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*THE MAN IN THE
CROW'S NEST*

THE MAN IN THE CROW'S NEST

And Other Talks to Children

BY
FRANK T. BAYLEY



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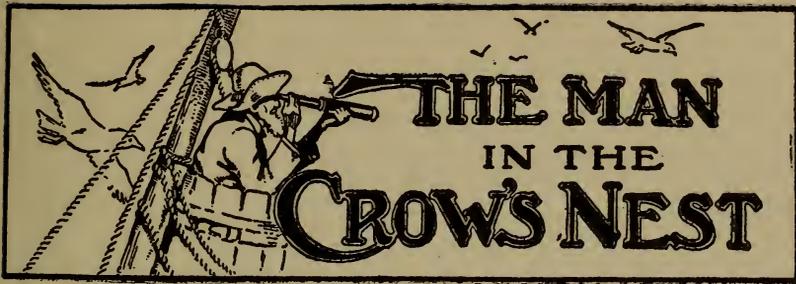
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I WAKENED ONE NIGHT TEMPTED to think anxious thoughts. It was very dark; and you know how much worse things seem in the dark. I was on a big ship, lying in a narrow bed which they call a berth. All day long we had seen nothing but water and sky; not even a ship in sight save our own, as it went plunging through the waves. And now the black night had settled down. The fog-whistle was blowing; and fog at sea always means danger of collision. I could hear the throb of the engines and the whistling of the wind. It seemed to be whistling for other winds to come for a picnic; and when the winds have a picnic at sea it means a storm. As I thought of my friends far away and how deep the water was under the ship, I felt a little heartsick. Just then I heard

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a voice cry: "All's well! Four bells (which meant two o'clock) and all's well!" It was the man in the crow's nest, which is a sort of barrel, open at the top, hung high up on the mast near the bow of the ship. When it begins to get dark the watchman climbs into the nest, leaving only his head above the barrel, and there the watch is kept all through the long night. Every half hour he calls out, "All's well!" and tells the time in sailor fashion. It was a comfort to hear that cry! Why should I be troubled? While he was watching I need not worry. So I turned over and shut my eyes with a quiet heart and fell asleep, saying to myself those sweet words from God's great Book: "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper!" If you ever waken in the night and feel a bit troubled, just remember that God himself is watching and "All's well." Then turn over and go to sleep.



THE CENTER FIELDER

IF YOU LIKE A GOOD GAME OF BASEBALL, you know all about him. If not—well, I am sorry for you. It is a fine game, and you miss a good deal by not enjoying it. It is the center fielder's business to catch the ball which the batsman sends away out in the field, a long way from the other players. It is a great sight to see him run at top speed and then just catch it! He must be a swift runner, able to judge while the ball is yet in the air where it will fall; and he must get there before the ball does. He often saves the game by a fine catch. And he does not often miss.

How did he come to be so skillful? He has only two hands, two feet and one pair of eyes, just as everybody else has. But if somebody else tried to make the play, he would be very sure to

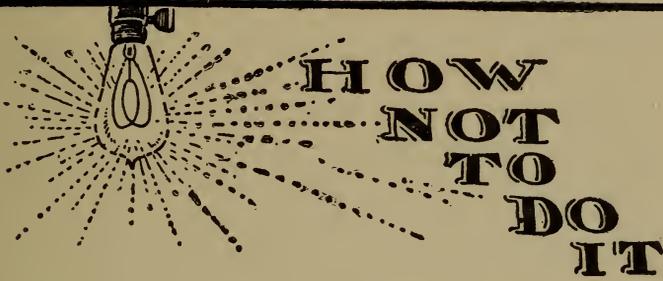
fail. What makes the difference? It is practice—long, hard, steady work. Oh, it is work that tells! Remember that when school begins! Your hands, your feet, your eyes and your mind are doubtless quite well enough. But they will count for little unless they are trained by hard work. And that is just what school is for; to make you skillful and a winner in the great game of life. He who thinks that a “smart” boy can get along without work will pay a hard price for his mistake. He will be like the untrained fielder. See him, with his hands sprawled out to catch the ball! It will catch him, instead. And he will lose his game, get a sore hand and be laughed at. Boys, are you ready for business when school begins?



IT TELLS ABOUT HIM IN THE BOOK of the Acts. Do you know the passage? His name was Manaen. He grew up a good and useful man and became an officer in the church at Antioch. But his playmate, Herod, was that dreadful man who allowed a wicked woman to kill John the Baptist, about which I am sure you know.

When I see boys playing together it sometimes scares me to think how far they may drift apart! Going to the same school, living even in the same homes, we cannot be sure that they will go side by side to the end. There are many paths through the world, and they don't come out all alike. Some of them lead to the dark, deep pit; while others go right up to the Beautiful city of God.

The boys and girls who read this will have to choose their own way, more and more. Each of you will come often to the cross-roads; and everything will depend on which road you take. Sometimes there will be no sign board, and Father or Mother will not be there to guide you. I know of a great and wise Friend who is always near, who knows where all paths lead, and who loves to guide. If you will ask him, he will keep you on the right road. If you learn how to listen, you will hear him whisper, "This is the way; walk ye in it." And then you have only to obey to be perfectly safe. And the best of all is that he will himself keep you company, so that you will never be alone. There may be a good many steps in the long road, and the way will sometimes be dark; but he will surely bring you to his Father's house.



THIS IS OFTEN ONE OF THE FIRST things that have to be learned. It is not easy to do a thing you have never done before. There is a right way, but you don't know which it is. And when you try the way that seems best, it often proves wrong. Then there is danger that you will be discouraged and give up trying. But to find out how *not* to do it is a step towards finding the right way.

Mr. Edison tried a great many things before he found the carbon thread that burns so brightly in the incandescent lamp. Most great inventors have a long search before they find their secret. And you know how it is when you sit down to a "sum" in arithmetic or a problem in algebra. Often you do not see the way at first. You have to try and try again. But you are all the time

making progress. You are learning how *not* to do it, and your mind is growing stronger by the trying.

It's just the same when you are playing hide-and-seek. You look in the wrong place at first; perhaps in a good many wrong places. But you are learning all the while where not to look. And after a little you are sure to light upon the very place. And then what fun it is!

Perhaps you will some day be an inventor; finding out something that will be a benefit to the world. If so you will need patience for many a look in the wrong place. You must spend time in finding out how *not* to do it. Meanwhile you may learn patience and perseverance in your work and play. "Keep trying!" is a conqueror's motto.



THE CHIP IS A SHIP TO THE BOY who is sailing it in a play-ocean. But there is quite a difference when the two are side by side at the big wharf. The chip drifts; the ship sails. The chip is carried about by every changing wind or current. But the steamer has a power of its own which holds it against wind or tide and drives it steadily forward. And it has a compass which tells it the way to go, so it can choose its own course and make its own way.

The chip never gets anywhere—that is, never anywhere that is worth while. After drifting about, nobody knows how long, it is likely to be ground to pieces by the white teeth of the breakers on some rocky shore. But the steamer!—that is quite another story. If you were standing on the wharf you would see the last hawser cast

off; you could watch her as she makes her way slowly down the harbor. At length she rounds the lighthouse on the point and feels the swell of the great sea. The bell in the engine room rings, "Full speed ahead!" and she is off. Straight away, day and night, through storm or sunshine, she holds her course until she drops her anchor on the other side of the sea. The secret lies in the answer of her great heart to things invisible; to the beckoning of the far-away haven and the needle that trembles in the compass.

There are men, too, that drift and men that hold their course steadily to some great end. People who live only by what they can see are drifters. The men whose hearts answer to things out of sight are the men of faith. And they are sure to arrive.



A PARROT
THAT DOESN'T
TALK

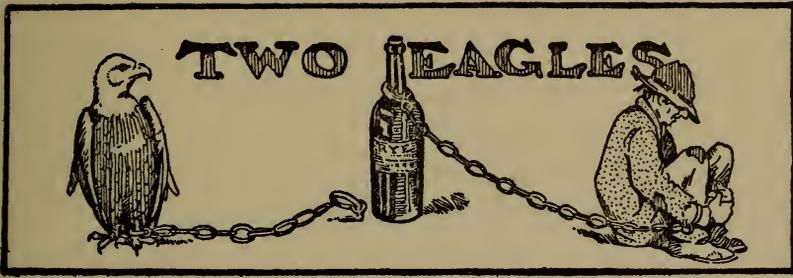
HE WAS NOT ALWAYS DUMB. HE once had a fine voice—for a parrot, and could talk quite well. But now he only mumbles and squawks. He doesn't even try to say anything. How did it happen? Some time ago he was put into a cage with other parrots that had no pretty ways; they were content just to mutter. So the poor bird forgot what he had been taught and began to do as the others did. And when I saw him, the other day, he seemed content to be no better than they. Even a bird, you see, is influenced by the company it keeps.

Perhaps this may help you to guess why your mother is so particular about the children you play with; why she does not like to have you go with some boy or girl in the neighborhood. Children are more sensitive to the manners of their

companions than parrots are, for good or ill.

If you were only a bird, it would be a great pity to learn bad ways by being with naughty birds. Yet a parrot doesn't matter so much, any way. One can easily buy another at the bird store. But when a mother finds her dear child corrupted by bad companions, what can she do? That is the way that many a mother's heart is broken.

Yet the parrots that did so much harm to this finer bird were quite beautiful and full of interesting ways. That made them all the more dangerous! If they had been ugly, they might have frightened the new comer away without harming him. So it is with boys and girls. The dangerous ones are not always homely or unkind. They are the more dangerous because they make you like them. So you had better let Mother or Father help you choose the birds you fly with



ONE OF THEM I SAW LAST SUMMER in the Yellowstone Park. It had built its nest on the very top of a high cliff, overlooking the river. There was its home—a nest with birdlings in it. With a spyglass I could see them stirring. After a while the mother-bird came, sweeping in wide circles through the air and settling at last on the nest—a perfect picture of strength and liberty.

