

## Sunday-School Advocate.

TORONTO, JANUARY 9, 1864.



## THE LISTENER.

Do you see that boy behind the door? He is a listener or eavesdropper. I don't like him.

Why not? Because he is a mean boy. Isn't it mean to filch the words from another's lips—almost as mean as to filch money from his pocket? Those two men are having a serious talk together. They don't wish any other persons to know what they are saying to each other. What right then has that boy to sneak behind the door and steal their words? Isn't he mean?

A boy of honor will no more listen than he will peep into a letter or steal cents from his grandmother's old wallet. He is above all such acts, because he knows them all to be wrong. Are you a boy or girl of honor, my reader? Then *you* never listen. You would rather run a mile to get out of hearing than to hear what others wish to hide from you.

If I knew that a boy was listening to me I would soon make him run. How? Would I whip him? Yes I would, and smartly too—but my whip should have no cords in it; it should be made of words well laid on. I would begin to draw a picture of his character. I guess that would make him run away as hard as if he had a bear at his heels. Ha, ha, wouldn't he smart under the strokes of my whip!

## A COWARD'S TRICK.

WHILE strolling along a narrow lane one evening I saw a little boy pass me quickly with a bundle under his arm. He seemed to be in a hurry, as if he wanted to do his errand and return before it grew dark.

"That is some poor mother's little man of business," said I to myself as I walked slowly on.

By and by I sat down upon a grassy bank which was shaded with the foliage of a fine old walnut-tree. Very soon I heard an earnest voice saying:

"Don't! please don't! Do let me pass!"

Looking down the lane I saw that my "little man of business" had been stopped by a big blustering boy. The big, loutish fellow had a wheelbarrow, and was running it from one side of the road to the other so as to stop the little boy. There was a high bank on each side of the road, so that the small boy could not pass on either side. Presently I saw that the big boy, having wearied himself with the barrow, had seized the little one by the collar and was brandishing a big stick over his head, causing him to cry with terror.

I arose and walked quickly down the lane. As soon as he saw me the big lout let the little boy go, and seizing his barrow, began to trundle it toward me.

"Are you not ashamed of your own cowardice?" said I to him when we met. "No brave boy will ever tease or frighten a little one. It takes a coward to do that."

The fellow held his head down and passed me as fast as his awkward legs could carry him.

Don't you all despise that big lout's conduct? I know you do. I hope your scorn is strong enough to keep you from imitating it. Remember, any big boy or girl who teases, hurts, or wrongs a little one is not only a wrong-doer, he is a coward—a mean, despicable coward. I trust I haven't such a coward in all my Advocate family.

## OUR COUNCIL-CHAMBER.

THE corporal opens the council to-day saying, "Let me read you a letter from Q-in-the-corner. He writes:

"DEAR CORPORAL.—On the last evening of December I was standing in front of a fancy store looking at the toys and playthings which were spread out in tempting array in the window. 'O, O,' thought I, 'there is much pleasure in store for the boys and girls who are to get a share of those toys. Wont there be fun in the houses to which those toys will go to-night?'

"While I was drawing thought-pictures of happy children and their stockings full of gifts from the liberal hands of old Santa Claus, I noticed a man and his wife coming up to the window. They stopped, talked about the toys, and what they should buy for their little ones at home. 'Tom wants a drum, Nelly has set her heart on a wax doll, Fred is crazy for a humming-top, and Mary would be delighted with that sweet little tea-set,' said the woman.

"We could hardly buy all those things with the candies and oranges which must go with them for less than five dollars," replied the husband. 'We cannot afford so much while everything is so dear.'

"I know," rejoined the wife, 'it is a good deal for us to spend on presents; but think, dear husband, how happy it will make the children. I will go without that muff you promised me if you will buy the things I named.'

"Ah!" thought I, 'how that woman loves her children. Blessed are the children of such a mother!'

"After some further talk they went into the shop and bought the drum, doll, tea-set, and top. Feeling curious to see the children of such loving parents, I followed them home, slipped into their house, saw the four stockings stuffed with oranges and candies, the presents, duly marked, hung up beside the stockings, and then, tucking myself up in the rug before the stove, I slept till morning.

"Just at daylight I was waked by a chorus of voices on the stairs, and then came a rush. The children drove in so quickly that I had scarcely time to hide behind the sofa. Tom seized his stocking and drum, shouting, 'A drum! I've got a drum! Hurrah! hurrah!' Nell screamed with delight over her doll, Fred danced over his top, and little Mary fairly cried with joy over her 'sweet little tea-set,' as she called it.

