

Sunday-School Advocate.

TORONTO, JANUARY 14, 1865.

"I DON'T WANT TO."

HENRY, take this parcel and carry it to Mrs. Smith for me," said a lady to her son one afternoon.

"I don't want to," drawled Henry in a snarlish tone. He was very busy rigging a little boat, and did not wish to leave it until it was done.

Mrs. Coats sighed. She was used to this disobedient answer, and had often been obliged to use stern words, and sometimes blows, to compel him

to obey her. Henry heard the sigh. It ought to have melted his stubbornness; but it did not, for his heart was very hard, and he kept on with his play.

"Henry!" said Mrs. Coats, after a painful pause of several moments, "do as I told you."

"I won't!" replied the boy, knitting his brow and compressing his lips.

Again the mother sighed, but more deeply than before, and a big tear rolled down her hollow cheek. Henry looked up and saw the tear, but even that did not subdue him. His heart was very, very hard.

"What shall I do?" said the poor woman to herself. "How can I conquer this willful boy? Ah, me! I fear my heart will be broken by his obstinacy."

Then Mrs. Coats rose from her chair and walked toward the door of her little chamber which opened from the sitting-room. When she arose Henry looked up again, for he thought she was going to get a rod with which to whip him; but when he saw her enter the chamber-door, he sneered and went on with his play. He knew his mother was going to tell the story of his rebellion to God. That surely ought to have subdued his will. It did not. Wasn't he a stubborn son?

Very soon he heard the whispers of his mother's prayer. O how earnest her words seemed as she poured forth her great heart-sorrow into the ear of the great Father above! Those whispers troubled Henry, but he would not yield to the call of duty. He threw down the rigging of his boat in a pet, said "bother!" in an angry tone, and left the house, more resolved than ever not to take the parcel to Mrs. Smith. Wasn't he a very wicked boy?

Yes, Henry was very stubborn. He had the will of a mule, and seemed to take delight in disobeying his widowed mother. She had often tried the rod, had tried coaxing, had tried praying, but neither love nor severity had been able to overcome his self-willed nature.

Having left the house, it came into his evil heart to go to a tall cliff in the neighborhood which rose up from the river bank more than a hundred feet in height. Wild grapes grew between the rocks of this cliff, and Mrs. Coats had often begged Henry not to venture near it as it was a very dangerous place for boys. To-day Henry, for the first time in his life, resolved to descend the cliff. His heart beat with wicked delight at the thought of being able to do something which his mother had begged him not to do. Disobedience, like an evil spirit, had taken possession of him.

Borne along by these bad feelings, Henry began to descend the cliff, searching for grapes as he slid from rock to rock. It was a hard place to descend. There was no path. Many of the rocks jutted out and overhung those beneath. The boy had to grasp the roots of trees and lower himself from point to point. It was a perilous route, and became more and more dangerous as he proceeded. After a while his heart began to fail him for fear he should fall. And fall he did, for having in his alarm grasped a rotten root, it broke, and away he went, tumbling down the rocks like a peddler's pack. When he reached the bottom he was senseless.

Luckily for him, there was a boatman on the river's bank, who picked him up, sprinkled water into his face, and as soon as he revived bore him gently to the nearest cottage. There the doctor and his mother visited him. He was suffering severe pain. His face was scratched and torn by brambles, his body was sore all over with bruises, and, worse than all, his left arm was badly broken.

They carried him home on a litter. His arm was set and bound up, and through many days and nights he lay wearily suffering the rewards of his disobedience. His thoughts were even more painful than his bodily hurts, and the sight of his quiet, gentle mother sitting ever beside his bed and looking so lovingly upon him, finally began to move his heart. "I am a wicked fellow," said he to himself one night; "I wonder what would become of me if I should die? O dear! O dear!"

These thoughts were doves from heaven sailing into his heart and wooing it from its evil ways. After resisting them many days he at last gave way to their power, and looking into his mother's face said:

"Mother, I'm so sorry for my disobedience. Will you forgive me? Will you pray God to make me a better boy?"

Was his mother glad? Did she forgive him? Did she pray for him? Of course she did. It is just like mothers to forgive and love. Did Henry become a better boy? He did, and when he was well again and the old phrase "I don't want to" leaped from his heart to his lips, a thought of his tumble down the cliffs, and of his heavenly Father's eye, and of his mother's loving face, drove both the evil words and the evil thoughts from his lips and heart. Henry was conquered by the mighty power of God.

How do you like my picture of Henry's disobedience? It is not a pleasant study, I know; yet if you are disobedient to your parents it is a pretty correct picture of your heart as the great God and your parents see it. I beg you not to carry your disobedience so far as to meet such punishment as Henry did. Better yield at once. Come to Christ now, just now, and ask him to take away your stubborn will and give you a kind, gentle, loving, pure, obedient heart. Will you?



EDITOR'S CABINET.

"You look glum this morning, Mr. Forrester; what troubles you, sir?"

