

A Little Word Lost.

I lost a very little word,
Only the other day—
A very naughty little word
I had not meant to say.
If only it were really lost,
I should not mind a bit;
I think I should deserve a prize
For really losing it.

For if no one could ever find,
Again that little word,
So that no more from any lips
Could it be ever heard,
I'm sure we all of us would say,
That it was something fine
With such completeness to have lost,
That naughty word of mine.

If it were only really lost,
Oh! then I should be glad;
I let it fall so carelessly
The day that I got mad.
Lose other things, you never seem,
To come upon their track;
But lose a naughty little word,
It's always coming back.
—Waif.

An Eye-Opener.

(By Leander S. Keyser.)

On his way to the office one morning Jack Sylvester met the minister. If the truth were told, Jack would have preferred to meet almost any one else. Somehow ministers had a habit of talking about other mat-

Mr. Austin," laughed Jack, "I rise early for business reasons."

"Well, doesn't the scripture command us to be diligent in business? You are obeying one of the precepts of religion. Why not try to follow all of them, Mr. Sylvester?"

Jack's eyes flashed as he answered:

"You have spoken to me several times about this. It isn't an agreeable subject to me. I want to be honest about it. My mind is made up to keep clear of the churches until—"

"Speak your mind frankly," urged the minister.

"Well, until I see them producing better results. I know churchmen who are frauds. Some of them do things that I wouldn't stoop to, yet they profess to be Christians. Above all kinds of men I despise a hypocrite. If a man can't live a Christian life, why should he make a profession of religion at all?"

"No doubt there is much truth in what you say," Mr. Austin was a man who would concede as much as he could to an opponent. "There are inconsistent people in our churches, and they are stumbling-blocks, I confess. But see here, my brother, don't you think it would be better and braver of you to give them an example of right living? You seem to understand so well just how a Christian should live."

Jack's eye fell before the minister's earnest, penetrating look, and no answer that was genuine occurred to his mind at the moment.

"Good morning, Mr. Sylvester," said the minister, moving away, "I do not wish to detain you. Only think calmly and deeply on these important matters."

It required more than an hour for Jack to dismiss the conversation from his mind. He was half-vexed with Mr. Austin, or with himself; he could scarcely decide which. The minister had given the matter such a personal turn, and had shown him his duty.

Jack was not an unbeliever. Like many others without the Church, he accepted the bible as the Word of God; but those hypocrites, those impostors, who used religion as a cloak—against them he constantly vented his wrath and criticism, making them his principal excuse for not becoming a Christian.

Some weeks passed. One day Jack sat in the office where he was employed, when his ear caught the sound of voices in an adjoining room. The door was slightly ajar, and he could not have helped hearing the conversation, even if he had wanted to. He thought of closing the door, but just then he heard his own name mentioned and felt that it would be embarrassing to let himself be seen. One of the voices was that of Mr. Austin, the minister, who was engaged in conversation with two of Jack's young friends.

"Are you ready to decide this matter now?" Mr. Austin asked, in a voice that betrayed no little anxiety.

"I'm not," promptly replied Perry Sales, "Of course, I've been thinking about it; but there are too many inconsistent Christians." Your church members—anyway, a good many of them—don't do right, in spite of all their profession. The other day I saw one of them slip into a saloon."

"Is that so?" asked the minister. "Then, let me have his name, and I shall bring him before the official board of the church, and request you to be a witness against him. May I call on you for that purpose?"

Then followed an awkward pause. Jack waited for Perry's reply.

"Oh, no! I prefer not to be involved in



"But lose a naughty little word,
It's always coming 'back.'"

But it wasn't really lost,
When from my lips it flew;
My little brother picked it up,
And now he says it, too.
Mamma says that the worst would be,
I could not get it back;
But the worst of it now seems to me,
I'm always on its track.

Mamma is sad; papa looks grieved;
Johnnie has said it twice;
Of course it is no use for me
To tell him it's not nice.
When you lose other things, they're lost,
But lose a naughty word,
And for every time 'twas heard before,
Now twenty times 'tis heard.

ters for a while, and then, sooner or later, steering the conversation to religion—a subject that the young man always fought shy of.

"Good morning, Mr. Sylvester," the Rev. Mr. Austin said, in his cordial way; "you are abroad early."

"No earlier than you," returned Jack, who meant to pass on.

Mr. Austin extended his hand, saying: "I don't believe it right to spend the early hours of the day in sleeping, and I'm glad to see that you are of the same opinion."

"Don't make me the text of a moral lecture,