

"THE ICE WAS BROKEN."

It takes courage to be the first in a good movement, but often when we have made a move that is a little pronounced considering the surrounding circumstances, we are surprised to find how many near us have been longing for stamina enough to take just that step.

In a Boston boarding-house roomed sixteen clerks, honest and well-disposed, and belonging to good families. All of them were of the age when the boy, just merging into manhood, generally makes decisions as to his conduct that result in final good or evil.

Three of the young men, who occupied one of the rooms together, were recent acquaintances, and their first Sunday morning in the house brought a trial of moral courage which is interesting to relate.

The hours between breakfast and church time must be whiled away somehow, and two of the room-mates busied themselves with miscellaneous reading.

The third felt a desire to take out his Bible and read it, as he had been taught to do at home. Fearing ridicule, he hesitated a good while, but conscience presently impelled him to go to his trunk and lift the lid. Cowardice suggested that it would look "sanctimonious" to be seen reading the Bible. He shut the lid down and walked away.

After nearly half an hour of struggle, conscience triumphed again. He rose and went to the trunk a second time. His hand was on the Bible. Again his courage failed him. As he was turning away, one of his companions called out:

"What's the matter, Ike? You're as uneasy as a weather cock."

Ike laughed and told the truth like a man. To his surprise both the others confessed that they had had the same struggle and defeat. Each thought that he ought to read his Bible, but was afraid to be seen by the rest.

The next minute all three had their Bibles in their hands, and read them together during the next half hour. They agreed to do this every Sunday. The ice was broken.

The next Sabbath morning, while they sat

quietly reading, two of the clerks from another room came in.

"Halloo!" they exclaimed. "What is this; a conventicle?"

The three Bible readers frankly told of their agreement. The visitors confessed that only cowardice had kept them, too, from the same duty. They promised to begin at once, and they did so. The example spread, till each of the sixteen clerks in the house spent his Sunday mornings reading the Bible.

Every one of these youths is to-day a useful man. We cannot, of course, say that the mere reading of the Bible on those Sabbath mornings made these men what they are. We can say, however, that the principles of the Bible must have influenced their lives for good, and the associations which, with such a habit, they would naturally seek, must necessarily have been honorable and elevating, and have tended to their success in life. One of them, who afterwards became a minister, related the facts we have given.

One boy's courage to do right may determine not only his own future well-being, but that of many others besides.—*Sel.*

KNOWING BOYS.

Six things a boy ought to know:

1. That a quiet voice, courtesy and kind acts are as essential to the part in the world of a gentleman as a gentle-woman.
2. That roughness, blustering and even foolhardiness are not manliness. The most firm and courageous men have usually been the most gentle.
3. That muscular strength is not health.
4. That a brain crammed only with facts is not necessarily a wise one.
5. That the labor impossible to the boy of fourteen will be easy to the man of twenty.
6. The best capital for a boy is not money, but love of work, simple tastes, and a heart loyal to his friends and his God.—*Selected.*

Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth.