

of every-day cares and duties. I am quite sure that—but hark! was not that Bridget's voice? I told her to call me when the fire was good, for I must preserve those plums this afternoon. I'm afraid they won't keep till Monday," and Mrs. Gray folded up her work, and took her large apron out of the closet as she talked.

Emily heard her mother's words with a sharp, uneasy consciousness that here was something for her to do if she chose. But she hated "kitchen work," as she called everything in the way of cooking, and though she was fond of inviting company to enjoy the dainties of their well-spread table, she was always unwilling to assist in the preparation of those dainties. So now, as usual, she silenced her conscience as it whispered that her mother was tired and needed help, and taking up the book which she was reading just then—"Society and Solitude" chose a comfortable chair and was soon deep in enjoyment of Emerson.

An hour passed unnoted, and then a sudden hubbub arose. The door of the sitting-room flew open, and Jack, Emily's second brother, aged twelve, appeared with a pale face and a hand streaming with blood.

"Oh! Em, can't you help me?" began the boy, "won't you get some rags or salve or something, quick! My, how it bleeds!" winding his pocket handkerchief closer as he spoke. But Emily only covered her face with her hands and screamed:

"Oh, Jack, how dreadful! Go to mamma, do, I can't bear the sight of blood, it makes me sick, and you'll bleed to death, I'm sure! Run, Jacky, run to mamma, she's in the kitchen—hurry!" and after one look of disgust and a muttered exclamation that "Em. never was good for anything when you wanted her," Jack went.

Once more Emily felt uncomfortable, and somehow her book had lost its charm. She threw it down and went to her room to smooth her hair for tea, and on the stairs she met Bridget, flying down in headlong haste, with a roll of old linen in her hand. It was for Jack's wounded hand, she knew, but she said not a word.

Arrived in her room she found her new cashmere dress, which had been sent home during her absence. Emily was a very pretty girl, and she was fond of pretty clothes. This new dress of navy blue was just to her taste. It fitted perfectly, and once on she felt that she must wear it to tea. But just as the last fold was adjusted and the last bow in place, her mother's voice was heard, calling from the foot of the stairs: "Emily, can't you come and put the preserves into the jars? They are all ready now."

"Oh, mamma, I'm all dressed in my new cashmere, and I hate to come into the kitchen with it," she answered hastily. "Couldn't you leave them in the safe until morning? I could do it then."

"You forget that to-morrow will be Sunday," said Mrs. Gray, adding in a moment, "Never mind, I can manage it; you needn't come down."

"Why don't you let Bridget finish the plums, mamma? I'm sure she could, and you might as well rest yourself." But her mother had gone back to the kitchen and shut the door without answering, so Emily concluded that she had not heard her last suggestion. While she was yet considering she saw Arthur coming in with a letter which he held up for her to see.

"It's for you, Em., from your confidential chum," he called out, and Emily rushed down and out in the porch to secure her welcome letter. Carrying it back to her room she read it with all the delight and interest with which a young girl of sixteen always reads a letter from "her dearest friend." Twice she went over the closely written pages, then, seizing her writing desk, she began an immediate answer. Absorbed in her task, Emily covered sheet after sheet of note-paper, without noticing that the tea hour had long passed. When at length the bell summoned her to the evening meal she was surprised to see that the hands of her little clock were pointing to seven instead of six.

"Why, did you know, mamma, that tea is a whole hour late to-night?" she asked as she took her seat. Looking at her mother as she spoke, Emily observed that she was very pale, and that she still wore her morning wrapper. She answered wearily:

"Yes, I know we are very late, but I could not help it. I had not even time to change my dress."

"It's too bad, mother!" Arthur broke in. "I wish I hadn't picked those plums this week, and then you couldn't have tired yourself out preserving them. I do wish you could get a missionary, to help you sometimes. Don't you, Em.?" with a sudden significant glance at his sister.

Emily's face flushed angrily, but she made no reply, and soon after she went back to her room, where her unfinished letter was waiting. And this was the last sentence she had written:

"Yes, dear Helena, I long as you do, to be about my life-work—to take my place in the

conflict, to draw nearer day by day to the lofty aims we long ago set for ourselves. But alas! dear friend, life is so commonplace, so unheroic—and I feel so deeply the want of congenial companionship, like your own, to encourage my drooping heart. It is strange, is it not, that one meets with so little comprehension or sympathy from one's own family? Mamma is always quoting a line about "the trivial round, the common task," but I look higher than that. I cannot grovel, dear, I must soar—soar onward and upward, above grovelling commonplace, into realms—"

And as Emily took up her pen to finish her letter, she heard her mother saying in the hall:

"Oh, dear, I must see that the children have their Saturday night bath, and I am so tired!"

And Emily wrote six pages more before she went to bed.—*Christian Intelligencer.*

"LITTLE THINGS."

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

"I like my nephew very much, and think he is just the boy I want."

The speaker was Mr. John Graham, a merchant in one of our large cities. The person to whom he spoke was his brother, who had come on a visit from the West, bringing with him the nephew of whom the remark with which I have begun this little story was made.

