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SUFFER LITTLE

UNTO ME

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WAIT AND SEE.

RUTH and Lois DIMMOCK were playing at their door building houses with pieces of colored crockeryware. Ruth was seven, Lois five. Many a laugh they had as their houses tumbled down just as they were putting the roof on; and the museum itself could not have made them happier, with all its wonderful things, than they were at that moment. It was a beautiful July morning, and Mrs. Hannah Dimmock, their mother, was busy within preparing their breakfast.

While they were thus rejoicing in their play, many persons on foot and in carriages passed through the gate, for they lived at the toll-house. The children were so accustomed to passengers that, far from being interrupted, they scarcely looked at them, till a woman with a large basket on her arm and a little boy by her side came up, when Ruth ran into the house crying out:

"O mother, mother, here's Aunt Jane and Cousin Billy," and Aunt Jane and Cousin Billy quickly followed her in. Lois crept in after, and they both

stood admiring silently the bright buttons on Billy's new jacket, and still more the bright dime he held in his hand, which he opened several times with considerable pride. Aunt Jane told Mrs. Dimmock she was going to the muster-ground and hoped to make something by her cakes, of which she had a heavy load.

"Are you going to take Billy?" said Mrs. Dimmock.

"O, he's been teasing my life out to go; but he'd be a deal better at home I told him."

"I should think so too," said Mrs. Dimmock, upon which Billy made a step or two toward the door.

"O mother," said Ruth, "please take us to the muster?"

"Nonsense!" replied Mrs. Dimmock; "do you want to get trodden to death? What should little folks like you and Billy want at the muster?"

"I want to see the soldiers," said Billy stoutly, "and to spend my dime; and I can have a horse for a penny."

"O mother, mother!" repeated Ruth, "please do take us."

Mrs. Dimmock did not answer her children, for

Lois chimed in with the petition; but she told Aunt Jane that, her husband being out, she had to attend the toll-gate.

"I will take the children to the muster," said Aunt Jane, looking good-naturedly at them, "if you like to trust them with me."

"Thank you kindly," said Mrs. Dimmock; "but I think home is the best place for them; and a better plan would be for you to leave Billy behind with me;" upon which Billy ran out of the house and laid hold of the gate-post, looking defiance at his Aunt Hannah, and declaring that he *would* go to the muster.

When they were gone, Ruth stood sorrowfully looking down the road, and her mother called twice before she went in to breakfast. Their mother took no notice, but she saw that the little girl was very angry. She cried as she ate, and Lois, who copied her in everything, thought it needful to look very unhappy too.

"Get your book, Ruth," said the mother when breakfast was over, "and learn your verse and teach Lois her hymn."

She obeyed, but with a very bad grace. Many times was she told she must learn the verse again, that it was not perfect; and at last, knowing that her mother would have her own way, she gave her mind to it, and the task was soon completed.

"Lay aside the book," said Mrs. Dimmock, "and run out now, pick up the chips that the carpenter has left, and Lois can bring them in in her pinafore, and after that you may play."

"I don't want to play," said Ruth sulkily, not quite loud enough for her mother to hear as she went out at the door.

When they got to the post Ruth began, "How cross mother is! She isn't a bit like Aunt Jane. I love Aunt Jane; she'd have taken us to the muster."

"Yeth," said little Lois.

"Mother makes us learn lessons."

"Yeth," said Lois.

"I don't think Billy ever learns lessons. If we'd been Billy we should have gone to the muster. Don't you wish we'd been Billy?"

"Yeth," said Lois.

"And then we should have Aunt Jane for mother, you know;" and so Ruth went on, Lois agreeing to everything she said, according to her usual custom.

"Shan't we make houses?" said Lois when the chips had been carried in.

"No," said Ruth, for whom the bright blue, red, and yellow fragments had lost all their charms.

As she was kicking them away, a gentleman came to the door and asked if Squire Jones had passed through the gate. Finding he had not, he said, "I will wait for him, then." It was Mr. Mortimer, the minister.

"How are my little friends here?" he said, and in a few minutes he had one on each knee asking them simple questions from the Bible. He was much pleased with Ruth, and little Lois, too, knew more than he had expected.