

to us it may be to somebody else. I believe economy is a Christian duty as much as keeping the Sabbath-day, and I feel impelled to instill my principles into every little heart I can."

So Katy learned two good lessons over her doll's talma—a lesson of order and another of economy—both of them excellent for any little boy or girl to learn.

J. E. M'C.

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ALPHONSO'S BARGAIN.

"ALPHONSO, what will you take for your cart?" said Alfred to his friend one day.

"Don't want to sell it," was the curt reply of the boy addressed.

"Why not?" rejoined Alfred. "I'll give you my new kite, my bat and ball, and my bag of marbles for it. I'm sure that's fair."

"You think so, perhaps, but there isn't such a nice cart as mine in the town; and what's more, there's nobody here who can make one like it. It's a regular beauty, Alf."

"I know it, and that's why I want to buy it. Come, wont you sell it?" said Alfred, coaxingly.

"Well," said Alphonso, "seeing we're old friends, I will, if you'll add your peg-top to the kite, bat, ball, and marbles—but mind, I don't care about it anyhow. I would rather keep my cart."

"I ought not to add the top," replied Alfred, "but I want the cart so much I guess I'll do it. Go and get the cart while I go after my things, Alphonso!"

The boys ran each to his home. They soon returned, Alphonso with the cart, and Alfred with the kite, bat, ball, marbles, and top. The exchange was made and they parted, mutually pleased with their bargain.

While Alphonso sat counting the marbles his thoughts troubled him. He stopped counting, held down his head, and muttered these words:

"Well, it was a little mean after all to sell him a broken-down cart. It's a regular sell. The axle is broken and it wont carry anything hardly. It was lucky, though, that I found that bottle of glue, or I couldn't have stuck the axle together. Shouldn't wonder if it breaks down before he gets home. Hah, hah! Won't he be mad, though! Never mind, I'll brass it. I've made a first-rate bargain and no mistake. It aint my fault altogether. I only looked out for my side. Alf ought to have looked out for his. He'll think I'm sharp at a trade, and he'll think right, ha, ha, ha."

Alphonso had, as my readers can perceive, cheated his playmate by selling him his cart with a broken axle. While loading it with stones he had broken the axle, and, finding a bottle of liquid glue in his father's workshop, he had mended it so that it would carry the cart-body, but would not bear a load. By concealing this fact he had obtained a price from Alfred which he could not have got had he frankly told the truth about it. It was a clear case of cheating.

Alfred took his wagon home in high spirits. It was a pretty thing to look at, and the boy was proud of his purchase.

"Come out here, Carrie!" cried he as he passed into the yard of his home, "Come out and see my cart!"

Carrie ran into the yard. "Isn't it beautiful!" said she as soon as she had taken a look at it. "Now you can give me a ride, Alfred, can't you?"

"That's just what I bought it for, Carrie," replied Alfred, laughing. "Get in! I'll give you a nice ride round the garden now."

Carrie jumped into the cart like the little fairy that she was; but no sooner did Alfred begin to pull than crack, thump; down went the cart with poor Carrie in it.

"A regular spill!" cried Alfred, laughing at his sister's queer plight. "Who would have thought you would have broken my cart down so? You are heavier than I thought for, Carrie."

"I'm not heavy," rejoined Carrie as she stepped out of the wreck. "It's your cart that's weak."

"That can't be," said Alfred, "for I saw Alphonso draw Ned Jones and Pete White in it the other day, and you don't weigh half as much as one of them."

"Then it must have been broken when you bought it," said Carrie.

"Do you think so?" asked Alfred; "I'll see."

Alfred turned the cart over and examined the axle. He found it broken across just where it had been joined, or stuck together rather, with glue. Alphonso's secret was out now. Alfred saw that he had been cheated.

"I wouldn't have served Alphonso in that way," said Alfred; "I'm sorry for him though, for I'd rather be cheated myself than cheat another."

That was nobly said. Alfred had lost less than Alphonso in this bargain. He had lost top, marbles, bat, ball, and kite only; but Alphonso had lost his character, had corrupted his heart, had shown himself to be an unprincipled boy.

Don't you think Alphonso's conduct was mean, false, and wicked, my children? Do you think he made any real profit out of that bargain? It is true that he got a large price for a broken-down cart, but by corrupting himself he lost what is worth much more than money or playthings—his good conscience, his self-respect, his reputation. In my opinion he made a very bad bargain. If any of you think otherwise, you may write me about it.

OUR LETTER COLUMN.

WITH May-day smiles I greet you, my young friends, praying that your hearts may bloom with the graces of the Holy Spirit, as Nature blooms beneath the sun and gentle winds of May.



"Here is an illustrated anagram. The names of the two principal persons—a farmer's wife and a soldier—in the picture are contained in the following sentence:

"Bid Ai dig lava.

