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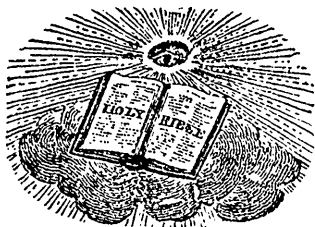
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# SUNDAY SCHOOL GUARDIAN.



"ALL THY CHILDREN SHALL BE TAUGHT OF THE LORD."

VOL. VIII.] TORONTO, C.W., SEPTEMBER, 1853. [No. 4.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SABBATH SCHOOLS.

The following article, taken from the *New York Sun*, contains some excellent thoughts on the benefits resulting to the youth and the country, from the religious instruction which it is the design of the Sabbath School to impart. We commend the subject to the serious consideration of all who labour and pray for the spread of that Christian knowledge which is the guide in the attainment of personal salvation, and the basis of national elevation and prosperity:—

"Properly conducted Sabbath schools are excellent helps in the training of the young. The influence of the Sabbath school accompanies the scholar through life; and, though serious and fixed religious convictions may not always be the result of Sabbath school teaching, yet if all such schools were closed for one generation, religion would lan-

guish, and but few churches be needed to hold the worshippers among the next generation. The preaching of the gospel is not more necessary to the preservation and extension of Christianity, than is the teaching of the young the simple lessons of inspired truth.

'Train up a child in the way he should go,' says the wise man, 'and when he is old he will not depart from it.' He may forget for a time. When the sun of prosperity shines on him, he may become proud and boastful of himself. When health imparts vigor to all his energies of mind and body, he may not duly reflect upon the uncertainty of life, and his dependence, for all his mercies, upon his Creator; and when the world, with its temptations and vanities beset him on every side, he may yield and fall into sin, but not all these can entirely destroy the principles of religion and virtue implanted in his mind. They will, when adversity clouds his path, when sickness humbles his thoughts, when the penalties of vice press heavy upon him, revive in his soul, causing a sense

of shame and guilt, and lead him to seek, at the Throne of Grace and Mercy, pardon for his offences and consolation in his sufferings.

The lessons of youth will become the comforts of age, and the truths of religion give repose and confidence after the perils of a stormy life. The glow of divine love re-kindled in his breast will lighten the burden of declining years; and catching, as he nears the dark portals of death, a glimpse of that bright promised land beyond the grave, he will depart thither, leaving behind his testimony to the truth and the power of revealed religion.

We have many notable examples of the revived influence of an early training in the truths of Christianity. Men who rose to the loftiest summits of fame; men of strong passions and consuming ambitions, who, in the sharp conflicts of life seemed to forget all but themselves and their earthly prospects, have, in the evening of their days, refreshed their weary spirits by seeking that balm of consolation which religion alone affords. And have not all—even sneering infidels—confessed that it adorned their character more than the greatest achievement of their lives?

Early instruction in religion—not the religion that teaches hate—but the religion of love, emanating from the God of love, is a matter of the first importance. It is the first duty of parents to their children; and parents who neglect it, incur a fearful responsibility. Sabbath schools are great aids to parents in the performance of this duty. Attendance at the Sabbath school forms a good habit in the child. The principle of communion and fellowship in religion is practically inculcated, and the child soon learns that next to the love and fear of God is the love of all God's creatures.

It is the grand object of true religion to harmonize mankind—to teach them they are members of one great

family, bound to each other by the strongest and holiest ties; and that, as their origin is one, so their destiny is one—if they but live by the light which Heaven has revealed. The truest organization of Society is that based on Christianity, and in the Sabbath school and the House of Worship, the principles of this organization can be best illustrated and taught.

We might dwell upon the softening and refining influence of Sabbath schools on the character of teachers as well as taught. Our aim, however, is only to encourage an institution whose benefits to our country cannot be too highly estimated. As we regard intelligence and religion as the securities of our freedom, we esteem and venerate the agencies for their diffusion. So long as we have schools in which every youth in the land obtains an education of the intellectual powers, and Sabbath schools in which the Holy lessons of Christian love are inculcated, we have no fears for our civil liberty and national prosperity.

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#### ABSENTEE VISITING.

