

"Your children?" she asks the surgeon.

"No. I have no children. These live upstairs; they come in nearly every day to play."

It is about four o'clock in the afternoon when a picturesque little dame in a green velvet coat and hood approaches the surgeon.

"She used to say 'pa' and 'ma'; she don't say nothin' no more," this little creature lisps as she reaches up to put a doll on the table.

"Put new machinery in her," interprets the sedate-looking nursemaid. "We have bought other dolls for Matilde, but she won't have anything to do with them. She likes her old doll best."

"And fix new slippers to come off," directs Mme. Matilde, "and curl her hair fresh."

"And would you like her to have a new dress?"

Matilde nodded. "A white dress," she stipulated. Then, glancing askance at the rough-haired cherubs in their soiled dresses who were romping in the next room, she bade the surgeon a formal "good-day" and marched off with her nurse.

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A Lenten Sacrifice.

BY L. R. S.

Arthur was sick in bed with a very bad cold. "Oh, dear," he groaned as he tossed about, "it's just dreadful. I'm so tired of being sick; I'm so tired of staying in bed. Oh, my head aches so, and I wish I was well, I do."

Just then Mabel came in from school.

"Mabel," said mamma, in the kitchen, "can't you go and amuse Arthur a little while? He has had to stay by himself nearly all day, and it's very lonesome for him."

"Oh, I can't," said Mabel, "I've just got to go to service now. I promised Miss Hadley. She said we ought to come to service as often as we can during Lent."

"But you went to service yesterday

and the day before, and there are other ways of keeping Lent beside that. I think it would be more of a sacrifice to you just now to stay at home with Arthur."

Mabel stood and looked out of the window, and frowned all over her face. She wanted to go to service. Of course, she ought to go to service; and Arthur shouldn't be so selfish as to want her to stay. She didn't see what Arthur had to be sick for, any way, and bother everybody so. Well, she supposed she had to stay, when mamma talked that way.

She turned away from the window and took off her cloak with a jerk.

"Better go and wash your face first," looking around at her, "and try to wash the frown off," she added, smiling. Mabel laughed at the idea. Then she ran off to her own room, washed her face and hands well, and laughed again, and when she came back again, sure enough, the frown was all gone.

"Don't you want to play checkers with me, Arthur? We haven't played for a long time. I'm afraid we've most forgotten how," she said, going in where Arthur was.

"Oh, yes," said Arthur eagerly, "Let's play checkers." So Mabel got out the checker-board and laid it on the table by the bed. "Which men will you have?" inquired Arthur.

"Oh, I'll take the white."

"Then I'll have the black," said Arthur, and they set to work, or rather to play, and in a few minutes Arthur had forgotten all about his headache, and how tired he was of being sick, and how dreadful it was to have to lie in bed, for they did have such a nice game.

When it was quite dark and they had to stop, mamma came in to light the lamp and found them still laughing and talking together.

"Well, who won?" asked mamma.

"It was just even," answered Arthur, "Mabel got four games and I got four. It's hard work to beat Mabel," he laughed.

"I'll go and bring Arthur his supper," said Mabel, and away she ran. "How glad I am," she thought, "that I made a Lenten sacrifice after all, if I didn't go to service."

But Arthur said to himself, "Mabel's a brick."

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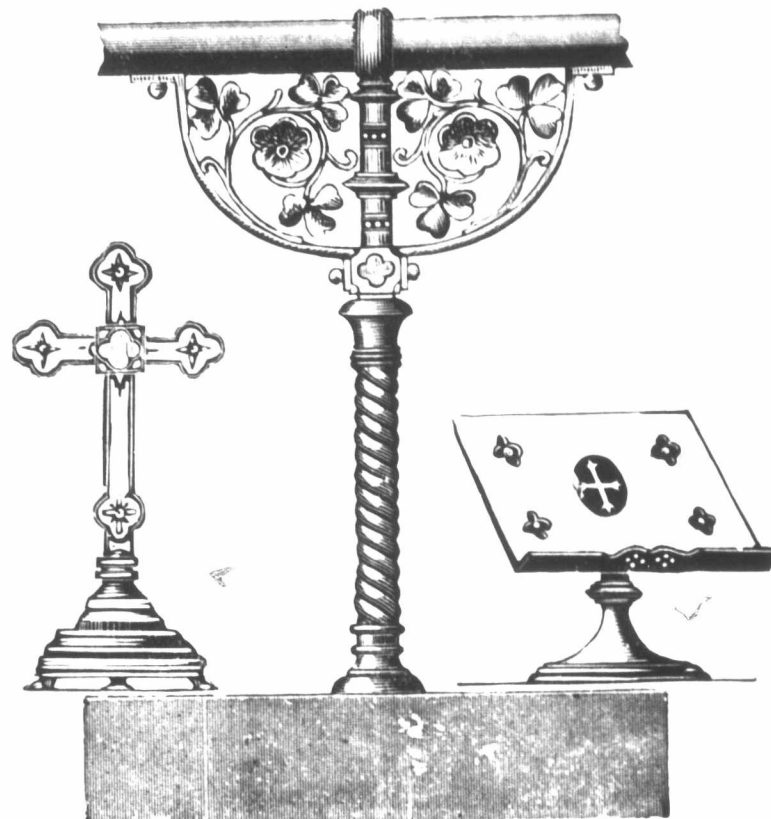
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