

THE
LITTLE STORY BOOK.



WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION, AND
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CHAPTER I.

THE PLAY-GROUND.

I AM sure the little boy who is reading this book is fond of play. All children are fond of play; and there is nothing wrong in this, if they play at the right time, and when their parents or teachers give them leave.

Mrs. Truman had one little son, named Thomas. One day, after he had been working several hours, helping his poor mother

to get some yarn ready for the weaver, she called him and said, "Now, Tommy, you may run out



and play at blind man's buff or cricket. Here is the nice new ball I have made for you. But you must be sure to come back before dinner."

“Yes, ma’am,” said Tommy, “I shall not stay long.” And the little fellow jumped out of the door, and ran off to the green, where John and Joseph Thompson were playing cricket. His good mother looked after him, and was pleased to see her little son so rosy and happy.

Mrs. Truman was very poor, and had to work hard for her living, but she feared the Lord, and this was enough to make her contented. She loved her little boy, and tried to teach him every thing that was good. And Thomas was always glad to read in

the Bible, and to near about the Lord Jesus Christ.

But I must tell what happened at the play-ground. After the boys had played ball for more than an hour, they began to be tired. John Thompson was the son of a gardener, and his father had a great many fine plants. So, when they had done playing, John said,

“Come, Tommy, let us go to our garden, and see the beautiful flowers. We can play there all the afternoon.”

“Oh, no,” said Thomas, “I cannot go, for mother said I must

come home before dinner, and she cannot do without me."

John. She does not care about your coming home so very soon. I am sure she can do very well without you.

Thomas. No, she cannot, indeed; for she has to work hard for her living, and she has no one but me to help her. And she wants me to take some yarn to Mr. Reed, the weaver, so that we may get a little money.

Joseph. I know why Tommy will not go with us. He is afraid of getting a whipping from his mother.

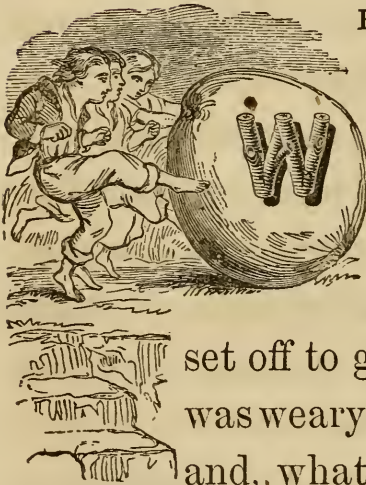
When Thomas heard this, he began to be ashamed. He was so foolish, that he chose to do wrong rather than to be laughed at by these bad boys. So he disobeyed his mother, and went with them to the garden.

When they got there, they saw a great many fine plants and shrubs, and little Sally and Jane Thompson filled a basket with beautiful flowers. There were roses, and pinks, and lilies, and tulips, and peonies, and many others; and they were all tied up in little nosegays. Tommy wanted some of these very much, but

he did not know how to get them. At last he thought he would give his ball for some of them. Now his mother had given him this ball upon his birth-day: it was covered with green and red leather, and was very pretty. Mrs. Truman was poor, and she had no other present to make her son on his birth-day, and Thomas had promised her that he would not barter it away.

At last he was so desirous to have the flowers, that he gave the ball to Sally Thompson for a basket full of them, and promised her that he would bring the basket back the next morning.

CHAPTER II.



WHEN it began to be dark, our Tommy took his basket of flowers, and set off to go home. He was weary and hungry, and, what was worse, he felt very badly, because he had been doing wrong.

As he walked home, something within him seemed to tell

him that he was a bad boy, and that he had committed sin. This was his *conscience*. He was almost ashamed to see his mother's face. He knew that he had made her very sorry, and he thought that perhaps she had gone, herself, to the weaver's with the yarn. Then he wished he could get the ball back again, and that he had not gone to the garden, and that he had not played with these idle boys. Tommy was almost ready to cry at the thought of all this.