A friend of mine tells of another eagle which he saw in a great city; its wings worn and bruised by its vain efforts to fly. It was a prisoner, chained on the sidewalk in front of a liquor saloon! Did you know that chains are made in saloons?

I never saw that chained eagle. But I have often seen nobler prisoners chained by the saloon.

One of them I saw one day in a hospital. This young man who, a little while ago, had health, a good home, many friends and a good name, was sick, friendless and alone in a strange city, without even proper clothing to wear. He had brought it all upon himself by drinking. And the worst of it was this: when anybody helped him, he would go to the saloon again and bring all his misery back. You would think he would keep away from that which had cursed him so! But he was a poor slave. The saloon had chained him and he could not break the chain. It was a sadder sight than the chained eagle.

What are the boys and girls going to do about this monster that puts strong men in chains? I hope you will hate the saloon and fight it. Never let it catch you! And do all you can to keep others from its clutches. Never touch that which makes men slaves. Keep your wings free! You will have great use for them.

OMETHING WHICH A BOY BROKE



ONE ALWAYS FEELS BADLY TO see a beautiful thing broken, like a lovely vase that stood on the mantel in the parlor. I have known a child to have a good cry over even a broken toy that didn't cost much. And it is all the worse when the broken thing cannot be mended. Something was broken one day which was very beautiful and precious; and it can never be mended. It was a mother's heart.

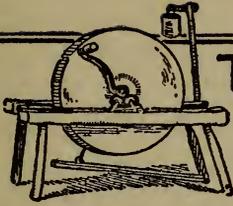
“And who broke it?” It was her own son, a boy of about fifteen. “Did he mean to do it?” Oh, I think not. “Then how did it happen?” I must tell you the story, though it is very sad. I am sure he loved his mother, for one evening I saw him kiss her good night. But he broke her heart, after all.

He began by going with bad boys who taught

him evil things. Then he commenced to deceive his mother, because he didn't want her to know. After awhile he began taking things that did not belong to him—just little things at first.

One evening his mother sent him to her room on an errand, and there he saw some money which she had saved by hard work. It was all she had. Yet he took it and ran away with some of his bad companions. She never heard of him again until a newspaper man came one day to tell her that her boy was dead in a far-away city. As I tried to comfort her she said, "Oh, I don't want to be comforted!" Her heart was broken.

Every boy is in trust with his mother's heart. He can make it glad, or he can break it. And a mother's heart is the most precious thing in all the world. When it is broken the angels weep.



TAKING HOLD WITH G O D

SOME OF THE BEST GRINDSTONES in the world are found in the Bay of Fundy. But they are down at the bottom of the sea and you would hardly guess how men ever get them. When the tide is out, which happens twice every day, the workmen quarry the stones from the solid rock and fasten them to a big flatboat. Then in comes the tide, a mighty flood rushing in, as though the great ocean had suddenly changed its mind. A wonderful sight it is—rising often as high as a house!

And now the men have nothing more to do. They have taken hold with God, and it is his power that does the work for them; for the lift of the sea is a part of God's omnipotence. The silent tide as it rises lifts the boat, and up come the stones with it.

God loves to help men! He has said, "Take hold of my strength!" And when men do that, they never fail. That is just what the farmer does when he plants a seed, and the sailor when he spreads a sail in the wind, or the telegrapher when he makes God's swift currents his messengers. For the sunshine which swells the seed and the winds that swell the sail and the unseen energy that speeds the news—these are all from God; pulses of his power and tokens of his love.

But there are harder things to do than raising grindstones out of the sea. It is very hard sometimes to be good and to do right; to hold the temper or the tongue, to be unselfish, to say No! And those are the times when God especially delights to help. Every boy or girl may take hold of God's strength when there is work to do or a battle to fight.



THE MAN AT THE TELEPHONE

IT WAS FUNNY TO SEE; BUT IT WAS fine! I laughed, but I admired the man. I knew he was a gentleman.

When the 'phone bell rang and he put the receiver to his ear, he heard the voice of a lady. But she was miles away; why should he lift his hat? He wouldn't have done so if he had stopped to think. But it is the thing we do without thinking which often shows just what we are. He was accustomed to treat a lady with courtesy. And when he heard a lady's voice, though she was far away and couldn't see him, off came his hat! It was like a boy's whistling—it did itself.

It is a fine thing to be so in the habit of politeness, of truth-telling, of kindness and courtesy that one doesn't have to make the effort. The right thing does itself or, rather, the person does

it without trying. Behavior is like piano playing; if you learn right ways, if you form good habits, after awhile you hardly have to try. Trained fingers take care of themselves. That is why a great musician seems to play without effort. He would play correctly if no one were listening, or in the dark. So a true gentleman will be always courteous; an honest boy will be truthful without stopping to think about it. A gentleman is a gentleman in the dark. A true man can be trusted when nobody sees him. Here is one reason why you should always do the right and proper thing; you are all the time making yourself. And what you are will show itself when you are not watching.



THE SLOW BOY

THIS SERMON IS FOR HIM, HIS mother—maybe for his teacher, too.

Did you finish the school year a bit discouraged, Laddie? And do you sometimes think it isn't worth while to try? Cheer up! I have a message for you. It seemed to come in at my window from the trees in the yard; but I think it was really from God, to comfort the slow boy and his mother. Most of my trees are maples. Their leaves came out like jumping-jacks this spring! They were like boys going on a picnic, who can't get into their suits quickly enough. And such suits as these were, of soft, shiny green, tinged with yellow! Queer enough that would be for boys or girls; but nothing could be finer for a tree. The Artist who mixes the colors for the great outdoor world never makes a mistake.

But one tree lagged behind. It had hardly a leaf when the others were in full dress. Yet you should see it now! It has caught up; and all summer long it will be the finest of all the trees. God does not make all the trees alike. The elm doesn't waken so quickly as the maple at the kisses of the sun. Perhaps it sleeps more soundly—which isn't a bad fault. And so it is with girls and boys; God does not make them all alike. Some of them are late sleepers. But when they wake up, watch them! They are worth waiting for.

But remember, the elm was not *lazy*; it was just slow. It was doing its best all the while. And God is never impatient with the slow elm. But I wouldn't like to comfort the wrong boy! Some boy might call himself a slow elm when he is only a lazy maple.



THE MAN WHO WALKED WITH GOD

ALL YOU CHILDREN KNOW, I AM sure, the story of the man who walked with God in the long ago. But some boys and girls—poor things!—do not have anyone to tell them about the good people of the Bible.

There was a little girl who had never so much as heard of Enoch! Playing, one day, with a playmate whose mother had taught her the beautiful story, her little friend chanced to mention him. “And who was Enoch?” the poor child asked; “I never heard of him.” So the girl who knew began the story:

“Once, a long, long time ago, there was a man whose name was Enoch. He lived in a country a great way off; and he was such a good man that God used to come every day and walk with him.”

The playmate was very still; for it seemed to

her a strange thing that God should come down from his beautiful heaven to walk with a man. She wondered how the story would end. And she wondered all the more over it when the child-preacher said:

“Well, one day they kept on walking and walking—a long, long way. Enoch was very weary and after a while God said: ‘Enoch, we’ve taken a long walk to-day. You’re a great way from home and you’re tired. You can just come in and stay with me.’ So Enoch didn’t come home any more.”

Enoch’s family must have missed him and if they didn’t know what had become of him they were very sad. But if they knew how he walked with God every day, perhaps they didn’t wonder that God wanted to take him home with him.

The story of Enoch may be true of you and me. If we will go God’s way, God will walk with us every day, because he loves us. And some day he will take us to his own home, to live with him forever.

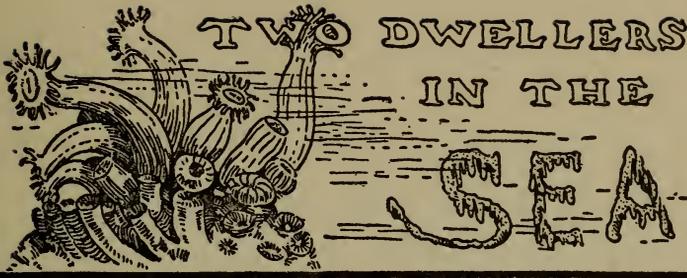


MAY IS THE MONTH OF CRADLE-making everywhere. Everywhere dear babes are being born and swung in wonderful cradles sheltered by curtains of delicate green, just suited to shade a baby's eyes from the sun. The good Father cannot be far away, I am sure; for every little while a gentle hand rocks the cradle to and fro, as the babes stir in the nest. All children know the Rock-a-by Baby on the Tree Top. I think every mother sings it to her little ones. But, dear children, have you ever seen a cradle in the tree-top? I know you would like to. And I want to tell you where you may find it, and the tender nurse that rocks it.

You will not have far to go, I hope, to find an apple orchard in bloom. There the great God, who loves all little children, is preparing a feast

for them to enjoy when apples are ripe. But God has something for you in the orchard before the apples hang upon the boughs. He is inviting you into his nursery, to see his beautiful babes. Did you know that every blossom is a tiny cradle, in which a baby apple is sleeping? And the breezes are God's nurses that rock the cradle with tender touch.

I hope you will never pass an apple orchard without thinking of God's nursery. Perhaps he could just as well give us apples without flowers. But God dearly loves beauty and he has made it for us to love. So he brings every apple into the world as a little babe; makes for it the exquisite cradle on the bough and sends the winds to rock the cradle under the leafy curtains. And he makes the nursery wondrous sweet, so that the bees love to visit it and the passer-by hears sweet music. The bees must be singing of the sweet babes they saw as they peeked into the swinging cradles!



