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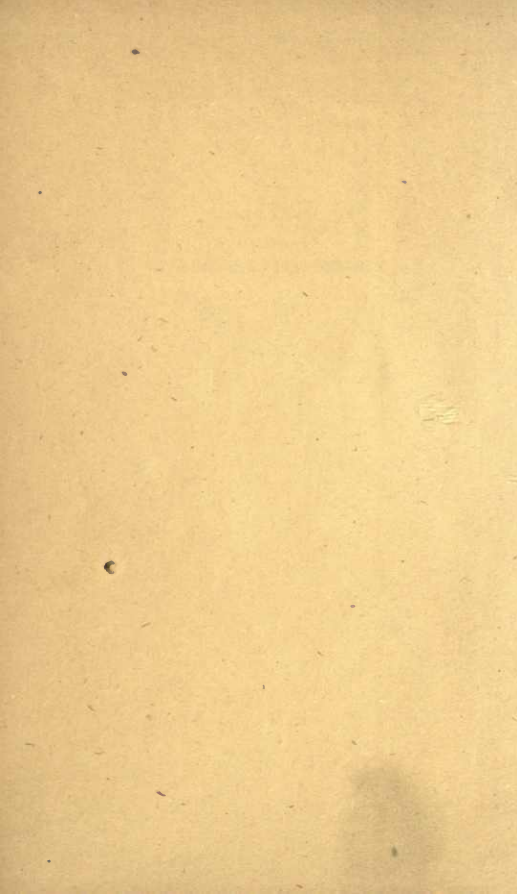
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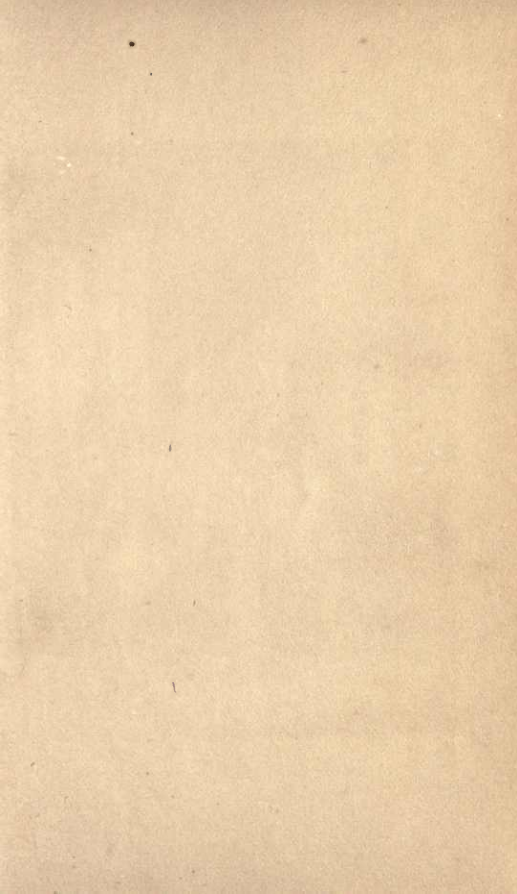


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AMY'S NEW HOME.

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AMY'S NEW HOME,

AND

OTHER STORIES

FOR

BOYS AND GIRLS.



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AMY & NEW HOME

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AMY'S NEW HOME

CHAPTER I

CHAPTER I

THE morning window was thrown
wide open as let in the morning
sun. The day had been very
hot and Amy's mother wanted all
the fresh air she could get. She
popped up by her window and
saw that the flowers were very white
and that the leaves were a bright
green in her garden. With a sigh
her head better than the really was
she had been ill for many weeks
and the doctor said that she would
never be well again. She knew
this - knew that she was dying; but

AMY'S NEW HOME.

PART I.

THE cottage window was thrown wide open to let in the cooling breeze, for the day had been very hot, and Amy's mother wanted all the fresh air she could get. She sat, propped up by pillows, in a large arm-chair. Her face was very white and thin; but there was a bright colour in her cheeks, which made her look better than she really was. She had been ill for many weeks, and the doctor said that she would never be well again. She knew this—knew that she was dying; but

she was not afraid, for she had long trusted in Jesus, and served him, and now she could say, in the sweet words of the twenty-third Psalm, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil : for thou art with me : thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Amy stood by the side of her mother, looking out into the garden. She had finished the needlework she had to do, and was watching the sparrows pick up the few crumbs which she had thrown in the pathway for their supper. Her mother wanted her to run about in the garden, but Amy said she would rather stay where she was ; she felt, although she hardly knew why, that she did not like to leave her

mother. Yet she had not the least idea that her mother was dangerously ill.

"Mother," she said presently, "how full our pear-tree is this year! What a many we shall have if they all ripen! Will you give me a little basketful for myself, when you gather them?"

Her mother sighed, and hesitated. Amy looked round for her answer. "I shall not gather the pears this autumn, dear," she said gently.

"Why not?" asked Amy in a tone of surprise.

"Because I shall not be here then, Amy."

"Not here, mother? Are we going away?"

"I am going away, Amy, going

to a better home than this, darling. I wanted to tell you so before, but I knew it would trouble you to hear it."

Amy did not at first understand her mother's meaning; but when the sad truth rushed all at once into her mind, it was almost more than she could bear. Her heart beat very fast, the crimson flush rose in her cheeks, and her eyes filled with tears. "Oh, mother, do not talk so," she exclaimed; "it is not true, I am sure it is not. You are a great deal better than you were; you eat more than you did last week, and you are not nearly so pale; you will get stronger when the weather is not so warm. Mrs. Roberts says you will, mother."

“Amy, dear, it would be wrong and unkind to deceive you; the shock would only be the greater if it came upon you quite unexpectedly. Dr. Martin says that he does not think I can last many weeks longer, and I feel that he is right. It is only for your sake that I mind it. I would gladly have lived till you were a little older, if it had pleased God; but his will be done.”

Amy burst into tears. She flung herself on a stool at her mother's feet, and, burying her face in her mother's lap, sobbed out, “Oh, mother, what shall I do without you? You must not leave me, oh, you must not leave me.”

Her mother tried, in vain, to soothe her. Amy had naturally

very strong feelings, but she had early been taught to control them, and was generally able to keep them within bounds. But she could not now ; indeed, she made no attempt to do so : her distress was so great that it seemed as if she must give way to it ; and it was not until her mother said that she should not get any sleep that night if Amy kept on crying so, that she lifted up her head again, and tried to wipe away her tears.

Then her mother put her arm round her, and kissed her tenderly, and talked to her of that loving Saviour who would always be with her, to take care of her, and to bless her ; and in whose kind ear she might pour out all her little trou-

bles, and feel certain that he would help her out of them. She spoke, too, of those beautiful mansions to which she was going, where there would not be any more sorrow or sin, but where everybody was quite holy, and quite happy; and she bade Amy look forward to the joyful meeting they should have when, if she followed Jesus, he would call her to the same bright home, and they should live together there for ever.

Amy did not take in the full comfort of these words at the time; still, she grew calmer as she listened to them, and they came into her mind afterwards, when she much needed them, and when she had no one to tell her of such things.

She got up now, with a less sorrowful look, to prepare the gruel for her mother's supper, and each tried to be as cheerful as they could, that they might not add to the other's grief. Poor Amy ! when she was alone in her little room, her tears burst forth afresh ; but she knelt down, and asked God to pity her and to make her dear mother well again ; and she rose up with a lighter heart. In a few minutes she was fast asleep.

Amy Burton was an only child. She had been carefully brought up by her pious mother, who had sought, with God's help, to train her child for another world, as well as for this. Mrs. Burton's husband also feared God, but, being a sea-

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man, he was generally away from home, so that Amy saw very little of her father, and learned but little from him. About a year before our story begins, he set out on a voyage which he said should be his last one; for that, if he were spared to return to his native land, he would remain at home with his wife and child, and get his living in a more quiet and comfortable way. But, alas! he did *not* return. Tidings at length came that the vessel in which he sailed was lost in a storm at sea, and that all on board had perished. It was a terrible blow to Amy's mother. She never recovered from it. Her health failed from that time; and within the last few weeks she had been so much worse, that she

had given up all hope of ever being well again.

The thought of going to her Saviour was a glad thought to her, but it was hard work to part from her dear little girl ; to leave her an orphan in the wide, wide world, not knowing how she would be cared for, and watched over. But Amy's mother was a Christian, and she was enabled, after a little struggle, to trust her child in God's hands, and to believe that she would be safe in his keeping. This promise was very sweet to her in that moment ; " Leave thy fatherless children, *I* will preserve them alive."

Amy had an uncle, her father's eldest brother, who lived in a large manufacturing town, many miles

distant from the village in which she had been born and brought up. The morning after Amy's sad conversation with her mother, a letter came from this uncle, in answer to one which Mrs. Burton had written to him about her own illness, and about Amy. It was short, but kind. He offered to take charge of his little niece when her mother died, and to provide for her as he would for one of his own children. Mrs. Burton folded up the letter with a thankful heart. It was a great relief to her to feel that, whenever it might please God to call her away, there was a suitable home ready for Amy. Had she known more about that home, she would have been less satisfied with it. But she had

not seen her brother-in-law for some years, and she had never heard, for there was no one to tell her, how much he had altered for the worse since they last met. Instead of being sober and industrious, as he then was, as well as regular in his attendance at the house of God, he had grown careless and unsteady, and had become the companion of those who "make a mock at sin," and who refuse to heed the warnings of their Maker. It was well for Amy's mother that she was ignorant of this sad change, for she had no other relations with whom she could leave her child, and it would have grieved her very much, in her last hours, to think that Amy's new home was to be one in

which the fear of God was never thought of, and his holy word was unread and uncared for. She was mercifully spared this trial.

Some weeks passed away, and Amy's mother got weaker and weaker. She could no longer sit up in the arm-chair and look out into the pleasant garden, but was obliged to lie in bed, and to be waited upon night and day. Amy was generally with her; for the child could not bear to be out of her mother's sight when she could possibly help it, and she was so quiet and thoughtful that she was never in any one's way. Kind friends and neighbours did everything for Mrs. Burton that she wanted, and she was very grateful for their services; but still,

she never fancied anything so well as when Amy brought it to her, or seemed so easy and comfortable as when Amy sat beside her. It was natural that the mother and child should cling so closely to each other, for they loved each other dearly, and had never been once separated.

The hours spent in that sick-room were very precious to Amy. Her mother, while she had strength, conversed with her about many things more freely than she had done before, and gave her much loving advice about the future. Above all, she often talked to her about Jesus, that good Shepherd, who gathers the lambs with his arms, and carries them in his bosom, and who never forsakes those who trust

in him, but brings them safely at last to his better fold above.

It was not long before his gentle voice called Amy's mother to her rest. She calmly fell asleep in Jesus. Her cares and sorrows were for ever ended. But Amy's were only just beginning. She had lost her beloved mother, and she must leave her old home for a new one, amongst strangers. Poor little Amy!

PART II.

AMY grieved deeply for the death of her mother. She did not say much to any one, but she would get by herself, and think about her mother, and cry as if her little heart would break. Everybody pitied her, and was kind to her; and Mrs. Roberts took her home to her own house until the funeral was over, and did all she could to comfort her. But Amy still looked sorrowful and unhappy.

One day she went out by herself, and wandered through the green

shady lanes, till she was quite tired, and sat down under a large tree to rest. From this spot she could see the roof and chimneys of her mother's cottage, and as her eye fell upon them, her tears burst forth afresh at the thought of her home. She sobbed out, "Oh mother, mother! why didn't you take me with you?"

"Because God knew that it was better for you to stay here a little longer, Amy."

Amy looked up through her tears. It was the good clergyman who was speaking to her. He was passing that way, and happened to hear what she had said. Amy knew him very well, for he had visited her mother in her illness, and he

had often spoken to Amy when she was in the room with her; so that when he now sat down beside Amy, and began to talk to her, she did not feel at all afraid of him, but ventured to ask him *why* it was better for her to stay here.

“It is God’s will that you should, Amy; and if we trust in his wisdom and goodness, that is reason enough for us. But he sees that you are not ready for heaven yet, Amy. Heaven, you know, is a prepared place for a prepared people. We must be fitted for it, as well as allowed, for the sake of Jesus, to enter it. And God sends us trials, Amy, on purpose to make us holier. He wants us to get rid of our wrong desires and wrong tempers, and to

grow Christ-like. And that is why he keeps us in this world. He waits till the fruit is ripe, before he gathers it. Do you understand me, Amy?"

"Yes, sir," said Amy, thoughtfully.

"And then, Amy, Jesus Christ has some work for us to do here, and we cannot go home till our work is done. Do you love Jesus, Amy?"

Amy's face brightened at this question, and she said, "Yes, sir, I think I do."

"Well then, Amy, I am sure you will like to do all the work you can for him."

"But what work can *I* do, sir?"

"I do not know yet, neither do

you ; but you will soon find out. You are going to a new home, and you will have new duties there, and those new duties will be some of the work you will have to do ; and the rest will come as you can manage it. Will you try, Amy, when you are there, and when you feel dull and lonely—as I know you will sometimes feel—will you try and think that you are just where Jesus, your dear Saviour, has put you, and that you are his little servant, doing his work ?”

It was with such simple words as these that the kind minister strove to comfort and teach Amy. And he did her a great deal of good. She became more cheerful and hopeful. Her grief for the loss of her mother

was softer, and less passionate ; and she was able to think of her new home without the strong dislike which she had felt at first towards it.

Amy's uncle was written to immediately, and he came to the funeral. He was a rough, good-tempered man, and behaved, in his way, very kindly to his little niece. He told her not to fret so, but to cheer up and be a good girl, and she should go home with him and play with her cousins, and see all the wonderful sights of the town. Amy tried to smile and look pleasant, but she felt sorry, rather than glad, to think of leaving the village, and the cottage, where she had always lived ; and she shrank from

her uncle's loud tones and hasty manner, and wondered whether her aunt would be like him.