This question is put by the Corporal to the Esquire, whose face is a little longer than usual. The old man looks up with his wonted smile and replies:

"I was thinking, noble Corporal, of a boy whose conduct troubles me. He is so fickle you can't do anything with him. At school he was so careless of his studies that, though naturally bright, he was counted almost a dunce. Since he left he refuses to settle down to anything. He has been in a store, and that was too tiresome he said, and left it. He was then sent to a watchmaker to learn his business, but he soon gave that up, saying his fingers were too clumsy to handle the little wheels, pins, and screws of a watch. Next he went into a machinist's shop, but the work there was too hard for him. His last place was with a tailor, whom he left because the boys laughed at him and called him the ninth part of a man."

"If he don't alter his course he won't make the ninety-ninth part of a man!" exclaimed the Corporal sharply as he brought his cane to the floor with a thwack which startled us, and then he added after a brief pause, "He is a rolling stone, a rolling stone, sir."

"He is, sir, and rolling stones gather no moss," rejoined

Mr. Forrester, "and therefore I am troubled about the boy. I fear he will be useless and unhappy all the days of his life."

"It is a hard case," said the Corporal with a sigh. "Such boys are a curse to themselves, to their parents, and to society. But if the boy will make a hard bed for himself he will have to lie upon it and suffer all the penalties of his conduct. I'm sorry for him, but if he won't help himself there is no help for him."

Those are true words, O Corporal. If a child will do wrong nothing can save him. He will suffer, suffer, suffer for his folly all the days of his life, and bring sorrow upon all who love him.—But to your letters, noble Corporal. What have you to-day?

"First, I find two books in my budget called the 'History of the M. E. Church in the United States of America, by A. Stevens, LL.D.' What have you to say of them, Mr. Editor?"

They are books of rare interest and value, my Corporal. Every boy and girl in your company, every Sunday-school teacher, and every person in the Church should read them. I hope they will be placed in every Sunday-school library in the land.

"That is high praise, Mr. Editor, but the books will bear it and more. Here is a splendid volume in appearance called 'The American Boy's Book of Sports and Games; a Repository of In-and-out-door Amusements for Boys and Youth, with over Six Hundred Engravings.' What say you of that, sir?"

It is not a Sunday-school book in any sense, but it is a book for week-days that boys will esteem among their best treasures. Besides much that relates to boyish sports, it contains much valuable information concerning birds, rabbits, fowls, dogs, horses, and fish; also concerning carpentry, boat-building, gardening, etc. I am sorry to see its value diminished, however, by a chapter on games of chance—such as backgammon, bagatelle, tennins, etc.—games which awaken a taste for gambling, and lead those who love them into dangerous associations. With this exception, I can strongly recommend the book as a week-day book for boys, who must play as well as work and study.

"Very good, sir. Here is a letter from G. S. G., of —, which calls on your children to pray for our gracious Queen Victoria. It says the children ought to do this morning and evening, because it would help them to think about and to love their country, and because God would hear their prayers and help the queen do her duty amid all her trials and sorrows. What say you to that, sir?"

It is good advice, my Corporal. Every Christian child should pray daily for the rulers of his country. The Bible requires this of all who read its sacred pages. Hence, I indorse the call of G. S. G., and entreat all my children to say in their daily prayers, "Please, God, bless Victoria, our gracious queen, with all her counselors, and help her put down evil men, maintain our laws, and lead our country safely in the paths of liberty, prosperity, and religion." What next, Corporal?

"Here is the answer to the Christmas puzzle in our last number:

"(1.) Cyrenius, Luke ii, 2. (2.) Herod, Matthew ii, 1. (3.) Simeon, Luke ii, 25. (4.) Mary. (5.) Angels, Luke ii, 13, 14. (6.) Shepherds, Luke ii, 15, 16. (7.) Inn, Luke ii, 7. (8.) Rama, Matt. ii, 18. (9.) Turtle-doves, Luke ii, 22-24. Name of the happy day—CHRISTMAS.

"A miss who writes with a sharp pen and calls herself a Sunday-school cadet, says:

"We have a large Sunday-school and the very prince of superintendents. His term of office expired last spring, and, as he is a very timid, bashful little man, he wished some one else put in his place, but as all the scholars voted to re-elect him, he could not refuse to serve. He is the very man for the place, and we would not exchange him even for your Corporal Try, begging your pardon for saying it. All he needs is a little more self-confidence. We also elected a chorister at the same time, but though we all voted for him, our votes did not have the same effect on him as on our superintendent, for he does not attend, and we are left to do the best we can for singing. Now, Corporal, cannot either you or Mr. Forrester tell us some way to remedy this evil? We will try it faithfully if you will."

Pray for the chorister, my bright little cadet. He wants a little more divine love in his heart which would make him want to sing and to help you sing too. Of that bashful superintendent whom you prefer to the Corporal, I have only to say that he is a fortunate man. The children love him, and the Corporal says he is not a bit jealous, for he is sure that children who love their teachers keep a warm place in their hearts for him.