The Rev. J. F. Serjeant, in his excellent little work on "Sunday-School Teaching," has given the following touching anecdote of a Scottish visiter, which forcibly illustrates the evil of negligence, as well as the benefit of perseverance in this duty, sometimes laborious, but always followed with God's blessing, when performed in a prayerful and kindly spirit:—

"On making my usual application and statement at another house, I was invited in by a poor and thinly-clad, though still decent-looking woman.—At her request I took a seat, while she sat down opposite me on a stool, and busied herself in the domestic employment of scraping potatoes. There was a pause for a minute or two. I repeated my application. She seemed

agitated with strong emotion, and her voice faltered as she spoke, 'And you are for my bairns to come to your school?' 'Yes, if you are willing.'—'Three of them are sleepin' in the kirkyard, Sir; but God has left me twa o' them yet, and ye'll get them,' and her tears flowed freely. I spoke to her soothingly for a little, until she recovered herself, when she said very earnestly and seriously, 'O! will ye teach them weel?' 'I hope to do so, as well as I am able.' 'I am not a member of any kirk, Sir, for I am not worthy; but I would like to have my children brought up in the knowledge of Jesus, that they may be with Him when they gang awa' like the lave; and, O! dinna be ill pleased when I say that you are a young man, and may be apt to forget your duty when you are dealing with young immortals, and not be so anxious as ye should be. I give them to your care, to watch over them and lead them to the Saviour, when they are out of my sight on the Sabbath-day. And, O! will ye speak to them? will ye visit them? will ye be anxious about them? The others were once at a Sabbath-school, and all turned ill about the same time; but though the Teacher kenned, he ne'er looked near, and when they were a' gane I thought I would just send word to the school that they could na' come back ony mair.'"

#### A LETTER IN SHORT WORDS.

FROM A MINISTER TO SUNDAY SCHOLARS

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,—I think much of you, and would go a great way to see you, if by that means I might know that you each love the Lord, and strive to do his will in the best way you can. O, let me tell you once more that this is the best way for the young and old, the rich and the poor, the weak and the strong—for those who are sick and those who are well—to spend the few years we have to

live in this world! If we spend them in this way, we shall be shure to have a life of peace and joy at the right hand of God. What a thought! live a few years here, and serve the Lord, and then live with HIM who reigns on high? Yes, so it is; and so may it be with us all, through the grace of God! And now let me ask, Do you not wish to live so that you may "be with the Lord"—with all the good, where no pain is felt, but where there is joy and peace while the throne of God shall stand? I know you do, or, at least, some of you; and I hope that you will *all* choose the fear of the Lord, that you may *live*, and not be like those who *die*, and "have no hope."

The days of youth will soon pass by; age will soon come on; and it will not be long ere death will push us to the verge of life, and we must fall; our flesh must be laid in the grave, and our soul go to God who gave it, and there wait the time which will fix the doom of all the world. How will we wish, when that day shall come, to share with those who love, serve, and fear the Lord! O, what pain it will give us then to think that all our life was spent in the way of sin and death—that our doom was one of woe, where no rest is found, no hope can come to bring us joy, lift up our head, or cheer our heart? I pray the Lord to keep you, through both youth and age, in the way that leads to joys at his right hand.

You may not feel or know the worth of what you now *do* learn, yet the time may come when it will be of more use to you than all the gold found in the mines of the earth, if you go on to know the Lord, and walk in all his ways.

I may not meet you in this life, but hope we may meet in yon bright world where good men dwell, where we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. To do this, we must "watch

and pray" while we live, that we "fail" not "of the grace of God."

Boys and girls are much like trees and plants. Take the young tree, and bend it to the ground, let it grow in that way, and when it is old, all you can do to it will not make it grow up straight. So with the boy: if, while he is young, his thoughts and his heart are all the time set "on things on the earth," and he thinks not of the things of God, he will grow to be a man of the world, and at last *may* die, and have no hope in Christ.

If we take no care of the plant, but let the weeds grow up, and keep from it the light of day, and dews of night, it will not thrive. So is it with the girl who knows not the law of God, from whom the light of truth is hid; on whose heart the dews of grace fall not. With her mind set on things of earth, she will not grow up in truth and love—will not be strong to do the will of God; but, through sin, she will be an heir of pain and woe: yet God *may* save her by his grace.

In view of these things, I hope that you will learn all you can of the way of truth, and do all you can to keep the law of God, that when he comes to judge the world, you "may be found of him in peace." Think, O think of that rest which you may gain, when the ills of life, that press you hard, can no more reach you—where joys will flow like the full stream. O, may you be of those "whose praise is not of men, but of God!"

Take the word of God for the rule of *all* your life. Let it be "a lamp" to your feet, and "a light" to your path. Say to the Lord, "thou art my rock;" "for thy name's sake lead me and guide me, for thou art my strength." The Lord has said, "I will teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye;" and where He is "guide, no ill can come."

If you will "walk in the light as he is in the light," "the blood of his Son" will cleanse you "from all sin:" then all will be well for "the life that now is, and" for "that which is to come." You may then say, "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord;" and shout forth his praise, and cry, "O fear the Lord, ye his saints, for *there is no* want to them that fear him;" for "they that seek the Lord shall not want." Then to those who stray from God you may well say, "I will teach you the fear of the Lord." I hope you will keep this truth in view, that he who serves the Lord is safe; for "the law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide."

I now will soon lay by my pen, and hope to write to you once more, if you get this.

