

KIND WORDS  
AND  
KIND DEEDS.

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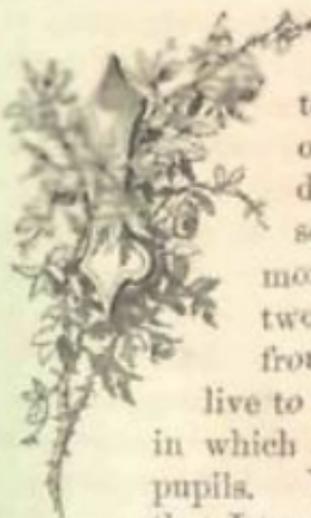




Kind Words.

## KIND WORDS AND KIND DEEDS.

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ALMOST live among children, for I am a teacher, and have been one for many years; indeed, ever since I left school myself. Every morning I pass through two streets on my way from the place where I live to the large school-room in which I instruct my young pupils. You will understand that I travel over that same bit of road four times every day, and I dare say you would be inclined to think that there cannot be anything very attractive within so short a space, and in one so

often traveled over. Yet there are many attractions for me.

The road, to be sure, always does look the same, changing only from wet to dry; but that I think little about. It is the faces, mostly those of children, in which I delight, and which make my pictures.

Sometimes I meet troops of bright, happy-looking children tripping away to school, and as I always go at the same time exactly, I know well which of my young acquaintances are punctual. Many among them, whose names I do not know even, are so accustomed to meet me that they begin smiling as soon as I come in sight, and we exchange a little nod and a kind word as we pass. And when I thus see them, morning after morning, I say to myself, "These little people have their hearts in their work, and I'm sure they are much happier for being in earnest about what they have to do. They remember that there is a time to learn." But faces vary much, and so do the ways of the young scholars. They raise pleas-

ant thoughts in my mind sometimes: at others they make me sad.

For instance, a few mornings since I met two children, one of whom I had often seen before. She was a girl of ten, or thereabouts; and her new companion was a little thing, with soft flaxen curls and bright blue eyes, who seemed rather doubtful where her elder sister was going to lead her. The dear child was plainly bound for school, and it was her first morning. I dare say she felt a little afraid, not knowing exactly what to expect; for she stopped once and said, "I want to go back to mamma. Let me go home." But the elder sister took hold of the little hand which had been withdrawn, then kissed the rosy face, wiped away a gathering tear, and said, "Yes, Katie dear, by and by. School first with sister, and then home again to mamma. I shall like to tell mamma that Katie has been very good." The kind words and loving kiss comforted and strengthened the doubting child, and she trotted along by her sister's side, and was soon out of my sight.

It happened that very same morning I saw a picture of a very different kind, and yet in one sense rather like what I have described. Further on my way I met two more children; one straggling, crying, and screaming, resolved not to go to school, and striving to release herself from the strong grasp of the elder. This last tried no soothing words, no kind caress, but strove to drag the child along. More than once, indeed, a blow was given, which the little one returned with all its tiny strength. Then the elder sister, quite angry, released the child from her grasp, and said: "I don't care; I shall tell mother, and you will be well whipped. I am glad of it, you little tiresome thing; you have made me late already."

She hurried on, leaving the screaming child, who neither durst return, nor could follow fast enough to overtake the other.

"O what a pity," thought I, "that this sister did not try the effect of loving words as the first I saw did! She might, perhaps, have led the little one with a kiss and a gentle hand, and thus have

obeyed the divine command, 'Little children, love one another.'

How sweet it was to see the first little doubter comforted by the thought that "Mamma would be glad when she heard that Katie had been a good girl!" How sad, in the other case, to hear a sister rejoicing in the idea that one younger than herself would be punished for a fault which might perhaps have been prevented by a soft answer and a kindly word!

It took but a very few moments for me to see and hear what I have told you, and in a very few more I saw a kind little school-fellow overtake the weeping child, dry her eyes, and coax her to try and catch her sister.

"So Mary has left you," said the newcomer. "I am afraid you were naughty; but you must be quick, and run along with me now, or I shall be forced to go too, for fear of being late. Make haste, there's a darling, and we will catch Mary."

Away they went together. The blessed charm of love had conquered the angry

temper, and the spirit of strife had fled before the spirit of peace.

