as soon as he came in, “I heard to-day that a boy was wanted at the Gazette-office, who could write a

good hand. The wages are to be four dollars a week."

"You did!" Mrs. Mayberry said quickly, her weak frame trembling, although she struggled hard to be composed.

"Yes. And Mr. Easy is well acquainted with the publisher, and could get me the place, I am sure."

"Then go and see him at once, Hiram. If you can secure it, all will be well; if not, your little brothers and sisters will have to be separated, perhaps sent into an orphan asylum."

Mrs. Mayberry covered her face with her hands and sobbed bitterly for some moments.

Hiram ate his frugal meal quickly, and returned to the store, where he had to remain until his employer went home and dined. On his return, he asked liberty to be absent for half an hour, which was granted. He then went to the counting-house of Mr. Easy, and disturbed him as has been seen. Approaching with a timid

step and a flushed brow, he said in a confused and hurried manner—

“Mr. Easy, there is a lad wanted at the Gazette-office.”

“Well?” returned Mr. Easy in no very cordial tone.

“Mother thought you would be kind enough to speak to Mr. G—— for me.”

“Haven't you a place in a store?”

“Yes, sir. But I don't get any wages. And at the Gazette-office they will pay four dollars a week.”

“But the knowledge of business to be gained where you are will be worth a great deal more than four dollars a week.”

“I know that, sir. But mother is not able to board and clothe me. I must earn something.”

“Oh ay, that's it. Very well, I'll see about it for you.”

“When shall I call, sir?” asked Hiram.

“When? Oh, almost any time. Say tomorrow or next day.”

The lad departed, and Mr. Easy's head

fell back upon the chair, the impression which had been made upon his mind passing away almost as quickly as writing upon water.

With anxious, trembling hearts did Mrs. Mayberry and her son wait for the afternoon of the succeeding day. On the success of Mr. Easy's application rested all their hopes. Neither she nor Hiram ate over a few mouthfuls at dinner-time. The latter hurried away, and returned to the store, there to wait with trembling eagerness until his employer should come from dinner, and he again be free to go and see Mr. Easy.

To Mrs. Mayberry the afternoon passed slowly. She had forgotten to tell her son to return home immediately, if the application should be successful. He did not come back, and she had, consequently, to remain in a state of anxious suspense until dark. He came in at the usual hour. His dejected countenance told of disappointment.

“Did you see Mr. Easy?” asked Mrs. Mayberry in a low, troubled voice.

“Yes. But he hadn't been to the Gazette-office. He said he had been very busy. But that he would *see about it* soon.”

Nothing more was said. The mother and son, after sitting silently and pensive during the evening, retired early to bed. On the next day, urged on by his anxious desire to get the situation of which he had heard, Hiram again called at the counting-room of Mr. Easy, his heart trembling with hope and fear. There were two or three men present. Mr. Easy cast upon him rather an impatient look as he entered. His appearance had evidently annoyed the merchant. Had Hiram consulted his feelings, he would have retired at once. But there was too much at stake. Gliding to a corner of the room, he stood with his hat in his hand, and a look of anxiety upon his face, until Mr. Easy was disengaged. At length the gentlemen with whom he was occupied went away, and Mr. Easy turned toward

the boy. Hiram looked up earnestly in his face.

“I have really been so much occupied, my lad,” said the merchant in a kind of apologetic tone, “as to have entirely forgotten my promise to you. But I *will* see about it. Come in again to-morrow.”

Hiram made no answer, but turned with a sigh toward the door. The keen disappointment expressed in the boy's face, and the touching quietness of his manner, reached the feelings of Mr. Easy. He was not a hard-hearted man, but selfishly indifferent to others. He could feel deeply enough if he would permit himself to do so.

“Stop a minute,” said he. And then stood in a musing attitude for a moment or two. “As you seem so anxious about this matter,” he added, “if you will wait here a little while, I will step down and see Mr. G—— at once.”

The boy's face brightened instantly. Mr. Easy saw the effect of what he said, and it made the task he was about entering upon

reluctantly a lighter one. Hiram waited for nearly a quarter of an hour, so eager to know the result that he could not compose himself to sit down. The sound of Mr. Easy's step at the door, at length made his heart bound. The merchant entered. Hiram looked into his face. One glance was sufficient to dash every dearly cherished hope to the ground.

"I am sorry," said Mr. Easy, "but the place was filled this morning. I was a little too late."

The boy was unable to control his feelings. The disappointment was too great. Tears gushed from his eyes as he turned away and left the counting-room without speaking.

"I'm afraid I've done wrong," said Mr. Easy to himself, as he stood in a musing attitude, by his desk, about five minutes after Hiram had left. If I had seen about the situation when he first called upon me, I might have secured it for him. But it's too late now."

After saying this, the merchant placed his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, and commenced walking the floor of his counting-room, backwards and forwards. He could not get out of his mind the image of the boy as he turned from him in tears, nor drive away thoughts of the friend's widow whom he had neglected. This state of mind continued all the afternoon. Its natural effect was to cause him to cast about in his mind for some way of getting employment for Hiram that would yield immediate returns. But nothing presented itself.

"I wonder if I couldn't make room for him here?" he at length said. "He looks like a bright boy. I know Mr. —— is highly pleased with him. He spoke of getting four dollars a week. That's a good deal to give to a mere lad. But, I suppose I might make him worth that to me. And now I begin to think seriously about the matter, I believe I cannot keep a clear conscience and any longer remain indifferent to the welfare of my old friend's widow and chil-

dren. I must look after them a little more closely than I have heretofore done."

This resolution relieved the mind of Mr. Easy a good deal.

When Hiram left the counting-room of the merchant, his spirits were crushed to the very earth. He found his way back, how he hardly knew, to his place of business, and mechanically performed the tasks allotted him until evening. Then he returned home, reluctant to meet his mother, and yet anxious to relieve her state of suspense, even if in doing so he should dash a last hope from her heart. When he came in, Mrs. Mayberry lifted her eyes to his inquiringly; but dropped them instantly—she needed no words to tell her that he had suffered a bitter disappointment.

"You did not get the place?" she at length said, with forced composure.

"No—it was taken this morning. Mr. Easy promised to see about it. But he didn't do so. When he went this afternoon, it was too late."

Hiram said this with a trembling voice and lips that quivered.

“Thy will be done!” murmured the widow, lifting her eyes upward. “If these tender ones are to be taken from their mother’s fold, oh! do thou temper for them the piercing blast, and be their shelter amid the raging tempests.”

A tap at the door brought back the thoughts of Mrs. Mayberry. A brief struggle with her feelings enabled her to overcome them in time to receive a visitor with composure. It was the merchant.

“Mr. Easy!” she said in surprise.

“Mrs. Mayberry, how do you do?” There was some restraint and embarrassment in his manner. He was conscious of having neglected the widow of his friend, before he came. The humble condition in which he found her quickened that consciousness into a sting.

“I’m sorry, madam,” he said, after he had become seated and made a few inquiries, “that I did not get the place for your son.

In fact, I am to blame in the matter. But I have been thinking since that he would suit me exactly, and, if you have no objections, I will take him and pay him a salary of two hundred dollars for the first year."

Mrs. Mayberry tried to reply, but her feelings were too much excited by this sudden and unlooked-for proposal to allow her to speak for some moments. Even then her assent was made with tears glistening on her cheeks. Arrangements were quickly made for the transfer of Hiram from the store where he had been engaged, to the counting-room of Mr. Easy. The salary he received was just enough to enable Mrs. Mayberry, with what she herself earned, to keep her little ones together, until Hiram, who proved a valuable assistant in Mr. Easy's business, could command a larger salary, and render her more important aid.

A GOOD INVESTMENT.

- “**T**HAT’S a smart little fellow of yours,” said a gentleman named Winslow to a labouring-man, who was called in, occasionally, to do work about his store. “Does he go to school?”

“Not now, sir,” replied the poor man.

“Why not, Davis? He looks like a bright lad.”

“He’s got good parts, sir,” returned the father, “but”——

“But what?” asked the gentleman, seeing that the man hesitated.

“Times are rather hard now, sir, and I have a large family. It’s about as much as I can do to keep hunger and cold away.



"WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO TO SCHOOL AGAIN."

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Ned reads very well, writes a tolerable fair hand, considering all things, and can figure a little. And that's about all I can do for him. The other children are coming forward, and I reckon he will have to go to a trade middling soon."

"How old is Ned?" inquired Mr. Winslow.

"He's turned of eleven."

"You won't put him to a trade before he's thirteen or fourteen?"

"Can't keep him at home idling all that time, Mr. Winslow. It would be his ruination. It's young to go out from home, I know, to rough it and tough it among strangers"—there was a slight unsteadiness in the poor man's voice—"but it's better than doing nothing."

"Ned ought to go to school a year or two longer, Davis," said Mr. Winslow, with some interest in his manner. "And as you are not able to pay the quarter-bills, I guess I will have to do it. What say you? If I pay for Ned's schooling, can you keep

him at home some two or three years longer?"

"I didn't expect *that* of you, Mr. Winslow," said the poor man, and his voice now trembled. He uncovered his head as he spoke, almost reverently. "You a'n't bound to pay for schooling my boy. Ah, sir!"

"But you hav'n't answered my question, Davis. What say you?"

"Oh sir, if you are really in earnest?"

"I am in earnest. Ned ought to go to school. If you can keep him home a few years longer, I will pay for his education during the time. Ned"—Mr. Winslow spoke to the boy—"what say you? Would you like to go to school again?"

"Yes, indeed, sir," quickly answered the boy, while his bright young face was lit up with a gleam of intelligence.

"Then you shall go, my fine fellow. There's the right kind of stuff in you, or I'm mistaken. We'll give you a trial, at any rate."

Mr. Winslow was as good as his word. Ned was immediately entered at an excellent school. The boy, young as he was, appreciated the kind act of his benefactor, and resolved to profit by it to the full extent.

"I made an investment of ten dollars to-day," said Mr. Winslow, half-jestingly, to a mercantile friend, some three months after the occurrence just related took place, "and here's the certificate."

He held up a small slip of paper as he spoke.

"Ten dollars! A large operation! In what fund?"

"A charity fund."

"Oh!" And the friend shrugged his shoulders. "Don't do much in that way myself. No great faith in the security. What dividend do you expect to receive?"

"Don't know. Rather think it will be large."

"Better take some more of the stock, if you think it so good. There is plenty in market to be bought at less than par"

Mr. Winslow smiled, and said that in all probability he would invest a few more small sums in the same way, and see how it would turn out.

The little piece of paper which he pleasantly called a certificate of stock, was the first quarter-bill he had paid for Ned's schooling. For four years these bills were regularly paid; and then Ned, who had well improved the opportunities so generously afforded him, was taken, on the recommendation of Mr. Winslow, into a large importing house. He was at the time in his sixteenth year. Before the lad could enter upon this employment, however, Mr. Winslow had to make another investment in his charity fund. Ned's father was too poor to give him an outfit of clothing such as was required in the new position to which he was to be elevated; knowing this, the generous merchant came forward again, and furnished the needful supply.

As no wages were received by Ned for the first two years, Mr. Winslow continued

to buy his clothing, while his father still gave him his board. On reaching the age of eighteen, Ned's employers, who were much pleased with his industry, intelligence, and attention to business, put him on a salary of three hundred dollars. This made him at once independent. He could pay his own boarding and find his own clothes, and proud did he feel on the day when advanced to so desirable a position.

"How comes on your investment?" asked Mr. Winslow's mercantile friend about this time. He spoke jestingly.

"It promises very well," was the smiling reply.

"It is rising in the market, then?"

"Yes."

"Any dividends yet?"

"Oh, certainly. Large dividends."

"Ah! You surprise me. What kind of dividends?"

"More than a hundred per cent."

"Indeed! Not in money?"

"Oh no. But in something better than

money. The satisfaction that flows from an act of benevolence wisely done."

"Oh, that's all." The friend spoke with ill-concealed contempt.

"Don't you call that something?" asked Mr. Winslow.

"It's entirely too unsubstantial for me," replied the other. "I go in for returns of a more tangible character. Those you speak of won't pay my notes."

Mr. Winslow smiled, and bade his friend good-morning.

"He knows nothing," said he to himself, as he mused on the subject, "of the pleasure of doing good; and the loss is all on his side. If we have the ability to secure investments of this kind, they are among the best we can make; and all are able to put at least some money in the fund of good works, let it be ever so small an amount. Have I suffered the abridgment of a single comfort by what I have done? No. Have I gained in pleasant thoughts and feelings by the act? Largely. It has

been a source of perennial enjoyment. I would not have believed that, at so small a cost, I could have secured so much pleasure. And how great the good that may flow from what I have done! Instead of a mere day-labourer, whose work in the world goes not beyond the handling of boxes, bales, and barrels, or the manufacture of some article in common use, Edward Davis, advanced by education, takes a position of more extended usefulness, and by his higher ability and more intelligent action in society, will be able, if he rightly use the power in his hands, to advance the world's onward movement in a most important degree."

Thus thought Mr. Winslow, and his heart grew warm within him. Time proved that he had not erred in affording the lad an opportunity for obtaining a good education. His quick mind acquired, in the position in which he was placed, accurate ideas of business, and industry and force of character made these ideas thoroughly practical.

Every year his employers advanced his salary, and, on attaining his majority, it was further advanced to the sum of one thousand dollars per annum. With every increase the young man had devoted a larger and larger proportion of his income to improving the condition of his father's family, and when it was raised to the sum last mentioned, he took a neat, comfortable new house, much larger than the family had before lived in, and paid the whole rent himself. Moreover, through his acquaintance and influence, he was able to get a place for his father at lighter employment than he had heretofore been engaged in, and at a higher rate of compensation.

“Any more dividends on your charity investment?” said Mr. Winslow's friend, about this time. He spoke with the old manner, and from the old feelings.

“Yes. Got a dividend to-day. The largest yet received,” replied the merchant, smiling.

“Did you? Hope it does you a great deal of good.”

“I realize your wish, my friend. It is doing me a great deal of good,” returned Mr. Winslow.

“No cash, I presume?”

“Something far better. Let me explain.”

“Do so, if you please.”

“You know the particulars of this investment?” said Mr. Winslow.

His friend shook his head, and replied—

“No. The fact is, I never felt interest enough in the matter to inquire about particulars.”

“Oh, well, then, I must give you a little history.

“You know old Davis, who has been working about our store for the last ten or fifteen years?”

“Yes.”

“My investment was in the education of his son.”

“Indeed!”

“His father took him from school when he was only eleven years old, because he could not afford to send him any longer, and was about putting the little fellow out to learn a trade. Something interested me in the child, who was a bright lad, and acting from a good impulse that came over me at the moment, I proposed to his father to send him to school for three or four years, if he would board and clothe him during the time. To this he readily agreed. So I paid for Ned’s schooling until he was in his sixteenth year, and then got him into Webb & Waldron’s store, where he has been ever since.”

“Webb & Waldron’s!” said the friend, evincing some surprise. “I know all their clerks very well, for we do a great deal of business with them. Which is the son of old Mr. Davis?”

“The one they call Edward.”

“Not that tall, fine-looking young man—their leading salesman?”

“The same.”

“Is it possible! Why, he is worth any two clerks in the store.”

“I know he is.”

“For his age, there is not a better salesman in the city.”

“So I believe,” said Mr. Winslow; “nor,” he added, “a better man.”

“I know little of his personal character; but, unless his face deceives me, it cannot but be good.”

“It is good. Let me say a word about him. The moment his salary increased beyond what was absolutely required to pay his board and find such clothing as his position made it necessary for him to wear, he devoted the entire surplus to rendering his father’s family more comfortable.”

“Highly praiseworthy,” said the friend.

“I had received, already, many dividends on my investment,” continued Mr. Winslow; “but when that fact came to my knowledge, my dividend exceeded all the other dividends put together.”

The mercantile friend was silent. If ever in his life he had envied the reward of a good deed, it was at that moment.

“To-day,” went on Mr. Winslow, “I have received a still larger dividend. I was passing along Buttonwood street, when I met old Mr. Davis coming out of a house, the rent of which, from its appearance, was not less than two hundred and twenty-five dollars. ‘You don’t live here, of course?’ said I, for I knew the old man’s income to be small—not over six or seven dollars a week. ‘Oh, yes, I do,’ he made answer, with a smile. I turned and looked at the house again. ‘How comes this?’ I asked. ‘You must be getting better off in the world.’ ‘So I am,’ was his reply. ‘Has anybody left you a little fortune?’ I inquired. ‘No, but you have helped me to one,’ said he. ‘I don’t understand you, Mr. Davis,’ I made answer. ‘Edward rents the house for us,’ said the old man. ‘Do you understand now?’

“I understood him perfectly. It was

then that I received the largest dividend on my investment which had yet come into my hands. If they go on increasing at this rate, I shall soon be rich."

"Rather unsubstantial kind of riches," was remarked by the friend.

"That which elevates and delights the mind can hardly be called unsubstantial," replied Mr. Winslow. "Gold will not always do this."

The friend sighed involuntarily. The remarks of Mr. Winslow caused thoughts to flit over his mind that were far from being agreeable.

A year or two more went by, and then an addition was made to the firm of Webb & Waldron. Edward Davis received the offer of an interest in the business, which he unhesitatingly accepted. From that day he was in the road to fortune. Three years afterward one of the partners died, when his interest was increased.

Twenty-five years from the time Mr. Winslow, acting from a benevolent impulse,

proposed to send young Davis to school, have passed.

One day, about this period, Mr. Winslow, who had met with a number of reverses in business, was sitting in his counting-room, with a troubled look on his face, when the mercantile friend before-mentioned came in. His countenance was pale and disturbed.

“We are ruined! ruined!” said he, with much agitation.

Mr. Winslow started to his feet.

“Speak!” he exclaimed. “What new disaster is about to sweep over me?”

“The house of Toledo & Co., in Rio, has suspended.”