As in days gone by, so still I wish you well in all the joys of life; and hope that when the storms of earth shall cease, your frail bark may land on that bright shore where all is joy and peace. And may the Lord, by whom we live, keep us all safe, till Christ shall come and claim us for his own!

Yours, O. E. SPICER.

Northville, N. Y., July 7, 1853.

#### SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

"How I wish I was in Henry's class!" said a bright-eyed little boy named Charlie, as he came in one Sabbath noon and seated himself thoughtfully by his mother's side.

"And why wish to be in Henry's class!" said the mother. "Has my little son learned all that one teacher can tell him, so is wishing for a new one, or does he think a hard lesson will become an easy one, if he changes the person that hears it?"

"O, not that, mamma, but I am so tired of sitting with nothing to do. Our teacher does not care anything about us; he hears the lessons as if he was

glad when it was through, and I am sure we are, then he says—'boys keep still until school is done,' and takes his book and reads. Some go to sleep, some whisper and play, some count the panes of glass in the window, and all are glad when the bell rings for the close of school. It isn't so in Henry's class. They all look so happy, and the lessons are so interesting, he wishes they would last all day. O, if I was only there!"

"What makes the difference!" said the mother mentally, for it was a question Charlie would have been puzzled to answer. And what did make the difference?

These teachers were each active, consistent christians, ready to labor in any part of the Lord's vineyard that should be appointed them. They were also familiar with the Scriptures, well versed in all those portions which are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, or for instruction," and each earnestly desirous that his pupils should become "wise unto salvation." But here the resemblance ceased. Henry's teacher loved his work, and the young charges committed to his care. Charlie's taught from a sense of duty; he knew it was well for children to be instructed in the Sabbath-school, and that some one must take the responsibility of teaching them. Contenting himself with hearing the lessons recited properly, and preserving order in his class, he imagined his scholars were too young to gain much immediate benefit from his labors, but encouraged himself with the hope that the seed, although it should "lie long buried," would "at last spring up and bear fruit abundantly." And so it may, if the "birds of the air" do not pluck it up before it has taken root.

When Henry's teacher came to his class, his face beaming with interest, the light was reflected back from those young faces, as from a mirror. Chil-

dren are quick to discern the feelings of those who care for them. And so during the whole exercise, the attention was fixed by attractive means upon the lesson, and there were few wandering glances, or wandering thoughts.—Familiar illustrations, similar texts of Scripture, an oft-repeated hymn, some incident that had occurred during the week, and innumerable other things, were so interwoven with the passages committed to memory, they not only served to illustrate them, but also to strengthen the impression upon the mind. Every eye was intently fixed upon the teacher, waiting for the words that should fall from his lips; there was no opportunity for him to "sit down and read;" his only regret was that the hour should be too short for him to finish his instructions. A glance at his weekly course may account for his usual interest in a measure. He was ever looking for materials to carry into the class; any thing that had a reference to the lesson, or could be introduced with profit, was remembered and related. An incident, trifling in itself, was often made the means of impressing some solemn truth or detecting some sinful propensity, as nothing else could have done. Appropriate illustrations are easily found, if any one is earnestly seeking them.

This teacher was also well acquainted with his class, familiar with their peculiarities, their childish joys and sorrows. When he saw them at their sports, he did not pass by on the other side, but gave them a friendly greeting, praised the new kite that was floating in the wind, or commended their military skill as soldiers, thus they felt he was a friend as well as a teacher. In addition to the instructions on the Sabbath, he often met his pupils during the week, and in a more familiar way repeated the solemn entreaties, and enforced the sacred truths of the Bible. Finally, his Sabbath-school class was

very near his heart at all times, and earnest were the petitions he daily offered for their salvation. So true is it, "we cannot pray fervently for an object without becoming interested in it."

Is it strange that such labors should be crowned with success, that many from that little band should go out to the world clothed in the armour of Christ, ready to labor for others, even as they had been favored; while a few called in their early teachings to the heavenly world, are, we trust, very near to the Saviour, who, when he was upon earth, called little children unto him, "put his hands upon them, and blessed them."

From the New York Observer.

#### THE S. S. TEACHER'S PRAYER.

"Come and see me," he had said; "You know where I live: come this week."

I had only known him as we used to gather around him Sabbath after Sabbath and hear him tell of Jesus and His love.

I wondered what he wanted. But I went, and at the appointed hour I found him alone in his chamber.—And there we sat down together: I, a gay thoughtless boy, and he the messenger of God to my soul; and he told me of my sins, and of Jesus and of Heaven, and he asked me if I would not love Him who had so greatly loved me. And then together we knelt before the mercy seat, and what a prayer was that he poured forth! Years have rolled by but it yet tingles in my ears. Wave after wave of youthful folly have swept over it, but it remains still uneffaced. My heartstrings yet vibrate with its sound, and as I look back and gaze into the dim vista of the past, it looms up as looms the canvass on the distant sea.