"I want a boy whose word can be relied on every time, and one I can trust with money. I have had several clerks whom I could not trust, and I begin to think it's a hard matter to get one that suits in all ways. From what I have seen of Harry I feel sure I can depend on him every time. He seems to be a manly little fellow."

"Harry is a manly boy," his father said with pride, as he looked toward the lad, who was waiting on the croquet ground for his uncle to join him in a game. "I have brought him up to be honest and truthful. I do not think I ever knew a boy whose word I could put more implicit confidence in than his. If I leave him with you, John, I hope you will be careful to see that the examples he has put before him are good ones. It is not only easy, but quite natural, for a boy to imitate the conduct of those about him. He does it unconsciously, often; and if that conduct is not what it ought to be, he soon gets into bad habits."

"Oh, you may feel easy on that score, Dick!" answered his brother. "If Harry comes into the store, I shall have him near me most of the time; and you can trust me, can't you? I think you know what my habits are well enough to feel safe in leaving him to my especial care."

"Yes, I think I do," answered the other. "I want my boy to grow up an honest, truthful man, and I certainly would not leave him with you if I did not have confidence in your ability to set him an example."

His brother joined Harry on the croquet ground, and they began their game. The boy and his uncle were very fond of the game, and both played to win. Harry's father had no fault to find with that. It was what he liked to see. He wanted his boy, in work or play, to go into it with his whole heart, and do the very best he could. But he did not want him to be so desirous of winning as to stoop to the use of unfair means. He wanted him to win honestly and fairly, or not at all. As he watched the game, he saw several performances that startled him. More than once, when his ball was out of position for its wicket, he saw his brother move it until it was in position. Harry detected the cheat once or twice, and told his uncle that he had moved his ball. Without saying, in so many words, that he had not moved it, his uncle managed to convey that idea, and the play would go on. Harry made a skillful run and struck for the last wicket, but hit the wire and the ball bounded back, stopping in such a shape that it would have been impossible for him to have driven it through when his play came if he had not moved it a few inches. When his uncle was playing, he gave it a push with his mallet, and succeeded in getting it into such a position that, when his play came, he ran the wicket, and hit the post.

"You moved your ball, didn't you?" said his uncle; "I saw where it stopped, and thought that I had the advantage of you, as you would have to take one stroke to get into position, and that would throw the game into my hands."

But Harry protested, without telling what might be called a "square lie,"—though it was that in fact, and nothing less,—that he had not meddled with his ball, and his uncle gave up as having been mistaken.

"Come here, Harry, I want to talk with you," his father said; and Harry came and sat down on the steps, while his uncle went off to the stables.

"Do you feel satisfied with the way in which you won that game?" Harry's father asked.

The boy's face flushed. "No, I don't," he said; "but Uncle John cheated, and I had to, or I wouldn't have stood any chance at all."

"Does a dishonest action on the part of another justify one on your part?" asked his father gravely.

"You don't call Uncle John dishonest,—do you?" asked Harry, in surprise.

"Yes; what else could you call it?" asked his father. "Dishonesty is dishonesty in work or play. He cheated. He stole an advantage. He really denied having done so. You did the same. Can you call your conduct anything but stealing, and telling a lie to cover up the theft?"

"No," answered Harry, after a moment's thought, "But I didn't think it could be so very bad, because—because—"

"Because what?" asked his father, as Harry hesitated.

"Because Uncle John's a member of the church, and I didn't think he'd cheat and—deny it, if it was wrong. It was only croquet, anyway, and that's why he did it, probably. If it had been anything else—"

"That is no excuse for him or for you," his father said. "It was the example that I looked at. Dishonesty is dishonesty, as I said, in play as well as work. If you can justify it when you are merely amusing yourself, you certainly will justify it when there is anything to be gained by it. If you cheat at one thing it is quite likely you will cheat at another. If you tell a lie about your play, you will be apt to tell one about your work. You see what it leads to. It's the beginning of greater things. A little cheat or theft, and a little lie, prepares the way for larger ones which will be very sure to follow."

"I think you're right," Harry said. "In fact, I know you are, when I come to think of it. But I didn't think it could be so bad, because Uncle John did it."

"Never do anything because some one else does it," said his father. "Ask yourself if it is right or wrong, and let your conscience guide you."

That night the brothers were sitting in the library together.

"I shall not leave Harry here," Mr. Graham said. "Shall I tell you why, John?"

"Yes, certainly," answered his brother.

"Well, I'm afraid I can't trust you to set him an example!"

"Can't trust me?" Mr. Graham faced about in great surprise. "What do you mean, Dick?"

His brother told him about the talk he had had with Harry over the morning game of croquet.

"But that was nothing but a game of croquet," said the merchant. "You don't mean to say you think I'd cheat or lie about my business,—do you?"

"No, I don't," answered his brother.

