

elled it clear down to the firm ground, and then he called Fred to admire it.

"It's nice," said Fred: "I guess it's as nice as that sermon boy could make.

'Spos'n we go and shovel a path for Mrs. Ranney."

"Come on," said Rob; that'll be a sermon about—about—I wonder about what?"

"Being kind," said Fred; "but I don't know what the text for it is, unless it's 'Love one another.'"

"That's a pretty good text," said Rob, "that fits to most anything good."—*Selected.*

A CHEAP SOUL.

FROM THE "YOUNG CHURCHMAN."



FEW years ago, says a gentleman, I was sitting in a large dry goods store in Chicago, waiting for a friend. It was storming a little outside, and the clerks were not very busy. Not far from me stood a cash-boy, with his back against a pile of prints, and his elbows carelessly resting upon the same. I noticed his handsome face, set with dark hair and eyes so expressive, his cheeks bespeaking perfect health. A lady at an opposite counter, while paying a bill let fall some fractional currency, such as was then in circulation, that fluttered and fell to the floor, and was picked up by the gentlemanly clerk in attendance, except one, a twenty-five cent piece, which noiselessly skimmed along and fell near the cash boy I have alluded to. Without changing his position, he set one foot upon the money, and seemed unconscious of everything except the sky-light, and stood gazing up into the open space while search was made for the money.

I watched him, with a sickening thought in my mind, "What will be the end?" I went swiftly to him, and whispered in his ear; "Boy, will you sell your soul for a paltry twenty-five cents? Don't you know perfectly well that the money is under your foot? Restore it, and never, never do such a thing again."

The boy turned pale, stooped and picked up the money. "Sir," he gasped, "don't tell on me, I pray—I beg—and I will never do so any more. Think of my mother."

I presume he thought I knew him. I did not then, but afterward found out who he was; and from the fact that he stayed with his employer several years, and was raised to a high position, I think the offence was never repeated.

Boys, the first theft is the longest step you take toward prison; the first glass of liquor takes you nearer a drunkard's grave than all you swallow after; often the first oath clinches the habit of profanity. A stained soul is hard to purify. There are virtues you can lose, but once lost they are gone forever.

THE TRANSLATING OF THE GOSPEL.

WITHIN a cloister of the olden time,
As slowly swung the bell for even chime,
The holy Father Bede, whose failing breath
Gave sure foretoken of his holy death,
Besought a scribe to write the precious word
That from his languid lips scarce could be heard.

"A chapter yet is wanting, master mine,"
Up spake the boy, as fast the sacred line
Of John, the best beloved the saints among,
Was deftly wrought into the mother tongue.
"Then quickly speed!" the dying monk exclaimed,
Whilst on his face the golden sunset flamed.

"Dear master," spake the lad in mortal dread
(For now the noble face was like the dead),
"The work must rest unfinished, much I fear;
There lacketh yet a single sentence here."
"Write quickly, boy," was spoken in reply;
"Until the work be done I may not die."

"Tis finished," said the little scribe at last,
And looked upon the holy man aghast.
"Yes, *all* is finished," the great monk replied,
Then crossed his pallid hands and, smiling, died.

THE REWARD OF PERSEVERANCE.

At one of the mills in the city of Boston, a boy was wanted; and a piece of paper was tacked to one of the posts, so that all the boys could see it as they passed by. The paper read:—

"Boy wanted. Call at the office to-morrow morning."

At the time named there was a host of boys at the gate. All were admitted; but the overseer was a little perplexed as to the best way of choosing one from so many, and said he,—

"Now, boys, when I only want one of you, how can I choose from so many?"

After thinking a moment, he invited them all into the yard, and driving a nail into one of the large trees, and taking a short stick, told them that the boy who could hit the nail with a stick a little distance from the tree should have the place.

The boys all tried hard; and, after three trials, each failed to hit the nail. The boys were told to come again next morning; and this time, when the gate was opened, there was but one boy, who, after being admitted, picked up the stick, and, throwing it at the nail, hit it every time.

"How is this?" said the overseer. "What have you been doing?"

And the boy, looking up with tears in his eyes, said:—

"You see, sir, I have a mother; and we are very poor. I have no father, sir, and I thought I would like to get the place, and to help all I can; and, after going home yesterday, I drove a nail into the barn, and have been trying ever since, and have come down this morning to try again."

The boy was admitted to the place.

Many years have passed since then, and this boy is now a prosperous and wealthy man; and at the time of an accident at the mills he was the first to