

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

### WHAT ONE BLACK-HEADED WORM DID.

"That's a splendid sycamore!" said a gentleman to his friend, to whom he was showing his grounds.

"Yes," replied his friend, who was a naturalist; "but see! here is a wood-worm forcing its way under the bark. If you let that worm alone it will kill the tree."

The worm was a mean-looking, black-headed thing about three inches long. The owner of the tree pooh-pooed at the idea of one such worm killing so noble a tree, and said:

"Well, well, we'll see. I'll let the worm try it."

The worm soon worked its way under the bark. The next summer the leaves of the tree dropped off very early. A year later it was a dead and rotten thing. One worm had killed it. *Only one!*

Sometimes I see boys and girls with beautiful faces, graceful bodies, and pretty fair characters. They are merry, polite, hopeful boys and girls, but they will cherish some one favorite fault. One will be *proud*, another *vain*; a third will be *envious*, a fourth will be *passionate* now and then; a fifth will *lie*, a sixth will *break the Sabbath*, a seventh will *disobey father and mother*, an eighth will *quarrel and fight*; in short, some one fault or other can be seen working upon their characters as clearly and busily as that black-headed worm was seen boring into the tree.

One of those boys or girls is reading this line just now. I have a whisper for you, my little friend. I don't want to speak it out loud, so I just say softly in your ear:

"If you let your one great fault alone it will ruin your soul!"

There, think of this, will you? Think of it, my child, until you are afraid to keep your fault. Then go to Jesus and ask him to wash it away in his most precious blood, will you? W.

### LITTLE SAMUEL.

Once in the silence of the night  
The lamp of God was clear and bright,  
And there, by holy angels kept,  
Samuel, the child, securely slept.

An unknown voice the stillness broke.  
"Samuel!" it called, and thrice it spoke.  
He rose—he asked, "Whence came the word?  
From Eli?"—no: it was the Lord!

Thus early called to serve his God,  
The paths of righteousness he trod;  
Prophetic visions filled his breast,  
And Israel, taught by him, was blest.

Speak, Lord, and from our earliest days  
Incline our hearts to love thy ways;  
O let thy voice now reach our ear,  
Speak, Lord, and let thy servants hear.

And ye who know the Saviour's love,  
And all his mercies richly prove;  
Your timely, friendly aid afford,  
And teach us how to serve the Lord.

### WRITING A LETTER TO GOD.

We have a little Eddie here in his fourth year, who seems quite disposed to say smart and beautiful things. The last fine thing was said yesterday. He was amusing himself with paper and pencil. His mother said, "What are you doing, Eddie?"

With a tender tone he replied, "I'll tell you, mamma. I am writing a letter to God to ask him to tell the angels to come and take me up to see him."



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### RUSSIAN SHOPS AND MARKETS.

Ooo-oo-oo! Indeed, it is cold! We shall be obliged to lay in a good supply of mittens, and caps, and good warm overcoats, and cloaks, and furs of all kinds. It is the *fashion* here, too, to wear all these comfortable things. I remember, when quite a little girl, being able to distinguish the Russian among the pictures in my old geography by his immense fur cap and long fur-lined overcoat, and particularly by the large muff he carried in his hands, or, rather, he carried his hands in the muff. Little did I think then of coming such a trip as this to the land of furs.

The thermometer? O I do not think we can keep still long enough to look at it. Shall we take a walk down one of the business streets and see the shops? What a display they all make of their goods! Yes, and how few signs they have! Well, we can certainly understand the goods better than we can read lettered signs. Here are boots and shoes, and there are cakes and loaves, displayed very much as we see them at home. And look at the pictures in some of the windows! Here is a picture of an ox, and a man's portrait in this window, and it doesn't look like a picture-store either. I should think not. The owner is just advertising you that he keeps ox-meat for sale. And then, that frightful-looking picture of a man being shaved and a woman being bled tells of a barber's shop. And look at the horrible surrounding of all those dental and surgical instruments and drops of blood. Indeed, I like far better the simple striped pole that some of our barbers at home still use.

Why, here is a place that is quite busy. It really looks as if they were doing something. Yes, the large low building that covers this square is the center of trade for the city. It contains ten thousand tradesmen. They call it *Gostinnoi Dvor*. The *Tshukin Dvor* is another great bazar. Do you see those little images and crucifixes over the door with lamps burning before them? Some are images of the virgin, some of St. John or some other saint, and are intended to show how religious their owners are. But their religion does not prevent their drinking, and dram-shops are almost as plenty as they are in New York. There is a stall devoted to the sale of amulets. Here is another for dried fruits, and yonder you may see a bridal outfit, from the slippers to the veil.

And here are some Russians enjoying their favorite *pirogas*, a kind of cakes eaten hot with oil; and just

beyond is a tea-stand. You need not hesitate to take their tea, that is if you are a tea-drinker. For my part, I am not. I always prefer cold water. But tea, or *somovar*, as they call it, is the universal drink in Russia. It is said to be greatly superior in flavor to that which we get at home, because it is brought overland from China, and has no chance to lose its flavor in crossing the salt water.

Let us visit the meat-market. Here are partridges from Saratoff, (down near Circassia,) swans from Finland, heathcocks from Livonia, and bears from Lapland. They are all frozen solid, and are cut up with a hatchet, if need be. If the weather should become mild these poor fellows would lose much of their stock. But they are quite safe at present, if we may judge by the feeling of our noses.

And that reminds me, children, of what I should tell you. If any of you see your neighbors' noses turning white rub them soundly with a snow-ball. You would not like to see them *thaw off*.

What! almost dark so soon! Is it cloudy? No, there is the full moon coming up in all its glory. I must remind you that we are about in the latitude of Southern Greenland, and that here the days are very short and the nights very long at this time of the year. There was still greater difference in December last. But we are not obliged to close our trip yet, though the *Gostinnoi Dvor* may be closed. We'll take a run down by the Neva and see the skaters, who are doubtless in the height of their glee.

What a busy scene! Men and women, boys and girls, old and young, all ranks, ages, and conditions are on the ice having a merry time of it. This was a great amusement in Russia long before it became general among us. Sliding down hill is another of their favorites. Norman is looking around for the hills, eh? Well, my boy, Nature does not afford any hills in this part of the country, so when folks wish for hills they are obliged to make them. Harry, with his studious head, has discovered another fact. The surface of the river is but little lower than that of the streets. Well, and what follows? Why, that when the river rises, as it will be likely to do in the spring, it will come up into the streets. Yes, that is precisely what does happen sometimes, and much property is destroyed by the inundation. The site of the city was poorly chosen in this respect as in some others; but "with the czar is power, with the czar is death." Peter placed it here, and here it must remain whether drowned or frozen.

AUNT JULIA.

### BEEES.

A SWARM of bees in their natural state contains from ten to twenty thousand insects, while in hives they number from thirty to forty thousand. In a square foot of honey-comb there are about nine thousand cells. A queen bee lays her eggs for fifty or sixty consecutive days, laying about five hundred daily. It takes three days to hatch each egg. In one season a single queen-bee hatches about one hundred thousand bees. It takes five thousand bees to weigh a pound.

### PUNCTUALITY.

It is said of Melancthon that when he made an appointment he expected not only the hour, but the minute to be fixed, that no time might be wasted in idleness or suspense; and of Washington, that when his secretary, being repeatedly late in his attendance, laid the blame on his watch, he replied, "You must get another *watch* or I another *secretary*."