

## Children's Department.

## Roy's Lesson.

"I do not like him, and I will have nothing whatever to do with him."

Roy Winslow spoke very decidedly; he was rather apt to be positive in his assertions.

"And you are sure that you are right to do so?" asked his mother.

"Certainly; he is not the kind of a fellow I care to associate with, nor one that I suppose you would approve," answered Roy, in a slightly injured tone of voice.

"Circumstances alter cases, Roy. It seems to me Joe has not much of a chance to be different. He hasn't any mother, you know, and his father is not a very good man, I am afraid. If Joe has nothing to help him at home, and you boys all cut him, as you say you do, what is left to him but to go wrong? Aren't you strong enough to reach out a hand and help him up a little, Roy?"

Roy's bright face clouded. Missionary efforts in the abstract were very fascinating, but brought into new life in the shape of helping someone rather disagreeable, they suddenly became very unattractive.

"I am sure I don't know what I could do for him," he said.

"Ask God to show you," his mother answered.

"My mother beats any one I know presenting a cause," Roy said once. "She don't urge you much, nor argufy; she just lays your duty out so plain before you, that you will never feel comfortable until you have done it."

So Roy found that he could not be easy in his mind about Joe White. It was just as his mother said; his home was very different from any of the other boys', and he seemed to have no one to help him, as they did.

Roy was inclined to be a little of a Pharisee; he had rather felt as if he were naturally good, but somehow, as he thought of what his mother said,

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he wondered if he would have been as good as Joe in his place.

"I guess I am priding myself on my mother's goodness, instead of my own; she has to put me up to everything, and she had hard work getting me up to some of them, that's a fact," he said, rather shame-facedly, to himself, as he thought it over. "I'm not so much of a fellow as I thought I was. I wonder, now, if Joe would go to the social with me to-night, if I asked him. Oh, dear! it would be just horrid having to take him! I wonder if doing good isn't rather tough work, anyway, when you are doing it, instead of thinking or reading about it? Well, I'll try to get Joe to go to-night; perhaps we can help him a little."

And having made up his mind, Roy put on his cap and started for Joe's.

Joe himself was standing at his own gate in an irresolute way. He had come out of the house half an hour or so ago, and had been standing there ever since, trying to make his mind up what to do. Jim Morgan and Tom Ryan had asked him to spend the evening with them; they would "show Jim some fun," they said; but, rough as Joe was, he hesitated. A faint memory of his mother's words to him; he was sure, in his heart of hearts, that she would not have wanted him to go with them. No, he knew well, if she had lived, he would not have wanted her to see him even speak to such fellows.

"But what can I do?" he said to himself, bitterly; "there isn't anyone at home, and the good boys won't have me. I might as well go to the bad and be done with it."

"How are you, Joe? I was just coming down to see you. Wouldn't you like to go with me to the social to-night? We have real good times, I think. I'm sure you would enjoy it. Come on, won't you?"

Joe turned and looked at Roy a minute.

"He is just such a boy as she would have wanted me to be," he thought. "I'll go with him."

So Joe went, and Roy found him less of a trouble than he had expected.

"But that's often the way, isn't it?" he said to his mother. "No matter how tough a thing looks, it isn't usually as hard as you expect, when you really get at it. And Joe puzzled me somehow. I spoke to the boys, and we have agreed to see if we cannot help him. Come to think ourselves over, I, for one, don't feel so sure that we're anything 'extry'; but we can all try together, can't we, if our mothers will all help?"

"I want to thank you, Roy," said Joe, months after, when he stood up before the world and confessed his intention to serve Christ henceforward, "I want to thank you for asking me to go with you that night. It was the turning point of my life, and I feel, under God, I owe everything to you."

"No, you don't, Joe; you owe it to my mother," answered Roy gravely.

"Then, God bless her!" said Joe fervently.

And in his heart Roy said, "Amen!"

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