

## 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.

## A SILLY PRINCE.

THERE was once a young prince who could not bear the sight of a spider or a fly. "They are such ugly creatures that I cannot look at them," he said. "They are never of any use, and I cannot understand why they were ever made. I should like nothing better than to know that every one of them had been killed."

In course of time this young prince became a general in the king's army. One day a great battle was fought, and he was so beset by his enemies that he was obliged to hide himself in a thick wood. Being very tired, he lay down in the shade of a spreading oak and fell asleep. While he was thus sleeping under the oak he was discovered by one of his enemies, who crept quietly toward him, intending to kill him. But just at that moment a horsefly bit the prince on the hand and awakened him. He sprang up quickly, and, seeing his danger, drew his sword to defend himself. But the coward, who had hoped to take him by surprise, turned about and ran away as fast as his legs could carry him.

Several days after this the prince, being still closely followed by his enemies, concealed himself in a cave not far from the sea-shore. He had been there but a short time when a spider came out from under a rock and wove its web across the cave door.

Even before the spider had left off its weaving several soldiers, who were searching for the prince, passed that way.

"See this cave!" cried one. "Very likely he has hidden himself within; let us stop and see."

"Nonsense," said the others; "do you not see the spider's web across the door?"

How could he go inside without brushing that down?"

And without another word they all hurried on and made no stop.

The prince, who had heard their words, raised his hand toward heaven and thanked the Maker of all things for His goodness. Afterward, when he had driven all his enemies out of the country he was fond of telling everybody of the lesson which he had learned from the spider and the fly. And never, so long as he lived, could he bear to see anyone hurt the smallest creature.

## TAKING ADVANTAGE.

BY LEANDER S. KEYSER.

LITTLE Martin Bell was a warm lover of the birds. He studied them both summer and winter, and never tired of their sweet songs and charming ways. One winter day he waded through the deep snow out



SEEING HOW IT WORKS.

to the swamp where a covey of song sparrows had taken up their abode, finding cozy, sheltered nooks among the weeds and grasses to keep warm. He came back greatly excited.

"Papa," he began, and then had to stop for breath. "Papa, there is a sparrow hawk out in the swamp, and it's just eating up all my song sparrows."

"Why don't they hide themselves in the bushes?" asked papa.

"Because the farmer cut down all the bushes last summer, and the snow has covered the ground and grass, so that there are only a few hiding-places among the weeds along the bank of the run. The hawk just flies along the ditch, and scares the sparrows out, and then pounces upon them and eats them up, the cruel thing!"

"Well, I'm very sorry for your pretty song birds," sympathised papa.

"Isn't it too mean for the hawk to take advantage of them in that way, when they can't find any place to hide in?" said

Martin, tears of anger and pity welling in his eyes.

Papa looked thoughtfully out of the window for a few moments before he replied:

"It is indeed; but that is just what a good many people, both old and young, do. I mean they take advantage of one another's weaknesses and misfortunes. The rich will sometimes treat the poor just as the hawk treats those sparrows; they will wait until hard times come, so that the poor cannot help themselves, and then they will grind them down by reducing their wages, raising their rent, and so on."

"Yes, and that's awful wrong; they're hawks, so they are!" declared Martin, stoutly.

"But boys sometimes do the same." Martin was silent, so his father went on: "They will abuse a poor little boy in school just because he can't help himself, or because they are stronger than he. They won't attack a boy who's as large and strong as they are. I have seen a whole company of boys and girls taunting the life out of a pupil merely because he was innocent and helpless or half-witted. Don't you think they were rather hawk-like?"

"Ye-ye-s," faltered Martin. His memory and his conscience were at work.

"Then," continued papa, "I have seen a boy tease and abuse his sister, who was smaller than himself and couldn't give him like for like. What do you think of such a boy?"

"Do you mean me, papa?" asked Martin, blushing like a rose.

"Oh! I didn't mention any names," laughed papa.

"Well, I'll never act like a hawk again, see if I do," said Martin, like a man. "It's still meaner for a boy to take advantage than for a hawk."

## A LESSON FOR HARRY.

"Oh, I want some of those apples," said Harry.

"They belong to Mr. Hill," said Robby. "I don't care," said Harry. "Mr. Hill has more than he wants. I mean to have some."

"It will be stealing," said Robby. "No, it won't—just a few apples."

Robby went on to school, but Harry climbed on the wall and began picking the apples.

One of them fell on a box which was on the other side of the wall. The next minute Harry heard something buzzing about his ears.

"Oh! oh!" he screamed. The box was a beehive, and the bees began stinging the naughty little boy.

Mr. Hill heard his cries and came. Then Harry felt as though it were really stealing to take apples which did not belong to him.

I hope Harry will learn to remember that God can see him when no one else can, and that God has said, "Thou shalt not steal."