

Sunday-School Advocate.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 24, 1864.

A MOCKING BOY'S MISFORTUNE.

"Ha, ha, ha! What a gump you must be to run your head against that lamp-post!" cried Harvey North, pointing scornfully at little Harry Blunt. Harry was rubbing his nose, which was quite sore from its collision with a gas-lamp pillar. He had been looking at two poodle dogs across the street, and shared a mishap very common to those who, as the proverb says, "look one way and row another." He had run plump against the pillar.

"You needn't laugh at a fellow," growled Harry, whose mind was made as sore by Harvey's mockery as his nose had been by the lamp-post.

He had hardly uttered these words before he saw Harvey fall down an open grating. The mocking boy had been walking backward during his sport over Harry's misfortune, and so had stepped into the hole, and was now rubbing his loins and crying, "O, O, O," on the cellar-steps of a grocery.

"I hope you're not hurt, Harvey," said Harry as with a pale face he looked down the grating at his fallen chum.

"Get out!" said Harvey spitefully.

"It's you that will have to get out," replied Harry quite wittily, yet feeling vexed at Harvey's ill-nature.

"I guess he is not much hurt," said a well-dressed man who had seen and heard all that I have just described. Then going down the steps he added, "Come, my lad, get up!"

Harvey got up and walked into the street. He was not seriously hurt, only a little bruised. The well-dressed man took him by the hand and walked with him down the street. "You remind me," said he, "of the sparrow which laughed at the hare."

"How so?" asked Harvey somewhat sharply.

"I will tell you. A sparrow once saw a poor hare seized by an eagle. 'Ho, ho,' said the bird to the hare, 'what a fool you were to sit there and be caught! Why didn't you run away? You are a very swift traveler, why did you let the eagle catch you? Ha, ha, ha!'"

"Just at that moment a fierce hawk pounced on the mocking sparrow. 'Ha, ha,' said the dying hare as it heard the screams of the bird, 'you're caught, are you? You felt very strong and safe while you mocked me just now. Please bear your own misfortune quietly or else show me how to escape mine.'"

"I see," said Harvey, who was a quick-witted boy.

"I see. You've hit me fairly, sir. I'm the sparrow. Harry was the hare. I laughed at him when he was in trouble, and then fell into a worse scrape myself. I won't mock him again. Harry, my boy, give me your hand."

The boys shook hands. The well-dressed man smiled and bade them good morning. His fable was timely, and I hope it will teach you, my reader, as well as Harvey, the folly of mocking at those who fall into trouble. Never laugh at the faults, blunders, or misfortunes of others. Why should you add your mockery to their sorrows? Better learn to weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those who rejoice. Such conduct is noble, manly, and Christlike, but mockery of others' trials is mean, cowardly, and wicked.

ARE YOU A TRUE DIAMOND?

Two bracelets lay on the counter of a jeweler's store looking very much alike. A lady took up one of them and asked:

"How much is this bracelet worth, sir?"

"One hundred dollars, madam," replied the dealer.

"And how much is this one?" said she, touching the other.

"Five dollars," rejoined the jeweler.

"Indeed!" exclaimed the lady; "why is the difference in price so great? They are both of one size and pattern and look exactly alike."

"Yes, madam, they do, but there is just this difference between them. The hundred-dollar bracelet is made of gold, and its stones are real diamonds. The other is gilt, and the diamonds are imitations."

When I heard of these bracelets I said to myself, "There is a still greater difference between children. Some are

really good, others only appear to be good. The former have the diamond of heavenly love set in the pure gold of simple faith; the latter have selfishness for a diamond set in the mere gilding of a desire to be approved by their friends. The former are just what they appear to be, the latter appear to be what they are not."

Such were my thoughts. I hope they were not harsh ones. I would like to believe that all my readers are real diamonds, truly good boys and girls, having Christ's love in their hearts, and being obedient to his laws in all their actions. May I believe so? or must I admit that I have some shams in my family? How is it with you, Master Plausible? Are you a true diamond? And you, Miss Smirk, are you true or false? Say!

EDITOR'S TABLE.

CHRISTMAS, joyous, happy, laughing Christmas, is near at hand again. May all my readers spend it cheerfully, pleasantly, and, if they like, merrily. I like to see children merry, but they ought to be wise too. "It is good to be merry and wise," says the old song; but it is certainly bad to be merry and foolish. The wise man of



Jerusalem—you know his name, little Quickstep—once said that the laughter of fools is like the crackling of thorns under a pot. He meant that their merriment, arising out of something wrong, soon dies, just as a fire made of thorns soon goes out. You know that to be true, don't you? Were you ever merry over a silly or wicked thing for many minutes together?

