

And ever, as the boys passed onwards, with their eyes fixed on the shining Cross, the gay travellers shouted loudly to them, "Come down with us, and rest and take your ease awhile."

At length Lawrence stood still, and said, "What can be the harm of joining those people for a few moments? I want to catch some of the golden fish, and just try whether it is as pleasant down there as they say. Why should the King grudge us a little pleasure, for the road is hard and stony? Do come, Vincent and Bernard; why should we set ourselves up to be better than other people? If you will not come, I shall go down alone, and enjoy myself for a little." And, not withstanding all their entreaties, Lawrence was soon at the bottom of the deep bank, eagerly engaged in attempts to capture some of the brilliant fish. The idlers welcomed Lawrence gaily, and told him that the king need never know that he had disobeyed his order, "For," said they, "he cannot see you hidden down here, living as he does so far away."

But Lawrence answered, "Indeed, you are mistaken, for I know that the King can see us everywhere, though we cannot see him. However, I think he is too kind to be angry with us for amusing ourselves awhile, when we are wearied with the roughness of the road."

As he spoke the men looked at each other and laughed, but they did not see that close beside them stood a servant of the great king, watching Lawrence with a sad, reproachful gaze.

"Well," said Lawrence at length, "I do not find much pleasure in looking at the fish in the distance, I want to see if they really are made of gold; why should we not catch some?"

The others loudly applauded the idea.

"Yes, why should we not capture a few, and perhaps make ourselves rich and happy? True, they are not ours, but there is no one to prevent our taking as many as we please. Who will be the first to try?"

"I will," said Lawrence; I am not afraid."

So he stooped down, and grasping a turf of grass with one hand, with the other he attempted to seize one of the golden fish. Alas! it was too quick for him, and just when he thought he had it safely, it slipped through his fingers like water, and swam gaily away. At last he grew impatient, and reaching over to catch a particularly fine fish that had attracted his attention, he succeeded in grasping it firmly in his hand. In doing so, however, he lost his balance, the turf of grass gave way, and he fell into the water, which closed over his head.

Ah! then, indeed, he knew how wrong he had been to leave the narrow road, to play with the glittering fish, and in a moment there flashed through his mind all the bad and cowardly things he had done in his life. As he rose to the surface, he called loudly to his gay friends to come and save him, but alas! they who had been so anxious to

tempt him into mischief, now stood coldly by, and laughed at his struggles. He would certainly now have been drowned, had it not been for the ready aid of the King's servant, who had passed hitherto unnoticed.

(To be Continued.)

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