

The Swearer Rebuked by a Child.

It was an excursion day, and the railway carriages were nearly full, when a lady evidently in ill health entered, leading a little son of four or five years.

She panted and looked around in vain for a vacant seat. The gentleman by my side, perceiving her embarrassment, sprang to his feet, and politely offered his seat, which was accepted with a grateful acknowledgement.

She was about to take the little boy in her arms, when a gentleman on the opposite side extended his hands, saying, with a winning smile, "Come here, my boy, come and sit down upon my knee. I am better able to hold you than your mother is."

The child looked up for his mother's consent, and then joyfully sprang to the seat so kindly offered. For some few moments the gentleman amused himself by asking the child all manner of questions, drawing out his curious ideas, and listening with satisfaction to his artless replies.

Soon, however, his attention was drawn to an article in the paper he had just laid aside, and giving the boy some sweetmeats, he entered into an earnest political discussion with another gentleman by his side. At first it seemed they only sought amusement, and jokes and laughter were frequently intermingled with argument. But the contest gradually waxed stronger, until at length jokes were exchanged for profanity.

The boy had been very happy with his new friend, but when the first profane word was uttered, he looked up with astonishment.—Tears gathered in his large black eyes, and laying the watch carefully aside, which had been given to him by the gentleman for his amusement, he slipped quietly to the floor and fled to his mother.

"Where are you going, my dear?" exclaimed the gentleman, as he saw him moving off. "Come back, my boy, come back; I thought you were very happy a few minutes since, what is the matter now? Come, you are a fine little fellow; come and see what I can find for you in my pocket." But the boy clung to his mother, utterly refusing the extended hand.

"Well, now," exclaimed the gentleman, with evident chagrin, "this is very strange. I do not understand it. Come, my boy, tell me why you left me?"

"Tell the gentleman, my dear," said the mother, encouragingly, "why do you not wish to sit with him?"

"Because," said he, as he straitened himself back, and summoned all his resolution for the effort, "the Bible says we must not sit in the seat of the scorner."

The gentleman looked confounded. For a moment the blood rushed to his high expansive brow, and I thought he was angry. The mother was also surprised. She had not expected such a reply. But the man instantly regained his composure, and pleasantly replied, "I hope you do not call me a scorner?" The boy leaned his head upon his mother's shoulder, but made no reply.—"Come, tell me," continued he, "why do you call me a scorner?" The child looked up, and simply but earnestly said, while a large tear stole quietly down his cheek, "I don't like to hear you swear so."

"O! that is it, is it? Well," continued he, as the mother pressed her son to her bosom, and bowed her head to hide the tears which were starting in her own eyes, "come back and sit with me, and I promise you I will never swear again."

"Won't you asked the child, earnestly, 'then I shall love you very much indeed.'" Saying this, he allowed the gentleman again to place him on his knee, but it was quite plain to be seen he did not go back with the joyfulness with which he had at first taken the seat.

The gentleman saw this. He felt that he had lowered himself in the esteem of that innocent and noble-minded boy. The thought evidently gave him pain, and he did all he could to efface from his mind the unpleasant impression.

It was his mother's custom to read a chapter in the Bible every morning to her son, explaining it as she could, and then pray with him. That morning she had read the first Psalm, and when explaining to him the character of a scorner, among other vices she had mentioned profanity. And now, resolved at all events to do right, he thought it was really a sinful act to sit for one moment with a man who had taken God's name in vain.

When will mothers realise the vast amount of influence they are capable of exerting over their children? When will they realise the strength and permanence of those impressions received in childhood?