Some of the furniture which belonged to Amy's mother was sold, and the remainder was packed up and sent to Amy's new home. Amy's clothes, with her books and playthings, and other little trifles, were put carefully into a box by Mrs. Roberts—a new box, which Mr. Roberts, who was a carpenter, made himself for Amy—and it went with her and her uncle by the train. Amy had never been on a railway before, and she was a little frightened at first by the noise and the speed, but she enjoyed the ride after she got used to it. The novelty of the scene around her helped to

make her forget the past; and her uncle's bustling ways, and constant talking, did not allow her any time for thought about the future. All that reminded her of home, just then, was a large bunch of flowers which she carried in her hand, and which had been gathered, before she came away, out of the garden in which she had spent so many happy hours of her life.

It was nearly tea-time when Amy reached her new home. Her uncle carried her box, and she followed him through the busy and dusty streets, with rather a bewildered air, until he turned down a quiet, but gloomy-looking one, in about the middle of which was his own dwelling. The houses in that street

were not very small, but they were very dingy outside, and the painting and papering inside was very faded and discoloured. The only signs of anything like the country, were a few sickly and stunted plants in pots, that stood in some of the windows.

Amy's uncle pushed open the door, and bade her come in. She stepped timidly inside, and the next minute found herself in a large and somewhat disorderly kitchen.

"Here's father, and here's our new cousin!" shouted George, a noisy, rough-headed boy, as he sprang forward to meet them; "why, she is not as big as our Esther."

"Hold your tongue, sir," said his

mother, coming towards them with a child in her arms, and giving the boy a push at the same time ; “ we didn’t expect you yet, John, or I would have sent George to meet you.” She kissed Amy, and cleared a chair for her to sit down. “ You are tired, I dare say,” she said, kindly, “ but you will feel better when you have had a cup of tea. Dear ! how like your father you are ! Don’t stand staring there,” she added, turning round to one of the children, who, was looking at Amy from top to toe ; “ make haste, and set the table ; you ought to have done it before now ; and you, go and fetch some wood, George, to make the kettle boil : look sharp, now, both of you.”

Amy in the course of the evening, took a few quiet glances at her new relations. Her aunt wore an old black gown, and had large flowers in her cap; but her face looked careworn and fretful, and she was always finding fault with something, or somebody. George, we have already described. Little Alice, who generally sat on the floor, was a spoiled child, who cried when she wanted anything, and generally had what she cried for. Esther was not at home when Amy arrived at her aunt's: she did not return till late. She was a pert, forward sort of girl with long curls; and Johnny, who was next to her in age, was lame, and could not move about without crutches. He commonly was seen

sitting on the steps of the street door.

Oh, what a scene of confusion the tea-table was! The different things were placed on it without any attempt at order; and if each of the children did not help themselves, they tried to do so.

“Mother, I wish you would speak to George!” exclaimed Esther, angrily; “he has taken a lot more butter to his bread, and I put plenty on at first.”

Before the mother had time to scold George, Johnny called out, pouting, “I won’t have my tea in this blue mug: give me the green one, George.”

“No, I shan’t.”

“Give it him, there’s a good boy,

George, or there won't be a bit of peace, and you may have my cup and saucer if you like."

While this dispute was being settled, Alice was digging her little hand into the sugar-basin, and then wiping her sticky fingers on her clean pinafore. "Let that sugar alone, Alice!" said her mother, moving the basin to the other end of the table. Alice began to cry, or at least to make a noise like crying, for no tears came, and her mother, in order to quiet her, took some of the sugar and spread it thickly over a slice of bread and butter for her.

In this way the uncomfortable meal was got through. And when it was ended, and Esther was wash-

ing up the tea-things, Amy's uncle put on his hat and went out, and Amy's aunt came and sat down beside her, and asked her several questions about herself and her old home, partly from curiosity, and partly from the desire to make the little girl feel less of a stranger with them. But Amy did not get on very well with her answers, for her cousins confused her very much by their noisy shouts and movements; and her low, soft tones were scarcely heard amongst their loud voices.

“I do wish you would be still for a little while,” said their mother: she might just as well have spoken to the chairs and tables—“I am sure I never saw such a set of chil-

dren, in all my life, as you are ; I don't know what your cousin will think of you."

As if they cared what their pale, shy, little cousin thought of them !

There was not much quietness until Johnny and Alice went to bed, and then Amy seemed so tired and sleepy, that her aunt asked her whether she would not like to go also. Amy said she should, and gladly followed her aunt up stairs, into a very little room that just held two or three boxes and a small bed, which she was to share with Esther. It did not look half so clean and inviting as her own little bed at home ; but Amy was too weary to notice anything much, or

to care about it if she had. She was worn out with the fatigue and excitement of the day, and soon fell asleep.

PART III.

WHEN Amy awoke the next morning, she could not at first tell where she was. She rubbed her eyes, and tried to think how she came there. Then she recollected that she was in her new home; and if she wanted any proof of this fact, she found it the next minute, in the sight of Esther kneeling on the floor, and coolly examining the contents of Amy's box! Amy raised herself in bed, and looked, as she felt, rather astonished; but her looks

were lost upon Esther, for she was too busy to observe them.

“ Oh, you are awake, are you ?” she said as she lifted her head ; “ I thought you were going to sleep all day ; but mother said I was not to call you this morning.”

“ Have you had your breakfast, then ?” asked Amy.

“ No ; father has not come in yet, and George is just going for some bread, so you will have plenty of time to dress yourself, if you make haste. But I say, Amy, are these all the frocks you have got ?”

“ Yes,” said Amy.

“ Why, here are only four, besides what you are going to put on, and they are half-worn out already. It does not signify, though, because

they will be too short for you, when you leave off your black, and I dare say mother will cut them up for Alice. But you might have had your Sunday one made a little smarter, I think ; *I* would not wear it. Plain, tight sleeves, and no trimming, nor flounces ! And is this your best bonnet ?”

“ To be sure it is,” said Amy.

“ Well, it is big enough for mother, I’m sure, and it is made of such poor silk. What old-fashioned notions country folks have !”

Esther went on talking, and tumbling over Amy’s things at the same time. She pulled everything out of the box, making her remarks as she did so with great freedom and rudeness. Amy hardly knew

whether to be vexed or amused. She did not certainly like to see her work-box and two or three little keepsakes so roughly handled, nor her books turned over with so little care, but she supposed that she must not say anything about it.

Just as Esther had reached the bottom of the box, her mother called to know where she was, and what she was doing, and why she had not fried the bacon for her father's breakfast. Esther ran quickly out of the room, and, as she did not shut the door, Amy heard her aunt say to her, "You should not have let Amy hinder you so long."

Esther did not answer; she allowed her mother to believe that it was her cousin's fault she had stayed

so long upstairs ; and Amy felt hurt at the blame being unjustly cast upon her. Besides, it was really Esther who had hindered her, not she who had hindered Esther ; for the floor was strewed with the things which Esther had carelessly scattered about, and Amy was obliged to fold them up and put them back again before she could leave the room, or, indeed, finish dressing herself.

When Amy went into the kitchen there were only Johnny and Alice there, for George had not returned from the baker's, and Esther and her mother were hanging some clothes out in the yard to dry. Alice was seated on a low stool by the window, eating a piece of bread and

molasses ; and Johnny was standing at the side-table, leaning on one of his crutches, and destroying Amy's flowers as fast as he could. These flowers had been placed in a jug of water the night before, and Amy meant to untie and arrange them in the morning ; she thought, of course, that they were quite safe where she left them. But there was Johnny, picking the very best of them out of the nosegay, and then tearing them, leaf by leaf, to pieces. Even if they had not been her own, Amy would have been sorry to see him doing so, for she was so fond of flowers, that she could not bear to have them injured. Forgetting her shyness, she rushed towards her cousin, and seizing hold of his arm,

"Oh, you naughty boy!" she said, "you must not touch these flowers; they are not yours."

"I don't care," said the little fellow, "I shall have them if I like; mother said I might." He snatched a large white rose out of the bunch, and then there came a struggle between the children; for Amy prized that flower more than any of the others, and determined to save it. It had grown on her mother's favourite rose-tree, and was the only one that had bloomed that summer. Amy tried hard to get it from Johnny, but he kept firm hold of it; he pushed and she pushed, and, not being aware how very lame he was, Amy accidentally knocked aside his crutch, and Johnny tum-

bled down. He was not hurt, but he screamed loudly from passion, and refused to let Amy help him up again ; and at that minute both his father and mother came in.

“ Why, Johnny, my boy, what is the matter ? ” said his father.

“ Amy pushed me down, father ; she is so cross.”

His father lifted him on his knee, and said, “ You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Amy, to behave so to a poor little cripple like him.”

“ I did not mean him to fall, uncle ; I did not know he was so lame, or I would not have touched him ; but he would not give me my flower.”

“ Well, and why need you quarrel about a flower ? ” said her aunt ;

"there are plenty of them, and surely he may have one to play with."

"But this is a rose, a white rose," said Amy; "may I have it now, aunt? I will give him another for it."

"Don't be tiresome, child; you have made mischief enough already; sit down and get your breakfast."

Amy burst into tears: she could not help it; everything seemed to go wrong with her.

"Dear me," said her aunt, "who would have thought you had such a temper? Now, you must either be quiet or go up stairs out of the way."

Amy dried her tears, and took her seat at the table. But her heart

was very heavy, and it was as much as she could do to eat her breakfast without showing any more of her sorrow about the flower. What a bad beginning she had made in her new home! Was this the way in which she was to get on with her cousins? Amy wished herself back again in her mother's peaceful little cottage; wished that she had never come to live with her uncle and aunt; wished that she could run away from the troubles that seemed gathering around her. These were natural wishes, but they were selfish and useless ones; and Amy lived to own this, and to find out that God's will is better than our will.

As she was moving her chair af-

ter breakfast, she picked up her rose from under the table, where Johnny, not really caring for it, had dropped it, as soon as he had gained his point. Some leaves were gone, and it was a good deal shaken; but, not having been fully opened, it had borne its rough treatment pretty well, and was a nice-looking flower yet. Amy carried it carefully upstairs and put it, with some water, into an old broken bottle which she had seen in the bedroom, and which her aunt said she might have; and she thought that no flower ever smelt so sweetly as that did.

The rest of the day passed much more pleasantly with the little girl. It was a very busy day, for it was Saturday, and there was house-

cleaning and ironing and mending to do, and a pie and some cakes to make for to-morrow. But Amy was a busy little girl, and she had been used to work when she was at home, so she did not mind it. Her mother always said that it was very wrong to allow girls to be idle while they were young, because it got them into bad habits, which would be very hard to overcome, even if they tried to conquer them; and that, when they went out to service, they would be ill fitted for it. She therefore brought up Amy to be active and tidy; teaching her, as she was able to learn, whatever would be useful for her to know in after life. But it was done so quietly and so gradually, that Amy found

it a pleasure rather than a trouble, and never thought it a hardship to have her hands and her time well occupied.

It was a good thing for Amy that she had had such a wise mother; for, now that she was placed with others, and would early have to work for her own living, she would be spared many little trials, through her mother's careful training. The very first day in her new home showed this; for Amy was so handy, and moved about so quickly, and was so willing to do whatever was wanted, that her aunt praised her more than once, and said, that if she kept on as she had begun, she would be a nice help to her in the house.

How pleased Amy felt when she heard this! It seemed to make up for the little trials of the morning. It was like a bright ray of sunshine sending away a dark cloud. Amy went to bed in good spirits, and thought that perhaps after all she might be very happy in her new home.

PART IV.

THE glad sunshine had peeped in at the little bed-room window for some hours the next morning, before Amy opened her eyes. The light was so strong, that she was afraid it was very late; but as Esther was asleep beside her, and nobody had called them, Amy concluded that it must be earlier than usual. She began to get up, however, for she was wide awake; and she thought she would go down as soon as she was ready, without disturbing Esther, and light the fire

and put on the kettle. She had always done this at home since her mother began to be ill, and she wished to be as useful now. After she had knelt down and prayed, she crept softly down stairs, and opened the shutters without any noise. No one in the house was moving, and as she went into the kitchen she looked up at the old clock in the corner. To her great surprise the old clock told her that it only wanted five minutes to nine. It was very strange that nobody was up; but there was all the more need, Amy thought, for her to bestir herself, and it was not long before the fire was burning cheerfully in the grate, and the hearth was tidily swept up. Amy was spreading the

table-cloth when her aunt appeared. "What, Amy," she said, "up first?—that is a good child, for your uncle is coming, and he will be glad of his breakfast."

"It is very late, aunt, isn't it?" said Amy, glancing at the clock.

"I suppose you would call it late in the country, Amy, but we never hurry ourselves here on a Sunday. We are thankful to get all the rest we can, after a week's hard work; and the day is quite long enough for what we have to do in it."

Amy thought that if this was one of the "town ways," the country ones were much better. She had always risen early at home, that she might have plenty of time to get to her Sabbath school, for they

lived nearly a mile from it ; but of course no one at her uncle's went to a Sabbath school, or they would not lie in bed until nine o'clock. She was afraid that her aunt and uncle felt very differently about such things, to what her mother had done, for she had not noticed a Bible anywhere in the house, except a large one, covered with dust, at the top of a cupboard, and there had not been a word said about the Sabbath which could have led any one to suppose that it was a day to be kept holy unto the Lord.

The breakfast was longer about than usual, for Amy's uncle had no work to do, and could sit as long as he chose with his family ; and the children either ate more, because

there was toasted bread, or else they did not eat so fast. Amy grew very fidgetty on account of the time, and at length she slipped away and ran up-stairs. She made the bed, and laid out her Sabbath things upon it. The others had only just left the table when she returned. Her uncle was filling his pipe, and her aunt was nursing Alice, and bidding Esther wash the cups and saucers instead of teasing George.

“Shall I help her, aunt?” asked Amy, “because it is almost time to get ready for church.”

“For church?” cried Esther.

Amy coloured, and said “yes.” She could not tell why Esther should seem so surprised at her question.

