

Our Young Folks.

The False Balance.

Two little girls, in the early morning of an October day, were dressed in a sleepy fashion, or rather one of them was dressing, and the other sat on the side of the bed looking at her.

"There," said Bess, impatiently, "now that mean old shoe string must go and break, and I know that bell's just going to ring. Turn over the leaf, Gussie, so we can be learning the text while do our hair."

Gussie got up on the bed, and turned over the leaf on a roll of texts which hung on the wall, and then stood a minute, reading it to herself.

"Why don't you hurry?" said Bess, looking up at her, "you'll be awful late. My senses me! What a text to pick out for folks! 'A false balance is an abomination unto the Lord.' 'Fears to me if I was a Sabbath school committee, or whoever does print out these verses, I'd find some that has some sense to 'em.'"

"Why, Bessie Maynard, that's in the Bible, and I sh'd think you wouldn't dare to talk so," said Gussie, with horrified eyes.

"Well, I don't mean just that way, of course. I mean sense for everybody. You know yourself there's a difference. There's verses about wives, and husbands and ministers, and—and grandmothers, and they don't fit everybody. I should think that verse was meant for grocery-men that don't weigh things right, and I just wish they had to learn it."

"It's easy to learn anyhow," said Gussie, "only I like to think about my verse. Some of them seem just a purpose for me, like 'diligent in business,' and 'whatsoever thy hand.'"

"Yes," said Bess, complacently "you are so slow and such a put-o-fer, but there isn't a thing in this verse to think about."

There was a little silence, for Bessie was brushing her thick, curly locks, and it took all her patience to struggle through the tangles.

"That's because you didn't brush it out last night," said Gussie.

"I s'pose so; but it is such a bother. Dear me! I'm going to braid it this way; I can't stop."

"O Bessie! you know mamma won't like it; and it spoils your hair," said Gussie.

"It'll do for once," said Bess; "it looks all right, anyhow."

"I wonder," began Gussie, and then suddenly stopped.

"What?"—inquired Bess.

"I don't know—I thought maybe that might be what the text meant," said Gussie slowly; "sort of half doing things; not quite giving so much as you pretend to."

Gussie stopped, afraid of offending the sister of whose superior gifts she stood greatly in awe; but Bess only laughed as she answered, "You do think of the queerest things Gussie."

That was what they all said of Gussie, but she kept on thinking.

It was her day to dust the parlor.

"I'll help you," said Bess; "and then you'll get through, so we can go for chestnuts."

"But you don't do the corners, Bessie, and you haven't moved any of the books," said Gussie, as she watched her sister's rapid whisks of the duster.

"What's the difference?" said Bess. "It looks all right; you s'pose anybody's going to peek around after a speck of dust? There—now, that's done."

But Gussie, with the thought of that false balance in her queer little head, kept on until the work was thoroughly done, saying to herself, "If I pretend to give mamma a pound of work, and only give her half a pound, I'm sure that's deceitful balance."

The next thing in order was to pick over the grapes for jelly, and even patient Gussie sighed over the big basket, but as

usual Bessie's part was completed long before hers.

"I wish you would learn to be a little more nimble with your fingers, Gussie," said her mother, and Bessie added in an undertone, "It's 'cause you fuss so; s'pose 'a bad grape does go in now and then, who's going to know it when they're all mashed up?"

"I don't care," said Gussie, feeling a little touched by her mother's criticism. "I shan't have any false balance 'bout my work, 'cause the Lord can tell a bad grape if it is mashed up; its puttin' it in."

Only one thing more stood between the little girls and the holiday excursion for chestnuts. The history lesson must be learned for Monday, and thou they would be as free as the birds. "How I hate it," said Gussie, "stupid dry stuff about ad-min-is-tr-a-tions. I don't see any use knowing it, anyhow."

"I'll tell you what," said Bess, "let's begin about the middle, because the first of it never does come to us."

"And then," said Gussie, "Miss Marcy will s'pose of course we know the beginning."

