

THE GOSPEL TRIBUNE,

AND CHRISTIAN COMMUNIONIST,

A
Monthly Interdenominational Journal.

VOLUME III.]

JULY, 1856.

[NUMBER 3.

"ONE IS YOUR MASTER, even CHRIST: AND ALL YE ARE BRETHREN."

Moral and Religious Miscellany.

KNOCKING DOWN THE BASKET.

A little girl seven or eight years old was going up one of the steepest streets in N——, carrying a basket full of bits of wood and shavings on her head. The wind blew hard, and a great deal of sleet had fallen the day before, freezing as it fell, and making the pavements very slippery. As the little girl stepped slowly and carefully, to keep her basket well balanced, a large boy, dressed in warm and comfortable clothes, went behind her, and, slyly pushing her basket, sent it tumbling to the ground, scattering the wood in every direction. The shavings went flying down the hill, and the basket rolled over and over after them. The boy who had done all this mischief burst into a loud laugh.

The little girl turned upon him a sorrowful and reproachful look, and said "No, no," and then ran for her basket. She slipped and fell. Poor thing! her troubles were more than she could well bear, and she began to cry aloud.

The boy still stood and laughed. Just then a gentleman, who had seen the whole, came up, and, laying his hand on the boy's shoulder, said,—

"See what you have done! Was it a smart thing for a great boy to upset a little girl's basket on a cold, windy, slippery day? What skill or cunning was there in the trick? Anybody could have done it that had a heart bad enough. What fun was there in it? I cannot see any. Did you feel happy when you did it? I know very well you did not; although you laughed, you didn't feel well in your heart."

The boy said nothing, but held down his head and looked ashamed.

"You are sorry for what you have done," continued the gentleman; "I see that you are. Now, do all you can to make up for it. Pick up the wood and as many of the shavings as you can, and put them in the basket for the little girl. Her fingers are already stiffened with the cold."

The boy did so, and then, turning to the gentleman, said, "Shall I put the basket on her head, sir?"

"No," was the answer; "you are stout and strong, and had better carry it home for her. You ought to help her all you can after what you have done."

"Where do you live?" said the gentleman to the little girl.

"Plebot Street," she answered in broken English. "Plymouth Street; that is not far from here. What is your name?"

"Lena Schneider."

"You are a little German girl, are you not?" he asked.

She nodded her head, smiling as she did so; for, though he was a stranger, her heart was warmed by his sympathy and kindness. Pleasant tones and

kind acts made acquaintance and friendship, and love very quickly. O, how much happiness they make both for these who give and those who receive them?

The gentleman walked beside the little Lena on her way to her home, while the boy followed with her basket. She turned into a narrow street of old wooden houses, and stopped at the cellar of one of them.

"Thank ye; good bye," she said, as she reached for her basket.

"Do you live here?" asked the gentleman. She again nodded her head and smiled.

"We'll go in and see your mother," said he.

Lena went down the old stairs, and, opening a door, led them into a low, dimly-lighted cellar, where sat a woman making baskets. On a blanket by her feet lay a miserable, half-starved infant, whose face looked old and withered. Two other children were sitting on the floor, playing with some small pieces of basket stuff. The mother and Lena spoke together in German, and the mother rose to offer what seats she had to the visitors, while Lena put some of the wood she had been gathering on the dying fire.

The gentleman asked some questions about the family; but the mother could not understand a word of English. He learned from Lena that the husband and father had died on the passage from Germany; that their money was all gone; and they had no friends in this part of the country to help them. He gave them some money, and then took his leave with the boy.

When they had reached the street he asked the boy his name.

"William Leonard," he answered.

"Now, William," said the gentleman, as he wrote a few words on a scrap of paper, "I am sure you would be glad to do a little to help that poor woman and her children.

"Yes, sir," said William, his face brightening as he spoke.

"Then take this note to my house, No. 54 W—— Street, get as large a basket of hard wood as you can carry, and give it to the poor Germans. Those icy bits of old boards that they have, won't do much towards warming them in their open fire-place; they will need something more before I can get them a load of coal from the city, and a stove. Now, good morning; will you not come and see me in a few days?"

"I should like to," said William.

"And perhaps you may then be able to tell me that there is more pleasure in helping people and doing them good than in playing unkind tricks upon them."

"I think there is now," was the answer. William got a very large load of hard wood at the house he was directed to; but it did not seem very heavy to him, his heart beat so lightly and happily. When he