

THE FALSE BALANCE.

Two little girls, in the early morning of an autumn day, were dressing, in a sleepy fashion, or rather, one of them was dressing, and the other sat on the side of the bed, looking at her.

"There," said Bess, impatiently, "now that mean old shoestrings must go and break, and I know that bell's just going to ring. Turn over the leaf, Gussie, so we can learn the text while we do our hair."

Gussie got on the bed and turned over the leaf on a roll of texts which hung on the wall, and then stood a minute reading it to herself.

"Why don't you hurry?" said Bess, looking at her; "you'll be awful late. My senses me! What a text to pick out for folks! 'A false balance is an abomination to the Lord.' 'Pears to me if I was a Sunday-school committee, or whoever does pick out those verses, I'd find some that had some sense to 'em."

"Why, Bessie Maynard, that's in the Bible, and I should think you wouldn't dare to talk so," said Gussie with horrified eyes.

"Well, I don't mean just that way, of course. I mean sense for everybody. You know yourself there's a difference. There's verses about wives and husbands and ministers and—and grandmothers, and they don't fit everybody. I should think that verse was meant for grocery-men that don't weigh things right, and I wish they had to learn it."

"It's easy to learn anyhow," said Gussie, "only I like to think about my verse. Some of them seem just a purpose for me, like 'Diligent in business,' and 'Whatever thy hand.'"

"Yes," said Bessie, complacently, "You are so slow Gussie, and such a put-offer, and there isn't a thing in this verse to think about."

There was a little silence, for Bessie was brushing her thick, curly locks, and it took all her patience to struggle through the tangles.

"That's because you didn't brush it out last night," said Gussie.

"I s'pose so; but it's such a bother. Dear me! I'm just going to braid it this way; I can't stop."

"Oh, Bessie! you know mamma won't like it, and it spoils your hair," said Gussie.

"It'll do for once," said Bess; "it looks all right, anyhow."

"I wonder," began Gussie, and then suddenly stopped.

"What?" inquired Bessie.

"I didn't know—I thought, maybe, that might be what the text meant," said Gussie, slowly, "sort of half doing things; not giving quite so much as you pretend to."

Gussie stopped, afraid of offending the sister of whose superior gifts she stood greatly in awe; but Bessie only laughed as she answered, "You do think of the queerest things, Gussie."

That was what they all said of Gussie, but she kept on thinking.

It was her day to dust the parlors.

"I'll help you," said Bess, "and then you'll get through so we can go for chestnuts."

"But you don't dust the corners, Bessie, and you haven't moved any of the books," said Gussie, as she watched her sister's rapid whisks of the duster.

"What's the difference," said Bess, "it looks all right; you s'pose anybody's going to peek around after a speck of dust? There, now, that's done."

But Gussie, with the thought of that false balance in her queer little head, kept on until the work was thoroughly done, saying to herself, "If I pretend to give mamma a pound of work, and only give her half a pound, I'm sure that's a deceitful balance."

The next thing in order was to pick over the grapes for jelly, and even patient Gussie, sighed over the big basket; but, as usual, Bessie's part was completed long before hers.

"I wish you could learn to be a little more nimble with your fingers, Gussie," said her mother, and Bessie added in an undertone, "'It's cause you fuss so. S'pose a bad grape does go in, now and then, who's goin' to know it when they're all mashed up?"

"I don't care," said Gussie, feeling a little touched by her mother's criticism. "I shan't have any false balance 'bout my work, 'cause the Lord can tell a bad grape if it is smashed up; and it isn't the grape that matters—its putting it in."

Only one thing more stood between the little girls and the holiday excursion for chestnuts. The history lesson must be learned for Monday, and they would be as free as the birds. "How I hate it," said Gussie, "stupid, dry stuff about ad-min-is-ter-a-tions. I don't see any use in knowing it anyhow."

"I'll tell you what," said Bess, "let's begin about the middle, because the first of it never does come to us."

"And then," said Gussie, "Miss Marcy will s'pose, of course, we know the beginning."

"Yes," nodded Bess, beginning to gabble over the words. "I'm going to finish in half an hour—on account of these things it was impossible."

"But we don't know what things," said Gussie.

"No, and I don't care."

"And if Miss Marcy s'poses we know and gives us credit, it'll be a deceitful balance, 'cause we make her think we know a pound when we know only half a pound."

Bessie's face flushed a little. "I just wish Gussie Maynard, you wouldn't talk any more about that groceryman's text. It's just nonsense trying to make it fit us."

But, after all, Bessie did not feel quite comfortable, and she went back and learned the beginning of her lesson.

"There," she said, "that's good, full weight, and I don't intend to be a 'bomination any more."—*Advocate.*

CHINESE ETIQUETTE.

When last in this country the Rev. F. L. H. Pott, who is head master in St. John's College, Shanghai, gave to a *Tribune* reporter an interesting account of the way in which he receives a pupil. It gives one a good idea of Chinese etiquette. Mr. Pott said:

"You want to know how I receive a boy into the college? Well, the fathers of the boys at St. John's are usually politicians, merchants or scholars. They are all Chinese gentlemen. Of course I have to adapt myself to the etiquette of the Chinese, and so, when a father arrives with his boy, I escort them to my Chinese reception room, where the father and I each shake our own hands most heartily, and bow profoundly. I then say to him:

"What is your honorable name?"

"He replies: 'My name, insignificant name is Wong.'

"Then I say: 'Please be seated,' and point to a seat in the back of the room, at the left hand of the table—the seat of the greatest honor. He immediately take