

Sunday-School Advocate.

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NELLIE AFTER HER SICKNESS.

POOR NELLIE.

"NELLIE, NELLIE!" cried Mrs. Rogers one evening as she stood in the doorway of her cottage looking eagerly toward the garden, and then listening for a reply.

But no reply came. Nellie's merry tones did not respond as usual, and her mother began to feel alarmed. Nellie was only three years old, and she was the prettiest, sweetest, happiest little child that ever gladdened a mother's heart.

Search was made in the garden, through the woods, along the lanes, and in the adjacent village, but no trace could be found of the dear little curly-head. "She is lost!" screamed her widowed mother the next morning after a night of search; "my precious Nellie is lost!"

Yes, Nellie was lost, nor could any one tell what had become of her. Some said she was drowned in the deep pond, but no one could find her body. Others said she had perished in the woods, but they could find no trace of her there. Others, again, said she must have been stolen by beggars or gypsies. But none of them knew poor little Nellie's fate.

O how Nellie's mother did weep and fret about her lost child! Her life was one long sorrow for fourteen years. Had Nellie died in her arms she would have been comforted; but the uncertainty which hung over her darling's fate was her torment.

After fourteen years of grief there came a dark, stormy night. The rain fell in torrents. The lightnings flashed, the thunders rolled, the wind blew fiercely. The widow sat with her sister trembling in her cottage, and fearing to go to bed lest they might perish in that awful storm.

By and by a rap was heard at the door. At first they were afraid to open it lest a thief might be there. The rap came again. Then the widow's sister opened the door and saw, not a thief, but a poor trembling girl clothed in rags and dripping with the rain. In piteous tones the poor creature said:

"O, kind lady, pray give me shelter."

The lady let the girl into the hall and asked, "Where do you come from?"

"I have walked many miles to-day," replied the girl. "See, my feet are bleeding!" and she raised her bare feet and showed them to be trickling with blood.

Turning to Nellie's mother the lady asked, "Shall I let her come in?"

"By no means, Fanny," replied Nellie's mother angrily. "How do we know who she is?"

"Do let her come inside?" pleaded the sister.

"I will not. Perhaps she is some hardened tramp. Turn her away instantly!" rejoined Nellie's mother.

"O for pity's sake, my dear lady, do give me shelter," begged the weary girl; "I am no tramp, but a poor, miserable girl."

"I will not! Leave the house directly or I will send for a constable!" said Nellie's mother.

So the poor girl was driven out into the stormy street to brave the rain and wind—perhaps to perish in wet and darkness.

The widow was certainly very cruel in thus turning a suffering girl from her door-step on such a fearful night. Perhaps, however, it was not cruelty. She was timid and nervous, and her fears lest the girl might be the companion of robbers were stronger than her pity.

The next day a strange beggar woman sent for the widow's sister and told her that the girl who was driven from the widow's cottage was no other than the long-lost Nellie! Her own sister, now dead, had stolen the child fourteen years before and had carried her round the country begging. She proved the truth of her statement in various ways, and left no room to doubt that Nellie had come home again and had been driven from her home by her mother's command. The poor girl was now lying very sick in a neighboring cottage.

You may be sure that Nellie's mother was both glad and sorry that day—glad because she had found her child, sorry because of her cruelty the night before. As for Nellie, she was carried to her old home on a bed, and it was long before she was well again. She cheerfully forgave her mother for driving her into the storm, but the mother never forgave herself. In the other column is a picture of Nellie after she got well.

Poor Nellie had suffered much during the fourteen years of her beggar's life—how much could not be either told or written. It was a terrible misfortune to be so treated, and it was wonderful that she ever reached her home again. Let my children who are in happy homes nestling in the love of father and mother and sheltered by the good hand of God, be very thankful. Let them be glad that great sorrows do not fall to their lot; and let them learn also from this story to deal kindly with the poor. It is not well to be harsh even with beggars, for although most beggars are undeserving and vicious, yet now and then a son or daughter of misfortune—a really deserving person—may be found in the beggar's garb. Let us be kind as well as cautious.

A SENSIBLE BOY.