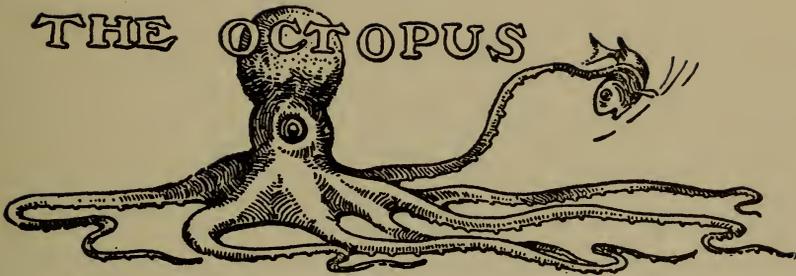
YOU MAY SEE THEM BOTH IN the great Aquarium at Naples, living in huge tanks of salt water, side by side. One is the Coral-Maker, so small that he is often, though incorrectly, called an insect. He and his brothers are always working together in great companies; and there are neither strikes nor lockouts.

Their work is under water, where they build in wonderful shapes and colors. Some of it resembles the most delicate flowers, in brown, purple, orange and gray. They know better than to build on a poor foundation; for they start from the solid rock at the bottom of the sea, building up, up, up, until they reach the surface, and then they die! But their lives have not been wasted. Out of their beautiful work ex-

quisite ornaments are made, such as ladies are proud to wear. Some of it the waves beat into soil; and the kindly winds bring little seeds from afar which lodge there and grow, making green grass and shrubs and trees. After a while there is a beautiful island, where people make homes and God sends little children to live.

So the tiny coral, though it is so small and dies so soon, has a part in the making of God's wonderful world. Wouldn't you *like* to have something to do to make God's world more beautiful, and a better place for people to live in? That is just what God plans for you, dear children. If you will give your lives to him, he will show you how to make them both beautiful and useful.

THE OCTOPUS



HE LIVES IN THE OTHER TANK OF which I was just telling you, right alongside the coral-workers, in the aquarium at Naples. But though close together, they are not a bit alike. The octopus is much bigger than the coral-maker. He has eight long arms and this is the reason they call him by the queer name he bears. Each arm is covered with tiny suckers, arranged in rows. These are the fingers by which he takes hold of things. His body is short and stout, and he has two eyes that bulge out of his head, as though he was trying to see behind him. He looks like a huge spider, only uglier.

Usually he lives near some rock in the water and he likes to pull himself into a hole or crack in it, where he lies with his long arms reaching

out for some careless little fish to come his way. And then woe to the little fish! It will never go home any more. One day I saw them feed the octopus. A man let a little crab down from above, on the end of a string. When the horrid creature saw it coming, he pulled out of his hole in the rock, grabbed the poor thing with one of his great arms and down it went into that hungry mouth!

If you were to be made over and live in the sea, I am sure you would not want to be an octopus! You would rather be a coral-maker; to do something beautiful and useful. But you can make the choice without being anything else than a boy or a girl, for just such a choice comes to everybody. There are people of both these kinds: some who live to make the world better, and others who are always watching for a chance to snatch something for their own selfish pleasure. Of which sort will *you* be?



WHAT A MAN
SAW IN
A
STONE

IT WAS A PIECE OF MARBLE WHICH somebody had hacked and marred and cast aside as worthless. It had lain for years in a rubbish-heap, soiled and half buried in dirt. But there came a great day when the man saw it who was a great artist. A real artist is one who can see what nobody else can see—in a flower, a stretch of beach or a piece of stone. And this man saw in the rejected block something which seemed as though it might be an angel! And with the artist-key, which they call a chisel, he set to work to bring it out of prison.

For many days he labored; now making the marble chips fly as he hammered with fierce eagerness, now working slowly, with delicate touch, and often stepping backward to see the angel figure afresh. And one day the prisoner came

forth, radiant in white. But it was no angel! It was the noble figure of a young man, eager to serve the God whose voice he had heard. It was David! standing with his sling in hand, ready to meet Goliath.

That was more than 300 years ago. The statue stands to-day in a great gallery in Italy, where I hope you may some day see it.

Our Lord Christ looks upon people as Michael Angelo did upon the blackened stone. He sees all our faults and sins. But he sees what he can make of us, if we will only let him. He will lay his sharp tool upon us, and it will often hurt. But he will bring out, little by little, not an angel, but something very beautiful in his sight—a boy, a girl, a man or woman strong and pure, radiant in white.

HAPPY HARRY



IN A PLACE WHERE THE SHADOWS of a great mountain fall, there lives a man whom everybody calls Happy Harry. I think few people know him by any other name. Long ago he found a great treasure and, though it is very precious to him, he is always sharing it with somebody. He did not find it among the hills where men look for gold, or in the woods where boys love to look for wonderful things. He found it one day in his own heart. And it has been there ever since.

It is not money or fine things that make him happy. He lives in a very plain little house and every day he earns his bread by hard work. Long before children are awake he goes to the market to load his wagon with fresh fruits and vegetables from the market-gardens. And all

day long, in all kinds of weather, he is driving through the alleys of the city, selling his wares. His treasure is always with him. Nobody could ever steal it, for he keeps it in his heart. And it is his treasure that makes him happy. Indeed, that treasure is the secret of a happy life.

One day he heard a whisper that God loved him! And that is his treasure. Though he lives all by himself in the little house, he would tell you that he is never alone. His great Friend is always with him. He is always helping somebody, just as Jesus was. Out of his small earnings he is fitting three poor girls for college! Every Sunday he delights to show his treasure to the prisoners in the jail; and nothing makes him so happy as when some of them hear the whisper for themselves.



IT HAD BEEN A CLOUDY AND DARK day and people were hungering for the “clear shining after rain.” Late in the afternoon the clouds broke; the sky was full of them, fleeing like defeated squadrons from a battlefield. The sun was conqueror! And the winds were his cavalry, chasing the foe.

A little boy was standing by his mother’s side when a bright ray of sunshine streamed in through the window. He moved across the room and stood in the midst of it, calling to his mother, “Mamma, me standing in God’s smile!”

The boy grew to be a man. His mother had gone to live with God in the Land of Light. He had come to be a favorite at court and cared more to please the king than to please God. One day, as he was looking over some old papers,

a little parcel caught his eye. Opening it he found a tiny pair of blue shoes, with a bit of paper on which he read in his mother's handwriting this sentence: "These shoes were worn by my darling boy at two years of age, when he stood in a ray of sunshine and said, 'Mamma, me standing in God's smile!' God grant that he may always stand in God's smile!"

Then he saw that he had been so anxious for the king's favor that he had lost God's smile. That night, before he slept, he found it again. And it was so sweet that he was careful ever afterward to stand in it.



THE WHEELBARROW AND THE AUTOMOBILE



IT WOULD BE A QUEER QUESTION were I to ask, "What is the difference between them?" I should like to hear the children's answers! I am sure they would not be all alike. There are many differences, of course, in size, shape, weight and in other ways. But I think the greatest contrast is this: the automobile goes itself, while the wheelbarrow never moves unless somebody moves it. It stands as helpless as a stone until some one trundles it. But the auto, though it has been standing quietly for an hour, suddenly begins to move, though nobody is pushing it.

But does the automobile really go of itself? Something inside the machine makes it go, to be sure—a hidden power. But how did the power get there? It never got there of itself, and the

auto never could have put it there. The auto was made by some one, just as much as the wheelbarrow; and the maker put the throbbing heart into it. It would take a finer mechanic, too, to build an automobile than a wheelbarrow.

Many wonderful things seem to go of themselves. The bud opens without anybody's touching it. Silently the fruit comes out of its flower-cradle. And nobody turns a crank to make a boy grow. The power is on the inside, just as it is in the auto. But how did it get there? Only Some One with a mind to plan and a will to act could ever make a seed sprout, a bud unfold or a boy grow. And that Somebody is God. We never see his hand moving anything; the power is on the inside. But it is God's power, and he put it at the heart of things

“He only is the maker
Of all things near and far;
He paints the wayside flower;
He lights the evening star.”



EASTER SHOWS A LIGHT IN THE doorway through which we all must pass. We call it the gate of death. No one would like to go through a door opening into the dark, especially if he had to go alone. But Christ has put a light in the path, close by the door, so that no one need be afraid. And he has told us that death to the Christian is only the way to our Father's house. Christ has done more than this for us. He not only set the light just where the strange path opens, he went through the gate himself, and on the Resurrection Day came back to his disciples, to show that death had not harmed him.

People sometimes say that we can know nothing about the great world that lies beyond death; but they are wrong. Jesus has told us very plainly some dear things about it. Just before

he died, he told his disciples that he was going to prepare a place for those who love him. It must be a beautiful place if he prepares it who has made so beautiful this world which is only our schoolhouse; for the home must be finer far than the schoolhouse. He said, too, that he wanted his friends to live with him in that glorious place; and that when the gateway opens, he would come to take them home.

Surely, no one who knows Jesus need be afraid to die, for he will keep his promise. He will not leave us to take a single step alone. We shall just walk with him along the path which he has lighted, into our Father's house.



MAKING FACES

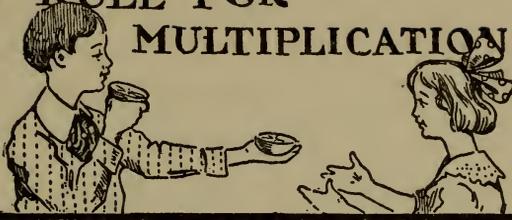
IT IS OFTEN VERY POOR BUSINESS—when you do it on purpose. But there is a way of making a face which I commend to all the children. It is a slow way, taking a good deal of time, and one is never thinking about it when he is doing it. He never does it on purpose. Have you not read about Moses, how his face shone when he came down from the mountain where God talked with him? It is said he did not know that his face shone. But the people who saw him knew. The shining face would have been spoiled if he had been saying, “Look at me!”