“You went to church in the

country, I dare say, Amy," said her aunt; "but then you had so much time there, and there was only your mother and yourself to do for. It is very different in a town, especially with a family like ours; for your uncle must have a bit of hot dinner on a Sunday, when he has cold all the week; and then, when we do go out, we are glad to take a walk and get some fresh air, after being shut up in this close street from Monday morning to Saturday night."

Amy was more puzzled than convinced by her aunt's words. If want of time was one excuse for not going, why did they lie so late in bed? and even if they must have a hot dinner, were all obliged to help to cook it?

“ Could not *I* go, aunt ?” she said.

“ Well, no, Amy, not very well, for Esther wants to run in and see Lucy Sparkes ; and there are the gooseberries to pick for the pudding, and the peas to shell for dinner, and ever so many other things to do ; and Alice is so poorly and fretful that she is quite one person’s work. You shall go when you can be spared, if you wish to.”

The tears stood in Amy’s eyes, but no one saw them, for no one troubled themselves to look, and she brushed them silently away ; for she knew, poor child, that it was useless to say any more then. The church bells rang out their joyous peal, but they only made Amy feel sad, because she could not obey their

call. She had not one quiet five minutes all the morning; for when she was not running about to fetch things for her aunt, she had to baste the meat, and mind the potatoes, or to play with the troublesome little Alice. Her uncle went out with one or two of his fellow-workmen, and he was not in a good temper when he came back, and grumbled very much because the meat was rather overdone. There was a plentiful dinner; but Amy did not enjoy it half so well as her mother's more scanty meal. As soon as it was finished and cleared away, she went timidly up to her aunt, and asked, almost in a whisper, whether she might go to church that afternoon. Her aunt did not seem

pleased, and said hastily, "Yes, go if you like, child; but you don't know your way about yet."

"Oh, I can find it, aunt," answered Amy; "there is a church not far from here, Esther says."

"You might show your cousin, George," said his mother. But George was busy cutting an apple in pieces with his knife, and was not inclined to move, and Amy was too glad to have leave given her, to mind about his company. She quickly tied on her bonnet and cape, and set off. She turned first to the right, and then to the left, and then down a narrow court, as Esther had directed her, but she could not find the church, and the chimes having ceased, there was not the sound of

the bell to guide her. She grew hot and flurried, for she was not used to a large town, and was afraid of losing herself. Nor did she like to go back, for they would all laugh at her so ; besides, she should lose the service. Just as she was ready to give up the search in despair, a few steps more led her right, and she hastened into the church, and sat down in the aisle.

It was not at all like the pretty village church to which she had been accustomed to go ; the walls looked damp, the hangings were faded, and the windows did not let in much light ; but it was the house of God, and Amy felt happy, and at home there, directly. The prayers and the singing calmed her ruffled

spirit, and the sermon, she thought seemed to be meant for *her*. So it was. God never forgets any who seek him, and he sends kind messages, and "words in season," to children, as well as to grown-up people. The sermon was about God appearing to Jacob in a dream, as he was travelling to his uncle's, and promising to be with him, and to keep him, and to bless him; and Amy, with no father nor mother to watch over her, and forced to leave her early home, and go amongst strangers, felt almost as lonely as Jacob, and heard with gladness that God was as willing to be a friend and Father to her, as he had been to Jacob; and she went away comforted, if no one else did.

She needed the comfort, for very unkind and taunting remarks were made by George when she got home; he called her a saint, and other names.

"It is very wrong to say such things, George; you know it is."

"Come, come, no quarrelling," said Amy's aunt, as she poured out the tea; "if that is all the good you get by going to church, Amy, I think you would be as well at home."

George and Esther gave a mocking look; Amy was troubled and silent. Was it her fault, or theirs, that they so often disagreed? Had she really given any occasion for this reproof? Why were they all so ready to blame her? She tried

to suit her cousins : how was it that she did not succeed ? She hoped they would understand her better in time.

Poor Amy, she was beginning to learn that life has its trials, and that they are sometimes very difficult to bear.

After tea, Amy's aunt and uncle got ready for a long walk. The children were to go with them, if they liked, but Johnny was obliged to remain at home, because he was too lame to walk so far, and his father could not draw him up the steep hill which they intended to climb, in the little chaise which they sometimes used for him. But he was not very willing to stay by himself. It was so dull, he said ;

there was nothing to be seen in the street ; and Charlie Green could not come over and play with him, for he was away at his grandmother's.

"Well, Esther, you can stop in to-night, for you were out most of the morning, you know."

"No, I can't," said Esther, "I am tired of being indoors ; and it is George's turn to stay."

"It is not," said George. "Yes, it is," repeated his sister.

"Well, I do not care if it is ; I am not going to be shut up here this fine evening : it is all nonsense humouring Johnny so."

Amy gently interfered. "Aunt," she said, "might I be left with him? I do not want a walk, and I would much rather stay at home."

. Her aunt paused for a minute, but soon agreed; and George muttered something which sounded very like "thank you," to his cousin. Johnny seemed disposed to be a little contrary, and to say that he would not have Amy instead of his brother; but Amy promised to show him some books and some pictures, which she had brought with her, and which he had not seen, and he was satisfied.

Amy was not sorry to have the opportunity of being alone with Johnny; for her little cousin had not been very good friends with her since the dispute about the white rose, and she wished to show him that she did not cherish any feelings of ill-will towards him. So, when

the rest were gone out, she did her best to amuse him. She fetched her pictures down, and described them to him. Several of them were Scripture scenes ; and when she found that he did not know anything about them, she told him, in simple language, the histories belonging to them. There was David the giant-killer, and Daniel in the lion's den, and Joseph with his bright-coloured coat, and others equally pretty. Johnny was very much interested. And when these were put aside, Amy sang some of her pretty little hymns to him, and talked to him about her own home, and of the happy way in which she used to spend her Sabbaths there.

The hours passed so quickly and

pleasantly, that Johnny was surprised, when his father and mother returned, to hear how late it was. Nor had Amy enjoyed herself less than Johnny had; for this saying of Jesus is always fulfilled to those who act upon it, "It is more blessed *to give* than *to receive*."

PART V.

AMY soon found that there was plenty for her to do in her new home. Her aunt was not very strong; the house was seldom tidy and clean, except on a Sunday; and yet Amy saw that her aunt never seemed to have time to rest or to enjoy herself. Amy had been used to such a different kind of life, and had been trained to such different habits in her mother's quiet cottage, that she felt the present change more than most children would. But she did not talk about it, nor

did she set herself the task of trying to put everything to rights. She was too young to undertake this, or indeed to think of it. All she attempted was to give all the help she could, and to give it in the best way she could. She knew that since her uncle and aunt were kind enough to provide for her, it was her duty to make herself useful to them in return. And she had not many idle moments; for her aunt finding her so handy and busy, kept her pretty well employed from morning till night. It was constantly, "Amy, do this;" "Amy, fetch that;" "Amy, run there;" everybody, from her uncle down to little Alice, applied to her if they wanted any help, and seemed to

take it as a matter of course that she should attend to them. Amy was often very tired, and longed to have a little quiet time to herself; but when the house-work was finished, there was a never-ending quantity of needle-work to do; and besides that, there was always Alice to be amused, or to be carried out-of-doors.

Amy would not have minded the hard work, if it had always had kind words along with it. But her aunt was often hard to please in little things; and her cousins were very trying at times. And Amy's temper was by no means perfect. She could not always return good for evil, nor bear in mind that "a soft answer turneth away wrath."

She got angry, and made matters worse by her efforts at self-defence. And then afterwards she was very unhappy.

Still, these little daily troubles did Amy good. They taught her that she was weak and sinful. She would never have learned what were her besetting faults, if such trials had not brought them out clearly to view. Nor would she otherwise have known what a precious Saviour Jesus is. But now when she was vexed and sorrowful, she told him what distressed her, and asked him to forgive and help her; and she did not ask in vain. He comforted her by the sweet promises of his love, and he sent his Holy Spirit to strengthen her,

when she was tempted to do wrong, and to make her gentle, and meek, and forbearing. And he lightened the work that Amy sometimes grew weary of, by reminding her that it was work to be done for him.

One day, Amy, quite worn out with the fault-finding of her aunt, and with Esther's ill-natured speeches, ran away into her bedroom, and, sitting down on her box, began to cry. She felt very miserable. "Esther did not have to work so hard, why should she? Besides, take what trouble she would, she could not please her aunt. It was a shame she should have to slave so." Then she thought of her mother's soft tones, and of the encouraging words she had so

often heard from her lips in days gone by: oh, how different all would have been had her mother lived! How gladly would Amy have toiled for *her*!

Just then, Amy remembered what the kind minister had said to her about her new duties, in her new home; how she was to think of them as the work which she was to do for Jesus. "But I have not looked at them in that way," said Amy, in a tone of half-surprise to herself; "I have quite forgotten it till now. I will try and recollect that the Lord has put me here, and given me the work I have to do; and that he knows just how hard it is, and sees the pains I take with it. I think I shall get on better now.

It is so nice to feel that he cares for a poor child like me; and that he is pleased with me when I strive to act rightly, and to do what aunt wishes me."

From that time, Amy went to work more cheerfully. She was influenced by a new and better motive now, and it helped her on greatly. While her mother lived, Amy's love for her was so strong, that it led her to oblige and obey her mother as often as she could. But since her mother died, Amy had worked from duty, not from love, and it was not half so pleasant to her. Now, all her little daily duties were to be done from love to Jesus. Oh, how that thought sweetened each! How much easier

Amy found them when she met them in this spirit ! Are you surprised at this, dear young reader ? Then I am sure you have never tried the plan yourself. You have not yet learned, as Amy had, to say, with an old poet—

“Teach me, my God and King,

In all things thee to see,

And what I do in anything,

To do it as for thee.

All may of thee partake :

Nothing can be so mean,

Which with this tincture, ‘*for thy sake,*’

Will not grow bright and clean.

A servant with this clause,

Makes drudgery divine :

Who sweeps a room as for thy laws,

Makes that and the action fine.”

“Sweeping a room” is a servant’s act ; but if it be done from love to

Christ, from the desire to please him by being faithful in little things, he does not despise nor overlook it. Amy believed this, and it often made her happy. Her aunt might find fault with her unjustly, or might forget to notice how diligently she worked ; but her Saviour's gracious eye was always upon her, and he marked her humblest effort to serve him.

Not many months had passed after Amy came to live with her uncle and aunt, before there was some improvement to be seen in the house, and in the ways of the family. You may wonder how a gentle little girl like Amy could have begun it, or have helped it forwards. But it was because she

was so gentle that Amy was so useful. She did not make much noise, and she said very little ; but she quietly did what wanted doing, and she did it well.

Amy kept her own bed-room neat and tidy. It was well aired and well dusted. The small window used to be so clouded that she could hardly see through it ; but a little rubbing soon made it bright and clear. The old table with its three legs looked none the worse for having a white cover to it ; and a sheet almanack, and two or three Scripture prints in frames, gave a cheerful look to the white-washed walls. Esther laughed at Amy for being so particular about a room which nobody but themselves saw ; but

she soon began herself to try and make the other rooms tidier also. If one front window was cleaned, it was necessary to clean the other, in order that they might both look alike outside; and as Amy was willing to do all the roughest parts of the work, Esther could hardly help taking the lighter parts.

It was the same down-stairs. Amy managed, after a time, to get the meals in a more orderly fashion. She generally laid the cloth and set out the table, and she did it as carefully as if it had been in a lady's parlour. Why should not she? Why should poor people have things "any-how," because they are poor? If the cups were common blue and white ware, they were

quite clean ; if the old teapot was common metal, it was bright as silver ; if the knives were much worn, they were well polished, and each article was put in its proper place. At first, some remarks were made about “ Amy’s fidgetty ways ;” but as she took all the trouble upon herself, and did not ask any one to help her, no one could very well find fault : and when they were used to the tidiness, they liked it better than the former confusion. It was so all through the house. Amy never complained, but she did all she could herself, according to the nice methods which her mother had taught her ; and her aunt and cousins, almost without knowing it, fell into the same plans. I think the

great secret of Amy's success was her quiet, humble spirit.

Amy's new home, merely in outward comfort, was certainly all the better for her living in it. Now, you may not think it signifies very much whether people are tidy or untidy, orderly or disorderly. But it does. Such habits have a great deal to do with their tempers and happiness. An uncomfortable home often destroys peace in-doors, and drives boys into the streets. Will the little girls who are reading this story try to remember this?

But Amy did even more good in her new home by her gentle and loving temper, than by her industry. Being an only child, and living alone with her mother, she had not

mixed much with other children ; and when she first came to her aunt's she did not quite fit in with her cousins. She had not found her right place among them. But when she got more used to them and their ways, and above all, when she had found grace to be kind, and meek, and forgiving towards them, Amy seldom disagreed with them. She tried to suit them, and was ready, in general, to give up her will to theirs.

George and Esther went to school ; Amy was to have her turn when the spring came ; but Johnny and Alice were always at home, and Amy soon became their best friend. She had quite won Johnny's affections, by staying at home with him

and showing him her best pictures that Sabbath evening, and she took good care not to lose them. The poor little fellow had been very much indulged, on account of his lameness; but he was a thoughtful child, and minded, more than either of the others, what Amy said to him. A look from her, or a half-whispered word, when he was going to be disobedient, checked him better than all her aunt's scolding. Amy helped him to be more patient and cheerful, not only by telling him about the meek and lowly Jesus, but also by finding nice little employments for him. He could not run about like other little boys, and he often got cross for want of something else to do. Amy showed him how to

draw little pictures, and lent him her own paint-box to colour them ; and she taught him how to write copies and to do easy sums on his slate ; and how to make a cabbage-net with some twine that his father gave him. And when he was not in the humour to do these sort of things, she would draw his thoughts away from himself, by asking him to mind Alice for a little while, while her aunt and she were busy, and thus make him feel that, lame and feeble as he was, he was really of some service to others. So Johnny was much happier than he used to be, and it was all through "Cousin Amy."