"Yes," nodded Bess, beginning to gabble over the words. "I'm going to finish in half an hour—'On account of these things it was plainly impossible'—"

"But we don't know what things," said Gussie.

"No, and I don't care."

"And if Miss Marcy s'poses we know and gives us credit, it'll be a deceitful balance, 'cause we make her think we know a pound when we only know half a pound."

Bessie's face flushed a little. "I just wish, Gussie Maynard, you wouldn't talk any more about that grocery man's text. It's just nonsense trying to make it fit us."

But after all Bessie did not feel quite comfortable, and went back and learned the beginning of her lesson.

"There," she said, "that's good full weight, and I don't intend to be a bomin-ation any more."—*Christian Observer.*

"Ye Have Done It Unto Me."

"Ye have done it unto Me, ye have done it unto Me," sang Jenny, one Monday morning. "There! I'll remember it this time, sure. But, dear me! I'm forgetting after all. The teacher said we must not only learn the words, but think of what they mean and try to do them."

"Let me see, now," and she pressed her chubby hands to her forehead; "teacher said, 'if we give a cup of cold water to one of His little ones, for the Savior's sake He would say, 'Ye have done it unto Me.' I don't s'pose I know any of His little ones, but I'll try if I can find 'em.'"

She ran into the kitchen where on the dresser she spied a large bowl which was used to mix cake in.

"Ah!" thought she, "the Savior is pleased if we give His little ones a cupful of water: He'll like a bowlful better still. Bridget, may I take this bowl awhile?"

Bridget, who was busy with her washing, did not turn her head but said,—

"Oh, yes; take what you like."

Jenny lifted the big bowl down very carefully; but how to fill it was the question. She did not want to trouble Bridget; besides, she had an idea that she ought to do it all herself.

A bright thought struck her; taking the cup that always hung on the pump, she filled it up several times, and poured it into the bowl.

"It's cupful, after all," she thought.

It was almost more than she could carry without spilling; but she walked slowly to the front gate. There was no one in sight, and Jenny set her burden on the grass and swung on the gate while she waited. Presently, along came two little girls on their way to school.

"Want a drink?" called Jenny.

"Yes, indeed; it's so hot, and I'm dreadful thirsty. I most always am. But how are we to get at it?" Laughing as she saw the great bowl.

"Oh, I'll soon fix that!" and Jenny ran for the tin cup with which they dipped out the water.

"It tastes real good," they said and kissed her as they ran off to school.

The next that appeared was a short, red faced Irishman, wiping his face with the sleeve of his flannel shirt, while an ugly dog trotted at his side.

"He don't look like 'one of the little ones,'" thought Jenny, doubtfully; but she timidly held out her cup. He eagerly drained it, filling it again, and drinking.

"And it must be a blessed angel, ye are, for it's looking for a tavern I was, and now I won't need to go nigh one at all. And shure, after all, water's better nor whiskey. Might I give some to the poor baste?" pointing to his dog.

Jenny hesitated; she did not like the idea of having the dog drink from her cup or bowl. But the man settled it by pouring the remnant of the water into his dirty old hat, the dog instantly lapping it up.

After they were gone, Jenny filled her bowl again. But I can't tell you now of all to whom she gave cups of cold water that hot day. But when she laid her tired head on the pillow that night, she thought,—

"I wonder whether, after all, any of 'em were His 'little ones'?"

And the dear Savior, looking down and seeing that the little girl had done all that she could for His sake, wrote after her day's days "Ye have done it unto Me."

About Sharks.

The appearance of sharks occasionally on the English coast naturally creates a certain panic among bathers; and we may trace the breakage of the nets of the fishermen to their presence, among other causes. The six-gilled shark, or gray shark, is sometimes ten or twelve feet in length, and is very destructive among the pilchard on the Cornish coast.

