

THE SUNBEAM

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A TRUE RAT STORY.

Two boys of sixteen, dressed in loose, white linen suits, met near the Sabbath school-room door, one hot summer afternoon.

"I say, John, I've been to Sunday-school ever since I could remember, and I believe I've learned about all there is to know. We are getting too old to go to Sunday-school, I think. Besides it's too awful hot; let's go walking."

The other boy, a little younger, was easily persuaded, and for the next hour they sauntered up and down the shady walks of a park near by. As they started out on the street homeward, a huge Norway rat darted from under the plank sidewalk, and running a few steps disappeared in a hole near a pump.

Quick as thought Edward Jones ran, slipped one of his shiny boots over the hole, and called out, "Get a pail of water and I'll show you more fun in five minutes than you've had at Sunday-school for a year!"

A man was standing near with a pail; at the boy's request he obligingly filled it, and poured the water down the hole. Edward replaced his foot for a minute, saying, "Now look sharp and you'll see what a drowned rat is like!"

The Sabbath-schools were over, the side-



A CRANE.

moving his foot off a little way and peeping down. But Mr. Rat was on hand waiting his chance to escape drowning, and seeing a nice place of retreat up the leg of Ed's pantaloons he lost no time in taking advantage of it, and quicker than I can tell it had slipped under the loose waistband and curled cosily up under Edward's armpit, while that youth was frantically jumping up and down, tearing off his coat and vest, and screaming at the top of his lungs.

Tearing a hole in his shirt-bosom the unwelcome rat dropped out, and hastened gladly to his home under the sidewalk.

While the bystanders laughed at his "fun," poor Ed, shivering with cold, fright and disgust, gathered up his clothes and hastened home, a scared, muddy youth, saying to John, who couldn't keep from laughing also at the "fun" he had seen, "I'll go to Sunday-school faithfully after this. I'll never try that thing on a rat again so long as I'm a boy."

TELLING an untruth is like leaving the highway and going into a tangled forest. You know not how

walk thronged with people, who naturally stopped to see what was going on that so interested those two well-dressed boys.

"Now, watch sharp!" cried Edward,

long it will take you to get back, or how much you will suffer from the thorns and briars in the wildwoods. How much better it is to tell the truth at all times!