Amy's new home had certainly wanted her in it.

PART VI.

WEEKS and months passed away, and Amy and her cousins got on nicely together. Johnny was Amy's firm friend, and, in any trifling dispute, was always ready to defend *her* side. Amy's example had by degrees made Esther ashamed of her own idle and untidy ways; and, although she was very far yet from being as neat and as busy as her cousin, it was pleasant to see that she had taken many steps towards it.

Nor was George out of the reach

of Amy's gentle influence. He did not, it is true, seem to care much for her, and he often teased and vexed her; but underneath his rough ways there was a warm heart, and Amy had, somehow or other, contrived to gain his good opinion. She did not, however, know it for a long time, and I am not sure that he did; but it was true for all that, and the rough boy was the better for it. Little by little he left off his tormenting ways towards her; and while he pretended not to care for her sayings and habits, he often allowed himself to be guided by them. Amy's kind, unselfish conduct had a good effect upon him.

He ran into the kitchen one morning, where his mother was

kneading the dough for the baker. "Here, Amy," he shouted, "sew this button on my sleeve, please; it has just come off."

Amy was not there. "Amy is gone out on an errand," said his mother; "but Esther will be down directly, and she will do it for you."

"Oh, no," said George, "I shall not ask her; she will make such a favour of it, and scold me into the bargain for being so careless. I would rather wait for Amy, for she never grumbles at me."

Was not George's good word in Amy's favour worth something? She would have thought it was, if she had heard it.

One Sabbath afternoon Amy got ready to go to church, as usual.

Since her first Sabbath in her new home, Amy had kept steadily to this practice. Her aunt neither hindered nor helped her in so doing; so long as Amy did all that she wanted in the morning, she left her to do as she pleased herself in the afternoon; but Amy's cousins had often teased her about it, and her uncle sometimes seemed annoyed; and once, when Amy, by mistake, left her Bible in the kitchen, he told her angrily to take it out of his way, and not let him see it there again. But Amy was not to be turned out of the right way. She knew that if she did not observe God's day, she could not expect his blessing to rest upon her. Besides, she loved his house and his service,

and was never so happy as when she was meekly listening to his word.

Well, this afternoon she came softly down stairs, intending to slip out, as she always did, without making any noise, when George met her in the passage with his best jacket and cap on. "Amy," he said, in his blunt way, "I shall go with you this afternoon; I want to see how I like it." What a pleasant surprise this was for Amy! She did not say much; she only said, "Oh, George, I am so glad!" but her bright looks plainly showed what were her feelings.

George behaved very well at Divine worship, and told Amy afterwards that he was not at all tired,

except a little towards the end. When the heart is not really interested in religion, there is not much delight taken in the study of God's word. The day did come, although not for a long time, when George could say for himself, "Oh how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. How sweet are thy words unto my taste: yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" At present, the only reason why he went to God's house was to please Amy, and to do as she did. Still, it was a good thing to get him there at all; and Amy was very thankful when the next Sabbath came, to have him again for her companion; and after that he went with her regularly. Amy was afraid that

her uncle would be displeased, and order George to stay at home; but he did not seem to trouble himself about it. All the notice he took of it was, to say to his wife, "It is only a fancy of George's, and it will not last long; he will soon be tired of it: let him do as he likes." Perhaps George's father knew that his boy was safer than if he were rambling in the streets with idle lads.

Have you ever seen a tiny stream flowing softly along from day to day, a quiet blessing to all within its reach? Have you peeped at the modest violet, half-hidden from sight, that sheds such a sweet perfume around? Such was our little Amy's life in her new home. She was happy herself, and she was

helping to make others happy. Had not she any troubles, then? Oh yes. The little stream, you know, has to push its way over large stones and tangled weeds; and the lowly violet has to bear the rough wind and the smart shower: but what then? The stream gathers strength, and the flower gains in sweetness. So Amy's troubles, as we have already seen, did her good, and made her more useful. Her aunt often said that she did not know what she should do without her. And her cousins loved her dearly. Amy's mother little thought, when she parted from her child, how much good Amy would be the means of doing in her new home.

The winter was gone away, and

the spring had come. And spring brought with it sickness and sorrow. Amy's uncle was very ill. A neglected cold brought on a severe disease; and the doctor, after he had been to visit him two or three times, shook his head, and looked very grave. The next day that he came, he spoke more plainly to Amy's aunt, and said that he could not hold out the least hope of her husband's recovery. It was a sad and trying time. It reminded Amy of her mother's illness and death; but oh! there was this difference—"Was her uncle prepared?" she thought. "Is he a Christian? What hope has he to rest upon now?"

Amy wept, and prayed earnestly that her uncle might repent of his

past life, and find refuge in Jesus, the Saviour of sinners. Another day and night passed; and in the afternoon, Amy went to stay in her uncle's room for an hour, while her aunt tried to get a little sleep, which she much needed after being up all night. Amy was struck to see how much worse her uncle looked. She sat down sorrowfully beside him, and longed to speak to him of that peace which Jesus alone can give in a dying hour; but she did not know how to begin.

Presently her uncle opened his eyes, and spoke to her. "Amy," he said, faintly, "what did the doctor tell your aunt about me this morning?"

Amy's heart beat quickly; she

was afraid to answer, and yet she dared not keep her uncle waiting. So she replied, in as steady a tone as she could, "He said that you were very ill, uncle."

"Yes, yes, I know that; but did he say that I was dying, Amy? Tell me the truth: the doctor does not think I shall get better, does he?"

Amy's sad whisper, "No, uncle," was uttered without her knowing it. She felt frightened when she had said it. But her uncle seemed to have expected it.

"It is just as I thought," he said, mournfully. "But, Amy, I am not fit to die; oh! I cannot die yet." He turned away from her, and moaned.

“Would you like to have a minister sent for, uncle?” she asked timidly.

“No, no, I don't want anybody to come; nobody can do me any good; I must die as I have lived: there is no hope for me now.”

“Yes, dear uncle,” said Amy, eagerly, “the Bible says there is hope even for the chief of sinners. ‘The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.’”

“Not from mine,” said her uncle; “it cannot do that. I have despised the Saviour, and rejected his love, and I am beyond the reach of his mercy.”

“Oh, no,” said Amy, “Jesus prayed for his very murderers when he was on the cross.”

Her uncle was silent. But Amy's reply sank deep into his heart, and he often thought of it afterwards. She fetched her Testament, not feeling quite sure whether he would allow her to read to him ; but he made no objection to her doing so, and she chose the third chapter of John, and went slowly through it. He thanked her when she had finished it, but did not say anything more to her, and seemed disposed to sleep.

Amy sat by him, with a full and thankful heart, until her aunt returned. From that afternoon she was often with her uncle, reading the Scriptures to him, and trying in her own simple way to soothe his fears, and tell him of Jesus. He

listened eagerly to her, for he longed to find peace.

In his healthful days, Amy's uncle had looked on Christian people as those who were "righteous over-much;" although, even then, Amy's simple piety and upright conduct had made some impression on his mind. But when death seemed to come near, his spirit sank within him. He felt that the Bible was true, and without a Saviour he must perish for ever.

Happy are those who have found Jesus before sickness comes, for it is hard work seeking him on a dying bed. Remember that, dear young reader. Ill and feverish, Amy's uncle was often unable to think calmly, and sometimes he was

quite insensible ; and all that Amy could do was to pray for him.

But Amy's uncle did not die then. The doctor's fears were removed. He got slowly better, and was able, before many weeks were over, to come down stairs again. He was a different man ever afterwards. His vows did not fade away, as such too often do. He was humble, thoughtful, and prayerful. He could say with David, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes," Ps. cxix. 71 ; and, in God's strength, he said, as Joshua did, "As for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord," Jos. xxiv. 15.

We may say, "good-bye" to Amy now, with a light heart, for we are

sure that her new home will be a happy home. And as we bid her farewell, let us learn from her early history this sweet lesson, that even children may help to make happier the homes in which they dwell.



WILLIAM TELL.

A BOW DRAWN AT A VENTURE.

PERHAPS some of our young readers amuse themselves at times by practising with the bow and arrows, and a very pleasant pastime I have no doubt it is. But, then, instead of "drawing your bow at a venture," you have an aim. You set up your target, and try to fix the arrows in the centre; and the nearer they come to this the more skilful you think yourselves. Skill is always of use, although its real value must very much depend upon

the way we employ it, and the end to which it is applied.

I dare say most of you know the story of William Tell ; but it is so much to my purpose, and so good, that I think it will bear telling once more. About the year 1300, an Austrian of the name of Gesler was made the governor of the Swiss ; he was very cruel and proud. He caused his hat to be fixed on a pole in the market-place of a town of which William Tell was a native, with a command to all the people, upon pain of death, to bow before it as they would to himself if he were present. Tell would not pay this homage, and was therefore ordered to be hanged ; having, however, the choice presented to

him of shooting at a certain distance an apple from the head of his own son. This Tell accepted, and performed his task so well, that he succeeded in striking off the apple without touching his boy. Was he not, in this one successful act, well repaid for all the pains he had taken in becoming a good archer?

Another true story which I shall mention is not quite so well known. Aster, a celebrated archer of Greece, offered his services to Philip, king of Macedon, telling him, in proof of his skill, that he could bring down birds in their most rapid flight. Philip said, "Well, I will take you into my service when I make war upon starlings." This reply so enraged Aster that he went

to Methone, a small city which Philip was then besieging, and from thence aimed an arrow at the monarch, on which was written, "To Philip's right eye;" and so sure was his aim that he put out the sight of the king's right eye. Philip then shot the arrow back with these words on it, "If Philip take the city he will hang up Aster." And so it was, when the city was taken, the archer was hung.

Both these stories show, though in different ways, the truth of which I have said—that the value of skill very much depends upon the use we make of it. William Tell's skill was the means of saving his own life and that of his child; while Aster employed his talent in wick-

edly revenging an insult, and in the end losing his life.

Very often we find in Scripture that the bow is spoken of. I will notice only one instance; and let us look a little at the history connected with it. But you must take up your Bibles, for we cannot do without them; and turning to the eighteenth chapter of the second book of Chronicles, we shall find that Ahab, the wicked king of Israel, had requested Jehoshaphat, the pious king of Judah, to go up with him to Ramoth-Gilead to war against the king of Syria. Now see what it is to keep company with wicked people, and how little trust is to be placed in their friendship. "The king of Syria had commanded

the captains of the chariots that were with him, saying, Fight ye not with small or great, save only with the king of Israel." So the cowardly and selfish king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself, and go to the battle; but put thou on thy robes." He would rather that he were slain than himself. But God appeared in behalf of Jehoshaphat. And then comes the verse, "And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness" (or armour). The archer did not know that it was the king of Israel, and the bow was drawn at a venture; but it was the most successful of all the arrows shot that day.

Now this is exactly my position with regard to you, my young readers. I do not know any of you. I am ignorant of your tempers and habits, your studies and pursuits and sports. I do not know whether you have any brothers or sisters, or whether you are an only child. So, in writing to you, I must "draw my bow at a venture." But I want my words to be like so many arrows, and to reach your minds and hearts, and fasten themselves in the faults that are there. And I am going to speak, first of all, about

SELFISHNESS.

The undue love of self is a very common fault, and the source of many others; such as envy, jealousy,

and backbiting: and, when people are very selfish, they will sometimes tell falsehoods, and cheat, and be very unkind to others, for the sake of serving themselves and getting their own way. Selfishness is very displeasing to God. It is a breaking of the command which teaches us to "love our neighbours as ourselves," and to "do to others as we would they should do unto us;" for those who are selfish love themselves better than they love any one else, and would be very sorry if others were to do to them as they do to others. Those who are selfish are never loved by anybody, and of course cannot be truly happy—not half so happy as those who are willing to give up their own wishes

and pleasures for the sake of others.

I know a youth, I will not tell you his name, or where he lives, but he is of a very selfish temper, and it shows itself in all sorts of ways. When he was quite young, he was so jealous that he could not bear to see his mother kiss his little brothers and sisters; and he wanted all their toys, though he never gave them any of his own; and, if he could not have them, he would try to spoil their pleasure by breaking them. If any cake or fruit were handed to him, he always picked the largest and the best. In cold weather, he always tried to get the seat next the fire, and, in summer, one near an open window; and, if there were

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any sight to be seen, he always chose the best place for seeing it, and he did not mind pushing, or behaving very rudely, for the sake of getting it. He might have known, if he had thought about it, that somebody must have the worst seat and the worst place ; but, the truth is, he never thought of anybody but himself ; and, if he had, he would not have been willing to have given up to them.

And he was just the same at school as he was at home and in company : he cheated so in his games, that at last none of the boys would play with him ; and he almost hated the schoolfellow who happened to take his place in his class, or to keep the top for any length of time.

As he could not bear that his master should like anybody better than him, he was always telling tales of those who were favourites with the master because they were diligent and attentive boys. But it did not serve his purpose, for his master was too wise to be misled by it.

He has now left school, and has grown to be almost a man ; but his selfishness has kept pace, and grown as fast as he has done.

What do you think of my story? Would any of you choose this youth for a companion, or desire to imitate his example? I hope none of you resemble him already. But I think I see a little boy there, shrugging his shoulders and twisting about as if he were not quite easy. Has the

arrow hit him, and struck into some selfish practice he is prone to indulge in? He may draw it out by degrees. Giving up the habit will soon ease the smart, and perfect goodwill and kindness and love will leave no selfishness for the arrow to fasten in. But he can never alter the past, or do right in the future, in his own strength; so we must pray to God to forgive him, for Jesus Christ's sake, what he has done amiss, and to give him a new heart, so that he may strive against his selfishness in the time to come.

Perhaps some of you, who may pride yourselves upon being what is called rather sharp, may say, "We do not see why selfishness should be charged upon us young

people : we know many grown-up persons that are quite as selfish as we are." Very true ; and so do I. But then, they were selfish when they were children. And it is because selfish children become selfish men and women that I wish you may alter now, while it is easier than it will be when you are older.