The white shark is a formidable fellow; but although his class occasionally send over to our isles deputations of one or two, we have, fortunately, not had to record of late years such a visitation as that of 1785, when hundreds appeared in the British channel. This individual is perhaps the most formidable of all the inhabitants of the ocean. Ruyach says that the whole body of a man, and even a man in armor, has been found in the body of a white shark. Captain King, in his "Survey of Australia," says he caught one which could have allowed a man with the greatest ease. Blumenbach says a whole horse has been found in it; and Captain Basil Hall reports the taking of one, in which, besides other things, he found the whole skin of a buffalo, which, a short time before, had been thrown overboard from his ship.

As it is not always pleasant to have sharks follow a ship, it cannot be too well known that a bucket or two of bilgewater has been known to drive them away.

Two things contribute to the shark's determinate ferocity. In the first place, we may refer to his teeth, for of these engines of destruction nature has been to him particularly bountiful; and this species of bounty he has a peculiar pleasure in exercising. If he could speak he would probably tell us that, besides being troubled with his teeth, which he could not help keeping in use, he had been gifted with enormous abdominal viscera, and that, more particularly, a third of his body is occupied by spleen and liver. The bile and other digestive juices which are secreted from such an immense apparatus, and poured continually into the stomach, tend to stimulate the appetite prodigiously—and what hungry animal with good teeth was ever tender-hearted?

In truth, a shark's appetite can never be appeased; for, in addition to this bilious diathesis, he is not a careful masticator, but, hastily bolting his food, produces thereby not only the moroseness of indigestion, but a whole host of parasites, which goad and irritate the intestines to that degree that the poor squalus is sometimes besides himself from the torment, and rushing like a blind Polyphemus through the waves in search of anything to cram down his maw that may allay such urgent distress.

He does not seek to be cruel, but he is cruelly famished. "It is not I," expostulates the man in the crowd, "that is pushing; it is others behind me." The poor wretch must satisfy not only his own ravenous appetite, but the constant demand of these internal parasites, either with dead or living food; and therefore it is that, sped as from a catapult, he pounces on a quarry, and sometimes gorges himself beyond what he is able to contain.

What Zero Means

Perhaps not one person in a hundred knows why a point 32 degrees below the freezing point on Fahrenheit's thermometer is called zero. For that matter, nobody knows. The Fahrenheit scale was introduced in 1720. Like other thermometric scales, it has two fixed points—the freezing point, or rather the melting point of ice, and the boiling point of water. The centigrade and Reaumur call the freezing point zero, and measure therefrom in both directions. This is a very natural arrangement. Fahrenheit kept the principle on which he graduated his thermometer a secret, and no one has ever discovered it. It is supposed however, that he considered his zero—32 degrees below freezing—the point of absolute cold or absence of all heat, either because being about the temperature of melting salt and snow, it was the greatest degree of cold he could produce artificially, or because it was the lowest natural temperature of which he could find any record. The grounds on which Fahrenheit put 180 degrees between the freezing points are likewise unknown.

Steaming and Bending Wood.

In an address recently delivered by Mr. H. G. Shepard, of New Haven, Conn., relative to the use of wood in carriage making, he said that after a piece of wood is bent its characteristics underwent a considerable change. The wood is heavier, and its fibres have become interlaced; it will sustain more pressure and strain than straight wood in the same directions, either across or with the grain. He said: "A piece of timber that has been steamed, whether it is bent or not, has its stiffness increased. It is more brittle than it was before, and for some uses it will do as well, and yet there is a quality that the steaming process and the kiln drying process produce in much the same way; they both cook the gum in the timber and make it brittle and stiff. There is a kind of hickory that never becomes stiff by a natural process of drying, and one of the desirable qualities of a spoke, rim, or whiffletree is stiffness as well as strength; you take that hickory—and it is the very best we have—and steam it, and it is better fitted for these purposes than it was before. It is difficult to tear apart a piece of bent wood; the fibres are interwoven, one with the other. We do not perceive the change on the outside, but when we come to split the stick open, we find that its character is entirely changed."

Where we discover being keeper to our brother, we're his Cain.

The following advertisement appeared in a Wisconsin paper: "Wanted—A medium-sized house for man and wife as near new as possible." This is a delicate way of informing the public that this couple haven't been married long.