Full twenty-one years have fled by

since it was breathed forth, and of those twenty-one, sixteen years were of bitterness and sin. For sixteen long years it lay before the mercy seat unanswered, but not forgotten. And when the Spirit came at length to work upon the young man's heart, heavy and dark were the struggles in that soul, as grace fought for the mastery there; but successful it could not but be, and successful it was; for the prayer of faith had been offered for that soul, and we know that "the prayer of faith availeth much."

That Teacher's name has long since been forgotten. Long since have the countenances of those classmates faded from the memory of the past, and sunk into deep oblivion. But that last prayer will never—can never be forgotten. Like an oasis it stands forth amid the desert of my youthful folly and sin; a beacon light on the dark shore of the past; a monument upon which is inscribed "*the faithfulness and love of a Sabbath School Teacher.*"

Sabbath School Instructor: Do you wish for success in your labors? Do you seek to sow imperishable seeds of truth, and create enduring impressions upon the youthful minds of your little flock? Let your instructions, and warnings, and entreaties be more personal and direct. The common method of instruction is not enough. It is too general. Each one applies it to the other; no one to himself. Endeavor to individualize your instructions and remarks. Heat and light concentrated, are tenfold more powerful than diffused. And if God sees not fit immediately to reward your efforts, be not discouraged. You may be sowing seed which, after you are dead and gone—after your name and countenance have long since been forgotten upon earth—will spring up and produce a glorious harvest to your Redeemer's praise.

EPIPHANIUS.

## THE EXTRAORDINARY NUMBER SEVEN.

On the 7th of the 7th month, a holy observance was ordained to the children of Israel, who feasted 7 days, and remained 7 days in tents. The 7th year was directed to be a Sabbath of rest for all things; and at the end of 7 times 7 years commenced the grand jubilee. Every 7th year the land lay fallow; every 7th year there was a grand release from all debts, and bondsmen were set free. From this law may have originated the custom of binding young men to 7 years' apprenticeship, and of punishing incorrigible offenders by transportation for 7, twice 7, or three times 7 years. Every 7th year the law was directed to be read to the people. Jacob served 7 years for the possession of Rachel, and, also, another 7 years. Noah had 7 days' warning of the flood; and was commanded to take fowls of the air into the ark by sevens, and the clean beasts by sevens. The ark touched the ground on the 7th month, and in 7 days a dove was sent out, and again in 7 days after. The 7 years of plenty, and the 7 years of famine, were foretold in Pharaoh's dream, by the 7 fat and the 7 lean beasts; and by the 7 ears of full and the 7 ears of blasted corn. Miriam was shut up 7 days to be cleansed of her leprosy. The young animals were to remain with the dam 7 days, and at the close of the 7th to be taken away. By the old law, man was commanded to forgive his offending brother 7 times; but the meekness of the last revealed religion extended his humility and forbearance to 70 times 7. "If Cain shall be revenged 7 fold, truly Lamech 70 times 7." In the destruction of Jericho, 7 Priests bore 7 trumpets 7 days. On the 7th they surrounded the walls 7 times, and after the 7th time the walls fell. Balaam prepared 7 bullocks and 7 rams for a sacrifice. Laban pursued

Jacob 7 days' journey. Job's friends sat with him 7 days and 7 nights, and offered 7 bullocks and 7 rams as an atonement for their wickedness. David, in bringing up the ark, offered 7 bullocks and 7 rams. Elijah sent his servant 7 times to look for the cloud.—The ark of God remained with the Philistines 7 months. Saul was ordered by Samuel to tarry at Gilgal 7 days. Jesse made 7 of his sons to pass before Samuel. The men of Jabesh-Gilead fasted 7 days for Saul. The Shunamite's son, raised to life by Elisha, sneezed 7 times. Hezekiah, in cleansing the temple, offered 7 bullocks, and 7 rams, and 7 he-goats for a sin-offering. The children of Israel, when Hezekiah took away the strange altars, kept the feast of unleavened bread 7 days. King Ahasuerus had 7 chambermaids; 7 days' feast; sent for the Queen on the 7th day. Queen Esther had 7 maids to attend her.—Solomon was 7 years building the temple, at the dedication of which he feasted 7 days. In the tabernacle were 7 lamps. 7 days were appointed for an atonement upon the altar; and the Priest's son was ordained to wear his father's garments 7 days. The children of Israel ate unleavened bread 7 days. Abraham gave 7 ewe lambs to Abimelech as a memorial for a well. Joseph mourned 7 days for Jacob.—The Rabbins have some curious remarks on the greatness of Samuel, as though this were implied not only in his name, but in the language of Hannah, his mother, who in her thanks says, "that the barren had brought forth 7." Solomon mentions 7 things that God hates, and that the sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than 7 men that can render a reason. The house of Wisdom in Proverbs had 7 pillars. The vision of Daniel was 70 weeks. The fiery furnace was made 7 times hotter for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Nebuchadnezzar ate the



