

"Ah, here comes poor old Mr. Edson," said Mr. Willis; "wha. could he have come all this distance for? Good morning Mr. Edson, how is your wife this morning?"

"Better, sir, thank you; considerably better; she's sitting up to-day, and I came over, seeing she was feeling so smart, to see if you'd kindly lend me your paper; wife said 'twould be good as a cordial any day to hear me read one of those nice sermons."

Mr. Willis hastened nervously to forestall his wife's forthcoming declaration.

"I'm very sorry, Mr. Edson, very sorry, but our religious paper didn't come this week. I'll find last week's copy for you, and next week I'll send over one of the children with this week's issue, if possible."

Nothing more was said on the subject, until the family were seated at their ample dinner, when Jennie asked a little timidly:

"Pa, are you going to take mamma's paper again?"

"Yes, Jennie, I am; and I'm going to black my own boots hereafter to help pay for it."

The children were very quiet for a moment, then Jennie said thoughtfully:

"And wouldn't it help if we didn't have raisins in the puddings? I'd a great deal rather have our nice story and pretty lesson every week than to have plums in our puddings."

"Yes, Jennie, that would help," replied the mother; "and as Margaret is about to leave, I'll hire a less expensive girl, and do more of my own cooking; that will probably be a great saving in more respects than one. I miss the information and pleasure derived from my paper enough to make the extra effort willingly."

It was surprising how much happier they all felt; and when towards the last of the week the paper came, impulsive Jennie actually kissed it.

"Why, it looks just like an old friend," she exclaimed.

"Yes, and it is a friend in more ways than we realized, and not only a friend, but a help and a teacher," replied her mother.

Mr. Willis was silent; he saw the child's enthusiasm and heard the mother's comments, but afterwards, when only his wife and himself were in the room, he said:

"Wife, I am positively ashamed that I ever could have been so blind and stupid as not to properly appreciate the worth of a good religious paper; Absolutely ashamed that my poorer neighbors and my own children knew more of the worth and teaching of the religious press than I did. We will economize in some other direction than this in the future—do without something not actually indispensable to our comfort and satisfaction, and I promise you have heard down the length of the brass mouth, putting the needle between each tooth, making a little click, clicking noise with her thimble against the brass, and doing it all so rapidly that Reuben was lost in astonishment. When the jaws opened, and the glove was drawn out, he leaned forward eagerly to discover a long, smooth row of the daintiest stitches, somewhat like those that his mother took in shirt bosoms!"

"It is beautiful!" he said, admiringly; "and how fast she did it!"

"How would the sister at home like that sort of work?" asked Mr. Barrows; and Reuben who had not fancied the idea of setting deth at work, for the first time began to think that perhaps such work as this might do for even Beth.

When he heard that very industrious, little girls actually earned sometimes a dollar a day, and that his mother would have no trouble in earning that sum, he said emphatically, "I know mother will move."

At last the exciting day was done. Reuben had accomplished a great deal of business. He had been to the freight depot, and learned the price of freight, and the exact way of marking it, he had learned the price of butter, and meat, and flour, and milk, and wood. In short, he had done everything that he could think of, which it seemed likely to him that a man, with a family to provide for, would have done. Mr. Barrows looked on, sometimes amused, and sometimes touched almost to tears by the small boy's thoughtful planning for mother and sister. Where he needed help he got it, but for the most of the work, Mr. Barrows left him to himself, curious to see how he would carry out his plans. "The boy has the wisest head set on his young shoulders that I ever saw in my life!" he said to his wife that evening, after Reuben had gone to bed. "He hasn't done anything wonder-

ful either. I don't know that he is any smarter than most boys of his age; he simply has used the brains that folks like Andrew Porter spend in mischief, to help him in supporting his family. The notion he has that he is the man of the house, and must look after the comfort of his folks, like any other man, is worth a fortune to him. I believe the boy will be a rich man, while he is a young one."

"You have taken one of your tremendous likings to him," Mrs. Barrows said, laughing. "I don't wonder. I fancy him myself; and as for Grace, she wants to teach him music and drawing right away. I hope the rest of the family are half as nice. Do you believe they will come?"

"I do if Reuben can bring it to pass; and I think he can; I put the rent of the little house at a hundred dollars. I'd have made it lower, if the boy's bright eyes hadn't been fixed on me. I knew he would suspect something; he isn't after charity. I hope I shall not be disappointed in him. If he doesn't grow up a smart, business man, as well as a good man, I shall wonder at it."

(To Be Continued.)

AUNT SUE'S STORY.

BY CELIA SANFORD.

