

Children's Department.

Minnie and Frizzle

Minnie and Frizzle had a quarrel, true as you live!

Auntie Dora would never have sent them the dishes if she had known that the dear little nieces would one day have a quarrel over the tiny pink and white cups and saucers. There was a whole set, but it was the cups and saucers that brought the little girls to grief.

Such good times as they had too! Every day for a whole month, mamma was called upon to cut the tiniest slices of bread and cunningest little shavings of dried beef, and when cook was goodnatured, she would make the very littlest bits of cookies, no bigger than Frizzle's thimble—indeed, I am not sure that they were not cut out with that same thimble! Then they had make-believe tea made out of hot water with a little milk and sugar. It was just delightful!

But these little girls were very much like several other little girls whom I know; they both wanted their own way about things. And one unfortunate day they did not want things the same way. Minnie wanted to put the cup and saucers on the little table just as mamma did, and Frizzle wanted them put on as Aunt Jennie had them. Neither of them would give up, and finally Frizzle said in a dreadfully cross tone

"Then I won't play!" and she sat down in a chair, kind of sidewise, with one elbow hoisted up on the back of the chair, and the other little clenched hand hanging down. It was not a very graceful position, neither was it a very pleasant-looking little girl who sat there kicking her heels against the rounds of the chair. She was saying to herself, "I don't care! Minnie always wants her own way! I think

things ought to go as I say. I am older than she is!"

And Minnie, left over in the corner where the little table was set out, talked to herself too.

"I sinks Frizzle's test as mean as she can be! she allers wants her way! I sinks mamma knows a great deal more's an Aunt Jennie how sings ought to be. Any way, I like mamma's way bestest!"

After a while Minnie grew tired of pouting, and said, in her little heart, "I wish Frizzle would come back, I don't care very much any way." And she went over to where Frizzle still sat and stood beside her. Frizzle did not look up; then Minnie pulled a little on Frizzle's dress, and said:

"Come, Frizzle, I don't care a single bit. Let's go to playing."

At this Frizzle turned suddenly round and laughed. "I don't care either!" she said. And so they made up and went back to their play.

Mamma had watched the whole; and that night when she put the little ones to bed, she said:

"I was very glad to see my little girls make up after their quarrel this afternoon, but how much better I should like to see them overcoming this naughty habit of getting cross at each other. When will you remember to put away the first angry feeling just as it comes up in your little hearts. You lost a whole half-hour this afternoon, right out of your play, over that little matter as to whether your cups and saucers should be put in a pile or spread out singly. Wasn't that a silly thing to do?"

Frizzle and Minnie thought it was, and I think so too.

Jessie's Importunity.

"Mamma, what does importunity mean?"

Jessie looked up from her Bible and waited for mamma's answer.

"Importunity means urgent request—continual asking for a thing," replied the mother.

The puzzled look on Jessie's face lifted a little, and she read, "'I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet, because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.' Does that mean because he asks over and over?"

"Yes, dear, it means that if the man wanted the bread very much he would ask earnestly and his friend could not resist the pleading."

"I suppose like papa, when I ask him for things," said Jessie, "he can't say 'no' when I want things very much. This morning when I went down to the office to ask him for some money for skates, he was writing, and when I spoke to him, he kept right on writing. I said 'papa!' and he never looked up; then I said louder 'papa!' and he kept on with his writing; then I said 'papa! will you give me some money to buy a new pair of skates?' but he didn't look up; and I said 'papa' over so many times, and finally I shook the table, just a little, and I could see a funny little smile that didn't show much, but I knew if I kept on it would come out, and it did. Papa just leaned back and laughed and said 'What a persistent little girl you are!' then he gave me the money. Was that the same as if he had said, 'because of your importunity?'"

Mamma smiled upon her little daughter. "Yes, Jessie, I think you understand what importunity means

as well as any little girl I know of."

Then Jessie turned back to her reading and read.

"Ask, and it shall be given you. Mamma, does that mean that God will give us whatever we ask if we ask in earnest?"

"Read on a little," said mamma.

And Jessie read until she came to the verse, "If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"

"But, mamma, you have told me to ask for other things, and I have asked a great many times for something that I wanted very much, and God has given things to me when I have asked."

