

THE BROKEN CORD.

Our illustration this week is on a subject which is particularly interesting to young folks. From whatever cause it may arise, it is nevertheless true that swinging is a very captivating amusement, and there is so much energy required in the exercise, and so delightful an effect produced upon brain and nervous system that it is as universally resorted to for pleasure and recreation on playgrounds, at the pic-nics of young people and on other occasions as any kind of amusement we know of.

But like every other kind of amusement, there is often some danger connected with it. Sometimes the supports give way; sometimes the cord is not properly tied; and at other times, as in the illustration we now give, the cord itself break. In any of these cases it sometimes happens that great injury results therefrom. Not long ago, we knew an instance near Toronto, in which at a pic-nic of young people the cord happened to give way, the boy fell, broke his leg, and was laid up for a long time, in fact his life was despaired of. Other instances of the kind occasionally occur. In fact there are very few beautiful roses without a thorn—there is very little enjoyment of any kind in life without some danger connected with it; and this fact should lead us to be careful how far we commit ourselves to any pleasure whatever. Some restraint is needful in every case; and if a little more thoughtfulness in these matters were used, there would be much less disappointment when it is found that life does not furnish all the happiness we desire.

Other reflections may be made upon so interesting a subject; such as the danger of separating ourselves from the foundation on which our hopes of happiness are built. Our future for eternity depends upon the connection we keep up between ourselves and the author in which our blessings are to be found. Our connection with the author of our salvation is kept up by our diligent and sincere use of the means which the Church has placed within our reach. When that connection is maintained, life, health, and vigor are preserved; when the connection is broken off, nothing but disaster and ruin can follow.

MERE ROSE'S DECISION.

STORY FOR YOUNG FOLKS.

CHAPTER II.

There was no poverty in the simple home of Mere Rose. She had sufficient money to be able to live in comparative comfort, and to lay by a little dower for Clothilde and Julie, should they ever marry. For the present, Clothilde aspired to going out some day as lady's-maid, whilst Julie, who was more of a home bird, thought it would be very pleasant to be a dressmaker. Now they went to school, and having each a little allowance of money every week to spend as they pleased, in their home knew nothing of the cares of poverty.

They talked over the sad accident to their poor Laure and Tots as they sat at supper, eating their soup in their thick bowls with a good appetite, and having several slices from the large *paite de menage*.

Presently down went the bowl, and Clothilde clapped her hands. "Mere Rose—Julie! I have just thought of something I will do for Laure."

"What is it?" asked Mere Rose. "Don't you remember when Monsieur de Fillac's gardener was arranging his seeds in the autumn, that he gave me a quantity of seeds? I told him they were not of use to me, as we had no garden, but he said it did not matter, I could have them. I will sell them now, Mere Rose, and give the money to Laure. Is not that a good plan?"

"Very good," answered Mere Rose; and then, as she looked up, she caught sight of Julie's face, on which there was a sweet expression—sweeter even than usual. Julie thought her grandmother's look was a questioning one, and she said hastily—

"Mere Rose, I have not arranged what I can do for Laure; to-morrow I will decide."

"Blessed!" said Mere Rose; and soon after that the lights were put out, and all was quiet. Clothilde and Julie had a tiny room to themselves, and that night they did not linger as they undressed, for it was very cold. Clothilde felt very pleased at having remembered the seeds. She had been excited at hearing all about the sad accident to good Laure, and she had longed to do something for her. At first she thought that she would spend her allowance of half a franc a week upon buying coffee and anything nice that Laure might fancy, but then, did she not want to save her money? And Clothilde thought of a certain little tin box in her *armoire* where she had been storing for the last three months her allowance, hoping soon to have enough to buy some wool of a particularly pretty shade of brown, with which to knit herself some stockings. No, she could not give that up, and now the plan of selling the seeds seemed such a good one. She was so pleased about it all, that she never asked Julie about her plans, and Mere Rose, deciding that it was best not to influence the children, helped Laure herself, but did not ask Clothilde or Julie any more questions.

All that winter Mere Rose's rheumatism was so bad that she hardly ever got out, and was not able to go and see poor Laure even once.

Spring came and the country looked very lovely; the trees bursting into leaf, the hedges fragrant with primroses and violets, and the fields yellow with Lent lilies. Mere Rose felt rather troubled as Easter came nearer and nearer, and she remembered that on Easter Day she would have to decide which of her grandchildren was the

most generous. "It was such a strange fancy of Madame de Fillac's," thought Mere Rose, "and very hard for one to have to decide, for both of my grandchildren are unselfish and generous."

And later Mere Rose found it harder still to make up her mind. She thought of how, day by day, Julie and Clothilde had both denied themselves butter so as to give a better breakfast to a poor little boy who lived near them, of how Clothilde had sold her seeds and given all the money to Laure, and Julie had made her some clothes. However, when Easter Eve came, Mere Rose felt better, and she walked over to Laure and saw the old washerwoman, who had recovered from the injuries she had received sufficiently to enable her to go about her cottage. Tots was playing with a ball in the garden, and Mere Rose was soon seated before Laure's tiny fire.

Of course, she spoke a great deal of her illness, and then she spoke of Julie and Clothilde.

"Ah, those dear children!" exclaimed Laure, "how can I ever thank them for all their kindness? There was the little Clothilde who brought me her two franc piece, and Julie, who, every week, brought me half a franc."

"Did Julie do that? I did not know," said Mere Rose.

"She said she did not wish me to speak of it, but I said I must tell you," said Laure; "and her time, too! every holiday has the dear child come to sit with me. And so on, the old woman continued speaking of Julie's kindness.

"Yes," thought Mere Rose to herself, "the most generous is Julie, certainly, for she has denied herself in the things she has given; and Clothilde has but given of what she she did not want. And about the little Henri's breakfast; now I come to think of it, Julie is fond

of butter, so it must have been self-denial, whereas Clothilde dislikes it."

The next morning Madame de Fillac's present was given, and in the box was found a little silver watch. Julie did not like taking it; she felt it was very hard upon Clothilde. But Mere Rose could not do, otherwise, than give it to her.

"All that we do for others, especially for the poor, is done, or ought to be done, for God," said she, when she told the children all about it, "and we should not offer to Him what costs us nothing. It is well not to be niggardly with one's possessions, but true generosity is that which gives up what one likes."

Clothilde thought of the stockings, and was silent for a moment, then she said gently—

"You are right, Mere Rose—Julie is the most generous! I am glad she has the watch. When I see her use it, it will remind me of Madame de Fillac's Easter gift, and of how Julie won it."

Clothilde did try for the future to be aware of the generosity that only applies to giving of what involves no self-denial, and by her hearty pleasure at her sister's present, and her readiness to acknowledge that it had been justly awarded, Mere Rose could see that the spirit of true generosity was in Clothilde, and that the courage and unselfishness of Julie would shared by her. And so it was the children never forgot Mere Rose's Decision.

The name only of Christ doth not make a Christian, but he must also possess the truth as it is in Christ, for many there be who walk in Christ's name, but few who walk in His truth.



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