

[For the 'Messenger.'

The Day After Christmas.

'I'm tired of Christmas!'
'Oh, Robbie, you mustn't say that.'
'But I am. I've played with all my toys and I've eaten all my candies, and I'm just tired of everything.'
'Oh, but, Robbie, you know you should not talk like that,' said eight-year-old Nan, 'mother would not like it.'
'I wish mother was at home,' wailed baby Ethel.
'Let's go and see if Aunt Winnie is in, she'll muse us.'
'Why, children,' exclaimed a cheery voice, as Aunt Winnie herself opened the nursery door. 'What is the matter?'
'Oh, auntie, we were just going to look for you.'
'Yes, we're tired of Christmas.'
'Tired of Christmas, Robbie, already?'
The children led Aunt Winnie to the big armchair, and baby Ethel climbed up in her lap.
'Now, muse us, auntie. But don't tell us any more about Santa Claus; please,' said poor little Robbie.
Auntie smiled, and patted Robbie's flushed cheek.
'What is that little red horse-shoe on the floor? Would you hand it to me, please, dearie?'
'Which? The magnet? That was the littlest thing I got in my stocking yesterday. What are you going to do with it, auntie?'
'I want to show you a little experiment. Do you know what the magnet is for?'
'To catch iron with. It just catches the iron and holds it as if it was glued on,' answered Nan, who always noticed things, 'but you can take it off again,' she added, slowly.
'Yes,' said Aunt Winnie, 'Nan, dear, would you like to run to my room and look in my little tool box. There you will find a row of boxes of tacks. I should like you to bring the smallest box of tacks and the largest, and in the corner you will see a little pile of old tacks, bring a few of them. And if you can carry any more, you might bring three or four of the large nails at the right hand.'
'Oh, I'll go with her and carry the nails,' said Robbie, now quite interested. 'What can they be for? Do you think it is to hammer them into something, Nannie?' he asked as they ran along the hall. 'Auntie is always thinking of something nice.'
'Oh! see these beautiful little gold-headed nails. Shain't I take some of them, too?' as they opened the tool box.
'Well, Robbie, auntie didn't say so, you can carry those big nails.'
'Oh, but I'll just take these, they're so pretty,' said Robbie.
They ran back to the nursery.
'Here, auntie, here are the tacks. Don't you want a hammer, too?'
'No, darling, we don't need a hammer. Put the tacks on the table, please.'
Nan put the tacks carefully on the table and drew up a chair for Aunt Winnie.
Robbie seized the magnet, 'Will tacks come up on this, auntie? Oh, see, just see them jump for it. Look, Nan, I've caught them all.'
Nan was watching in astonishment. She turned with a puzzled face to her aunt.
'Auntie, why do some of the tacks hang on to each other without touching the magnet?' she asked.
Aunt Winnie smiled, 'Shall I preach you a little sermon, dearies? We will use the magnet for "an illustration," as the ministers say.'
'I'm going to be a minister when I grow

up, just like Uncle Robertson in Quebec, announced little Robbie.
'Me too, be a minister,' said baby Ethel.
'Huh,' said Robbie, 'girls can't be ministers, only men can.'
Ethel was about to wail over the misfortune of not being a man, but auntie kissed her and told her she might be a missionary when she grew up, and that was just as good as being a minister.
Ethel was comforted, and Nan, who paid but little attention to Robbie's aspirations, asked Aunt Winnie to 'do the sermon.'
'Well, let us suppose these tacks are a lot of people. What kind of people would we have here in the pile?'
'Big people and little people,' said Robbie, 'and middling-sized people.'
'And I suppose the crooked, old little tacks would be bad or ugly little people, and the gold-headed ones pretty, or rich. Wouldn't they, auntie?'
'Well, then, we have here a crowd of all sorts of people—'
'Like in Sunday-school,' observed Nan, 'there are all kinds there. Lots of little



