

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

THE RUDE LITTLE GIRL IN CHURCH.

My little readers, do you want to hear a story about a little girl I saw in church this morning with a pretty bonnet on? Well, then, when I walked out to church this beautiful Sabbath morning, so still and holy seemed the day that I felt as though God was walking among the leaves and smiling through the sunshine. As I walked slowly up the long aisle and took a seat in the house of God, the organ burst forth in varied strains of music. I felt as though heaven had pretty nearly opened to take us up into its bright mansions, until just then a little girl with a very gay bonnet on her head came tossing and flirting herself up the aisle as though there was scarcely room enough in the church to contain her little importance. She marched straight up to the head of the church, and threw herself into a seat so unlady-like that it took all ideas of heaven out of my head and brought me down flat into a red-cushioned pew, with a rude little girl in front of me. First she stared all around to see who was looking at her; then she would toss her head first on one side, then on the other. If she saw any one looking toward her, she would toss that side of her hat which had the feather on at them, and thus she acted so naughty that she reminded me of a breakfast I once heard a little boy ask for.

I was sitting at the hotel table, and as the waiter handed the bill of fare around to us all, a lady handed it in fun to her bright, rosy-cheeked boy, who was quite too small to read. He took it, and after looking over it very solemnly for a time, looked up to the colored servant and lisped out that "he would thake thum codfiss and thum ice-cream."

Now this rude little girl who had a pretty bonnet on her head just reminded me of "codfish and ice-cream."

When little girls go to church they should not think more about the pretty clothes they wear than of what the minister says of the blessed Jesus. Besides, if they act naughty and proud, some one may be looking at them, and thinking they look just like "codfish and ice-cream."

STELLA.



THE PEACOCK.

The self-applauding bird, the peacock, see;
Mark what a sumptuous pharisee is he:
Meridian sunbeams tempt him to unfold
His radiant glories, azure, green, and gold;
He treads as if, some solemn music near,
His measured steps were governed by his ear;
And seems to say, "Ye meaner fowl, give place;
I am all splendor, dignity, and grace."

JESUS MY GUIDE.

I KNOW not the way I am going,
But well do I know my Guide;
And with childlike trust I give my hand
To the faithful Friend at my side;
And this is all I say to him
As he takes it, "Hold me fast;
Suffer me not to lose my way,
But bring me home at last."



THE INDEPENDENT FIDDLE.

"WHAT a grand thing it is to be independent," said an old violin, as it lay half in and half out of its richly ornamented case; "to be admired and praised by all; to be the means of giving forth such sweet sounds as to make my hearers weep or laugh at my master's pleasure, and yet to be independent, to have all this within one's self."

"Do you mean to say that *you* are independent?" said the bow, who had been listening impatiently to the violin's self-complacent remarks, and who was now in a very unamiable frame of mind. "You independent! Why, what would you be without me? Granting that you have the beautiful tone of which you speak, what is it, pray, that brings it out of you? Why, it is I; and is it not I that draws the weird howls and beautiful speaking tone out of you for which our master is so famous? You independent! It is I who deserve all the praise. You are simply a passive instrument; I do all the work."

"No, no, you don't," cried the four strings in chorus.

"I," cried Mr. G., "produce the beautiful speaking tone."

"I," cried Mr. D., "produce the weird howls."

"I," said Master A., "produce beautiful harmonies."

"I," said Miss E., "the highest natural notes."

"We all," said Mr. G., "can do these things more or less; indeed, without us you would both be useless; you are both dependent on us."

"Ay, ay, these things are all very true," said a little cake of rosin from the bottom of the case, who had been very quietly listening to all that had been said, "but you must not forget *me*; for, little and insignificant as I may appear, you are all dependent on me. Without me the bow would slip, the strings would not vibrate, and consequently there would be no sound at all; so you see that your independence—if there is such a thing in existence—must be very small indeed when it dwindles down to an insignificant piece of rosin."

"You are quite right," said a hoary old violoncello, who had gravely heard the discussion to its end; "there is no such thing as independence in this world; it never did nor never will have an existence among mortals. The most powerful king that ever lived was not independent. There is nothing in nature independent in itself; the smallest blade of grass cannot grow without air, rain, and sun. We may say with truth, nature abhors independence. And when nations on this earth boast of it, and even fight among themselves about it, they only show their own ignorance and foolishness;

for nations, like everything else in this world, cannot exist independent of each other. So you need not be surprised, my little friend," said the violoncello, turning to the violin, "at the ease with which your little friends have corrected you of the too common mistake. Apart from each other, as you have seen, you are all of little or no use; but combined, you give forth almost the sweetest melody and harmony that it is possible to listen to. And so it will be with the nations of this earth: as long as they are separated by feuds and contentions, there will be nothing but wars and rumors of wars; but when they all combine to work harmoniously together, they will give forth—figuratively speaking—the sweetest harmony and melody."

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ABSTAIN FROM ALL APPEARANCE OF EVIL.

To abstain from a thing is to avoid it. Wise people abstain from what is likely to do them harm. Sin is a thing from which we ought to abstain. But even this is not enough. We are told to abstain from all that looks like sin.

There is a curious Chinese proverb which says, "In a cucumber-field do not stoop to tie your shoe, and under a plum-tree do not wait to settle your cap on your head;" which means, if you do, some one may think you are stealing the cucumbers or the plums.

Bob Ross was very fond of learning his lessons up in the great apple-tree. He didn't touch the fruit; he only went there because he found it a nice quiet seat. But his little brothers thought that he went there to eat the apples, and as soon as they could climb they began to rob the orchard. All this came from Bob having forgot to abstain from the appearance of evil. Boys, beware!

G. L.

A BEAUTIFUL INCIDENT.

A BABE not old enough to walk was creeping on the floor. By and by a bright ray of sunshine fell upon the carpet. Baby saw it and crept toward the dazzling object. She looked at it, and crept all around it, with the greatest interest in her sweet face, and then putting down her little lips she *kissed* it. The bright little sunbeam lighted up joy in her heart, and she expressed that joy with a sweet kiss.

If you cannot *relieve* do not *grieve* the poor. Give them soft words if nothing else. Put yourself in the place of every poor man, and deal with him as you would God should deal with *you*.

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