grass of the fields 7 years. The elders of Israel were 70. The blood was to be sprinkled before the altar 7 times. Naaman was to be dipped 7 times in Jordan: Apuleius speaks of dipping the head 7 times in the sea for purification. In all solemn rites of purgation, dedication, and consecration, the oil or water was 7 times sprinkled.— Out of Mary Magdalene were cast 7 devils. The Apostles chose 7 deacons. Enoch, who was translated, was the 7th after Adam, and Jesus Christ the 77th in a direct line. Within this number are connected all the mysteries of Apocalypse revealed to the 7 churches of Asia: there appeared 7 golden candlesticks, and 7 stars in the hand of him that was in the midst, 7 lamps being the 7 Spirits of God, the book with 7 seals, the lamb with 7 horns and 7 eyes, 7 angels with 7 seals, 7 Kings, 7 thunders, 7 thousand men slain, the dragon with 7 heads and 7 crowns, the beast with 7 heads, 7 angels bringing 7 plagues and phials of wrath. There are also numbered 7 heavens, 7 planets, 7 stars, 7 wise men, 7 champions of Christendom, 7 notes of music, 7 primary colours. Perfection is likened to gold 7 times purified in the fire. Anciently a child was not named before 7 days, not being accounted fully to have life before that periodical day. At thrice 7 years the faculties are developed, manhood commences, man becomes legally competent to all civil acts; at four times 7 a man is in full possession of his strength; at five times 7 he is fit for the business of the world; at six times 7 he becomes grave and wise, or never; at seven times 7 he is in his apogee, and from that day decays; at eight times 7 he is in his first climacteric, or year of danger; and ten times 7, or three score years and ten, has, by the royal Prophet, been pronounced the natural period of human life. The 7th thousand year is believed by many to be the Sab-

batical thousand or Millenium. On the 7th day God rested from His labours, after creating the heavens and the earth.—*Early Days.*

#### MICHAEL FARADAY.

Michael Faraday, England's most eminent chemist, was born in 1794, the son of a poor blacksmith. He was early apprenticed to one Ribeau, a bookbinder, in Blanford street, and worked at the craft until he was twenty-two years of age. While an apprentice, his master called the attention of one of his customers, (Mr. Dance, of Manchester,) to an electrical machine and other things which the young man had made; and Mr. Dance, who was one of the members of the Royal Institution, took him to hear the four last lectures which Sir Humphrey Davy gave as a professor. Faraday attended, and seating himself in the gallery, took notes of the lectures, and at a future time sent his manuscript to Davy, with a short and modest account of himself, and a request, if it were possible, for scientific employment in the labors of the laboratory. Davy, struck with the clearness and accuracy of the memoranda, and confiding in the talents and perseverance of the writer, offered him, upon the occurrence of a vacancy in the laboratory, in the beginning of 1813, the post of assistant, which he accepted. At the end of the year he accompanied Davy and his lady over the continent, as secretary and assistant, and in 1815 returned to his duties in the laboratory, and ultimately became Fullerian Professor. Mr. Faraday's researches and discoveries have raised him to the highest rank among European philosophers, while his high faculty of expounding to a general audience the result of recondite investigations, makes him one of the most attractive lecturers of the age.— He has selected the most difficult and

perplexing departments of physical science, the investigation of the reciprocal relations of heat, light, magnetism, and electricity; and by many years of patient and profound study, has contributed greatly to simplify our ideas on these subjects. It is the hope of this philosopher, that, should life and health be spared, he will be able to show that the imponderable agencies just mentioned, are so many manifes-

tations of one and the same force.—Mr. Faraday's great achievements are recognized by the learned societies of every country in Europe, and the University of Oxford, in 1832, did itself the honor of enrolling him among her Doctors of Law. In private life he is beloved for the simplicity and truthfulness of his character, and the kindness of his disposition.—*Men of the Times of 1852.*



CHARLIE AT THE BRIDGE.

"Now," said Charlie Piper's mother to him, as he went out of the door to go school, "do not harbour that thief to-day: remember!"

"No, mother, I will not," boldly answered Charlie Piper.

What! a boy like Charlie Piper harbor a thief? One would think he could have nothing to do with thieves. Yes, one would suppose so; and yet there was one thief so sly that he used to get himself into Charlie's good graces, and Charlie used to go with him; and although he well knew that it grieved his mother, and certainly hurt his character, yet it was some time before he had firmness enough to take a firm stand against him.

As he went off to school, his mother bade him "remember!" On he goes until he gets almost over the bridge, when he stops a minute to watch the little minnows darting around in the water below. He almost wished he was a minnow—that he had no grammar to learn, or copy to write; he was sure minnows must be very happy, with nothing to do the livelong day but play in the water.

