

where I was, I saw the little boy (about eight years of age) had an ugly, black cigar in his mouth, "as long"—so a gentleman standing by me quite truly said—"as himself," and he was puffing away as if he was an old hand at it. Upon coming near me he pulled out of his pocket a paper containing I don't know how many more, and offered them to his father, who took one and lit it from the one his son was smoking.

On questioning his father as to his allowing his son, so young, or even at all, to smoke, he gave this as his reason:

"I have had seven children, and buried all but this one, and I am going to let him do as he pleases. He is a very smart boy."

I thought he was a sadly erring father. I gave a few words of advice to the boy never to use tobacco in any way, shape, or form, after which he left with his father.

I sincerely hope none of the boys that read the Advocate will follow such a bad example so early practiced, for if I should happen to see them. Corporal Try, you shall have their names for court-martial.

T. D. C.



For the Sunday-School Advocate.

SOWING THE WRONG SEED.

HARRY desired to have a portion of the garden to cultivate himself, and this wish his father was very well pleased to gratify. In the lower corner of the garden, quite by itself, a large plot of ground was measured off, and paths were made all around it. This was Harry's garden, and he was to prepare it himself. He carefully dug it up with his spade, gathered out all the stones, diligently smoothed it over, and now it was all ready for sowing.

In the fall of the previous year Harry had been out in the fields gathering the seeds that he had found ripening upon the withered stocks. Now that his garden was ready, he took his seeds one morning and went out to sow them. His father had noticed the steps he had taken, but had said nothing until this morning, wishing to teach him a lesson that would be of service to him as long as he lived.

"What are you about to do, my son?" said he.

"Plant my garden," answered Harry.

"And what do you expect will grow?"

"Beautiful flowers; and the first bunch I gather I shall give to mother."

"Flowers, my poor boy!" exclaims his father. "You are sowing the seeds of weeds, and nothing but coarse and hurtful weeds will grow up. They will run all over your garden and all over mine, destroying every pleasant plant."

Harry said he was sure he did not wish to have weeds grow in his garden, and so he asked his father to please to tell him what seeds would grow into beautiful flowers, and to give him some of those he sowed in his own garden.

The father took the little boy to the place where the garden-seeds were kept, and telling him about the flowers and how they should be planted, he sent him out again into his garden with good seed.

As they sat together on the piazza overlooking

the garden, just after supper, and were talking together about the flowers, "Harry," said the father, "do you know that you have another garden to plant?"

"Where is it?" asked Harry.

"God has given you one, my son. It is your own heart."

"What can I do about that, father?"

"See that nothing but good seed is planted in it."

"How shall I know what seed to plant?"

"How did you learn what seed to plant in your garden just below the house?"

"I asked you to please to tell me."

"And I am most happy to tell my little son how to plant the garden of his heart. There are many books written to tell us about the flowers and how to cultivate them, and God has written a book to tell us how to cultivate beautiful flowers and rich fruits in our hearts. My little son knows the name of that book."

"It is the Bible."

"Yes, it is the Bible. If you read that it will teach you how to sow the good seed, and save you from having your garden overgrown with noxious weeds. Recollect, Harry, that a bad boy never makes a good man, that bad habits never grow into a good character, and that if we are careless, and indolent, and disobedient when children, when we grow up our lives will not be lovely to others or pleasant to ourselves. The good seeds of prayer, obedience, and kind tempers, with God's loving smile upon them, will take root and grow up in our hearts and lives. Our garden-spot will then be beautiful for others to enjoy, and our dear Saviour as he looks down upon our gentle tempers and listens to our humble prayers will say, 'I have come into my garden.'

"If wicked thoughts, and wishes, and habits are sowed in your heart now that it is young and tender, they will certainly grow up hateful to be seen, and these weeds will run out in every direction, injuring and destroying others. Watch carefully, then, my little boy, the seeds that are sown in your heart."

P.

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

DO YOU EVER DECEIVE?



SOME children are full of deceit. They seem to delight in making their playmates and friends believe what is false, or doubt what is true. They are false and therefore wicked children.

Have I a deceitful child among my readers? If so I wish to tell him or her a story about a bird.

A thrush had built her nest in a quarry. The miners soon after began to blast the rock, and the pieces fell very near the little bird's nest, very much to her annoyance. After shrinking from the pieces a few times, the bird noticed that the miners rang a bell and left the quarry just before every explosion. The little creature followed their example, and every time the bell rang left her nest, and flying to the spot which sheltered the workmen, lighted at their feet until the explosion was past, when she returned to her nest.

This curious fact was noticed by the men, and, numerous persons hearing of it, went out to witness her movements. The men could not, however, explode a blast as often as the visitors came, so they only rung the bell. This deceit served its purpose a few times, but the thrush soon discovered it, and afterward on hearing the bell peeped from her nest to see if the men left the quarry. If they did she followed them; if they did not she remained on her nest.

Thus you see that even a bird could not be deceived long. She soon saw that the men wished to make her believe what was not true. I want you to make a note of this, little Double-face. Ask yourself this question: "If a bird could soon see through a deceitful act, will not my friends soon see through me and learn that I am a cheat?"

They will find you out, you may depend upon it. Indeed, they have found you out already. Every boy and girl you know, your parents, teachers, and friends all know that you are a false child. They all see through the thin mask with which you seek to cover your false heart. What is a still more serious fact for you, God knows what you are. He sees through you, and knows that you are full of deceit and falsehood. Make haste, therefore, O my child, to put away your deceit. Ask Jesus to give you a true and honest nature. Beg your heavenly Father to help you to say in good earnest,

"My lips shall not speak wickedness nor my tongue utter deceit."

W. W.



ALONE IN THE DARK.

"STAY by me to-night, dear mamma," said a child, "The rain rattles down, and the wind is so wild; I shut up my eyes, and I cover my head, And draw myself up in a heap in the bed, And I think about robbers, and shiver with fear— Do stay by me, mother! It is so dark up here."

"I cannot, my darling; and why should I stay? You are never afraid to come up here by day; You study and play in this same little room, And never have left it with fear or with gloom. Why, then, when you're wrapped up so cozy and warm, Do you think about things that can do you no harm?"

"O, mother, it's light in the daytime, you know, And the sunshine then puts all the room in a glow, And up from the hall comes a murmur of sound, Where Jennie and Kittie are running around; And though your voice, dear mother, I don't always hear, Yet it's so light and cheerful, I know you are there."

"My dear little boy, I'm afraid you forget That God is near by, watching over my pet. Nor darkness nor light would be safe without One Who sees us, and guards us till life's race is run. In the loneliest night He is close by your side; If you love him and trust him, 'The Lord will provide.'"

"You never need fear, but when feeble and faint, Then call upon God, who will hear your complaint. There's no one to hurt you when God is so nigh; His angels, to keep you, descend from the sky."

The child put his little soft hand in her own, And kissed the sweet face that so lovingly shone: "You may put out the light, mother dear, when you please; If I feel afraid now, I will think that God sees."

M. E. M.

IT IS SIN.

WHEN a foolish thought within Tries to take us in a snare, Conscience tells us, "It is sin," And entreats us to beware.

But if we should disregard And neglect this friendly call, Conscience soon will grow so hard That it will not speak at all.