

## Sunday-School Advocate.

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THE OLD MAN BEFORE HE BECAME A BEGGAR.

## AN OLD MAN'S STORY.

"I've a dog, a pony, and lots of money; see here!" said ULRIC WEST, holding up a steel purse, well filled with bright cents and small silver coins, to the admiring gaze of a group of boys and girls.

"Yes, you are a rich fellow, a regular Cræsus," replied HAROLD VANNOT with a sneer; "but what good does it do you? You never let the fellows play with your dog nor ride your pony. You never spend your money if you can help it, and every boy in Lindenvale knows you're as mean as dirt—a regular miser. I shouldn't wonder if you grow up into a real mean skinflint, like that old Dan Dancer, who had lots of money and yet died in a sack because he was too mean to use his bed-clothes."

"That's right, Harold!" "Give it to him!" "He deserves it all!" cried the boys and girls, who were much pleased to hear Harold give such a "setting down," as they called it, to Ulric, who was both the richest and meanest boy in the school.

At that moment an old man in a very much worn dress limped up to the group, and touching his hat said:

"Please give a poor old man a penny?"

"Get out with you!" said Ulric haughtily. "It's against the law to beg in the streets. Get out!"

Now this old man was not a common vagrant, but was really poor and deserved help. He was lame, and had outlived all the friends of his earlier years. He once had a quiet home, in which he read his Bible and served God. He was quite venerable, too, in spite of his threadbare garb. His hair was like silver threads, his brow was marked with deep furrows, his face wore a sad but quiet look, he was such a man as would incline a generous heart to pity and help him. At any rate, all the children in that group, except Ulric, were moved to pity, and every one who had a cent in his pocket took it out cheerfully and put it into the old man's hand—all but Ulric. He kept his hand in his pocket tightly gripping his purse. Seeing the rest give only made him vexed, and he said with a bitter sneer on his lips:

"What a pack of fools you are to throw your money away on that old beggar!"

"For shame, Ulric!" said KITTY PARSONS, "you may be old and poor yourself one of these days, and then perhaps you'll be sorry you called this old man hard names."

Without appearing to notice Ulric's remark, the old man thanked the children for their gift and said:

"If you will listen to an old stranger and will let me sit down on that rock yonder I will tell you a story."

"A story! a story!" cried the boys; "let's hear it! let's hear it!"

The old man sat upon the rock, the boys and girls gathered round him, and the old man said:

"Once on a time some soldiers marching through a village asked for a guide. A poor man who knew the way offered to go with them, but, as it was bitterly cold, he begged some one to lend him a cloak. No one heeded his request but a poor old blacksmith, a stranger in the place working for hire. He pitied the guide and loaned him his old cloak.

"The guide started with the soldiers. At the next village they found another company of soldiers under the command of an officer who, on seeing the guide, turned pale and asked, 'Where did you get that cloak?' The guide told him. The officer ordered his horse, rode to the village from which the guide had come, and inquired for the poor old blacksmith. You may judge of that old man's surprise when he saw an officer in splendid uniform, with the cross of the legion of honor sparkling on his breast, standing before his shop. He looked at this grand officer a moment, and then exclaiming, 'O it is my own son, Rudolph!' he sprang out and threw himself into the young soldier's arms.

"Now Rudolph had joined the army when his father lived in another place and was pretty well off. He had been with the army several years far away from home, and had by great bravery risen to honor and command. His father, meanwhile, had been very unfortunate. There were few post-offices and mail-routes in those times and in that country, so that they had not heard of one another. But the son remembered his father's cloak when he saw it on the guide's shoulders; and then the father's kindness in loaning it to his poor neighbor led to the discovery of his son and to his own relief, for you may be sure that Rudolph did not leave him to toil unhelped at his anvil and bellows.

"The people wept for joy when they heard of the old blacksmith's good fortune in finding his brave son, and they said, 'As the old man had compassion on others, so God has had compassion on him and has let his son find him again, who has delivered him from all his necessity.'

"And now you have heard my story," continued the old man, rising from the rock to resume his weary walk, "I give you my blessing, and may Heaven help you to remember that

"The gracious Lord his soul will bless  
Who helps the stranger in distress."

Then the old man bowed to the children and limped away, followed by such cries as, "Good-by, old gentleman!" "Thank you for your story." "Hurrah for the old blacksmith!" etc.

"There, Ulric, you're hit—why, where is Ulric? I declare he is gone!" said Harold.

Ulric had quietly slipped away while his companions were cheering the old man at his departure. He was, most likely, ashamed of himself, and so he slunk out of sight.

