

BOYS' AND GIRLS' DEPARTMENT.

"HE SHALL GATHER THE LAMBS IN HIS ARMS."

Once the children were brought, precious Savior, to thee,
And thou gavest thy blessing so full and so free;
At thy wedding feast, is there yet any room?
Amid all who seek, may the little ones come?
The shepherd hears quickly the lamb's plaintive cry;
The hen shields her brood from the storm that is high;
The mother risks all for the child of her love,
But greater the care of our Savior above.
Hear his gentle voice calling you. What does he say?
"I want you, dear children, I want you to-day."
He wants to protect you, and keep you from harm,
For in his fold of rest there is naught to alarm.
He has errands of love for the willing ones too;
There is work in his fields, even small ones can do;
There are dark hearts to brighten, and sad ones to cheer,
Let the light that he gives you be shining and clear.

So great was his love that he died on the tree,
That cleansed and forgiven each sinner may be;
O who to his feet precious offerings will bring?
Who will render true homage to him as their king?

"Dear Jesus, our lips we would render to thee;
O keep back all words that displeasing may be;
All angry and cross ones, all foolish and bad,
That we never may make our dear Savior feel bad.

Keep our eyes shut to all that would lead us astray;
Keep our feet in the narrow but sure and safe way.
Our hands let us use in some labor for thee;
Very loving, although it so little may be.

And while Satan whispers, 'Come now with me,'
Let our ears, precious Savior, be closed by thee;
We would give thee our hearts as thy kingdom alone,
O come in and set up thy own royal throne."

THE MOTHER'S PRAYER;

OR, "WAS IT OWING TO THAT?"

Two years have passed since Robert Neal came to London. Owing to previous good character, and also to kind recommendations, he had been fortunate in obtaining respectable employment.

Robert's mother was a widow, and her greatest delight was to hear, from time to time, a good report of her son.

Robert felt fresh energy for his work as he remembered that each shilling he earned brought fresh comforts to his dear mother's fire-side; and he resolved, for that mother's sake, to keep in the path of duty.

Good resolutions do not always last; and as time passed, Mrs. Neal had reason to feel anxious about her boys.

Lately, Robert had fallen in with a set of youths whose fast way of living had an attraction for the inexperienced country lad. To keep pace with them, and to do as they did, soon became one of his chief desires.

To do this, he had to join in many things which his pocket could ill afford, and of which his conscience did not approve.

But Robert did not like to be laughed at; he thought his companions manly fellows, and his aim was to be like them.

The shop was closed. The evening was fine, and Robert had strolled out for a walk.

Just as he was turning into Ludgate Hill a hand was laid on his shoulder, as a voice exclaimed, "Well met! we wanted to see you to-night."

The speaker was Frank Spendall, who, with a friend, had been lying in wait for Robert for the last half hour.

Robert looked pleased as he heard these words, and his face

brightened still more as the speaker continued:

"We are going to arrange something important to-night, and we want your assistance."

Robert felt flattered; and, as he linked his arm in that of the speaker, he was ready to agree to anything.

Leisurely, the three strolled into Farringdon street, and then Frank Spendall opened his plans.

"It's only about that affair we were talking the other night, Neal."

"The—the—" stammered Robert, but before he could get any further his companions broke in with a laugh.

"Why, it's taking your breath away already—you poor young country chaps have not much courage."

Robert flushed; but he gave a little nervous laugh as he answered, "No, it is not that, but you see I have not the money."

"Oh, nonsense, you'll have your pay next month, won't you?"

"Yes,—but—" "But again! I never knew 'luts' and 'ifs' to gain anything yet! But you would like to have a share in it if you could?"

"Yes; that is, if you think it safe," answered Robert, with an eager look, "though," he added quickly, "I've not the money."

"But you can get the money, and I will tell you how." Then the speaker, in low tones, tried to prevail on Robert to use his master's money—just for this once. "It will never be found out; it will be only borrowing it, and by and by you can put it back."

"But suppose I should not be able?" Robert's face grew pale at the mere idea.

"Pshaw! you are sure to! There, you are frightened again." The laugh that followed these words jarred on Robert.

"But suppose I am not able? I don't like the idea; it seems to like stealing."

"Stealing! Is borrowing stealing?"

"But my employer trusts me so, and if I should lose the money, all my salary wouldn't replace what I borrow."

"But you'll not lose it; I know that for a fact!"

For a few seconds Robert wavered; but the temptation was too strong. With flushed face, and an assumed heartiness in his tone, he exclaimed:

"All right! I'll take your advice."

The day after this conversation Robert had an opportunity of executing his purpose; and stifling the prickings of his conscience he began to count out the money. Yes! he could manage it; and, in a little while, he would replace it before it ever could be missed. But suddenly, just as he was on the point of committing the theft—for it would have been nothing less—thoughts of past days rose in his mind and stayed his hand. The days when he was a little child kneeling at his mother's knees rose vividly before him, and as the words, "lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," came like an angel's whisper into his mind, a sigh of thankfulness escaped him as he murmured, "No. Let them call me coward or what they like—but, with God's help, they shall never call me thief, and my mother shall never be ashamed of her son."

So the victory was won; and to what was it owing? Perhaps to the blessed influence of a mother's prayers, for at that same

hour, could Robert have peeped into his little cottage home, he would have seen his mother on her knees.

