

JOHN ALDEN'S BIBLE.

FIGHTING THE GIANTS.

BY ALICE FRANCES.

Harry, Maud, and little Frank had just come home in time for tea. They had been to spend the day with their cousins.

"Well, children," said their mamma, "did you have a nice time?"

"Yes, indeed!" they answered.

"What did you play?" asked mamma.

"Cousin Fred asked some more boys to come over, and we played war," said Harry.

"Yes, mamma," said Maud, "Mabel and I wanted to play too, but they would not let us, because we were girls."

"And they wouldn't let me play, either," said Frank. "They said I was too small."

"That was too bad, indeed," said mamma. "I hope it did not spoil your good time."

"It did for a while," said Maud, "but we got our dolls and played house, and Frank played with us."

"How would you like me to tell you of a war in which all may be soldiers?"

"What! girls, too, mamma?" asked Maud.

"Yes, girls, too."

"Little folks like me, mamma?"

"Yes, my dears; men and women, boys and girls, little and big. None are too small or too young for this war."

"Oh! goodie! goodie! goodie!" shouted Frank, and he clapped his hands to show how glad he was.

"Begin right away, mamma," coaxed Maud.

"Don't be in too big a hurry, children. Wait until after tea."

Just then papa came in, and the children had to tell him all about their visit.

After supper the children could hardly wait until the work was done, for mamma's stories were always "just prime," as Harry said. At last, however, everything was done, and they all gathered round the bright coal fire.

"Well, children," said mamma, "I think by the way you act you are all eager to be soldiers in this war. I am glad of that, for you will have many, many battles, and if you don't fight you are sure to be beaten. This story is called 'Fighting the Giants.'

"These giants are all the harder to fight because they cannot be seen."

"Then, mamma," said little Frank, "how can we fight them?"

"My dear, we can feel them. You know, children, how eager I am to have you grow up to be grand, true and noble. I want you to be loved, honoured and trusted by all good people. I want you to try to make this old world of ours better. These giants I am going to tell you about, try, oh! so hard, to keep us from being and doing good, and it is only by hard fighting that we win. These giants like to get hold of boys and girls, because they know that if they can get to do as they wish, they are quite sure of them when they are men and women. The first giant to come to us is named 'Selfishness.'

"He comes when we are tiny little children. He is the biggest giant of all. He is always looking over the heads of others. He never seems to see any one else, unless he wants some one to do something for him, and he tries to make us like himself. No matter how much of anything we have, we are never willing to share with others."

"I know one boy who let that giant get him," said Harry, "and that is Sam Smith. His uncle gives him money nearly every day, and he comes to school with his pockets full of candy. Suppose he'd give us any? Not much. He goes walking around as though he owned everything, but never gives a bite to any one."

"Yes, my dear," said mamma, "the giant has that boy for sure. I fear he will not grow to be a useful man, unless he turns right around and fights that giant. But we must be very careful to look at ourselves, and see whether he has hold of us or not. You see he gets into our work as well as into our play. He tries to keep us from doing anything for others."

Harry's face turned very red, and he hung his head.

"What is the matter, Harry?" asked his mother.

"I was just thinking, when you said he got into our play, that he had me, too," said Harry.

"How is that, my boy?"

"Well, you see, I might have let the girls and Frank play with us boys this afternoon, but I did not."

"Yes, my boy, he had you for a time, but I hope you will fight him very hard after this."

"I will try, mamma," answered Harry.

"He had me, too," said Maud.

"Well, my dear, how did he have you?"

"I would not let cousin Mary have my doll," answered Maud.

"Yes, children, he gets all of us if we are not careful. But there is a sword which is sure to kill him, if we always use it."

"Oh, what is it?" they all cried at once.

"Don't you remember the Golden Rule? Frank, say it for us."

"Do unto others as you would they should do unto you," said Frank proudly.

"That is right, my boy; so we call this sword 'the Sword of the Golden Rule.' If you wish to be truly happy, try to make others happy. Never let a day pass without doing good to some one."

"I will tell you about another giant tomorrow night. But you must go to bed now." So, after kissing her "good-night," they all went to bed.

GIANT DECEIT.

"There is another giant," said mamma, the next evening, when they were all together again, "who is a great friend of 'Giant Selfishness.' He is as black as he can be, but he has the power of sometimes seeming as white as snow. If we could only see how bad he is, we would never wish to have anything to do

like and trust the most—those who are truthful or those who are not?"

"Why, those who are truthful, of course," they answered.