Take care, take care, for I have drawn my bow again, and intend to let my arrows fly right and left. I am going to shoot at pride and vanity. So let all vain and proud children get out of the way.

Pride and vanity in many respects resemble each other. They both arise out of our thinking too much of ourselves, or of something that belongs to us ; and some per-

sons are vain of the very same things that others are proud of. Pride and vanity are, however, unlike in this—vanity does little harm to anybody except those who indulge in it, while pride affects the comfort and happiness of others, proud people often behaving very rudely to those whom they consider in any respect their inferiors.

I knew a little girl that was always looking at herself in the glass, admiring her fair complexion and her curls. She was continually watching to see who noticed her, and she liked to be with those who were foolish enough to call her pretty, and to praise her dress and flatter her. This was a vain child.

And she had a cousin who was

as proud as she was vain. His father had a handsome house and a carriage, and a great many servants. And this proud boy fancied himself quite a little lord, and looked so scornfully on those who were not so grand or well dressed as himself, and spoke so haughtily to the servants, that he was very much disliked.

Now I think you will see the similarity and the difference between pride and vanity.

I am going to talk about a few of the many things of which children are either vain or proud, and to show the folly of their being so. And, as I go along, let each ask, "Is this like me? Do I conduct myself in this way?"

Some are vain of their *persons*. Of this I have already given an instance, and therefore shall not dwell upon it now, further than to remark that beauty, however pleasing in itself, is quite spoiled by vanity.

Others are vain of their *dress*. If they happen to have a new robe, or sash, or hat, they want everybody to see it, and seem to think themselves of great consequence. And it is not only the children of rich people who act in this way. Did you never see a girl in the school seem very full of herself because she had got a smart bonnet? And did you not notice how she looked down upon the shabby frock and old shoes of the poor little girl who sat next to her, and whom she

ought rather to have pitied? Oh! it was very offensive in the sight of God.

Some are proud of their *circumstances*, or, I should rather say, are proud because their parents are rich and live in grandeur. But wealth is God's gift, and no cause for pride, but demands gratitude for his undeserved goodness. Thinkest thou, O child of rich parents, that it is for any merit in thee that these blessings are bestowed?

Others, again, are proud of their *abilities* and *attainments*. They think themselves very clever, and love to talk and show off. But nobody likes these conceited children; and if they would only consider how very little it is that they *do* know, com-

pared with the much that they *do not* know, they would be more humble, and be willing to listen and learn instead of thinking much of themselves and exhibiting before others.

To conclude, Beauty, and goodly attire, and wealth, and talents, and knowledge, are not naturally our own. In whatever degree we possess them, they have been bestowed upon us by God. "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"

Above all things, remember the disapprobation of pride God invariably expresses throughout the Scriptures. Perhaps there is no sin

excepting idolatry that more excites his displeasure. Remember also his sweet promises of mercy and favour to the humble. He has said that he will have "respect unto the lowly," and will "dwell with him that is of a humble and contrite spirit."

THE BLOT OF INK.

“WHO has made this blot of ink on my notebook?” said a school-master, as he came into the school-room, and again took his seat at the desk, which he had left a few minutes before, in order to speak to the mother of one of his scholars.

A deep silence was the only answer to this question.—“I ask,” repeated Mr. Bernard, “who has made this blot of ink on my notebook?”

At the first summons, forty pairs

of eyes were raised to the face of the master, and as quickly brought back to the slates ; at the second all the heads remained down, and nothing was to be heard but the sound of the pencils, which scratched the slates more than usual, as the figures were being written down.

“When a master asks a question,” said Mr. Bernard, “it is the duty of the scholars to answer him ; now there is one among you who is guilty, there is one who left his seat and came, most probably, to look for the answer to his sum in this key-book ; my pen, which had ink in it, must have slipped from his hand, and blotted the note-book as it fell. I now call upon the guilty one to stand up.”

There was still the same silence all round.

The master sighed, for he loved his little scholars very much ; it grieved him to punish them ; but he knew that these young souls had been entrusted to his care by the Saviour, to teach them his ways and to guide them in the path which leads to life ; and while his heart was grieved at the thought that he must at any cost find out the offender and punish him, especially as his obstinacy threw suspicion on his companions, he resolved not to act rashly.

He now slowly left his desk, and standing in front of the forms where his scholars were seated, he said, " I do not like tell-tales ; it is

a proof of a very bad spirit when a boy discloses his schoolfellows' faults ; but it is necessary for the good"—and he laid a stress on the word, " for the good of the offender, that I should know who he is. Now, I do not want you to say, it is such and such a one, but I desire you all, beginning with the first division, to leave this room, and to go into the passage, with the exception of the one among you who is guilty."

They then began to file off. One, two, three forms were soon empty ; the fourth class, which was composed of the youngest boys, went more slowly ; the last child but one had gone, the one who remained seemed just about to rise, but, after a slight movement, he reseated himself.

Mr. Bernard shut the door of the room, and then came and sat down by the little boy, and taking both his hands in his, he said: "So it was you, Paul, who went in this deceitful way to find out from my book whether your sum was correct? It was you who left your seat without my permission? It was you who insulted your master by refusing to answer him; for, as you are the guilty one, it was to you that I spoke. You are right not to look me in the face; but tell me, how will you look at your dear mother when she calls you this evening to say your prayers to God before you go to bed? And how will you pray? What will you say to the Lord, whom you have offended?"

Two tears rolled down poor little Paul's cheeks. "My child," continued the master, "your conduct grieves me all the more, because, up to this time, I have observed your good conduct and love of truth."

Paul's cheeks became like crimson ; he raised his head, and cried, "Sir, I didn't lie."

"Do not try to excuse yourself, my boy," said Mr. Bernard ; "if you did not tell a lie, at least you let your schoolfellows be suspected of a fault of which you alone were guilty, and that was not honest. However much it grieves me, I *must* punish you ; to-day is Wednesday, so this evening and for the rest of the week, I shall keep you in till

eight o'clock in the evening; and each day, during the extra hours, you shall write out ten pages of grammar."

Mr. Bernard opened the door, and, the time being up, he dismissed his scholars, telling Louis, Paul's brother, to explain to their mother the cause of his brother's absence. While he was speaking to him, all the other boys had left, and the master and the two brothers were alone in the schoolroom. Paul was sitting with downcast eyes, so that he did not see how pale and bewildered Louis looked, when he heard his master's message. Louis was twelve months younger than his brother, who was in his eleventh year: the love of the two boys for

each other was so great and so strong, that it had often excited the admiration of their schoolfellows, and even of their master.

Mr. Bernard had stopped speaking some minutes, but Louis did not move; he seemed fixed to the spot, and his eyes were fixed on Paul, who did not look up. "Louis, my child, you must go; it is long past five o'clock. Paul, get your grammar and begin to copy."

Paul rose to get his book, but Louis threw his arms round his neck, sobbing aloud. "Oh, brother, brother!" he cried. He would have added more, but Paul, kissing him affectionately, tried all he could to comfort him. "Never mind, Louis; hush, hush; I will write fast, and I

shall have finished before eight o'clock, and when I come home, I will explain it all to my mother: be quiet; there, run away. I wish you would go, Louis; I don't like to see you cry so: if you would only go." And Paul tried to get free from his brother; but Louis would not leave him.

"*I will stay too, I will stay,*" he cried; "it is you who ought to go; I dare not go to my mother;" and his sobs increased.

At last Mr. Bernard took Louis' hand, and said, "My child, you must go: as your brother is guilty of a serious fault, you can understand that he must be punished."

But what was his astonishment when the little boy answered, "You

are mistaken, sir, I am the guilty one."

"Louis!" cried Paul, seizing him by the arm, "you were punished enough, without saying that." And the two brothers threw themselves into each other's arms.

Mr. Bernard watched them without knowing what to think. Was Louis really guilty, and not Paul? Had the latter done this in order to save his brother from punishment? And now, whom was he to punish? His perplexity was great. The two brothers were standing there before him clasped in each other's arms, and their heads resting on each other's shoulders. The master's eyes filled with tears as he watched them, but after a few mo-

ments he drew them towards him, and said :

“ Dear children, I like to see this great love between you, and never would I wish that you should love each other less ; but while you have this brotherly love, you must also love each other *as unto the Lord*. When one of you commits a fault, the other must love him so much, as not only to wish to bear his punishment, but also to tell him frankly that he has done wrong. I know that this is more difficult for a loving heart. I now understand what happened this afternoon. In a moment of thoughtlessness, Louis committed the first fault ; his courage failed him when I asked the question ; and, as one sin generally leads

to another, he had not the courage and frankness to confess himself guilty by remaining in his seat. Was it not so, Louis ?”

“ Yes, sir,” he answered, his eyes swimming with tears.

“ But you, my boy,” said Mr. Bernard, turning to Paul, “ why did you not leave your seat ?”

“ Because, sir,” said Paul, colouring, “ I said to myself, ‘ My brother has done wrong, but as he will not confess it, I must take his place, because then our schoolfellows will not be suspected any longer :’ that is the truth, sir. And now may my brother go home ?”

“ No, no !” cried Louis, “ it is I who ought to stay ;” and his tears began again.

“ You see, dear boy,” said Mr. Bernard, “ how much wiser it is, in youth as well as in old age, to act with uprightness and perfect honesty. Solomon says, ‘ He that covereth his sins shall not prosper ; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy,’ Prov. xxviii. 13. This is perfectly true, as everything is which the Bible teaches us ; and if, as soon as I asked, ‘ Who has made a blot of ink on my note-book ?’ you had answered, ‘ Sir, it was I ; I had the curiosity to look into it, but I am sorry for it, and please to forgive me,’ most probably I should have received your confession, with nothing more than a simple rebuke, and a warning never to do it again.

Instead of that, you paid no attention to my repeated questions ; your fault is the greater, and you have forced your brother, although he was innocent, to represent himself as being the guilty one. As he has offered himself for you, he must bear the punishment ; and you, you are free.

“No, no,” continued Mr. Bernard, gently repelling Louis’ entreaties, “I cannot unsay what I have said ; it is Paul whom I punished ; he must finish the task which he has undertaken out of love for his guilty brother. You, my child, I pardon, and I will love you just as much as before, for I am sure you are sorry for your sin, and in future you will try to show your gratitude to your

brother for what he has done for you, and you will avoid falling again into the same fault."

The good master was right; from that day, in which the innocent was punished for the guilty, Louis understood better than ever the great love which his brother had for him, and he never ceased trying to show by his conduct the gratitude he felt for that love.

And now, my dear little friends, I *must* ask you one question. Have you understood the moral of this tale? Does it not remind you of an important, a solemn fact, which refers to each of you personally? Yes, surely it must recall to your minds our Lord Jesus Christ, who came to pay the debt of all your

sins—the sins of all those who believe in him. And as the good master forgave Louis, for his brother's sake, so our heavenly Father forgives us our many sins for the sake of the blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed for us. And what have we to do? A very simple thing, for one who loves his Saviour; we must, like Louis, prove our gratitude, by our conduct and by our love for him, by obeying the commands which he has given us.

THE PINK SATIN LINING.

PART I.

“ I WONDER your mother lets you wear such a shabby bonnet, Mary Lee,” said a girl about twelve years old to a younger companion, “ after the fine beaver you had last winter.”

“ Yes, so do I,” said another; “ with all her boasting about grand relations, it seems they cannot afford to buy her another.”

At this moment the two girls reached the door of their father’s cottage, and, turning to their morti-

fied schoolfellow, made her a mocking curtsy, and hoped they should see a fine new bonnet next Sunday.

No sooner had they entered the house, than Mary Lee began to run towards home, and in a few moments her mother was surprised to see her little girl enter the cottage out of breath, and, throwing herself into her arms, sob as if her heart would break. "What can be the matter with you, Mary?" said Mrs. Lee; "tell me, my child, and do not sob in that way. Are you hurt? or in disgrace?" "Oh, mother, my old bonnet!" sobbed Mary; "the girls have been jeering me about it."

"If that is all you are crying about, Mary, dry your tears; I did not think my little girl would be so

foolish and proud as to wish to be dressed finer than other children in her own station—your bonnet is still very neat; and I try to keep you so in your other dress. But, Mary, even if I could afford to buy you better or finer clothes, I should not do so, lest I should encourage that love of finery which I find you possess. Besides, I cannot quite understand why your schoolfellows should expect you to be dressed better than themselves. They know I cannot afford, even if I considered it right, to dress you always as well as you appeared last winter. Ah, Mary, I am sorry I allowed you to wear the presents your aunts sent to you, if you are dissatisfied with what I am able to afford for you now.”

“Oh, dear mother,” said Mary, “I know it is very wrong to be dissatisfied with the clothes you give me; I will try not to mind what the girls say about my bonnet; but they are so spiteful, and do so mock me, it makes me cry.”

“It need not do that, my child, if you would remember the words of Scripture, ‘Be clothed with humility,’ and the apostle’s command, that women, instead of adorning themselves with costly apparel, should seek for ‘the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.’”

Mary had almost expected her mother to take her part, and sympathize with her mortified pride. She well knew that her own con-

duct was the principal, if not the only, cause of the annoyance she received from her school-fellows; but she dried her tears, and made a resolve not to give way again to such foolish pride. Mary did this in her own strength; no wonder, then, that she fell before a new and unexpected temptation.

The town in which Mary lived was more than two hundred miles from London. Mrs. Lee and her two sisters had been brought up in this town, by pious parents. Her eldest sister had married about the same time as herself, and had gone to London with her husband. Mrs. Lee's youngest sister soon followed, and obtained a situation in a family as lady's maid.

