

JACQUES THE SHEPHERD BOY.

Jacques was ten years old. He lived with his grandmother in a little village. His daily occupation was to lead the goat out to pasture. He led her out to feed on the short grass which grows in stony, uncultivated spots, for his grandmother could not afford much fodder.

Every one knows that goats, from their love of roaming about on forbidden ground, are not at all easy to keep. Jacques was well acquainted with his, for she had already served him one bad turn. He kept his eye on her whenever they had to cross the green, cultivated fields; for his good granny charged him always to watch her, lest she should trespass on her neighbors' meadows and orchards. Once arrived in the stony pastures, he allowed her more liberty, and while she fed on the tender bits of grass, picked out from between the stones, or on the leaves of the bushes, he too was busy.

In this way the time slipped quickly by, for time only appears long to those who have nothing to do. Oh! how many children lose their time, or else spend it in soiling or tearing their clothes without caring for the trouble they give their mothers, who have to mend them. How many children spend it worse still in robbing birds' nests, or in picking their neighbors' fruit, without reflecting that God sees them! God who has said, "Thou shalt not steal." Idleness is the mother of all vices, says the proverb, and it says true. A good way to avoid temptation, and to keep from doing wrong, is to look for some useful occupation.

Like many other children, Jacques intended to do what was right; he truly desired to behave well, but being thoughtless and heedless, he too often neglected his duty. Do you know why? It was because he sometimes forgot about his prayers in the morning, about asking Jesus to keep him from evil during the day, and to give him strength to act rightly. Then, when temptation seized him, he could not resist it, but allowed himself to be led into what was wrong. Had he prayed to God, would the Lord have let him fall into sin, or else would He have kept him from it? What do you think about it? I think that God would have kept him from it.

One day, while he was letting his goat browse, and she looked as if she never could have a thought of evil, but nibbled on with the best appetite, Jacques suddenly spied, on a stone close to him, a gorgeous yellow butterfly with black streaks and red spots. Never had he seen such a beauty. Quickly he wants to grasp it, but the butterfly has flown. Jacques follows it with his eyes, and watches it light on the blossoms of an eglantine not more than ten paces off. He creeps softly toward it, takes off his hat and throws it over it. The butterfly passes out from beneath it, and flies on. Jacques follows it, running. He thinks no more of his goat, or his grandmother's charges. He runs, runs after the butterfly; and from bush to bush, from flower to flower, he chases it a long time, until it reaches the outskirts of the woods, and sees it disappear among the branches of the trees. No more butterfly! But what does he perceive? Strawberries—a quantity of wild strawberries—beautiful and red, all around him. What joy! He eats them; he gathers a bunch of them; he puts some in his hat; and . . . time passes. At last he remembers his goat, and as fast as he can he runs back to the spot where he left her. But she had not waited for him. He hunts everywhere; she is nowhere. He calls in vain; she does not come.

"Wicked beast," he cries then, and as if it were the poor goat that had done wrong, calls her all sorts of abusive names; ever using words too wicked to repeat. Yes, thus it is, when we do wrong, we often like to throw the blame on another, and fly into a passion, instead of being humbly repentant. Is 'his right? Thus do we add one sin to another.

The night was approaching. Jacques was running here and there, looking, hunting, calling, but not finding the lost goat. What should he do? Go home without her? but he did not dare. His grandmother would scold him. Was not her goat her greatest possession, almost all that she had? . . .

While he thus talked to himself, still crying bitterly, suddenly the parable of the Prodigal Son presented itself to his mind. He had read it the evening before with his grandmother in the great Bible. "Yes," he said, "I also will do that way. I will go and confess my disobedience to my grandmother, and ask her to forgive me."

The grandmother listens to him kindly, with a sad and serious look answering: "My poor Jacques, how much sorrow and trouble you cause me to feel each day by your heedlessness and disobedience. To-day God allowed what has just happened, to make you more thoughtful, and to show you the necessity of correcting yourself of your faults. Ask Him to help you to do better in future. Thanks to God the goat is not lost. She to-day has showed more sense than you. When she found herself alone, she, of her own free will, came home to me."

LET THEM CALL FOR THE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH.

This is not a very easy passage entirely to understand and apply to our present conditions. But it certainly means this much to Christian people: That they ought to expect the minister to make it a part of his business to visit the sick faithfully and promptly; but that they ought not so to expect unless they do their part in giving him the requisite information and invitation. It is the part and duty of the "elder" to go to the sick room when he is called, but it is the people's part and duty to see that he is called.—Standard of the Cross.

True honor is that which refrains to do in secret what it would not openly; and, where other laws are wanting, imposes a law upon itself.

The hand of Christ first strewed the snow on the Lebanon, and smoothed the slopes of Calvary.—Ruskin.

The clergy who complain of the small coins that find their way into offertory bags ought to substitute basins. One of the most witty of our judges says that when he goes on circuit he attends church on Sundays with a three-penny piece in one pocket and a sovereign in the other. "If there is a bag," he observes, "I get off with the threepence, but if there is a plate it costs me the sovereign."

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DIED.

HOOKER.—Died at Prescott, Ont. Sunday evening, 29th August, Alfred Hooker, Esq., in his 82nd year.

MARRIED.

OTWAY-PAGE—SHEARS.—On August 31, at St. Bartholomew's, Ottawa, by the Rev. E. W. W. Hannington, chaplain to H. R. H. Princess Louise, Thomas Otway-Page, B.A., of Vanbleek Hill, Ontario, to Ellen Frances Sarah, only daughter of Daniel Shears, Esq., late of Bankside, Southwark, London.

REID—COX.—At All Saints Church, on Tuesday, the 7th September, by the Rev. A. H. Baldwin, Rector, assisted by the Rev. Canon Houston, George P. Reid Manager Standard Bank, Picton, only son of the late John Reid Esq. of Georgetown, Demerara, to Caroline daughter of the late Rev. Robert Gregory Cox.

CHURCH WOMAN'S MISSION AID

Our Sewing Society will, D.V., resume its meetings on the first Tuesday in September, in the Schoolroom attached to Holy Trinity Church, at 2 p. m. Clergymen in this and the Algoma divisions, who desire our aid in the coming winter, will please forward their applications to me at once, and those to whom we have already furnished assistance may be sure they will not be forgotten. Address: MRS. O'REILLY, 31 Bleeker Street, Toronto.

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