Mr. Winslow struck his hands together, and sank down into the chair from which he had arisen.

“Then it is all over,” he murmured. “All over!”

“It is all over with me,” said the other. “A longer struggle would be fruitless. But for this, I might have weathered the storm. Twenty thousand dollars of drafts

drawn against my last shipment are back protested, and will be presented to-morrow. I cannot lift them. So ends this matter. So closes a business-life of nearly forty years, in commercial dishonour and personal ruin!"

"Are you certain that they have failed?" asked Mr. Winslow, with something like hope in his tone of voice.

"It is too true," was answered. "The Celeste arrived this morning, and her letter-bag was delivered at the post-office half an hour ago. Have you received nothing by her?"

"I was not aware of her arrival. But I will send immediately for my letters."

Too true was the information communicated by the friend. The large commission-house of Toledo & Co. had failed, and protested drafts had been returned to a very heavy amount. Mr. Winslow was among the sufferers, and to an extent that was equivalent to ruin; because it threw back upon him the necessity of lifting over

fifteen thousand dollars of protested paper, when his line of payments was already fully up to his utmost ability.

For nearly five years, every thing had seemed to go against Mr. Winslow. At the beginning of that period, a son, whom he had set up in business, failed, involving him in a heavy loss. Then, one disaster after another followed, until he found himself in imminent danger of failure. From this time he turned his mind to the consideration of his affairs with more earnestness than ever, and made every transaction with a degree of prudence and foresight that seemed to guarantee success in whatever he attempted. A deficient supply of flour caused him to venture a large shipment to Rio. The sale was at a handsomely remunerative profit, but the failure of his consignees, before the payment of his drafts for the proceeds, entirely prostrated him.

So hopeless did the merchant consider his case, that he did not even make an effort to get temporary aid in his extremity.

When the friend of Mr. Winslow came with the information that the house of Toledo & Co. had failed, the latter was searching about in his mind for the means of lifting about five thousand dollars' worth of paper, which fell due on that day. He had two thousand dollars in bank; the balance of the sum would have to be raised by borrowing. He had partly fixed upon the resources from which this was to come, when the news of his ill-fortune arrived.

Yes, it was ruin. Mr. Winslow saw this in a moment, and his hands fell powerless by his side. He made no further effort to lift his notes, but, after his mind had a little recovered from its first shock, he left his store and retired to his home, to seek in its quiet the calmness and fortitude of which he stood so greatly in need. In this home were his wife and two daughters, who all their lives had enjoyed the many external comforts and elegancies that wealth can procure. The heart of the father ached as his eyes rested upon his children, and he

thought of the sad reverses that awaited them.

On entering his dwelling, Mr. Winslow sought the partner of his life, and communicated to her without reserve the painful intelligence of his approaching failure.

“Is it indeed so hopeless?” she asked, tears filling her eyes.

“I am utterly prostrate!” was the reply, in a voice that was full of anguish. And in the bitterness of the moment, the unfortunate merchant wrung his hands.

To Mrs. Winslow, the shock, so unexpected, was very severe; and it was some time before her mind, after her husband’s announcement, acquired any degree of calmness.

About half an hour after Mr. Winslow’s return home, and while both his own heart and that of his wife were quivering with pain, a servant came and said that a gentleman had called and wished to see him.

“Who is it?” asked the merchant:

“I did not understand his name,” replied the servant.

Mr. Winslow forced as much external composure as was possible, and then descended to the parlour.

“Mr. Davis,” he said on entering.

“Mr. Winslow,” returned the visitor, taking the merchant’s hand and grasping it warmly.

As the two men sat down together, the one addressed as Mr. Davis, said—

“I was sorry to learn, a little while ago, that you will lose by this failure in Rio.”

“Heavily. It has ruined me!” replied Mr. Winslow.

“Not so bad as that I hope!” said Mr. Davis.

“Yes. It has removed the last prop that I leaned on, Mr. Davis. The very last one, and now the worst must come to the worst. It is impossible for me to take up fifteen thousand dollars’ worth of returned drafts.”

“Fifteen thousand is the amount?”

“Yes.”

Mr. Davis smiled encouragingly.

“If that is all,” said he, “there is no difficulty in the way. I can easily get you the money.”

Mr. Winslow started, and a warm flush went over his face.

“Why didn’t you come to me,” asked Mr. Davis, “the moment you found yourself in such a difficulty? Surely!” and his voice slightly trembled, “surely you did not think it possible for me to forget the past! Do not I owe you every thing?—and would I not be one of the basest of men, if I forgot my obligation? If your need were twice fifteen thousand, and it required the division of my last dollar with you, not a hair of your head should be injured. I did not believe it was possible for you to get into an extremity like this, until I heard it whispered a little while ago.”

So unexpected a turn in his affairs completely unmanned Mr. Winslow. He covered his face and wept for some time, with the uncontrollable passion of a child.

“Ah! sir,” he said at last, in a broken voice, “I did not expect this, Mr. Davis.”

“You had a right to expect it,” replied the young man. “Were I to do less than sustain you in any extremity not too great for my ability, I would be unworthy the name of a man. And now, Mr. Winslow, let your heart be at rest. You need not fall under this blow. Your drafts will probably come back to you to-morrow?”

“Yes. To-morrow at the latest.”

“Very well. I will see that you are provided with the means to lift them. In the mean time, if you are in want of any sums toward your payments of to-day, just let me know.”

“I can probably get through to-day by my own efforts,” said Mr. Winslow.

“Probably? How much do you want?” asked Mr. Davis.

“In the neighbourhood of three thousand dollars.”

“I will send you around a check for that sum immediately,” promptly returned the

young man, rising as he spoke and drawing forth his watch.

“It is nearly two o’clock now,” he added, “so I will bid you good day. In fifteen minutes you will find a check at your store.”

And with this Davis retired.

All this, which passed in a brief space of time, seemed like a dream to Mr. Winslow. He could hardly realize its truth. But it was a reality, and he comprehended it more fully, when, on reaching his store, he found there the promised check for three thousand dollars.

On the next day the protested drafts came in; but, thanks to the grateful kindness of Mr. Davis, now a merchant, with the command of large money facilities, he was able to take them up. The friend before introduced was less fortunate. There was no one to step forward and save him from ruin, and he sank under the sudden pressure that came upon him.

A few days after his failure he met Mr Winslow.

“How is this?” said he. “How did you weather the storm that drove me under? I thought your condition as hopeless as mine!”

“So did I,” answered Mr. Winslow. “But I had forgotten a small investment made years ago. I have spoken of it to you before.”

The other looked slightly puzzled.

“Have you forgotten that investment in the charity-fund, which you thought money thrown away?”

“Oh!” Light broke in upon his mind. “You educated Davis. I remember now!”

“And Davis, hearing of my extremity, stepped forward and saved me. That was the best investment I ever made!”

The friend dropped his eyes to the pavement, stood for a moment or two without speaking, sighed, and then moved on. How many opportunities for making similar investments had he not neglected!

BEAUTY.

“**B**EAUTIFUL!” exclaimed Mary Marvel, with a toss of the head and a slight curl of her cherry lips. “There isn’t a good feature in her face.”

“And yet, I think her beautiful,” was the calm reply of Mrs. Hartley.

“Why, aunt! Where are your eyes?”

“Just where they have always been, my child!”

“Agnes is a good girl,” said Mary, speaking in a less confident manner. Every one knows this; but, as to being handsome, that is altogether another thing.”

“Is there not a beauty in goodness, Mary?” asked Mrs. Hartley, in her low, quiet way, as she looked, with her calm.



DRESSING FOR THE PARTY.

penetrating eyes, into the young girl's face.

"Oh yes, of course there is, aunt. But, beauty of goodness is one thing, and beauty of face another."

"The former generally makes itself visible in the latter. In a pure, unselfish, loving heart lives the very spirit of beauty."

"Oh yes, aunt. All that we know. But, let the spirit be ever so beautiful, it cannot re-mould the homely countenance; the ill-formed mouth, the ugly nose, the wedge-shaped chin must remain to offend the eye of taste."

"Do you think Miss Williams very homely?" asked Mrs. Hartley.

"She is deformed, aunt."

"Well!"

"She has no personal beauty whatever."

"Do you think of this when you are with her?"

"No. But when I first saw her, she so offended my eyes that I could hardly remain in the room where she was."

“You do not see her deformity now.”

“I never think of it.”

“The spirit of beauty in her heart has thrown a veil over her person.”

“It may be so, aunt. One thing is certain, I love her.”

“More than you do Ellen Lawson?”

“I can't bear Ellen Lawson!” The whole manner of the young girl expressed repugnance.

“And yet Ellen, by common consent, is acknowledged to be beautiful.”

“She is pretty enough; but I don't like her. Proud, vain, ill-tempered. Oh dear! these spoil every thing.”

“In other words, the deformity of her spirit throws a veil over the beauty of her person.”

“Explain it as you will, aunt. Enough that Ellen Lawson is no favourite of mine. Ever as I gaze into her brilliant eyes, a something looks out of them that causes me to shrink from her.”

The conversation between Mary Marvel

and her aunt was interrupted, at this point, by the entrance of a visitor.

Mary was passing through her twentieth summer. She was handsome; and she knew it. No wonder, then, that she was vain of her good looks. And being vain, no wonder that, in attiring her person, she thought less of maidenly good taste than of that effect which quickly attracts the eye.

She had beautiful hair, that curled naturally, and so, when dressed for company, a perfect shower of glossy ringlets played ostentatiously about her freely exposed snowy neck and shoulders, causing the eyes of many to rest upon and follow her, whose eyes a modest maiden might wish to be turned away. In fact, Mary's attire, which was generally a little in excess, so set off her showy person, that it was scarcely possible for her to be in company without becoming the observed of all observers, and drawing around her a group of gay young men, ever ready to offer flattering atten-

tions and deal in flattering words where such things are taken in the place of truth and sincerity.

Such, with a groundwork of good sense, good principles, and purity of character, was Mary Marvel.

Some few days after the conversation with which this sketch opens occurred, Mary was engaged in dressing for an evening party, when her aunt came into her room.

“How do I look, aunt?” inquired Mary, who had nearly completed her toilet.

Mrs. Hartley shook her head and looked grave.

“What is the matter, aunt? Am I overdressed, as you say, again?”

“I would rather say, under-dressed,” replied the aunt. “But you certainly are not going in this style?”

“How do you mean?” And Mary threw a glance of satisfaction into her mirror.

“You intend wearing your lace-cape?”

“Oh dear, no!”

Mary’s neck and shoulders were too

beautiful to be hidden even under a film of gossamer.

“Nor under-sleeves?”

“Why, aunt! How you do talk!”

“Where are your combs?”

Mary tossed her head until every free ringlet danced in the brilliant light, and fluttered around her spotless neck and bosom.

“Ah, child!” sighed Mrs. Hartley; “this is all an error, depend upon it. Attire like yours never won for any maiden that respect for which the heart has reason to be proud.”

“Oh, aunt! Why will you talk so? Do you really think I am so weak as to dress with the mere end of attracting attention? You pay me a poor compliment!”

“Then why do you dress in a manner so unbecoming?”

“I think it very becoming!” And Mary threw her eyes again upon the mirror.

“Time, I trust, will correct your error,” said Mrs. Hartley, speaking partly to her-

self; for experience had taught her how futile it was to attempt to influence her niece in a matter like this.

And so, in her "undress," as Mrs. Hartley made free to call her scanty garments, Mary went to spend the evening in a fashionable company, her head filled with the vain notion that she would, on that occasion, at least, carry off the palm of beauty. And something more than simple vanity was stirring in her heart. There was to be a guest at the party in whose eyes she especially desired to appear lovely—and that was a young man named Percival, whom she had met a few times, and who was just such a one as a maiden might well wish to draw to her side. At a recent meeting, Percival had shown Mary more than ordinary attentions. In fact, the beauty of her person and graces of her mind had made upon his feelings more than a passing impression.

On entering the rooms, where a large portion of the company were already as-

sembled, Mary produced, as she had expected and desired, some little sensation, and was soon surrounded by a circle of gay young men. Among these, however, she met not Percival. It was, perhaps, half an hour subsequent to her arrival, that Mary's eyes rested on the form of him she had been looking for ever since her entrance. He was standing, alone, in a distant part of the room, and was evidently regarding her with fixed attention. She blushed, and her heart beat quicker as she discovered this. Almost instantly a group of young persons came between her and Percival, and she did not see him again for some twenty minutes. Then he was sitting by the side of Agnes Gray, the young lady to whom her aunt referred as being beautiful, and whom she regarded with very different ideas. Agnes wore a plainly made sprigged muslin dress, that fitted close to the neck; her beautiful hair was neatly but not showily arranged, and had a single ornament, which was not conspicuous.

For the first time, an impression of beauty in Agnes affected the mind of Miss Marvel. She had been listening to something said by Mr. Percival, and was just in the act of replying, when Mary's eyes rested upon her; and then the inward beauty of her pure spirit so filled every feature of her face that she looked the very impersonation of loveliness. A sigh heaved the bosom of Mary Marvel, and, from that moment, her proud self-satisfaction vanished.

An hour passed, and yet Percival did not seek her in the crowd, though, during that time, he had danced not only with Agnes Gray, but with one or two others.

It was toward the close of the evening, and Mary, dispirited and weary, was sitting near one of the doors that opened from the drawing-room, when she heard her name mentioned in an undertone by a person standing in the hall. She listened involuntarily. The remark was—

“I hardly know whether to pronounce Miss Marvel beautiful or not.”

The person answering this remark was Percival; and his words were—

“I once thought her beautiful. But that was before I met one more truly beautiful.”

“Ah! Who has carried off the palm in your eyes?”

“You have seen Agnes Gray?”

“Oh yes. But she is not so handsome as Miss Marvel.”

“She has not such regular features; but the more beautiful spirit within shines forth so radiantly as to throw around her person the very atmosphere of beauty. So artless, so pure, so innocent! To me, she is the realization of my best dreams of maiden loveliness.”

“Miss Marvel,” remarked the other, “spoils every thing by her vanity and love of display. She dresses in shocking bad taste.”

“Shocking to me!” said Percival. “Really, her arms, neck, and bosom, to-night, are so much exposed that I cannot go near

her. I would almost blush to look into her face; and yet, I respect and esteem her highly. Pity, that personal vanity should spoil one who has so many good qualities—so much to win our love and admiration.”

The young men moved away, and Mary heard no more. Enough, however, had reached her ears to overwhelm her with pain and mortification. She soon after retired from the company. The rest of the night was spent in weeping.

The lesson was severe, but salutary. When Percival next met Mary Marvel, her dress and manners were much more to his taste; but she had changed too late to win him to her side, for his heart now worshipped at another shrine.

THE KNIGHT, THE HERMIT, AND THE MAN.

THE KNIGHT.

SIR GUY DE MONTFORT was as brave a knight as ever laid lance in rest or swung his glittering battle-axe. He possessed many noble and generous qualities, but they were obscured, alas! by the strange thirst for human blood that marked the age in which he lived—an age when “Love your friends and *hate* your enemies” had taken the place of “But I say unto you, love your enemies; bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.”

Ten knights as brave as Sir Guy, and possessing as many noble and generous qualities, had fallen beneath his superior strength and skill in arms; and for this, the bright eyes of beauty looked admiringly upon him—fair lips smiled when he appeared, and minstrels sang of his prowess, in lady's bower and festive hall.

At a great tournament given in honour of the marriage of the king's daughter, Sir Guy sent forth his challenge to single and deadly combat; but, for two days, no one accepted this challenge, although it was three times proclaimed by the herald. On the third day, a young and strange knight rode, with vizor down, into the lists, and accepted the challenge. His slender form, his carriage, and all that appertained to him, showed him to be no match for Guy de Montfort—and so it proved. They met—and Sir Guy's lance, at the first tilt, penetrated the corslet of the brave young knight and entered his heart. As he rolled upon the ground, his casque flew off, and

a shower of sunny curls fell over his fair young face and neck.

Soon the strange news went thrilling from heart to heart, that the youthful knight who had kissed the dust beneath the sharp steel of De Montfort, was a maiden! and none other than the beautiful, high-spirited Agnes St. Bertrand, whose father Sir Guy had killed, but a few months before, in a combat to which he had challenged him.

By order of the king the tournament was suspended, and rampant knights and ladies gay went back to their homes, in soberer mood than when they came forth.

Alone in his castle, with the grim faces of his ancestors looking down upon him from the wall, Sir Guy paced to and fro with hurried steps. The Angel of Mercy was nearer to him than she had been for years, and her whispers were distinctly heard. Glory and fame were forgotten by the knight—for self was forgotten. The question—a strange question for him---

“What good?” arose in his mind. He had killed St. Bertrand—but why? To add another leaf to his laurels as a brave knight. But was this leaf worth its cost—the broken heart of the fairest and loveliest maiden in the land? nay, more—the life-drops from that broken heart?

For the first time the flush of triumph was chilled by a remembrance of what the triumph had cost him. Then came a shudder, as he thought of the lovely widow who drooped in Arto Castle—of the wild pang that snapped the heart-strings of De Cressy’s bride, when she saw the battle-axe go crashing into her husband’s brain—of the beautiful betrothed of Sir Gilbert de Marion, now a shrieking maniac—of Agnes St. Bertrand!

As these sad images came up before the knight, his pace grew more rapid, and his brows, upon which large beads of sweat were standing, were clasped between his hands with a gesture of agony.

“And what for all this?” he murmured.

“What for all this? Am I braver or better for such bloody work?”

Through the long night he paced the hall of his castle; but with daydawn he rode forth alone. The sun arose and set; the seasons came and went; years passed; but the knight returned not.

THE HERMIT.

