

TENDER AND TRUE.

BY WILLIS BOYD ALLEN.

"But I can't," said Floss, shaking her brown, tangly curls, and puckering up her forehead. Her teacher smiled.

"Where did you find that word, Floss? In the Bible?"

"You know what I mean, ma'am. You have to say polite things sometimes, that are just a little-tiny-bit not true."

"When, Flossy?" And Miss Merton stroked the puzzled curly head.

"Why, if somebody comes to see you when you're just going out to play, or asks you if you think her dress is pretty, when it's oh! ever so homely."

"But can't you think of any way to be polite and tell the truth at the same time, my little girl? I should be very sorry for you to be rude, because that generally means being unkind and thoughtless; and I should be very sorry to think you were deceitful, too."

"Deceitful! O Miss Merton! and Floss looked very sober."

"When you say, 'Glad to see you,' and don't mean it."

"How can you help it, ma'am, without being impolite?"

"Suppose you are glad to see her?"

"But I'm not, you know."

"Suppose you try very hard to be glad, until you really are?"

Flossy pondered a moment.

"Just remember that grown up people and all, whether they are cross or pleasant, are Christ's little children. Think how He loves them; how you would pity them, and perhaps, love them, too, if you had to care for them and comfort them—even the disagreeable ones—when they were crying about something, or had fallen down and were badly hurt, or very sick."

"And about the—that horrid dress with yellow spots, ma'am?"

Miss Merton saw that she had a particular case in mind, but she said nothing, except that "she would leave that for Flossy to find out by herself."

Floss walked home slowly from Sunday School, thinking hard all the way.

The very next afternoon she was invited to take a ride at five o'clock with a lady who lived near by. At half-past four there was a loud ring at the front door-bell. Flossy's heart sank as she glanced at the clock and at her hat and sack lying on the sofa. Yes, it was Sue Marlowe, who was sure to stay an hour at least, and probably wanted to be invited to tea. Sue's own tea-table, Flossy happened to know, was not a particularly pleasant one. Still it seemed as if she might have chosen some other afternoon.

Flossy started slowly downstairs, when all at once her lesson of the day before came into her mind.

"Oh, dear!" she said to herself, "what shall I do?" Then she remembered Miss Merton's suggestion, and began to hurriedly think something like this: "Oh you poor girl! I'm so sorry you don't have good times at home, and your father stops at the saloon on the corner and is cross to you—and if you had tumbled down and bumped yourself awful, and mud on you, and—there she was at the front door. All this had been the funniest jumble possible, you see, but she was in sober earnest; and by the time she was shaking hands with forlorn little Sue, Flossy had really forgotten her own disappointment, and found herself saying, eagerly: "How do you do, Sue? Come right up-stairs. I'm real glad to see you."

Sue stared a little at the warmth of her reception, which, to tell the truth, was apt to be rather cool: and followed her hostess up to the sitting room. Mrs. Rand, Flossy's mother, was sitting there with some sewing, and greeted the new comer cordially.

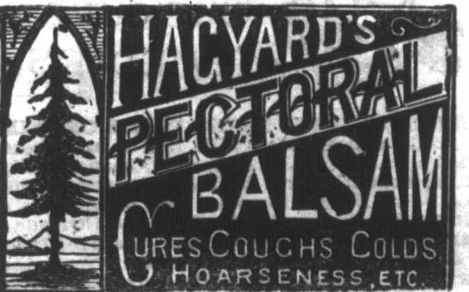
So that little fight was won, as all

good fights are sure to be, if we keep on trying long enough. It was a very bright face which the little scholar presented to Miss Merton the following Sunday. And as she told of her conflicts during the week, she whispered, "I think I found the way to do it, ma'am; and—I'll try!"—Visitor.

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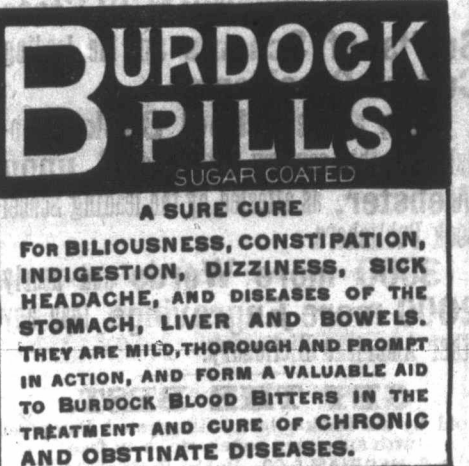
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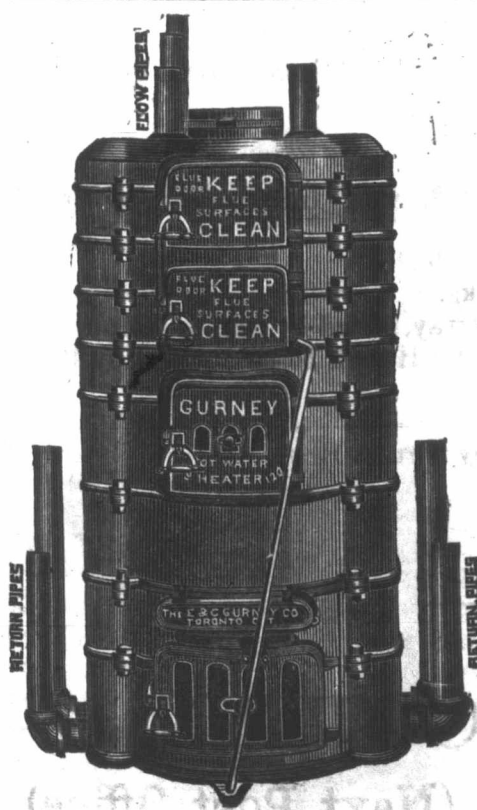
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