"Who can discover the names?"

"And here is the answer to the Biblical question in our last: 'For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' Matt. xvi, 26.

"Here is a letter from I. S., of Altoona. He is superintendent of a Sunday-school of two hundred and fifty scholars in the mountains of Pennsylvania. He says his classes are formed into missionary societies, each electing its treasurer monthly, and have its own name, such as 'White Rose,' 'Doves,' 'Pearls,' 'Advance Guards,' etc. These societies raised \$191 92, which you will allow was very well done for a mountain school."

Very well, indeed, though I do not know why mountain children should not do as well as the children of the plain. Indeed, corporal, those mountain boys and girls often quit their quiet homes and become the stars and ornaments of our big cities. I think Altoona must be marked A 1 on your list, corporal.

"I agree. Here are some dying words of our departed members:

"Do not weep, mother; I can trust in Jesus."—ELLEN BERRY, fourteen years old.

"You will see me again up in heaven, mother."—IDA WRIGHT, eight years old.

"Don't you see those eyes? O how beautiful! They look like gold, don't you see them, papa? They are angels. The room is full of them. Don't you hear the music? Just wait and I'll have a harp and you will hear me play. Go to church, papa, and pray, but don't pray for me, for I shall be in heaven."—TILLA MOORE, ten years old.

"I will go with you, blessed Jesus. I will go with you. I must go home."—HELEN L. M'ELROY, sixteen years old.

"Put on my tombstone, Blessed Bible, thou art mine."—MARY LEE, twelve years old.

"Mother, you will come; father, you will come too."—SARAH LEE, aged fifteen years.

"Here is a letter about NATTIE MINOR, which I should like to see printed, but it is too long for our columns. Besides it is a memoir, and you never print memoirs in our paper, do you, sir?"

No, corporal, never. If I did I should have room for nothing else, so I treat all alike and print none.

"You are right no doubt, Mr. Editor; but I must read you a part of this letter:

"When Nattie was sick he called his mother to his side and entered into conversation with her. Soon he stopped talking and folded his hands across his breast, and for some time engaged in earnest prayer. Opening his eyes he looked up and said, 'Mother, I believe I've found my Saviour.' His mother, thinking that possibly she did not understand him, asked him what he said. With emphasis he replied, 'I believe I've got religion.' 'What makes you think so, my son?' 'O, I'm so much lighter now,' said he. 'Why, I've been trying to get religion two days, and have been praying all the time, but somehow I felt so heavy in my heart; but now it seems as if I was ten pounds lighter, and I'm so happy,' and then he prayed again. The same day at noon he called his father to his side and repeated nearly the same words.

"A few minutes before Nattie died he was asked if he was happy. By a sign he at once answered in the affirmative. Said one again, 'Does it seem all bright?' In the same prompt manner he answered, 'Yes.' Then folding his little hands, he moved his lips, and his angelic spirit departed while in the very attitude of prayer."

Stop, corporal, stop! You will make me break my rule if you don't. Dear Nattie was a very uncommon child, and it must be a great comfort to his parents to think of the excellent character he bore. Let my children remember that if they die young their good conduct will dwell in the memory of their parents like the sound of a sweet old melody. What next, corporal?

"I. R. G., of Alliance, Stark County, Ohio, writes:

"We have been trying to continue Sunday-school through this winter in Alliance with pretty good success as you will here see. We have twenty girls and ten boys who are punctual in their attendance, learning the catechism, etc. They all like the S. S. Advocate, and hold up their hands to join the Try Company. They have made a

missionary collection of \$2, which must need go through your hands to the treasurer. Now if the corporal will admit these thirty children into his army we will take a fresh start and not stop till we get the full company of one hundred. Why not, when we have here Thomas D., who learns and says his lesson like a little man; and Christabelle M., a charming little singer; and Normeldona I., a smart little girl to speak pieces; and Ellen I., a very punctual attendant at Sunday-school.

"Those thirty children having given good proof of their fitness by attending school all winter and by collecting that money are admitted to my company," says the corporal, and I sent my greetings to those noble little fellows of Alliance. Will they each resolve to do something every day to make somebody happy? I hope so.

"Here is a line from MORRIS B., of Marion, Illinois. He says;

"I am not well. I have to lay in my bed. I have been reading the Sunday-School Advocate for about three years and like it better all the time. I live away down in Southern Illinois, in Marion, Williamson County. There are a great many wicked people in this country, but we have a good Sunday-school here. I do think it will do some good to the children, and may be to the parents. I love Sunday-school, good books, and your good little paper. I want to do all the good I can. I hope to be well soon. Will the good corporal let me join the Try Company?"

"My sick little brother is welcome to enter my ranks," adds the corporal, and I sincerely wish Master Morris better health and power to fight sin in his neighborhood.