Did you know that a person is all the time making his own face—making it noble or base, beautiful or ugly? The process is quite different from the work of the sculptor, who molds the clay with

his hands. When a man molds his own face he does it from the inside and not with his hands at all. His thoughts, his feelings, his wishes and his purposes—these are the instruments he uses. They work silently and he does not realize what they are doing; but he is all the time making his own face.

Would you, my dear girl, like to have a beautiful face? You can! Even if you were born homely, that need make no difference. You can never make your face beautiful by anything you put on it. But if you will keep your heart pure, do loving deeds and let Christ live in you, your face will one day be radiant because love has molded it and the inner light shines through.

A NEW RULE FOR MULTIPLICATION



I WONDER IF IT IS IN YOUR ARITHMETIC! It is one of the best rules in all the world, but it isn't in all the books. You know the old rule, of course, but this is a great deal more "fun." (To think of *fun* in arithmetic!) It is a multiplication—by division. Does that puzzle you? Perhaps you are saying: "When you multiply you get more; but when you divide you get less. How, then, can you get more by making less?"

I will tell you the rule if you will promise two things: to try it, and then to explain it to somebody. Of course you will try it, for of what use is a good rule if you don't use it? And when you have seen it work, I know you will want to share it. Let me explain the rule by an "example," as the books do.

Suppose you have something that is very nice—oh, *so* nice! To multiply by this rule, just divide it; give some of it to somebody. Then you will certainly have more than you had before. Not more of the thing you divided—but more of something which is far better. For it is a peculiar thing about this rule that it not only multiplies, but it *changes the kind*. Under the old rule, if you multiply two oranges by two, you have four; but they are only oranges. When you multiply by dividing, you have an orange—and the pleasure of sharing, which is certainly much more than just oranges! You get, not more orange, but more pleasure. And, after all, it isn't things that make us happy. Isn't it a good bargain to exchange things, just *things*, for real pleasure? Who wouldn't be glad to have less orange and more fun?



A BAG OF FEATHERS

THERE IS A STORY OF A MAN WHO was an officer in the army of a king. He had such a temper and let it fly so often that they called him “the man with a biting tongue.” He did not realize how it hurt when he spoke the harsh words, though he was often sorry afterwards.

One day the king gave him a bag of feathers, telling him to empty them in the street. The next day the king sent him out to gather all the feathers up, bidding him put every one back into the bag again. When the officer explained that it would be impossible, since the winds had carried them everywhere, the king said: “That is just the way with the words you speak. You can never gather them up again; not so much as one of them.”

There is but one way to keep harsh, cruel words from flying like sharp arrows into somebody's heart, where one can never draw them back. And that is never to let them go out of our lips. Many a man would give a great deal to recall some of his words; but he can never, never bring back one of them. I have even known a boy to grieve when it was too late because some word of his had made his mother's heart bleed.

Let us keep that bag tied in a hard knot! The winds can never scatter the feathers so long as they are in the bag. But once they get out, we can never gather them up. A man once prayed this prayer: "O Lord, set a watch upon my lips!" Is it not a good prayer for us all to offer?



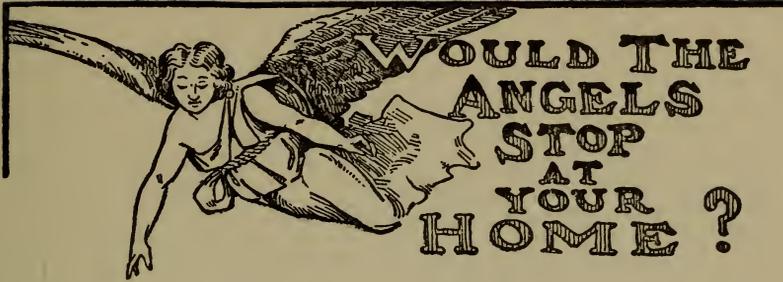
WE ALL LIKE THE EASIEST WAY. But the easiest way isn't always the best. I thought of this one day when I saw a man feeding his hens. As he went into the barn the biddies knew very well what it meant and they came fluttering and clucking around him like children when the dinner-bell rings. It is beautiful to see how all the animals know those who are kind to them. A peck measure was filled with grain from a big chest and I expected to see it scattered on the hard, smooth floor, where the kernels could be easily picked up.

But instead of that, the first thing the man did was to throw upon the floor several handfuls of straw and chaff. And then he scattered the grain in the midst of it! That made it much harder for the biddies, for they couldn't even see

a single kernel. But they knew just what to do. They began scratching with all their might, stopping only to pick up the grains, one by one, as they came in sight. It was slow work and there was a deal of scratching before they finished their breakfast.

Why did he make it so hard, when he might have made it so easy? I asked him and he said the hens wouldn't scratch if they didn't have to and if they didn't scratch, they would get too fat and wouldn't lay so many eggs.

Then I thought of the boys and girls—how they like to have things made easy, at home and in school, and how they sometimes complain when things are hard. You see, dear children, we are in the world not to have an easy time but to grow and to be fit for our best work. And we can't grow without hard work. That is why a wise parent or teacher doesn't make it easy for us. That is the reason that God often gives us hard things to do.

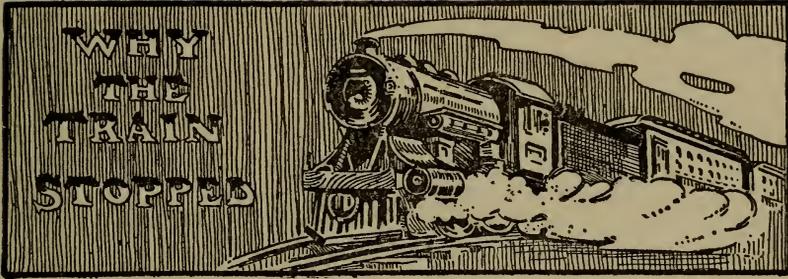


HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED why the angels stopped with the shepherds, instead of with some of the great people in Jerusalem or in Rome? They might have found there fine homes, real palaces, with elegant furnishings; great lords and ladies in fine dresses and living in splendid "style." But they passed on until they came to the shepherds, whose home was out of doors or in humble cottages, and who lived a quiet, simple life. It could not have been because God had no message for those who lived in the fine houses and had elegant clothes; for the Good News was for all the world, and God loves the rich as well as the poor. But God sent them where he knew they would be welcome.

No doubt God's angels visit the world now-

days, though we do not see them. The Bible says God sends them to help his children, and we may be sure they love to come. I wonder if they ever stop at your house? They will not visit you because of the fine *things* you have. They would not care for those. Indeed, they would be grieved if they saw you thinking too much of them yourselves.

What would make them stop at your house? It would be the same thing that lead them past Herod's palace in Jerusalem and the great houses in Rome, to fold their bright wings above Bethlehem and stop to talk with the shepherds on the quiet hillside. They went where they knew Jesus would be welcome. Would he be welcome in your house? Do you think things would please him there? Would anything have to be different if he came? If you are not sure about it, perhaps you will ask your father and mother.



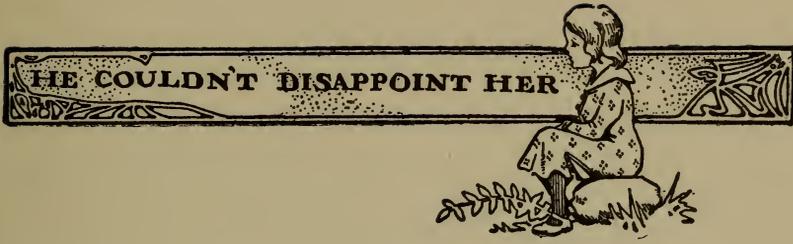
SOMEBODY ONCE WANTED TO have his own way and was vexed because he couldn't. That somebody wasn't a boy. He was a big, grown man! Don't you think men are a good deal like boys, after all? Maybe your father liked to have his own way when he was a boy; and perhaps he does now. You might ask your mother. But of course his way ought to be a wiser way than yours, since he has been learning so much longer.

It happened on a railway train. The man wakened in the middle of the night. The train was standing still and as he looked out of the window not a single house was to be seen. They had stopped in the open country, where there was nothing in the world for a train to do. He waited and waited for the cars to move. Would

they *never* start? And there was that big locomotive doing nothing but blow off steam! He would have complained had there been anybody to listen. But the passengers were all asleep; so he just grumbled to himself and thought how badly things were managed.

After a while he heard a rumble, which grew into a roar; and in a moment a train went whizzing past. He trembled as he thought, "What if my train had been on that track!" It would have been if he had had his way, and there would have been a terrible accident. He had not known about the "Special." But the despatcher, who watches all the trains from his room in the city, knew; and he had sidetracked one train to let the other pass.

You see it isn't always best to have one's own way, even for a big man. There is a great and wise Friend who knows better than we what is good for us. He is always watching. When he makes us wait, it is for some good reason. Let us trust him. I am sure you know his name.



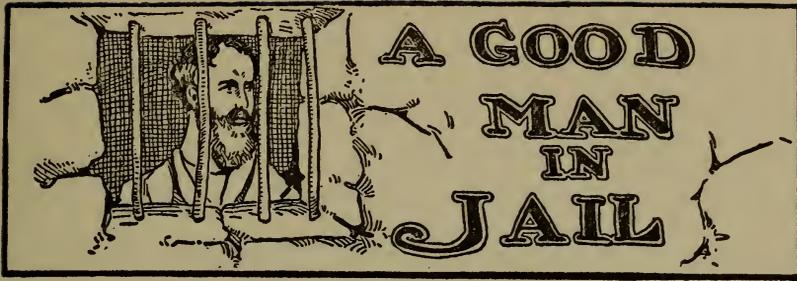
THERE LIVED IN ENGLAND years ago a man who was a writer of famous books. He was a great general, too, wearing on his breast seven medals which he had won by bravery in battle. They called him Sir William Napier. His heart was as tender as it was brave. Walking one day in the country, he saw a little girl crying by the roadside. Carrying her father's dinner to him as he worked in the field, she had dropped a bowl and it was broken. She was afraid of being beaten when she went home.

