

### "Worth Winning."

**T**HERE was a boy who worked away from home, named John. Every week he wrote to his mother, who lived on a small farm away up among the hills. One day John picked up an old envelope from the waste paper basket, and saw that the postage stamp on it was not touched by the postmaster's stamp, to show that it had done its duty and henceforth was useless.

"The postmaster missed his aim then," said John, "and left the stamp as good as new. I'll use it myself."

He moistened it at the spout of the tea-kettle, and very carefully pulled the stamp off.

"No," said John's conscience, "for that would be cheating. The stamp has been on one letter; it ought not to carry another."

"It can carry another," said John, "because, you see, there is no mark to prove it worthless. The post master will not know."

"But *you* know," said conscience, "and that is enough. It is not honest to use it a second time. It is a little matter, to be sure, but it is cheating. God looks for principle. It is the quality of every action that He judges by."

"But no one will know it," said John faintly.

"No one?" cried conscience. "God will know it, and that is enough; and He, you know, desires the truth in the inward parts."

"Yes," cried all the best parts of John's character; "it is cheating to use the postage stamp the second time, and I will not do it."

John tore it in two and gave it to the winds. And so John won a victory. Wasn't it worth winning?

### The Sick Lamb.

**L**ITTLE Christian had a lamb,—his very own plaything; a frisky, pretty thing it was, and as fond of fun as Chris. himself. But one day it fell down the steps at the back of the house, and lay bleating on the ground, in pain, until Chris. and its mother came to its help. The poor little lamb had broken one of its legs, and could not stand. Christian cried to see his pet in pain, and tended the wounded limb day and night with loving care. But the old sheep wanted to be nurse also; when Chris. would put his lamb to bed, old Anna—as they named the sheep—would bring in her mouth little bundles of sweet, fresh grass, and would often come in with a mouthful of water which she would pour over the broken leg as Chris. had done. Some of you may think sheep very foolish creatures, but this may show you that, when timidity is laid aside, they are as sagacious as many other animals.

In the end the lamb died, and was buried; and now comes the sad part of old Anna's love. She took herself to the grave of her dead lamb, and never

left it,—neither eating or drinking—and on the morning of the third day was found there by Christian—dead? Was not this a proof of deep love in a poor, dumb creature? You who have fond mothers who have hung with sorrow over your beds of sickness,—you will understand something of this love. Boys and girls, how truly and tenderly should you love your mothers!

And there is One who gave His life for you,—who so loved you that He chose rather to die a shameful death than that *you* should bear the just punishment of your sins at the hand of God. How you should love Him for this! How *do* you love Him; or do you love Him at all?

### A Helper.

**I**N a cemetery a little white stone marked the grave of a dear little girl; and on the stone were chiseled these words: "A child of whom her playmates said, 'It was easier to be good when she was with us.'" Was it not a beautiful epitaph?

### Crooked Habits.

**W**HILE shaking hands with an old man the other day, we noticed that some of his fingers were bent quite inward, and he had not the power of straightening them. Alluding to this fact, he said: "In these crooked fingers there is a good text for a talk to children. For fifty years I used to drive a stage-coach, and these bent fingers show the effects of holding the reins for so many years."

This is the text. Is it not a suggestive one? Does it not teach us how oft-repeated acts become a habit, and, once acquired, remain generally through life? The old man's crooked fingers, dear children, are but an emblem of the crooked tempers, words, and actions, of men and women.

### An Anecdote of Edward VI.

**A**T the coronation of Edward VI., when the three swords for the three kingdoms were brought to be borne before him, the king observed that one was yet wanting, and he called for the Bible.

"That," said he, "is the sword of the Spirit, and ought in all right to govern us, who use these for the people's safety by God's appointment. Without that sword we are nothing, we can do nothing. From that we are what we are this day . . . we receive whatsoever it is that we at this present do assume. Under that we ought to live, to fight, to govern the people, and to perform all our affairs. From that alone we obtain all power, virtue, grace, salvation, and whatsoever we have of divine strength."

Dear children do you value the Bible as that young king did?