

"But is it very hard to remove mountains of sin, mamma?"  
 "Yes darling; with us it is impossible, but we can do all things if we ask Jesus to help us."

**GOING HOME TO BE FORGIVEN.**

Some boys were playing at ball in a retired place one afternoon when they should have been at school. They absented themselves without leave, intending to go home at the usual hour. Thus they thought their absence would not be noticed by their parents and friends.

While thus engaged Mr. Amos came along. "What are you doing here?" said he. "Your parents think you are at school, I shall let them know where you are, and what you are about."

He passed on and the boys stopped playing. What was to be done? He would be sure to tell their parents. It was too late to go to school and too early to go home. Their consultations came to no comfortable conclusions; the probabilities of punishment were talked of. Some thought they might escape, but the prospects of most of them were not promising. At length John Roberts rose up and said, "I'm going home."

"What for? to get a flogging and have it over?" said one.

"No, I'm going home to be forgiven;" and away he went.

John never played truant before. He had very kind parents, and they would deny him nothing that was for his good, and he felt that he had treated them ungratefully by acting contrary to their known wishes. He resolved to go home and make a full confession of his fault, and ask their forgiveness.

On reaching home he met his sister, several years younger than himself, to whom he told his resolution, and, like the loving sister she was, she agreed to go with her brother and ask mother to forgive.

As they came into the house they met their parents just starting out to make purchases for the house, but when the mother saw the anxious look on the children's faces she willingly waited until John had told the story of his playing truant, and then asking to be forgiven. As in the case of the Prodigal Son, the parent was as willing to forgive, if not more so, as the son was to be forgiven. John was right; it was a good thing to go home for—to be forgiven.

**NED'S RUDDER.**

"And so you mean to follow the sea," said Dr. Williams to Ned.

"Yes. Father says I may sail with the *Osprey* on her next voyage," answered Ned, with a pleased look.

"And you sail your yacht meanwhile to keep your hand in," said the doctor, looking at the toy he had taken from Ned. "Its a pretty little craft, and well put together; but it lacks a rudder, Ned."

"I know that, but its going to have one all right. You don't suppose I'd put to sea without a rudder, do you? That yacht is not finished yet, sir."

Ned looked at the doctor with a very confident air, as of one who knew quite well what he was about; and the doctor looked back at him with a grave smile.

"I see you understand what your boat needs, my boy. I wonder if you know what as well what your own outfit should be."

"Well, I guess I do." And Ned rattled over a list of things that belonged to a seaman's chest. The doctor listened to him attentively.

"There's a rudder lacking, I'm afraid," he said, when Ned had finished.

"A rudder! How can you carry a rudder in your kit?"

"What is the use of a rudder?" asked the doctor.

"Why, to steer by, of course."

"Just so. And a man wants something to steer by, as well as a ship. The Bible is a rudder, Ned, and chart, and compass besides. It's an anchor, too, of hope and dependance. They that go down to the sea in ships, and see the wonders of the great deep, can the very least of all afford to be without it."

Ned looked down, and blushed a little. "I

suppose I can take a Bible along," he said, rather uneasily.

"I thought I would bring you one," said the doctor, taking out a neat pocket Bible. "I've put your name in it, and I want you to promise me that you'll steer by your rudder. The ship that doesn't mind her helm is in a bad way; but a boy that drifts about here and there, with nothing to shape his course, is in a much worse one. Remember that, Ned."

It was a word in season, fitly spoken. The boy had heard the same before; but it reached his heart now with a different meaning. He took the doctor's Bible, and gave his promise; kept it, too, in spite of many a sneer and many a temptation. The *Osprey* went on a long voyage. She met storm and disaster; and often, in the face of hardship and danger, Ned's "rudder" served him well, since God was at the helm.

On land or on sea, there is no soul that can keep in the right track without the same blessed guide.

**THE GREAT MASTER.**—"I am my own master!" cried a young man, proudly, when a friend tried to persuade him from an enterprise which he had on hand; "I am my own master!"

"Did you ever consider what a responsible post that is?" asked a friend.

"Responsible—is it?"

"A master must lay out the work (which he wants done, and see that it is done right. He should try to secure the best ends by the best means. He must keep on the lookout against obstacles and accidents, and watch that everything goes straight, else he must fail."

"Well."

"To be master of yourself you have your conscience to keep clear, your heart to cultivate, your temper to govern, your will to direct, and your judgment to instruct. You are master over a hard lot, and if you don't master them, they will master you."

"That is so," said the young man.

