

Sunday School Advocate.

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LITTLE NITA AND HER COMPANIONS.

BY MRS. JANE HOLMES, ENGLAND.
For the Sunday School Advocate.



N that same year of the affair about the orange, was a very eventful one to little Nita.

In the first place, early in the summer she was snatched up by a kidnapper.

Nita was returning from a children's party; she had red shoes and a nice white frock, and probably the tall kidnapper had light enough to see the good clothes and covet them. At any rate the wretch snatched the child and tried to draw her into a dark lane, but Nita clung to the person who had charge of her, and a third party being present, the tall kidnapper ran up the lane and disappeared.

Poor Nita was so frightened after this, that she became afraid of almost everything. When the Summer holidays came on, a dear, kind lady who was fond of little Nita, invited her to spend six weeks in the country at her beautiful residence. There six weeks' play and open air cured the fearful child of her trembling and crying. The lady had a little son about Nita's age, called "James." Indeed, his Mamma used to call him "Diamond Bright," because he was such a sweet-tempered little fellow, and never took sulks or passions, or spake rudely. Nita and he agreed very well; they never quarrelled during the six weeks they spent together.

They were both honest, truthful children, and they could be trusted into the garden at any time. They never touched garden fruits or flowers without leave. They used to be sent to the hay-field sometimes, and, oh dear! what fun they had tossing about the hay, and playing hide and seek in it; and sometimes they got leave to ramble over the great green hill, and gather wild flowers, or chase butterflies. I am not sure that chasing butterflies is just a right thing to do; but I know they were careful not to hurt the beautiful creatures, only little James liked the pleasure of capturing the fly by placing his straw hat over it; the next instant he raised his hat, and let it escape. Nita never could cover the fly with her soft, muslin summer bonnet, as it just flapped and fell together quite limp; and she used to be sorry that she was not a boy to wear a round, firm hat. Sometimes the children gathered wild strawberries, and sometimes they gathered dogberries, to make necklaces for Nita, or at other times they gathered rushes, to make a grand rush cap for James. What funny figures they were coming home. Nita with her bonnet wreathed round with honey-suckles and wild roses, and her pinafore full of materials for jewellery; and James with a tall rush cap, and a fern in front by way of feather; a peeled rod in his leather belt for a sword, and his straw hat fastened by its narrow green ribbon to the front of his belt for a drum!

This he beat with a couple of twigs, but as the hat did not make sufficient noise to be martial, the two children supplied this want as well as they could, by singing out, "row de dow," all the way up the avenue. Doubtless this stirring music announced their approach, for they were sure to see Mamma standing waiting for them. She never would

allow them to bring their treasures into the Hall, but she would make them leave all on the garden seat, outside, assuring them that they would be quite safe, and that they must now come in and be washed and dressed for dinner; an operation by that time quite necessary. However, when dinner was over, the children would run out to take possession of their treasures, and oh dear, what sorrowful looks they did give—not a vestige left, all gone! The garden seat and the walk *clean swept*. On these occasions the tears would come in Nita's eyes, and "Diamond Bright" would say, "Never mind, Nita, we shall get more to-morrow."

I told you that these children were truthful and honest, and so they were allowed to shell peas and beans, and to gather and pick fruit for preserving, and to gather roses for making rose-milk. In short, they enjoyed many pleasures during this happy holiday; but all pleasures must come to an end, and when the six weeks had expired, Nita was obliged to return to the city and to school; but she had now rosy cheeks, and had ceased trembling and crying. The very day of her return home, Nita's papa bought her a piano-forte. This was the second grand event in that year, counting the escape from the kidnapper to have been the first.

I should have told you that "Diamond Bright" became a great man, travelled far, and wrote many valuable books, and was finally knighted by the Queen's uncle, and sent Governor to India.

In the autumn of this year, Nita's Mama took her to a stay-maker's to purchase a little corset. Mrs. B. accompanied them, and on entering the shop, the owner (a pleasant looking woman) requested them to walk into the parlour for a few minutes, until she had served some country customers who were in haste. Now, the afternoon was warm, and Nita had walked a great way, and she felt both tired and thirsty. There was a table placed under the window, and on this table an immense dish of large greengage plums! Oh, they did look and smell so temptingly. Mrs. B. said, "I shall take the liberty, dear little Nita, to hand you one of them, and tell the owner when she comes in that I have done so."

Nita said, "Oh no, pray don't Mrs. B.," and Nita ran behind the open parlour door, where she could neither see nor smell the plums. So the stay-maker entered in a few minutes, and Mrs. B. told her what had happened. The kind stay-maker said, "Well, then I shall just pick out the two very largest plums on the dish, and give them to the child myself!" So Nita made a little bow, the best she could, and she eat one plum herself, and brought the other home to her little sister Belle, who was just recovering from hooping-cough.

Now, this circumstance is not counted as a great event in Nita's life, but it is written to show you little ones that Nita lost nothing by shunning temptation, and even if the staymaker had not given her two plums, Nita would have been happier now to have been able to remember that she had kept her hands from picking and stealing all her life long.

(To be continued.)

"My MASTER IS ALWAYS IN."—"Johnnie," said a man, winking slyly to a dry-goods clerk of his acquaintance, "you must give me good measure. Your master is not in."

Johnnie looked solemnly into the man's face and replied:

"My Master is always in."

Johnnie's master was the all-seeing God. Let every tempted child, ay, and adult too, adopt Johnnie's motto, "My Master is always in." It will save him from falling into many sins."

WHY AM I NOT A CHRISTIAN?

1. Is it because I am afraid of ridicule, and of what others may say of me?

"Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me, and of My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed."

2. Is it because of the inconsistencies of professing Christians?

"Every man shall give an account of himself to God."

3. Is it because I am not willing to give up all to Christ?

"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

4. Is it because I am afraid that I shall not be accepted?

"Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."

5. Is it because I fear I am too great a sinner?

"The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

6. Is it because I am afraid I shall not "hold out?"

"He that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Christ Jesus."

7. Is it because I am thinking that I will do as well as I can, and that God ought to be satisfied with that?

"Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

8. Is it because I am postponing the matter without any definite reason?

"Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

A RIDDLE.

BY LORD BYRON.

I am not in youth, nor in manhood, nor age,
But in infancy ever am known;
I'm a stranger alike to the fool and the sage,
And tho' I'm distinguished in History's page,
I always am greatest, alone.
I am not in the Earth, nor in the Sun, nor in the Moon,—

You may search all the sky—I'm not there;
In the morning and evening—tho' not in the noon—
You may plainly perceive me, for like a Balloon,
I am midway suspended in air.

I am always in riches, and yet I am told
Wealth ne'er did my presence desire;
I dwell with the miser, but not with his gold,
And sometimes I stand in his chimney so cold,
Tho' I serve as a part of the fire.

I often am met in Political life—
In my absence no Kingdom can be;—
And they say there can neither be friendship nor strife,

No one can live single, no one take a wife,
Without interfering with me.

My brethren are many, and of my whole race,
Not one is more slender and tall;
And though not the eldest, I hold the first place,
And even in dishonour, despair, and disgrace,
I boldly appear 'mong them all.

Though disease may possess me, and sickness and pain,

I am never in sorrow or gloom;
Though in wit and in wisdom I equally reign,
I am the heart of all Sin, and have long lived in vain,
I ne'er shall be found in the Tomb.

WOULD JESUS LIKE IT?—Little Carrie often asks, "Would Jesus like me to do this?" When inclined to dispute with her playmates, her teacher asks, "Who will be like Jesus? Who will give up?" Carrie is always the first to say, "I'll give up; the others may have it."