

Children's Department.

A Grateful Stork.

A story of a stork is told by a German paper. About the end of March, 1891, a pair of storks took up their abode on the roof of the schoolhouse in the village of Poppenhofen. One of the birds appeared to be exhausted by its long journey and the bad weather it had passed through. On the morning after its arrival the bird was found by the school-master lying on the ground before the schoolhouse door. The man, who, like all Germans, considered it a piece of good luck to have the stork's nest on his house, picked up the bird and took it indoors. He nursed it carefully and when it was convalescent used every morning to carry it to the fields a short distance from the house, where its mate appeared regularly at the same hour to supply it with food. The stork is now cured; and every evening it flies down from the roof and gravely walks by the side of its friend from the schoolhouse to the meadows, accompanied by a wondering crowd of children.

The Thorn in the Finger.

There is hardly a little boy or girl who reads this, who has not known at some time or other what it is to have a thorn in the finger.

Perhaps it was one day when the blackberries were ripe and you were out picking some from the hedges. And up there was a lovely cluster, so black and so much bigger than the ones in your basket, and you made a big effort to get them. Just a scramble, a stretch forward, and a little jump, and you had secured your prize; but when you were safe back to your old place again, you felt a twinge in your little finger, and there, sure enough, was a sharp thorn. It was only a lit-



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tle thing, but it pained you very much, and when you got home mother had to get a sharp needle or the tweezers to draw it out.

Supposing you had left it there, and said nothing about it to anybody?

Well, if you had, the little finger would have grown a deal worse, and having swelled up, it would have required a poultice and all sorts of things to make it better.

Now, dear little reader, it is better if possible never to get thorns in your finger. But I suppose you can't help it always.

Now sin is like that thorn, and nothing pricks sharper or hurts more than a naughty temper or a habit of not speaking the truth. The worst of

it is, that not only the one that has the thorn suffers, but others too. Worst of all, it grieves God to see children with these thorns of sin.

Pray to God, then, to take away your temper, your naughtiness, whatever it may be, and give you the gentle and loving spirit which will not only make you happy, but others too.

Don't keep your thorns in your heart. They will get worse and worse, and you will feel less sorry when you do wrong, and you will really begin to love your thorn. But a bad thorn might make you very ill, and a bad sin may kill your soul.

Ask Jesus, whose tender hand can draw out the hardest thorn, to bless you and give you grace and help to do what is right, to avoid what is wrong, and to be in every way a loving obedient and useful lamb of His flock.

A Grateful Chicken.

One bright May morning an adventurous little chicken, distinguished from its companions by one black feather among the white ones, broke loose from its home in the farm yard, and wandered about the garden picking up food for itself. A neighboring cat, seeing it thus unprotected, soon had it in its mouth and hoped to have a savoury breakfast at its expense. But his hopes were not to be realized. Old Tommy, a black cat, which had been a pet in the family for eleven years, was quickly to the rescue, and after a fight brought little "black feather" into the kitchen, but with a broken leg. A match served for a splint, some cotton for bandages, a basket for a crib, and soon the poor little invalid was able to trot about. It became so tame that it would hop up the stairs after the house-maid in a most laughable manner, often perching on her shoulder while she went about her household duties. Sometimes, as a treat, little "black feather" was allowed to eat morsels from the side of her plate. One day she gave it some grains of rice in this way. No sooner had it eaten them than away it flew, but soon appeared on the table again and placed a black beetle in the centre of her plate, with a look of gratitude, as much as to say, "There is something to repay you for your kindness to me. A black beetle is a great luxury to a chicken, and it must, therefore, have been pure gratitude and love for its benefactress that induced "black feather" to give up such a favourite dainty. She is now a full-grown hen, and runs about the fowl-house and poultry-yard. She has quite forgotten her old good deeds; but (we venture to think) she has never repented of them.

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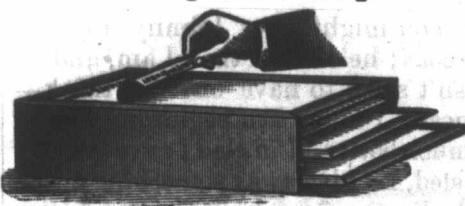
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