Far from the busy scenes of life dwelt a pious recluse, who, in prayer, fasting, and various forms of penance, sought to find repose for his troubled conscience. His food was pulse, and his drink the pure water that went sparkling in the sunlight past his hermit-cell in the wilderness. Now and then a traveller who had lost his way, or an eager hunter in pursuit of game, met this lonely man in his deep seclusion. To such he spoke eloquently of the vanities of life and of the wisdom of those who, renouncing these vanities, devote them-

selves to God; and they left him, believing the hermit to be a wise and happy man.

But they erred. Neither prayer nor penance filled the aching void that was in his bosom. If he were happy, it was a happiness for which none need have felt an envious wish; if he were wise, his wisdom partook more of the selfishness of this world than of the holy benevolence of the next.

The days came and went; the seasons changed; years passed; and still the hermit's prayers went up at morning, and the setting sun looked upon his kneeling form. His body was bent, though not with age; his long hair whitened, but not with the snows of many winters. Yet all availed not. The solitary one found not in prayer and penance that peace which passeth all understanding.

One night he dreamed in his cell that the Angel of Mercy came to him, and said:

“It is in vain—all in vain! Art thou not a man, to whom power has been given

to do good to thy fellow-man? Is the bird on the tree, the beast in his lair, the worm that crawls upon the earth, thy fellow? Not by prayer, not by meditation, not by penance, is man purified; not for these are his iniquities washed out. 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' These are the divine words thou hast not yet learned. Thou callest thyself God's servant; but where is thy work? I see it not. Where are the hungry thou hast fed?—the naked thou hast clothed?—the sick and the prisoner who have been visited by thee? They are not here in the wilderness!"

The angel departed, and the hermit awoke. It was midnight. From the bending heavens beamed down myriads of beautiful stars. The dark and solemn woods were still as death, and there was no sound on the air save the clear music of the singing rill, as it went on happily with its work, even in the darkness.

"Where is *my* work?" murmured the hermit, as he stood with his hot brow un-

covered in the cool air. "The stars are moving in their courses; the trees are spreading forth their branches and rising to heaven; and the stream flows on to the ocean; but I, superior to all these—I, gifted with a will, an understanding, and active energies—am doing no work! 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' Those blessed words cannot be said of me."

Morning came, and the hermit saw the bee at its labour, the bird building its nest, and the worm spinning its silken thread.

"And is there no work for *me*, the noblest of all created things?" said he.

The hermit knelt in prayer, but found no utterance. Where was his work? He had none to bring but evil work. He had harmed his fellow men—but where was the good he had done? Prayers and penitential deeds wiped away no tear from the eye of sorrow—fed not the hungry—clothed not the naked.

"De Montfort!—it is vain! there must be charity as well as piety!"

Thus murmured the hermit, as he arose from his prostrate attitude.

When night came, the hermit's cell, far away in the deep, untrodden forest, was tenantless.

THE MAN.

A fearful plague raged in a great city. In the narrow streets where the poor were crowded together, the hot breath of the pestilence withered up hundreds in a day. Those not stricken down, fled, and left the suffering and the dying to their fate. Terror extinguished all human sympathies.

In the midst of these dreadful scenes, a man clad in plain garments—a stranger—approached the plague-stricken city. The flying inhabitants warned him of the peril he was about encountering, but he heeded them not. He entered within the walls, and took his way with a firm step to the most infected regions.

In the first house that he entered he found a young maiden alone and almost in the agonies of death; and her feeble cry was for something to slake her burning thirst. He placed to her lips a cool draught, of which she drank eagerly; then he sat down to watch by her side. In a little while the hot fever began to abate, and the sufferer slept. Then he lifted her in his arms and bore her beyond the city walls, where the air was purer and where were those appointed to receive and minister to the sick who were brought forth.

Again he went into the deadly atmosphere and among the sick and the dying; and soon he returned once more with a sleeping infant that he had removed from the infolding arms of its dead mother. There was a calm and holy smile upon the stranger's lips as he looked into the sweet face of the innocent child ere he resigned it to others; and those who saw that smile said in their hearts—"Verily, he hath his reward."

For weeks the plague hovered, with its black wings, over that devoted city—and during the whole time, this stranger to all the inhabitants passed from house to house, supporting a dying head here, giving drink to such as were almost mad with thirst there, and bearing forth in his arms those for whom there was any hope of life. But when “the pestilence that walketh in darkness and wasteth at noonday” had left the city, he was no where to be found.

For years the castle of De Montfort was without a lord. Its knightly owner had departed, though to what far country no one knew. At last he returned—not on mailed charger, with corslet, casque, and spear—a boastful knight, with hands crimsoned by his brother’s blood,—nor as a pious devotee from his cloister; but, as a *man*, from the city where he had done good deeds amid the dying and the dead. He came to take possession of his stately castle

and his broad lands once more—not as a knight, but as a man—not to glory once more in his proud elevation, but to use the gifts with which God had endowed him, in making wiser, better, and happier his fellow-men.

He had work to do, and he was faithful in its performance. He was no longer a knight-errant, seeking for adventure wherever brute courage promised to give him renown; he was no longer an idle hermit, shrinking from his work in the great harvest-fields of life; but he was a *man*, doing valiantly, among his fellow-men, truly noble deeds—not deeds of blood, but deeds of moral daring, in an age when the real uses of life were despised by the titled few.

There was the bold Knight, the pious Hermit, and the Man; but the MAN was best and greatest of all.

THE MERCHANT'S DREAM

ALGERON was a merchant. All through a long summer day he had been engaged among boxes, bales, and packages; or poring over accounts current; or musing over new adventures. When night came he retired to his quiet chamber and refreshed his wearied mind with music and books. Poetry, and the harmony of sweet sounds, elevated his sentiments, and caused him to think, as he had often before thought, of the emptiness and vanity of mere earthly pursuits.

“In what,” said he, “am I wasting my time? Is there any thing in the dull round of mercantile life to satisfy an immortal spirit? What true congeniality is there

between the highly gifted soul and bales of cotton or pieces of silk? Between the human mind and the dull, insensible objects of trade? Nothing! Nothing! How sadly do we waste our lives in the mere pursuit of gold! And after the glittering earth is gained, are we any happier? I think not. The lover of truth—the wise, contemplative hermit in his cell is more a man than Algeron!”

Thus mused the merchant, and thus he gave utterance to his thoughts—sighing as he closed each sentence. The book that he loved was put aside—the instrument from which his skilful hand drew eloquent music lay hushed upon a table. He was unhappy. He had remained thus for some time, when the door of his room opened, and a beautiful being entered and stood before him. Her countenance was calm and elevated, yet full of sweet benevolence. For a moment she looked at the unhappy merchant, then extending her hand, she said—

“Algeron, I have heard your complaints. Come with me, and look around with a broader intelligence.”

As she spoke, she laid her finger upon the eyes of the young man. Arising, he found himself in the open air, walking by the side of his strange conductor, along a path that led to a small cottage. Into this they entered. It was a very humble abode—but peace and contentment were dwellers in the breasts of its simple-minded occupants—an aged female and a little girl. Both were engaged with reels of a curious and somewhat complicated construction; and both sang cheerily at their work. A basin of cocoons on the floor by each of the reels, told Algeron the true nature of their employment. A small basket of fine and smoothly reeled spools were upon a table. While the merchant still looked on, a man entered, and after bargaining for the reeled silk, paid down the price, and carried it away. A few minutes after, the owner of the cottage came in. He asked for his rent,

and it was given to him. Then he retired. Shortly after, a dealer in provisions stopped at the humble dwelling, and liberally supplied the wants of its occupants. He received his pay, and drove off, singing gayly, while the old woman and the child looked contented and happy.

“Come,” said his conductor, and Algeron left the cottage. The scene had changed. He was no longer in the open country, but surrounded by small houses. It was a village. Along the streets of this they walked for some time, until they came to a store, which they entered. Standing beside the counter was the same man who had bought the cottagers’ silk. He had many parcels, which he had collected from many cottages; and now he was passing them over to the storekeeper, who was as ready to buy as he was to sell.

“Another link in the great chain,” remarked the mysterious companion significantly. “See how they depend the one upon the other. Can the hermit in his

cell, idly musing about truths that will not abide—for truth is active; is in fact the power by which good is done to our fellows, and will not remain with any one who does not use it—thus serve his fellows? Is his life more excellent, more honourable, more in accordance with the high endowments of the soul, than the life of him who engages in those employments by which all are benefited?”

Algeron felt that new light was breaking in upon him. But, as yet, he saw dimly.

“Look up,” continued his companion, “and see yet another link.”

The merchant raised his eyes. The scene had again changed. The village had become a large town, with ranges of tall buildings, in which busy hands threw the shuttle, weaving into beautiful fabrics of various patterns the humble fibres gathered from hundreds of cottages, farm-houses, and cocooneries, in all the region roundabout. Through these he wandered with his guide. Here was one tending a

loom, there another folding, arranging, or packing into cases the products thereof; and at the head of all was the manufacturer himself.

“Is his a useless life?” asked the guide. “Is he wasting the high endowments of an immortal mind in thus devoting himself to the office of gathering in the raw material and reproducing it again as an article of comfort and luxury? But see! Another has presented himself. It is the merchant. He has come to receive from this man the products of his looms, and send them over the world, that all may receive and enjoy them. Are his energies wasted? No, Algeron! If the merchant were not to engage in trade, the manufacturer could not get his goods to market, and would no longer afford the means of subsistence that he now does to hundreds and thousands who produce the raw material. Without him, millions who receive the blessings furnished by nature and art in places remote from their city or country, would be de-

prived of many comforts, of many delights. The agriculturalist, the manufacturer, the merchant, the artisan—all who are engaged in the various callings that minister to the wants, the comforts, and the luxuries of life, are honourably employed. Society, in all its parts, is held together by mutual interests. A chain of dependencies binds the whole world together. Sever a single link, and you affect the whole. Look below you. As a merchant, your position is intermediate between the producer and the consumer. See how many hundreds are blessed with the reception of nature's rich benefits through your means. Could this take place, if you sought only after abstract truth, in idle, dreamy musings? Cease, then, to chafe yourself by fallacious reasonings. Rather learn to feel delight in the consciousness that you are the means of diffusing around you many blessings. Think not of the gold you are to gain, as the end of your activity; for so far as you do this, you will lose the true

benefits that may be derived from pursuing with diligence your calling in life—that for which by education you are best qualified—and into which your inclination leads you.”

“I see it all now, clear as a sunbeam,” Algeron said, with a sudden enthusiasm, as light broke strongly into his mind. The sound of his own voice startled him with its strangeness. For a moment he seemed the centre of a whirling sphere. Then all grew calm, and he found himself sitting alone in his chamber.

“Can all this have been but a dream?” he murmured, thoughtfully. No—no—it is more than a dream. I have not been taught by a mere phantom of the imagination, but by Truth herself—beautiful Truth. Her lovely countenance I shall never forget, and her words shall rest in my heart like apples of gold in pictures of silver. Henceforth I look upon life with a purified vision. Nothing is mean, nothing is unworthy of pursuit that ministers to the

good of society. On this rock I rest my feet. Here I stand upon solid ground."

From that time, Algeron pursued his business as a merchant with renewed activity. The thought that he was ministering, in his sphere, to the good of all around him, was a happy thought. It cheered him on in every adventure, and brought to his mind, in the hour of retirement, a sweet peace, such as he had never before known. Fully did he prove that the consciousness of doing good to others brings with it the purest delight.

THE END.



MAGGY'S BABY.

MAGGY'S BABY,

AND

OTHER STORIES.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM ORIGINAL DESIGNS BY CROOME

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MAGGY'S BABY.

“OH dear, dear me! I wish I knew what to do with myself!” sighed Mary Page, as she closed the book she had been trying to read, and threw herself in a lounging position on the sofa.

“Put on your things and take a walk. You need fresh air and exercise,” said the young lady’s mother.

“I don’t care about walking,” replied Mary listlessly.

“Your health requires it, my dear,” urged Mrs. Page.

Seated in the room with the mother and daughter, was a quiet-looking girl, busily employed with her needle. She did not

appear to observe what passed between Mrs. Page and Mary; nor in fact did she, for her mind was as busy as her fingers—and both were usefully occupied.

Without responding to her mother's last remark, Mary, whose eyes had rested for a moment or two on the form of the young girl, as she bent over the work that lay in her lap, said; with some impatience in her voice and manner—

“For mercy's sake, Alice! do stop. It makes me nervous to look at you. Nothing but stitch, stitch, stitch, hour in and hour out. What can you be doing?”

The young person thus addressed raised her head, and fixed her mild blue eyes on her interrogator, while a wreath of the heart's warm sunshine played softly about her lips. Then, without replying, she resumed her employment.

“Oh dear!” sighed Mary, again.

“Now do exert yourself, my love,” said Mrs. Page, in a persuasive tone of voice. “Dress yourself and take a walk.”

“Where shall I go?”

“Walk out and take the fresh air.

“Walk for nothing? Oh dear, no! That's worse than staying in the house; particularly as an hour must be spent beforehand in dressing. Now do, Alice, stop that everlasting stitch, stitch, stitching!” said Mary, more petulantly than when she first addressed her. “You make me so nervous that I can scarcely contain myself. What *are* you doing?”

Again the young girl raised her head, and fixed her gentle eyes on Mary Page. For a few moments she looked at her calmly, yet with a mild reproof in her glance. Then gathering her work in her hands, she arose, and was about leaving the room, when the former interrupted her by saying—

“Just tell me what you are so wonderfully busy about, Alice? Here, for two days, you have been doing nothing but stitch, stitch. What a fit of industry has come over you.”

Alice, whose hand was on the door,

paused to hear what Mary had to say. Then approaching her, she bent over and whispered something in her ear, to which the young lady replied—

“No—it’s too much trouble. I don’t feel like moving.”

“But I want you. Come! I’ve something particular to say.”

“Say it here. Ma won’t listen, if it’s any secret.”

“Not a word of it until you are in my room,” said Alice firmly.

There was a decision about her tone and manner that had its effect upon Mary, who slowly raised herself from her reclining position, saying as she did so—

“You are a provoking chit, Alice.”

The two girls presently left the apartment together, and ascended to the room of Alice. As soon as they were alone, the latter said—

“Did you ever see a sweeter babe than Mrs. Martin’s?”

“Isn’t it a darling?” instantly replied

Mary, a light glancing over her face, and sparkling in her eyes. The true heart in her felt instantly the ingenuous appeal of the cousin—for that was the relationship borne by the young girls to each other.

“Indeed it is,” quietly returned Alice.

“Do you know,” said Mary, with animation, “that I begged Mrs. Martin to lend me the dear little thing for an hour or two? I declare! if she'd only said yes, if I wouldn't have brought it home in my arms.”

Alice smiled at her cousin's suddenly awakened enthusiasm.

“I know where there is just as sweet a baby as Mrs. Martin's; and what is more, its mother will let you bring it home, if you feel at all inclined to do so.”

“Do you!” And Mary struck her hands together in expression of her delight. “And pray, where is it?”

“Not half a square from here.”

“Whose baby is it?”

“Do you remember Maggy Green, who

used to sew for your mother, two or three years ago?"

"Yes."

"And how she got married and went to live in New Jersey?"

"Yes."

"Well, Maggy's husband died three or four months ago, and she has come back to the city."

"And is living near us?"

"Yes. She is at the house of a friend, who has kindly given her a home until she is able to get one for herself."

"And Maggy has the dear little baby of which you were speaking?"

"Yes."

"Is it sweet and clean?" asked Mary, a slight shade passing over her animated face. "So many of these poor babies are neglected by their mothers, and kept in such a condition that one can't bear to look at, much less touch them. A dirty baby! Oh, dear! Save me from such an infliction."

"It will be our fault if Maggy's baby

isn't always as nice as a new pin," said Alice. "Now let me show you what I have been doing."

And Alice opened a drawer, and lifted therefrom two neatly made baby-frocks, one with a pink and the other with a blue sprig. There was also a white flannel petticoat, a snowy linen shirt, and a pair of white worsted socks, with blue edges and ties.

"What beauties!" exclaimed Mary. "And are these for Maggy's baby?"

"Yes."

"And did you make them?"

"Yes; I have just finished a white apron, the 'stitch, stitching' of which annoyed you so much just now."

"Well, you are a queer one, Alice! And you've been working these two or three days for Maggy's baby? Why didn't you ask me to help you?"

"You?"

"Yes, me."

"Oh, I've heard you say, dozens of times, that you had no taste for things useful."

“I say a great many things when I'm tired of myself and everybody around me. But when are you going to see Maggy and her baby?”

“This morning.”

“I'll go with you,” said Mary with animation. Already a beautiful glow had come to her cheeks that were before pale; her eyes were full of life, and every movement evinced the rapid flow of animal spirits.

“I shall be most happy to have your company,” replied Alice.

“I'll get myself ready in a twinkling.” And Mary glanced from the room. In a much shorter time than it usually took Mary to dress herself, she was ready to accompany her cousin, and, chatting together with much animation, they left the house.

We will not accompany the young ladies to the humble abode of Maggy Green, where they betook themselves, and where half an hour was spent in washing and dressing the baby. A lovely babe it was, with

eyes as blue as the bending heavens, and cheeks as fair and beautiful as a newly-opening flower.

Daily, from that time, there was, in the house of Mrs. Page, an object of deep interest for Mary—an object that drew upon her active love; for Maggy was taken back into the family, and her baby became the especial care of Alice and her cousin. Not half so frequently did the latter now complain of being a burden to herself; for there was always something or other that love inspired her to do for the sweet little stranger—Maggy's baby; and thus she learned that only in coming out of ourselves, and living for others, is it possible to find true enjoyment in life.

CHARLEY'S CRUTCH.

“**T**HE Children’s Home” is the name by which an institution in Philadelphia, founded in the true spirit of charity, is known. Some years ago, a few benevolent ladies, moved with compassion for the sufferings of very young children neglected and abused by intemperate and vicious parents, rented a house in South street, a few doors below Ninth, employed a matron, and placed in her care a few little ones, resigned into their hands by mothers who could not or would not provide for them. Among the first inmates of this “Home” were babes but a few months old, some of whom, when received, were in a condition the

bare thought of which makes the heart ache.

