

figure of that poor little child, and the horror-struck faces of its father and mother, long haunted me, ay, and they do so still.

May Heaven forgive me my share in it!

Mrs. West, having been informed that her husband was out poaching in Purrwood, and that the keepers were on the look-out there also, determined to try and save him from being taken. Not liking to go quite alone, she took her daughter with her. It is supposed that she left the child for a few moments, whilst she went further on to try and find West. The rest is known.

I need only add that poor Mrs. West never held up her head after that fearful night; she pined away slowly but surely, and died some years after of a broken heart, which was called "consumption" by the doctors. James West is still alive—alive in the body, but dead in the mind; his reason has left him.

This is a sad tale indeed, and all this misery came from poaching! *only* poaching. Who can say, when he deliberately breaks the laws, how far he will go—where he will stop? Many a man has gone out a poacher, and come back a murderer. Let us each pray, "O Lord, keep me from the very appearance of evil."



## A WALL OF FIRE OR WALL OF SNOW.

**I**T was during the campaign which brought the allied armies to Paris, in 1814, that an aged woman and her grandson, who lived in a small village in Germany, were preparing for their nightly rest.

The peasants universally entertained a well-grounded terror of the marauding Cossacks, who formed the light cavalry of the Russian army, and who, penetrating the most obscure solitudes, swept away all on which the poor inhabitants depended for their subsistence. From the position of the advancing troops, these unwelcome visitants were at this time hourly expected in the village.

"Grandmother," said the child, when their simple supper was done, "what shall we do if the Cossacks come here?"

"We must put our confidence in God," she replied, "for He never forgets any who trust in Him. And now, my child, read the chapter, and let us ask our heavenly Father to take care of us."

The evening's portion was the second chapter of Zechariah, and the old woman called the boy's attention to the promise in the fifth verse: "I will be a wall of fire round about."

"But," said he, with the literal exactness of childhood, "will God really make a wall of fire round us to keep out the Cossacks?"

"I do not say that," replied the grandmother; "but He will certainly protect us in the best way; and if there were no other means of doing so but by fire, even that would not be wanting."

They went to bed and slept; the one in the carelessness of youth, the other in the calmness of faith. The night was quiet, and seemed unusually long, till the grandmother—though not a gleam of daylight

appeared—desired the child to rise and open the door.

On doing so, he found the entrance, as well as the window, blocked up with snow. As there were provisions enough in the house, they remained contented prisoners; and when, on the ensuing day, they contrived to liberate themselves, it appeared that during that very night the dreaded Cossacks had entered the village, and while the terrified inhabitants sought safety in flight, had destroyed some of their dwellings, and plundered all.

One cottage only, hidden by the drifting snow, escaped; and there, we may well believe, the aged Christian and young companion devoutly returned thanks to Him who had heard their prayers, and made a wall of snow no less effectual for their protection than one of fire.



## THE LITTLE WORD—NO.



**L**AST winter I spent a short time in a pleasant family. They were wealthy, and, so far as I could judge, a Christian family. The father held office in the church he had erected, and preserved through years of trial, that made him prematurely grey, the family altar. He was honourable and upright in business; courteous, kind, and forbearing in his intercourse with the world.

The mother, an estimable woman, professed herself willing to do and suffer for Christ, hoping to die and reign with Him. The only daughter was a lovely girl; but the sons—and here was a mystery. The eldest, a child of uncommon promise, entered at an early age upon a career of drinking and gambling, which ended in forgery, until he was cast out of the family circle as one unknown. The second, following in his footsteps, was awaiting in the county jail a trial that might sentence him for years to the State's prison. Children of prayer, of pious teaching and example, the fact was to me inexplicable. I expressed my wonder in the hearing of an old man who had long known them. Said he, "I can explain in a few words; it is from the father's want of power to say—No."

When they were children, and it needed but a word to guide them, he neglected to say No. As years rolled on, and he noticed the first steps in the way of wrong-doing, he excused them. And when they went too far he strove to curb them, but the boys had their own way, for it grieved him to say No. In after years when their souls were stained with crime—when, with all the yearnings of a father's heart, he took them again to his home, striving by gentleness to win them to the way of life, he dared not say No.

Christian parents, learn to pronounce at proper times the simple word, No. On it, under God, may depend the welfare and happiness of your children for time and eternity.