As Sir William tried to comfort her, she said, "But you can mend it, can't you?" He had to tell her, No. But he could mend the trouble, he said, by giving her a sixpence to buy a new dish. When he opened his purse he found he had not a

bit of change! So he promised to meet her the next day at that very place, bringing the sixpence.

Returning home, he found an invitation to dine the next day with a gentleman whom he wanted very much to meet. But he couldn't go to the dinner and keep his promise to the child. When he remembered how she wiped the tears away as he promised the sixpence, he could not break his word to her. So he declined the invitation, saying: "She trusted me. I cannot disappoint her." The next day he found her waiting, and the sixpence made her dance for joy. But he was happier than she.

Every child has a Friend far greater than Sir William, with a heart more tender. He always knows when a child is in trouble and he always *cares*. He has given many promises to children and he never forgets one of them. Do you think Jesus could ever disappoint a child who trusts him? All the stars are his; but he loves to help a little child.



A JAIL IS NOT SUPPOSED TO BE the place for a good man. Yet some of the best men in the world have been prisoners. One of them was the Apostle Paul, whose prison you may see in Rome when you go there some day—a dreadful stone dungeon it is!

Three hundred years ago there was a jail in the little English town of Bedford. And one day they took a man there and shut him behind the prison walls who had done no wrong. He was a tinker and earned an honest living by hard work. But the king forbade him to tell the people about Christ; and he chose to obey God rather than man. So they took him from his home, leaving his wife and children alone. And he was in jail nearly twelve years.

It must have seemed strange to the people, who

knew what a good man he was, that God should let him suffer so; and the wife and little ones, who could see him only in the prison, must have found it very hard. Perhaps the good man himself sometimes wondered. But God had his own wise and loving plan about it; and now all the world can understand. For during those long, hard years he had time to write one of the greatest of books which has been printed in many languages and has gone over all the world. I hope you have read it! The man's name was John Bunyan, and his book is called "The Pilgrim's Progress."

God's way is not always plain at first. His plan is so large that we can understand it only by waiting. But his way is always the best way; and he often brings the best things out of the hardest. When we cannot understand, it is good to wait patiently for him.

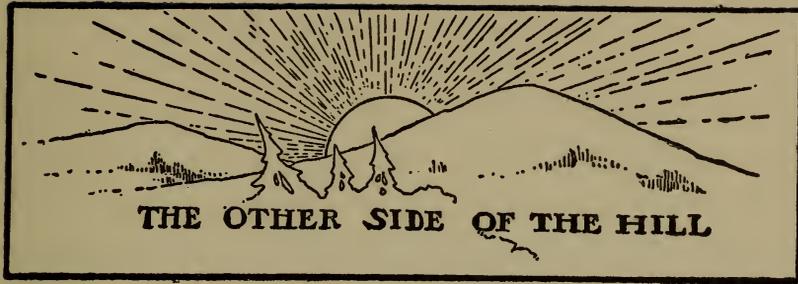
HOW THE MOON HELPS THE SUN

IT IS A PART OF THE SUN'S BUSINESS to light up this world of ours; to shine all day long, so that people may see their way. It has other things to do, indeed; yet that is a large part of its work. But what shall the poor world do when the sun goes down over the horizon, out of sight? It would never do to leave us altogether in the dark. So the good Father, who made the world and never forgets to take care of it, has set the moon in the sky to help the sun carry on the business. And how does the moon help? It has no light of its own, as the sun has. But as it sails along, far up above the earth, it keeps its face turned towards the sun, and the sunlight which it catches it throws down upon the earth.

Do you remember that Jesus said, "I am the

light of the world''? But what should the world do when Jesus went back to his Father's home in heaven? How could it be lighted any more? Would not the darkness be terrible when he was gone?

Jesus told his disciples that they, too, were to be the light of the world. And that has been the beautiful business of every Christian ever since; to help Christ lighten the world. And there is great need of it, too; for many people are living in the dark. Even a child-Christian can help. We have no light of our own, any more than the moon has. But if we keep our faces toward Christ, he will shine upon us. And people will see in us the light which comes from him. That is one thing which prayer does; it turns our faces toward Christ. And so it keeps us in the light which made his face so beautiful.



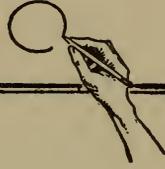
I AM GLAD FOR THE BOYS AND girls who live where there is a hill in sight. Can you see one from your windows? I know a boy who used to wonder what was on the other side of the hill. The sun went down behind it on a summer day and sent back golden rays that seemed to say there was something beautiful there. But it was many a day before the lad was big enough to go to the top. It was a great day when, after a long climb, he reached it, faint and weary. Eagerly he looked westward, where the sun had seemed to go; and what should he see but another hill! And then he began to wonder what lay beyond that!

Your father, I am sure, has climbed a good many hills and found out what was behind them. But he, too, has caught sight of a hill, far away

on the horizon, which he has never climbed; and he sometimes wonders what is on the other side. Perhaps that is what he is thinking about when he sits so quiet by the fire and hardly seems to hear when you speak to him. It isn't because he does not love you. He is wondering what he shall see when, some day, he comes to the top of the hill. Maybe he is thinking of a boy who went over the hill one day and never came back; and that makes him wonder all the more.

One reason why so many people love the Bible is because it tells so much about what lies over the hill. And, better still, it tells of a great Friend who knows all about it and who will lead all who trust him to the hill top and then on to the things beyond, which are so wonderful that no one has ever seen or heard anything so glorious or can even imagine it.

A ROUND



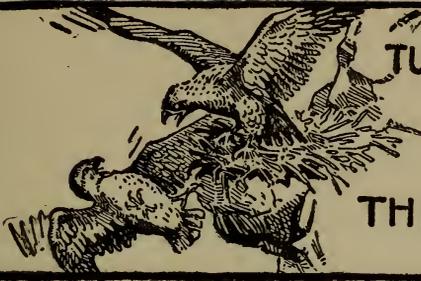
THERE WAS IN ROME MANY years ago a rich man who lived in an elegant house, one of the largest palaces in the world. He wanted an artist to do some very fine work for him, and sent his servants to find the man who could do it best. After looking at many splendid paintings and wonderful statues, they found an artist who, when asked for a sample of his work, took a pencil and drew a simple circle. When they showed that to the master, he said, "This is the man I want!" And he gave him the work to do.

The artist's name was Giotto. He lived 600 years ago. But his circle was so perfect that even to-day, after so long a time, people speak of a fine circle as being as "round as Giotto's O." Isn't it great to be celebrated through 600 years

for having done a perfect thing! What if it was a little thing? Perfection is no little thing.

Giotto became one of the great artists of Italy. When you visit Europe, you may find his work in many cities. In Florence he was made master of the work in the great cathedral. Close beside it is the wonderful tower which he planned, the Campanile, one of the most beautiful things man ever built. Thousands visit it every year from many lands. Like his round O, it is a perfect thing. And Giotto not only made beautiful things, he inspired others to seek perfection.

Do you ever neglect your work because it is "only a little thing" you are doing? Life is made up of little things. And by doing them well one learns to do his best. If you do your very best with small things, you will surely have greater things given you to do, as Giotto did. You will be an artist some day, an artist in the highest of all arts, the art of noble living. Jesus said, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things."



TUMBLED
OUT
OF
THE NEST

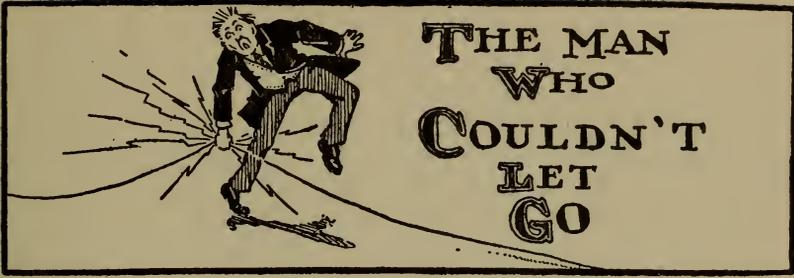
AND IT WASN'T AN ACCIDENT, either. Its mother did it; its own mother! And she did it on purpose. Wasn't it cruel? Perched high on a cliff overlooking a valley in the mountains, the mother eagle had made her nest. There she waited many days for the coming of her little one, and when she felt it stirring under her feathers she was as happy as a bird could be. Yet it was this very mother that tumbled her birdling out of the nest.

The nest was warm and cozy, and the young eaglet was quite content to lie there, looking out over the big world and taking the food which its mother brought from afar. But the mother bird knew the joy of flying, the ecstasy of sailing on widespread pinions, now swooping to pick a fish

out of the river, now soaring into the very face of the sun. Flying was so much finer than snuggling! No wonder she wanted her little one to fly. Day after day she tried to lead the eaglet from the nest, fluttering over it and calling loud her invitations. But all in vain. The birdling seemed to say: "No, thank you! I'm very comfortable here."

So one day the mother tipped the nest and threw the little one out. It must fly now or fall. With outspread wings it beat the air, doing the best it could; often fluttering and sinking, but trying again. The mother kept close by, catching the poor thing on her broad wings when it was weary. And so the eaglet learned to fly. The mother had no other way to teach it.

Boys and girls, too, like to be comfortable. Wise parents have sometimes to tumble them out of the nest that they may learn to fly. And it is often God's way with us. We want to be comfortable. He wants us to be strong. He has given us wings and we must learn to use them.



WALKING ON THE STREET ONE day he saw a wire lying on the ground. Without thinking much about it, he stooped to pick it up. That was natural enough; why shouldn't he? It seemed harmless, to be sure. But when he grasped it he couldn't let go! He tried to but he couldn't. It was a "live wire." A strong current of electricity was running through it. It was burning him cruelly and he cried out with the pain. His whole body was writhing in distress. But his hands still gripped the wire, and when men came running to help him, they had to drag him away from it by force.

