

Family Reading.

THE STORY OF ANNETTE.

There was once a little girl named Annette; and this little girl was very amiable in disposition. She loved her parents, and was kind and affectionate to her brothers and sisters. And generally she did as she was bid, but not always; for she was rather thoughtless, and did not sufficiently consider whether a thing was right or wrong.

One day, after her mamma had been angry with her, and had spoken very seriously, little Annette went out into the garden; but could not play as usual with her brothers and sisters, because she was so much pleased in looking at the flowers, and the bees and butterflies, as she used to do.

Just then she saw, on a rose-tree, a beautiful bird, about the size of a thrush; but it had not a speckled breast and brown back like the thrushes, nor glossy black feathers like the blackbirds which she had often watched as they hopped about; but was of all sorts of bright colours, and had a tuft of gold on his head.

Annette sat down and listened to the song of the beautiful bird, and said to herself, "How I wish I was always good; and then I am sure I should be happy!"

"Annette," said she, "I am the Fairy Gratianna; and I promised your parents, soon after you were born that I would do all I could to take care of you, and help you to grow up a good girl."

"Thank you I thank you!" said Annette. "How nice it will be to know always exactly what o'clock it is when I get up in the morning, and go to bed; and then I shall never keep mamma and papa waiting a minute!"

Annette was rather disappointed when she heard this; for she began to think it was only one of those make-believe watches which never go except when they are being wound up. However she was too well behaved to tell the Fairy, "that she did not much care for her present."

"The watch which I have just given you is far more valuable than any watch yet made by mortal hands. It will not tell you the minute or hour of the day, nor the day of the week, nor the time of the moon, as some watches do."

thought to herself, "Oh, what a good girl I am!"

But the watch just then gave a gentle tick, and reminded her that she ought to think more humbly of herself, and that if it had not been for the watch, she would perhaps have been a very naughty girl.

It would be impossible to speak of all the occasions on which the watch ticked; for Annette was not often naughty, yet she was often tempted to be naughty, so that the watch ticked more or less every day.

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"What a nice little watch it must be!" "One thing you must promise," said the Fairy, "and that is, that you will never part with it."

enemy than a friend. Then it is that some are tempted to cast it from them, and give themselves up to wicked ways; but, if they call on God in their extremity, He will not desert them, but come in some way to their aid, and save them from the impending danger.

TURN RIGHT AT THE TURNING POINT. It was the beginning of summer holidays, when Mr. Davis, a friend of my father, came to see us, and asked to let me go home with him.

At last Mrs. Davis said it was bed-time. Then I expected family prayers, but we were very soon directed to our chambers. How strange it seemed to me, for I had never before been in a house without family prayers.

When my mother bade me good-by, just before the coach started, she said tenderly, in a low tone, "Remember, Robert, that you are a Christian boy belonging to a Christian family."

This went on for some time. Meanwhile Annette grew up to be a great girl, and had to think and manage for herself. Sometimes she listened to the watch, and was thankful and happy when she did so; but, from having learned occasionally to disregard it, she found that it was not of half the use it might have been.

"Dearest Annette, why are you so sorrowful? So beautiful a creature as you, ought to know nothing but pleasure and gaiety."

"I know the reason," continued the youth; "it is on account of that odious watch given you by the Fairy Gratianna. You see I have found out your secret; and you have only to throw it away, and you will be happy."

Annette was almost persuaded, but she thought on her promise; and at last it occurred to her to touch the spring. No sooner had she done so, than the Fairy Gratianna stood before her, and the youth started aside in confusion.

"Well, and who can tell what is meant by the watch?" said papa, as soon as the story was over. "Conscience, conscience!" said two of the little auditors at once.

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