I READ in one of my exchanges of a little three-year-old romping boy, who played so hard and so long one day that he played away his good-nature. He began to fret, and cry, and snap like a little snarling dog. His father tried to persuade him into a good humor but failed. Coaxing only made him worse; and then his father, being a wise man, took a switch and gave him a whipping.

The little fellow cried very hard for a few moments, and then, as if a new idea had been whipped into his head, he ran to his father, and throwing his arms about his neck, said:

"Pa, you do know what's good for me, don't you?"

Now I call that little curly-pated boy's speech a very sensible one. The rod was good for him just then, for it drove peevishness from his heart and brought back his good-humor. There are not many children who believe the rod is good for them. But it is, nevertheless—that is, if they are ill-behaved. But the most sensible children are they who never misbehave. Such do not need the rod at all. What a happy family ours would be if not one of them ever needed the whip!

THE EDITOR AND HIS COUNSELORS.

F. Forrester, Esq. Mr. Editor, I wish to inform you and the Corporal of a fact—a painful fact, sir. There is a little lion loose among your child-folk. They call him WILL.

Editor. Will, eh! I know the little fellow. I knew him when I was a boy. He is a little old fellow—almost as old as the world. In fact, he was in the world before the first child was born, and has done a terrible amount of mischief.

The Corporal. That's so, Esquire. I know him too. His given name is *Sel*. His full name is SELF-WILL. His one great business seems to be to persuade children to follow their own wills instead of submitting to the will of their parents and to the will of God.

The Esquire. That's it exactly, Corporal, and it's that

which brings children into trouble and danger. A child bent on doing as it pleases is almost ruined.

The Corporal. True as the multiplication-table, 'Squire. And it is the same with men. A willful man always hurts himself. I was reading of one such only last night in Mr. C. F. HALL's account of his life among the ESQUIMAUX in the cold regions of the North. The man's name was JOHN BROWN. He was a sailor. He was one of the crew of a whale-ship, and had been staying several days with a



brother sailor in an Esquimaux cabin several miles from the ship, for the benefit of his health. When his health was restored he proposed one morning to go to the ship. He and his shipmate BRUCE started. But it was very cold, with a high wind and signs of bad weather. Bruce proposed to go back, saying it was not safe to venture that day. "We shall be frozen to death," said he; "I shall go back to the Esquimaux cabin." But Brown was willful. He swore an oath and said, "I'm going on, for I'm determined to have my duff and apple-sauce at to-morrow's dinner."

Bruce went back but Brown kept on. The Esquimaux warned him, and offered him an old dog to guide him to his ship. But Brown was willful again, and instead of taking an old dog which knew the route, chose a young one which did not. Off went the self-willed sailor with the dog. Did he ever reach the ship? Never. His shipmates found him dead on the ice a day or so later. Having his own way killed him. SELF-WILL, the lion, slew him.

The Esquire. Just as having their own way is leading many little feet into the paths of death. Mr. Editor, can't you do something to save your little folk?

Editor. Nothing more than I am doing all the time, 'Squire. I am urging them in almost every paper to submit their wills to the dear Saviour and their parents. Such submission kills your lion and saves the children. Corporal, please open your letter-budget.

The Corporal. I have no room for letters in this number, Mr. Editor; but here is the answer to Scripture questions in our last:

The middle book of the Old Testament is Proverbs.

The middle chapter of the Old Testament is Job xxix.

The middle verse of the Old Testament is 2 Chron. xx, 17.

The middle book in the New Testament is 2 Thessalonians.

The middle verse in the New Testament is Acts xvii, 17.

The middle chapter in the entire Bible is Psalm cxvii.

The middle verse in the entire Bible is Psalm cxviii, 8.

The shortest chapter in the entire Bible is Psalm cxvii.

The shortest verse in the entire Bible is John xi, 35.

The verse Ezra vii, 21 contains all the letters of the English alphabet.

—Richmond, in the United States, has the Union flag proudly floating over it. The greatest of the rebel generals and armies has surrendered. Peace cannot be far off. Glory be to God on high! God has given to the United States victory. Praise him. Sing praises to his name, O my children! Praise him for that victory over slavery and rebellion.