From this small beginning, the institution grew to importance, and soon there were in "The Children's Home" between sixty and seventy inmates, from the babe of a few months old to the boy and girl of eleven and twelve. All are supported and educated through the unostentatious but true benevolence of a few kind and generous-hearted ladies.

Visitors to the "Home" sometimes, from a kind impulse, will give the children pennies. To prevent dissatisfaction and little jealousies, the matron has made it a rule that all money so received by the children shall be placed in a box. This box is opened, generally, about New-year's day, and the amount expended for fruit and cakes, in which all the children share alike.

Among the children was a lame boy, about eight years of age, named Charley, who has to use a crutch. Now, as fully two years had passed since Charley's crutch

was made, and he had been growing all that time, it was but a natural consequence that said crutch should have become too short; or, rather, that Charley should have grown too tall for his crutch. So the little fellow, in using his crutch, had to bend over more and more every day, to his no small inconvenience. The matron noticed the growing defect, but did not know where to get a new crutch for Charley. Some of the lady patronesses, in their regular visits, also observed the child, and spoke of the want of a new crutch. But, some how or other, the new crutch did not come, and Charley continued to hop about, but more and more defectively, as the time wore on.

New-year's day came round again, and the box containing the aforementioned pennies was formally opened by the matron in the presence of all the children.

"Now," said she, after the money was counted over, "what shall be bought with these pennies? There is one apiece all round. What will you have, Johnny?"

speaking to a little fellow whose eyes were fixed on her own.

“I’ll have a cake,” said Johnny.

“Very well; Johnny will have a cake. What will you have, Mary?”

“An apple,” replied Mary.

And so the questions went round—one deciding on a cake, one on an apple, and another choosing for his or her New-year’s treat a pie or candy. At last the question was put to a little fellow, whose large bright eyes sparkled as he half arose in his eagerness, and said—

“I’ll give my penny to buy Charley a new crutch.”

The matron stood for some moments silent. She was touched by the unexpected answer.

“You’re a good boy,” said she in a changed voice, “to think of Charley—poor little fellow! He does want a new crutch very badly. Now, children,” she added, speaking in a cheerful, elevated, encouraging tone, “what say you all to buying Char-

ley a new crutch? Which of you will give your pennies for this purpose? You shall do just as you please. Now, let all who are for buying Charley a crutch with these pennies, hold up their right hands."

Instantly the hands of the children flew into the air; some even, in the heartiness of their assent, holding up both hands.

"You are good children," said the matron, much affected by the incident. "Charley will now have a new crutch, and your pleasure, in seeing him use it day after day, will be far greater than if this money had been expended in candies, cakes, and apples."

The sequel to this pleasant story it will not be hard for the reader to imagine. But we will not leave all to the imagination. One of the ladies interested in the Children's Home coming in soon after the occurrence just related, was informed of what had taken place.

"Let the children have their treat," said she. "I will get Charley a crutch. Au

act so unselfish as this must not go unrewarded."

A neat walnut crutch of the proper length soon took the place of Charley's short, roughly made pine one, and it filled, for the time, the measure of the child's happiness. The pennies which had been collecting in the box, served their first purpose, and produced the long looked-for feast of good things, which were now enjoyed with a double zest by the children.

There is a germ of good in the heart of that humble child, (his name even has not reached us,) who, forgetting himself, thought only of his little friend and companion. The instincts of a noble nature are stirring in his young bosom. Humble, unknown, forsaken as he has been, and kept from want and suffering by the hand of charity, there is that in him which gives promise of a man of whom in after years it shall be said—"The world is better for his having lived."

HARRY AND HIS DOG;

OR, THE EVILS OF DISOBEDIENCE.

“COME, Nero,” said Harry Long, as he passed out of the house with his satchel in his hand. “Come, old fellow.”

Nero sprang instantly to his feet, and dashing past the boy, ran a few rods from the house, and then pausing, turned, and, with a look half human in its pleasure and intelligence, waited for Harry to come up with him.

Now, Henry's mother had more than once told him that he must not take Nero away when he went to school. But it was so pleasant to have the dog's company along the road to the school-house, that



HARRY AND HIS DOG.

the lad every now and then disobeyed this injunction, trusting that he would escape punishment.

Nero was quite as willing to go with his young master as the latter was to have him in company; and bounded away, as has been seen, at the first word of encouragement. But the two friends had not proceeded far, before the mother of Henry saw them from her window, and instantly came out and called after Nero. She was offended at the disobedience of her son, and uttered some threatening words to both him and the dog.

Nero did not, at first, show much inclination to obey the authoritative voice of Mrs. Long; and if Harry had only spoken a single word, would have gone with him in spite of all opposition. But that word Harry dared not speak, and so the dog stood still, looking back first toward Mrs. Long, and then wishfully after his young master. Finally, Nero returned slowly to the house, and Harry went on as slowly,

and equally as much disappointed, to school.

When Harry returned home, a few hours afterward, his mother received him kindly, yet with a serious countenance. His first thought was of his disobedience in trying to get Nero to follow him to school; and, as he expected, she began at once to speak on that subject.

“Harry,” said she, “I hardly think you can have forgotten what I said to you last week about taking Nero away from home.”

Henry hung down his head, and did not attempt to offer an excuse for his conduct.

“I am extremely sorry,” continued Mrs. Long, “that my son should have acted so disobediently. Sorry for his sake; for disobedience brings evil into the heart, and this creates unhappiness. And I am also sorry for another cause: to disobey is to do wrong; and wrong-doing, in almost every case, injures others.”

Harry looked into his mother's face with a glance of inquiry.

“Yes, my son,” she added, “wrong-doing, in almost every case, injures others.”

“It couldn’t have hurt any body if I had taken Nero to school with me. How could it, mother?” said the boy.

Mrs. Long gazed for a few moments into the face of Harry, and then, reaching her hand toward him, said—

“Come.”

There was something so serious, not to say solemn, in the face of Mrs. Long, that the lad began to feel a little strangely.

“Where, mother?” he asked.

But she did not answer, and he moved along silently by her side.

From the sitting-room down-stairs, where the mother had met her boy, they passed along the passage, and up-stairs into a chamber, where, to his surprise, Harry saw his little sister, Phoebe, a sweet child in her second year, lying asleep, and looking so pale and deathly, that the sight caused a shudder to pass through his body.

“Oh, mother!” he exclaimed, turning

quickly and grasping the garment of his parent. "Dear mother! what is the matter with Phoebe?"

"Let us sit down here by the window," said Mrs. Long in a calm voice, "and I will tell you all about what has happened."

"Is she dead, mother?" eagerly asked the boy, while tears came into his eyes.

"No, my child, she is not dead, thanks to our heavenly Father! But I cannot tell how it would now be, if you had taken Nero off to school with you this morning."

"Why, mother? What did Nero do?"

"Listen, and I will tell you. After I called the dog back, he came and laid himself down on the mat before the door, and placing his head between his forepaws, shut his eyes, and seemed to be sleeping. He remained lying thus for nearly an hour, when, all at once, I saw him start up, listen, and look about him. Presently he ran off and went all around the house. He seemed uneasy about something. First he looked in one direction, and then in

another; snuffed the air; put his nose to the ground and ran a little way from the house, and then came back again.

“ ‘What is the matter, Nero?’ said I.

“ He came and fixed his eyes upon my face with a look that to me seemed anxious, stood for a few moments, and then went to his mat again. But he did not lie there more than an instant before he arose and started off up-stairs. In a little while he came down and seemed more uneasy than ever. I began now to feel strangely.

“ ‘Where is Phoebe?’ I now called out to Margaret, who was in the kitchen.

“ ‘I am sure I don’t know,’ replied Margaret. ‘I thought she was with you.’

“ At this moment, with a short bark, Nero sprang toward the spring. I saw this, and, fearing that Phoebe might have wandered off in that direction, followed quickly. But, ere I had gone halfway, I beheld the noble dog returning with your little sister in his mouth, and the water

dripping from her hair and clothes. She appeared to be quite dead when I took her into my arms; and did not show any signs of life for nearly half an hour afterward. Then she began slowly to recover. Oh, my son! think what might have been the consequence, if our faithful Nero had not been at home."

Harry covered his face with his hands, and burying them in his mother's lap, sobbed bitterly.

"And will Phoebe get well, mother?" he asked, looking up with tearful eyes, after he had grown calmer.

"Yes, my son," replied Mrs. Long. "She is out of all danger, now. God has permitted her still to remain with us."

"Oh! if she had been drowned," said Harry, the tears flowing afresh.

"But for Nero, this painful event might have taken place."

"Suppose that he had gone to school with me?" The boy saddened as he spoke.

"Sad, sad might have been the conse-

quences of your disobedience, my son. You now understand what I meant by our wrong acts affecting others as well as ourselves. In right-doing, Henry, there is always safety. Never forget this. May the lesson you have now received go with you through the remainder of your life."

Just then Phœbe awoke and rose up in bed. Harry ran to her, and putting his arm about her neck, kissed her tenderly.

Nero came in soon after, and shared the joy and caresses of his young friend, with whom, not many hours before, he had joined in willing disobedience. But Nero was not to blame in this, for he followed the instinct of his nature. Harry was alone to blame; for he had reason and reflection, and knew that the act he meditated was wrong, because it was an act of disobedience.

THE BEGGARS.

ANNA and Willy were walking with their mother, one clear, cold day, early in the new year. The shop-windows were still full of elegant and attractive holiday goods, and the children lingered, at various points along the street, to enjoy the display.

Anna had a sixpence, the last that remained of her Christmas and New-year's gifts, and she had promised herself some pleasure in spending it. She was a tender-hearted child. Suffering in others always awakened her sympathy, and made her desire its relief. Let me give an incident to illustrate her character

Anna had been saving her money for some time previous to the holidays, and in her little purse was over half a dollar. A few days before Christmas, a lady friend called upon her mother, who had engaged to go with her to a place called the "Children's Home," where were gathered together some thirty or forty little children, from the babe of a few weeks old to the boy and girl of nine or ten—little children whose parents were either dead, or too idle and vicious rightly to care for them. Here, they had warm rooms, comfortable food and clothing, kind nurses, and careful teachers. This "Home" was provided by the true kindness of a few excellent ladies, who not only supported it with their money, but visited it regularly to see that their benevolent purposes were fully carried out.

Anna went with her mother to this Children's Home. How quickly was her heart touched by what she saw! There was a poor little motherless babe, not so old as her little sister Helen. It had large dark

eyes, curly hair, and rosy cheeks, just like Helen's. When Anna bent down to kiss it, the tears blinded her, to think that the babe had no kind mother to love and care for it.

"Mother," whispered Anna, as they were about going away.

"Well, dear? What is it?" asked her mother.

"Can't I give my half-dollar to the Children's Home?"

"The half-dollar you saved for Christmas?"

"Yes, mother. I've got it in my pocket; and if you'll let me, I'll give it to the Children's Home."

"Do so, if you like, my dear," replied Anna's mother, greatly pleased at such an evidence of good feeling and self-denial on the part of Anna, who had, she knew, entertained other purposes in regard to her money.

So Anna gave her half-dollar to the poor, motherless children; and she felt happier •

for what she had done, than if she had spent it in buying things to gratify herself.

Such was Anna, the little girl who was now walking with her mother and brother.

“Oh, look!” she cried, stopping suddenly, and catching hold of her mother’s hand. “There is a poor woman and three little children. It’s so cold, and they’ve got no home. Can’t I give them my sixpence?”

“Just look at that unfeeling lady,” said Willy, speaking with some indignation, and pointing across the street, where a lady, warmly clad, with her hands protected by a muff, was passing the beggars without offering them a single penny.

“That is Mrs. L——,” replied the mother; “and I know her, my son, to be any thing but an unfeeling woman.”

“Why don’t she offer the beggar a penny, then. I only wish I had some money. I’d give it to her very quick. Run over, sis, and give her your sixpence.”

Now, Willy had spent every cent given to him during the holidays, in buying things

for his own use. He did not indulge at all in the luxury of benevolence.

“Mrs. L——,” replied the mother, “may not think it true charity to encourage women to sit, with their poor little children, in the cold all day, begging for pennies, instead of trying to support them by useful work.”

“Ah, but mother,” spoke up Will quickly, “suppose they can’t get work to do?”

“Then, don’t you think it would be better for them to go with their children to the Almshouse, where they would have warm rooms to stay in, good food to eat, and comfortable clothes to wear,—and where they would be required to do something useful? Idleness and beggary are next-door neighbours to vice.”

“Can’t I give her my sixpence?” urged Anna, whose heart was too full of sorrow for the little children all exposed to the cold, to feel the force of what her mother said.

“Certainly, dear, if you wish to do so. The money is your own,” was replied.

So Anna ran across the street, and placed her sixpence in the woman's hand. When she returned, she looked thoughtful. But little was said by her on her way home. That evening, as she sat alone with her mother—Willy and the other children were playing in the nursery—she said—

“I don't think that beggar-woman was a good woman, mother.”

“Why not, dear?” was the natural inquiry.

“I can't tell,” said Anna. “But when she looked into my face, I felt afraid. Oh! I'm so glad she is not my mother. I'm sure she is not good to her children. Poor little things! I wish they were in the Children's Home. They would be so much better off.”

“There is no doubt of that, my child.”

“And the baby, mother. Oh! it had such a strange look. Its cheeks were red and shining, and its eyes were half closed. It did not look as if it was asleep; and yet

it wasn't awake. What could have ailed it, mother?"

"Beggars-women," replied the mother, "often give their babes large doses of laudanum, or preparations from this deleterious drug, to keep them quiet, while they sit idle in the street."

"Does it hurt them, mother?"

"It makes them stupid and insensible for a few hours; and also destroys their health—if it does not cause their death, it lays the foundation for wretchedness in the future."

"Had the babe I speak of taken laudanum?"

"I should think so from what you say," replied the mother.

"Oh dear! isn't it dreadful, mother? Why don't they take the poor little children away from such bad women, and put them into the Children's Home. It would be so much better."

"In that I agree with you entirely, Anna. But what is everybody's business, as they

say, seems to be anybody's business. Our city officers, who are chosen by the people to attend to the public good, are not always as faithful in little things as they should be."

"I only wish that I was mayor for a little while," said Anna. "I'd take up every woman I found begging in the streets with a baby in her arms—that I would! And if they had been giving them laudanum, or any of that kind of stuff, I'd take their babies away from them, and put them in the Children's Home."

"That would certainly be wiser than to encourage them in idleness and the ill-treatment of their tender offspring, by giving them pennies and sixpences."

"But there are some beggars who are deserving?"

"I would hardly like to say no, my child," replied the mother thoughtfully. "And yet, I very much doubt if, in this country, any but the idle or vicious become beggars. To give to such, you can easily see, would

be no charity; for that would only encourage them in their evil ways."

"I'm sorry I gave that woman my sixpence," said Anna, after looking serious for some time.

"Don't say that, my dear," returned her mother smiling—"your act was an unselfish one; you wished to help the needy. There was a good impulse in your heart. Ever cherish such impulses. They come to you from God, who clothes the naked and feeds the hungry. But we should be wise, Anna, as well as good."

"Wise! O yes; I understand you, mother. We should know whether our alms will really do good, before we make them."

"Yes, love. That is what I mean. If we give to the idle and vicious, we do them really more harm than good—for we furnish them with the means of continuing in idleness and vice."

"I can understand that, mother, very well. I wonder I never thought of it myself."

“Many grown people, Anna, are no wiser in this respect than you have been. There are others, again, who make the vice of beggary a plea for not giving at all—who push aside every applicant for aid, without even an inquiry into his circumstances. This, you see, is falling into error on the other side. The true spirit is a willingness to help those in need to the best of our ability. When this is felt, there will be no lack of opportunity.

“Nor, in giving, need we ever be in much doubt. You were in none when you gave your half-dollar to help the Children’s Home.”

IV.—D

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

THE following true story, written by a highly valued friend and relative, is so beautifully told, and conveys so sweet a lesson of childlike trust and confidence, that we cannot resist the strong inclination we feel to give it a place in the present volume. Our young friends will thank us for so doing.

THE CHILD'S FAITH.

It was a cold evening, and there was but little fire in Mrs. Hoffman's stove; so little Frantz sat close by it; and though his thoughts were far away, yet a slight feeling

of discomfort from the chilliness mingled with his fancies.

His mother's wheel kept on—as it always did in the winter's long evenings—with a low humming sound, that had till now been very cheerful and pleasant to little Frantz; but, somehow, he forgot to notice it this night. Poor Frantz!—he scarcely looked like himself, for his head was bent down, and his eyes seemed to be looking straight through the floor, so fixed and intent did his gaze seem.

Often and often did the mother's eye turn to her little boy, for never before had the joy-speaking eye of Frantz been so long bent to the earth; but still the mother said no word, till at last a deep sigh came from the parted lips of Frantz; then his mother laid her hand softly upon his; yet even that gentle touch startled Frantz, so lost was he in thought; and when he quickly lifted his face, and saw the questioning look of his mother, his pent-up thoughts burst out at once.

‘ Oh, mother! In a week it will be Christmas-day. *Can I not* have a Christmas-tree?’

The mother’s face looked sad, but only for a moment; she knew that the earnest wish of little Frantz was not likely to be realized; but she knew, too, that it was best for her boy to learn to bear cheerfully any crossing of his desires which must be; and she spoke more soothingly and gently than usual, as she said—

“ And what makes my little Frantz set his heart on that now? He has never had a Christmas-tree before!”

“ Oh, that is it,” exclaimed Frantz; “ I *never* had one. Ever since I was a baby, mother, I have heard of the good Christ-child, who brings beautiful gifts to others. Why does he not bring them to me? Am I worse than all the rest, mother?” .