Years rolled on full of sorrow to Mary's mother, who became a widow, and was obliged to support herself and her little girl by taking in needlework. She had plenty of work to do, for every one seemed to take an interest in the diligent, yet delicate-looking widow. During all this time her sisters had been prosperous and successful, but she had never met them ; the distance from London to their native town was, in those days of coach-travelling, a tedious and expensive journey. At length an opportunity offered for Mrs. Lee to accept for Mary a long-talked-of invitation to see her aunt in London. Under the care of a friend, therefore, her mother allowed her to visit "the good and evil city,"

as the Rev. Richard Knill once called it, when addressing the writer, who was about to return to London.

Mrs. Lee would have trembled to part with her little girl, had she known how prosperity had drawn the hearts of her sisters from God ; while adversity had made her cling more closely to him.

After dazzling the child with what, to her eyes, appeared the utmost gentility and grandeur, they, with mistaken kindness, sent her back with a new smartly trimmed frock and a beaver bonnet and feathers. Mrs. Lee, pained as she was herself, was yet unwilling to pain her sisters, otherwise she would have sent back both bonnet and

dress, as being totally unsuitable for a little girl in Mary's station of life, in a country town. As it was, she took off the gay trimming from the dress, and removed the feathers from the bonnet, before she would allow her to wear either.

The sorrow, and even temper, shown by Mary at this, proved to her mother how quickly the seeds of pride had sprung up in her child's heart: and she earnestly prayed to be enabled to counteract their evil effects. She was not, however, aware of half the injury her once humble little girl had received. In her new London frock and bonnet, Mary excited sufficient notice from her school-fellows to gratify her awakened vanity; but it did

not satisfy her. Vanity is almost the greediest of all the meaner vices. Nothing is too little to be received as a token of admiration. And Mary took every opportunity to describe to her schoolfellows the fine rooms, fine clothes, and sums of money possessed by her aunts in London, not omitting a description of the scarlet trimming and feathers which her mother had refused to allow her to wear.

This vain boasting, and the manner in which she now looked down upon those more meanly dressed than herself, excited their envy and dislike. When, therefore, the following winter, the same bonnet and dress, their freshness and beauty gone, still continued to be worn by

Mary as best, they took every possible means of "paying her back," as they called it, for her pride and vanity the winter before.

Not many days after the conversation with which we commenced this true history of a little girl, Mary's mother was taken very ill; so serious indeed did her disorder become, that it was thought necessary to send for one of her sisters. Aunt Jane, the youngest, arrived as quickly as possible, and nursed her sister with every care; yet it was some days, even after the disease took a favourable turn, before Mrs. Lee could be considered out of danger. During this sad time Mary's kind heart was too full of sorrow and terror at the thoughts of losing

her mother, to have room for silly fancies about dress and pride. At length Mrs. Lee was able to get up and sit in her arm-chair, and Mary heard with joy that she might soon expect to see her dear mother about the house and garden as usual, with her accustomed health.

With the removal of her fears came back the recollection of her dress. Aunt Jane had inquired respecting her appearance; and, on seeing the bonnet and frock, decided upon turning the one, and sending the other to be cleaned, without consulting her sister. She had discovered a little of what she called Mrs. Lee's peculiarities, and thought, very justly, that to this she could have no objection, and

Mary quite agreed with her; but when aunt Jane proposed to line the bonnet with pink satin, Mary, who knew how much her mother would disapprove of unnecessary finery, was too pleased at the idea to tell her aunt the truth. She therefore readily agreed to the arrangement, only begging that it might be kept a secret until the bonnet was finished.

By this, the foolish child hoped to be able to wear the pink lining for one Sabbath at least; and then, if her mother wished, it could be taken out again. Sabbath morning came; Mrs. Lee was still in her room, when Mary entered to wish her good-bye before going to the house of God. She had purposely

omitted to put on her bonnet ; and Mrs. Lee, after noticing and approving the frock, inquired for it. I am sorry to say the answer was an untruthful one. " It is in aunt Jane's room ; I cannot go in till she is ready." The blush of confusion which covered Mary's face as she said this convinced her mother that it was not all true, and a pang of sorrow thrilled through her heart. At the same moment aunt Jane's voice was heard calling the child. Mary hastily kissed her mother, glad to escape from that earnest look.

In that lonely chamber, with the Bible open before her, in the calm quiet of a Sabbath morning, the mother prayed for her erring child.

PART II.

MARY'S fine bonnet was quickly tied on, and with her aunt Jane she went on her way to the house of God. As we have before said, her mother was ill, and confined to her room. All the thoughts of Mary were about the best and quickest way of showing her fine pink satin lining to the two girls who had laughed at her. They generally sat with their father, two seats behind Mrs. Lee; therefore, as the finery Mary so much wished to display was inside her bonnet and round

her face, she could only do so by turning round and looking at them. I am sorry to be obliged to write it, but I am telling a true story, and therefore I must relate the truth: Mary's whole thoughts after she entered her pew were how she should contrive this.

While singing the hymn Mary stood up, and the moment it was finished, she turned and looked towards her schoolfellows. By so doing she certainly attracted their attention to her pink satin lining; but scarcely had her gratified pride made this discovery, than she recollected herself, and, blushing with shame and confusion, sat down, feeling that every eye must be upon her. In her folly and pride she had

forgotten that other parts of the service were to be attended to. In the utmost confusion she took up her book, and with trembling fingers tried to find the place. She had not heard the number of the psalm, but she needed it not. Upon her tingling ears fell the words of the 139th Psalm, like a voice from heaven : " O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and my uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways."

Her aunt, seeing her confusion, gave her a book open at the place. She took it, but she could not read—she could only hear ; and as she

listened it seemed as if the presence of God filled the place. Above, around, on every side was the glorious God, whose service she had mocked, whose house she had profaned, and whose presence she had forgotten. The service continued. When the minister gave out his text, Psalm cxxxix. 23, 24: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting,"—Mary listened with burning cheeks, as every word he uttered seemed meant for her; and when the service was at an end, her heart was too full to speak. She walked home by her aunt's side in silence. No sooner, however, had



"THAT BONNET."

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she entered the house, than she hurried up stairs, burst into her mother's room, dashed off her bonnet on the ground, fell on her knees and burying her head in her mother's lap, sobbed convulsively.

Mrs. Lee, in her weak state, was at first terribly startled by this violent grief; but a glance at the smart bonnet, as it lay before her on the floor, gave her some idea of what was the matter. She let her little girl weep on, and waited for her to speak, with a heavy heart. "Oh, mother," at length said the sobbing Mary, "that bonnet—that and bonnet—oh, never let me see it again." "Mary, you are very foolish; how can your bonnet have done anything to cause all this sorrow?" "Oh,

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mother, it can—it has made me wicked and proud in God's house this morning: I can never, never wear it again."

"Stop, my dear Mary; I am afraid you are laying your own faults upon an article of clothing: you cannot mean what you say. Compose yourself, and tell me what has happened." Mary, with many tears, told her mother all that had occurred; her sinful pride, her forgetfulness of God's presence, and the manner in which she had betrayed her pride to every one near her.

Mrs. Lee was very grieved to hear all this; yet amidst her sorrow there arose a hope that the effect upon her child would be for her

good. She desired her to sit on a little stool by her side, and then tried to lay open to her the real cause of her sinful conduct. "My dear Mary, how many sins have you committed this day through the indulgence of one—pride in dress, the meanest and most contemptible of them all. You sinned against God before you went out this morning, Mary; you were untruthful, for you deceived your mother. You promised also to wear the bonnet as long as I thought proper for you to wear it; but you broke your promise by hiding from me the whole of the alteration that was going to be made in it. You concealed it from me, but you can hide nothing from God. You had for-

gotten to ask him for strength to keep your promise to me, and to resist temptation, and he left you to yourself, to fall ; but I thank him, my dear child, that he did not say of you, as he said to the Jews, ' Ephraim is joined to idols : let him alone.' If this has in some measure shown you the sinfulness of your own heart, and if it teach you to pray for strength to resist temptation, then I shall not even regret that my little girl had a pink satin lining to her bonnet."

" Oh, dear mother," said Mary, " I think I shall never be vain or proud of fine clothes again. I did not think pride could ever make me so wicked as I was this morning."

“ My little girl can give me one proof that she *hopes* never to be proud of fine clothes again,” said Mrs. Lee, glancing at the bonnet.

“ How, mother?” said Mary, looking up eagerly, then following the direction of her mother’s eye. She hesitated; the soft shining folds of the satin, as the bonnet lay face towards them, were certainly very enticing; but Mary felt, that if she wore it again she should be as vain as ever. “ Mother,” she said, “ I know what you mean; I will wear my bonnet without the lining; it shall be taken out.”

Mrs. Lee raised her little girl in her arms and kissed her fondly, exclaiming, “ Thank God, my dear child; now I have hopes of you.”

The pink lining was taken out, much to aunt Jane's surprise ; yet she could not but own the wisdom of her sister's decision. And Mary completely silenced the remarks of her companions by owning her faults, and telling them her mother did not wish her to be dressed finer or better than the children of her neighbours.

I am happy also to be able to say, that Mary grew up modest and simple in her dress, and never forgot the lesson she had learned when vain and proud of the pink satin lining.

THE PICTURE CLOCK,

OR WILLIE'S LESSON.

“OH, mamma, just see what baby has done!” exclaimed Willie Upton, running into the library where his mamma sat writing. “My beautiful new puzzle! And now just look at this piece;” and the little fellow’s face lengthened into a dismal expression of concern.

Certainly the trial was not a small one for the fortitude of seven years old to support. His “beautiful new puzzle,” a large dissected map of

the world, had been sent to him as a birthday present only three days before, and was consequently very precious in his eyes ; and now the piece which he extended to his mamma bore sad tokens of baby's destructive powers. South America had become almost a blank under the action of his busy little teeth—new-found implements which he was particularly fond of using, and nothing was left, but a surface of wet, rough, discoloured paper.

“ Why, my dear boy, how could you be so careless ? ” asked Mrs. Upton : “ you might have known that baby would spoil that piece if you let him have it.”

“ Yes, mamma ; but he was out in the garden when I began it ; and

directly nurse set him down, that she might take off her things, he crawled up to it while my back was turned, and I never knew anything about it till he threw that piece down, and I saw that it was spoiled. Oh, mamma, I am so sorry !”

“So am I, Willie,” was the kind reply ; “but I am glad, at the same time, to see that my little boy can bear a vexation like this without crying about it or being angry. If you will ask me to-morrow morning, perhaps I can put it all to rights again. I can paste a fresh piece of paper over this, and draw the country and paint it, and we will ask papa to print the names when he comes home. What do you think of that ?” added his

mamma, smiling as she saw his face brightened again.

“ Oh, mamma, thank you, it will be beautiful ; and then I can choose the colours. And may I bring my map down here to finish putting it together ?”

“ You must be very quiet, if you do, Willie ; for I have a long letter to write to papa, to tell him that I got home safely yesterday, and how the poor people are that I went to see this morning. If you will promise not to fidget or talk to me till I have done, you may have the map at that end of the table.”

Willie joyfully gave the required promise, and, sealing it with an affectionate kiss, ran to fetch his puzzle. For about half an hour all

went on quietly, but by that time he began to get tired of his map, and his mamma's letter was still unfinished. Just then he happened to look up at the clock, which hung just opposite to him on the library wall, and he saw in a moment that it had stopped. Now this clock was a great favourite of Willie's, and I think you would have liked it too, my little reader, if you had ever seen it. It was not like the clock in the kitchen, and not like the drawing-room time-piece, or any of the pretty ones you see in the jeweller's window, but one much more curious. At first sight you would have thought it was only a pretty picture, as it hung in its broad gilt frame against the wall.

There was a little church, with a curious wooden spire, standing among some trees near a quiet river ; and there were cows standing in the water to drink, and blue hills in the distance, and blue sky above, which made it altogether very pretty. Then, if you noticed rather more particularly, you would see a clock in the church tower ; but, perhaps, you would hardly think it was a real one till you saw the hands move and heard it strike. But it was a real clock ; and, besides doing all the work of a common one and looking very pretty, it would play tunes when any one touched a spring at the side ; so it was no wonder that Willie liked it. He used to think and wonder about it

sometimes for a long while together, especially when he was tired of play in the evening. Then he loved to sit on his mamma's footstool by the fire, and look at it and listen to its music.

But this afternoon, though the staircase clock had just struck four, the hands of the one in the little tower pointed to a quarter to seven, and its usual low ticking was silent.

"Oh, mamma," exclaimed Willie, the moment he perceived it, forgetting his promised silence, "see, the picture clock has stopped."

Mrs. Upton looked up from her letter, and answered quietly, "So it has. I suppose Susan forgot to wind it up yesterday. I generally do it, you know."

“Will you set it going now, mamma, and let me see you? or may I just get on a chair, and move the hands back to four o’clock? Do let me.”

“No, dear, it must wait now till seven, then you shall see me wind it up; but you must not interrupt me now. I am just telling papa about Mrs. Lockey’s poor little blind boy; you know he is very ill, and I went to see him this morning on purpose to send word. Get your ‘Far off,’ and read a little till I have finished, and then you shall come and sit by me, and I will tell you about him.”

“If you please, ma’am,” said Susan, opening the door, “Mrs. Rawlins is come again. She called

yesterday before you came back, and I told her you would be home to-day."

"Very well, Susan, I will come and speak to her. Willie, my dear, do not go back into the nursery just now; I daresay baby is gone to sleep after his walk; and do not touch anything while I am away. I daresay I shall not be long."

Mrs. Rawlins had, however, a long and sad story to relate, and more than half an hour slipped away before she got up to go. During the absence of her kind minister and his wife, her eldest boy, who had always been a great trouble to her, had run away—gone no one knew whither—and all her husband's efforts to trace him had been

in vain. She came to ask if Mr. Upton, while he was in London, whither they supposed the lad had gone, would try to get some information about him. This was at once promised, and Mrs. Upton's words of hope and sympathy seemed to relieve the poor mother of a heavy burden, and it was with a lighter and a thankful heart that she turned at length from her pastor's friendly door.

