



The little Blackguards' School.

Many of the readers of the "*Youth's Penny Gazette*" have heard of John Pounds. There are few more remarkable men. He was a stout, strong boy till fifteen years of age, when he fell and broke his thigh bone, and otherwise injured himself, so as to be a cripple ever after. Being determined to do all he could to earn his bread, he betook himself to the business of a cobbler, which afforded him a comfortable support.

About the year 1818, John Pounds took upon himself the care of a little deformed nephew,—the son of a brother who followed the sea. The little fellow's feet turned inwards, and overlapped each other, and he was beside very feeble in body.

Having seen the iron pattens, with which a neighbor's child had been provided by an eminent surgeon, he ingeniously contrived, by fastening together the soles of old shoes and boots, an imitation of them that effectually cured the distortion. This child became a chief object of his care and affection ever afterward. He reared him; at a proper age put him apprentice to a fashionable shoemaker, and they lived together till the end of his days.

His attempts and success in the work of education arose out of this connection. When his nephew was about five years old, he applied himself to fulfilling the office of school-master to him. After a time, he thought he would learn better if he had a companion; he obtained one, then added another, and went on gradually increasing the number; and found so much pleasure in the employment, that he resolved to extend the same benefit to others whom he saw around him, in that very populous and poor neighborhood, quite destitute of instruction. The first addition to his charge was the son of a poor woman, who went about selling puddings; her homeless child, unable to accompany her, being left in the open street, amid frost and snow, with no other shelter than the over-hanging of a window.

As he became fond of the work of tuition, he gradually increased his numbers, until at length he became school-master-general to all around whose parents were too poor or too careless to provide them with other schooling. His establishment often averaging forty at a time, including about a dozen little girls, who were