Charlie well knew he had not a moment to spare on the bridge; he knew that precisely five minutes after nine the master fastened the door for prayers, and no tardy boy could get in; he knew it was too bad thus to lose a whole half-day's school, but for all that

he kept stopping and delaying. In fact his old companion, the thief, was by his side, ready to steal his precious moments; so the boy kept stopping and stopping, thinking about the minnows, and saying: "O, it is so dull to be cooped up in that old school-room," until, all at once, his mother's word, "Remember," rushed into his mind. It seemed as if she spoke it again in his ear. He started up from his lounging attitude, threw back his arms, as much as to say, "Hands off, Mr. Thief!" and took to his heels, in the direction of the school-room. Charlie ran with all his might. He arrived just the moment the master was about locking the door, and happily got in.

"Good!" said Charlie, looking as glad as could be. "Good! I made my escape that time—I did! Good-by, Mr. Thief; you and I have done having any more dealings together."

Charlie was as good as his word: and from this time, instead of being a

boy always delaying, always behind-hand, he became the very pattern of promptness. Hereafter, "procrastination," which the proverb calls the "thief of time," kept at a distance, and ceased to trouble him altogether.

Now, do the children think what a bad thing this procrastination is?—Procrastination, you know, is the spirit of delaying, of being behind-hand in all your undertakings, and engagements, and duties. It is aptly called a thief, for it robs us of one of our best treasures—time. Did you notice how it was trying to steal Charlie's time on the bridge? Avoid this thief. Say, "Hands off," whenever he tempts you to dally in your duties; and do resolutely and promptly whatever you have to do; or, as the Bible finely expresses it, "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord." Such a course will certainly rid you of this troublesome and dangerous enemy forever. Will you try it?—*Child's Companion.*



### BLIND ROBERT.

One day I met a little boy in the street, who was going along very slowly, feeling his way by the houses and fences; and I knew that he was blind. If he had had eyes to see with, he would have been running and jump-

ing about, or driving a hoop, or tossing a ball, like the other boys in the street. I pitied him. It seemed so hard for the little fellow to go about in the dark all the time, never to see the sun, or any of the pretty things in the world—

never to see even the faces of his parents, and brothers, and sisters. So I stopped to talk with him. He told me that his name was Robert, that his father was sick at home, and that his mother had to take in washing, and work very hard to get a living. All the other children had some kind of work to do, but as he could not see to work, he was sent after clothes for his mother to wash! I asked him if he did not feel bad because he was blind. He looked very thoughtful and solemn for a moment, and then he smiled—smiled just as I think the angels smile in heaven: "Sometimes I think it hard to have to creep about so. Sometimes I want to look at the bright sun that warms me, and at the flowers that feel so soft when I touch them. But God made me blind, and I know that it is best for me; and I am so glad that he did not make me deaf and dumb too. I am so glad that he gave me a good mother, and a Sunday school to go to, instead of making me one of the heathen children, that pray to snakes and idols."

"But, Robert, if you could see, you could help your mother more." I said this without thinking, and was very sorry as soon as I had said it; for the little boy's smile went right away, and tears filled his blind eyes, and ran down his pale cheeks.

"Yes," he said, "I often tell mother so; but she says that I help her a good deal now, and that she wouldn't spare me for the world; and father says I'm the best nurse he ever had, if I am blind."

"I am sure you are a good boy, Robert, I answered quickly.

"No, sir," he said, "I am not good, but have got a very wicked heart; and I think a great many wicked thoughts; and if it wasn't for the Saviour, I don't know what I would do!"

"And how does the Saviour help you?"

"O, sir, I pray to him, and then he comes into my heart, and says, 'I forgive you, Robert; I love you, poor blind boy! I will take away your evil heart, and give you a new one.' And then I feel so happy; and it seems to me as if I could almost hear the angels singing up in heaven!"

"Well, Robert, that is right; and do you ever expect to see the angels?"

"O, yes sir! When I die, my spirit will not be blind. It is only my clay house that has no windows. I can see with my mind now, and that, mother tells me, is the way to see in heaven. And I heard my father reading in the Bible the other day, where it tells about heaven, and it said there is 'no night there.' But here it is night to blind people all the time. O, sir, when I feel bad because I cannot see, I think of heaven, and it comforts me!"

I saw now that Robert began to be uneasy, and acted as if he wanted to go on. I said, "Don't you like to talk with me, Robert?"

"Yes, sir, I do; and it is very kind of you to speak so to a poor blind boy; but mother will be waiting for the clothes."

This evidence of the little fellow's frankness and fidelity pleased me. I had become much interested, and made up my mind to find out more about him. So I took some money out of my pocket, and gave it to him, telling him to take it to buy something for his sick father. Again the tears filled his blind eyes.

