

The Family

The Child's Taper

The sun's last beam had faded, The night began to fall, As a little cottage maiden Lit up a taper small.

And all within the dwelling Enjoyed its kindly light, Which glimmered like a star-beam, Amid the gloom of night.

And shining as a beacon, Across the lonely moor, It showed a wandering traveler The pathway to the door.

There, safe within its shelter, He blessed the little light, That shone amid the darkness, And led his steps aright.

And so, my heavenly Father, What'er I have to do, Thy glory I would always Keep fully in my view.

And though a little taper, My light may seem to be, Yet kindled at things altar, It still may shine for thee.

I may, if thou wilt help me, My little lamp to trim, Show some the way to Jesus, And find their rest in Him.

I may, if thou wilt bless me, And teach me how to shine, Reflect upon my pathway, A ray of light divine.

And others may behold it, A bright, though tiny flame, And seeing whence it kindled, Give glory to thy name.

And while my lamp is burning, With brightness from above, My life shall be a witness, To all my Saviour's love.

And shine, 'mid earth's darkness, With calm and constant ray, Till lost amid the radiance Of everlasting day!

Then shall I sing with wonder, When I thy glory see, That such a little taper, Could e'er have shone for thee!

A Case of Concience

HENRY HUNT was taller in the First National Bank than he was in the Second National Bank.

His character was as clear as a glass pane, and his heart as clear as his head.

He was standing behind the counter alone, one day, when his uncle George came in.

"Well, Henry, I've made up my mind, rather suddenly, to sail to-morrow; and I have five thousand dollars in greenbacks, which I've no time to invest."

"Take care of those and get me a good interest if you can."

"Why what a quick start you make! But I'll do the best I can with your money."

"They chatted away, till at last his uncle bade him a warm good-bye, and was off."

Henry put the money into the vault, and for some days he was busy that he hardly gave a thought to it.

But the next week James Harter and he were alone in the bank, one day, after bank hours.

He had balanced his account and had done up his other work, when as he happened to go into the vault, he caught sight of the little tin box that held his uncle's money.

"There, now," he said to James, "is that five thousand dollars. Something must be done with it."

"Let us listen to the talk that followed. 'Why don't you put it into United States bonds?'"

"I don't know. The Sonora gold mine promises fifteen per cent. sure, with a fair prospect of fifty."

"A very moderate promise for a gold mine. Yes; so much the more likely to be safe. Uncle asked me to get him a good interest. Seven per cent. would be good. To be more than that I'll call it eight. Fifteen per cent. would then leave me seven for myself."

"But, my dear fellow, you've no right to do any such thing."

"And pray why not, I should like to know? Isn't eight per cent. good interest? If he has that, with the principal all safe, don't he get his full rights?"

"But this Sonora business is a doubtful affair. You ought not run such a risk."

"Just so; but you wouldn't let him demand it. The facts about this matter, then, are, first, that your uncle, because the money is his, has sole right to the interest of it, unless by a bargain with you, he gives up part of his right; and secondly, that he, has full title to it because the risk is his, and so whatever profit may come out of it is his."

"But suppose I were able and willing to take the risk?"

"So far, so good. But that would not make the money yours, or authorize you to get profit out of it without the owner's consent."

Henry thought long and soberly over the talk. It set the whole thing in a new light before his mind. He resolved to follow James' advice.

And if any of your young readers are in any such quandary, let me urge them, "Go and do likewise."

Charlie on the Bridge

"Now," said Charlie Piper's mother to him, as he went out the door to go to school, "don't you harbor that thief to-day, remember."

"No, mother, I will not," answered Charlie, deliberately and emphatically.

What! a boy of Charlie Piper's age harbor a thief? One would think he could have nothing to do with thieves. Yes, one would suppose so, and yet there was one thief so good that he used to insinuate himself into Charlie's good graces, and Charlie used to go with him, although he well knew that he grieved his mother, and certainly hurt his character, yet it was some time before he had firmness enough to take a manly stand against him.

As he passed out to school, his mother bids him "Remember!"

On he goes until he gets almost over the bridge, when he stops a minute to watch the little fishes darting about in the water below.

He almost wished he were a fish, that he had no grammar to learn or copy to write; he was sure fishes must be very happy, with nothing to do but to live long and play in the water.

Charlie well knew that he had not a moment to spare on the bridge; he knew that precisely five minutes after nine the master fastened the door for prayers, and no tardy boy could get in, he knew it was too bad to lose a whole half day's school; but for all that, he kept stopping and delaying. In fact, his old companion, the thief, was by his side, ready to steal his precious moments; so the boy kept stopping, thinking about the fishes, and saying, "Oh, it is not pleasant to be cooped up in that old school-room," until, all at once, his mother's word, "REMEMBER," rushed into his mind. It seemed as if she spoke again in his ear.

He started up from his lounging attitude, threw back his arms as much as to say, "Hands off, Mr. Thief!" and took to his heels in the direction of the school-room.

He arrived just the moment the master was about locking the door, and happily got in.

"Good!" said Charlie, looking as glad as he could be; "good! I have made my escape this time, I have. Good by, Mr. Thief, you and I have, I hope, done having dealings together."

Charlie was as good as his word; and from this time, instead of being a boy always behind-hand, he became the soul of promptness.

Hereafter, "procrastination," which the proverb called the thief of time, kept at a distance, and at last ceased to trouble him altogether.

Now, do your young readers know what a bad thing the procrastination is? Procrastination is the spirit of delaying—of being behind-hand in our undertakings, and engagements, and duties. It is aptly called a thief, for it robs us of our best treasure—time.

Did you notice how it was trying to steal Charlie's time on the bridge? Avoid this thief, say, "Hands off," whenever he tempts you to dally in your duties; and do resolutely and promptly whatever you have to do, as the Bible expresses it, "Whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord."

Such a course will certainly rid you of the troublesome and dangerous presence of this thief. TWENTY—Children's Friend, London.

Temperance

The First Drink

Sometimes wonder if any of my little friends think how entirely little circumstances may rule a person's whole lifetime? A single action, though very trifling in itself, often exerts an influence that is felt till the last hour of existence. Let me tell you a story to illustrate what I mean:

Benny Gray was ten years old before he took his first glass of liquor. His parents were very good, respectable people, and had always taught him to shun the saloons where liquors were sold. They told him of the evil effect of strong drink, and more than once he had the opportunity to see for himself the fearful wrath that liquor will make of a strong, healthy man, for his house was in a large village, and drunken men were often seen staggering down the street.

One day he was walking down the street in company with a boy of about his own age. Robert Wade was not such a boy as Mr. or Mrs. Gray would have chosen as an associate for their son, but he had formed Benny's acquaintance in some way, and had gained considerable control over him. Bad boys very easily gain a strong influence over those who associate with them who are not as bad as themselves. They are willing to lead the way into mischief and wrong doing, and in a very little while their companions will follow.

Benny and his companion walked along that afternoon, talking these things around them on the street, and talking very busily. At length they stopped before a saloon, where various kinds of sparkling wine and glittering liquor were exhibited in flashing decanters in the large window, like shining decoys, to lure men on to temptation, and, finally ruin.

"Let's go in and have a drink," said Robert Wade; "I'll pay for the liquor."

"Oh—no!" answered Benny, with a little hesitation in his manner, "I guess not."

"Oh, yes—come in," said Robert. "There won't be any hurt in it if you know. You needn't tell any one of it, and no one will know."

"My father wouldn't like it," said Benny, with a glance at the tempting glitter of the liquors in the window. He had never tasted a drop of intoxicating drink in his life, but now he wondered how it tasted!

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