

“I SHOULD KEEP HIM.”

I WAS very much struck with an answer I received the other day from a little boy who was visiting me. He had been playing a long while and was very tired. One of his playmates, I am sorry to say, was not a very good boy; he did not mind his mother, and sometimes uttered words I do not wish ever to hear from children's lips; but he was a generous, merry kind of a boy for all that, and was quite a favorite.

“I am afraid, Charlie,” said I, “that Willie Ray is naughty; he is a very troublesome child. Now, if you were his mother, what would you do with him?”

“I should keep him,” answered Charlie, looking up into my face fearlessly.

“Would you keep a naughty boy, Charlie? Does he deserve his mother's kindness?”

“Yes, I should keep him!” said Charlie again, shutting his lips firmly together, as if that was all he had to say.

“But, Charlie,” I persisted, “do you think a naughty boy like Willie Ray ought to be kept by a good, kind mother? he is disobedient and unruly in every way.”

“Now, auntie,” replied the little boy—“now, auntie, do you think he could be good if his mother did not keep him? I should keep him and try to make him better.”

Here was his answer. How many mothers act upon little Charlie's resolute reply, “I should keep him”? He is my boy; God gave him to me. He may be undutiful and disobedient sometimes, but I shall keep him—work with him and for him, still hoping and never quite despairing.

Yes, children, the mother is the last to give up her child; through evil report and good report, in times of sickness and sorrow and trial, and even in crime, she will shield, she will love him, and pray for him, and keep him always in her heart.

And does not the blessed Saviour show the same patience and love to us all, His children, for whom he died? Does He not wait “yet this year,” that they may bring forth fruit? He intercedes for us, sends blessings and mercies and trials, to bring us back to him. He will not let us go until we prove wholly recreant. Let us pray that, as little Charlie said, “He will keep us,” and at last receive us into His heavenly habitations. — *Christian Advocate.*

Some people seem to feel that there is an incongruity between festivity and Christianity; but whoever carefully reads the life of Him Who was without spot of sin, must come to the conclusion that all innocent enjoyment meets the approbation of the Christ.

He was not an austere man. He mingled with the race, to bless, to cheer, and hallow, and, just as surely as He went to the wedding in that little oriental village, does He enter the places of our assembling for the sacred nuptial tie, and also for pleasant social communion. Without a sense of His presence, there is always a lack which nothing else can supply; and when we know and feel Him near, we look for such a miracle as changes otherwise insipid pleasures into the most inspiring and tasteful joys.