“ No—no, Frantz;” so spoke the mother hastily—for in her heart arose a picture of the gentleness, the self-denying fortitude of her little boy, in the midst of trouble; his patience in sickness, his industry in

health, his anxious care to help her in all that his little hands could do. "No—no! my Frantz—it is not that."

"Well, mother, but is there *any* reason? Oh! you do not know how I have dreamed and dreamed of a beautiful tree that I should have this Christmas: it was full of golden fruit and lighted tapers, and under it were laid gifts for you, dear mother: a new Bible, with large print; and a purse of money, so that you might not have to work so hard, dear mother; and warm clothes that would never let you get cold. And oh! as I came along the street to-day, and saw the windows shining with their loads of beautiful toys, and gifts of all sorts, and saw the boys and girls running and shouting, and telling how they would not care for any thing else, when the Christmas-day was once come, and they would have their loaded tree—then, mother, all the dreams I have had, since I can first remember, came back; all you have told me of the good Christ-child and of his love for

children; and I half felt, mother, as if I was left out, and not loved among the rest."

"Dear Frantz," said the mother, "it was a sad, sad thought. Do not let it come into your heart again. Oh! the Christ-child is always good—altogether loving, even when his love is shown in such ways that we do not clearly see it at once. Come closer to me, Frantz."

Frantz saw in her mother's face a look of such deep tenderness, that his soul grew full. He took his own little seat, and sat close beside her, and leaned his head against her knee, and the mother said gently—

"The Christ-child has given you beautiful gifts, my Frantz; he has given you life, and a warm, earnest heart; he has given you a mother, who loves you so dearly; a home to shelter you; he gives us the light of day, and all the glorious things its reveals, and the stiller beauty of the night; and he gives us, more than all, a hope of heaven, and a knowledge of the

path to it. Are not these great gifts, Frantz?"

Frantz lifted his face; he did not speak, but his eyes were full of tears, and his mother knew that his heart said—

“Yes.”

So she went on:—

“These are the gifts we most need to make us happy; others *may* be good for us, but the Christ-child knows better than we do what we need. If it were good for us, he would give us all we wish for; but then we might not make a good use of his gifts, or we might grow proud of them, or be so wrapped up in the gifts as to forget the giver. Ah! my Frantz, let us only ask for what is best for us to have, and he will give it; he loves to give, and only refuses what will hurt us.”

Again little Frantz had bent his head on his hand, but now it was not sadness, only thought, that was in his face; and he asked—“How can we know what is best—what to ask for?”

“If it is *not* given, think that it is best withheld, and be patient; if it *is* given, be thankful, and use the gift aright. See, Frantz!”

And the mother arose, and took from a closet a small sum of money.

“This,” she continued, “is all I have; if any of this is spent for toys or play, I shall not have any to buy shoes for you or for me, and by this I know the Christ-child deems it best for me to be content with what is most necessary, and to give up the pleasure of buying you beautiful golden fruit and coloured tapers.”

“Could I not do without shoes?” asked Frantz. “I would go so many errands for the old cobbler, that he would mend my old ones; and oh! if that would make it right”——

“And *I*—should I do without shoes?” asked the mother.

Frantz looked down at the worn-out shoes she had on, and again his heart was full.

“Oh no, mother; you *must* have shoes. But oh! how happy the boys must be whose mothers have shoes, and can give them Christmas-trees too!”

Long did Frantz lie awake that night and ponder over all his mother had said, and at last a thought sprang into his mind. It was not wrong to *ask* the Christ-child for what we wish, if we will only patiently bear the withholding. He would ask for the tree. But how? His mother had told him the Christ-child was ready to answer, and always near. Frantz would write his heart's wish in a letter, and direct it “To the Christ-child.”

And early in the fair morning, Frantz wrote the letter, and when he met his mother, his face was once more the gay, bright face of old; for in his pocket was the paper which seemed to him a warrant of coming joy, and in his heart was a feeling very like certainty that his wish would be granted; yet he did not speak of it. It was his first, his glad, darling secret, and it

should be a great surprise to his mother. So he only looked joyful and kissed her; and she laid her hand on his head, and said how glad she was to see her boy so patient and cheerful once more.

Frantz did many little acts of kindness and industry that day, for in his heart was a fountain of hope and love; and he wished to help every one. But, lively as he was, he did not forget to drop his precious letter in the post-office.

When the post-master came to look over the letters, of course he was much surprised at this one of Frantz, with so strange a direction; but in a moment he saw that it was in a child's hand, and he opened the letter. It ran thus:—

“GOOD CHRIST-CHILD,

“I am a poor little boy, but I have a good mother, who has taught me many things about you; and she has said that you are kind and good, and love little children, and delight to give them gifts, so that

they are not hurtful ones. Now, my mother is kind too, and would like to give me all I want, but she is poor, and when I asked her for a Christmas-tree, she could not give me one, because she had only money enough to buy shoes for us; so I ask you, who are kind and rich, to give me one. I hope I am not a bad boy—I am sure my mother does not think I am; and if it is best for me not to have the tree, I will try to be patient, and bear it as a good boy should; but I don't see what hurt a large Bible, or warm clothes, *could* do to my mother; so, if I may not have the tree, oh! please give her those, and I shall be so happy.

“FRANTZ HOFFMAN.”

Pleased with the simple, childish innocence of the letter, the post-master put it in his pocket. When he went home, he found a rich lady there, who had come to take tea with his wife; and at the table, when all were assembled, he drew forth the

letter of little Frantz, and read it aloud, telling how it had come into his hands, and saying how the poor little fellow would wonder at never getting his tree, nor ever hearing of his letter again.

“But he *may* hear of it again,” said the rich lady, who had listened carefully to every word. “There is so much goodness of heart in the poor boy’s love for his mother, that it well deserves to be rewarded. He *may* hear of it again.”

So the lady remembered the name of the boy; indeed, she asked the man to give her the letter, which he did, and by its aid she sought and found out where Frantz lived. From some of the neighbours she heard how poor they were, and how little Frantz helped his mother all day cheerfully, and was the best boy in all the neighbourhood; and that Mrs. Hoffman had not now even the money to buy shoes, for that her landlord had raised her rent, and she had to give the little sum laid aside to him. And the lady thought to herself that it would not

be likely to spoil so good a boy by a beautiful tree; so she had one brought to her house—large and full of leaves it was; and she bought all kinds of beautiful and useful things to hang on it, and little rose-coloured tapers, to be placed among the branches; and on the table, under the tree, were laid two pairs of shoes, one pair for the mother and one pair for Frantz, and a pair of thick blankets, and a large shawl, and a purse of money, (for the lady knew that poor Mrs. Hoffman must have many wants of which she could not know, and she wanted her to supply them by means of the purse;) and, best of all, there was a large Bible.

If Frantz's dream had suddenly turned into reality, it could not have been more beautiful.

So day after day went on, and though Frantz knew not the fate of his letter, he never doubted that all would go well. It was pleasant to see the sunshiny face with which he greeted every morning, as "one

day nearer Christmas." And when at last Christmas morning came, bright and clear, there was a leaping, bounding heart in his bosom, and a light in his blue eyes that made his mother smile, though she scarcely knew where their next meal was to come from. The wheel kept on its whirring, and Frantz sat with his eyes fixed on the blue sky, as if he almost thought his expected tree would drop down from it. Suddenly a low knock was heard at the door, and a voice asked—

"Is little Frantz Hoffman here?"

Frantz almost flew to the door.

"I am Frantz!" he said.

And the little maiden who had asked for him, told him to come with her, and his mother must come too.

Soon, very soon, was the little party ready, and the maiden led them along gayly to a handsome house, whose door she pushed open, and they entered in.

How lightly trod Frantz along the wide passage, for his heart whispered aloud to

him! At the end stood a door just ajar, and as the girl pushed it open, a blaze of light streamed out. Frantz caught his mother's hand and drew her forward, exclaiming—

“It is my tree—my tree! I knew so well it would be ready!”

And sure enough, there stood the shining tree, all bright with lighted tapers, and laden with sparkling fruit, and on high was an image of the beautiful Christ-child, holding out his hand and smiling so lovingly, and below was written—

“FOR FRANTZ,
BECAUSE HE LOVED HIS MOTHER”

THE TONGUE-BRIDLE.

“**W**HAT is the trouble now?” asked Mrs. Ellis, coming into the room where her daughter Maria sat weeping bitterly.

“That will tell you,” replied Maria, drying her tears and handing her mother an open letter. Mrs. Ellis read as follows:—

“**M**ISS:—I have just learned from Harriet Wilson that you made rather free with my name yesterday. Now I would just like to know whether you did or did not say, that you thought me over and above conceited; and if so, what you meant by it? I am not used to be talked about in that way.

“**ANN HARRIS.**”



IN TROUBLE.

“And did you say so to Harriet Wilson?” asked Mrs. Ellis.

“Yes, I did; and now how to get out of it, I am sure I cannot tell. I never dreamed that Harriet was such a tattler, or I would have been close enough with her.”

“You cannot deny it, of course?”

“No, not up and down; but then, ma, it will never do in the world to come right out and acknowledge it pointblank. I’d make Ann Harris an enemy all my life.”

“How very unguarded you are, Maria! This is the third or fourth time you have brought yourself into difficulty by a free way of talking to every one.”

“I know I am imprudent, ma, sometimes; but then I never can believe that girls with whom I am intimate will act so meanly as to become tattlers and mischief-makers, until it is too late for caution to be of any avail. But I’m done with Harriet Wilson. I’ve broken off my intimacy with several girls already, for repeating what I

said in confidence, and I'll do the same with her."

"It would be much better, Maria," said her mother, "if you would put a bridle on your tongue. This would save both yourself and others many unkind thoughts and painful feelings."

"I know it would, ma; but then I can't always be watching myself. It's impossible; I try often, but it's of no use."

"If you persevere in trying, you will in time gain such a control over yourself as to keep you out of these unpleasant difficulties."

"That may be; but what shall I do now? Ann has pinned me right down; and there is no way of getting off, unless I say that Harriet must have misunderstood me."

"Which would be prevarication, Maria, if not something more."

"True; for I remember well enough that I said exactly what she reported."

"And you seriously think, Maria, that Ann is conceited?"

‘ Yes, ma, I do, or I would not have said so.’

“I think as you do, Maria; but then, there is to me nothing offensive in the good opinion she seems to entertain of herself.”

“I agree with you there; and had I not been somewhat ill-natured at the time, I never should have alluded to it.”

“I suspected as much,” Mrs. Ellis replied. “And under the circumstances, I am of opinion that the best way is for you frankly to own that you did say what has been reported, and why you said it. Such an honest confession will do you both good.”

“I don’t know, ma.”

“Why do you doubt?”

“I don’t believe that such an explanation would soften her angry feelings at all.”

“I am inclined to think that you feel a reluctance, on your own account, to pursue this course,” said Mrs. Ellis.

“Well, perhaps I do,” returned Maria, after a pause.

“You are evidently in the wrong, Maria, and a consciousness of this clouds your perception of the true way to act. Now, if you will let me write your reply to Ann’s note, I think all can be brought around again.”

“You are certainly at liberty to do so, ma; but still, I should like to reserve the power of sending or withholding it, as it seems best to me. Is this asking too much?”

“Oh no! I would rather not send a reply, unless you could see clearly that it was a right one.”

“Then write me an answer, ma.”

In the course of the day, Mrs. Ellis prepared the following draft of a reply to Ann’s letter of complaint, and submitted it to Maria:—

“To Miss Ann Harris:

“DEAR ANN:—I received your note complaining that I had, according to report, said unkind things of you. I cannot deny

that, in a moment of ill-humour, I was tempted to say that I thought you somewhat conceited; and, to be frank with you, your manners at times indicate this fault, or peculiarity of character. But it is not half so bad a fault as the one I indulged in when I alluded to it. Now, as I have confessed that I have a trait in my disposition much worse than the one I alluded to in yours, I must hope that you will forgive me.

Ever yours,

“MARIA ELLIS.”

“What do you think of that?” said Mrs. Ellis, after she had finished reading the proposed reply.

“It’s not exactly such a letter as I should have written, but I believe it’s a much better one; so I will send it.”

“I don’t think it can do any harm, and it tells the whole truth, does it not?”

“Yes it does, and in pretty plain terms, too,” said Maria, smiling.

The letter was accordingly sent, and in

the course of a couple of hours a reply was received from Ann Harris. It read thus:—

“DEAR MARIA:—Your answer to my note has been received, and it has completely dispelled my unkind feelings. Let us forget the unpleasant incident, and be the same to each other that we have so long been. Neither of us is perfect; therefore we must learn to bear and forbear. When I see Harriet Wilson again, I will talk to her about her fondness for retailing bad news. Yours truly,

“ANN HARRIS.”

“You have helped me to get back a friend that I always loved, dear mother!” said Maria, a good deal moved, as she finished reading the note. “I shall try hereafter to be more guarded than I have been. I must bridle my tongue, as you say, mother, unless I am pretty certain about the company I am in.”

“The best tongue-bridle, Maria,” Mrs.

Ellis replied, "is that which charitable feelings and charitable thoughts give. If your restraints are merely external, you will ever and anon be giving the rein to your unruly member, and then troubles will be the consequence."

Maria hardly understood her mother, and did not reply, and there the conversation ceased. On the next morning, Cora Lee, another friend, called in, and after some chat, said—

"I hear that you have had a little falling out with Ann Harris—is it true?"

"There has been a little difference, but it is all settled now," replied Maria. "That tattling busybody, Harriet Wilson, went and repeated to her that I said she was conceited. But she has been well rewarded for her pains; for in a note that I received from Ann, she expressed herself pretty plainly about her; saying that she had a fondness for retailing ill news, and that she should talk to her about it."

"She is served perfectly right," the friend

remarked; then musing, as if suddenly recollecting herself, she added, "but I must be walking; I have several calls to make this morning."

As soon as Cora Lee parted with Maria, she turned away to see Harriet Wilson, who was one of her particular friends.

"So Harriet," said she, "Maria and Ann Harris have made up their difference, and, from what I can learn from Maria, Ann is pretty hard on you. She is going to take you to task for your fondness for retailing ill news. As for Maria, she don't spare you, but calls you a tattling busybody."

Of course, Harriet was greatly incensed, and as soon as her friend was gone, put on her bonnet, and posted off to see Ann Harris. She found that young lady in, and commenced on her something after this wise—

"I understand, miss, that you say I am a retailer of ill news, and that you mean to take me to task about it."

Ann was a good deal surprised, and felt

pained and confused at this sudden allegation. But before she could collect herself sufficiently to reply, Harriet said—

“I should like to know if what I have heard be true?”

“It is true that I said,” Ann now replied calmly, “I would talk to you about your fondness for retailing ill news.”

“You had no right to make such a charge against me,” returned Harriet, in an angry tone, her face flushed and her eyes sparkling. “It is a false”——

“If you were not angry, I might, perhaps, convince you that I had some ground for what I said,” replied Ann, still in a collected voice. “All of us have our faults; I have mine, and you have yours; and each of us is too apt to see those of others and to be blind to our own. If, instead of repeating to me the remarks made by Maria Ellis, you had reflected a moment as to what possible good could grow out of it, and then resolved not to speak of it, all this trouble would have been avoided.”

“And do you pretend to tell me to my face, that I am fond of retailing ill news?” Harriet asked, her anger greatly increased.

“I try, whenever I speak of another, to confine myself to what I think the truth,” replied Ann, still in a calm voice, “and this I never retract.”

“Give me patience!” Harriet ejaculated, her face growing pale with passion.

“You are wrong, Harriet,” said Ann, “thus to be so much exasperated at a mere trifle. Reflect, whether almost every day you do not, in speaking of your friends, allude to their faults in a way that you could not bear to be spoken of yourself. This is too common a practice; and be assured that you do not always escape in this general habit of censoriousness. You are not faultless, and it is not in the nature of things that you should be.”

Harriet could not collect her thoughts for a reply, and Ann, after a pause, went on—

“If, when Maria Ellis, under the influ-

ence of a momentary ill-nature, as she frankly confesses herself to have been, spoke of me as she thought in calmer moments, you had restrained your propensity to repeat such things, no harm could have resulted from her thoughtless, and I might almost say, innocent allegation. But when you came to me, and told me that she had called me conceited, it aroused my feelings and caused me to ask for an explanation. With the frankness of a generous spirit, she at once confessed her fault, and all would have been well again, if she had not thoughtlessly repeated what I said in my note to her about you."

But Harriet Wilson, though conscious that she had acted wrong, was so much incensed; as well as mortified, that others should think her wrong, that she neither could nor would confess her fault, but braved it out with anger and defiance. As soon as she had gone away, Ann sat down, and penned a note to Maria Ellis—

“DEAR MARIA:—It seems that our little difficulty is not yet ended. I have just received a visit from Harriet Wilson, who has treated me in a very strange manner about what I said in my last note to you in reference to her fondness for repeating ill news. I am sorry that you communicated that to any one, as it has not only prevented my making an effort to show Harriet her fault, but has called down upon me her indignant censure. Yours, &c.

“ANN HARRIS.”

“What is the matter now?” asked Mrs. Ellis, who saw, by the sudden change in her daughter’s countenance, that the note she had received was by no means an agreeable one. “No more doings of the unruly member, I hope?”

Maria’s face crimsoned deeply as she handed her mother the note. After Mrs. Ellis had read it, she said, somewhat kindly, for she really felt for Maria in her unpleasant position—

“You have not put on the right tongue-bridle yet, I see.”

“I suppose not. But indeed, ma, I try to be guarded how and to whom I speak. I never should have dreamed that Cora Lee would have gone right off to Harriet Wilson and told her what I said.”

“But the best way is not to speak unkindly of any one.”

“How could I have helped it, mother, in this case?”

“By simply questioning yourself as to your real motive for making the communication. It was not to do Harriet Wilson good, was it?”

