

There, now! it will cost ever so much to get these strung up. Why didn't I take them in, anyway? I remember, I hadn't locked the stable door when father called me and then I hurried to do it before he asked me again.

Later in the day, Rufus, with a penitent face, brought to his mother the letter which should have been mailed. During the rabbit hunt it had slipped out of his pocket, one of his brothers having found it in the damp clover, and it was now a sorry-looking mis-sive.

'Rufus,' she said, as he sat on the porch-step near her, 'I do not see how you can endure to live such a burdened life.'

'How burdened, mother?'

'You are always hurrying from one thing to another—'

'Why, yes, you see, when I'm told to do one thing, I generally have to wait till I do something I've been told to do before. Then, by the time I do it, likely I've forgotten the other thing, so when somebody else tells me to do something else, there's something ahead of it. It seems just so all the time.'

'Exactly,' said his mother, with a smile at his way of putting it. 'You live all the time under a burden of undone duties.'

'Well, it does seem,' said Rufus, reflectively, 'as though I was always about six things behind.'

'That is a poor way to get along.'

'I guess it is,' agreed Rufus, with energy.

'Then, why don't you try a better way? It is a bad, bad habit. A habit clings to us and grows stronger. Every time we yield to it, it is one more brick added to the character we are building. A brick is a small thing and they are laid one by one, but, as a wall of habit rises day after day, how fearfully strong it is if the habit is a bad one! If you carry your habit into manhood—dragging along your burden of delayed or undone duties—what a wretched pattern of a man you will be!'

'I shouldn't like to be that,' said Rufus, soberly.

'I hope you will not.'

'But it does seem as though I never could get caught up.'

'Brace yourself to it, my boy. Ask for the help we all need, even in what we consider our smaller duties, and then be on the alert to

do every duty in its proper time. Promptness and reliability are among the best foundation-stones on which a boy can build character.'

I Thank You.

('Waif.')

Three little words, nine letters wide;

And yet how much these words betide,

How much of thought or tenderness
This short 'I thank you!' may express.

When spoken with a proud disdain,
'Twill chill the heart like frozen rain;

Or when indifference marks its tone,

Turns love's sweet impulse into stone.

Be not afraid, my little one,

As time goes on beneath the sun,
While marching in life's motley ranks,

For all our blessings to 'give thanks.'

To thank your God for life so fair,
For tender mercies great and rare,
For health and strength, for home
and friends,

And loving care that never ends.

Then thank the ones whoc'er they be,

That do a kindness unto thee.

'Twill cost you little, pain you less,
This sweet 'I thank you!' to express.

The Dog and the New Testament.

('At Home and Abroad.')

Dr. Moffat, the celebrated South African missionary, tells a humorous story of a shepherd lad who had been converted by reading the New Testament. He had been very wayward, but the teachings of Jesus had made him quite a new boy. One day he came to Dr. Moffat in much distress, telling him that their big watchdog had got hold of the Book and had torn a page out of it. Dr. Moffat comforted him by saying it was no matter, for he could get another Testament.

But the boy was not at all comforted. 'Think of the dog,' he said. Dr. Moffat laughed, and said, 'If your dog can crunch an ox bone, he is not going to be hurt by a bit

of paper.' Dr. Moffat supposed that the boy thought that the paper would hurt the dog's teeth, but that was not it.

'Oh, Papa Moffat,' he cried, 'I was once a bad boy. If I had an enemy I hated him, and everything in me wanted to kill him. Then I got the New Testament in my heart, and began to love everything and forgave all my enemies, and now the dog, the great big hunting dog, has got the blessed book in him, and will begin to love the lions and the tigers, and let them help themselves to the sheep and the oxen.'

What a beautiful tribute this African boy, out of the simplicity of his heart, paid to the power of the Bible.

Watching for Faults.

('Our Young Folks.')

'When I was a boy,' said an old man, 'I was often very idle, and used to play during the lessons with other boys as idle as myself. One day we were fairly caught by the master. "Boys," he said, "you must not be idle; you must attend closely to your books. The first one of you who sees another boy idle will please come and tell me."

'Ah!' I thought to myself, 'there is Joe Simmons, whom I don't like; I'll watch him, and if I see him look off his book I'll tell the teacher.'

'It was not long until I saw Joe look off his book, and I went up at once to tell the master.

"Indeed," said he, "how did you know he was idle?"

"I saw him," said I.

"You did? And were your eyes on your books when you saw him?"

'I was caught, and the other boys laughed, and I never watched for idle boys again.'

If we watch over our conduct and try to keep it right, and always do our duty, we will not have time to watch for faults or idleness in others. This will keep us out of mischief, and make us helpful to others.

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