After these children had passed from my sight I glanced over the way, and there, lingering on a door-step, I saw a little girl whom I very well knew. She blushed, and turned her head aside when she caught sight of me, and I knew why. Her mother is a poor woman, very poor, but she is anxious that Bessy should be well taught, and not grow up in ignorance; so she labors hard, often when she ought to be asleep, in order to earn the money to pay for Bessy's schooling. She never detains her at home one moment beyond the time at which she ought to start for school, for she wishes the child to have as much benefit as possible in return for her hard labor. And most likely she thought Bessy was there, instead of standing loitering on the way, waiting for a school-fellow who is always late, and often a ten-o'clock scholar.

I wonder if little Bessy knows or thinks that she is doing wrong when she thus wastes her time. I fancy she must, or she

would not have blushed so deeply when I looked at her the other morning.

Still I am afraid she did not remember that there was another Eye, that Eye which is never closed in sleep, looking down upon her and marking all her sin. I think I hear some dear little reader say, "Surely it was not a sin just to call for a school-fellow!" No, the sin was not in that. It was in deceiving her mother, who thought she was at school. It was in throwing away the money for which the poor widow works so hard; for you know that in neglecting to use those privileges that were paid for in such a way Bessy wasted the money; and it was also a sin to squander the precious time, which was God's own gift.

I am afraid Bessy did not remember all this, or consider that, while we may leave many fragments to be picked up at another season, we can never gather again the fragments of time which we have once allowed to slip from our hands.

I was just closing the school door after me at noon when my ear caught the

sound of childish laughter. Such a merry laugh it was that I turned round quickly to see what caused it. Opposite to me a little boy, who could only just toddle about, was holding out his chubby hands to catch a ball which an elder brother was throwing to him. The great boy's face was fairly beaming with enjoyment; and though he was so much older than his tiny companion, it seemed to be a real pleasure to him to amuse the little fellow, whose boisterous laughter had made me turn quickly round a moment before.

I could not help pausing to look at them. The great boy took pains to throw the ball into the outstretched hands which never succeeded in catching it; and when the little one tried to throw it back, and only managed to send it over his own head in the wrong direction, both laughed merrily; and the elder, picking it up time after time, said "Try again, Johnny."

So they went on. Fresh trials and failures, more patience on the part of the elder, more enjoyment and hearty laugh-

ter from the younger, as long as I remained a looker-on.

I thought this a pretty sight. *Children's real dispositions* are often more plainly shown in their play than at any other time: and I trust the same good temper and gentleness which these boys manifested *will increase in them, and, by God's blessing, be perfected as they grow to manhood.*

I remembered as I looked at them—for, no doubt, the text applies to the *young as well as the old—the words,* "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

A few steps further and I turned the corner, and heard no longer the merry laugh which had brought happy thoughts to my mind. Outside a passage which led to three small houses I saw a group of boys standing. They too were laughing, but evidently in mockery of some person who was within it. I glanced over their shoulders and saw rather an odd-looking figure. It was a boy without his

jacket, but with a handkerchief tied over his head, and a large apron before him. He was shaking some small pieces of carpet, and looking very awkward, as though not used to such work. The lads at the passage end were teasing and taunting him: "See! he has got an apron on," cried one. "He is dressed like a girl," said another. "He'll bring his sewing to school, I should think, when he comes again. Shall we buy him a doll, or a new apron?" shouted a third; "for that is his mother's, and is too long for him."

They all laughed and shouted again, and the poor boy's face flushed, and then turned pale with distress. He tried to answer them; but his lip quivered, and the words died away before they were uttered.

"I believe he is going to cry," exclaimed another of his tormentors; "O what a baby!"

I cannot say how much I felt for the poor boy, and I was resolved for once to interfere.

"Hush, boys," I said; "I want to ask

this little man in the apron a question or two."

I suppose this mention of the apron made them think I was going to join with them, for they all laughed, and the poor lad looked up in a manner which seemed to say, "*Are you going to help in teasing me?*"

"Now just listen," said I, "all of you, while I question him. Will you tell me if you have a mother, my little man?"

"Yes, ma'am," replied he in a low voice.