“Well, I can't say, mother, that it was.”

“Your real motive was to make Cora Lee think meanly of her, was it not?”

“Why, ma! do you think I”—— Maria paused and looked upon the floor, while her face crimsoned.

“Probe yourself thoroughly, my child. It is of the first importance for you to know distinctly your true character. If you have

taken pleasure in the idea of injuring another because she has wronged or offended you, you have indulged in an evil affection; and unless that evil affection had lain concealed in your mind, it never could have been aroused into activity."

Maria looked thoughtful and concerned, and her mother continued—

"Surely, my child, it is not by indulging this evil that it is to be weakened, much less by concealing it, even from yourself, after its indulgence. It is better to look it in the face, confess that it is wrong, and then try and shun it."

"I think, mother, I now begin to see what you mean by a tongue-bridle," said Maria, looking up seriously into the face of her kind adviser.

"Well, my child?"

"It is, that we should shun the cause of evil speaking."

"That is it, Maria. If we condemn the feeling that prompts us to speak unkindly of others, and try to conquer it, we shall

be in little danger of indulging the bad habit. But if we only curb the busy little member, at the same time that we desire to speak censoriously, we shall be sure, sooner or later, to be betrayed into a word that had better not have been uttered. Kind feelings for, and a desire to do good to others, is the best tongue-bridle."

"I see it plainly enough, now, dear mother, and I am resolved to try and put the true bridle upon my tongue."

And Maria did try to some purpose. The little difficulty she was in was amicably settled; for she had all the parties together, confessed her fault, and urged a general reconciliation. If, at any time afterward, she felt the desire to indulge in unkind words; she turned her thoughts inward to the unkind feelings that prompted them, and she was soon so much engaged in trying to conquer those feelings, that the desire to speak from them passed away. She had found the true TONGUE-BRIDLE.

PRESENCE OF MIND.

GEORGE WILLIAMS and Edward Jones, two boys living near together, obtained their parents' consent, one Saturday, to go to the mill-pond and skate. There had been some pretty cold weather, and as the ice had formed rapidly, Mr. Jones and Mr. Williams supposed that the surface of the mill-pond was as hard as the floor, and that therefore their boys would be entirely free from danger.

Away ran the two boys, with their skates hung around their necks, and their thoughts intent upon the pleasure they were to have on the mill-pond. On reaching the top of a hill which overlooked the

pond, they saw Henry Lee, a school companion, gliding along over the smooth surface of the ice as swiftly as a bird on the wing. Eager to join him, they ran shouting down the hill, and were soon occupied in strapping on their skates. But ere this was completed, the two lads were alarmed by a cry of terror from Henry; and on looking up, they saw that he had broken through the ice, and was struggling in the water.

At this, Edward Jones became so frightened, that he threw off his skates and started back, screaming, toward home; but George Williams, with more presence of mind and courage, seized a long pole that lay upon the shore, and went as quickly as possible to the assistance of the drowning boy. Henry had fallen into what is called an "air-hole," where the ice is very thin; and as at every attempt he made to extricate himself, the ice broke with the weight of his body, he was in great danger of losing his life unless speedy

assistance came. If he remained still and held on to the edges of the ice, he could keep himself up; but then the water was so cold that in a little while he would get benumbed and lose all power to sustain himself. Before, therefore, the frightened Edward Jones could alarm his friends and bring assistance, he would in all probability, have been lost under the ice.

As we have said, George Williams, who was much more courageous than Edward, caught up a pole, and ran as speedily as possible to the place where Henry was struggling in the water.

“Don’t be frightened, Henry,” he called; “don’t be frightened—I’m coming, and will get you out.”

At this Henry ceased his violent efforts to extricate himself, and remained quiet until George came up as near as it was prudent to come, and laid his pole across the broken place, so that each end of it rested upon solid ice.

“Now, hold on to that,” said he coolly.

You may be certain the poor lad in the water did not wait to be asked twice to do as he was told. With both hands he grasped the stick. Then George lay down at full length, and keeping one hand for support on the pole, crept up so close to the broken place in the ice, that he could grasp one of Henry's hands.

"Easy—easy," said he in a calm, encouraging voice, as the boy in the water caught his arm eagerly, and was in danger of dragging him in also. This gave Henry more confidence, and restored, in some measure, his presence of mind. After this it took but a moment for George Williams to pull Henry out, and get him beyond all danger.

The two boys were more than halfway home, when they met a number of men, whom Edward Jones had alarmed by his cries for help, running at full speed to rescue the drowning lad. The praise they bestowed upon George for his courageous conduct was very pleasant to him, but not

half so pleasant as the reflection that he had saved the life of his young playmate.

On the evening after this occurrence, Mr. Jones, the father of Edward, took his son into his room, and when they were alone, said to him—

“How comes it, my boy, that you did not, like George Williams, go immediately to the aid of Henry Lee, when you saw him break through the ice?”

“I was so frightened,” replied the boy, “that I didn’t know what I was doing.”

“And this fright would have cost Henry his life, if there had not been another boy near to save him.”

Edward looked very serious, and his eyes were cast upon the floor.

“I’m sorry,” he said, “but I couldn’t help it.”

“Don’t say that, my son,” replied Mr. Jones. “This timidity—or I might say, cowardice—is a weakness that all may, in a great measure, overcome; and it is the duty of every one to overcome it, for all

should be brave, and ready to risk even life to save others. It is not often that persons who so risk their lives receive any injury, for God protects those who seek to protect others. Let me tell you something that happened when I was a boy. Two children were playing near a spring. One of them was only four years old; the other was seven. The larger boy's name was Frank. While Frank was building a house with sticks that he had gathered under the trees, he heard a splash, and turning around, saw that his little brother had plunged headforemost into the spring, and was struggling in the water. The spring being deep and narrow—it was walled up at the sides—there was no chance for the child to extricate himself.

“When Frank saw this, he was terribly alarmed, and his heart beat so loud that it seemed to him that any one standing near might have heard it. What did he do? Run away for help? No, he was a very little boy, but he was thoughtful and brave,

little as he was. Instead of darting off for home as fast as his feet would carry him, to get some one to come and save his brother from drowning, he laid hold of him by the legs, a portion of which were above the water, and applying all his strength, succeeded in dragging the already half-drowned child from the spring. Thus, by his presence of mind and bravery, he saved the life of his brother.

“These two children lived near a mill, and were permitted by their parents to play in the mill or about the water, just as they pleased. They didn't think any more of danger than we do when we send you to school over the long bridge that crosses the river. Well, one day they were playing by the side of the deep wooden trough, or sluice, that receives the water from the mill-race, before it is poured upon the great wheels. This is furnished with heavy gates at both ends, by which the water is let on and shut off at pleasure. In this trough the water glides along more rapidly

than in the mill-race, and it is drawn under the gate at the lower end, with a very strong, whirling motion, and thence passes to the water-wheels.

“By the side of this deep trough, the two children of whom I spoke were playing, when the little one, who had before fallen into the spring, slipped off, and went plunging down into the water. Frank saw him fall. In an instant the child, who was buoyed up by his clothes, went sweeping down toward the open gate, through which the water was rushing. The delay of half a minute would be fatal. Had Frank become so much frightened as to be unable to act promptly, had he hesitated a moment what to do, his brother would have been lost. But the brave boy sprang at once to his rescue, and leaning down, he caught the child by the clothes, and held on to him eagerly. The water was so far down, and Frank had to stoop so low, that he had not strength to pull his brother out; but he held on to him, and screamed loudly

for help. But the noise of the mill was so great that the millers could not hear his voice. Still he held on, and cried out for aid. Nearly five minutes passed before any one came to his assistance; and then a man, who was going by, saw him, and ran down along the mill-race, and rescued the drowning child. Thus it was that the courage and presence of mind of Frank saved the life of his brother a second time. Now, suppose he had been too frightened to think or act in a proper manner, as you were to-day; his brother would, in all probability, have been drawn in under the gate, and been killed on the wheel."

Edward shuddered at the thought.

"That brave lad," continued Mr. Jones, "was your Uncle Frank; and the brother whose life he saved is now your father."

"You, father! you!" exclaimed Edward in surprise.

"Yes, my son; I fell into the spring, and your uncle saved me from drowning by his promptness to act; and I fell into the mill-

race, and was rescued through his courage and presence of mind."

Edward's thoughts went back to the mill-pond, and he saw, in imagination, Henry Lee struggling in the hole in the ice; and saw how easy it would have been for him to have gone to his assistance, and rescued him from his perilous situation, instead of running away, frightened out of his wits, screaming for others afar off to do what was needed to be done at the moment. He felt, painfully too, that his playfellow would have been drowned, had not George Williams, with true bravery, gone instantly to his aid. It was a moment of self-reproach and mortification.

"Many years ago," continued Edward's father, "I remember reading a story of a boy's presence of mind and courage, that I shall never forget. The lad of whom I speak was walking along the road with his mother and a little sister, when, all at once, was heard the startling cry of 'Mad dog!' On looking in the direction from which

this alarming cry came, a dog was seen running toward them, pursued by a crowd of men and boys. A high fence on each side of the road made escape impossible. So frightened did the mother become, that she was fixed to the spot, and her daughter clung to her, screaming in terror. But the boy stepped boldly before his mother and sister, and, as the dog approached, began hurriedly wrapping around his hand and arm a silk handkerchief which he had drawn from his pocket. In a shorter period of time than it has taken me to relate to you the fact, the dog was down upon them. The brave boy, however, did not shrink back an inch. As he stood in front of his mother and sister, the mad animal, on coming up, made a spring at him, when the boy, with wonderful coolness, thrust the hand around which he had wound his handkerchief, boldly into his mouth, and grasped his tongue. While he kept hold of the dog's tongue, the animal could not bite him; and the handkerchief had protected

his hand from being scratched by his teeth, as he thrust it into his open mouth:

Ere the dog could recover himself and struggle loose from the boy, the men in pursuit were upon him, with clubs and stones, and in a few minutes he was lying dead, almost at the feet of the heroic boy, who, while he had saved the lives, perhaps, of his mother and sister, remained himself unharmed.

“Few boys, not one perhaps in a hundred,” continued Mr. Jones, “would have had his presence of mind and courage, under similar circumstances; and I doubt very much, if one man in ten could be found to show so brave a spirit. Yet, how much better and safer was it for the boy to act as he did—safer for himself, and safer for those he loved. The fact is, my son, but little of danger presents itself as we pass through life, which may not be escaped if we look it boldly in the face, and see what it is like. Unless we understand exactly what the danger is, and in what

manner it is approaching, how shall we escape it?"

The stories of bravery and self-possession which Mr. Jones related made a very marked impression upon the mind of Edward. He saw, by contrast, his own conduct in a most unfavourable light, and he shuddered when he thought of what the consequence to Henry Lee would have been, had not his companion possessed a cooler and more courageous spirit than himself.

It was not more than a week after the affair at the mill-pond, that Edward started out with a little brother, not over four years of age, whom he was drawing on a sled, for the purpose of riding down a hill on the smooth snow, a short distance from the house. On the way to this hill, Edward had to pass through a field belonging to a neighbour. When nearly across, he heard the noise of some animal, and looking around, saw a mad bull approaching from the other side of the field. With the first impulse of fear, he dropped the rope with

which he was pulling the sled on which sat his little brother, and sprang away, in order to reach the fence before the infuriated animal came up. He had only gone a few steps, however, before he thought of the innocent child on the sled, who would surely be gored to death by the bull, if left where he was. This thought made him stop and turn round. The bull was now running toward them, muttering and bellowing dreadfully. If he went back for his brother, escape was almost impossible; but how could he leave the dear child to a terrible death without making an effort to save him? These were the hurried thoughts that rushed through his mind. Then he remembered the mill-pond, the boy and the mad dog, the child in the spring and his brave brother, and what his father had said about being courageous. It took scarcely an instant of time for all this to be presented to the frightened boy. By a strong effort he composed himself, and then ran back to where his brother was still

upon the sled. The bull was now very near; but Edward, though he had taken the child in his arms, was able to run so fast as to reach the fence and climb over it before the mad creature could reach them. In less than a quarter of a minute after he was beyond the reach of danger, the bull came dashing up to the fence, foaming and bellowing with rage.

“Well and bravely done, my noble boy!” exclaimed Edward’s father, who, seeing his children’s danger, had been running toward them unperceived. Just as Edward landed, with his brother still clasped in his arms, safely on the right side of the fence, he came up.

Edward turned quickly toward his father, who saw that his face was very pale, and that his lips were quivering.

“It was a narrow escape, my son,” said Mr. Jones, “a very narrow escape. But heaven is always on the side of those who seek to save others that are in danger. If you had hesitated a moment about acting

courageously, our dear little Willy would now have been bleeding, it may be, upon the horns of that mad animal. How thankful I feel that you had the bravery to do as you have done."

"And I am thankful, too, father," said the boy, in a trembling voice. "Oh! if in my cowardice I had permitted Willy to be killed, I should never have been happy again in all my life."

After such a trial and triumph, Edward was able in the future to act with becoming presence of mind, in all cases of danger and peril that happened to occur.

TEMPTATION RESISTED.

CHARLES MURRAY left home, with his books in his satchel, for school. Before starting, he kissed his little sister, and patted Juno on the head, and as he went singing away, he felt as happy as any little boy could wish to feel. Charles was a good-tempered lad, but he had the fault common to a great many boys, that of being tempted and enticed by others to do things which he knew to be contrary to the wishes of his parents. Such acts never made him feel any happier; for the fear that his disobedience would be found out, added to his consciousness of having done wrong, were far from being pleasant companions.



CHARLES AND HIS MOTHER.

On the present occasion, as he walked briskly in the direction of the school, he repeated over his lessons in his mind, and was intent upon having them so perfect as to be able to repeat every word. He had gone nearly half the distance, and was still thinking over his lessons, when he stopped suddenly as a voice called out,

“Halloo, Charley!”

Turning in the direction from which the voice came, he saw Archy Benton, with his school-basket in his hand; but he was going from, instead of in the direction of the school.

“Where are you going, Archy?” asked Charles, calling out to him.

“Into the woods for chestnuts.”

“A’n’t you going to school to-day?”

“No, indeed. There was a sharp frost last night, and Uncle John says the wind will rattle down the chestnuts like hail.”

“Did your father say you might go?”

“No, indeed. I asked him, but he said I couldn’t go until Saturday. But the hogs

are in the woods, and will eat the chestnuts all up before Saturday: so I am going to-day. Come, go along, won't you? It is such a fine day, and the ground will be covered with nuts. We can get home at the usual time, and no one will suspect that we were not at school."

"I should like to go, very well," said Charley; "but I know that father will be greatly displeased, if he finds it out; and I am afraid he would get to know it, in some way."

"How could he get to know it? Isn't he at his store all the time?"

"But he might think to ask me if I was at school. And I never will tell a lie."

"You could say yes, and not tell a lie, either," returned Archy. "You were at school yesterday."

"No, I couldn't. A lie, father says, is in the intent to deceive. He would, of course, mean to ask whether I was at school to-day, and if I said yes, I would tell a lie."

"It isn't so clear to me that you would.

At any rate, I don't see such great harm in a little fib. It doesn't hurt anybody."

"Father says a falsehood hurts a boy a great deal more than he thinks for. And one day he showed me in the Bible where liars were classed with murderers and other wicked spirits in hell. I can't tell a lie, Archy."

"There won't be any need of your doing so," urged Archy; "for I am sure he will never think to ask you about it. Why should he?"

"I don't know. But whenever I have been doing any thing wrong, he is sure to begin to question me, and lead me on until I betray the secret of my fault."

"Never mind. Come and go with me. It is a fine day. We sha'n't have another like it. It will rain on Saturday, I'll bet any thing. So come along, now, and let us have a day in the woods, while we can."

Charles was very strongly tempted. When he thought of the confinement of

school, and then of the freedom of a day in the woods, he felt much inclined to go with Archy.

“Come along,” said Archy, as Charles stood balancing the matter in his mind. And he took hold of his arm, and drew him in a direction opposite from the school. “Come! you are just the boy I want. I was thinking about you the moment before I saw you.”

The temptation to Charles was very strong. “I don’t believe I will be found out,” he said to himself. “And it is such a pleasant day to go into the woods.”

Still he held back, and thought of his father’s displeasure if he should discover that he had played the truant. The word “truant,” that he repeated mentally, decided the matter in his mind, and he exclaimed, in a loud and decided voice, as he dragged himself away from the hand of Archy, that had still retained its hold on his arm, “I’ve never played truant yet, and I don’t think I ever will. Father says

he never played truant when he was a boy; and I'd like to say the same thing when I get to be a man."

"Nonsense, Charley! come, go with me," urged Archy.

But Charles Murray's mind was made up not to play the truant. So he started off for school, saying, as he did so—

"No, I can't go, Archy, and if I were you, I would wait until Saturday. You will enjoy it so much better when you have your father's consent. It always takes away more than half the pleasure of any enjoyment to think that it is obtained at the cost of disobedience. Come! go to school with me now, and I will go into the woods with you on Saturday."

"No, I can't wait until Saturday. I'm sure it will rain; and if it don't, the hogs will eat up every nut that has fallen, long before that time."

"There will be plenty left on the trees, if they do. It's as fine sport to knock them down as to pick them up."

But Archy's purpose was settled, and nothing that Charles Murray could say had any influence with him. So the boys parted, the one for his school, and the other for his stolen holiday in the woods.

The moment Charles was alone again, he felt no longer any desire to go with Archy. He had successfully resisted the temptation, and the allurements were gone. But even for listening to temptation he had some small punishment, for he was late to school by nearly ten minutes, and had not his lessons as perfect as usual, for which the teacher felt called upon to reprimand him. But this was soon forgotten; and he was so good a boy through the whole day, and studied all his lessons so diligently, that when evening came, the teacher, who had not forgotten the reprimand, said to him—

“You have been the best boy in the school to-day, Charles. To-morrow morning try and come in time, and be sure that your lessons are well committed to memory.”