How had the time been spent by the little prisoner in the library? For a while he amused himself with his book; then put his map back into the box, piece by piece, that the lid might fit nicely; and then, hardly knowing what to do, he sat still for a few minutes and looked

out of the window. There was not much to be seen, for the vicarage stood in a garden separated from the road by a low paling, so he very soon grew tired of that. I daresay you know the little hymn that says—

“Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.”

So it proved with Willie. He began first to wish that his mamma would come back; then to wonder how long she would be; then he looked at the clock, and, remembering that it did not go, wondered why she did not let him put it back, and make it strike. He had so often wanted to touch it, and he would have done it very carefully. “I daresay it was only because mamma

thought I should do it too quickly, or break the hands, and I am sure I should not," murmured the little boy to himself; for a restless, discontented spirit was beginning to rise up in his heart: but then he remembered that his mamma said she could not do it herself till seven o'clock. "Well, it was only because she did not like to be interrupted," answered the fretful voice within; "mamma never likes to be interrupted when she is doing anything."

"Oh, Willie, Willie," whispered conscience and gratitude together, "how often mamma has left off when she has been most busy, to do things for you!"

Willie almost started when that inward whisper came, it made him

feel that he was so ungrateful ; but in a moment the other voice went on again.

“ No doubt that was the reason,” it persisted ; “ and, if she could not do it herself, she might have let you—why cannot you do it now ? ”

Poor Willie ! the temptation was strong, and it found him unprepared. He was alone, and he forgot the Eye that saw him—forgot all his mamma’s gentle teachings, and her patient love—forgot everything, in the eager desire to do that forbidden thing. Moving the arm-chair directly under the clock, he mounted on it—that was not quite high enough ; by stepping on the arm he could just reach it. And with a beating heart and flushed cheek he had laid

his finger on the long hand, when the door opened, and, turning round with a start, he met his mamma's grieved and astonished look.

For a moment Mrs. Upton did not speak, and Willie stood as if fixed to the arm of the chair where he had perched himself. Then she went forward, and lifting him gently down, pointed to his low chair in one corner of the room, and said quietly, "Go and sit down there, Willie, till I can attend to you."

The child obeyed in silence, and without lifting his eyes. He did not see the sorrowful look that clouded his mother's face; but the low sad sigh with which she seated herself at the table, and drew her desk towards her, went to his heart. He

loved her dearly; and the long silence that ensued gave time for conscience, silenced before, to whisper to him the folly and sin of the reasoning by which he had been tempted to disobey her.

At length the letter was finished, sealed, and despatched. Willie's heart beat quick as the servant closed the door, but his mamma did not speak, and at last he looked up at her. She was sitting at the table still, her head resting on her hand and turned towards the fire. If he could have listened to her thoughts at that moment, he would have heard them shaped into an earnest prayer to God for wisdom towards him; but he only saw her face turned away, still, he thought, in dis-

pleasure, and he could not bear it any longer. His low sob caught her ear, and she turned in a moment and called him to her. Willie felt that there was no anger in her tone, and in an instant he was by her side. Mrs. Upton drew him close to her, and, laying his head against her shoulder, his tears flowed without restraint.

“Dear mamma,” he said at last, “will you forgive me? I am very sorry that I was so disobedient.”

Mrs. Upton pushed back the bright hair fondly from his forehead, and printed on it a long silent kiss—one of those mother’s kisses that often seem in after years to linger on the brow. “Yes, dear boy,” she said, “I do forgive you; but it was

not only against me you did the wrong. God saw you, though you forgot him, and he was displeased. Let us ask him to forgive you."

She pressed her child closer to her, and he felt in the hushed stillness of the few moments that followed that she was praying for him. His own heart, deeply touched and humbled, grew calm and earnest with the awe of the thought that God was listening, and he prayed too, silently, to be forgiven.

After a few minutes, silence, he put his arms round his mamma, and kissed her fondly; then drawing the little stool up to her feet, sat down, still keeping hold of her hand, and looking very grave, but not unhappy.

“Please, mamma, will you tell me one thing?” he said at length, breaking the silence suddenly. “I know I ought not to have touched the clock when you told me not; but will you tell me why you said so? Was it because you thought I should not do it carefully?”

“No, my dear; I dare say you would have taken care not to do any mischief that you knew of; but there are a great many little springs and wheels inside, some to make it go, some to make it strike, and others to make it play, and if you had moved the hands back as you wished, you would have put several of them out of order. I should have had to send it to London to be set right, for no one understands these

foreign clocks here. Now if I wait till the right time, and wind it up, that will set going what is called the main-spring, which will make all the others begin to work in proper order, as if it had not stopped. Do you understand?"

"Yes, mamma; and I am very glad I did not do it. I have often wondered what made the hands always keep going round, and why that clock and the kitchen clock and your watch tell the right time; and that little watch uncle John gave me never does, except when I move the hands."

"Now, then, you know the difference. One has a spring hidden inside it that keeps it going on all the while; and the other has no

inside spring, and so can only go as it is moved. Which is the best do you think?"

"Oh, mamma, the one with the spring, to be sure."

"But why? One looks just as good as the other, and you can always set yours right when you like."

"Yes, mamma; but then the hands only stay where I put them. You know the first day I had it I set it by this clock, and left it on the table, and when I came back it was all wrong. I could not keep it right except by watching it and moving the hand every minute, and so it is no good at all."

"My dear boy, you have answered quite right, and there is a serious

lesson in those words that I hope you will remember. Suppose I alter them a little, so as to use them about you instead of the watch, and say, 'I cannot keep my little boy right, except by watching him and telling him every minute; and if I leave him quite right, and come back in half an hour, I am sure to find him doing something wrong. Such obedience as that is no good at all.'

Willie coloured deeply; for he felt all the force of his mamma's words, gently as they were spoken. "But, mamma," he answered, after a pause, "I am not always doing wrong when you are not looking at me."

"No, dear child, because there

are many other things that move you besides my presence. There is the wish to please me, and the fear of being punished, and the satisfaction of going on well, or the hope of a reward. All these move round the hands of my little clock in the right direction ; and because one or other of them is generally at work, many people who only see it now and then think it is a very good little clock. You know Mrs. Evans said so this morning. Was she right, Willie ?”

“ No, mamma ; I see just what you mean. Perhaps if my little watch had been lying there, pointing right, she would have thought the same of that, only she would soon have found it out ; and if she

had seen me this afternoon she would have known that I had not the inside spring either. Mamma, I know what the inside spring is. You have often told me that I want the love of God in my heart to keep me from doing wrong."

"Yes, dear, that is the only spring that can be relied on to keep any one right. Other motives might keep you for a time from doing anything very wrong, but temptations are sure to arise, when they will not act or will not be strong enough; and as you grow older some of them will pass away altogether. Your papa and I, for instance, might be taken from you, and you would no longer be kept right by the wish to please us; but if God's Holy Spirit

fixed the love of him in your heart, it would be a constant spring of right feeling and action. Do you understand?"

"Yes, mamma. I don't often do anything wrong when you are by; and God is always by, so if I loved him, that would always keep me."

"If you ask him, he will teach you to love him. We should often think of all his goodness to us, of his dear Son's coming down to die, and of the happy heaven that he has promised—then we should learn to love him. Every day we should know him better, and our hearts would turn to him more and grow truer to his will, so that we should want no outward motive, but should be kept right by this holy spring

within. Without this, if a child is thrown among bad companions he soon becomes like them; but this can keep him going right, whether he is praised or blamed, or left quite unnoticed. It was this that kept Joseph right—not only in his father's home, but as Potiphar's slave, in the prison, and in Pharaoh's heathen court."

"And Daniel, mamma. I wish I was like Daniel. It was so noble of him not to be afraid to worship God."

"God grant, my darling boy, that you may have this blessed love and fear for the main-spring of your life. Remember, that only his Spirit can fix it in your heart, and we must pray to him to do it, and only

the same Holy Spirit can keep it acting when it is given. Just as the spring of my watch cannot go on without being wound up every day, so as long as we live we want the constant influence of the Holy Spirit to keep our faith and love working on. Your papa and I could no more keep from doing wrong without it than you could."

"Then, mamma, everything must come from God all through, if he both gives the spring and keeps it going."

"Yes, dear, all good is from him. How thankful we should be, that he has promised to give all, if we ask him!"

Little reader, perhaps you are called a good child. Is your good-

ness outward or inward? Is love to God the inward spring that moves you through the round of daily duty, or are you only pushed on by outward influences like the hands of Willie's watch? If the last, let me tell you seriously that such goodness is good for very little. It may please those around you; but it is of no value at all in the sight of God, and it is God who will judge you at the last day. Oh, pray to him, that for the sake of Jesus he will put his love and fear into your heart, and make them the ruling principle of all your life.

THE TRIAL OF THE TONGUE.

A MERRY little party met one evening at the Grange. Nina and Annie Blyth had come to spend a few hours with their cousins, Jessie, Kate, and Mary, bringing with them a little visitor, Lizzie Forrest, who only a week before had arrived from London for the holidays. Six girls, the eldest only fourteen, the youngest seven, and all determined, for that evening at least, not only to be happy themselves, but to make others so.

Nina and Jessie, the most grown

of the party, were great friends, and whenever they got together had much to say to each other ; but this afternoon, instead of getting into a corner to whisper, nod, and smile, nobody knew about what, they were polite enough to join in the sports of the younger children, and found how pleasant it is to be obliging.

The first visit of all was, of course, to the garden, where the strawberries were red and ripe. It was delightful to stoop over the sunny bank and pick the tempting fruit, which hid so modestly under its shade of broad green leaves. Everything was new to Lizzie, who was familiar only with city life, and her joy was unbounded. After tea, when the long shadows fell on the

grass, and the children were almost tired from out-door play, Mrs. Blyth called them into the drawing-room, and begged of them to rest.

"What a nice hour for talk!" said Annie, settling herself comfortably on the sofa beside her aunt: "a dull world it would be to us girls, but for our tongues."

"It would be a far happier world, I think," replied Nina, "if people only learned to use them right." Annie blushed at her sister's remark, for conscience told her of some foolish gossip in which she had been just indulging.

"You seem to think, Nina," said her aunt, "that there is a right and a wrong use of the tongue, and I quite agree with you; but, that we

all may learn the one and avoid the other, let us hear something more about it."

"Well then, mamma," cried Jessie, "let us have a court; you shall be judge, and I shall be counsellor for the poor tongue, while Nina can, if she like, take the opposite side; and Lizzie Forrest, Annie, Mary, and Kate must stand in the place of twelve jurymen."

"Agreed," said all the girls at once.

"But before we proceed to the trial of this unruly member," urged Mrs. Blyth, "are you quite sure you are familiar with the laws he was bound to obey? Bring out the statutebook, that my young pleaders may be able to refer in any case of

difficulty. And remember with reverence that they are no human laws you hold in your hand, but the laws given by the King of kings. Now, Nina, open the case against the prisoner."

"Let us, then, find out the laws on this subject," said Nina: 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour,' Ex. xx. 16. 'Lie not one to another,' Col. iii. 9. 'Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment,' Matt. xii. 36. Now for the witnesses. 'The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. But the

tongue can no man tame ; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison,' James iii. 6, 8. ' His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud : under his tongue is mischief and vanity,' Ps. x. 7.

" Another witness," continued Nina, " as to ' the character of the prisoner. ' He that uttereth a slander is a fool.' Prov. x. 18. ' A tale-bearer revealeth secrets,' Prov. xi. 13. ' The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things,' Ps. xii. 3. Not to tire you," resumed Nina, " I shall refrain from bringing up more witnesses, although there are some present at this moment, who could prove the prisoner guilty not only of lies, deceit, flattery, evil speak-

ing, tale-bearing, hasty words, and foolish talking, but even of false and profane swearing. Enough, however, has been said to show that the prisoner deserves the severest punishment permitted by law."

Nina then sat down, and Jessie rose for the defence. "I shall not attempt," she said, "to deny the statement of the witnesses, but shall endeavour to show some of the claims which the prisoner still has to the mercy of the court, and how useful, under proper restraint, he may yet become; let me then introduce a witness on behalf of the prisoner. 'A wholesome tongue is a tree of life,' Prov. xv. 4. 'There-with bless we God, even the Father,' James iii. 9. 'The tongue of the

wise is health. The lip of truth shall be established for ever,' Prov. xii. 18, 19. 'Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice,' Ps. lv. 17. 'Seven times a day I praise thee,' Ps. cxix. 164.

"You have heard the evidence of these witnesses; and I plead that, considering the useful services my client has rendered to the state in time past, and the important duties he may yet perform, his life be spared; for I doubt not, under due care, he shall again become what he once was—the glory of the kingdom."

When the judge had summed up the evidence, Lizzie, Kate, Annie, and Mary, the jury, retired, but re-

turned after a few moments, bringing in a verdict of "Guilty," strongly recommending, however, the prisoner to mercy.

The judge then said, "It only remains for me to pass sentence on the prisoner. I desire that henceforth he be bound in the golden and silken chains of truth and love, placed under a guard, and permitted to exercise to the utmost the various parts of his proper calling; kind words, soft answers, gentle teachings, loving warnings, holy conversation, prayer, and praise."

Twilight had deepened almost into night when the young people separated, for they lingered long to listen to Mrs. Blyth, as she entreated them to beware of sins of

the tongue ; and before they parted she offered an earnest prayer, beseeching God, for Christ's sake, to keep their tongue from evil, and their lips from speaking guile.

THE LOST BOY.

AN INCIDENT IN THE OHIO PENITENTIARY.

BY THE WARDEN.

