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PLAYING FOOL.

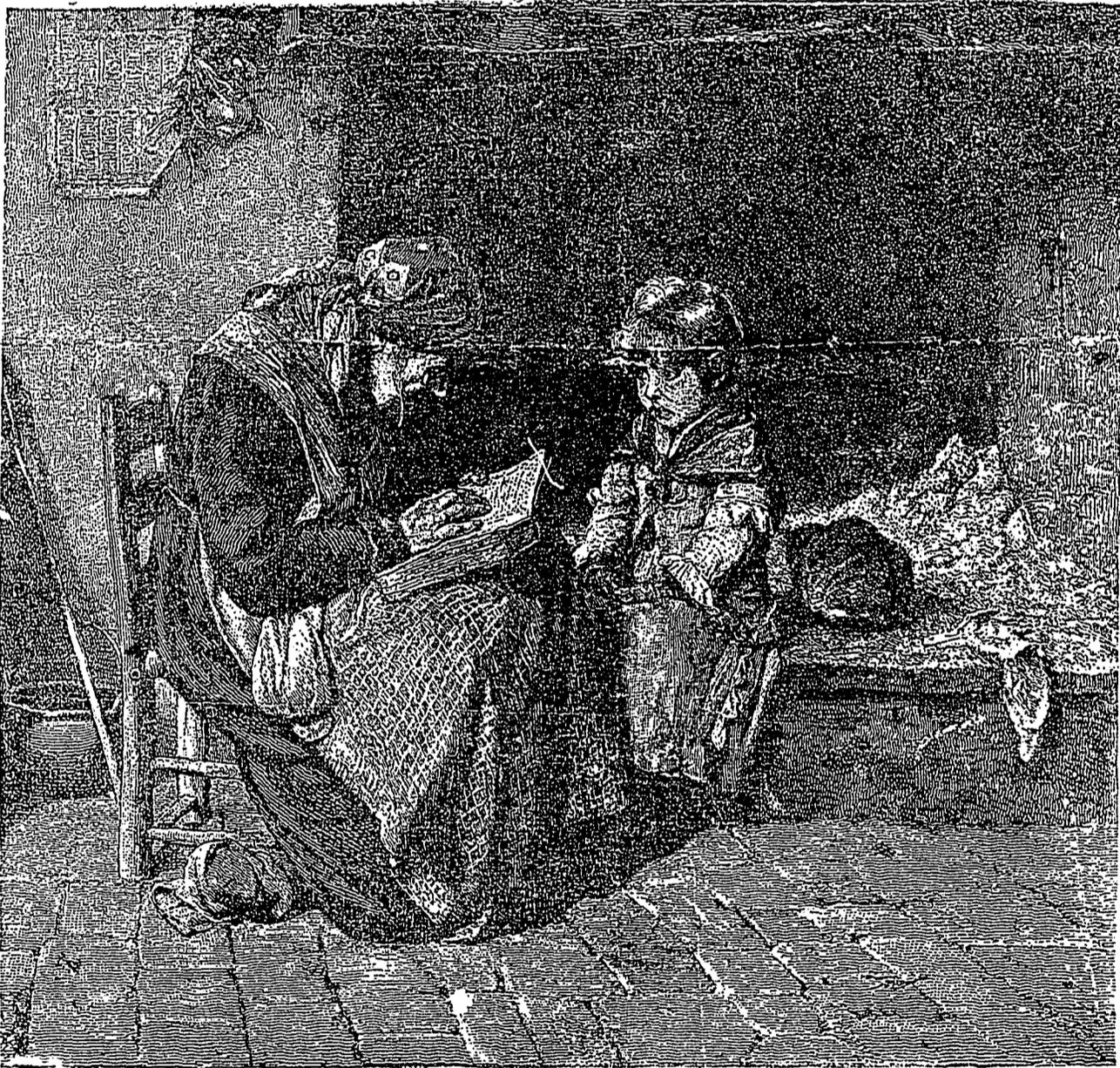
An industrious young shoemaker fell into the habit of spending much time at a saloon near by. One by one his customers began to desert him. When his wife remonstrated with him for so neglecting his work for the saloon, he would carelessly reply: "Oh, I've just been down a little while playing pool." His little two-year-old caught the refrain, and would often ask: "Is you goin' down to play fool, papa?" Smith tried in vain to correct this word. The child persisted in his own pronunciation, and day by day he accosted his father with "Has you been playin' fool, papa?" This made a deep impression on the shoemaker, as he realized that the question was being answered in the falling off of his customers and the growing wants of the household. He resolved again and again to quit the pool-table, but weakly allowed the passion of play to hold him a long time. Finally he found himself out of work, out of money, and out of flour. Sitting on his bench one afternoon, idle and despondent he was heard to exclaim: "No work again to-day; what I'm to do I don't know." "Why papa," prattled the baby, "can't you run down and play fool some more?" "Oh, hush! you poor child" groaned his father, shame-stricken. "That's just the trouble. Papa has played fool too much already." But he never played it again, and to-day his home is comfortable and happy once more.—*Temperance Review.*