Charles felt very light and cheerful as he went running, skipping, and singing homeward. His day had been well spent, and happiness was his reward. When he came in sight of home, there was no dread of meeting his father and mother, such as he would have felt if he had played the truant. Every thing looked bright and pleasant; and when Juno came bounding out to meet him, he couldn't help hugging the favourite dog in the joy he felt at seeing her.

When Charles met his mother, she looked at him with a more earnest and affectionate gaze than usual. And then the boy noticed that her countenance became serious.

“A'n't you well, mother?” asked Charles.

“Yes, my dear, I am very well,” she replied. “But I saw something an hour ago that has made me feel very sad. Archy Benton was brought home from the woods this afternoon, where he had gone for chestnuts, instead of going to school, as he should

have done, dreadfully hurt. He had fallen from a tree. Both of his arms are broken, and the doctor fears that he has received some internal injury that may cause his death."

Charles turned pale when his mother said this.

"Boys rarely get hurt, except when they are acting disobediently, or doing some harm to others," remarked Mrs. Murray. "If Archy had gone to school, this dreadful accident would not have happened. His father told him that he might go for chestnuts on Saturday; and if he had waited until then, I am sure he might have gone into the woods and received no harm, for all who do right are protected from evil."

"He tried to persuade me to go with him," said Charles. "And I was strongly tempted to do so. But I resisted the temptation, and have felt glad about it ever since."

Mrs. Murray took her son's hand, and pressing it hard, said, with much feeling—

"How rejoiced I am, that you were able

to resist his persuasions to do wrong. Even if you had not been hurt yourself, the injury received by Archy would have discovered to us that you were with him, and then how unhappy your father and I would have been, I cannot tell. And you would have been unhappy, too. Ah! my son, there is only one true course for all of us, and that is to do right. Every deviation from this path brings trouble. An act of a moment may make us wretched for days, weeks, months, or perhaps years. It will be a long, long time before Archy is free from pain of body or mind—it may be, that he will never recover. Think how miserable his parents must feel; and all because of this single act of disobedience.”

We cannot say how often Charles said to himself that evening and the next day, when he thought of Archy—

“Oh, how glad I am that I did not go with him!”

When Saturday came, the father and mother of Charles Murray gave him per-

mission to go into the woods for chestnuts. Two or three other boys, who were his school companions, likewise received liberty to go; and they joined Charles, and altogether made a pleasant party. It did not rain, nor had the hogs eaten up all the nuts, for the lads found plenty under the tall old trees, and in a few hours filled their baskets. Charles said, when he came home, that he had never enjoyed himself better, and was so glad that he had not been tempted to go with Archy Benton.

It was a lesson he never afterward forgot. If he was tempted to do what he knew to be wrong, he thought of Archy's day in the woods, and the tempter instantly left him. The boy who had been so badly hurt did not die, as the doctor feared; but he suffered great pain, and was ill for a long time.

THE TWO WAYS.

JAMES LEWIS was fifteen years old. Like many lads of his age, he felt, at times, that the parental hand, which sought to guide him aright, drew upon the reins too often. He wished to do many things that his father disapproved, and often became impatient when checked by one wiser and more experienced than himself.

In this respect, James was like most young persons, who think their parents or guardians over-particular about them, and more inclined to abridge their pleasures than to widen the sphere of their enjoyments.

“I think father is very unkind,” we

have heard a boy say, when the act of his parent was dictated by the tenderest regard for his welfare.

“Mother never likes to see me enjoy myself,” says a little girl, when some restriction is laid upon her. And yet that very restriction is meant to save her from years of misery in after-life.

Children are not apt to think that their parents are older and more experienced than themselves, and, in consequence, know better than they, what is for their good. Nor do they comprehend the loving and thoughtful care, deepening often into anxious solicitude, with which they are ever regarded. We do not greatly wonder at this, because the minds of children are not perfected, and their store of experience is small. Still, they are able to understand what their parents teach them, and to act more wisely than if they followed only their own inclinations. And it is to help them to act more wisely, and thus to secure happiness in the future, that their pa-

rents and friends so often present good precepts to their minds, correct in them what they see to be wrong, and seek so constantly to turn their feet into ways of safety.

But we were going to relate something about a lad named James Léwis, who was fifteen years old. A boy who has gained that age generally has his mind pretty well stored from books, and is able to think on a good many subjects. And he is, moreover, very apt to have a pretty good opinion of himself and to believe that he knows, even better than his father, what is best for him.

James was just such a lad as we have here pictured; and his father often felt troubled about him when he saw how perseveringly he sought to have his own way, even though it was not approved by his parents.

“My son,” said Mr. Lewis, one day, after having vainly endeavoured to make James understand that something he wished to

do was wrong, "there are two ways in life—one leading to happiness, and the other to misery. At first they run almost side by side, and we may easily step from one to the other; but soon they diverge widely, and never come within sight of each other again. The path that leads to destruction, my son, looks more inviting to the young and inexperienced than the one that leads to happiness. The flowers that grow along its margin have brighter hues and a more attractive perfume, while in the distance a hundred bright prospects are given to the eyes. The young are naturally inclined to walk in this path. But God has given them parents and friends, to point them to the better way, and lead them therein. They stand as angels of mercy, sent from heaven to guide them to the way of life. James, try and let this thought sink into your mind. And now I leave you free, in this instance, to act as your own mind may direct. I have pointed out the danger that is before you. I have

told you that the way in which you desire to walk is not the right way. That which we feel inclined to do, is not always best for us, because our hearts are evil, and inclined to lead us into evil. Left free, as I now leave you, let me earnestly entreat you to choose the path of safety. It may not be so inviting at first; you may not be able to enter it except through self-denial; but you will not walk in it long before discovering that the flowers which spring up here and there have a sweet and soothing perfume, and that your feet are not weary, although the way looked rough when viewed from the point where it diverged from the path I have so earnestly warned you not to take."

We are sorry to say that the words of Mr. Lewis did not sink so deeply into the heart of James as they should have done. It is true that he thought about them, and, to a certain extent, comprehended their meaning. But his inclination was stronger than his reason. As his father had not laid

a command on him, he, after a struggle in his own mind between a sense of right and a desire to participate in a pleasure whose charms his imagination had heightened, suffered himself to enter the way in which there was no safety, and, before he dreamed of danger, he was led aside into the commission of an act that violated both human and divine laws.

When James returned home, he felt afraid to meet his father. Oh, how unhappy he was! Never in his life had he been so wretched. He had gathered the first fruit that hung temptingly from the branches that bent over the way he had chosen to walk in, but it had proved as bitter as wormwood. All that his father had said when warning him not to choose the path of error, came vividly to his mind, and almost with tears did he repent of his folly. Alone in his room, bowed down with shame and self-condemnation, James Lewis sat, after the shades of evening had fallen. Gradually, as the twilight deepened, and

as his eyes ceased to reflect the objects around him, the mind of the lad became filled with confused and rapidly varying images.

Suddenly there was a great change. He found himself standing on a beautiful plain. From this departed two roads, toward which he was walking. His mind was tranquil and happy. One of these roads looked exceedingly inviting. Bright flowers sprang thickly beside it, and trees, among the branches of which sported birds of gayest plumage, grew all along its borders. The other road presented nothing attractive. The margin was nearly barren, and it began at once to ascend a steep and somewhat rugged hill. As James drew near the point where these two ways diverged, he met an old man, with a mild countenance, and eyes lit up by wisdom.

“You see before you,” said the old man to him, “the Way of Life and the Road to Destruction. Choose, now, which you will walk in. The Road to Destruction looks

far more inviting at the entrance than the Way of Life; but the flowers you see have no perfume, the fruits that hang temptingly from the trees are bitter to the taste, and the road which looks so smooth and pleasant is, in reality, rough and stony.

“The farther you go in this road, the less attractive it becomes; but, with every step of progress in the Way of Life, the more beautiful will all appear. The one leads to death, the other to life. Choose, now, the way in which you will walk.”

The boy paused only for a few moments. He looked first at the unattractive way, and then at the path so full of beauty.

“The old man erred,” said he in his heart. “This is the Road to Happiness and to Life, and the other is the way to Destruction.”

And then he entered, with hurrying feet, the Road to Destruction. Earnestly the old man called after him, and tenderly did he warn him; but the boy heeded him not.

In his eagerness to reach a spot at a short distance from the point where the two roads separated, and at which there was a beautiful arbour, with a fountain throwing bright waters into the sunny air, his foot struck against a stone that was not perceived, and he fell to the earth with a stunning jar. He was in so much pain from the fall, when he reached the green arbour, that he could not enjoy its pleasant shade, nor take delight in the beautiful fountain. With a groan he threw himself upon the green sward; where he had lain only a few minutes, when he sprang to his feet in sudden terror, for close to him had crept a poisonous serpent, that was just about striking him with its deadly fang.

With less ardour the boy moved on in the way he had chosen. Soon a number of flowers, glowing in all the hues of the rainbow, arrested his eyes; and he stepped aside to gather them. But their odour was so offensive that he threw them to the earth quickly. Another flower tempted

him by its beauty ; but, in plucking it, he tore his hands with thorns.

Pausing now, he looked back, and the wish arose in his mind that he had taken the other road. He would have retraced his steps, but he remembered the serpent at the fountain, and feared to go by that dangerous place again. So he moved on once more. Far in advance there opened before him a beautiful prospect, and he pressed on to enjoy the scene. But, all was an illusion—like a mirage in the desert. When he gained the spot, the attraction had disappeared. And now the road began to ascend, and to wind along the skirt of a forest. His heart grew faint as he entered deeper and deeper into this gloomy district, and yet saw no open space ahead.

As he walked fearfully along, a roar shook the earth ; then a beast of prey rushed past him, and struck his fangs deep into the vitals of some weaker animal. Terror gave wings to his feet, and he ran deeper

and deeper into the forest. Night at length began to come. It was with difficulty that he could see his way or keep in the path, which had become so rough that he stumbled at almost every step. His feet were bruised and cut, and he walked onward in pain.

“Oh that I had taken the other road!” he said, pausing in the midst of the dark forest, and looking back. But the cry of a wild beast arose in the direction from which he had come. He moved again, when, suddenly, a meteor shot across the sky. By the light which it gave, he saw himself on the very edge of a fearful gulf, down which he gazed in horror. Another step and he would have been lost. The shock startled him from his dream.

All was dark in the chamber where James Lewis sat, and it was some moments before he could realize the fact that he was safe in his father's house, with the two ways in life yet before him, and he in freedom to choose the one in which he would walk.

Dear children! if you wish to enter the right way—the Way of Life, leading to felicity—you must do so through obedience. You cannot, yourselves, know this way. It must be pointed out to you. If left to yourselves, you would be almost certain to take the Road to Destruction. The way of obedience is the way of safety. This way does not look inviting at first, but, when you have once entered it, you will find that it grows more pleasant, attractive, and beautiful, at every step. Unlike the other way, no serpents lurk amid the waving grass; no thorns are among its flowers; it leads through no dark forest abounding in ravenous beasts. And, unlike the way which terminates in the gulf of Destruction, it ends in the garden of God.

HARRY'S DREAM.

“**S**UCH a dream as I had, mother!” said Henry Jones, as he took his seat at the breakfast-table; and he laughed as he spoke.

“What was it about?” asked the boy’s mother.

“Oh! It was such a funny dream. I thought old Peter lent me his violin; and I went out alone with it into the woods, and then sat down upon a rock and began to play. As I drew the bow across the strings, such music filled the air as I never heard before. The very leaves on the trees, and the wind that played among them, grew still to listen. But, more wonderful than this: while I was playing, three of the dearest rabbits you ever saw came leaping

along, and they stood and looked at me, with their ears bent back, and their heads turning first on one side and then on the other, to listen. In a little while they all got upon the stump of a tree that had been cut down, and there sat upon their hind-feet, while, with their forefeet they kept time to the music. Just then I heard a noise, and glancing round, I saw an old owl, with his solemn face, looking out from a hollow tree."

"An owl!" said Fanny, as she laughed aloud. Fanny was the sister of Henry Jones.

"Yes; a great owl. And he looked so serious! But I played on as hard as I could play, and the music seemed to go away off through the woods, it was so loud. Presently I heard such a rattling among the bushes and such a rushing in the air all around me. A beautiful deer with branching horns came bounding along; and when he came near me, he stopped and looked at me with his large dark eyes. His face was gentle as the face of a lamb. I kept

drawing my bow as hard as I could, and the deer stooped down, and lay on the grass and listened. Then all the birds and beasts that were in the great wood came gathering around me, and while I played for them, they hearkened to the music as if they had been human, instead of dumb creatures. The robin was there, and the red-bird; the wren, the sparrow, the little yellow-bird, the dove, and the beautiful humming-bird. A great eagle came rushing through the air; and a hawk stooped down among the birds, but he was so pleased with the music that he did not seek to do any harm, nor were the little birds afraid of him."

"What a strange dream!" said Fanny.
"How long did they stay?"

"Oh! a great while. I played for them all for a long time, and never felt so happy in my life."

"Did they come near?" asked Fanny.

"Yes. The deer laid his head upon my knee, and a sweet little humming-bird

with blue and golden wings and breast like a rainbow, came close up to me, and almost lit upon my shoulder. A bluebird settled down upon the deer's back, and robin red-breast and the sparrow came so close that I could have caught them in my hand."

"Robin red-breast and the sparrow!" cried Fanny, clapping her hands. "Why, it was the sparrow, who, a long time ago, shot cock robin with his bow and arrow."

"Yes; but that was all forgotten, and they were the best of friends."

"Oh, I wish I had been there!"

"But it was only a dream, you know, Fanny," said Henry.

"True enough. I was forgetting that. And they stayed a long while?"

"Yes. But at last I heard a great roar in the wood. Then the birds started up, fluttering their wings, and were soon glancing away over the tree-tops and through the forest. The deer sprang frightened to his feet, and, after looking timidly, first on this side and then on that, bounded off

like an arrow. I now saw a great red lion dashing along and roaring, while his long tail swept angrily around. This so frightened me, that I awoke."

"What a strange dream!" said Fanny.

"What could it mean, mother?" asked Henry, on closing the relation. "I never had such a strange dream before."

"Dreams, my son," said Henry's mother, "are of two kinds; fantastic, or such as have in them no signification whatever; and correspondential, or such as present, in apparent visible form, such objects as correspond in nature to qualities and attributes of the mind. Dreams of this kind often come as means of instruction, warning, or admonition, and are sent or permitted to come by the Great Father of us all, who is ever overruling all occurrences, even the most minute, for our spiritual good."

"But what signification could there be in my curious dream?" asked Harry.

"That, my son, is more than I am able

to point out; still, my mind sees dimly a remote significance. Do you remember by what name the Lord, when on earth, called Herod."

"That fox?"

"Yes. But what did he mean by this?"

"He meant that Herod was cunning, like a fox."

"Yes; or, in other words, that the quality of Herod's mind, which the fox visibly embodies in nature, ruled his actions. Herod had other qualities beside that of cunning, as all other men have; but he was a fox, because he suffered this particular quality to govern him. You have heard a child called a lamb?"

"Yes."

"Because a lamb is the visible representation of innocence in the world of nature. A cruel man is called a tiger, for a like reason; the tiger being a natural form of cruelty. And so it is of every beast and bird and flower; in fact, of every visible object below man. They are all images of

things in man. In your dream, then, you saw around you only what was in yourself,—images of your affections.”

Harry looked wonderingly into his mother's face. He but half comprehended her meaning.

“Why did they all come around me when I played,” he inquired.

“It is easy to ask questions, my boy,” said the mother, smiling, “but it is not always so easy to answer them. Let us, however, remember, that in music one essential thing is harmony, and that what is harmonious is in order. Think, at the same time, of all these animals that were so docile at the sound of your music, as affections of your mind, all subdued and in perfect subjection to the power of true harmony, or that which comes from a life passed in the order for which God designed it. In other words, if you live an orderly and good life, according to the commandments of God, all the affections of your mind will be in subjection. Good affections will be in their

true activity, while evil affections will yield a powerless obedience, subdued under the influence of what is harmonious and heavenly."

The boy did not fully comprehend this; but it made him thoughtful.

"Have I tigers and wolves in me?" he asked some hours afterward.

"You have evil affections, to which these correspond, my son," replied his mother. "But they are young and feeble yet, and you must not give them food to nourish and strengthen them, which you do when you indulge a feeling of cruelty, or seek, from anger, to harm another. That there are human wolves and tigers in the world, more cruel even than the wild beasts of the forest, the dreadful crimes that are almost daily committed too fully prove. Be watchful, then, my son, that you do not give these evil beasts of the heart power over the innocent lambs and doves that likewise have a place in your bosom."



WILLIAM AND THE BEGGAR.

TRUE BENEVOLENCE.

A LITTLE boy, named William, once had a sixpence given to him. He was a kind-hearted boy. "What shall I do with my sixpence?" said he. "How shall I spend it? Oh! I will buy myself a top and cord!" And away he started for the store where toys were kept for sale.

As he went along, he saw a man with soiled and ragged clothes, sitting on the door-step of a house. The man seemed so wretched, that the lad paused to look at him. The man said nothing, and the boy soon went on again; but he walked slower, and every now and then stopped and looked back at the miserable creature. When

he got to the shop-door, he paused, and instead of going in, turned and looked again at the poor man, who was still in sight.

“He must be hungry,” said the lad to himself thoughtfully. “I can do without a top very well.”

Back he ran, and without reflecting further, handed the man his sixpence, saying as he did so—

“Here, poor man, is a sixpence. You must be hungry. Go and get something to eat.”

The man took the money, and thanked the boy for his generous conduct.

William felt happy. He had denied himself an anticipated pleasure in order to relieve the necessities of another, and the thought gave him more delight than he could possibly have received from the possession of the top he had intended buying.