When he got almost home, the thought came into his head, that he would just tell his mother how

bad he had been, and ask her to forgive him. Mrs. Truman was sitting by the door, sewing some clothes for him. As soon as she saw him, she said, "O, Tommy Tommy, you do not know how unhappy you have made me. I did not know what had become of you, and I was afraid you had met with some accident."

When Thomas heard this he began to weep, and hid his face in his mother's lap. "Oh, mother," said he, "I ask your pardon: I am a wicked boy, for I have disobeyed you, and broken my promise; and I have given away

the ball which you made for me.” Then he told his mother all that had happened.

Mrs. Truman kissed her little son, and said, “Tommy, I am glad that you have confessed the whole truth of your own accord. I would rather lose a hundred balls than that my son should be a liar. If you are really sorry for being so undutiful, go and confess it to the Lord, and ask him to forgive you, for Christ’s sake. And be sure, my dear boy, never to do so any more.”

Now, my little readers, I wish you to learn from this simple sto-

ry, never to let bad companions lead you into disobedience. Never break your promises ; never disobey your parents ; and if, at any time, you have done wrong, never deny it, but confess the whole truth. Confess it to those whom you have offended, and confess it to God. This will make you feel easy in your mind, and if you are sincere, you will be forgiven

CHAPTER III.

THE HOLIDAYS.



ook at the
coach stand-
ing at the
gate. It is
in good time.
And what is it
there
for?

It has
come to
take the boys
home from school
to spend the holi-

days. Little boys are always glad when the vacation comes, for then they can go home, and see their dear parents, and brothers and sisters. But who is that going out of the academy door, with his cap in his hand? That is young Frank Bell, who is going home in the coach. He is taking leave of the little boys who are not to go away from school.

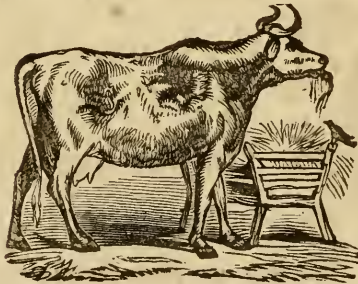
Now the driver has cracked his whip; the horses are trotting along, and the wheels are going round. The coach drives on so fast, that the trees and fences

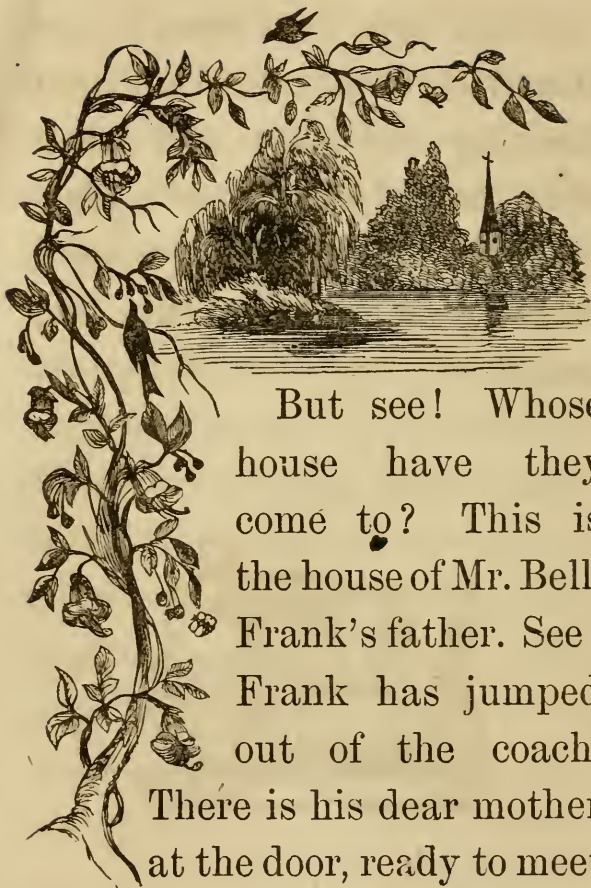
seem to be sliding back. O, how delighted the little fellows are. Every thing fills them with pleasure. They look out at the fine houses, and woods, and green meadows, and grain-fields; the streams and bridges; the flocks and the birds. They pass through pretty villages, and every few houses some one of the scholars gets out at his father's door. The boys laugh and talk about the pleasant times they shall have when they get home, and how glad they shall be to meet with their dear friends once more.

