



The Fast Word.

In South Africa a Caffir chief sent some of his men fifteen miles to ask a missionary if the word he had taught them about the Lord's-day was the "fast word,"—that is, whether or not it came from God, and was a command that they must strictly keep.

The reason why he had sent was this: An English trader had brought his waggon near their village, and was asking the native people to buy and sell, although it was the Lord's-day. The trader said that "he had no Sunday," at which the Caffirs wondered much. The chief, however, answered that the missionary must decide the question, but that the trader might let his oxen graze, and make himself comfortable till the messengers came back.

When the messengers came to the missionary's house they said, "How can this be? The man was a white man! Where was he born that he has no Sunday?"

The missionary sent back word to the chief that it was a "fast-word," for it was God who said, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," and that this word was binding upon all men of every nation.

When the chief received this message he said to the Caffirs who had crowded around him, waiting for the missionary's answer, "Do you hear that now! The missionary must be right, because he has the book," meaning the Bible.

The trader was then told that he must wait until the next morning, when they would be glad to trade with him, for they would have nothing to do with him on the holy day.

It is very sad to think how many there are in our Christian country who neglect the "fast word" which these Caffirs had learned, and who "buy and sell and get gain" on the Lord's day, instead of using it for the holy purpose for which the wise and loving God has given it.

How Mollie Helped Mamma.

There was once a bright, spirited little girl, whose hard-worked father was taken suddenly away from his little family, leaving the whole burden of their support on the mother. A kind lady questioned this child, but six years old, as to how they got along.

"Oh," said little Mollie, "mother and I do all the work now, and we do it first-rate."

"But what can you do to help, with such little hands as those?" asked the lady.

Mollie held up her plump little hands, and turning them over again and again, said:

"Oh, I can do lots and lots! I set the table, and wash the dishes, and shake up the cradle-pillow, and blow the whistle for the baby. Some times mamma gets tired washing, and she cries.

Then I go and lift baby out of the cradle—he is awful heavy—and hold him right up before mamma. Then she always laughs and takes him, and that rests her, you see."

Be Content.

"Oh, dear! I don't see what you buy me such thick shoes for," said little Jennie Ray; "they are only fit for clod-hoppers. Why can't I have a pretty pair of French gaiters like Annie Swift's?"

"We buy such things as we can afford and think suitable for you," answered her mother. "I am sorry that, instead of being thankful for them, you should fret so. I wish you were like the man who said, 'I never grumbled but once; and that was because my shoes were worn out and I had no money to buy new ones. Soon after, I met a man who had no feet; and I went home contented with my bare ones.'"

"I am not so bad off as either of them," said Jennie; "so I'll be glad I have got thick shoes to cover my bare feet, and that I have feet to be covered."

Willie's Heroism.

This blue sky was covered with dark thunder-clouds and the air was still and hot.

In the little school-house "on the green" a patient teacher was trying to make her scholars bend their anxious eyes on their books; but the little faces would keep turning towards the window.

She had promised to tell the story of William Tell that afternoon to her geography class; and, finding it so difficult to turn their minds from the shower, she called out that class before its turn, and told them the story about how William Tell had to fire his arrow through an apple which had been placed on the head of his son, and how brave the boy was, and how he cried, "Fire, father! I am not afraid!" for he was sure his father's arrow would never miss its mark.

Just as she was saying this there came a sudden flash of lightning and a loud crash of thunder. Some of the children screamed, some began to cry, and some ran to the teacher for protection; Willie Hawthorne kept his seat, and his eyes were fixed quietly on his book.

"Why, Willie!" asked his teacher, after the shower was over, "why were you not afraid like the other children?"

"Because, Miss McLean, I knew the arrow was in my father's hand; and how could I be afraid?"

I believe the children never forgot Willie's bravery; and now, when you are afraid of the lightning, little reader, you can remember Willie's answer, and be as brave as he.



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