But let Christmas find you full of good purposes, full of efforts to make everybody happy, and you may be as merry as you please. The times are hard nowadays, yet I hope old SANTA CLAUS will find gifts enough somewhere to fill you all with delight. Not that I think a gift, however costly, is the best thing in the world. Love is better than gifts, and that child whose mother loves her very tenderly, though she is too poor to give her even a penny doll at Christmas, may be happier than the child whose mother gives her a heap of costly presents without love. Gifts, my children, are trash, unless they are signs of love.

Some children think otherwise, I know. The taller of the two girls in the picture above was of that opinion. She had a rich uncle for whom she did not care one straw, but she loved his presents. Her sister loved him for his own sake. One day those sisters talked to each other about him. The elder said, "I care nothing for him, except that he is rich and I expect some splendid Christmas presents."

The younger replied, "His gifts would crush me if I could not love the giver. Love that cannot be bought is better than silver or gold."

A wise and good little sister, wasn't she?

The uncle happened to overhear what the sisters said. So when Christmas morning came he made himself into a regular Santa Claus, and entered the parlor loaded with all sorts of pretty things. He gave the best of them to

the younger sister, her brother, and other members of the family. To that selfish elder sister he gave—what do you think? A mask!

Wasn't that capital? "Served her right," you reply. Exactly so. And now let me say to you all, that if you value your friends for their gifts only, you won't enjoy even the gifts. They will not please you half as much nor half as long as they would if you loved the givers better than the presents. But I have said enough on this point. Once more I wish you all a merry Christmas. I shake hands with you all in my heart. I send you lots of mental kisses. I send you my love. May the glorious Father who sent his son Jesus to be born in Bethlehem, and so made Christmas for you to enjoy, bless you all! Now, Corporal, untie your letter budget!

"Before I do that, Mr. Editor, I wish you to lay this Christmas puzzle before my noble company. Here it is:

"Find the name of a man who governed the land near which Christ was born and at the time of his birth; of another king who ruled over the land in which Christ was born; of a man who had long waited for the birth of Jesus; of a woman who became celebrated because of the birth of Jesus; of some great personages who sang a glorious song at the birth of Christ; of some other persons who paid the new-born babe a visit; of a building which stood very near the Saviour's birthplace; of a place which heard sad voices a few days after Christ's birth; and of some birds which died soon after the Saviour's birth. The initials of these names, properly arranged, will give a word which stands for one of the happiest days in the year.

"This is my puzzle, sir, and the boy who does not give the answer to his mother mustn't have any turkey for dinner Christmas-day. Now for my letters. Here is one from JEMIMA D., of —, saying:

"I have a good home, and one little sister living and two in heaven. My health is not good, so I cannot go to school, but my ma tries to teach me at home. I and my little Sister Sylvia wish to join your Try Company. We mean to try and be good girls, and not say 'I can't' when our ma asks us to do anything. How I should like to see your Try Company all in a band. I think it would be worth seeing. My pa is away. How I do want to see him! I hope he may be spared to come home again. I am a Canada girl, and ever mean to stand for the right, the pure, and the true.

"P. S.—We have just received a letter from pa. He is in — and is well."

Huzzah for Jemima D. and her absent father, boys and girls! May she whip the giant as the brave Wolf once whipped the French on the heights of Quebec!

"C. E. G., of —, writes:

"Last evening Maggie Marchal, of our Sunday-school, twelve years old, said in our prayer-meeting: 'I was praying to-day for pardon, and I trembled and I saw a vision of white, and something said, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow," and what I saw became a lamb—so pure—and I didn't tremble any more and couldn't pray much, and I went to my sister, and she said Jesus spoke those words and had blessed me, and I prayed, "Lord, help my unbelief," and I believed and am happy.'"

I have not much faith in visions, though no doubt they are sometimes sent to the children of God, even to young girls like Maggie. If Maggie truly serves Jesus I shall believe her vision was a real one; but I don't advise my readers to expect the Saviour to appear to them in that way. His usual way is to speak in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and not to the eyes by visions. May my dear Maggie so live as to see the Lamb on his throne! What next, Corporal?

"WILLIE B. T., of — City, says:

"I am six years old and have been to the Sabbath-school two years in this place. I like to go very much. We have to learn two verses in the Bible to get a blue ticket, and it takes ten blue tickets to get a pink one, and when we get ten pink ones we draw a nice book. I have eight pink ones. I would like to join your Try Company. We take the Sunday-School Advocate here and like to read it very much. Last Sabbath I read of a little boy who sent you fifteen cents to get your picture. I would like you to send me one for five three cent stamps which you will find in the letter, and one to pay the postage back. I have a Brother Johnnie, eleven years old, and a little Sister Annie, eleven weeks old, with a dimple in one of her cheeks."

Willie must kiss that baby with the dimpled cheek for me. My photo was sent. I like Willie's spirit. It is a loving one. He loves the Advocate, the Sunday-school, Brother Johnnie, his mother, and I know not whom or what besides. May our heavenly Father bless him, and make him an heir of the city which has golden streets and pearly gates.—Good-by for a fortnight.