Mrs. Neal could only relieve her anxiety by praying to Him who reads the secrets of all hearts, to deliver her son from sin, and to keep him in the paths of righteousness.

Peace entered Robert's heart! Was it owing to that prayer?—*British Workwoman.*

FORBID THEM NOT.

"Well, Myra, you may do as you please, but I assure you, that if Miss Morton does bring such girls into our Sabbath school class, I shall leave it; that is certain. Why, that Lucy Ashton's mother is a rag-picker, or a washerwoman, or something of the kind; and the dress she had on to-day was positively patched, and darned all over. And then to think of her sitting next to me! No, upon that point I have made up my mind. If she stays, I leave. Miss Morton must choose between us."

So spoke, in decided terms, Miss Lillie Lyman to her confidential friend, Myra Bell, as they walked home from Sabbath school together.

"O, but, Lillie," said Myra, hesitatingly, "do you think you are quite right? She really has a very sweet face; and each time she has been there, she has seemed so interested in the lesson. I really pitied her to-day when Miss Morton placed her next to you—she seemed so embarrassed as she met the cold, hard look you gave her. And then I am sure she heard you talking about her after school. I know she did, in fact, for I saw the tears roll down her cheeks as she turned away."

"Well, served her right, if she did. I meant her to. I think it is very impertinent for girls in her position to push themselves where they are not wanted."

"But, Lillie, she would not have come if Miss Morton had not invited her."

"O yes, of course Miss Morton invited her, and Miss Morton will have us all down with the small-pox, or some other horrible disease, before the winter is over, if she fills up the school with people from those law parts of the city. I tell you, I for one will not stand it."

And Lillie walked up the marble steps of her handsome home with an air that said it was useless to argue the matter further.

Several weeks passed, and as the unwelcome little stranger did not make her appearance, Miss Lillie was able to again enjoy attending Sabbath school. At last one morning, about a month from the time of her conversation with Myra, the girls noticed a pained, troubled expression upon the usually placid face of their teacher.

"Girls," she said, when the class had collected, "something has happened that has grieved me very deeply. You remember the little girl, Lucy Ashton, who was with us a few weeks ago. Her parents are very wicked, and very poor. I felt that the only chance for the child was to get her interested in coming to Sabbath school. With much difficulty, I obtained her mother's permission for her to attend. I have missed her from the class, but neglected to look her up. Last night I was sent for—" Tears choked her utterance for a moment, when she proceeded: "I found her in a dying condition. She had had a severe fall, and was fatally injured

How her little face lighted up as she saw me! 'O,' she cried, 'you have come. Now tell me more—more about Jesus. Don't waste a minute, please. O, dear lady,' she said, as I leaned over her and took her hand in mine, 'I wanted to come to Sabbath school to hear about him, but the girls didn't like me to sit next to them, and they talked about me after school, and said I had no right there, and so I was ashamed to come. I used to stand outside and listen to the singing, but I don't dare to come in. I knew they would look so hard at me—and sometimes I cried all the way home. I wanted so to hear you tell those beautiful stories about Jesus. And now I'm going to die, the doctor says, and I feel so afraid—because Jesus can't love a girl that don't know about him, can he? O, I ought to have come, any how. I ought not to have minded those proud girls. Now, I'll go to heaven, and I'll be a stranger to him, and he won't let me stay. O, tell me all about him—tell me all about him you can."

"Girls," said Miss Morton sadly, "there are some stony hearts among you, I am afraid; but it would have melted them if you could have seen the eager look on that little pale face, as I explained to her the sweet, simple story of the Cross. If I stopped, she would grasp my hand, and say, 'Tell me more—more,' whispering, 'there is so little time.'

"All through the night I watched beside her, whilst her mother lay in a drunken sleep upon the floor. Once, after lying quiet for some time, she called me feebly. 'Tell those cruel girls,' she said, 'that I forgive them. I thought I never could, but I now feel in my heart that the dear Lord has forgiven me, and I love everybody. But beg them, dear lady, to let the poor children come in and hear about him. O, if they only knew how hard it is to be good when everybody is wicked around you, they wouldn't keep us out—and they ought not, ought they, when He told the children to come?'"

"Just at daylight she raised herself in bed. 'O!' she cried, joyously 'look! look! You told me—now I see—I see—' and with a glad cry she stretched her hands upward, then her little head fell back upon my breast, and Lucy was at rest."

There was a solemn silence in the class when Miss Morton ceased speaking, a silence that none dared break.

"We will take our subject, to-day," she said, "from the eleventh chapter of Acts, ninth verse, 'What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.'"

It was a favored hour, and the lesson was impressed deeply upon more than one tendered and troubled conscience. At its close, after the other girls had passed out, Lillie Lyman lingered.

"Miss Morton," she said, "did you know that I, I was the very worst of them all? And now Lucy is an angel in heaven, and I stand on the outside—O! so far away from Jesus. May I go with you to her funeral? Please do let me. I would like to lay some flowers on her coffin. That is all I can do now."

And so upon the plain little coffin a wreath of fair, white flowers was placed; and as Lillie gazed upon the sweet, pure face with the light of heaven upon it, she whispered softly to herself, "What God hath cleansed, that call thou not common." A.

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