"Then I should think you did not put on that apron to hinder your mother?"

"No; I wanted to help her. She has been up all night with my little sister, who has the measles, and is likely to die. Mother is very tired; but she must not leave her now, and I thought I could do something for her. Mother said I should spoil my clothes, so I took off my jacket and put on this apron. I should not care for what *they* say, only *they* hinder me, and mother will want me in the house directly."

The boy had held out amid the taunts of his acquaintances, but thoughts of his sick sister and his weary mother overcame him, and he burst into tears.

I turned and looked at the boys. They seemed ashamed, and hung down their heads. Then I said to him of the apron, "Will you shake hands with me, my little man?"

The boys stared, and even my little friend in the apron hesitated. To say the truth, his fingers were soiled, and he was afraid of making mine dirty too.

"Never mind the soiled hand, my lad," said I; "it is that stain which makes me ask to shake it. It is the hand of a boy who has not forgotten that God commanded him to 'honor his father and his mother,' and whose love for a parent makes him willing to bear taunts which he does not deserve."

I looked full at the boys as I clasped the smutty little palm, and then I said: "My dear lads, I believe if you had known what you do now you would have been careful not to hinder him in his

labor of love, or to make his duty harder to perform."

There was a murmur of assent, and one boy said: "It was only for fun. They did not mean any harm, and Joe must not mind what they have said."

Joe looked up, and replied that "he did not mind it *now* a bit; they were all friends and school-fellows."

"*And I hope,*" said I, "*they will remember to be careful not to say what will grieve a playfellow, and that no dress which is suitable for our honest work can disgrace us.*" I shook the dirty little hand again, and said "Good-by" to them all.

As I glanced back, I saw the boys eagerly helping Joe to beat his carpets, and all looking as delighted as possible at being permitted to soil their hands in the work which a moment before they despised. Again I thought to myself, "*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*"

Children, do you, when at play, practice the love and forbearance which should

mark the young disciple of Christ? Or do you sometimes taunt and mock one another, thus rousing evil feelings in the hearts of your companions by means of those "grievous words which stir up anger?" If you do, think of the little scenes I have described to you. Think how all-powerful is love, sweet Christian love, in allaying the evil passions of our hearts, in smoothing away difficulties from our own paths, and in helping our neighbor over a rough place in his.

The word of God says: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

## KNOCKING DOWN THE BASKET.

A LITTLE girl seven or eight years old was going up one of the steepest streets in N., carrying a basket full of bits of wood and shavings on her head. The wind blew hard, and a great deal of sleet had fallen the day before, freezing as it fell, and making the pavements very slippery. As the little girl stepped slowly and carefully, to keep her basket well balanced, a large boy, dressed in warm, comfortable clothes, went behind her, and, slyly pushing her basket, sent it tumbling to the ground, scattering the wood in every direction. The shavings went flying down the hill, and the basket rolled over and over after them. The boy who had *done all this mischief* burst into a loud laugh.

The little girl turned upon him a sorrowful and reproachful look, and said "No, no," and then ran for her basket.

She slipped and fell. Poor thing! her troubles were more than she could well bear, and she began to cry aloud.

The boy stood still and laughed. Just then a gentleman, who had seen the whole, came up, and, laying his hand on the boy's shoulder, said,

"See what you have done! Was it a smart thing for a great boy to upset a little girl's basket on a cold, windy, slippery day? What skill or cunning was there in the trick? Anybody could have done it that had a heart bad enough. What fun was there in it? I cannot see any. Did you feel happy when you did it? I know very well you did not; although you laughed, you didn't feel well in your heart."

The boy said nothing, but held down his head and looked ashamed.

"You are sorry for what you have done," continued the gentleman; "I see that you are. Now, do all you can to make up for it. Pick up the wood and as many of the shavings as you can, and put them in the basket for the little girl."

Her fingers are already stiffened with the cold."

The boy did so, and then, turning to the gentleman, said, "Shall I put the basket on her head, sir?"

"No," was the answer; "you are stout and strong, and had better carry it home for her. You ought to help her all you can after what you have done. Where do you live?" said the gentleman to the little girl.

"Plemot-street," she answered in broken English.

"Plymouth-street; that is not far from here. What is your name?"