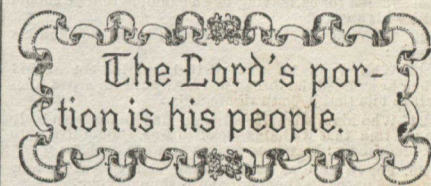
"You have formed honest business habits, I think. You formed them years ago, and they have become part of yourself. But with Harry it is different. He is a boy and more easily influenced than you are. He is susceptible to all impressions. Unfair play at croquet would not end there. He would not be expected to reason that cheating or stealing, or taking unfair advantage of another,—call it what you choose to,—is allowable only in croquet. He would not be expected to reason that cheating or stealing, or taking unfair advantage of another,—call it what you choose to,—is allowable only in croquet. He would form the habit of cheating, and that habit would make itself felt in all his transactions. If a boy becomes accustomed to lying in a game, do you suppose he will never lie about anything else? A habit, once formed, reaches out into all the avenues of a man's life.

"The playground is the world in miniature, and as the boy receives impressions there, and forms habits, so will the world of work into which he is to go by and by find the man to be. Boys are imitative. They do not discriminate as men do. They follow our examples. If they have faith in us, they think they can do as we do, and never stop to ask whether it is right or wrong. It was so with Harry. He did feel, however, in a vague way, that there was a moral wrong involved; but because you were a church-member, and he had faith in you, he did not think there could be anything really bad about it. Don't you see the force of your example? It dulled the boy's sense of honor and right. It was a seed which might have borne bitter fruit. The child is father of the man, they tell us, and truly. If Harry learned to cheat at croquet, and to lie about it, he would not hesitate to do the same in business; and the boy who grows up to manhood with those habits fixed upon him is on the road to ruin. What was done to-day may have been a trifling thing itself, but it was laying a foundation for a structure of dishonesty, and I felt startled when I saw how readily Harry imitated your example. Don't you understand how it weakened his faith in your principle of honesty and fairness, and blunted his own perceptions of what was right and wrong? He could do it because you did it, and he took it for granted

that you were a better judge of the moral questions involved than he was. It was the principle of dishonesty that he was learning; and this principle would have taken root in his heart, and flourished, and what the result would have been God only knows."

"I do see it," his brother answered, "but I never thought of it in that way before. I ought to ask Harry's pardon for what was done thoughtlessly, and I will. Of course I knew it wasn't right, but I thought it was 'only a game of croquet,' and never took the trouble to think anything more about it."

Ah, that's it! Only a "little thing," and we think no further! If we did, we might set the world a better example than we do.—*S. S. Times.*



DEUT. 32 : 9.

Question Corner.—No. 21.

Answers to these questions should be sent in as soon as possible and addressed EDITOR NORTHERN MESSENGER. It is not necessary to write out the question, give merely the number of the question and the answer. In writing letters always give clearly the name of the place where you live and the initials of the province in which it is situated.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

- 241. Who was high priest when Hannah took Samuel to the Temple?
- 242. Who were the sons of Eli, and for what were they noted?
- 243. A man of God was sent at this time to tell Eli that he was to be punished for the wickedness of his sons. What was the punishment to be?
- 244. By whom did the Lord again speak to Eli?
- 245. What important event took place soon after the Lord appeared to Samuel?
- 246. What did the Israelites do at the battle at Ebenezer that they had never done before?
- 247. What was the result of this battle?
- 248. What caused the death of Eli?
- 249. To what place did the Philistines first take the ark?
- 250. What happened when the ark was set up in this place?
- 251. To what city was it next sent?
- 252. How was it returned to the Israelites?

SCRIPTURAL ACROSTIC.

What child brought honor to his mother's name?
 What father by misrule brought ill-fame?
 Another contrast Scripture brings to view,—
 A son rebellious and a daughter true.
 A country and a valley here are given,
 As types respectively of hell and heaven.
 Two sacred mountains and a garden see,
 Which plainly prove our article to thee.
 And now our search more striking contrast brings,—
 The prince of demons with the King of kings.
 Two precious titles we must here combine,
 Which speak our Jesus human and divine.
 Two of His twelve disciples now behold,
 One doubting, timorous, one fearless, bold.
 A country where one righteous man was found.
 A city where iniquities abound.
 The sinful mother of our fallen race,
 The mother of the seed redeemed by grace.
 These initials form a command of our Saviour
 which our young friends delight to heed as
 they solve these Bible puzzles.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN NO. 19.

- 217. The captain of the army of Jabin, king of Canaan, Judges iv. 7.
- 218. See Judges iv. 18, 21.
- 219. The Midianites, Judges vi. 1.
- 220. Gideon.
- 221. Threshing wheat by a winepress to hide it from the Midianites, Judges, vi. 11.
- 222. Three hundred, Judges vii. 2, 6.
- 223. See Judges vii. 19, 25.
- 224. The tribe of Ephraim, Judges vii. 24, 25.
- 225. Jephthah.
- 226. Because he delivered the Israelites out of the hands of the Ammonites, Judges xi. 9, 10.
- 227. Six years, Judges xii. 7.
- 228. Samson.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

Aaron's rod.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

To No. 19.—Andrew Hill, 11; Henry A. Luman, 10.
 To No. 18.—Fred C. Stewart, 12; Harry K. Gowen, 12, ac.; Henry A. Luman, 11; Mary C. Blow, 11.