

"I mean," said Aunt Helen, "that when they were tiny babies I promised the Lord to train them up for him, and afterward I stood up before a great congregation of people and told the Lord that if he would take these little children for his own, and give me wisdom and strength to lead them in the right way, I would try to bring them home to him at last. And so every morning I ask him to take care of his little children, and to keep us all from leading them into sin. Will you do this too, Willie?"

Willie looked very sober, but he did not speak.

"You are older than they are," his aunt went on to say, "and they will be very likely to try and do just as you do, so if you set them a bad example they will be very likely to follow it. And if you tease and trouble them so as to make them angry, that will be a sin for you as well as for them. You know what Jesus said about those who cause the little ones to offend. Now remember, Willie, in all your play, these are God's little children, and you must be careful about leading them into sin."

Willie Hunter stayed nearly all summer with his Aunt Helen, but he could not forget this conversation. Whenever he was tempted to do anything that was wrong before his cousins, he would think, "They are *God's little children*, he will be very angry with me if I make them naughty," and then he would remember the freight train, and how slight a push would sometimes start people on a *down grade*, and when once started how hard it was to stop or turn them. Think of that, boys and girls, you elder brothers and sisters, to whom the little ones look up in confidence. Be very careful that your hands never start them on that down grade toward ruin.

EMILY HUNTINGTON MILLER.

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

ONLY A COBBLER.

DR. CAREY, while at dinner one day with the Governor-General of India, heard an officer ask if Dr. Carey had not once been a shoemaker.

"No, sir," replied Carey; "only a cobbler."

That was a brave reply. Few men who rise from small beginnings to prosperity have either sense or courage enough to glory in their early poverty.

I have known boys to be ashamed of their business because it was humble. Foolish shame! I would rather be an honest cobbler than a dishonest merchant. Nay, I would rather be an honest rag-picker than a wicked king. Character, my children, not business, makes the noble boy or man.

X.

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

THE BEGINNING OF EVIL.

BY MRS. H. C. GARDNER.

It was such a *little* thing—
One slight twist of crimson string—
But 'twas stealing all the same;
And the child who took it knew
That she told what was not true,
Just to screen herself from blame.
First a theft, and then a lie,
Both recorded up on high.

It was but a *little* sip,
Just a taste upon the lip,
But it left a longing there;
Then the measure larger grew,
And the habit strengthened too,
Till it would no curbing bear.
So the demon *Drink* decoys—
Soul and body both destroys.

It was but one *little* word,
Softly spoken, scarcely heard,
Uttered by a single breath—
But it dared to take in vain
God's most high and holy name,
So provoking wrath and death.
Soon the lips, once fresh and fair,
Opened but to curse and swear.



It was but one *little* blow—
Passion's sudden overflow—
Scarcely heeded in its fall;
But, once loosed, the fiery soul
Would no longer brook control,
Laws it spurned, defied them all,
Till the hands, love-clasped in vain,
Wore the murderer's crimson stain.

Ah, it is the foxes small,
Slyly climbing o'er the wall,
That destroy the tender vines;
And it is the spark of fire
Brightening, growing, curling higher,
That across the forest shines.
Just so, step by step, does sin,
If unchecked, a triumph win.

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

THE INFIDEL AND HIS DYING CHILD.



R. EUSTON HASTINGS had a dear little daughter named Eve, who was taken ill with scarlet fever. Ten days and nights of sadness and of gloom had passed, and as his wife, Evelyn, had shown symptoms of illness through the day, he had insisted in the stillness of the following night that she should retire to bed, while he sat alone watching with a trembling heart the disturbed sleep of his little Eve. It was near midnight when that disturbed sleep was broken. The child turned from side to side uneasily, and looked somewhat wildly around her.

"What is the matter with my darling?" asked Mr. Hastings in tones of melting tenderness.

"Where's mamma? Eve want mamma to say 'Our Father.'"

Euston Hastings had often looked on the beautiful picture of his child kneeling with clasped hands beside her mother to lisp her evening prayer, and since her illness commenced forbade her rising from bed. He had seen Evelyn kneeling beside it, taking those clasped hands in hers, and listening to Eve's softly murmuring words. Well he knew, therefore, what was meant by Eve's simple phrase "to say our Father."

"Mamma is asleep," he said; "when she awakes I will call her."

"No, no, papa, Eve sleep then," said the little one. "I will call her at once then, darling," and he

would have moved, but the little hand was laid on his to arrest him.

"No, don't wake poor mamma. Papa say 'Our Father' for Eve," she said.

"Will Eve say it to papa? Speak, then, my darling," he added, finding that though the hands were clasped and the sweet eyes were closed she remained silent.

"No, Eve too sick, papa. She can't talk so much. Papa, kneel down and say 'Our Father' like mamma did last night, wont you, papa?"

The father could not resist that pleading voice, and kneeling, he laid his hand over the clasped hands of his child, and for the first time since he had uttered it with childish earnestness in his mother's ear, his lips gave expression to those hallowed words of prayer. At such an hour and under such circumstances it could not be uttered carelessly. Mr. Hastings understood its solemn import, admitted God's rule over all things, and the surrender of all things to him. He understood this, we say, but he trembled at it. His infidelity was shaken, but he believed as the unreconciled believe, and his heart almost stood still with fear while "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" fell slowly from his lips.

Soothed by his compliance, Eve became still and seemed to sleep, but only for a few minutes. Suddenly, in a louder voice than had been heard in that room for days, she exclaimed:

"Papa, papa, see there! up there, papa!"

Her own eyes were fixed upon the ceiling, as it seemed to him, for to him nothing else was visible; while a smile of joy played on her lips, and her arms were stretched upward as to some visitant from the skies.

"Eve coming!" she cried again; "take Eve."

"Will Eve leave papa?" he said while unconsciously he passed his arm over her as if dreading that she would really be borne from him. With eyes still fixed upward, and expending her last breath and strength in an effort to rise from the bed, she whispered in broken tones:

"Papa come too—mamma—grandpa—little brother—dear papa."

The last word could only have been heard by the intensely listening ear of love. It ended in a sigh, and Euston Hastings felt that while he still clasped her cherub form and gazed upon her sweetly smiling face, that his little Eve had indeed left him forever. And yet not forever. He straightway sought the Lord, and has now followed her to glory.

Let my young readers of the Sunday-School Advocate never omit saying the Lord's prayer, whether sick or well, at home or abroad. "Our Father" will hear them.

D. NASH.

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES.

A GREAT boy in a school was so abusive to the younger ones that the teacher took the vote of the school whether he should be expelled. All the small boys voted to expel him except one, who was scarcely five years old. Yet he knew very well that the bad boy would probably continue to abuse him.

"Why, then, did you vote for him to stay?" said the teacher.

"Because if he is expelled perhaps he will not learn any more about God, and so he will be more wicked still."

"Do you forgive him, then?" said the teacher.

"Yes," said he; "papa and mamma and you all forgive me when I do wrong; God forgives me too, and I must do the same."

A LITTLE girl twelve years old said at the close of her short life, "O, mamma, I know I am very unworthy, but I have tried to do something for Jesus with my poor feeble talents, and through his precious blood I am hoping soon to hear him say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'"