

Boys' and Girls' Corner.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS.

International.

Institute.

Jan. 6. Mark vi. 17-29. Matt. ii. 1-13.
 " 11. Mark vi. 30-44. Luke ii. 40 to end.
 " 20. John vi. 25-35. Matt. iii. 1-13.
 " 27. Matt. xvi. 13-23. John i. 19-35.

THE RAIN.

A CLOUD came up in the August sky—

"Oh, do you think it will rain?"

Or do you think it will pass us by?"

The little leaves said: "We are parched and dry—
 Will it ever be cool again!"

The cloud grew nearer and still more near—

"Oh, will it rain, do you think?"

The little brook cried: "If it don't, I fear
 There will scarce be moisture enough down here
 To freshen the moss by the brink."

The meadow was parched and brown and dry.

And listless drooped each bloom,
 So wan and weak, they could hardly sigh.
 "If it doesn't rain, we all must die;
 Oh, that the rain would come!"

A little girl stood in a dreadful pout,

And looked through the window-pane—

"What are the ugly old clouds about?"

There, it's raining! I can't go out.

I wish it *never* would rain!"

So all day long she was glum and sad;

But the little leaves danced through the lane,
 And the brook, and the leaves, and the flowers
 were glad,

That a wiser power than little girls had

The sending of clouds and of rain.

—Alice Williams Brotherton.

"I'LL SPEAK NEXT TIME."

A YOUNG Christian girl tripped lightly into the dusty, smoke-begrimed town from her beautiful country home in the suburbs, her heart intent upon doing some little work for Jesus. In her hand she carried a bundle of Gospel tracts which she proposed distributing as she had opportunity.

As she passed along she saw a woman standing in her doorway, and determined she should have one of her tracts. Just then she became conscious of a still small voice within, saying, "Speak to her of Me—ask her if she knows Me. Tell her of My love for her, and of My power and willingness to save her even there where she stands. *She* needs Me even as *you* need Me. *You* cannot do without Me. *You* value My love; *she* cannot do without Me, and *she* would value My love if she knew it. Speak to her of Me." This young Christian's heart-reply to that inner voice was, "Oh, no, I cannot speak to her. I'm afraid I wouldn't know what to

say, I'd stammer and blush; I'll just give her a tract; the Gospel is in it, *it* will speak to her, but *I*—I couldn't—I'll speak next time."

All this happened in much less time than it takes you to read it, dear reader. She crossed the road, and, handing a tract to the poor woman, with a sweet smile and an attractive manner, which might have won its way to any heart if she had just spoken of Him, said, "Will you take one, please?"

"Oh, yes, miss, many thanks."

"Good afternoon."

"Good afternoon, miss."

And off she went, saying to herself, "I'll speak next time."

But her heart was ill at ease; she could hear the voice within saying, "Ah, you have missed a golden opportunity. You should have spoken to her of Me. I would have given you courage, and words, if you had only opened your lips. Besides, I would have filled you with much joy—the joy that those have who obey My faintest whisper. *Now* you are miserable, for you have disobeyed Me. And how do you know but that you have lost a star for your crown? How do you know but that poor woman may be lost forever, just because you refused to obey *Me* to-day?"

This young Christian, who really did love her Lord, confessed her faithlessness to Him and promised that she would indeed "speak next time."

A week passed, and again she approached the town with her bundle of tracts. As she drew near she heard the cemetery bell toll for the dead. Oh, she said to herself, if that should be the death-bell of that woman! It was. She had missed her chance. There was no next time. —William Thomson, Glasgow.

AN INCIDENT.

ON a railway train the writer noticed the entrance of a mother and little son who were unexpectedly greeted by a friend of the mother. The friend was only going from one way-station to the next, while the others were on a long journey. There happened to be but one vacant double-seat in the car; and into this the boy slipped, taking the seat next to the window. His mother, eager to improve the ten minutes with her friend, asked her son to give up his seat and take another for that little time, so that she could sit with her friend: "No, I won't; because I want to sit by the window, and all the other seats have people already at the windows."

"But, darling, only ten minutes, and then you can sit by the window all day."

"No, I won't go. I want to sit by the window *now*."

"But, dear, not to give mamma pleasure?"

"No."

"Not for just ten minutes, when mamma wants to talk with her friend, and you can sit by the window the whole day long?"

"No!"—with impatient emphasis.

And in spite of humble entreaty from the mother, and good-natured urging from the friend, that home-nurtured bit of selfishness kept his place, the mother never dreaming of insisting on the right and courteous thing, but murmuring gently that "Bobby did so enjoy looking out of the window."

When seven-year-old Bobby becomes Robert, the husband, his sad little wife will wonder, "Why is it that men have so little tenderness for their wives?"—*Century for January*.

THE STORY OF A RICH MAN.

MANY years ago a lad of sixteen years left home to seek his fortune. All his worldly possessions were tied up in a bundle, which he carried in his hand. As he trudged along he met an old neighbor, the captain of a canal boat, and the following conversation took place, which changed the whole current of the boy's life:

"Well, William, where are you going?"

"I don't know," he answered; "father is too poor to keep me at home any longer, and says I must now make a living for myself."

"There's no trouble about that," said the captain. "Be sure you start right and you'll get along finely."

William told his friend that the only trade he knew anything about was soap and candle making, at which he had helped his father while at home.

"Well," said the old man, "let me pray with you once more and give you a little advice, and then I will let you go."

They both knelted down upon the tow-path (the path along which the horses which drew the canal boat walked). The dear old man prayed earnestly for William, and then gave this advice: "Some one will soon be the leading soap-maker in New York. It can be you as well as any one. I hope it may. Be a good man, give your heart to Christ, give the Lord all that belongs to Him of every dollar you earn, make an honest soap, give