That is one of the dangers of a live wire. If you once lay hold of it you cannot let go, no matter how much it is hurting you. I know a boy who grasped a live wire a while ago and it

is hurting him cruelly. But he doesn't let go. He says he can't, even though his mother and father are begging him to and the doctor says it will kill him if he doesn't. The live wire is the cigarette.

The boy is only sixteen years old, but he is a slave. When he began smoking, he was holding the wire; but now it is holding him. He has a weak heart already, poisoned by tobacco. He has to give up some of the sports he loves because of it and he knows it is killing him. Yet he is clinging to it still, smoking every day, and nobody can stop him. If he were holding a live wire he might be dragged away from it, but no one can compel him to drop the cigarette.

You can see what habit is. We say a boy "has a habit." But after a while the habit has the boy. The only way to be safe with a live wire is never to touch it. And the cigarette is a live wire.



ROOM TO GROW IN

A GARDENER ONCE PLANTED A seed in the earthen pot and set it in a greenhouse. When it wakened to the pleasant light, the little seed was very happy. It could think of nothing better than to stay there always. But that was not the gardener's plan. The pot and the greenhouse would do for a little while; but not for always. The gardener meant some day to bring the plant out into a bigger world, to set it in a glorious garden, with the sky for a roof and the great, warm earth to nourish it.

There came a day when the pot was not big enough. It was filled with roots, so that the plant was cramped and couldn't grow any more. So the gardener came with his hammer and began to break the pot in pieces. No wonder the plant

was frightened. What would it do without the little pot in which it had always lived? You see it didn't know yet about the garden. It only knew the comforts of the greenhouse. At length the pot was broken. The gardener took the trembling plant in his own hands and set it in the great, wonderful outdoor world. And when it found itself under the sky, watered by the rain and the great sun comforting it, it lifted its head and laughed that it should ever have wished to stay in an earthen pot!

The gardener's way with the little seed is God's way with his children. He puts us here in the body that we may begin to grow. But we are not to stay here always. After a while we shall need more room to grow in. And then God breaks the earthen vessel and brings us to live with him in his own home, where we shall grow more beautiful forever. So we need not be afraid when we feel the blows of the hammer. It only means room to grow!

CROOKED PINS AND HOW THEY ARE FOUND OUT

I VISITED A FACTORY, ONE DAY, where pins are made. A long brass wire is drawn in at one end of a machine and at the other end out come the pins, more of them than you could count. Most of them are fine and straight, but a few come out crooked. The machine drops them all into a great heap, the crooked and the straight together. But it would never do to send them all to market, for nobody wants bent pins. So the crooked ones must be picked out from the others and set aside; while the straight ones are placed in shining rows in paper rolls, such as you see in the stores.

It would seem an endless task to find them. You would never guess how it is done! Nobody's eyes look for them; nobody's fingers pick them out. Each pin is made to confess for itself,

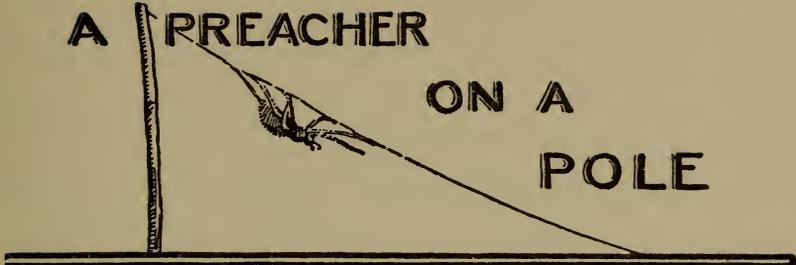
CROOKED PINS

and to go to its own place. They are all dropped upon a ribbon which has two motions; one straight forward, horizontally, the other from side to side, like a sieve. The straight ones roll off easily; but a crooked pin can't roll. So the bent ones stay on the ribbon and when they come to the end of it, they drop off into a box of waste.

It made me think of boys and girls. Most of them, I think, are "straight," but not all. Some have a crook in them. These often pass the school tests and graduate with the rest, just as the crooked pins run through the machine without getting found out. But, like the pins, every one will come to a test which will show just what he is. Some day the crooked will be separated from the straight and each will find his own place—the only place he is fitted for.

Dear children! you are making your own place every day, for you are all the time making yourselves.

A PREACHER ON A POLE



IT WAS A STRANGE PULPIT! AND the preacher was only a spider. But you shall judge if the sermon was not a good one for boys and girls. A gentleman caught the spider in his garden. Wondering how wise it might be, he fixed a tall stick in a basin of water and put the spider on top of it—a regular Robinson Crusoe stranded on a desert island! Like poor Robinson, the spider wanted to get away. And, unlike poor Robinson, he was able to do so.

The first thing was to study the situation. He slid down the pole to the water, stuck out a foot, got it wet and shook it, as a cat does. Then he crept around the stick, to make sure whether the water was on all sides of it. He found no way of escape. And what then? Was he discouraged? Did he say, “It’s no use?” Not he!

Climbing to the masthead he held council with himself.

A sudden thought seemed to strike him. He held up one foot and then another, to see whether there was wind enough to float one of his silken threads to the edge of the basin. Sure enough, there was! Then he began to spin the web stuff out of his little factory. Every breath of air floated it out further and further toward the mainland, where, at last, it caught on the edge of the basin. Then he drew it tight and, like a gymnast, ran down the guy-rope and got safely ashore.

Don't you think a boy should be ashamed to say, "I can't do it!" when the answer to his problem doesn't come the first time he tries? I can hear the spider laugh at a girl who says, "I'm just discouraged!" because she has a hard lesson in school or a difficult task at home. God, who gives the spider its wisdom, has given wits to boys and girls. He always helps his children when they do their best to find a way out.

THREE LITTLE TRAVELERS



THEY WERE COMING ALL THE way from Germany to a town in Illinois, a long, long journey. And they were all alone. They had friends in the old country, but there was no one who could come with them to America. Yet they never had a bit of trouble. All the way along they found friends. Everybody was kind and ready to help. Isn't it a wonderful story? Let me tell you how it happened.

Their friends in Germany believed in God and were sure that he cares for little children. They sewed to the clothing of each child a bit of cloth on which was written the name of the place to which they were going. Then they gave them a little book, on the blank page of which was written, in German, in French and in English, a single sentence. And when the children started

they told them, "If you ever get into any trouble or need any help, just open this book and hold it up before you."

Then came the long journey by steamer across the great sea and afterwards by railway. Nearly three weeks they were traveling; and always they found some one to help them—sailors, conductors, brakemen and all sorts of people.

What words were those that made every one so good to these strange children? They were these words of Jesus, "And the king shall say, Verily, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me." When any one read those words Jesus seemed to be speaking. Nobody could be unkind to his little ones. So it was that Jesus was with them all the way, and brought them safely to their journey's end. I think they must have loved him ever afterwards.



SAND IN THE SHOES

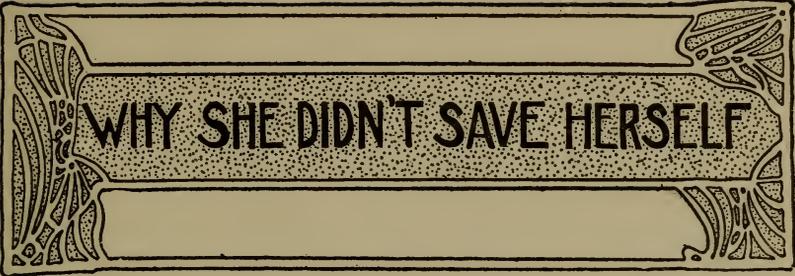
IT MAKES WALKING ANYTHING but easy! A big rock in the path wouldn't give half so much trouble. You can just walk around the boulder and that is the end of it. But those pebbles in the shoes! You carry them along with you and every step you take they hurt. I know well enough, though, that every boy or girl would very soon sit down by the road and shake the sand out of both shoes and then go on rejoicing. Of course!

But there are some people—grown-up people—who are not so wise. They have a good many troubles, some of them large, like the boulder in the road, but most of them small. And the small trials plague them a good deal more than the big ones. They have learned to leave the greater difficulties to God. The boulder is too large for

them to lift out of the road; so they just leave it to the Heavenly Father, as they have a right to do, and go on their way. But the sand grains in the shoes! those are the petty trials; the things that fret Mother about the house, the trifles that vex Father at the store. And these they just carry about with them.

To be sure they lay them aside at night, usually. But they keep them carefully where they can put them on with the shoes the next morning. And as the days go by, they pick up more pebbles, which they keep for another day. It's not strange that they get woefully footsore.

I wonder if people think that God cannot be trusted with the pebbles as well as with the big bowlders! He has said, "Casting *all* your care upon Him, for He careth for you." That must include the pebbles.



WHY SHE DIDN'T SAVE HERSELF

IT HAPPENED ONE SUMMER DAY IN a wild canyon of the Rocky Mountains. A picnic party was looking among the big boulders for a nice place to spread the lunch. It was hard climbing, the rocks were so big and tumbled about as though giants had flung them at each other in battle.

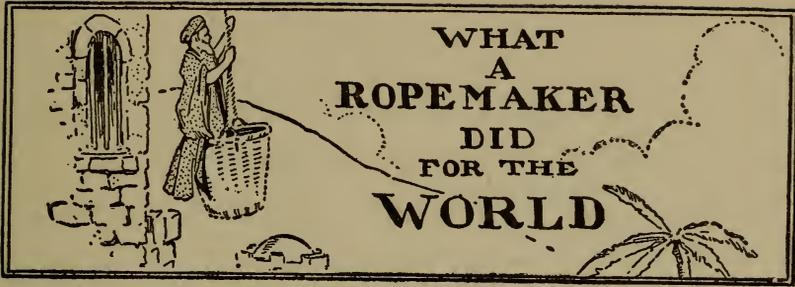
One of the climbers stumbled and fell. Instead of putting out her hands to save herself—and you know how natural that is! you can hardly help doing it—she fell at full length, striking her face upon the stones and severely cutting it.