"What can be the harm, I should really like to know, of my going down street for an hour or two in the evening? Mother is so particular. She can not bear me out of her sight a minute," and the speaker, a fair-haired boy of ten or twelve years, with an aggrieved look upon his usually bright face, tore into fragments a strip of paper which he held in his hand and scattered the bits upon the carpet.

"Mother loves you too well, Arthur, dear," replied his sister, "to allow you to go down the streets in the evening, and you can see for yourself that the company you meet there would be harmful for a young boy like you. There is Dick Allen, for instance. You can not help knowing that he uses vulgar and profane language, and I saw him puffing a cigar upon the street this very day."

"Who asked you to speak? I should like to know. I guess I can play with boys if they are rude, without becoming like them. I am not obliged to copy their faults."

"I don't know about that, Arthur; you remember your motto for to-day, 'A man is known by the company he keeps.' I suppose the same is true of boys. And the Bible says, 'Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?'"

"Well, you need not preach. If I want to hear a sermon I can go to church."

"And besides, Arthur," continued his sister, "you remember mother promised papa on his dying bed that she would watch faithfully over his children, and especially you, Arthur. I do not see how you can cross her wishes; and she is so gentle and loving, too. It hurts her more than it does you when she is obliged to give you pain, but she must be mindful of your best interests, and—"

"Now, see here, Carrie, if you say another word I'll leave the room," and the boy put on an injured look, marched across the room, seated himself by the window, and looked sullenly out into the deepening twilight. He was in a most uncomfortable frame of mind, and the longer he nursed his wrath the more uncomfortable he became; and when Aunt Sue and his two little sisters, Stella and Eva, came into the room, he did not deign to notice the one, and rudely repelled the others.

It was the hour for their accustomed game of romps with Arthur, and they were astonished at his moodiness, so unlike his usual merry, frolicsome ways, and tried playfully to draw him out, but at some curt rebuff of his, Eva's lips quivered, and both little girls retreated to their aunt's side, and soon forgot their troubles in listening to her cheerful words.

"O, Aunt Sue, tell us a story; do, please, before Mamma lights the lamp," pleaded Eva.

"Yes, do," chimed in Stella's sweet voice; "and let it be a true story about some little boy or girl that you have known. I like true stories best."

Aunt Sue thought a moment and then leaning back in her easy-chair, she suffered Stella to remove the knitting from her hands and began softly: "Yes, dearies, I

will tell you a true story of a dear little boy whom I knew many years ago. He was sweet-tempered, and good, and beautiful. His blue eyes were full of laughter, and the golden curls clustered thickly around his white, broad forehead. He was the pride and joy of his mother's heart, and she loved him very tenderly; and he was all she had left to love, for his little brothers and sisters had, one by one, left her to live with the angels, and, at last, his papa, too, was carried to the churchyard, and laid to rest beside four little grass-grown mounds, besprinkled with violets and mountain daisies; and then little Georgie was all that was left to her; and it seemed as if every fibre of her heart was entwined about him and her very life was interwoven with the life of the child, and her constant cry was: 'Lord, spare me this, my only treasure, for I can not live without him!'"

"But time flies, and Georgie is twelve years old, a noble, manly, promising boy. The mother would fain have kept him a child dependent on her love and care, she would have laid down her life to shield him from temptation; but Georgie loved company, and the kind of company which was at hand, and in which, for want of better, he was indulged, soon made the quiet atmosphere of home irksome to him; and his mother thought that it was her love for him that prompted the indulgence of all his wishes, and could not deny him; but it was her weakness and want of firmness."

"Instead of saying with decision, 'Georgie, my child, you can not go out to-night. I do not like the company you meet with at the village, and I can not allow you to go there,' she would say, 'O Georgie, you can not think how much your going out of evenings so worries me. I do wish you would stay at home more,' and Georgie would answer: 'Oh, mother, you are so fidgety! What harm can possibly come to me? I should like to know. You don't want to keep me cooped up here at home till I lost all life and spirits, now do you?' and then he would kiss her gayly and promising to be back in an hour or two would go whistling down the street. And very soon his will overpowered his mother's in everything; and he kept later and later hours, and grew every year more and more unsteady."

"He loved his mother, but he had never been taught strict obedience to her wishes, or self-control; and the tempter stood before him in alluring form, holding out bewitching, dazzling charms, and before he was seventeen years old his mother had reason to fear that he had formed many disorderly habits. His evenings were spent in low company; he had learned to smoke and chew, and many a form of impiety, at which he would once have shuddered, had become familiar to his lips; and once or twice—O children, can I say it!—his breath smelt of rum. Yes, actually smelt of rum."

