

black clouds (she had not noticed them before) gathering overhead, and the night slowly deepening. She let all her precious shells and seaweeds fall sadly on the sand, and retraced her steps along the grey solitary beach, in the hope of finding another path; there was none, and Nora felt the first heavy rain-drops pattering on her hands. Poor little Nora! A man could have easily climbed up the cliffs, for they were slanting and not very high; but it was hard work for a tiny maiden of seven. She determined to try, however. She got many a tumble, and scratch, and bruise as she clambered up the uneven slope, catching hold of loose chalk, tufts of grass, and sea-convolvulus. When she was half way up she heard a well-known voice shouting, in clear, firm tones, "Nora! Nora!"—but the light was too dim to see anything distinctly now, and Nora's voice was choked with sobs as she called out, "O papa! papa! do stop! I'm down here. Papa, papa!" And so the shout overhead died away.

At this time the inmates of Daisybank House were in a state of great anxiety and dismay. Mrs. Lindel had thought that Nora was having her tea in the nursery; nurse had thought that she was in the drawing-room with her mother; and it was only when Mr. Lindel came home at half-past seven that her absence was discovered. You can fancy what a commotion there was in the house. No one thought for a moment that Nora had gone down to the beach; and Mr. Lindel and the servants scoured the fields and roads in every direction, and enquired at all the cottages, and at several places in the village, but of course without success. Mrs. Lindel was too anxious to go to bed; she kept walking up and down the room, her hands tightly clasped, her face flushed, her lips dry and feverish, while she listened with an aching

heart to the heavy rain, and longed for the sound of footsteps.

At about half past nine, or perhaps a little after, the drawing-room window was pushed open, and a pitiable object presented itself,—a little girl, dripping wet, with her clothes torn and dirty, her hands scratched and bruised, her bright eyes dim with tears, her curly hair lank, and one shoe gone. Mrs. Lindel fainted away directly she saw her little daughter, and Nora's screams attracted the only servant left in the house. Very soon after this Mr. Lindel returned to see if any one had been more successful than himself. When he saw Nora he caught her up in his arms, saying fervently, "Thank God!"—and when Nora looked in his face to see if he was very angry, she saw that he was paler than she had ever seen him before, and there were big tears in his eyes.

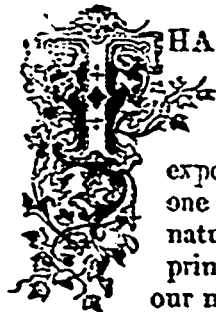
No one said a word to Nora about her fault. She was amply punished by seeing her mother shut up in a room for three weeks longer; and the sight of Mr. Lindel's suffering face was a reproach that Nora could hardly bear. She remembered her father's look for many a sad day.

This was Nora's first practical lesson, that it is impossible for any one to measure the consequence of their sins. If you had asked Nora when she stood swinging on the field-gate what punishment she would get if she disobeyed her mother, she would probably have answered a good scolding, and perhaps an hour spent in the corner. Now she had not been punished in either of these ways. Let us therefore pause before we do wrong, even the smallest wrong; for we cannot tell what poisonous plants may spring from the seed we sow. There is one who can make us strong to resist the very beginning of evil.

Sabbath Readings.

BROUGHT TO THE SAVIOUR.

"He brought him to Jesus."—*John i. 42.*



HAT the most important features of man's character are derived from his association with others, all experience goes to show. It is one of the great laws of our nature that our habits and principles, the complexion of our mental and moral existence, should be, as it were, moulded by associations, sometimes brought about in a way seemingly accidental, but which exercise a powerful influence over our whole lives. How often are talents elicited, aspirations kindled, thoughts and feelings originated, and resolves formed, after, it may be, a first brief intercourse with some master mind,

so as to shape the man's character and destiny not in time only but for an endless eternity.

Events of this kind stand out in bold relief before the memory. They can never be forgotten, especially in the matter of religion. Take, for instance, the case of a man's conversion, and do you not find it so? Now this derives all its importance from the fact of the man being then for the first time brought into contact with the Saviour,—from its being the commencement of an intercourse with Jesus,—the formation of a friendship which will influence his character and destiny for ever!

To be brought to the Saviour—to be made one of his disciples,—these are events never to be forgotten, because of the consequences they involve. To yield the understanding to the authority of his word, and