

Sunday-School Advocate.

TORONTO, MARCH 11, 1865.

HOLDING THE TRUTH FAST.



I HAVE read of a little boy—call him Willie, if you please—whose grandfather when dying had made him promise to “hold fast the truth.” Willie had promised to do so, and was very strict in his efforts to keep clear of lying in every form.

Willie was the son of a poor man, and was glad to work in a rich man's garden for his food. One day the gardener said:

“Willie, come here and help me move these plants.”

Willie was in such a hurry to obey that in turning round he knocked over a slender flower-stand on which stood some very rare plants in costly pots and vases.

“There!” cried the gardener, “you have made a pretty muss of those plants. The vases are all broken, and so are most of the plants. They cost a good deal of money.”

“O, I'm so sorry,” said Willie, weeping as he tried to gather the pieces and put them together again.

“You can't mend them,” said the gardener. “You are a careless fellow.”

“O dear, dear!” cried the boy, “Mr. Ruthsay will be very angry and turn me away. That will make my father feel bad, for he is very poor, and can hardly earn bread for himself and mother and my little brother.”

“But Mr. Ruthsay need know nothing about it,” rejoined the gardener. “If I tell him that Miss Bertha's dog got into the garden and upset the stand he will not blame you, will he?”

“John!” exclaimed Willie very earnestly, “that would be telling a lie.”

“But if I tell it what need you care?”

“It would be the same thing as if I said it if I knew about it,” replied Willie, “and,” he added with great firmness, “I will tell Mr. Ruthsay all about it, let what will happen.”

“You may do as you like, Willie,” said the gardener; “but if you are turned away it will not be very easy for you to find another place so nice as this.”

“I can't help it. I promised grandfather I would hold fast the truth, and I will.”

Willie wept a good deal that day, but he stuck to this grand purpose without flinching. When Mr. Ruthsay entered the garden shortly after he noticed Willie's grief and said kindly:

“What's the matter, little Willie?”

“If you please, sir, I have thrown down the flower-stand and broken those nice vases with the choice roses that were in them. I'm so sorry, sir. Please, sir, don't turn me away.”

Mr. Ruthsay was a good man, and did not fall into a passion as many rich men would have done. He inquired into the facts, and forgave the boy after charging him to be more careful in future. The gardener was glad to keep the boy too, for, in proposing to invent the story of the dog, he was only tempting Willie to see, as he said, “of what sort of stuff the boy was made.”

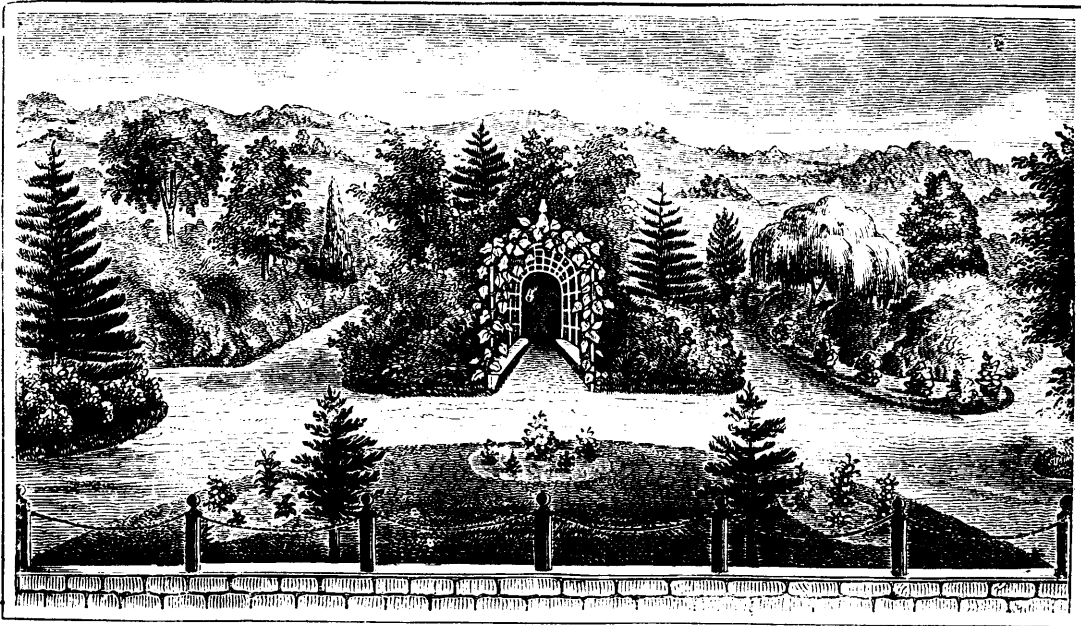
I think Willie was made of the right sort of stuff, don't you? He had a good clear conscience, which helped him to see that it would be as wicked to let the gardener lie for him as it would be to lie himself. Then he had a

strong will, by which he held on to the truth in spite of his fear that Mr. Ruthsay would turn him away. Ah, Willie was a noble boy. How many such children have I in my great family? Are there not hundreds of thousands among them who hold fast the truth in spite of everything? How is it with you, my reader? Are you a truth-teller? “Yes, sir,” you reply. Well, God bless you, my dear, and help you to cling to the truth even in the face of death.

EDITOR'S CHIT-CHAT.