"His mother was alarmed, and in bitterness of soul, such as she had never known in all her bereavement, she pleaded with him and prayed him to turn from his evil associates. He would listen at first, and pitying her grief, would promise amendment and for awhile would refrain from going out; but just as soon as hope would begin to revive in her heart, he would yield again to temptation, and dive deeper into the haunts of vice and degradation."

"The poor mother fainted and lay long in a state of unconsciousness the first time her boy was brought home to her drunk. After that he seemed to throw off all restraint, and his downward course was very rapid; and the burning tears and loving entreaties of his mother were of no avail. His feet were taken in a snare, and ruin and destruction came down upon him like an avalanche."

"At last there came an hour, the saddest in the poor mother's history, when her boy was brought home to her, a lifeless, mangled corpse. In a state of semi-consciousness caused by drink, he had attempted to step from one railway car to another, while in motion, and missing his footing he had fallen, and been crushed to death in an instant. For weeks the mother's life trembled in the balance between life and death, and when at last she was restored she learned that her son's irregularities had swallowed up her pleasant home, and she was penniless as well as childless."

"And so the sad history of this bright, beautiful boy, with its bitter ending, all came of disregard to his mother's wishes, of

trifling with temptation, and yielding to evil companionship. No, not all; the mother, too, must bear her part of the blame; perhaps a larger part belongs to her, because she weakly yielded to her son's importunities, and indulged him in things which she knew if persisted in would end in ruin."

"A deep silence of some moments followed the recital of 'Aunt Sue's Story,' broken only by an occasional sob from the little girls and the soft purring of Eva's favorite kitten, which she held tightly clasped in her hands. The mother had come in at the beginning of the story, and now sat with tear-filled eyes and averted face, thinking of her own responsibilities, and resolving to meet them faithfully at any cost. Aunt Sue's eyes were dry, but her face was very sad and white as she drew from the folds of her bombazine dress a miniature, set in gold, as a grey-cheeked, golden-haired child, and gazed long and tenderly upon it, and then she broke out: 'O Georgie! Georgie! would God I had died for thee! my sweet, my beautiful boy!'"

The children pressed up eagerly to look at the picture, and Stella exclaimed: "O auntie, it looks just like you!" And then the children understood that they had indeed listened to a life story, the truth of which had whitened the locks and wrinkled the face of the dear auntie who had come to them three years before, and whom they had all learned to love so dearly."

Arthur slipped from his seat by the window, and came and stood beside his mother, drawing his arm around her neck, and laying his wet cheek against hers; and then the sobs burst forth, and he spoke almost in a whisper: "Mother, I am glad you did not let me go out. I shall never want to disobey you again, never."—*Morning Star.*

THE DUTIES OF THE TEACHER TO THE SCHOLAR.

If the scholars love their teacher, they are usually willing to do anything for him; and what is easier than to reach the heart of a little child by kind words and loving looks? Now suppose they do love him, he must set a noble example, as they will imitate his actions. "As the teacher is, so is the school." If he be irregular in attendance, what can we expect from the class? If they have six different teachers on as many Sundays, what benefit do they receive?

"As a word to the wise is sufficient," let me relate a little incident which occurred in one of our Sunday-schools not long since; a scholar from one of the older classes was called upon to teach a class of boys whose ages ranged from ten to twelve years. When asked who their teacher was, they did not seem to know, as they had had so many different ones. Their behavior was such that she was really discouraged, and, having had but little experience in teaching, she did not know what to do; nevertheless, when asked by the superintendent, the next Sunday, to take charge of the same class, she determined to do her best, thinking that perhaps they would act differently. They did indeed, but in a way for which she was unprepared. Upon reaching the class, each boy turned his back to her, and would scarcely listen to a word that she said. She felt very much like giving up; yet, by kind words, she finally succeeded in gaining the attention of all but one. How much do those boys learn! Ah, actions speak louder than words. But if they had a regular teacher—one who would do his best to interest them—we have not the least doubt that they would become quiet and well-behaved scholars.

Jesus Christ, while teaching used language that could be well understood. He spoke to the people in parables, taking, as illustrations, things that occurred in their daily lives. What better way of getting a child interested, and of drawing out his thoughts than by asking the question in words simple enough to reach his understanding? If we can use an object with which he is familiar, to illustrate some truth, I think there will be less difficulty in holding his attention. Teachers cannot afford to be trifling. Little children are the best imitators known, and what a feeling to know that one careless action has led a child astray!

Let us, then, as teachers in the Sunday-school, try to win the love of our classes, and lead them in such a way that at last we may hear the welcome plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant."—*The Living Epistle.*