

"FORBID THEM NOT."

THERE is no sweeter story told  
 In all the blessed Book  
 Than how the Lord within his arms  
 The little children took.

We love him for the tender touch  
 That made the leper whole,  
 And for the wondrous words that healed  
 The tired, sin-sick soul.

But closer to his loving self  
 Our human hearts are brought,  
 When for the little children's sake  
 Love's sweetest spell is wrought.

For their young eyes his sorrowing face  
 A smile of gladness wore,  
 A smile that for his little ones  
 It weareth evermore.

The voice that silenced priest and scribe  
 For them grew low and sweet,  
 And still for them his gentle lips  
 The loving words repeat.

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The Sunbeam.

TORONTO, MAY 14, 1892.

THE LITTLE SHEPHERD

FREDDY WELSH went with his father to their sheep ranch twenty miles from home. Here was where the herder stayed and watched the flock of a thousand sheep through the long sunny days. The little cabin was his home at night, close by the corral where the sheep were folded. Freddy and his father stayed with the herder several weeks in the spring, to help to take care of the lambs. The flock was divided, and Freddy, who was only seven years old, was given the charge of the lambs and their mothers.

They were turned out in the morning, and slowly made their way from the corral, eating the tender grass.

Freddy could watch them from the cabin until nearly noon. Then they would be so far away that he was sent to turn them and drive them slowly home toward night. One day he saw a rattlesnake.

"Did you kill it?" I asked, "or did you run away?"

"Yes, ma'am, I killed it. Of course I did."

"What did you kill it with?" I asked, curious to know.

"A club," said he, "an oak club."

"But where did you find a club?" I asked, for the prairie was treeless.

"I dug it out of the ground. It was an old picket-pin."

"But I don't see how you ever dared to strike the snake," I said, as I looked at his chubby hands. "Most little boys would have run away as fast as they could. Weren't you afraid of it?"

"Yes, ma'am, some; but I hit it before it got coiled up. It can't strike before it gets coiled up."

"Didn't your father think you were brave?"

"He didn't know until I had killed two."

"Then you have killed more than one rattlesnake?"

"Yes, ma'am, I've killed eleven. I have the rattles at home that I took from the biggest one. It had nine rattles."

I have been thinking that Freddy's rule would work well in other things than killing snakes. "Strike before it gets coiled," was his way of getting rid of rattlesnakes. I know a boy who has a fiery temper. Don't you think it would be well for him to strike before he gets coiled—to say to his anger before it rises, "Keep down, I will not let you master me?"

WHAT KIND OF A MAN.

LITTLE DAVID was made very happy one Christmas by a present of a box of carpenter's tools from his uncle. He fitted up a bench in the cellar with some boards that his father gave him, put up a rack at the back of the bench for his saws, gimlets, chisels, and augers, and every tool is kept in its place, and no shavings are allowed to accumulate in his "shop," as he calls it. He has put up neat little shelves for his mother, and has done several small jobs about the house that, but for him, would probably never have been done at all.

He once made a pretty boat for himself,

which excited the admiration of all the boys in the neighbourhood; and many of them wished they could have one, too.

At last one of the boys asked David if he would make him one, saying he would pay him five cents for it when it was finished. David consented, and worked all his leisure time for nearly two weeks. He told Frank one day, after school, that he might have the boat that night, as he could finish it in a short time. So directly after tea Frank and another playmate, Henry, came to see the wonderful boat. Frank was delighted with it; but Henry, whose father was captain of a vessel, and who had travelled a great deal with his father, sneered at it.

"Ho!" said he, "if I couldn't make a better boat than that, I'd sell out. Just look at that bow; it isn't half sharp enough. I can make a great sight better boat than that and not half try. I'll make you a handsome one for two cents—make as it ought to be, too."

Frank hesitated and looked at David, but David leaned back against the bench and made no reply.

"He don't know anything about boats," continued Henry. "He never went to sea. He don't know the difference between the bow and the stern; and I'll bet he calls the 'thwarts' seats."

Still David said nothing in reply.

"Well," said Frank, "I guess you can make me one if you'll do it for two cents. I shan't want your boat, Dave."

Then David straightened up, and without noticing Frank in any way, turned to Henry and said, "Well, Henry, do you know what I think of you? I think you are the meanest boy I know. When Frank gave me the order to make his boat, I never said a word about making one for him; but now that it is done, and he likes it, you coax him to let you make one for him, and I am cheated out of my five cents. Any boy that will act as you have just grown up to be a mean man. You will keep growing meaner and meaner. I will wait for you and see how you come out."

And then he put the boat away under his bench, and began sweeping up the shavings, while the boys went away feeling rather ashamed of themselves.

David may have been a little severe, but he taught them a good lesson. Boys as well as men should keep their agreements, and any boy who acts in a mean or underhand way when he is small will, unless he reforms, grow up to be a mean man, and will be disliked by those who come in contact with him.