I HAD been but a few months in charge of the prison, when my attention was attracted to, and deep interest felt in, the numerous boys and young men who were confined therein, and permitted to work in the same shops with old and hardened convicts. This interest was increased on every evening, as I saw them congregated in gangs, marching to their silent meals, and thence to their gloomy bed-rooms, which are more like living sepulchres,

with iron shrouds, than sleeping apartments. These young men and boys, being generally the shortest in height, brought up the rear of the companies, as they marched to the terrible "lock step," and consequently more easily attracted attention. To see many youthful forms and bright countenances mingled with the old and hardened scoundrels, whose visages betokened vice, malice, and crime, was sickening to the soul. But there was one among the boys, a lad about seventeen years of age, who had particularly attracted my attention; not from anything superior in his countenance or general appearance, but by the look of utter despair which ever sat upon his brow, and the

silent, uncomplaining manner in which he submitted to all the hardships and degradations of prison life. He was often complained of, by both officers and men, and I thought unnecessarily, for light and trivial offences against the rules of propriety ; yet he seldom had any excuse or apology, and never denied a charge. He took the reprimand, and once a punishment, without a tear or a murmur, almost as a matter of course, seemingly thankful that it was no worse. He had evidently seen better days, and enjoyed the light of home, parents and friends, if not the luxuries of life. But the light of hope seemed to have gone out—his health was poor—his face pale—his frame fra-

gile—and no fire beamed in his dark gray eye! I thought every night, as I saw him march to his gloomy bed, that I would go to him, and learn his history—but there were so many duties to perform, so much to learn and to do, that day after day passed, and I would neglect him—having merely learned that his name was Arthur Lamb, and that his crime was burglary and larceny, indicating a very bad boy, for one so young. He had already been there a year, and had two more to serve! He never could outlive his sentence, and his countenance indicated that he felt it. He worked at stone-cutting, on the State House—hence my opportunities for seeing him were less than

though he had worked in the prison yard—still his pale face haunted me day and night—and I resolved that on the next Sabbath, as he came from school, I would send for him and learn his history. It happened, however, that I was one day in a store, waiting for the transaction of some business, and having picked up an old newspaper I read and re-read, while delayed, until at last my eye fell upon an advertisement of “A Lost Boy!—Information wanted of a boy named Arthur —,” (I will not give his real name, for perhaps he is still living;) and then followed a description of the boy—exactly corresponding with that of the young convict—Arthur Lamb! Then there was somebody

who cared for the poor boy, if, indeed it was him ; perhaps a mother, his father, his brothers and sisters, who were searching for him. The advertisement was nearly a year old—yet I doubted not—and soon as the convicts were locked up, I sent for Arthur Lamb. He came, as a matter of course, with the same pale, uncomplaining face and hopeless gait—thinking, no doubt, that something had gone wrong, and been laid to his charge.

I was examining the Convicts' Register when he came in ; and when I looked up, there he stood, a perfect image of despair. I asked him his name. He replied,

“ Arthur.”

“ Arthur what ?” said I, sternly.

“Arthur—— Lamb,” he answered, hesitatingly.

“Have you a father or mother living?”

His eye brightened—his voice quivered, as he exclaimed :

“Oh ! have you heard from mother ? Is she alive ? Is she well ?” and tears, which I had never seen him shed before, ran like great rain drops down his cheeks. As he became calm from suspense, I told him I had not heard from his parents, but that I had a paper I wished him to read. He took the advertisement which I had cut from the paper, and as he read it he exclaimed,

“That’s me ! that’s me !” and sobs and tears choked his utterance.

I assured him that the advertisement was all I could tell him about his parents—and that as it requested information, I desired to know what I should write in reply. The advertisement directed information to be sent to the editor of the Christian Chronicle, New York.

“Oh, do not write!” he said, “it will break poor mother’s heart!”

I told him I must write; and that it would be a lighter blow to his mother’s feelings, to know where he was, than the terrible uncertainty which must haunt her mind day and night. So he consented; and taking him to my room, I drew from him, in substance, the following story:

His father was a respectable and

wealthy mechanic in an interior town of the State of New York. At the holding of the State Agricultural Fair, in his native town, he got acquainted with two stranger boys, older than himself, who persuaded him to run away from home, and go to the West. He foolishly consented, with high hopes of happy times, new scenes and great fortune! They came as far as Cleveland, where they remained several days. One morning the other two boys came to his room early, and showed him a large amount of jewelry, &c., which they said they had won at cards during the night. Knowing that he was in need of funds to pay his board, they pressed him to take some of it, for

means to pay his landlord. But before he had disposed of any of it, they were all three arrested for burglary, and as a portion of the property taken from the store which had been robbed was found in his possession, he too, was tried, convicted and sentenced. He had no friends, no money, and dared not to write home—so, hope sank within him—he resigned himself to his fate, never expecting to get out of prison, or see his parents again.

Upon inquiring of the two young convicts who came with him on the same charge, I learned that what Arthur had stated was strictly true, and that his crime was keeping bad company, leaving his home, and unknowingly receiving stolen goods.

Questioned separately, they all told the same story, and left no doubt in my mind of Arthur's innocence. Full of compassion for the unfortunate little fellow, I sat down and wrote a full description of Arthur, his condition and history, as I obtained it from him, painting the horrors of the place, the hopelessness of his being reformed there, even if guilty, and the probability of his never living out his sentence, and describing the process to be used to gain his pardon. This I sent according to the directions in the advertisement. But week after week passed, and no answer came. The boy daily inquired if I had heard from his mother; until at last, "hope long deferred seemed to

make his heart sick," and again he drooped and pined. At last a letter came—such a letter! It was from the Rev. Dr. B——, of New York. He had been absent to a distant city, but the moment he read my letter the good man responded. The father of the poor boy had become almost insane on account of his son's long and mysterious absence. He had left his former place of residence, had moved from city to city, from town to town, and travelled up and down the country seeking the loved and the lost! He had spent the most of a handsome fortune; his wife, the boy's mother, was on the brink of the grave, "pining for her first born, and would not be comforted." They then

lived in a Western city, whither they had gone in the hope of finding or forgetting their boy! or that a change of scene might assuage their grief. He thanked me for my letter, which he had sent to the father, and promised his assistance to procure the young convict's pardon.

This news I gave to Arthur; he seemed pained and pleased—hope and fear, joy and grief, filled his heart alternately; but from thence his eye beamed brighter, his step was lighter, and hope seemed to dance in every nerve.

Days passed—and at last there came a man to the prison, rushing frantically into the office, demanding to see his boy.

“My boy! Oh, let me see him.”

The clerk, who knew nothing of the matter, calmly asked him for the name of his son.

“Arthur——”

“No such name on our books: your son cannot be here.”

“He is here! Show him to me! Here, sir, is your own letter! Why do you mock me?”

The clerk looked over the letter, saw at once that Arthur Lamb was the convict wanted, and rang the bell for the messenger.

“There is the warden, sir, it was his letter you showed.”

Too much of a good thing is often unpleasant. The old man embraced me and wept like a child. A thousand times he thanked me, and, in the name of his wife, heaped

blessings upon my head. But the rattling of the great iron door, and the grating sound of its hinges indicated the approach of Arthur, and I conducted the excited parent into a side parlour. I then led his son to his embrace. Such a half shriek and agonizing groan as the old man gave, when he beheld the altered appearance of the boy, as he stood, clad in the degrading stripes and holding a convict's cap in his hand, I never heard before ! I have seen many similar scenes since, and become inured to them ; but this one seemed as if it would burst my brain.

I drew up and signed a petition for the pardon of the young convict ; and such a deep and favourable

impression did the perusal of the letter I wrote in answer to the advertisement make upon the directors, that they readily joined in the petition, though it was a long time before McL——, consented. He was exceedingly cautious and prudent; but the old man clung to him—followed him from his office to his country residence, and there in the presence of his family plead anew his cause. At length, excited by the earnest appeal of the father, the director looked over the papers again—his wife, becoming interested, picked up the answer to the advertisement, read it, and then tears came to the rescue. Mac said, rather harshly, that the warden would let all those young rascals

out if he could. Those who know Gov. Wood, will not wonder that he was easily prevailed upon in such a case ; and the pardon was granted.

Need I describe the old man's joy—how he laughed and wept—walked and ran, all impatient to see his son free. When the lad came out in citizen's dress, the aged parent was too full for utterance. He hugged the released convict to his bosom—kissed him—wept and prayed ! Grasping my hand, he tendered me his farm—his watch—anything I would take.

I never saw them more ! But the young man is doing well ; and long may he live to reward the firm affection of his parents.

“JOY OVER ONE.”

THE sharp, quick sound of a crier's bell was heard above the rattle of carriages and the hum of multitudes hastening home as night came on, and the words, “Child lost! child lost!” fell upon their ears, and sent a thrill of pain to the hearts of fathers and mothers.

How many held their breath and listened! “Child lost! child! A little girl—not quite three years of age—her hair light and curly—eyes blue. When she left home she was

dressed in a scarlet frock and white apron ; has been missing four hours !” And again the bell was heard as the crier went on, proclaiming as he went the same mournful story.

And where, all this time, was little Lily Ashton ? Soon after she left her father’s door she made the acquaintance of other children in the street, with whom she played awhile, and then many things amused her as she ran along on the crowded sidewalk, but at length she discovered that her home was no longer in sight, and the poor little lost one sat down on a doorstep and wept bitterly. A kind-hearted gentleman came that way—one who loved children, and was always ready

to speak comforting words when they were in trouble. "What's the matter, little Blossom?" he asked.

His voice was so full of love that Lily stopped crying, and brushing back her curls, looked up to see who it was that spoke to her. The light from a street lamp above her shone full upon his benevolent face. "I isn't 'little Blossom;' I is Lily, and I want mamma," she said; and the tears began to flow again.

"Lily need not cry any more because we will go and find mamma. Will Lily go with me?"

Her tears ceased flowing, and she looked up into the kind face once more. "Have you got a little girl. and is she 'little Blossom?'"

"No, my dear; I have no Lily

nor Blossom, only when I find one such as you ; but I love little girls and boys, and I don't like to see them cry. Will you go with me to find your mamma ?" Lily stood up and put her hand in his, for her heart was won.

The kind gentleman lifted the tired little girl in his arms and carried her to the nearest police station, where he knew he would learn what she could not tell him about her home. And in a short time he placed the lost darling in the arms of her mother, whose anguish was thus turned into joy. He found other children—brothers and sisters—in that home, and as the parents and children gathered around little Lily, lost an hour before, but now

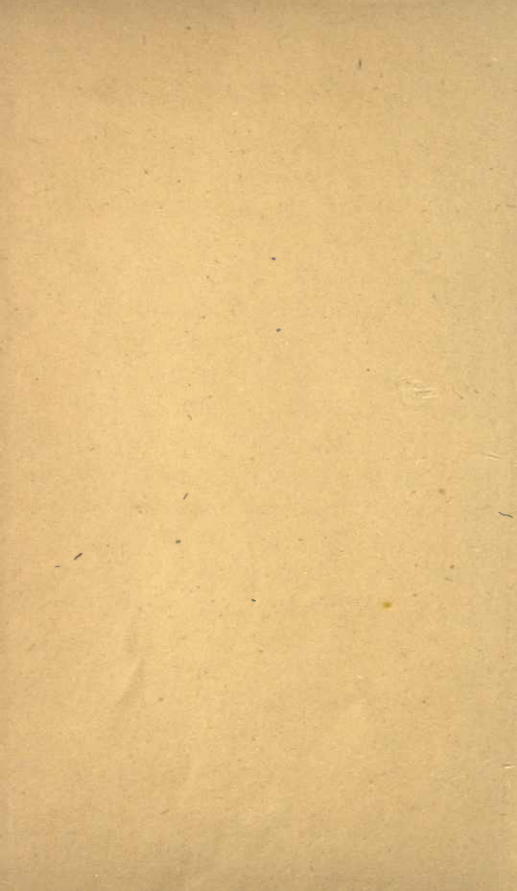
found, they laughed and wept by turns, for joy at her return.

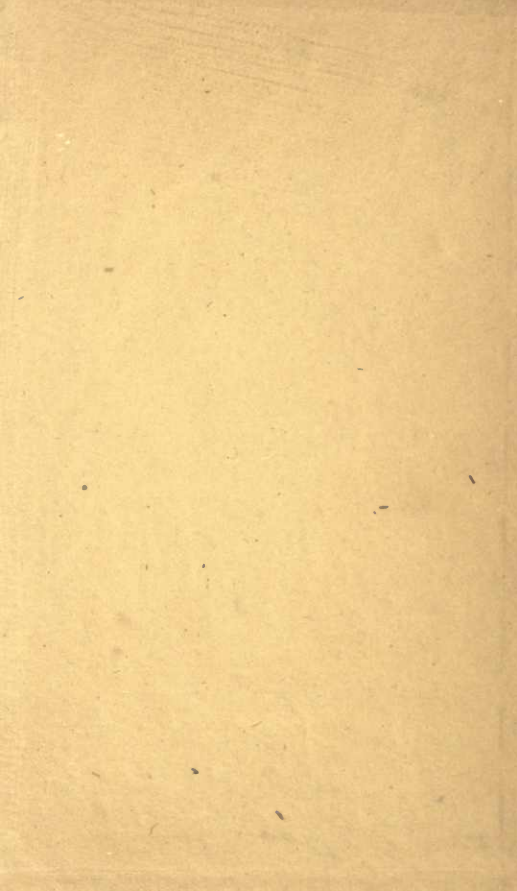
I know you do not wonder that this family were so glad to see Lily again. But their gladness reminds me—perhaps it has reminded you also—of some of the words of Jesus: “Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.” Can you tell why the happy family of the redeemed in heaven are joyful when a sinner repents? A sinner, you know, is one who is disobeying God; who does not love or trust in Christ; who is lost in the world, and who will never find the way to that beautiful home above, unless he repents. Do you not think that if you were in heaven, and could hear that some one on earth, who had

been wicked, had repented and begun to love Jesus, and was coming to be in heaven too—happy and holy for ever—you would be glad?

Perhaps some dear friends of yours are there now, and they are hoping to hear that you are in the way to the same home. Dear child, have you begun to walk in that path which leads to the “beautiful city above?” Come with the children of God; and there will be joy in heaven over you, far beyond that which was felt in Lily’s family when she was found. One is there who loves you far more than any friend here on earth can love, and he will receive you gladly into the number of the blessed.

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