

WHAT CAME OF NOT ACTING A LIE.

EVER since Charley had seen the picture of a happy family of guinea-pigs, and his father had told him what pretty pets these little creatures made, his heart had been set on having a pair; and so sure was he that his desire would sometime be fulfilled, that he made a little hut out of a tomato crate, and placed it beneath a great tree in the yard.

"I'll tell you what I will do," the minister said one day—Charley's father was the minister; "I'll give you some money now, instead of waiting for your birthday, and you can get a pair from Farmer Gray; I know he has some, for I saw them the other day, when I was there."

Then, turning to his wife he said, with a little sigh:

"I wish I could get that man to come to church; though he's very polite to me, he won't listen to anything I say on that subject."

You may be sure that Charley accepted the offer, and the very next Saturday morning you might have seen him bounding along the road which lay between Farmer Gray's and the village, the happiest boy to be anywhere found.

Farmer Gray was at the house, but he directed Charley to the barn, telling him that he could go and make his choice, and he would come out in a few moments.

"But, no! on second thought you had better wait for me; there is a glass frame near the barn door that you might knock over, and I couldn't afford to have it broken."

"Oh! please let me go," cried Charley; "I will be very careful."

"Very well, then, off with you; but, Tray, you stay here; you almost knocked it over once, already, this morning."

So Charley bounded off toward the barn, and as soon as the farmer's back was turned, naughty Tray dashed after him.

But, alas for Charley! In his eagerness he quite forgot the frame, and running through the barn door gave it a little push, and the next moment stood still, horrified by the

sound of a fall and breaking glass; and the same instant his eyes fell upon the pretty little creatures for which he had come, in a stall near by,

Oh! why had he not been more careful; what would Farmer Gray say? Tray had reached the barn before him, and when the frame fell, ran quickly out again with his tail between his legs, frightened by the noise. But Charley had not noticed him, till he heard the farmer's voice the next moment.

"You bad dog," "so it was you knocked over my frame? Didn't I tell you to stay at the house?" And then poor Tray gave a sharp cry, as though he had been struck.

"Let him think that it was the dog?" The words seemed spoken in Charley's ear and before he hardly realized what they meant, Farmer Gray came in and laid his hand upon his shoulder.

"Well, young man," he said, "I came pretty near blaming you for the crash that I heard as I crossed the yard, but I see that it was that disobedient dog of mine; if ever a creature loomed his guilt he did. Well, which pair do you like best?"

Such a chance for escape! But Charley lifted up his head, and, looking the farmer straight in the eyes, said:

"It was not Tray, sir; I broke the frame; I am very sorry I was so careless; but please take this money; will it be enough to pay for it?"

"Just about," answered the farmer; but he looked down into the pale face, and not at the bill which the boy had laid in his hand.

"Tell me one thing," said the farmer; "why didn't you let me think it was the dog?"

"Father says that acting a lie is as bad as telling one; and that would be a shameful thing, you know. Good-bye, sir! I am very sorry;" and with that Charley fairly ran out of the barn and down the road. But not home; he turned off into the woods, and it was a full hour before he reached the village. What went on there under the shade of the trees? Well, never mind; the trees have never whispered the secret, nor will I.

Sadly and slowly Charley walked around