"Yes, dear; Jesus taught us to ask for our daily bread, and that means all our needs; and He does hear and answer us; but I think that He means to teach us that we may ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit to lead us, and if we ask earnestly, desiring this gift, we shall certainly receive it, for we may know that it is according to His will. When we ask for other things, we do not certainly know that what we ask will be good for us, and we ought always to say in our hearts, 'if it be thy will.' Sometimes we wonder why God does not hear us and give us the things we have been asking for; but perhaps we have been asking for something which would harm us, and so God withheld the gift out of love."

"I see," said Jessie: "if I had telephoned to papa to ask if I could go down to the pond to skate, and he had replied 'no,' I might have thought he was cruel, when all the time he might have known that the ice was too thin to be safe; but then, papa would have said that was the reason."

"Yes, but God does not always tell us why, though a great many times we might know He does things for our good if we were not so blind; but where we cannot see, we may trust Him and believe it is for some good reason."

Tempted.

It was a bright spring afternoon; that is, it was bright just then, but being April, one couldn't be certain what the sky would do in five minutes; it had rained three times since noon, but now the sun was shining.

Constance Perkins paid no attention to the sun; she was reading a lovely story in her new spelling-book. A story in a spelling-book! Yes, indeed, and I can assure you it was a great pleasure to Constance, for she lived in the days when stories were scarce. The spelling-book from which she was reading had only been in print a few years, and the man who made it—whose name by the way was Noah Webster—was the first one who seemed ever to have thought of making stories for young scholars to read.

I really suppose, though, that the first thing which led Noah Webster to want to make a spelling-book was because in all the schools English books were being used, and he thought it was time that America had spelling-books of her own. So he made one, and here is a copy of the story that Constance was reading:

"An old man found a rude boy up in one of his trees stealing apples, and desired him to come down; but the young saucy boy told him plainly he would not."

"Won't you?" said the old man, "then I will fetch you down." So

he pulled up some tufts of grass and threw at him; but this only made the youngster laugh to think that the old man should try to beat him down from the tree with grass only.

"Well, well," said the old man, "if neither words nor grass will do, I must try what virtue there is in stones." So the old man pelted him heartily with stones, which soon made the young chap hasten down from the tree and beg the old man's pardon.

"MORAL.—If good words and gentle means will not reclaim the wicked, they must be dealt with in a more severe manner."

And she thought that was an interesting story! Yes, she did, and if you had as few stories to read as she had, you would think so too.

But Constance had more than the story to think about; there was the hard spelling-lesson to get; harder than usual, and Mr. Stebbins was very particular.

Constance was very anxious to do well in spelling, not only on account of the honour in school, but because if she wore home the medal at the end of the week, her father was going to get her a little curly white dog for her own.

No wonder that Constance studied, for if there was one thing more than another that she thought she wanted, it was that curly dog. But another girl was studying for the medal, if not for the dog, and a good speller she was, too, that was Penelope Bates. Constance looked over at her now; she was rocking her little body to and fro, and her lips were making a perfect buzz of the spelling-lesson. Constance took on fresh energy from just a look at her, and went on rocking herself and buzzing.

Not long to buzz, for the spelling-class was the very next one called. Something new they had to-day. The fashion of writing spelling-lessons had not even been heard of at that time; but good Mr. Stebbins sometimes got ahead of the times.

After the regular spelling-lesson, each scholar was to take slate and pencil, and write, as the teacher repeated them, the words of the "moral" in the story which I have copied for you. Only those who could write the moral without any mistake, in addition to having spelled all the other words correctly, could be said to have perfect lessons. I presume it sounds like very easy work to you; but these children were unused to writing. Words which rolled smoothly from their tongues, refused to roll from their pencils. It happened that when they came with their slates, ready to write, Constance seated herself beside Penelope Bates, near enough to catch glimpses from her slate.

To her dismay, this was what she saw: the word "dealt" written "delt," by Penelope's cramped up little hand.

Then did Constance go to thinking hard. Penelope must know how to spell the word, for it had come to her in the class, and she had gone above Hannah Jones on it. She had just left out the "a" by accident. What was Constance to do? It was against the rules to whisper; and besides, she must not tell her of her mistake. Yes, and I will not deny that there was another "besides" with which Constance struggled. Penelope would be almost certain to get the medal if she did not; what if that one word should settle the matter?

A little pink flush began to creep

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