"Well," thought I, 'that five dollars bought a big heap of happiness,' for, simpleton that I was, I supposed those children were going to be happy all that day at least. But alas! alas! ten minutes had scarcely passed before Fred, growing weary of his top, was tugging at Tom's belt and whining, 'Let me beat your drum.' Tom hit his brother on the head with his drum-stick and shouted, 'Let go my drum! Play with your top!' 'I wont!' cried Fred, stamping on the floor. 'You're an ugly fellow not to let me have the drum a little while.' While this quarrel was going on between the boys Mary was crying for Nelly's doll, and Nelly was screaming, 'Mother! mother! Mary has broken my pretty wax doll!' Such a hubbub you have seldom heard four children make, Mr. Corporal. Of course, the father and mother came in to see what the noise meant. After making each child take a seat apart and commanding silence they sat down, looking very full of sorrow. 'You haven't gained much by giving up your muff for the sake of these ungrateful children, my dear,' said the husband. 'No,' replied the wife, 'I have gained nothing but disappointment and pain. The things we bought to make our children happy they have perverted into instruments of quarrel and misery. O dear, dear! We have planted roses and plucked nothing but thorns. Our New Year is spoiled already.'

"Just then the bell rung for breakfast. When they were all gone I quietly slipped out. Having seen a copy of your paper in that house I judged those children belonged to your company, and so, sir, as in duty bound, I report the facts to you. Truly yours,

Q-IN-THE-CORNER.

"That's a terrible letter," says the corporal, sighing like a furnace—almost—and bringing his cane down upon the floor with a loud thump, "a terrible letter, Mr. Editor."

It is, corporal, a very terrible letter indeed—at least, it paints a picture of very shocking misconduct in those children.

"They are shamefully ungrateful," observes Mr. Forester, wiping the tears from his eyes. "I pity the mother who has such children."

"And I pity the father too," adds the corporal. "I wonder if they really belong to my company. Esquire, look over our roll-book, will you? See if we have that Tom, Mary, Nelly, and Fred on our army list. They live in the city of —."

The squire obeys, reports the offenders members of the company of over twelve months' standing, and asks, "What will you do with them, corporal?"

"Do?" rejoins the corporal; "I don't know what to do. I don't like to turn them out lest they go on from bad to worse, and perish at last. I can't keep them in lest they corrupt and disgrace my company. They puzzle as much as they pain me. What shall I do? What shall I do?"

"Suspend them!" suggests the squire.

"Ah, yes, that will do," cries the corporal, eagerly catching at the suggestion. "I suspend them until they repent and confess their sin to their parents and to God."

Do you hear that, you ungrateful Tom, and Fred, and Nelly, and Mary? You who on New Year's day turned the sweet wine of parental love into vinegar; you who quarreled over your New Year's presents; you who wouldn't let the New Year bring happiness to your parents; you are suspended from our noble Try Company until you repent and confess your sinful folly. Until then your names stand blackballed thus ● on the corporal's army list. Now, my corporal, forget that evil band, cheer up, and read your letters!

"Here is the answer to the question in verse in our last:

Isaiah R. . . . . Genesis xlix, 14, 15.  
S amari A. . . . . John iv, 4.  
A bija H. . . . . 1 Kings xiv, 1-18.  
A mas A. . . . . 2 Samuel xix, 13.  
C ale B. . . . . Numbers xliii, 1-6.

ISAAC. . . . . Genesis xvii, 19.  
RAHAB. . . . . Joshua ii, 1-13; Heb. xi, 31.

"ANNA L. W., an eight-year-old miss, writes:

"DEAR CORPORAL, (for I do not know what else to call you.)—I have two sisters and one brother living, and two sisters in heaven. Ma says that if I try to love and serve God I shall meet them in heaven. I have collected money twice now for the Missionary Society, and have been made a life member of the Missionary Society. I must tell you the prayer of my little baby sister, who is just three years old. She says, 'God bless me; make me a good girl. Amen.' I am trying to be a good girl.

"Anna may call me anything she pleases," adds the corporal. "I like her letter so well that if she was here I would allow her to kiss me, and it isn't every Anna who could be allowed that honor. If Anna goes on as she has begun she may become as good and wise as Anna the prophetess, who served God day and night in the temple. Goodness is the glory of a little girl as truly as the goodness of our Queen Victoria is her brightest ornament and glory."

I should like to see all the girls who love you, corporal, give you a kiss. What a smacking there would be! Ah, my corporal, you must be a happy man to have so many boys and girls in love with you. Don't blush, sir! You're an old man, you know, and if all the little girls and boys in Canada kissed you it wouldn't hurt you or them. Read on, sir!

"S. H. A., of —, says:

"We are fixing our church now and we have about done; but you see an old Bible in a new church wouldn't look well, so our superintendent proposed that we should take the collections for four Sundays and buy one. Well, we did so and raised over \$26, but the boys raised the most of it.

"That was doing well," adds the corporal; "but it would be doing better still if every boy and girl in that school would set to work in earnest to *obey* the Bible—to be Bible boys and girls. What think you, Mr. Editor?"

I think you a very wise corporal, and I agree with you exactly. Read on, sir!

"MARY JANE S. writes:

"We have about seventy-five scholars and eleven teachers. We have driven Satan from our ranks, and have put on the bright and shining armor to fight in the army of the Lord. Mr. Corporal, will you admit me into the ranks of your noble little Try Company, that I may go marching along with that happy little band, battling and conquering, and at last reach that fair happy land.

"Mary has the spirit of a Try Company soldier. She mistakes though when she calls my company 'little.' I guess it is as large as the army with which the noble Wellington whipped the French at Waterloo.