"Lena Schneider."

"You are a little German girl, are you not?" he asked.

She nodded her head, smiling as she did so; for, though he was a stranger, her heart was warmed by his sympathy and kindness. Pleasant tones and kind acts made acquaintance and friendship and love very quickly. O, how much happiness they make both for those who give and those who receive them!

The gentleman walked beside the little Lena on her way to her home, while the boy followed with her basket. She turned into a narrow street of old wooden houses, and stopped at the cellar of one of them. "Tank ye; good-by," she said as she reached for her basket.

"Do you live here?" asked the gentleman. She again nodded her head and smiled.

"We'll go in and see your mother," said he.

Lena went down the old stairs, and, opening a door, led them into a low, dimly lighted cellar, where sat a woman making baskets. On a blanket by her feet lay a miserable half-starved infant, whose face looked old and withered. Two other children were sitting on the floor, playing with some small pieces of basket stuff. The mother and Lena spoke together in German, and the mother rose to offer what seats she had to the visitors, while Lena put some of the wood she had been gathering on the dying fire.

The gentleman asked some questions

about the family; but the mother could *not understand a word of English*. He learned from Lena that the husband and father had died on the passage from Germany; that their money was all gone; and they had no friends in this part of the country to help them. He gave them some money, and then took his leave with the boy.

When they had reached the street he asked the boy his name.

"William Leonard," he answered.

"Now, William," said the gentleman, as he wrote a few words on a scrap of paper, "I am sure you would be glad to *do a little to help that poor woman and her children*."

"Yes, sir," said William, his face brightening as he spoke.

"Then take this note to my house, No. 54 W.-street, get as large a basket of hard wood as you can carry, and give it to the poor Germans. Those icy bits of old boards that they have wont do much toward warming them in their open fire-place; they will need something more

before I can get them a load of coal from the city and a stove. Now, good morning; will you not come and see me in a few days?"

"I should like to," said William.

"And perhaps you may then be able to tell me that there is more pleasure in helping people and doing them good than in playing unkind tricks upon them."

"I think there is *now*," was the answer.

William got a very large load of hard wood at the house he was directed to; but it did not seem very heavy to him, his heart beat so lightly and happily. When he carried it to the cellar he found the mother and children gathered around a rude table, on which there was a single dish of stewed vegetables, which they were sharing together. William was surprised at such humble fare. It did not seem to him sufficient; and he asked Lena why they had no bread nor meat, and if they did not like them.

"Yes; goot, goot," she answered; "no money."

William told her that the gentleman

had given her money; but she made him *understand that it must be saved for their rent*. He at once thought of a few cents which he had in his pocket, hurried to *the nearest grocery, and bought a loaf of bread*. He laid it on the table before the poor family without saying a word, and *departed*. O, how much happier he was than when he stood that very morning laughing at little Lena as she lay crying on the ice, her wood scattered, and her shavings and basket flying away before her! As he closed the cellar door he heard Lena's loud "Tank ye," and the laughter of the other children, mingled with the mother's German blessing.

He heard something else, too—a gentle voice in his own breast approving his conduct. *It was the echo of a voice from heaven, which speaks forgiveness to every child that repents of wrong-doing, forsakes it, and begins to do right, trusting in Christ for mercy.*

## "JESUS, SAVIOUR, PITY ME."

BY MARY LUNDIE DUNCAN.

Jesus, Saviour, pity me;  
Hear me when I cry to thee.  
I've a very naughty heart,  
Full of sin in every part.  
I can never make it good:  
Wilt thou wash me in thy blood?  
Jesus, Saviour, pity me;  
Hear me when I cry to thee.

When I try to do thy will,  
Sin is in my bosom still;  
And I soon do something bad,  
That makes me sorrowful and sad.  
Who could help or comfort give  
If thou didst not bid me live!  
Jesus, Saviour, pity me;  
Hear me when I cry to thee.

Though I cannot cease from guilt,  
Thou canst cleanse me, and thou wilt,  
Since thy blood for me was shed,  
Crowned with thorns thy blessed head.  
Thou, who loved and suffered so,  
Ne'er wilt bid me from thee go:  
Jesus, thou wilt pity me;  
Save me when I cry to thee.

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