Can you imagine why she did not put out her hands? Only one thing could have kept her from doing it. She had her baby in her arms—a dear little tot about two years old—and she held it up, clear of the rocks, as she fell. She couldn't save her child and save herself.

That is just like a mother! Mothers never save themselves. They are always doing and suffering for their children. I am sure you could fill this sermon out yourself, as you recall the things your own dear mother has done and suffered for you. I should like to see a list of them. I know it would be long. Maybe you will send me one.

I wonder if you have ever told her how much you love her; how glad you are that God gave her to you. I wonder if you sometimes try to do for her something which may show a little of your love and gratitude.

Mothers often make me think of Christ, who might have saved himself, but would not because he "came not to be ministered unto but to minister," and to give his life a ransom for us all.



JUST ONE MAN, AND ONLY A ROPE-maker! What could *he* do for the world? Day after day and all day long his work was just making rope. Don't you think it must have been dull business sometimes? I wonder if he didn't think now and then that it wasn't worth while to do his best! I am sure he resisted the temptation to slight his work, however weary he might be, for I happen to know about a bit of his rope which did great work for the world one day.

Did you know that such a story was in the Bible? You may find it in the book which gives us the life of the great apostle. Soon after Paul became a Christian, he was staying with friends in the city of Damascus. The governor of the city wanted to take him prisoner, and perhaps to kill him. Guards were placed to watch every

door of the house. But they forgot the window which opened into the street, outside the wall.

Some of his friends put Paul into a basket—it must have been a big one—to let him down through that window into the street. Then came the ropemaker's chance! A piece of his rope was in the house. They fastened the basket to it and Paul was let down slowly and carefully until his feet touched the ground; and so he escaped. Suppose that rope had been poorly made and had broken! Paul might have been killed in the fall. Just think of it! At that time he had not begun to tell the people of Asia and Europe about Jesus and not one of his letters, which we call epistles, had been written. How much was hanging upon that rope! What a loss to the world if he had been killed! And all because some man had made a poor bit of rope. Aren't we glad it was well made?

You can never tell when some piece of your work will be tested. *You* may serve the world some day. Are you making your rope strong?



HAS YOUR MOTHER A COOK-book? I am quite sure she has. And out of it come many delicious things for the family table—pies and puddings, meats and vegetables, to say nothing of bread and cookies. Not that any of these good things are really in the cook-book. Mother has to make them with her own hands unless she has somebody in the kitchen whom she can trust. But in the cook-book are the rules by which the cooking is done. It is a very valuable thing—that cook-book and after a while it looks well worn and old, because it is used so much. Yet old and homely as it is, Mother would never think of doing without it.

Suppose the old book were put away on the top shelf or kept in an old trunk! It might be elegantly bound in Russia leather or fine calf and

the edges gilded; but it wouldn't be of much use, would it? And nobody would believe that it was really thought much of. You may be sure the cook-book will never be treated in that way. It is kept close at hand and used nearly every day. At any rate, the rules it gives are used, even though Mother knows them so well that she does not need to look in the book every time.

Do you know that the Bible is for daily use as much as the cook-book? It is God's book to live by. Here are rules for a sweet temper, a pure heart, a happy home, the friendship of God and the way to heaven. It is truly the greatest and best of books. It is worthy of being beautifully bound and carefully kept. But we really honor it and get the good of it only when we bring it into our lives. Is that the way it is used in your house?



A LOAF OF BREAD

THANKSGIVING DAY IS COMING!

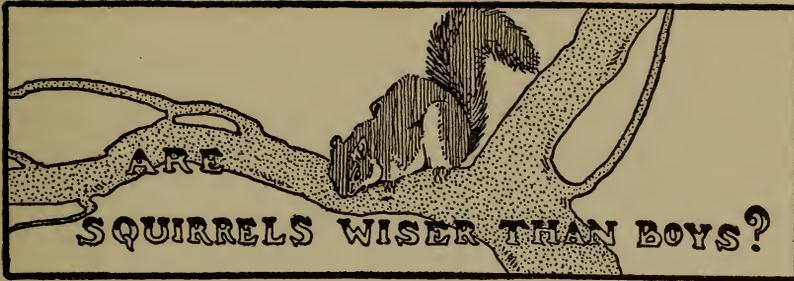
I can see the tables in many homes, loaded with good things and surrounded by happy children. You will be thankful for many things that day. I wonder if you will thank God for the loaf of bread? It is such a small thing—just bread! And you have it every day which can't be said of the big turkey. But you ask God each day, I am sure, to “give us this day our daily bread”; and the table would be pretty poor if you didn't have it. And wouldn't it be a shame not to thank him just because he gives it, as you ask him to do, every day in the whole year?

Have you ever stopped to think what God has to do with the loaf? To be sure, Mother mixed the flour and baked the bread; or perhaps it

was the baker-man. But where did the flour come from? The miller made it from the wheat which grew in the field; the farmer raised the wheat on his farm. But where did the seed come from? And who made it grow in the field? God gave the farmer his seed; no man in all the world could make a single grain of wheat! And when the farmer planted it, it was God who sent the rain out of the clouds, and the sunshine that beckoned the little seed and made it grow. God is the giver of every raindrop and it is his sun that rises every morning to warm the earth.

So it is easy to see that God is the real giver of the loaf. He sends it as his loving remembrance of our need; that we may grow and be strong, and that we may be ready for useful work in the world.

“Back of the loaf is the snowy flour,
And back of the flour the mill;
And back of the mill is the seed and the shower,
And the sun, and the Father’s will.”



THAT WAS WHAT I WAS WONDERING early one summer morning as I lay in a tent in the woods. Just as the light began to come, I heard a patter on the tent. It was too heavy for raindrops, and I wondered what it was. It seemed as though something was dropping out of the treetops. And so, indeed, it was. The squirrels were beginning their day's work. Climbing to the tops of the high fir trees, they were gnawing the cones from the branches and dropping them to the ground.

Now, no boy ever loved to play more than the squirrels do. It is fun to see them scamper, with their bushy tails over their backs, chasing each other among the trees, and jumping from limb to limb with never a fall. But they know it will not always be summer; that winter is coming,

when the deep snow will cover everything and they cannot gather their food in the fields. And they are wise enough to make ready for winter while summer days last.

The cones which drop from the big trees they pick up, one by one, carrying them in their teeth to hide in snug places. And when winter comes, they have plenty to eat; for in the cones are tiny seeds which make a fine meal for Mr. Squirrel and his family.

Boys have as good a right to play as the squirrels have, and it is more fun to see them. But it will not always be playtime. Boys grow to be men and there is work for them to do in the world which they can't do unless they are ready for it. What will happen by and by if they have not laid up a store of knowledge? A boy who loves to play but refuses to study will be worse off than a squirrel who frolics all summer and lays by nothing for the long, cold winter.



FROM MY WINDOW I SAW A LADY and gentleman peering through the windows of the next house. They were thinking of renting it, and wanted very much to look through it. But it has a good many rooms, and from the windows they could see very little of it. They had come in a fine automobile, and perhaps they were grand people—though not all people are who ride in automobiles—but they could do nothing without the key. A key is a tiny thing, but it often opens a big house.

I know a house far finer than the one next door. It has many rooms, more than you could count, and they are beautifully furnished and filled with costly treasures. You might live there a whole year and find new things every day. This wonderful house is open to any one who has the key.

The owner delights to have guests, and he has put the key where you can find it; yet you must unlock the door yourself. But when you once have the key, you can visit any of the rooms, for it will fit every lock through the whole house.

Would you like to go in to roam through the splendid halls, to visit the beautiful rooms? I will tell you where you may find the key, though I fear you may despise it, after all, because it is so small. But first let me give you the name of the house. It is the House of Knowledge. The great God built it, and it is his; but he loves to welcome all who come and to show them his best treasures. If you once go in, you may find more and more to enjoy as long as you live—and you are going to live forever!

And the key? It is in your schoolroom! Some of you have it already in your hands, though I am sure you do not begin to realize what it can do for you. The wonderful key is—the *Alphabet*, and you are going to school each day to learn how to use it.



ONE SUMMER DAY THERE WAS TO be a party. And was there ever a boy or girl who didn't like to hear about a party? It wasn't to meet in somebody's parlor, nor yet in the Sunday-school rooms, but far up on the side of a mountain. It was a picnic-party.

You can think how eagerly we wakened that morning and looked out to see the weather! It was disappointing; for a fog hung over the hills and nobody could see the mountain at all. But the lunches were packed and the wagons started early—in the heavy mist—started for a mountain which no one could see. Some of the people had never seen it; they believed it was there because the others had seen it. As we went on, the mist grew thinner and thinner. And before we reached the place where the climb-

ing began, the fog was gone; and there was the mountain, shining in the sun. I need not tell you we had a fine time. We were glad we had walked by faith and not by sight; that we had believed in the mountain when we couldn't see it, and hadn't minded the fog. In the morning the mist was the only thing we could see. But the mountain was there all the time, though hidden. And the mist did not stay long. Mists never do! The dear old sun is sure to drive them away.

We often need to believe in things we cannot see; to set out for the mountain when we can see only the mist. That is just what faith means; to believe in the mountain and not to mind the mist, and to begin climbing without waiting for a clear sky. The mist is for a little while; the mountain stands through day and night, and the mist can never change it. Whether we see it or not matters little. If we only *climb*, we shall reach the top.



KITE-FLYING IS ONE OF THE prettiest of the sports, I think. And there are wonderful kites nowadays; larger and finer by far than boys used to have. Some of them seem almost like birds! I like to watch them as they soar; and sometimes I ask the boy to let me hold the string for a minute. I like to feel the "pull"!