children, and not so many big people, and some are rich and some are poor, just like the tacks.'
'Why, Nannie dear, you could almost "do" this sermon yourself.' Nan smiled and blushed.
'But what is the magnet going to do?' asked Robbie, who could never keep still very long.
'Well, now, supposing I hold the magnet down near the tacks, what happens?'
'Just like before,' said Rob, 'they all jump up to it.'
'Do they all jump up to it, Nan?'
'No,' answered Nan, slowly. 'Not all. I think all the little ones do, but scarcely any of the big ones, and only one end of the biggest.'
'Auntie, what has that got to do with preaching?' asked Robbie, curiously. 'When the minister talks he does not tell about magnets. He tells things out of the bible.'
'Auntie,' said the more thoughtful Nan, 'don't you mean it to be—ain't it like—' Suffer the little children to come,' because it's the little tacks that seem so glad to jump up on the magnet?'
'Yes, darling, that's just it. The small tacks represent the little children, for in the early years of our life we are more easily drawn to the Lord Jesus. It is much easier for little children to give themselves to Jesus than for those who are older and have formed habits of doing their own way in-

stead of doing the things Jesus would have them do.'

'Oh,' said Robbie, who had been thinking hard, 'Oh, and I know why the big tacks didn't come up so easily. Because they were bigger!'

Aunt Winnie smiled and patted Rob's curly head. 'You mean, that as the larger tacks were heavier and did not come up so easily, so, the older people get, the harder it is for them to give up their own way. And see this big nail. Just its head is lifted up, all the rest clings to the ground. Those who grow up without knowing Christ get so bound about with earthly ties, that it is nearly impossible for them to let go entirely—but nothing is impossible with God.'

'Auntie, why do those tacks hang on to each other—the ones that are not touching the magnet, I mean? I have been trying to make these on the table hold each other up, and they can't.'

'You know there is a power in the magnet, Robbie, and when a piece of iron comes in contact with it, it receives the power, too—it is the same kind of power, though there is not so much of it.'

'Auntie, I know what it's like,' said Nan softly—'Isn't it like, you know, when we come close to Jesus, he gives us some of his power and then we can do things for him?'

'Yes, darling, Jesus wants to give to each of his followers the same Holy Spirit which was in him when he lived down here on earth—the same spirit which kept him from yielding to temptation, which kept him obedient and sweet and helpful, when he was a little boy. Jesus will give his Spirit to even the youngest, because he wants us to be good, and we can not keep ourselves good.'

'Sometimes I'm very naughty,' said Nan, 'but I ask Jesus to make me a good little girl again, and he does.'

Aunt Winnie kissed them all, and was gathering up the tacks, but Robbie said, 'Oh, don't take them away, auntie, tell us some more about it.'

'Yes, please, tell us some more,' begged Nan, slipping her arm around auntie's neck.

'Well, it's getting late, but I'll show you this one thing more. See this piece of note-paper. And see, I'll set this one tack alone here in the middle of the table. Now, I hold the magnet over it, but in between I put the paper. The tack can not see the magnet, but what does it do as I move the magnet around over it?'

'Oh, oh, the tack follows it around.'

'Yes, well—you know we can not see Jesus now, something hides him from our sight just as this paper hides the magnet from the tack, but still we can follow in his footsteps though we can not see him who guides us. This is called "walking by faith." Now, I think we must really put these toys away, for tea will be ready soon, and we must be all tidy and ready when mother comes in.'

'And will you show us some more illustrations another day?' pleads Robbie.

'Yes, dear, some other day.'

IVY LEAF.

Some One to Love.

Mr. Moody is responsible for the following touching incident: 'During the war a little boy, Frankie Bragg, was placed in one of the hospitals. He said it was hard to be there, away from all those who loved him. The nurse who was attending him bent down and kissed him, and said she loved him. "Do you love me?" he asked. "Kiss me again; that was like my sister's kiss." The nurse kissed him again, and he said, with a smile, "It is not hard for me to die now, when I know that some one loves me." If we had more of this sympathy for the lost and the sorrowing, the world would soon feel our influence.'