"And then," said mamma, "remember what the Bible says about it. Don't you remember how Ananias and Sapphira were punished for lying?"

"Yes, mamma," said little Fred, "they were both killed by God."

"Yes, children. God cannot bear deceit of any kind. So we must be very careful to fight this giant every time he tries to get us to deceive. What sword shall we use for this giant?"

"The sword of truth," they all answered at once.

"That is right, my dears; never forget it. But now it is time to go to bed."

As they went out mamma noticed that Harry looked very sad and thoughtful.

After she had gone to her room for the night, she heard a rap at her door. When she opened it, she saw Harry, with great tears running down his cheeks.

"Why, my child!" she said, "what is the matter? Are you sick?"

It was some time before Harry could stop crying so as to tell her. At last he said, "Oh, mamma! I deceived you."

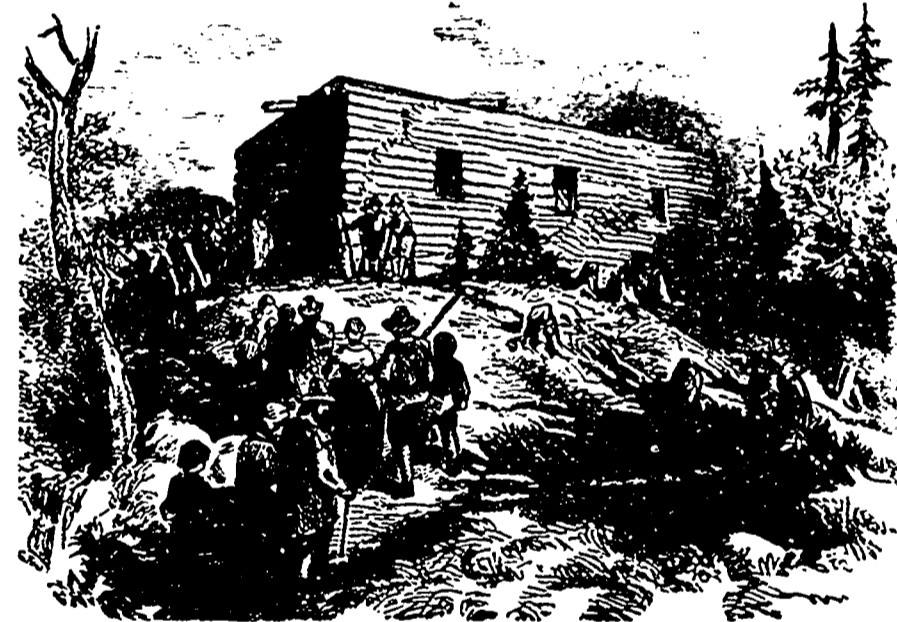
"Why, my dear child, when did you do that?" asked mamma.

"Don't you remember yesterday when I was late from school?" sobbed Harry.

"Yes," said mamma; "you told me you were kept in."

"So I was, but not all the time. I was only kept in about five minutes. Some of the boys wanted me to go for a swim. I did not want to go at first, because I knew you had told us not to; but they made so much fun of me, that at last I went, and then I was afraid to tell you. But, oh! mamma, indeed, indeed, I am so sorry," and he sobbed again as though his heart would break.

"My darling child, I am so glad you told me yourself. If I had found out in any other way, I would have been very,



OLD FORTIFIED MEETING-HOUSE, ON BURIAL HILL.

with him. He is an awful coward, and he makes cowards of us. This giant is called 'Deceit.'

"He is it who gets us to make believe something is true that is not true. We may either tell what is not true or act what is not true. Do you know how we may act what is not true?"

"Yes," said Maud, "Jennie Smith copied off me at school yesterday, and then stood up for having the right answer."

"Yes, my child," said mamma, "that is one way. Copying is very bad, indeed. It is not only telling or acting what is not true, but it is also taking what does not belong to us. We take an answer that does not belong to us, and then give it to the teacher for our own. I do hope my children will never, never be so mean as that."

"Well, I guess not," said Harry.

"No, indeed!" said Maud.

"Do you know why we try to deceive?" said mamma. "Why did Jennie Smith copy from Maud?"

"Because she could not get the answer herself," answered Maud.

"Was that the only reason?" said mamma.

"No, she was afraid of having to stay in," said Maud.

"That is it," said mamma. "The reason is always that we are afraid of letting the truth be known. So you see what I meant by saying that this giant makes cowards of us all."

"Then, if we let this giant into our lives, people will not trust us. Those who deceive are not believed even when they do tell the truth. Now just think of all your playmates. Whom do you

very much hurt. It would almost break my heart if my children grew up so that I could not trust them."

