

tell a first lie, or commit a first act of disobedience, or a first theft, or take a first smoke, or a first drink of strong liquor, or any other wrong act. First steps almost always lead to second ones, and they to third; and so it is that first acts, which seem trifling, often end in ruin and death. Will you not then beware of first wrong steps?

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

### How a Little Boy Hurt Himself.

"PLEASE do my sum for me, Caroline," said a round-faced boy to his sister one afternoon, as he held up his slate for her inspection.

"You have begun wrong," said Caroline. "You should have commenced with the right hand column, not the left."

"Well, you do it for me," pleaded Albert.

"I would if I didn't want to hurt you," rejoined his sister.

"Hurt me doing my sums? Ha! ha! I should like to be hurt that way every day. Come, do my sum, there's a dear, good sister, do."

"No, I can't do it. I love you too well. If you don't learn to help yourself over the hard places and things you meet, you will be a dunce and a weakling all the days of your life. Come, rub out those two figures on the left, and begin to subtract the right column. One from three, how many remain?"

"I won't tell you. You are a great big lump of ugliness. I don't like you one bit. I'll go and get Tom to help me."

With these big, swelling, naughty words, Albert ran off in a pet to his brother Tom's room. Tom was bought with a few marbles to do the sum, and thus Albert hurt himself.

Yes, *hurt himself*. Hurt his *mind*, helped break down his own nerve, pluck, and spirit to overcome difficulties. Of course, if Albert always treats himself in this way he will be a dunce in learning, a weakling in mind, and a coward in soul. He may live to be a hundred years old, but he will never be a real man. If you know any other way to become strong and useful than by bravely facing the music of hard study and hard work I would like to hear from you.

There is no other way. If boys and girls want to be worth anything to themselves or any one else, they must learn to help themselves. By overcoming difficulties they become strong. By crying, whining, and getting helped over all the hard places they become pigmies, nothings, boobies, babies, and most always something worse even than that.

QUEERSTICK.

### Child's Idea of God's Power.

A TEACHER of an infant-class in Sabbath-school had the little ones, about ten in number, gathered around her while she instructed a new scholar as to the character of God and the creation. When she said, "This great God made the water and ground, the grass and trees, the birds, the fish, and all animals, out of nothing," one of the number, who had previously heard the story, looking earnestly into the new-comer's face, and with a gesture of his closed fist, which seemed to say, "And still more wonderful," exclaimed, "Yes, and he had no tools either."—*Lutheran Sunday-School Herald*.

"You must not play with that little girl, my dear," said an injudicious parent. "But, mamma, I like her; she is a good little girl, and I'm sure she dresses as neatly as I do, and has lots of toys." "I cannot help that, my dear," responded the foolish mother; "her father, you know, is a shoemaker." "But I don't play with her father, I play with her; and I'm sure she aint a shoemaker."



For the Sunday-School Advocate.

### Berrying.

BY MRS. H. C. GARDNER.

THEY are off to the pastures wild,  
Where the shadowy wood  
Has for ages stood,  
And the forest flowers have smiled.

They stop by the little brook,  
They kneel by its brink  
For a cooling drink,  
And into its clear depths look.

In the dimpled, sun-browned hands  
There are baskets bright,  
Plaited red, and white,  
And blue, in patriot bands.

Far over the hills they go;  
Like fluttering wings  
Seem the gay hat strings  
That out in the breezes blow.

I know little Nell is there—  
I can tell her dress  
And every tress  
And curl of her bright brown hair.

The sisters Lily and May,  
With eyes as blue  
As the violet's hue,  
And smiles like the dawn of day.

Little Nat is there, I suppose—  
Indeed, I just know  
That he always will go  
With his beautiful twin-sister Rose.

There are more girls and boys  
In the merry group,  
And the whole gay troop  
Is full of laughter and noise.

They know where the berries hide,  
And grow in the shade,  
As if half afraid  
In the sunshine to abide.

They frolic with laughter and song  
By the singing rills,  
O'er the fair green hills,  
The rich-freighted bushes among.

On the childish, dewy lips  
Are the purple veins  
Of the berry-stains  
That color the finger tips.

O childhood, happy and free!  
With its swift-winged years,  
With its smiles and tears,  
Its innocent beauty and glee!

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

### The Boy's Reproof.

As I was walking out one afternoon I saw some men and boys huddled together looking eagerly downward. I drew near the group, and saw that what created so much excitement was a mouse drowning in a pail of water. How the poor little creature struggled! But it was all in vain; his strength was fast failing, and no one seemed willing to help him. Presently a voice was heard, and turning my eyes in the direction of the speaker, I saw a boy—nearly a young man—whose face was flushed with indignation, and bearing the expression of pity.

"Why do you torture that poor creature thus?" said he in a voice tremulous with emotion.

"He deserves it," answered one of the men.

"No animal deserves torture, sir," responded the brave boy. "If that little mouse has nibbled your cheese you cannot convince it that it has done a wicked thing. It does not know that your cheese cost you labor or money. If it be necessary to kill an animal in order to save your property, do it at once. Will you teach other mice not to steal by killing this one by slow degrees? Sir, this is nothing but cruelty! there is no excuse for it—no reason but that you delight in the sufferings of a poor little mouse."

At length a kind-hearted shoemaker, hearing our young hero, said, "Such treatment of a poor mouse is wrong, that's a fact."

The crowd was silent and evidently ashamed. I went about my business, and in a minute returned, and saw that the boy's plea had prevailed. The water had been thrown into the street, and the mouse saved from drowning.

Children, study to be kind to brutes. Cruelty to them is proof of a want of kind feeling to human beings. Cultivate this kindness by considering two things: first, that they suffer like you; and second, that it is your bounden duty to be kind and tender toward them. An eminent Christian said a man's religion was not worth much if his dog did not fare the better for it.

BROTHER TIM.

### Declamation for a Little Boy.

LITTLE MICE.

I'm a little fellow, but I'm going to talk upon a big subject. 'Tis not too big for such as we either. Some men laugh about little boys and girls forming Cold Water Armies, and say, what good can they do? I will tell you.

You have read about a little mouse that a lion helped out of a little trouble, and laughed at him because he said something about returning the favor; well, this great lion got into a hunter's net, and he roared, and growled, and bit, and that was all he could do. By and by the little mouse came along and gnawed off, one by one, all the cords of the great net, and let the lion go. That is what we mean to do; we may be little mice, but we are going to gnaw off every thread of the great net that has bound down our country for so many years. The net is intemperance, and our cold-water pledge cuts off all the deceiving threads that look so pretty and delicate, as wine, beer, cordial, cider, as well as the stouter cords, rum, gin, brandy. Now don't you think we can do something? We know we can. Intemperance shant catch us, at any rate.—*Cold Water Army*.

ATR is a dish which one feeds on every minute, therefore it ought always to be fresh.