

CANADA

# SUNDAY SCHOOL ADVOCATE

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For the Sunday-School Advocate.

### THE SHADOW IN THE SCHOOL-HOUSE.

WHAT is the matter with those boys? How unhappy they all look! The boy on the right almost makes your tooth ache while you look at him. The next boy wears a face such as I have seen a boy put on when about to take a big dose of bitter medicine. I guess his sum seems to him as bitter as any pill he was ever forced to swallow. That fellow with the dunce's cap on his head looks as if he expects another box on the ear the next time he goes up to say his lesson. The two next are whispering to each other about the teacher's ill-temper. The little fellow in pantalettes is crying over his A B C, and the two last are watching the teacher with rueful faces. Did you ever see a more woe-begone set of scholars in your life? What ails them? Something is out of joint in that school-house. What is the matter?

*The teacher is cross to-day.*

That's all the trouble. The woe on those young faces is the shadow of the teacher's ill-temper.

The picture itself is designed to illustrate some beautiful lines in a beautiful poem called "THE DESERTED VILLAGE," written by OLIVER GOLDSMITH. You must all read the poem whenever you meet with a copy—I mean those of you who are old enough to understand it. But, whether you read the poem or not, let the picture teach you how easy it is for one person to make many miserable. Those eight children look and feel wretched because their teacher is in an ill-humor. If their teacher was in a pleasant state of mind they would all wear sunshiny faces.

*You don't like the cross teacher who makes his scholars so miserable, eh? Well, I don't blame you; but stop! don't throw down the paper yet! Don't you sometimes put everybody's feelings out of joint in your house? Be honest, my little fellow! Do you not have fits of ill-temper sometimes which cause all in the house to wear rueful faces? While you are answering that question I will print the lines in Oliver Goldsmith's poem to which the picture refers. You may commit them to memory if you please.*

"Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,  
With blossomed furze unprofitably gay,  
There in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,  
The village-master taught his little school.  
A man severe he was, and stern to view;  
I knew him well, and every truant knew.  
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace  
The day's disasters in his morning's face:  
Full well they laughed with counterefeited glee  
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;  
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,  
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned.  
Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,  
The love he bore to learning was in fault.  
The village all declared how much he knew,  
'Twas certain he could write and cipher too;  
Lauds he could measure, terms and tide presage,  
And e'en the story ran—that he could gauge.  
In arguing too, the parson owned his skill,  
For e'en though vanquished he could argue still;  
While words of learned length and thundering sound  
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around—  
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,  
That one small head could carry all he knew."

Look out in your next paper for a picture of those same boys when their teacher wears a sunny face, Adieu.  
F. F.