SPRING is coming, hurrah, my children! Hurrah for spring! She is a fickle maiden, I know, often weeping, and sometimes storming as if she were an evil-minded giantess trying to overthrow our houses and tear up our trees. But we ought to like her, nevertheless, because she brings with her warm sunbeams, which with her tears soften the clods, swell the tree-buds, bring back the birds, and make all things look beautiful again. When spring comes the green grass shoots up, the crocus, the hyacinth, the tulip, and other pretty flowers also look up and bid her welcome. Very pleasant is the coming of spring. Let us thank God that it has come again.

Now is the time for boys and girls to get ready for gardening. You already know that I think every child should



grow flowers. Many of you do, for you have sent me dried specimens which I highly prize. All of you should, for the cultivation of flowers is far better as an amusement than any play you can get up. It is a health-giving pleasure. And then how pleasant it is to watch the growth and gather flowers of plants you sowed and reared with your own hands! Try it, my children. If you live in a city or village and have but a little yard, ask pa to set you off a very little corner for your flower-garden. If you live on a farm pa will give you a plot as large as you will care to cultivate.

Another thing I would recommend you to do this spring. Instead of spending your money on toys and candies, save it and buy tools to work with. Every boy, especially in the country, should try to own a hammer, a hatchet, a saw or two, gimlets, etc., and he should learn how to use them too. It is a fine thing for a boy to be able to mend his own sled, or wheelbarrow, or garden-tools, to make his own boats, bats, kites, tops, etc. In fact, working with tools is useful play, and I advise you all to buy tools and learn how to use them. There are men who sell chests of tools for boys, but whether they are good for anything or not I cannot tell. I never tried them. Your fathers, however, will buy you tools if you will save up your money for the purpose.

My chit-chat is spinning out like an old man's story. I must stop, assuring you that I want you to be good and happy, week-days as well as Sundays, in your play as well as in your prayers and studies. May God bless every one of you, my very dear children!—Here is a pretty little anecdote from one of my exchanges:

“YOUR FATHER SEES YOU.”

A little boy was desirous of having some tempting plums which grew on a tree in his father's garden. He watched his opportunity and stole into the garden, and was just about securing some of the plums, when his sis-

ter, who, suspecting his design, had followed him, whispered to him:

“Your FATHER sees you.”

This was sufficient to prevent the wicked act.

Persons are often tempted to do what their heavenly Father is not willing they should do. Would that some kind voice could always whisper in the ear, “Your Father sees you.”

Remember this, young reader, whenever you are about to do anything wrong.

I will now give you the answer to the *Scripture queries* in your last Advocate:

1. Hilkiah-h.....Isaiah xxii, 23.
2. A-mas-a.....2 Sam. xvii, 25; xx, 10.
3. N-atha-n.....2 Sam. xii, 7, 13.
4. N-aama-n.....2 Kings v, 14; Eph. ii, 8, 9.
5. A-s-a.....2 Chron. xiv, 11.
6. H-ezekiah-h.....2 Kings xix, 10-20.

HANNAH—1 Sam. ii.

Here is a letter from MILLY E. BROWN, of L. The writes:

I inclose a few prairie wild flowers. I go to Sabbath-school once in a while. It is so far I cannot go every Sunday. It is four miles from our house. We take your little paper, and have ever since I can remember. I like to read it. I wish it was larger.

Thank you, MILLY, for your very pretty prairie flowers. They are very fragrant. I'm sorry MILLY has no Sunday-school nearer than four miles from her home, but I'm glad the Advocate in part supplies the place of her school.

FRANKIE, a little boy just seven years old, says:

I am sick a great deal and cannot go to Sabbath-school much to learn about Jesus, but I read the Advocate, and I love it so much more than I can tell you, for it teaches me how to be good, and I want to see the editor's face so much that I send you fifteen cents for his picture. You will send it to me, won't you? Give the editor a good warm kiss for me, and tell him that

I pray for him every day that the Lord will bless him and spare his life a great many years to make little children good and happy, and I want he should pray for me. I had a dear little sister once who used to kneel with me and say, “Our Father,” but she has gone to live with Jesus, and I want him to take me when I die. And I will try to be good, and if I live to be a man I mean to preach the Gospel just as my papa does. I sent you a dollar some time since for some poor suffering one after reading a story in the Advocate about giving to the poor, which made me cry. I do not know as you received it, but I guess the Lord would bless me just as much for giving, wouldn't he?

I do not remember about Frankie's dollar, but if it came it was sent on its mission as many such dollars have been. The editor kisses Frankie in his heart and prays that God may make the dear boy strong and healthy, and that he may live to win many souls to Christ. God bless the dear boy!—L. M. C. asks these questions:

Do you think it is right for Christians to dance? Do you think it is serving God to play cards and dance in the parlor? and is it not just as bad to go and look on and uphold it as to dance? And don't you think little girls and boys that are trying to be Christians have just as good a right to dance as older people? Mother says it is wrong, and that we can't serve God and the devil at the same time. The reason why I ask these questions is, because I trust I found the Saviour about one year ago at a protracted meeting held in this place, and I am yet trying to serve God and want to do what is right.

Dancing is not a Christian amusement. Dancing in the parlor leads to dancing elsewhere. Better taste not, touch not, handle not. My little querist's mother is right. Let her advice be followed, for I am certain that no person who dances will pray much. Dancing and praying never go together, and if children mean to serve God they must let the service of Satan alone. The Corporal likes this girl's spirit very much, and he puts her name on his roll in big letters.