



ered. The fire was out. It was clear that nothing had been done toward getting tea.

"Edith! Edith!" cried Mrs. Cole sharply.

But Edith made no reply. She was too far off to hear her mother's call. Where was she? Down at the cove with little Willie Jones, building a fort on the sand. Willie had called in for her directly after Mrs. Cole started on her walk, and forgetting all her big wishes to help her mother, she had gone with him.

Mrs. Cole dropped into a rocking-chair and sighed. She was too much exhausted to get tea until she had rested. Presently her daughter entered the cottage.

"Edith," said Mrs. Cole in a tone of reproach, "why did you not get the supper ready?"

"O, because Willie Jones wanted me to help him build a fort," replied Edith with a careless air and in a heartless tone.

"Ah, Edith, Edith," rejoined her mother, "an hour ago you wished you had the strength, the hands, and the feet of four women that you might help me. But I would rather have the help of one willing child than the big wishes of four stout women."

Edith hung down her head and blushed, but she did not go ahead and get supper. She waited until her poor tired mother did it, and then she ate and drank as heartily, and chattered as gayly as if she had not played the part of a heartless child.

I don't like Edith's conduct. It was very selfish. I wonder if there are many like her in our Advocate family. I hope not. If there is one let her stand up and learn that one ounce of loving service for father or mother is of greater worth than tons of idle wishes and big promises. Girls and boys who really honor and love their parents show their love in deeds, not in wishes. Y. Z.

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

A LAMB OF CHRIST.

BELOVED LITTLE ONES,—To-day I have seen a dear lamb of Christ. She is not yet eight years old, yet she gives to her Saviour her best love, her first thoughts. I called on her mother, who has long been sick. The first that led me especially to notice little Mary was her creeping up into her father's arms and clinging to him as though she could almost grow there. I heard her whisper, "I love you, pa."

"I know it, my darling," was his reply.

Then she whispered to him her desire to go and live with Jesus. He asked her if she was not will-

ing to stay here upon earth and to do God's will, and told her that her blessed Saviour did not need her with him yet, but would call her in his own good time.

Soon after this her father left the room, and she crept silently to the side of her mother and lay, softly moaning, until her mother asked the cause of her sorrow. She said she felt badly because she had such a wicked, sinful heart. The sweet lamb! Nothing but the searching power of the Spirit could have taught her this. According to human judgment, she was one of the best little girls in the world. Yet we all have wicked hearts, and nothing but the grace of God can make us what we should be.

Soon after this she came to me and nestled still as a mouse at my side. I put my arm around her, and she drew still closer and laid her little head lovingly against me. Her mother asked if she loved me. She said, "Yes." Then her mother inquired why she loved me. Looking up into my eyes with unutterable affection, she replied, "Because she loves the Saviour?"

Then I deeply realized that little Mary had been born again, and was being fitted for the kingdom of God.

My beloved little readers, you too may be Christ's lambs. He loves you with an unchanging affection. He never, never will forget you, nor turn away from your prayers. All your desires to do right and to lead good lives are caused by his Holy Spirit. When you say your prayers, never forget to ask your kind Father in heaven to give you the constant guidance of this blessed Spirit. C. P. W.



For the Sunday-School Advocate.

SWEAR NOT AT ALL.

My dear boys, did you ever think, when our Saviour says, "Swear not at all," how much he meant by it? I cannot believe that any boys who go to Sunday-school and take this nice little paper ever do utter the dreadful words we sometimes hear in the streets. But do you not use expressions and words which sound like oaths, changing or transposing a few letters? Do you not sometimes use foolish and coarse expressions which now have no meaning, but stand in the place of profane language? I suppose many of these words were originally a part of sentences very wicked, belonging to dreadful imprecations; and even the "By George" which I have heard schoolboys say, probably means at full length, "I swear by King George," and was an English oath at first.

Aside from their vulgarity, I believe all these modes of speech to be very offensive to our Saviour. Would you not be extremely shocked at the very thought of "the child Jesus" swearing "by the temple" or "by Jerusalem?" These were common oaths in the days in which he lived. How much less did he ever take the name of his Father lightly and profanely on his young lips! It makes one shudder to speak of it; but if so improper for Jesus, who had a human nature and was a child and a youth as fully as you are, who came to set you and me a copy in his life which we are to follow as exactly as possible, then why is it not improper for you?

I can see only three reasons that can account for your yielding so readily to this sin. Either you are very angry, or impatient, and use these words to express your unpleasant feeling, or you think it manly, or you have caught the habit from others thought-

lessly. I have been speaking to boys; but I have known girls, I grieve to say, just as guilty. Not only is it extremely unladylike to exclaim, "Goodness!" "Mercy!" and the like, in order to express surprise or some other emotion, but it is, I believe, really wicked. These were at first, no doubt, sudden appeals to God, but have come to mean nothing in our minds but an equivalent to the expression, "You surprise me."

But Christ says, "Let your communication be, Yes, yes; no, no; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil," or of the wicked one. I fully believe that sudden temptations to profane speaking may come from wicked spirits who desire to make us as bad as themselves, and delight in hearing the language of the kingdom of darkness spoken by the lips of men, and especially by boys who are now forming the habits of men.

Now I wish you would commit to memory those verses in the fifth chapter of Matthew, in which our Lord speaks of swearing, and so thoroughly that you cannot forget them. Will you not? Begin at the thirty-third verse of the fifth chapter of Matthew. Then turn to the last chapter of James and learn the verse beginning, "But above all things, my brethren, swear not; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath." Then there is the third commandment, which you had better learn.

USA LOCKE.

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

A SAD STORY.

BY MRS. H. C. GARDNER.

SOMETHING dreadful has happened of late,
It shadows the place like a cloud;
Let me whisper the story to you,
I'm ashamed to tell it aloud.

Half a dozen young boys who had friends
And homes that were pleasant and bright,
Have been tried in the law-courts for theft;
Alas, what a pitiful sight!

Shall I tell how these boys, step by step,
Have come down to crime and disgrace?
The first step was straying from home
With the bad, wicked lads of the place.

At evening, when home should have been
Their refuge and happiness sweet,
They would steal from its shelter to lounge
In the stores, or to play in the street.

Soon they lingered a while by the doors
Of the drinking and billiard saloons,
And they hung round the low singing clubs
To catch the coarse words and the tunes.

By little and little they lost
Their fear of the law and its might;
Every day they grew bolder in crime,
More reckless and daring each night.

Now, locked in the prisoner's cell,
If their words to your hearing could come,
I am sure they this counsel would bring,
"Boys, spend all your evenings at home!"

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

A CHILD'S FAITH.

WHEN the United States army was defeated at the battle of Bull Run, the news filled every Northern patriot's heart with great sadness. At Galena one party heard of it while at the dinner-table. The shock was too great to be expressed in words, and the company sat silent. Presently a little girl spoke and said:

"Well, if they have not killed God, it will be all right yet."

That impossible deed was not done, and the little girl's faith has been honored. It is all right. Liberty has triumphed. Rebellion is crushed. The slave is free.

It is a good thing, my children, to have faith in God. X.

PLEASANT words are as a honey-comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones. Prov. xvi, 24.