"Oh! mamma, I'll never, never do it again. Indeed, indeed, I won't. Oh! won't you believe me?"

"I do believe you, my darling boy. That is, I do believe you will try. But you know that this giant needs fighting all the time, and you must be careful not to let him get ahead of you. But you must remember that I am not the only one you sinned against, and whose forgiveness you need to ask."

"I did ask God to forgive me, mamma," answered Harry.

"That is right, my boy. Now, good-night, and try to grow up a good, brave man."

GIANT TEMPER.

The following evening they had company, so that mamma could not tell them about any other giants; but when the next evening came, the children were very eager to hear more.

"The giant I am going to tell you of to-night," said mamma, "gets us to do such awful things. He even changes our looks. I have seen lovely faces changed in a second into such ugly faces that I could not bear to look at them."

"Oh-h-h!" said little Frank, "what an awful giant he must be!"

"Yes," said mamma, "I have known people, who let this giant get hold of them, to throw themselves on the floor, kick and scream, and often they strike their heads on the floor, and they blame themselves dreadfully."

"That's awful," said Maud. "What

do they let such a giant get hold of them for?"

"It is awful," said mamma, "but it is true, nevertheless. Then there are others who knock some one else down; yes, who even kill some one else. When I was a young girl I knew a boy who took out his knife and killed his playmate. We often see in the newspapers that some one has killed his own father or mother, sister or brother, wife or child, and it is all because that person has allowed this giant to do what it liked with him."

"Oh, mamma," said Frank, "do tell us the name of this awful giant."

"Have none of you guessed?" asked mamma.

"Is it Temper, mamma?" said Harry.

"Yes, my son, it is Giant Temper which gets us to do such awful things. Whenever you feel the least bit angry, remember it is Giant Temper that has you, and if you do not fight him now, while you are young, he may lead you to do some such awful thing as I have told you of. I was very sorry indeed to see all of my children let this awful giant get hold of them this morning."

"I know when, mamma," said Maud. "It was when we were quarrelling."

"Yes, my dear, he really had you all that time. I do hope you will enter into a good hard battle with this giant and beat him."

"But, mamma, you have not told us the sword to use for this old giant," said Harry.

"The sword of self-control," said mamma. "Do you know what that means?"

"I think I do," said Maud. "Doesn't it mean to just hold on to yourself and not let yourself get angry?"

"Well, yes," said mamma, with a smile, "I think that will do very well for an answer. Now, children, I have told you of these three giants, but they are not the worst one. They are only the servants of one who is master of all."

"Oh, who is he?" they cried.

"Who is it that is master of everything that is wrong?" said mamma.

"Satan," they answered.

"Yes, my dears. Satan is the one who gets these giants to try to get hold of us, because he wants to drag us down to where he is. So that every time we fight these giants, we fight Satan also, and when we fight against Satan, we fight for God, and you know that God has promised to help us when we fight on his side. Now, my dears, it is past your bedtime, so we must say good-night."

After giving their mamma their good night kiss they went to bed, with their minds fully made up to fight these giants always.

The Boy to the Schoolmaster.

"You have quizzed me often and puzzled me long;

You have asked me to cipher and spell; You have called me a dolt if I answered wrong.

Or a dunce if I failed to tell Just when to say lie and when to say lay Or what nine sevens may make,

Or the longitude of Kamtschatka Bay, Or the I-forget-what's-its-name lake, So I think it's about my turn, I do, To ask a question or so of you."

The schoolmaster grim, he opened his eyes,

But he said not a word for sheer surprise— Can you tell what phen-dubs means? I can.

Can you say all off by heart The onery, twoery, hickory aun, Or tell 'commons' and alleys' apart?

Can you sing a top, I would like to know, Till it hums like a bumble-bee? Can you make a kite yourself that will go

Most as high as the eye can see, Till it sails and soars, like a hawk on the wing,

And the little birds come and light on the string?"

The schoolmaster looked, oh, very demure,

But his mouth was twitching, I'm almost sure.

"Can you tell where the nest of the oriole swings,

Or the colour its eggs may be? Do you know the time when the squirrel brings

Its young from their nest in the tree? Can you tell when the chestnuts are ready to drop,

Or where the best hazel-nuts grow? Can you climb a high tree to the very tip-top,

And gaze, without trembling, below? Can you swim and dive, can you jump and run,

Or do anything else we boys call fun?"

The master's voice trembled, as he replied,

"You are right, my boy, I'm the dunce,"

He sighed.