

Sunday-School Advocate.

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 9, 1865.



HURRAH FOR A HOLIDAY.

"HURRAH! hurrah!" shouted young Ernest one afternoon as he bounded out of doors into the street, "hurrah for a holiday!"

A waiting group of boys and girls replied to his cheer right merrily, and then away they went to the sea-shore to fish from the rocks.

Aided by their Uncle John, who met them at the fishing-ground, they had "good luck" in catching minnows. But after a while they grew tired of this sport, and Willie cried out:

"Let us go to the woods and pick strawberries?"

"A capital idea," cried Willie Vernon; "I know where there's lots of 'em."

"So do I," said Ernest's Sister Violet.

"Please, Uncle John, will you keep our fish and fishing-tackle for us?" asked Ernest. "We will come back this way and get them."

Uncle John smiled at Ernest's readiness to use him as a convenience, promised to carry the fish home for them, and added, "but don't go too far into the woods, children. I see thunder-heads in the West, and we may have a thunder-storm before sundown."

Promising to keep a bright look-out for the possible storm, the children scampered away to a strip of woods about half a mile from the shore. On the edge of these woods there was a meadow in which grew plenty of wild strawberries.

It did not take those children long to reach the strawberry meadow you may feel sure. The berries were plentiful, and they soon became busy as beavers filling their baskets with the luscious fruit. So busy and merry, in fact, that they forgot all about the "thunder-heads," until a sound in the distant West, like the growl of an angry lion, reminded them of Uncle John's warning.

"O dear, the thunder-storm is coming!" said Violet; "let us go home directly."

"Pooh! how easily frightened you are!" replied Harry Norton.

"Girls always are," added Willie Vernon with a sneer. "Boys are odious creatures," retorted Violet. "Hark! There is more thunder! Let us go!"

"It's a good way off," said Ernest. "We shall have time to fill our baskets before it reaches us if we make haste. Come, let us pick quickly."

So, instead of minding Uncle John's caution and hurrying home, as wise children would have done, they went on picking berries for another half hour. Meanwhile the

storm gathered in the West, and now, as if let loose suddenly from invisible bonds, it swept across the sky and burst over and around the woods in great fury. The wind blew fiercely, the thunder rolled terribly, and the lightning flashed very fearfully.

The children, being terrified, did the very worst thing possible. Instead of keeping away from the woods, they rushed into them for shelter. They either did not know or did not think that trees attract lightning and ought to be avoided in a thunder-storm. One boy crept into the hollow of a big elm. Another crouched behind a huge overturned root. Ernest crept close to the trunk of the largest tree he could find. Violet and the other girls huddled together beneath a big rock. Thus dangerously sheltered from the rain, they waited in much fear for the storm to pass by.

In the course of half an hour the western sky began to light up, and the rain poured down with less violence. The children grew hopeful, and shouted cheerily to each other from their hiding-places. But all at once a dark mass of cloud which hung overhead grew darker, a keen flash of lightning followed by a crashing clap of thunder and a deluge of rain, filled their hearts with fresh terror. A shriek from Ernest increased their alarm a hundred-fold. Peeping out from their hiding-places they saw that the lightning had struck the tree against which he had been standing and torn off some of its biggest branches.

"Ernest is killed!" shrieked Violet.

Violet was mistaken. Ernest's right leg was crushed under a fallen branch, but he was otherwise all right. I need not tell you how they gathered round him regardless of the rain, which was about to cease, nor how Willie Vernon ran with the speed of a deer for help, nor how carefully Uncle John and others carried the poor boy home. You can readily imagine all this. All I need to add is, that Ernest, after a few weeks of confinement, recovered the use of his leg, and that all the children learned two lessons from their fright which they never forgot.

Can you guess what those lessons were? No? I will tell you. They learned, first, *That children should always be careful to follow the advice of their parents and guardians*; and, second, *That no one should ever fly to a tree for shelter in a thunder-storm*. These were good lessons. It cost them a bad fright and Ernest some suffering to learn them. If you are wise you will let their experience become your teacher, and will make those lessons your own without money and without price. Are you wise enough to do so?

MY LETTER BUDGET.

HERE is the answer to the picture puzzle in the last Advocate: The persons—soldiers, Peter, angel. The passage containing the narrative—Acts xii, 19.

Here is a Bible acoustic:

One who from humble beginnings became a great soldier, a mighty monarch, and a writer of beautiful songs.

1. One who was a tale-bearer and the willing tool of a tyrant.

2. One who carried news of a cruel massacre to a persecuted soldier.

3. A vessel that contained the oil with which a shepherd was anointed.

4. An object which was made to represent a fugitive prince.

5. One whose father was a prince and whose mother was a sensible woman.

Two or three of my correspondents complain that the verse said to contain all the letters of the alphabet has no j in it. They are correct, but j was formerly used in words now spelled with j; the latter letter having been added to our alphabet in modern times.

