



## The Boy with a Bad Mark.

'A BOY WANTED.'

There stood the notice in the shop window in large staring characters, as if to say that the people inside were really in earnest on the matter.

A small crowd of boys stood outside the shop looking at the notice. It was Saturday morning and they had a holiday from school; some of them were tired of learning and wanted to commence life on their own account, so they had agreed to take a walk together around some of the chief streets of the city in order to find out if any situations were vacant.

'Jack Martin,' said one of the lads who seemed to be a kind of leader, pointing to the notice, 'here you are, the very thing. Go in, Jack, and try your luck.'

Jack hesitated; it was easy enough talking about getting a situation, but it was very different to go into a place of business, and perhaps be asked any number of very unpleasant questions.

'No, no,' replied Jack, 'I don't care about an ironmonger's. Here you, Bill Fielding, you are very fond of pocket knives, why don't you have a try?'

'A tip-top place, I should think,' said the leader of the little crowd of excited boys. 'Just see what you'll learn here, fenders and fire-irons, lamps, and knives and forks, much better than quill driving all day in a stuffy office.'

'A splendid idea,' remarked Bob Ratcliff, 'your fortune is made if you only get this situation. You start at six shillings a week, you go on step by step till you become partner, then you marry the master's daughter. Of course, you become Lord Mayor of London, and live a regular toff. Go in, Jack, my boy, I see the gov-nor waiting for you behind the counter with outstretched arms.'

The boys laughed, and some of them peeping through the window saw a benevolent looking old gentleman surrounded with innumerable parcels, all of which had been opened to satisfy a tiresome customer, who after all only purchased a pennyworth of screws.

Jack being urged on so much by his companions to venture in, at last gained courage, and pushing open the door, walked straight up to the counter while his companions stood almost breathless with anxiety to know the result.

'Well, and what do you want, my little lad?' said Mr. Hammer kindly.

'I want a situation, sir,' answered Jack, his cap in his hand and his eyes fixed on the floor.

Mr. Hammer looked at the boy as if he were not only trying to read his face but also to see how his internal organs were doing their duty.

'Sorry I can't take you, my boy, you've got a bad mark on you, and I can't have a boy here with a bad mark on him.'

Jack felt a bit alarmed as Mr. Hammer made this remark. He wasn't aware that he was so distinguished from other boys. Had he any spots on his face showing that he was going to have small-pox, or what was it that had marked him out as unfit for the vacant situation?

'Please, sir, I've been vaccinated,' Jack ventured to say, hoping that this might put things right.

Mr. Hammer laughed so loudly at this that Jack blushed deeply, and wished himself outside with his companions.

'Put your hands on the counter, my boy,' said Mr. Hammer.

Jack did as he was told.

'Now, tell me, what are those brown stains on the fingers of your right hand?'

Mr. Hammer spoke severely now as if

he meant to know the truth and nothing else.

'Oh, they're nothing, sir, they'll soon wash off,' replied Jack.

'Now, I'll tell you what those stains mean, they mean you smoke cigarettes, they mean that when you have any pocket money, instead of spending it in a good way, you waste it in tobacco.'

Jack felt himself getting very weak in the knees, and wished he could bolt out, but Mr. Hammer had come round to the other side of the counter and was right in the way of the door.

'Now, my boy,' continued Mr. Hammer, 'I never take a boy who smokes tobacco. I don't like to see a boy wasting his time, stopping his growth, and generally doing himself harm by this habit. Go outside and tell your companions that boys with cigarette marks on their fingers will not get good situations.'

Jack was crestfallen, he never said a word; but when he and his friends had got a short distance from the shop, he held up the stained fingers and remarked—

'It's no good, chums, we can't get places if we smoke cigarettes.'—*Temperance Record.*

## Correspondence

### LETTER TO THE TEXT-HUNTERS.

Dear Tinies,—Here is another text-hunt for you. You will find the texts in Psalm cxix. This is specially for you, Tinies, but your big brothers and sisters may send in answers, too, so long as they write down their ages. We will have another 'Hunt' next week, so your answers should be sent within a week.—Ed.

1. Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.
2. Thy statutes have been my songs.
3. Thy word is true from the beginning.
4. The entrance of thy word giveth light.
5. Thy word have I hid in my heart.
6. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet.
7. Order my steps in thy word.

### SUCCESSFUL SCRIPTURE SEARCHERS.

Annie Taylor, 11. B. D. Moulton, 13.

