

Childrens' Department.

A CASE OF CONSCIENCE.

Up among the Vermont hills live two children who do not like to get up early. So their mother said one day, "I will give you a cent apiece every morning you are down promptly to breakfast."

It was queer how that cent cleared the sticks out of the children's eyes, took the sleepy gaps out of their mouths, the stretchiness out of their limbs, so that instead of turning over to go to sleep again, Ruby and Buzz would give one jump out of bed into the middle of the floor, and then they were wide awake and the day was fairly begun.

In this way the children had each earned six cents. Ruby went about rattling her pennies in her apron pocket, but Buzz, although he had a nice pocket in his new trousers, put his money in a box in the bureau drawer.

"To-morrow will be Sunday," said Buzz Saturday night as they went to bed. "I don't think we ought to take a cent for getting up early on Sunday morning."

"Oh, I do," said Ruby. "And that will be seven cents I shall have then."

"But I do not think it would be right to earn a cent, in such a way, on Sunday," said Buzz.

"This is not doing real work and earning money on Sunday," said Ruby; "this is only getting up, and we have got to do it any way and I mean to have a cent for it, and that will be seven cents in the morning," and Ruby took her money out of her pocket and piled it in a pile on the table.

"Getting up early for a cent on Sunday would be working to get the cent," said Buzz stoutly, "and I am going to do it without any pay on Sunday. 'Cause I think that is the way to do."

"Well, I think it is the way to get a cent if you can," said Ruby; "let us ask mother."

The children plead the case before their mother.

"Why do you think it is right to take a cent on Sunday, Ruby? she asked.

"'Cause I want it, and I will have more if I do," said Ruby; "we are paid for getting up—and we do get up on Sunday just as we do on other mornings, and we ought to be paid for it just the same."

"Now, Buzz, why do you think it is not right?" asked the mother.

"'Cause getting up is work for us—it is not work for you or papa, but it is for us, and you pay us because it is, and I don't want to work for money on Sunday—and then—and then—"

"But, if you do not take the money you will not have as many cents as Ruby has. Will you like to hear her counting them over—always having more than you?" asked the mother.

"No, I shan't like that. I don't like to hear her count her money any way. Ruby needn't count it so much. But I shall not take a cent on Sunday."

"And I shall take a cent every Sunday—just as soon as mother will give it to me," said Ruby.

The mother said that they should decide for themselves. So Ruby took

her money each Sunday and she had a quiet conscience, nor did any, even in their secret thoughts, accuse her of doing wrong.

Buzz went without the Sunday cent, and he too had a quiet conscience.

But it was at this point of difference that the children's natures began to diverge.

Ruby had more money, and more "good times;" but Buzz had a more tender love for the right because he had made a sacrifice for it, and this made his heart strong to do right things, even when they went a little against the grain.—Margaret Emma Ditto, in Feb. WIDE AWAKE.

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IN SAFE HANDS.

Not many years ago in a small seaside town far away, stood a cabin inhabited by a rough sailor, his wife, and a boy whom they called Davy. The boy was a dreamy, quiet child, who loved to clamber about among the crags and jutting peaks, and to watch the white gulls and swift-flying pelicans as they left their sheltered nests for the sea. Here he would sit for hours, when not employed with hauling in the nets which old Sailor Jack used for his fish. Davy was fond of music, too, in his simple way; and it was probably the bright, pretty hymns which first drew him into the Sunday-school, the steeple of which could be seen from the roadside.

Once having been within the doors, it was not so difficult to go again and again. Davy soon grew accustomed to the Sunday-school rules, one of which was that every boy and girl should each Sunday learn, and strive to apply, some short text from God's Word.

Not many weeks had elapsed since the little boy entered the school, when one bright Sunday, as usual, he shyly crept into the chapel, and took his seat in that part of the room to which he had been assigned. The text which that day was selected by the young lady who had charge of the class was this one:—"Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe."

One by one the boys repeated it, each growing more confident as it came to his turn. Miss Ainsworth grew thoughtful as she wondered on the minds of how many of her boys these words would have an impression. Would they forget them ere nightfall?

The service ended. Davy went silently home; but, before long, he left the house, and turned to his favorite haunt among the cliffs.

How it happened, none can ever tell; but the cliffs were slippery with seaweed and mist, and, although his tread was like that of a young antelope, Davy's foot slipped, and down, down he went, until his fall was arrested by a projecting ledge of rock.

Late in the day, as two gentlemen were walking leisurely along the upper road, they heard, weakly uttered the words: "Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe. I shall—be—safe." Looking over the rocks, they saw the little form, weak and faint with pain. The call for help was promptly answered, and men with rope were soon on the spot. Tender hands bore him to the cottage, and gently laid him down. But alas for Davy! his flickering life went out as he still murmured: "Hold thou me up."

That night, as Miss Ainsworth listened to the sad tale, she felt thankfully, while her eyes were dim with tears, that not in vain had she striven to implant in the minds of her boys that text which one of them had just taken as his prayer for eternity.

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