

clean, I was constantly in such a state of inward irritation that I had never even thought of doing so. So I tried it, and I assure you that it has made things different. In the first place, I am different myself. You cannot honestly pray for any one and dislike them at the same time. It seems so—well, so sneaking, to ask God to help a person when you are not willing to help her yourself if you have the opportunity. So I began by really trying to find something to like in her, and to do her kindnesses as if I meant them, instead of in the coldly considerate manner I discovered I had been using. Presently I took genuine pleasure in it. She seems like another girl to me. I suppose I do to her."

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## Sunbeam.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 9, 1905.

### GOD, AND THE BOY IN KNEE PANTS.

"Why, that was thousands of years ago!" exclaimed Fred, in amazement.

"Well, the sun shone thousands of years ago, and the same sun is shining to-day," replied his mother.

"But, see here; I'm just a boy in knee pants."

"That is nothing dreadful. There are probably a hundred millions of you in the world, and knee pants are no farther from God than long pants."

Fred went out of the room, and pretty soon his father found him staring straight up into the sky. "Hunting for stars?" he asked, laughingly.

"No, sir," Fred exclaimed, confused; and then he, too, laughed, and asked: "How much nearer to heaven are you than I, papa?"

"If you mean the blue heavens above,

the top of my head is probably two feet nearer than yours; but if you mean the heart of God, there is not even that much difference, I am sure; for he loves a boy as well as a man."

"That's what mother said, but I could not understand what he could want with a boy in knee pants yet."

Fred's father pointed to where the workmen were building the stone walls of a house, and said: "You see, the mason is just fitting a small stone in the wall. A large one would not fit there. So there are hundreds of places where a boy fits into God's plan of the world, but a man would not. Time and again he has used boys, thousands of whom we have never heard of. So if you see any good that a boy can do—making another boy see the meanness of a mean act or the glory of an unselfish one, or protecting a dog or other creature, lightening life's burdens a little here and there for weary ones, and getting ready for the work of a man by and by—remember that is one of God's calls to you to serve him, and that he wants all the boys in knee pants to stand in close to him, ready for his commands."

### THE STORY OF A BALL.

BY MYRTLE B. MILLS.

I was not always a ball. Long ago I was soft, fleecy wool on a sheep's back. Then the sheep was sheared and I was spun into soft, red yarn, and when that was done, with many skeins like myself, I was placed in a box and sent to a large store.

One day a dear, old lady came into the store and, choosing me and some of my companion skeins, carried us to her home. She called her little granddaughter Bessie to help her wind the yarn into balls. Bessie held each skein on her little outstretched hands, and one by one the pretty balls were made. I was the last one to become a ball, and grandmother gave me a loving pat as she put us all into her basket. Here I was quite happy in the society of so many little red balls, but I often wished that I might see more of the new world around me. Baby-boy saw grandmother making the balls and wished for them to play with. He took a curved stick and pretended he was a little shepherd and the balls were his lambs, and he had great fun.

"I am going to knit Baby-boy some stockings to keep Jack Frost from the little feet," said grandmother, one bright summer afternoon. So she took her rocking-chair and her work-basket with the red balls and knitting-needles out on the veranda. Taking me and another ball out of the basket, she put us into her lap and began to knit.

By and by grandmother began to nod over her work, and, dropping her needles into her lap, she fell asleep. While she

was taking her nap, I rolled quietly on the floor, just as Topsy, the black and white cat, came up the veranda steps. Now Topsy thought nothing so nice as to play with us as a ball, and she sprang for us and would have caught me had I not rolled quickly off the veranda, down among the nasturtiums which grew by the walk. Topsy sat up on the steps for a while, and watched for me to come again, but I stayed where I was.

About supper-time grandmother awoke, and, putting on her spectacles, looked around for me; but I was hidden among the vines. "Baby-boy, do you know where grandmother's red ball is?" she called; but Baby-boy did not know. I was growing dark by this time, so grandmother took up her work and went in for supper. The stars came out one by one and the cricket began to chirp. I felt very lonely and wished I had not rolled away to see the world, but was safe in grandmother's basket.

Next morning when Baby-boy came to pick some flowers for mamma, he saw me among the nasturtium leaves. Taking me in his chubby hand, he ran to grandmother, who was very glad to see me again. I lie in her basket now, and every day as she knits I grow smaller and smaller. But I am very happy, for I know when I am no longer a ball I shall be a little red stocking to keep Baby-boy warm.

### A PRETTY, HAPPY GIRL.

There are many plain young girls whose faces are lined with discontent and unhappiness. There is a drawn, perplexed expression between the eyes and the corners of the mouth have a decided droop. These are the girls who have a settled idea that they are plain beyond remedy and the distressing belief has deepened the lines of dissatisfaction; but in reality there is only a cloud over the face, casting the habit of unhappiness.

A pretty story, by which we can profit, is as follows: One morning a certain girl whose face was under this cloud walked out across the sunshine of a common. For a moment the lightness of the morning had lifted the gloom, and her thoughts were unusually pleasant. "What a pretty, happy girl that is we have passed!" she heard one of the two ladies passing say to the other. She looked quickly around, with envy in her heart to see the pretty girl, but she was the only girl in sight. "Why, they mean me! I have never called me pretty before! It must be because I'm smiling." Again, as she was getting on a horse-car, she heard the fates were out in her favor: "Do you see that pretty, happy girl?" "Well, declare, I am always going to look like that if this is what comes of it! I have been called homely all my life, and here, in one day I've been called pretty."