### BIBLE COMPETITION.

- No. 1.—New version.—Even a farmer has to wait for the crop so precious to him. Old version.—James v., 7: The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit and hath long patience for it, until he receives the first and latter rain.
- No. 2.—New version.—Every perfect endowment is from above. Old version.—James i., 17: Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.
- No. 3.—New version.—In his case faith and actions went together. Old version.—James ii., 21: Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac upon the altar.
- No. 4.—New version.—Put that teaching into practice and do not merely listen to it. Old version.—James ii., 22: But be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.
- No. 5.—New version.—Such a man's religious observances are valueless. Old version.—James i., 26: If any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue—religion is vain.
- No. 6.—New version.—God is opposed to the haughty. Old version.—James iv., 6: But he giveth more grace wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.
- No. 7.—New version.—To keep oneself from the contamination of the world. Old version.—James i., 27: Pure religion and undefiled before God the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction. To keep himself unspotted from the world.
- No. 8.—New version.—Think how tiny a spark will set the largest fire ablaze. Old version.—James iii., 5: Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth.

Pontypool, Ont.

Dear Editor,—I am a little girl eleven years old. My birthday is on May 24. I came from London, England, and I came across the sea last May. I was sick on the water. I left my mother and all my friends in England, and came to Canada to live with Mrs. G., near a little village called Pontypool. I go to drum school. I get the 'Messenger' at Sunday-school every Sunday. I have never seen a letter from Pontypool. I never wrote a letter for the paper before. I will try to write a better one next time.

FLORENCE W.

Havelock, N.B.

Dear Editor,—I received the Bagster Bible you sent me, and I like it very much. My mamma takes the 'Northern Messenger,' and I have been reading the little girls' letters, so I thought I would write one, too. We would not like to do without the 'Messenger' in our home. My papa is a farmer. Our farm consists of two hundred acres, and lies near a small village called Havelock, north of the I.C.R. A small brook runs through our farm, where we sometimes catch fish. In Havelock there are three churches, the Baptist, Methodist and Episcopal. We attend the Baptist church, of which the Rev. J. W. B. has been the well-beloved and energetic pastor for nearly four years. In Havelock there is a high school, a cheese factory, a flour mill, and mineral spring. The water of this spring is used for various purposes. Situated near this spring is a hotel, called the Spring House. A great many people visit there in summer. I attend school regularly. I have one sister and two brothers and one grandma. My birthday is on July 29.

VIOLET R. T. (age 10).

Waldergrave, Col. Co., N.S.

Dear Editor,—As it is quite a while since I wrote last, I thought I would write to you again. At present I am visiting my aunt, and am twenty-two miles from my home. I found all the verses in the last Bible Competition, and am sending a list of them. My cousin lent me the 'Messenger,' so I could study the lesson. I have read quite a lot of books. The names of some I liked best are: 'John Halifax,' 'Our Bessie,' 'Westward Ho!' 'Spun from Fact,' 'Ivanhoe,' 'Ben Hur,' 'The Prince of the House of David,' 'The Pillar of Fire,' and 'The Throne of David,' by the Rev. J. A. Ingraham. I read 'St. Elmo,' 'Infelice,' and 'Beulah,' by A. J. Evans-Wilson, and I liked them pretty well. 'Minnie Merle,' in 'Infelice,' was the one I liked most; but 'Regina' was nice, too. St. Elmo was much nicer after he reformed; but I thought he was very much in need of it. Since I wrote last I read 'The Sky Pilot,' so I have read all of Ralph Connor's stories except the very latest, and enjoyed them all. I liked Mrs. Murray and Kate Raymond best when I read 'The Man from Glengarry.' Mrs. Murray was lovely, and Kate was so full of fun, I liked her. I did not care so much for Maimie, though. I thought Jeanie Barrett, in 'Spun from Fact,' was lovely. I have read fourteen of Pansy's stories, and liked every one of them, especially a story called 'Mis-Sent.' Miss Stafford was lovely, and I enjoyed it very much. I hope this letter is not too long.

CHRISTINA JEAN McI. (age 19).

### Nail Bag.

McPherson's Mills, Sept. 11.

Dear Editor,—Please accept my thanks for the 'Bagster Bible' which I received Friday evening. I think it a valuable premium for so little work.

I enjoy reading the 'Messenger' very much. Later I will try and get more subscribers.

Yours truly,  
ANNIE KATE CAMERON.

### Sample Copies.

Any subscriber who would like to have specimen copies of the 'Northern Messenger' sent to friends can send the names with addresses and we will be pleased to supply them, free of cost.