The lesson of this story is, "Don't be mean and selfish, but be generous, children. Pity the deserving poor and help them. Don't keep all your good things to yourselves, but share them with others. Be noble! Be large-hearted! Be kind! Go through life scattering smiles, blessings, and gifts all along your pathway."

## OUR CONVERSATION CORNER.

NOT long ago a son was born to the Prince and Princess of Wales—the prince, you recollect, paid a visit to Canada a few years ago. When the babe was born some one wrote a simple prayer in verse for the little heir of royalty. Here it is:

God save the little prince,  
God bless the little prince,  
God save the prince!  
May he sin's ways forsake,  
May he thy grace partake,  
Save him for Jesus' sake,  
God save the prince!"

That is a good prayer, is it not? I have printed it because I suppose you wish well to the baby-prince, and because I want to parody or change the lines into a prayer which you may use every day:

God save my guilty soul,  
God bless my sinful soul,  
God save my soul!  
May I sin's ways forsake,  
May I thy grace partake,  
Save me for Jesus' sake,  
God save my soul!

Will you learn this prayer? Will you repeat it daily? Will you do so sincerely?

Here is a note from E. L. HOWARD, of —, saying:

"My father is a temperance man and I mean to follow his example, for I think it is a dreadful thing to be a drunkard. I hope all of my young schoolmates will be good temperance boys and shun evil."

Emory is right. It is a dreadful thing to be a drunkard, and the only sure way of escape from it is not to drink the first drop. The first drink is the most dangerous of all.

And here is the answer to Brother Dunn's riddle: The cock. Gen. i, 20; Matt. xxvi, 34, 74, 75; Mark xiv, 30, 72;



Luke xxii, 34, 61; John xlii, 38; xviii, 27; Gen. vii, 8; (his voice was heard by Noah and his family, hence the whole world;) Luke xxii, 62.

LOUISA D., of —, says:

"I used to live in the states. My father died there more than six years ago. Over three years ago my Aunt Mary brought me home with her, and I have lived here ever since. My Uncle William is a very good man, and he is superintendent of our school. I have a brother John, aged seven. He and my mother came up last summer to make us a visit. We kept John to spend the winter with us. He is here still and attends Sabbath-school. Aunt Mary teaches the infant class. He is in her class. Last week Aunt Mary invited her class and Mrs. Persons's (the class that I am in) to spend the afternoon with her. There were thirty-three of us. We had a splendid time. I was ten years old the eleventh of this month. I am very busy most of the time. We go to school every day, and our teacher, Mr. Newell, drives us right along. I am as far as bankruptcy in arithmetic. I study grammar, history, and spelling. Uncle William has a maple grove and makes sugar every spring. They gave me a cake, which I send to you as a token of my love to you for your love to so many children. My brother and I want you to admit us into your Try Company. Aunt Mary says we don't half try to be all we should be, but if you accept us we promise to try harder than we ever have done. I wish you would write in your next paper all that you want your company to try to do or to be. Do you ever travel for pleasure? If you do just take a trip up to our lakes this summer, (the scenery is most beautiful,) and come and see us and spend the Sabbath with us if you can. My Uncle William would like very much to have you come and talk to the children face to face."

"Bless that fatherless maiden in the house of her good uncle and aunt!" cries the corporal, smacking his lips over that big lump of maple-sugar which came with this note. The sugar is nice, indeed, and I prize it for the sake of the love which led my dear little Louisa to send it to me. Of course, she and her brother go into the corporal's ranks. They must try to do all things they are told to do in the Advocate, especially to love Jesus and obey Aunt Mary.—FRANCIS W., of —, sends me a long list of recruits, and closes his letter by saying:

"I want the appointment of recruiting officer in your ranks. I think I can recruit quite an army for the Try Company if you will give me the appointment."

Since Francis wants to be an officer for its work and not for its honors, I give him the appointment of lieutenant of the Lyons Try Company. May he be an officer likewise under the Captain of our salvation!—J. N. C., of —, under date of April 17, writes:

"Will you allow me to propose the name of Miss Ada Layton as a suitable person to become a member of your Try Company? She has been reciting verses all winter, from two hundred to five hundred each Sabbath; but two weeks ago she recited one thousand, and the following Sabbath nine hundred and ninety. Thus you see that I have some grounds for recommending her, and I hope that you will place her name on your list. I may send you others yet, for I promised to send you the names of all that would recite one thousand verses."

Yes, Miss Layton is admitted with honor to our Try Corps, but the corporal begs J. N. C. not to press his pupils to such efforts of memory as are required in reciting one thousand verses a week. It is too much for the brain of any child in the world.