I saw one the other day which acted as though it wanted to fly all by itself, with neither boy nor string to hold it. It was pulling very hard. And now and then it would dash about, up and down and sideways, as though determined to have its own way. And that is just what happened after a while; it had its own way! The string broke and the kite was free! But instead of soaring higher and higher, it began to flutter and

dive this way and that; and down it came, until it lay flat on the ground, its frame broken and its colors soiled.

Every boy knows that a kite needs a string to hold it steady as well as a breeze to carry it up; and a boy at the end of the string! But the poor kite didn't know that.

Coming home, I thought of some boys who are impatient to have their own way; who tug and tug at the string and sometimes break it. Their own way ends often as did the kite's. They flutter and fall, and are often badly broken.

It is fine for a boy to be eager to rise, to show what he can do. It is God's way that some day he should be free to make his own path. But he needs for a while the strong hand of a father or mother to hold him steady. He may think it unkind that he is not at liberty. But if he really had his own way, it might do for him what it did for the kite. Steady, boys! steady! You can fly finely some day. But not yet.

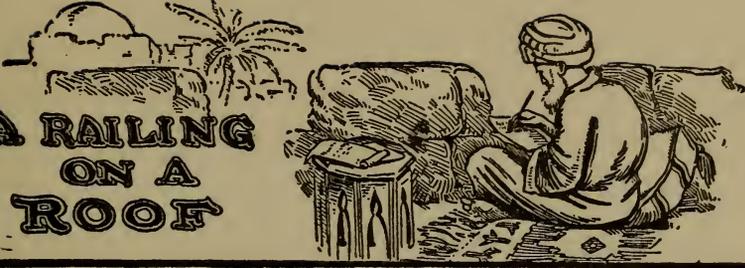


I KNOW A MAN WHO IS VERY RICH, but he never carries much money with him. He does not need to. He can use but little at a time, and more would be a burden to carry. So he keeps most of his money in the bank, drawing out what he wants at a time. He knows very well that his banker will give him what he needs, just when he needs it; so he travels light in heart and pocket. Would he not be foolish to try to carry about each day all the money he might need for a month to come? It would quite weary him before he could possibly use it.

There is a verse in the Bible—I think I will leave you to find it—which says, “As thy day so shall thy strength be.” It means that God is our banker, keeping always a supply for all our needs, and that he wants us to draw upon him each day

for whatever may be necessary. And there was never such a banker, surely, as God. Yet many people seem to feel that they must carry about with them all the time the grace they may need for to-morrow and a good many to-morrows. They often wonder what they would do if some dreadful thing should happen to them. Most of the things they fear never come, and they wear themselves out, like a man who pushes hard when there is nothing to push against! They forget that they may draw upon the bank that never fails.

We may be sure that God has always enough for all our need. He bids us not to be anxious about to-morrow. God will take care of us each and every day. And he loves to be trusted.



A RAILING ON A ROOF

IS THERE ANYTHING IN THE BIBLE which tells a man how he should build his house? Does God care about such things as house-building? And may not a man build his own house just to please himself? Some people say a man may do what he likes with his own.

In the twenty-second verse of the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy you may read that God commanded a Hebrew in building his house to “make a battlement” around the roof, so that no one might fall off into the street below. That may seem strange to children who see only houses that have a pitch roof. But the Hebrew houses had flat roofs, and people used the roofs a great deal as places of rest and social visiting. Sometimes the roof would be the best room in the house! But without the protection of the battlement, or

railing, around the edge, one might easily fall off. It wasn't that God cared for the house, you see, but for the people.

God cares for everybody! He is a great God, holding the sea in his hand and guiding all the stars. Yet he cares very tenderly for a little child. Indeed, he cares for the worst people in the world. And he wants us to feel towards others as he feels; to protect them from harm and to do them good.

It is not true, then, that a man may do what he pleases with his own, unless what he pleases is what pleases God. Whether men build houses or make laws or buy and sell goods—whatever a man does, God bids him care for others as well as for himself. He has no right to do anything that will injure another. This is a hard rule to keep, unless a man *loves* his neighbor. But love finds it easy to obey. That is why Jesus called love the first commandment.

A BEAUTIFUL SECRET



VISITING A GREAT FACTORY, ONE day, I went through a room where young girls were fastening hooks and eyes upon cardboard. Their fingers fairly flew!

Among them I noticed an old woman, busy at the same work. Her fingers were crooked and worn by hard work. I knew she could not keep pace with the nimble young fingers about her; and I wondered why she was there. I think you, too, would like to know.

Months before, she came begging for work. She sadly needed it, for she had a sick husband to support. Seeing the girls at their work, she said she could do what they were doing. The superintendent knew that she would be awkward and slow; and he tried to discourage her. But she begged for a chance; so he gave her a place at the

long bench with the girls. It was slow work; and she was paid by the piece, she could earn but little. Yet she persevered. And after a while her pile of finished work began to grow strangely fast. There was a beautiful secret about it!

Some of the girls, pitying her, were slipping some of their cards onto her pile; and it was wonderful how they enjoyed seeing it grow. Of course her pay increased. Soon she was receiving almost as much as the others, and she was able to keep her little home in comfort. When Christmas came, the girls gave her a purse with twenty dollars in it. "Is all this mine?" she said, "I never had so much money in my life!"

The story made me think of that word, "Bear ye one another's burdens."

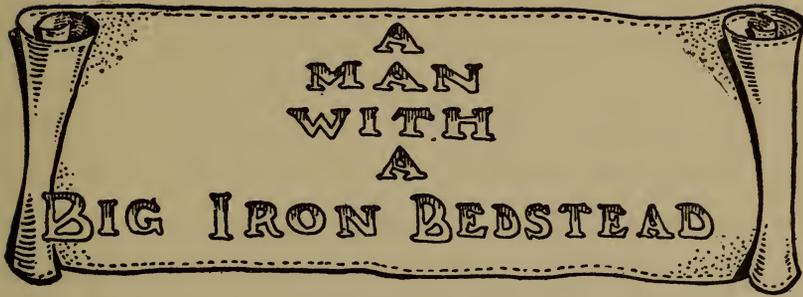


A SOAPMAKER WHO REMEMBERED

HIS FATHER WAS POOR, AND THE boy started out to earn his own living when he was but a lad. He met an old man on a canal boat who asked him what he was going to do. "The only trade I know," he answered, "is making soap and candles." He had learned that at home. The man bade him make an honest soap, give full weight, give his heart to Christ and a part of all his earnings to God. He went to New York City, where he prospered in business, always doing as the old man had said. After a while he became a leading merchant in the big city, and his soap became famous. Perhaps you have used it yourself; for it is sold everywhere. Now you want to know his name, I am sure. It was William Colgate. He never forgot God, but made him a partner in all his business.

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At first he gave away a tenth of his gains; later on, two-tenths, and more and more as he grew rich. And during his lifetime he gave several million dollars to make the world better. It is a great thing to make an honest living; a fine thing to get wealth. But the best thing a man can do in business is to serve God and help his fellowmen. The poor boy's secret is an open secret. He made something that was useful, sold it at a fair price, gave good weight and remembered God. It is a great thing to have God for a partner. And every man may do that, whatever his business, if he meets the test of honesty and consecration. God has said, "Them that honor me, I will honor."



A
MAN
WITH
A
BIG IRON BEDSTEAD

I WONDER IF YOU KNOW WHERE the story is in the Bible. He was a king. Now a king can make a great name for himself by serving his people. But this man, after he died, was known as the king with a big iron bedstead. It was a wonder in that day, for the story says it was kept in the capital city—perhaps in a museum. It was quite proper for a large man to have a big bedstead; and it was well enough to have it of iron. But to think of a man with a king's chances being known chiefly for some *thing* which he owned!

There is another Bible story of a man whom the people called "Comforter," because he was always helping somebody. Nothing is said of what he *had*; but his name shows what he was. And everybody loved him.

There are both kinds of people to-day. Some are known by the things they have; others for the good they do. I saw in a magazine a picture of a bedstead of gold which cost \$80,000. The man who owned it has gone where he cannot use it. Maybe it will go into a museum. I wonder if he was related to King Og! I have never heard that people loved him. Poor man!

A few years ago an English nobleman, who was also a noble man, was coming home from a long absence. A servant who had never seen him was sent to meet him at the train. And when he asked how he should know him, the answer was, "Look for a tall, fine-looking gentleman who is helping somebody." No wonder everybody loved Sir Bartle Frere!

What do people think of when they hear your name? Is it a pretty face, fine clothes, a big hat, a great house? Or is it a face that shines with kindness, a hand that is often helping some one?



CHEATING THE TEACHER

HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE HORSE who thought it would be great fun to cheat her master by pretending she had eaten her oats when she hadn't? I should hardly like to say that the story is true; but this is the way it came to me.

The master knew very well that Dollie—that was the horse's name—needed a good breakfast; that she couldn't do the work of the day without it. So he brought some oats in a bag—a big bag—nearly full, and put them in the crib. Then it occurred to Dollie that she might spill the oats and trample them under her feet so that the master would never know, and then, to make it all the funnier, she might eat some shoe pegs that were lying within reach. The master would

think she had eaten the oats; and that would be such a joke!

The story makes me think of a boy who tries to "make believe" he has gotten his lesson when he hasn't. He gets some other boy to "tell him"; or just before examination he "crams"—which is eating shoe pegs. But if he can only make the teacher think he has the lesson, what a good joke it will be! It makes him laugh to think of it.

The one joke would be just as good as the other, would it not? and both the jokers would be fools. The master is the best friend the horse has. The oats are just what the horse needs, and if he doesn't eat them, he is the loser. The joke is on the horse. He will find that out later. When he gets very hungry and weak, the oats can't be gathered up, and every thought of the shoe pegs gives him a pain.

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