"Now, I could undertake no such thing," said his friend. "I should fail, sure, if I did. Saul wanted to be his own master, and failed. Herod did. Judas did. No man is fit for it. 'One is my Master, even Christ.' I work under His direction. He is regular, and where He is Master all goes right."

**THE ROSE BUSHES.**

In front of my father's house, on the bank of a gently flowing Scottish river, grew two rose bushes. They blossomed all the season through. The flowers were very beautiful, but they were all of the same form and the same color. The pure, pale pink, ever-repeating itself from week to week, and from year to year, became wearisome. We longed for a change; not that we disliked flowers—for nothing could be more lovely, either in the bud or in the bloom—but we wanted something new.

I learned the art of budding. Having obtained from a neighbor some slips of the finest kind, I succeeded in inoculating them upon our own bushes. The success was great. Five or six varieties might be seen flowering all at one time on a single plant. The process was not much known at the time in the district. Our roses became celebrated, and neighbors came to see and admire them. They were counted a treasure in the family.

When their fame had reached its height, a frost occurred, more severe than usual, and both the bushes died. They were natives of a warmer clime, and too tender for our severe seasons. Had the buds been inserted into a hardier stock our beautiful roses would have survived the winter, and would have been lovely and blooming still. It was a great mistake to risk all our fine flowers on a root that the first severe frost would destroy.

This happened long ago, when I was a boy. I did not then understand the meaning of the parable. I think I know it better now.

Young people make a great mistake when they allow their heart's hope and portion to grow into this world and this life—a life that some sudden frost may nip. Rather let your portion be a branch of the True Vine—Jesus, the same yes-

terday, and to day, and forever. He will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

**THE MISCHIEF MAKER.**

Nelly Hart is a regular mischief-maker. Are there two little girls in school who are known as friends, happy in each other's society, Nelly goes to work to make trouble. She picks up some little harmless word, adds a word or phrase and takes away a word there, changes the tone and manner, and makes the whole convey an entire different idea.

"Mary Allen has a pair of mittens just like those I lost," said Frances McIntyre, innocently enough.

At recess Nelly calls Mary into a corner. "What do you think Frances says about you?" she asks in a mysterious whisper.

"What does she say?" asks Mary.

"Won't you ever tell her as long as you live and breathe?" says Nelly.

"No," says Mary, thoughtlessly.

"Well you know she lost her mittens; and this morning she said, 'Mary Allen has a pair of mittens just exactly like those I lost,' she says; and if you'd seen the way she looked, and how she tossed her head, and then says she, 'So just like mine!'"

"She didn't mean I stole them?" says Mary, naturally much provoked.

"Of course she did."

So there is a foundation of a very pretty quarrel, and soon all the school is taking one side or the other, and there is a great talk and a trouble.

The little mischief maker rejoices in the storm she has raised. Do you know any little mischief-maker? If you do, never listen to her "says she's" and "says I's." If she comes to you with a story, turn a deaf ear, for the words of a tale-bearer are as wounds.—*Child's Magazine.*

**CHARLIE'S GRATITUDE.**

Charlie loved fun as well as any boy. He found it hard work sometimes to wait for it till school was out. As for Saturday, he wanted to make it one long frolic, and generally did.

One Saturday the boys came after him to go sledding, and were very much surprised to find him busy in Mr. C's woodpile.

Chop, chop, chop, went his little hatchet, and the kindling-wood flew with his strokes till he had made quite a heap.

"What's the use of this!" said Ben Bay, who, as biggest boy, was the spokesman, "tisin't your woodpile!"

"I know that," said Charlie, "but it's my work just now," and the hatchet went on while the boys teased him to go.

By and by the work was done, and Charlie took his hatchet home, and started with the boys for Deshler's hill.

As his mother came to his little bed to tuck him in as good mothers are apt to do, she said with her good night kiss:

"Willie has been telling me that you were splitting wood for Mr. C—this morning. How was it my son?"

"Why, mother," said Charlie, "don't you remember what Mr. C—did for me a while ago? I broke through the ice when I was skating, and when I tried to help myself out and could'nt, and nobody knew just how to reach me, and my hands were most frozen, Mr. C—jumped in and held me till they brought rails and got us both out. I tell you what mother," said the boy with a flash in his eye, "I kind o' belong to Mr. C—now, and I help him all I can."

"Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price."

**SINS BLOTTED OUT.**—"According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." Ps. li. 1.

"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

The Master of Trinity, Cambridge, lately remarked at a Fellows' meeting, at which some over-confident opinions were advanced: "Gentlemen, we are none of us infallible, not even the youngest of us."