"O, sir," said he, "you are too good!" I was just wishing I could buy something for poor sick papa; he has no appetite, and we have nothing in the house but potatoes. He tries to eat them and never complains; but if I could only get a chicken for him, it would make him better, I know it would! But I don't want you to give me the money; can't I work for you and earn it?"

"I made him take the money, and then watched him to see what he would do. He went as fast as he could for the clothes; then bought a chicken to make broth of; then a stale loaf of bread for toast; and felt his way home, trembling all over with delight. I followed him without his knowing it. He went to a little, old-looking house, that seemed to have but one room! I saw that he put the bread and chicken under the clothes, and went—as I thought by the sound—close to his father's bed before he showed them; then dropping the clothes, he held up the loaf in one hand, and the fowl in the other, saying, "See, father; see what God has sent you!"

He then told about my meeting him and giving him the money, and then added, "I am sure, father, that God put it into the kind man's heart; for God sees how much you wanted something to nourish you."

I am afraid, children, that there were some tears in uncle Jesse's eyes as he turned away from the blind boy's home.

How beautiful to love God and to trust in him, as poor Robert did! Could you be so contented and happy if you were as poor as he was, and blind too? Think about it, dear children.—*Central Christian Herald.*

#### YOUTH AND PLEASURE.

I have sat on the shore, and waited for the gradual approach of the sea, and have seen its dancing waves and white surf, and admired that He who measured it with his hand had given to it such life and motion; and I have lingered till its gentle waters grew into mighty billows, and had well nigh swept me from my firmest footing.—So have I seen a heedless youth gazing with a too curious spirit upon the sweet motions and gentle approaches of an inviting pleasure, till it has de-

tained his eye, and imprisoned his feet, and swelled upon his soul, and swept him to a swift destruction.—*Montagu's Dedication.*



THE BRAZILIAN VESPER BELL.

In Brazil, all journeys are suspended at the Ave Maria, that is the vespers to the Virgin, which commence after sunset. Instead of a curfew, a very simple and pleasing circumstance announces this period in the country. A large beetle, with silver wings, just then issues forth, and, by the winding of its small but solemn and sonorous horn, proclaims the hour of prayer. A coincidence so striking, and so regular and frequent in its occurrence as this, was not likely to escape the honor of a religious superstition to account for it. Accordingly, the inhabitants of that country regard it as a sacred insect, supposing that it is a herald expressly commissioned by the Virgin to announce the time of her evening prayer. Hence it is called the "Ave Maria beetle." "On the hill of Santa Theresa," says a modern traveller, "I have heard it often in the evening, humming round the convent, and joining its harmonious bass to the sweet chant of the nuns within, at their evening service."

TIME, THOUGHT, AND MONEY are three talents given us for the service of God, and we have no more right to waste one than the other.



### THE TWO CENTS.

When A—— V—— was a little boy of four years old, his mother sent him half a mile from home, on an errand. He went along quite bravely, did his errand, and had just reached a piece of woodland which he must pass through on his return, when a loud clap of thunder startled him very much; soon there came a bright flash of lightning, and the little boy trembled all over. Just at this moment he remembered that he had *two cents* at home, that some one had given him. It was all he had, but he stood still a moment, and looking up, he *promised* God if he would take care of him and keep him safely till he could get home, he would give *Him* his *two cents*. God took care of the little boy, though he was drenched in the shower.

After A—— had gone to bed that night, having prayed and thanked his heavenly Father for his care of him through the day, he could not go to sleep: his kind mother soon heard him sobbing and grieving; she inquired the cause. "Why, mother," said he, "on my way home to-day, when I was afraid in the shower, I told God I would give *Him* my two cents if he would keep me safe; and now how shall I get them to *Him*?"

Who would not hope that this child would early give his *heart* to the Saviour? He did so, and preached the gospel more than forty years. "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

TITLES are, often times, not so much the reward, as the substitute of merit.

“CAN'T YOU STOP THE CLOCK?”

“Father,” said a little boy of four years old, “may I go with you to-day in the cars?”

“Yes, Eddy, if you will be at the depot at just three o'clock.”

The little boy went again to his play. So busy was he in some little work he had on hand for his amusement, and so engrossed in it were his thoughts, that he had quite forgotten his arrangements to meet his father, till the appointed time had almost arrived. As it flashed upon his mind, he instantly left his play, and ran with the greatest haste to his mother, and begged her to put on his apron quick. While making his preparations, the shrill whistle of the approaching engine pierced his ear, and in a moment more the train of cars came rushing by.

The poor child looked disconsolate enough. He walked about a few moments in sadness, then returning to his mother, he anxiously inquired: “Mother, what do the folks do when the time has all gone away? How do they get it back? Can't they keep it from going away, mother?”