On coming back home, William told his mother of what he had done, and ended by saying—

“Was it not right, mother?”

“You were right, certainly, my son, to deny yourself a pleasure, in order to relieve the distress of another, and I am glad to find in you so unselfish a spirit. Still, it is possible that you have not done so well as you would if you had bought a top, and amused your little sick brother by spinning it for him.”

“But, mother,” said William, “the man looked so poor; and I am sure he was hungry.”

“Yet, it is very possible that he alone was to blame for this.”

“How could he help it, mother?”

“If it is the man I saw going past the window half an hour ago, I am very sure he could help it. How was he dressed?”

“He had on a ragged brown coat; and his hat was torn, and one side bent in.”

“The same man. He is idle and drunken. All the money he gets he spends in liquor, and then goes home intoxicated to ill-treat his wife and half-starved, half-clothed children. With the sixpence you gave him,

he will buy liquor. Drinking this will deprive him of his reason, and then infernal spirits will flow into his mind, and prompt him to abuse the helpless, dependent ones in his wretched home. It does such a man no good, my son, to bestow alms upon him; but, instead, does him harm, and gives him power to harm others."

"O mother! I am so sorry," replied William, the tears gathering in his eyes. "I never thought of that. Will you forgive me for having done so wrong?"

"I do not blame you, my dear boy," said his mother. "As far as you are concerned, the act was good, for it sprang from a wish to do good to a suffering fellow-creature. You thought the object of your benevolence one who stood in need of food, without possessing the ability to obtain it; and you denied yourself in order to relieve his wants. That was right, and I hope you will ever be as ready to act in a similar spirit."

"But it wouldn't be right for me to give money to a drunken man again?"

“Oh no! Not if you knew that he was such. In dispensing to the needy of the good gifts that Providence has freely bestowed upon us, it is our duty to see, as far as lies in our power, that the idle and vicious are not encouraged in their evil ways, by having wants supplied by our hands that it is their duty to supply with their own. I will tell you how you might have spent your sixpence, and done good with it.”

“How, mother?”

“You know the poor woman living around in the court, who used to come and wash for us?”

“Mrs. Baker?”

“Yes. She is sick. You know that.”

“Yes, ma'am.”

“She has a fever. If you had bought her a nice orange, and taken it to her, it would have tasted very pleasant to her, and would have cooled her hot lips. Don't you remember how good the orange tasted which father brought you home, when you had that raging fever?”

“O mother! I wish I had thought of that,” said William, looking grieved. “If I only had another sixpence!”

“You shall have one, my generous-minded boy!” replied his mother, taking a sixpence from her purse, and handing it to William.

The lad fairly flew away. In about twenty minutes he came back. But his face was not happy.

“Did you get the orange, my son?” asked his mother.

“Yes, ma’am,” he replied. “And Mrs. Baker was so glad to get it. She said it tasted better than any thing she had placed to her lips for a long time. But, O mother! what do you think? The man to whom I gave the sixpence came staggering out of the drinking-house, at the corner, and fell so drunk upon the pavement, that he could not get up! It was my sixpence that did this!”

And the little boy put his hands over his face, and burst into tears.

“Do not be grieved, my son,” said William’s mother, speaking in a kind and soothing voice. “You did not do wrong, for you acted from a desire to benefit the unhappy man. In the Lord’s providence, you were permitted to give this man your sixpence; and let us hope that the Lord will make the act, in some way, promote his good, even though, to all human appearance, it seems to have done him harm.”

Thus the mother sought to satisfy her grieving boy. We should all profit by the lesson he was taught. God has given us minds and the ability to reflect. Let us use our reason, and wisely discriminate between true benevolence and mere impulse.

THE LAMB.

EMMMA LEE was on her way to school, one day, when she found a new-born lamb lying in the soft green grass. She looked all around, but its dam was nowhere to be seen; so she lifted it tenderly in her arms, and carried it back to her home. As she walked along, the lamb laid its head against her bosom, and looked up at her with its mild eyes, and meek, innocent face. Already she loved it; when she got home she said—

“O mother! Dear mother! Look here! I have found the sweetest little lamb. It was all alone in the field. And I have brought it home. Sha’n’t it be mine, mo-

ther? I will give it some of my bread and milk, and oh! I will love it so much."

But Emma's mother said that the lamb, no doubt, belonged to farmer Wilkins, and that it wouldn't be right for her to keep it.

Then Emma looked sad.

"It would be wrong, my love," said Mrs. Lee, seeing how sorrowful Emma looked, "for you to keep what belongs to farmer Wilkins. Suppose you had a lamb, and it were to get lost—would you think it right for the person who found it to keep it as his own?"

Emma Lee, though a very little girl, was quick to understand a good reason, when it was given. She saw, in a moment, that she had no right to keep the lamb. So she said, though in not a very animated way, for she could not help being grieved at the thought of parting with the innocent creature—

"Hadn't I better carry it over to farmer Wilkins?"

“Yes, dear. It may be his; but, if not, he can tell you to whom it belongs.”

So Emma took the lamb in her arms again, and carried it over to farmer Wilkins.

“I found this dear little lamb all alone in the fields, as I went to school,” said Emma, when she saw the farmer. “Mother says it must be yours; and so I have brought it over.”

“Yes, it is my lamb,” said farmer Wilkins, as he took the little animal from her arms; “and you are a good girl for bringing it home to me. If the dogs had found it, they would have torn it all to pieces. Here, Kitty,” and he spoke to a maid who was standing near, “go into the garden and pick a basket of strawberries for Emma Lee. She found this new-born lamb in the field this morning, and has come all the way here to bring it home.”

As the farmer said this, he put the lamb upon the ground, but, as Emma thought, not very gently. This awakened all her

sympathies for the little creature, and stooping down, she put her arm around its neck and kissed it.

“Dear, sweet lamb!” she murmured. Then looking into the farmer’s face, she said, in an earnest voice—

“You won’t hurt the poor lamb?”

“O no, child, I won’t hurt it,” replied the farmer, whose feelings were slightly moved by this exhibition of tenderness. “But come into the garden, with Kitty, and get some strawberries.”

“Thank you!” replied Emma, looking up; “but I don’t care about any strawberries to-day.” The farmer saw that there were tears in the eyes of the little girl; and he began to understand her real feelings about the lamb.

“Do you love the lamb?” he asked.

Emma did not answer in words, but the way in which she drew the creature’s head tightly against her bosom, told the farmer how much of tenderness was in her heart.

“If that lamb were yours,” said farmer Wilkins, “what would you do with it?”

Emma’s whole face brightened instantly, and her tongue was unloosed.

“O!” replied she, “I would feed it on new milk from our cow, every day; and I would make it a nice soft bed to sleep on, where no cold nor rain would touch it. And I would love it so much!”

“Take it, then, my good little girl,” said the farmer. “I have a great many lambs in my flocks, and shall not miss this one. Take it; it is yours.”

How overjoyed was Emma at these unexpected words!

“O! I am so glad!” fell warmly from her lips. Then lifting the lamb once more in her arms, she ran home with it as fast as she could go. Under her kind care, the lamb was so tenderly nursed that it scarcely missed the mother from which it had been taken; and it soon learned to know Emma’s voice, and would follow her about, and sport with her as playfully as a kitten.

Every day when she went to school, her mother had to shut the lamb up in the house, to keep it from following her; but when she returned, it would see her a good way off, and run skipping along to meet her. Emma would put her arms around its neck, as soon as it came up, kiss it, and say—

“Dear little lamb! How I love you!”

And though the lamb could not tell, in words, how much it loved its dear young friend, yet Emma could read its love in its eyes, and understand all it would have said had it been gifted with speech.

LITTLE GEORGE AND HIS GRANDMOTHER.

“O GRANDMA!” said little George, opening the curtain and looking out of the window—“the ground is all covered with snow!”

“Yes, my dear, it has snowed during the night, and covered the earth to the depth of several inches.”

“O, look at the pretty snow-birds! See how close they come to the door. But are they not very cold, grandma, their feet are so red?”

“No George. The little snow-birds are not afraid of the cold. They are all covered with soft and warm feathers.”

“But a’n’t their feet cold? When my feet were once almost frozen, they were red, just like the snow-bird’s feet.”

“Their feet are always red, as well in summer as in winter.”

“Where do the snow-birds go in the summer-time, grandma? I never see them after the winter is gone.”

“They love the snow and the cold, and so they go away off to the north in the summer-time, where they lay their eggs and hatch out their young ones.”

“Then, if they love the cold so well, why don’t they stay there? It’s always cold at the north, you have told me.”

“They come here for food. In our mild climate grow very many plants, the seeds of which are good food for them.”

“But it snows here too, grandma, and covers up all the ground.”

“But not often so deep as to cover up in the woods and corners of the fields the tops of weeds and bushes, from which they may still pick the seeds. See there! Don’t you

see that little bird picking out the seeds from a stock which still lifts itself above the snow?"

"O yes! Dear little bird! See! Now it has come close up to the door, and is picking up the crumbs from the step."

"After a deep snow, they always come about the houses and barns, and haystacks, to pick up crumbs and seeds."

"Where are they when it don't snow, or when all the snow is melted?"

"In the woods and fields, getting their food from weeds and shrubs."

"They all turn to sparrows in the summer-time, don't they?"

"No, dear. Didn't I tell you that they all left us and went away to the north, where the climate is colder?"

"O yes. But then I heard Mr. Murray say, that the little chirping sparrows that live about the houses in summer-time were snow-birds with new feathers on."

"Other people besides Mr. Murray have thought so. But a sparrow is a sparrow,

and a snow-bird a snow-bird. But come, it is breakfast-time, and you must eat and get ready for school."

"Must I go to school to-day, grandma, all through the deep snow?" little George asked, making a wry face.

"You are not afraid of the snow, are you, George?"

"No, I am not afraid of it—but then it is so deep, and looks so cold."

"It's only a few inches deep," grandma said, "and I will wrap you up so warm that the cold can't touch you. So come down and get a nice breakfast, and then my little boy will go off as happy as he can be."

Like a good many other little boys, George liked to get an excuse for staying away from school, and therefore it was, that as soon as he saw the snow on the ground, he thought that now he could stay at home and have a good frolic. But when his grandmother seemed so in earnest about his going, he felt a little unkind; and though he said nothing more, he looked

rather sober as he came down-stairs and seated himself at the breakfast-table.

“Wouldn’t you like to hear a little story, George?” his grandma said, after the breakfast was over, and she was about getting him ready to go to school.

“O yes, grandma, tell me a story,” and his eyes brightened up, and he looked all interest.

“Well, a great many years ago,” began George’s grandma, “there lived a poor woman in a cottage, who had one little boy. She hadn’t money to buy him such nice, warm clothes as you have, but the best that she could get for him were always kept whole and clean. In the summer-time he worked in her garden sometimes, and sometimes in the neighbours’ gardens, who paid him money. This money he always brought to his mother, for he loved her very much.

“When the winter-time came, and the ground was all covered up with snow, he could not get any work to do, and then he had time to go to school. His mother was

so anxious that her boy should learn, that she saved a little money, poor as she was, during summer, to pay for his schooling in the winter.

“ Now the school-house was more than a mile away, and the snow lay for months upon the ground far deeper than it is now, for the winters were a great deal colder then, and it snowed a great deal more. But this little boy never asked to stay home, although he was no bigger than you, and hadn't such a nice, warm great-coat as you have. In the morning he would be up bright and early, and bring in wood for his mother from the wood-pile, and fetch her three or four pails of water from the spring, enough to last all day, and then he would go off to school as happy as a bird.

“ Well, in this way he got a good education, and when he grew up to be a man, his learning enabled him to earn money enough to keep his poor mother from working so hard any longer.”

“ Wasn't he a good little boy, grandma ?”

IV.—M

George said, looking up with a face full of delighted interest.

“Yes, George, he was a very good boy; and, when he grew up to be a man, he was a good man.”

“Where is he now, grandma?”

“He is in heaven, my dear. After a while he took sick and died, and they buried his dead body in the ground, but his living spirit—that part of him that thought about and loved his mother—could not die. It went to heaven. But his mother was not all alone. He left her another little boy, his own boy, whose mother had gone to heaven a little while before him.”

“And was that little boy good to his grandma?”

“O yes.”

“And did he love her?”

“Yes, he loved her very much, and she loved him, and made him warm clothes. But he didn’t always like to go to school, because he didn’t know how much good it had done his father, when he was a little

boy, nor how far his father had to go, even when the snow was deeper and the air colder than it is now."

George stood thoughtful by his grandma's side for a moment or two, and then looking up into her face, asked earnestly—

"Am I that little boy, grandma?"

"Yes, my dear, you are that little boy," she said, stooping down and kissing him tenderly.

"And was it my father who got you wood and water, and worked for you in the summer-time, and then went so far to school in the cold and snow?"

"Yes, my dear."

"I'll never ask to stay home from school again, if it snows up to the top of the door," he replied, lifting his head with a determined air.

His grandma was much pleased to see the effect of what she had told him upon his mind. She got his thick over-coat and buttoned it up closely about the neck. Then she took his mittens and warmed

them all so nicely before she drew them on his little hands. After he was all ready, with his book, and his slate under his arms, she gave him a good kiss, and away he went as happy as a cricket.

He never complained of the cold after that. Whenever he saw the snow, he thought of his father when he was a little boy, and of how he had waded through it for more than a mile every day, that he might get to school and learn, and of how much good that learning had done him.

FADING FLOWERS.

ONE day, when a child, said a cheerful-minded friend, who had passed over more than two-thirds of the time usually allotted to men on earth, I went into the field and gathered a bunch of beautiful wild-flowers which I placed in a vase on the mantel-piece. To my eyes they were beautiful; and many times, during the few hours that passed till evening, did I come in from my play to look at them. *I* had gathered and arranged them—they were *mine*—and, therefore, the more highly prized.

Early the next morning I arose, and, dressing myself, went to look at my floral

treasures. Alas! they had withered away, and hung with drooping heads over the side of the glass in which I had placed them. A few curled leaves, almost colourless, lay upon the floor, and upon some of them a careless foot had trodden.

For a moment I stood bewildered; then shrank away into a corner of the room, and commenced weeping and sobbing bitterly. My all of earthly happiness seemed wrecked.

My kind mother (I shall never forget her, nor her early lessons of love) came in while my young heart was trembling in its sorrow, and taking my hand, as she sat down by me, inquired, in an anxious tone, the cause of my grief.

“My flowers,” said I, sobbing more bitterly; it was all that my tongue could articulate.

Her mother’s heart comprehended, the moment her eye caught my faded blossoms, the whole weight of my childish affliction. She did not speak for a few minutes, but

raised me up and laid my head upon her bosom. Her fond affection calmed my infant transports of sorrow, and I soon looked up composedly into her face; she smiled on me with a smile a mother's countenance can only wear; but I well remember now that a tear was on her cheek.

I thought it strange at the time that my mother should weep; but I can now well imagine her feelings, as the little accident I have mentioned threw her thoughts upon the future, and brought before her mind, in sad array, the many disappointments that would crowd my path, of which this one was but a gentle prelude. She looked placidly on my face for a moment, which was upturned to hers, and then assuming a serious tone, implanted in my young mind one of her first lessons of patience and endurance—a lesson which has never been forgotten.

“My dear child,” said she, “I am sorry that your flowers have faded; but you know there are many more in the fields,

and much prettier ones in the garden. You can gather a new bouquet."

"But I gathered them, mother," said I, "and I liked them flowers better than any others, because they were *mine*." And I wept again to think that those very ones that *I* loved should have faded.

"Your flowers will often wither, my child," answered my mother; "and though you may love your own more than any others, yet when their brightness and beauty are gone, you must remember that grieving cannot restore them. Every thing which brings to you pleasure, is one of the flowers of life. Do you not love me more than all those pretty coloured leaves?"

I could not say yes—but the smiling tears that were in my eyes told her my feelings; and my little arms, twined fondly around her neck, made the strongest affirmative her heart wanted.

"I am one of the flowers of life," continued she, "and so is your father, and so is

sister Mary. But did you never think that one day these flowers would wither?"

I scarcely comprehended her meaning then, but I did not forget the words she uttered; and years after, when manhood was upon my brow, and I stood looking down into her grave, the whole truth of her question and allusion came upon my mind, and I wept anew in bitterness of spirit.

"Remember, my dear," said she as I continued looking seriously into her face, but half conscious of the force of what she was saying, "that all along your ways through life will spring up pleasant flowers, and your hand will be constantly reaching out and plucking them—but, my child, they will all wither. Nothing on earth is permanent. All things are changing and passing away. You will indulge many brilliant anticipations, and, as you spring up to manhood, will have many hopes of happiness in this world; but disappointment will follow your steps wherever you tread, and the thorns of sorrow tear your

hands often as you have reached them out to pluck the blossoms of joy. Yet, amid all this, there is a virtue which takes largely away from the darkness of the picture; the virtue of patience. Do you not remember reading in the little book I gave you a day or two since, that

‘To bear is to conquer our fate’?

That means, if we are patient under disappointment and grief, it will rob them of much of their painfulness. We make our sorrows deeper than they really are, by thinking and grieving over them. Learn to have patience under all circumstances, and your happiness will be more certain.”

“And now, my child,” continued she, “gather up those leaves from the floor; throw away the withered flowers and get fresh ones.”

I ran to the field as soon as I had done my breakfast, and collected another bunch as pretty as those I had the day before, and was happy in looking at them in their

nice arrangement upon the shelf where I placed them.

In a day or two they faded also, but I remembered the words of my mother, and tried to learn patience. It was a hard lesson at first; but whenever any thing went wrong, I still tried the remedy called patience, and soon found that it was a charm which robbed disappointment of most of its pain.

Ever since, said this friend, I have endeavoured to use patience under all circumstances, and find that it brings the mind nearer than any thing else to that contentment which Campbell calls "the all in all of life."

THE END.

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