

dare is one of the greatest temptations a boy can meet. The boy who can be brave and strong enough to resist a dare is safe in all manner of temptations. Evil can scarcely reach one clothed with the invulnerable mail of courage to appear a coward for wisdom's sake.

'Shall I come half-way to help you?' laughed the sweet, taunting voice.

'No!' shouted Leonard. 'I will not run such a risk for the mere nonsense of showing my nerve. I should be ashamed to do it. I will not come one step!'

'Yes, you will!' cried Helen, piqued now to show the strength of her influence over him. 'Come, little boy!' she laughed teasingly, as she tripped lightly back over the blackened boards. 'Come to school with —'

A crack, a crash! and a scream of terror! The next instant Helen was hanging by her dress and one arm to the beam just below where a treacherous board had broken and let her through. She tried to secure her balance and climb back, but the catching of her dress which saved her from being plunged into the swift flowing river below now held her so securely that she was helpless.

'Arrah! Arrah!' cried the men, wringing their hands in dismay. 'Run for a ladder! It'll niver do fer any man to venture on them rotten boards, where even that light little creature couldn't go! Run for a ladder or a boat!'

'She'll drop afore ye could get either,' muttered another, peering over at Helen's ashen face.

'Give me that rope!' cried Leonard, with unflinching eyes.

One of the men handed it up automatically. To obey such a spirit was instinctive.

'Shore, ye mustn't go a step onter the bridge, or we'll hev two o' ye in the fix,' whispered the foreman, hoarsely.

'Hold this end! Strong now! Pass it around that tree!' commanded Leonard; and without a moment's hesitation he began to creep cautiously over the skeleton bridge. The men held their breath to watch the brave lad. Once, twice, a board cracked and almost gave way; but Leonard quickly threw his weight back, and advanced from another direction. When he reached Helen, she was too exhausted to help herself; but, by the aid of the rope, they managed at last to draw her

back to the safe, firm earth once more. Then how the men cheered! And how proudly they shook hands with the pale young hero!

'Shore, ye've did a big thing ter risk yer own life ter save hers, after her tauntin',' said one of the men, bluntly, but with honest feeling; 'but, me lad, the bravest thing ye did was to refuse to run the risk fer a mere stump! I wish I had a boy o' me own wid your spirit!'

One of the men had hastened to the nearest barn for a horse and carriage; and poor, foolish little Helen was taken home as tenderly and with as little rebuke as if the accident had not been caused wholly by her own folly.

It was over a week before her strained nerves would admit of her seeing any one. Then she called for Leonard.

'I can't ever tell you how sorry I am that I was such a little goose as to tempt you by calling you a coward,' she said.

'Oh, that was all right. I suppose I really was one,' laughed Leonard; 'for I nearly fainted from terror the moment I touched the ground with you. If the man had not cheered loud enough to scare my senses back again just then, I should certainly have collapsed.'

'You saved my life,' said Helen; 'but you would have saved it so much more easily if I had only heeded your warning. But, Leonard, honestly, I didn't think you a coward for a single minute. I admired you most of all when I was the most scornful; for a boy who can resist a dare to show his courage—and from a girl, too—is a real hero, and I knew it.'—*The Advance.*

The Pine Tree and the River

(Mary N. Prescott in New York
'Independent'.)

A Pine Tree grew on the bank of a river. The wind blew through its branches, like the fluting of an æolian harp, as if every pine-needle were a string. It had been growing there a hundred years; generations of little birds had built among its boughs; the tide had been going in and out for a much longer time. One day it seemed as if the old tree reached its ragged arms to follow.

'Every day you go gadding off,' said the Pine Tree, 'while I have never stirred from this bank since I was a tiny seed, cradled in a cone. I am tired of staying at home. I long to go with you.'

'But I am sent,' answered the River. 'I have errands to do. I must float ships out to sea. I must help the hay-makers with their gundalows to get up from the salt-marshes. I must give the fishermen a lift. I have spindles to turn and great booms of logs to send down in the spring. It is not altogether a pleasure-trip that I take. If I were late, if I were to take a holiday or a recess, how many plans would be upset! I sometimes wish I could rest awhile.'

'And I wish I might travel, as you do. I feel as if I were in prison. You, and the sun, and the wind, and even the little stars all take your journeys. I have heard that certain plants make excursions. I understand that there are coral islands, far out at sea, built by tiny insects; and a sun that shines at midnight in the north; and a cross of stars in the southern sky; and a stream of warm water flowing along the ocean; and strange winds that blow one way for six months at a time; and mountains that smoke; and I long to float away with you into that world of wonders.'

And the Pine Tree murmured day and night, and by and by a wood-chopper came and cut it down, and floated it upon the river, with a vast company of other logs, and it was shaped into a ship's mast, and travelled around the world, and was wrecked on a coral reef.

Faithful in Little Things.

I cannot do great things for Him,
Who did so much for me;
But I should like to show my love,
Dear Jesus, unto Thee.
Faithful in very little things,
O Saviour, may I be!

There are small things in daily life
In which I may obey,
And thus may show my love to Thee;
And always, every day,
There are some little loving words
Which I for Thee may say.

There are small crosses I may take,
Small burdens I may bear,
Small acts of faith and deeds of love,
Some sorrows I may share;
And little bits of work for Thee
I may do everywhere.

So I ask Thee to give me grace
My little place to fill,
That I may ever walk with Thee,
And ever do Thy will—
That in each duty, great or small,
I may be faithful still.
—*Child's Companion.*