“No, my son, there is no way to stop it, or to get it back when it is all gone.”

“Can't you stop the *clock*, mother?” still more earnestly he inquired.

Now, children, are there any lessons of wisdom we can learn from the trouble of this little boy?

Should we not be *prompt* and *punctual* in meeting all our engagements? When the appointed time is past, it can never be brought back again—it may then be too late to meet the engagement at all. And *we* may not be the only ones that will have to suffer for our tardiness. All concerned in the engagement may be injured by our fault. Always, then, be prompt in the performance of every duty. Be punctual at the house of God, at the

Sabbath and the week-day school, and in *all* your engagements of pleasure or business with others, however trivial they may be.

But there is a more important lesson than this to be learned from this scene in the life of this little child.—We, *young friends*, “cannot keep the time” God has given us, in which to prepare for death and for heaven, from going away. We may stop the clock, but our minutes and hours will continue to fly. And when *all* our time has gone away, we can never get it back again. No; if it is misspent or neglected, it can never be redeemed. All the duties toward ourselves and others, and toward our Maker, that we have failed to perform, must remain unperformed forever. If our “time has all gone away,” and we have not repented of sin, and become the children of God, it will then be *too late*. That precious opportunity can never be recalled.

Our time will all be gone whenever we are called to die. At death, *time* closes, and *eternity* begins. And our time may close at any hour or moment. O, then, “remember *now* your Creator.” Secure the friendship of God *now*, and become his children. If you neglect this important *now*, you may, like that little boy, forget your duty till it is too late, and you will then mourn at the last, “O, that I had been wise! O, that I had not neglected the things that belonged to my peace! Now the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved!”—*Well-Spring*.

THE PREACHER AND THE ROBBERS.

A Methodist Preacher, many years ago, was journeying to a village, where he was to dispense the word of life, according to the usual routine of his duty, and was stopped on his way by three robbers. One of them seized his bridle reins; another presented a pistol, and

demanded his money; the third was a mere looker-on.

The grave and devout man looked each and all of them in the face, and with great gravity and seriousness said, "Friends, did you pray to God before you left home? Did you ask God to bless you in your undertakings to-day?"

The question startled them for a moment. Recovering themselves, one said, "We have no time to answer such questions: we want your money."

"I am a poor Preacher of the Gospel," was the reply; "but what little money I have shall be given to you."

A few shillings was all he had to give.

"Have you not a watch?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, give it to us."

In taking the watch from his pocket, his saddle-bags were displayed.

"What have you here?" was the question again.

"I cannot say I have nothing in them but religious books, because I have a pair of shoes and a change of linen also."

"We must have them."

The Preacher dismounted. The saddle-bags were taken possession of, and no further demand made. Instantly the Preacher began to unbutton his great-coat, and to throw it off his shoul-

ders, at the same time asking, "Will you have my great-coat?"

"No," was the reply: "you are a generous man, and we will not take it."

He then addressed them as follows:—"I have given you everything you asked for, and would have given you more than you asked for. I have one favour to ask of you."

"What is that?"

"That you kneel down, and allow me to pray to Almighty God in your behalf; to ask Him to turn your hearts, and put you in the right way."

"I'll have nothing to do with the man's things," said the ringleader of them.

"Nor I either," said another of them. "Here, take your watch, take your money, take your saddle-bags."

So each article was returned. That, however, did not satisfy the sainted man. He urged prayer upon them. He knelt down; one of the robbers knelt with him; one prayed, the other wept, confessed his sin, and said it was the first time in his life that he had done such a thing, and it should be the last. How far he kept his word is known only to Him to whom the darkness and light are equally alike; to Him whose eyelids try the children of men.—*C. T.*

#### LITTLE MARY AND THE BIRD.

—  
 "Little bird, little bird,  
 Tell me true;  
 What have you done  
 With your eggs so blue?"  
 "I kept them warm  
 With my brooding wings,  
 Till these birdies came—  
 The wee, wee things."  
 "Little bird, little bird,  
 Can they fly,  
 Up with you  
 To the clear blue sky?"  
 "Not yet, little Mary,  
 The tiny wings  
 Are too weak to fly,  
 The wee, wee things."  
 "Little bird, little bird,  
 How can you fly,  
 With so much ease,  
 To the clear blue sky?"

"The same good God  
 Who gave me wings,  
 Taught me, and will teach  
 These wee, wee things."

"Little bird, little bird,  
 Tell me true:  
 Does the good God love  
 Little birds like you?"  
 "Oh yes, little Mary,  
 He loveth all;  
 And watches even  
 The sparrow's fall."

"Little bird, little bird,  
 Can it be,  
 The good God loves  
 Little girls like me?"  
 And the birdies sang,  
 As she spread her wings,  
 "Yes he dearly loves  
 All the wee, wee things."





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