

scud along lightly until he came within range of their vision.

Although he had been led to expect this very thing, Joe gave an irrepressible start when he saw the boy below him, and the rafter creaked ominously.

Otto stopped instantly, and seemed to be listening; he had the startled air of a marauding mouse when some skirt rustles in the room, and when the silence reassured him, the mouse's nimbleness was his too as he swiftly rifled two of the lunch baskets, putting the contents in some mysterious inner pocket between his ragged coat and what passed for his shirt. And that instant he was gone. Poor little Otto, he was no bungler!

Neal and Joe were fairly trembling with excitement, and with elation at their success. It seemed impossible to go back to school that morning and sit down to algebra and geography. A further scheme took shape in Neal's excited brain: 'We'll have him expelled, of course,' he said to Joe, 'and the way to do it is to get up a petition signed by our parents; I'll go and get mother to write it up for us, and sign her name.' (Neal's mother was a widow.)

Joe was ready to follow his leader but stopped at his own home, to talk it over there; and was much disappointed to find the house deserted and everybody away from home.

A still greater disappointment was in store for Joe; for Neal, who had gone bounding home to get his petition in shape, came creeping down the road at a snail's pace, his hands in his pockets, his head down, and a certain droop about his shoulders that suggested defeat rather than triumph.

'Hello!' Joe called out, impatiently; 'Where's the paper? Did your mother sign it?'

Neal stopped short, in front of his chum, with a look that was embarrassed, and yet resolute.

'Joe,' he said, 'I've changed my mind; I don't mean to tell anybody but Miss Dysart about Otto; and I don't mean you to tell either.'

Joe gave a grunt of dissatisfaction.

'I suppose your mother begged him off,' he said, as scornfully as he dared.

'I didn't tell my mother any-

thing about it; I haven't spoken to her, or to anybody else, since you saw me, except to ask the maid where mother was.'

'Where was she?' asked Joe, suspiciously.

'She was in her own room,' Neal answered, shortly, 'but that's none of your business. I've made up my mind to get Miss Dysart to talk to that little rowdy, and give him another chance.'

Neal carried his point, as he generally did; Joe did not dare to tell on Otto, though sorely tempted to do it. Miss Dysart was only too glad to be the means of giving the poor unfortunate a chance to do better, and, as far as the lunch baskets were concerned, Otto never offended again. One cannot help hoping that the kindness will bear fruit in his heart, being still young and unhardened in wickedness.

Nobody knew at the time, not even Miss Dysart, what had changed Neal's mind. Years afterward he told the story himself, and I may give it to you in his words: 'I went home hot-foot to look up my mother, and set on foot the plan to run the little thief out of school. 'Where's mother, Dilsey?' I asked. 'Mistis is sayin' ob her prayers, Mars Neal, an' yo' must'n' 'sturb her,' answered the old black woman. I went to mother's door and softly turned the knob; it was locked; I waited and waited, what seemed to be an endless time, and tried it again; it was still locked. 'Mother has certainly forgotten to unlock the door,' I said to myself; 'she doesn't say her prayers all day.' But I did not venture to knock at that locked door. Then an idea occurred to me, suggested, perhaps, by the spy work I had just been at. I tipped around through a closet, and finding that door ajar, I peeped into the room. To my dying day I shall never forget the sight that met my eyes. My mother was kneeling in the midst of her large, sunny chamber, with her worn old Bible spread open on a chair before her; her eyes were open, but she did not see me and would not, I am sure, if I had entered her room; she was in the presence of the invisible God, and in a low voice she was interceding with him for her only child—for me. With her finger resting

on the page before her, she pleaded God's promise to be a Father to the fatherless, and claimed from him that guidance and protection from evil which my earthly father would have given me, 'if he, O Lord, had lived and had been as great and wise and loving as thou art.'*

'I crept softly away, with my heart melted within me, by the sight of that sweet radiance on my mother's face, and the first effect it had on me was to make me resolve to be gentle with that poor boy whose mother had many a time cursed him, but who had, I felt sure, never prayed for him in her life!'

*A true incident.

A Puzzled Monkey.

Yesterday was a good day for the monkeys at the Fairgrounds, and they liked it. They frisked about in the sunshine, and cut their antics with an abandon that showed them to be bubbling over with fun and mischief. There is one that by some amusing peculiarities becomes an immediate favorite with every spectator. A gentleman in the crowd yesterday happened to have a small pocket mirror, and just for sport passed it to the favorite. The monkey's behavior, on seeing his face reflected in the glass, kept the crowd in a roar of laughter for nearly an hour. The monkey, of course, failed to recognize the reflection of himself, and took it for another monkey, and his anxiety to get hold of that monkey was what made the fun. He would look behind the glass and feel for it in such a comical way while he was looking in the glass that one could not help laughing. While the glass was close to his eye he gradually bent over, casually, and noticing that the evanescent monkey was on his back, apparently, he dropped the glass and made a sudden grab for him. When he didn't get him he looked surprised, and commenced looking under the straw to see what had become of him. He was then seized with a luminous idea. He picked up the glass and ran to the topmost branch of the dead tree that is erected in the cage, and climbing to the extreme end again looked in the glass. It seemed he reasoned that in such a position the monkey could not get away. He felt for it, grabbed at it, and tried all sorts of strategy to capture it, notwithstanding repeated failures. —St. Louis Republican.