Here is a letter from France which will please you as surely as the gift of a new drum if you are a boy, or a wax doll if you are a girl.

"MY DEAR GENERAL TRY,—You have been so very busy enlisting American recruits in your Try Army and leading them on to the victory, not only in a general way over sin and the devil, but also very specially over rebellion and slavery, that you have perhaps altogether lost sight of the commission you gave some years ago to a Frenchman who had requested you to take a rank worthy of the numerous band you have to lead, and to consent to be called *General* and not *Corporal* Try. You answered at the time very favorably, you deigned to accept the proffered title, and in return you authorized him, under the name and title of Captain Perseverance, to form a French regiment of your army, and to enroll as many young descendants of the Huguenots and young ex-Romanists as possible. This has been done. Captain Perseverance is now known by thousands of French and Swiss Sunday-scholars, and the

Try Army (*Gallice: L'ARMEE DES ESSAYEURS*) has been noticed, and discussed, and approved of in all the French Protestant children's papers. Not only is the regiment organized with its various officers, but it even has a band, the honorable title of band-master having been given to a gentleman in Paris, a deacon in the Reformed Church, who composed for us and set to original music a beautiful hymn with a chorus, the meaning of which is,

"Let us try, let us ever try,
Jesus will surely help us."

"A circumstance has just happened which is well calculated to test the efforts and the *perseverance* of the captain. He happens to be a Methodist preacher, and the late Methodist Conference just held in Paris, having ascertained that its finances were in a very poor plight and its treasury worse than empty, (on account of the extension inevitably given to the work, which now embraces, besides the regular circuit work, schools, seminaries, a Book Concern, a weekly magazine, etc.) has delegated the said Captain Perseverance to visit the United States and try what he can do by dint of application to replenish the empty treasury and obtain help to sustain a vigorous war against indifference, immorality, infidelity, and Popery. The captain may therefore be expected to land in New York somewhere about the beginning of September. Will you give him a hearty welcome, dear General? He will be willing to do any reasonable amount of hard work, and would be most happy to visit your soldiers to see how discipline is enforced among them, to address them on the religious state of France, on Sunday-schools and Methodism, and to obtain from each congregation a few dollars. As he has been specially occupied with Sunday-schools here, has organized the French Sunday-School Union, and founded and edited for seven years the French Sunday-School Magazine, he wishes to visit more particularly the American Sunday-schools, and would be most happy to collect the \$20,000 wanted to place our French connection on a safe financial basis.

"Now, General, if you cannot officially help him, you might perhaps, at least, announce his coming, and give him a *beetle bit* of a recommendation in your excellent Advocate. Please to try and show once more how wise you are, and how well-fitted to occupy the post of commander-in-chief to the honorable, powerful, and numerous Try Army.
J. P. COOK.

"P.S.—The French readers of the Advocate (there are a few) have often wondered why you still call yourself a mere *corporal*. They suspect that you are ambitious to imitate our great Emperor Napoleon I., who used to be called by his soldiers, 'the little corporal.' I have answered, however, that you are too much of an American to wish to imitate an emperor. Am I right? But if so, why don't you call yourself General or Commander-in-chief?"

Modesty, modesty, captain, keeps me a corporal. I shall be glad to see you in America, and I think the Advocate family will give you a hearty welcome.

T. J. D., of H—, says:

"Away out here, though many miles from your city, we have not forgotten our desire to do some good, but have a first-rate little Sabbath-school of about fifty scholars. We try to be of all the use possible to one another by singing together, talking together, and praying together. Only this morning all the boys and girls of the school formed themselves into a temperance Try Company, whose motto consists of a promise made by each member. It is, 'I will drink no liquor.' Just five words, as you will see—one for each finger and the thumb of one hand. Now, Corporal, as we intend to keep the pledge, and wish to persuade every person else to do so, we want you to admit us into your Try Company. Will you have us?"

Most certainly. The corporal goes in for a war of extermination against rum, slavery, rebellion, and all other sins. They are hard foes to kill. Like cats, which the adage says have nine lives, they require a good deal of killing before they die.

PERFECT TRUST.

A GENTLEMAN was walking one evening with his little girl upon a high bank, below which ran a canal. She coaxed him to descend the bank, saying:

"O, pretty! do take me to it."

The bank was very steep, and in descending the gentleman had to swing his child in the air, holding her by the right arm, several times. Whenever he did this, the child laughed gleefully, although she was in real danger.

"Tell me, Sophy, why you were not frightened when you were swinging in the air over nothing?"

Nestling her plump little cheek upon her father's face, she replied:

"Papa had hold of Sophy's hand; Sophy could not fall."

This was perfect trust. Happy is that man who, having placed himself in God's hand, saying, "Hold thou me up and I shall be safe," can look danger in the face and say, "God has hold of my hand. I cannot be harmed."