



A MISSION HOUSE.

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HERE are many kinds of houses. One of the best is the mission house. It makes a home for missionaries, where they all live together. There can not be a home without a house. Men and women never forget the house they lived in when they were children. Why? Because it was their home. And it is so with missionaries. In some countries these mission houses have to be very warm, for the winter is cold; in other places, where there is little or no winter, very thin and open houses will do. In Japan many of the houses are built of paper. What a funny thing it would be to have a house built of paper here! How soon the rain would soak it; how soon the wind would blow it over! So we think; but they have rain and wind in Japan, and yet the houses stand for a long time, because, I suppose, they know how to build them. But still they are, oh! so cold in winter—for the winter in some parts of Japan is as severe as it is in Canada. Some of our missionaries are living in those cold houses in Japan, and when the Missionary Society gets money enough it will build better houses for them. So it is that money is always wanted for missionary work.

RAGGED TOM; THE SURETY.

ON Sunday afternoon a big boy stood at the door of the Sunday-school. He was so bad that he had been turned out of school the Sunday before. His father and mother brought him, and begged he might be received in again. The superintendent said: "We should be glad to do him good, but we are afraid he will ruin all the other children. It is very bad for a school when a big boy sets a wicked example."

"We know he is a bad boy at school," said the parents, "but he is ten times worse at home, and he will be lost if you do not take him back."

"We could take him back if we could secure his good behavior. I will see," thought the superintendent.

So he stepped back into the school, and rang the bell for silence. All listened while he said, "That boy wants to come into the school again, but we cannot take him back without making sure of his good behavior. Will anyone be surety for him?"

A pause followed. The elder boys shook their heads. They said they knew him too well. The others did not care for him. But one little boy pitied the big bad boy, and was very sorry no one would be surety. The little boy went by the name of "Ragged Tom." It was not his fault that he was ragged, for his mother was very poor. The superintendent soon heard the little voice, "If you please, sir, I will, sir."

"You, Tom? a little boy like you? Do you know what is meant by being a surety, Tom?"

"Yes, sir, if you please; it means that when he is a bad boy I am to be punished for it."

"And you are willing to be punished for that big boy?"

"Yes, sir, if he's bad again."

"Then come in," said the superintendent, looking to the door; and the big boy, with a downcast face, walked across the floor. He was thinking as he walked, "I know I'm a bad boy, but I'm not so bad as that! I'll never let that little fellow be punished for me—no, never!" God had graciously put that thought into the big boy's mind. He was helping Tom as a surety.

As the children were leaving school, the superintendent saw the big boy and little Tom walking together. He said to himself, "I am afraid that boy will do Tom harm. I must go and look after them."

When he reached the cottage where Tom lived, he said to his mother, "Where is your son Tom?"

"Oh, he's just gone upstairs with a great boy he brought with him. I don't know what they are doing."

"May I go up?"

"Oh, yes, sir."

The superintendent went softly and quickly up the stairs, and, as he reached the top, he could see through the door that Tom and the boy were kneeling together. He soon heard Tom's voice saying, "O Lord, make this boy that has been the worst boy in the school, O Lord, make him the best."

The superintendent knelt down by Tom's side, and they all prayed together.