GRANDMOTHER READING THE BIBLE.

Hush, little feet! go softly  
Over the echoing floor,  
Grandmother's reading the Bible  
There by the open door.  
All of its pages are dearer still,  
Now she is almost down the hill,  
  
The golden summer sunshine  
Round her is gently shed—  
Gold and silver together  
Crowning her beaded head—  
While she follows where saints have trod,

No little feet to follow  
Over this weary road,  
No little hand to lighten  
Of many a weary load;  
Children standing in honored prime  
Bless her now in her evening-time.  
  
Grandmother has closed the volume  
And by her saintly look  
Peace I know she has gathered  
Out of the sacred Book;  
Maybe she catches through that door  
Glimpses of heaven's eternal shore.  
—Selected.

"I don't like to think about that bridge, mother; it makes me giddy. Don't you think it is very dangerous, just those two loose planks laid across and no railing? If she had stepped a little on either side, she would have fallen into the water."  
"Do you remember what she said?" repeated the mother.  
"Yes, mamma; she stopped a minute as if afraid to go over, and then looked up into her father's face and asked him to take hold of her hand, and said, 'You will take hold of me, dear father; I don't feel afraid when you have hold of my hand.' And her father looked so lovingly upon her, and took tight hold of her hand as if she were very precious to him."  
"Well, my child," said the mother, "I think David felt just like that little girl when he wrote those words you have asked me about."  
"Was David going over a bridge, mother?"  
"Not such a bridge as the one we saw in the woods; but he had come to some difficult place in his life—there was some trouble before him that made him afraid, and he looked up to God just as that little girl looked up to her father and said, 'Preserve me, O God, for in Thee do I put my trust.' It is just as if he had said, 'Please take care of me, my kind, heavenly Father; I do not feel afraid when Thou art with me and taking hold of my hand.'"  
—S. S. Visitor.



"ALL OF ITS PAGES ARE DEARER STILL, NOW SHE IS ALMOST DOWN THE HILL."

THERE WAS once a good woman who was well known among her circle for her simple faith and her great calmness in the midst of many trials. Another woman, living at a distance, hearing of her, said, "I must go and see that woman, and learn the secret of her strong, happy life." She went, and accosting the woman, said, "Are you the woman with the great faith?" "No," replied she, "I am not the woman with the great faith but I am the woman with the little faith in the great God."

Reading the blessed Book of God.

Grandmother's past the morning,  
Past the noonday sun,  
And she is reading and resting  
After her work is done;  
Now in the quiet autumn eve  
She has only to bind her sheaves.

Almost through with trial,  
Almost done with care  
And the discipline of sorrow  
Hallowed by trust and prayer,  
Waiting to lay her armor down  
To go up higher and take the crown.

HOW THE BRIDGE WAS CROSSED.

"Mother," said a little girl, "what did David mean when he said, 'Preserve me, O God, for in Thee do I put my trust?'"  
"Do you remember," said her mother, "the little girl we saw walking with her father in the woods yesterday?"  
"Oh, yes, mother. Wasn't she beautiful?"  
"She was a gentle, loving, little thing, and her father was very kind to her. Do you remember what she said when they came to the narrow bridge over the stream?"

The next day a baker in the village said to me, "Young man, you are a stranger here, and yesterday I pitied you when you began; for you did not know what a critical audience you had to address. But I have noticed that if a minister can only convince his congregation during the first five minutes that he cares for nothing but to save their souls, he will kill all the critics in the house." I have always thanked that baker for the best practical hint I ever

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