The little fellows laughed and

sang so much, that Mr. Carson, who went along to take care of them, had to tell them they must be quiet. He said to them, "Boys, you must not keep such an uproar, or the people along the way will think you are a parcel of drunken sailors. And, besides, when we stop at the door of any house, you must let the good people see what quiet, well-behaved young gentlemen you are"

So the boys were more peaceable, but they could not help shouting out now and then, when any of them saw a place with which he was acquainted, or came in sight of his own home.





But see! Whose house have they come to? This is the house of Mr. Bell, Frank's father. See! Frank has jumped out of the coach. There is his dear mother at the door, ready to meet him. There is his little sister Jane. And there is his dog Tray.

When Frank had got into the parlour and sat down, he began to tell them every thing that came into his head about the school. He asked a hundred questions about the servants, and the neighbours, and his playmates, and while they were preparing his dinner, he walked out to meet his father, who was coming home from the farm. Mr. Bell was rejoiced to see his son so much grown, and looking so well.

“Father,” said Frank, “I have a letter in my pocket from the teacher, which will tell you how I have behaved myself.”

“Very well,” said his father, “let me have it; I hope you have been a good boy.”

Mr. Bell read the letter, and found that Frank had been very diligent, and that the master considered him one of the best boys in the academy. And Frank blushed, and was full of pleasure, when he saw how much his dear father was delighted.

There is hardly any thing which gives parents so much pleasure as for their children to behave well, and to learn diligently. And if little boys and girls would only think of this, it

would make them careful to avoid every thing which is wrong.

Mr. Bell went in with Frank to dinner, and after dinner he took his son into the garden, and talked with him a long time; for he wished to see whether Frank had been learning what was useful, and especially whether he had remembered the religious truths which he had been taught by his parents. He was pleased when Frank told him that he had not forgotten these things.

“Have you been careful to read your Bible, Frank?” said Mr. Bell.

Frank. Yes, sir. Here it is. I always carry it with me in this little silk case, which mother made, to keep it from being soiled.

Mr. Bell. How much of it have you read?

Frank. I have read through the whole since this time a year ago.

Mr. Bell. I hope you have committed some of it to memory.

Frank. Yes, sir. I have learned the Sermon on the Mount, and eleven chapters of the gospel of John, and several of the

psalms of David. And we have studied a great deal with the Sunday-school Questions.

Mr. Bell. My dear Frank, have you been careful to pray to God?

Frank. I have always tried to pray every morning and evening.

Mr. Bell then talked about good things till the tears came into his little son's eyes. And when they went into the house again, he told Frank that he must get up very early in the morning, and come into the summer-house, where he would find something to please him.

In the morning, Frank was up betimes. He hastened down to the garden, and went into the summer-house. There he saw a



number of beautiful presents, which his father had prepared as the reward for his good behaviour.

There was a little ship, and a rocking-horse ; a beautiful book, and a large kite, covered with pictures.

While he was looking at these, his father came in, and said, "My dear Frank, your mother and I do not wish to bribe you. We are sure you would be diligent without these gifts. But we have given you these things to encourage you, and to show you how much pleasure it gives us when you are diligent, industrious, and obedient. Continue to be so. And above all things, love and serve God ; believe in

the Lord Jesus Christ, and strive to do whatever you find commanded in the Bible.”

CHAPTER IV.

THE LITTLE LIARS.

MRS. GOODLOVE and her daughter Helen were one day sitting at their work, when the little girl stopped sewing, and said,

“Mother, is it not wicked to call any one a *liar*?”

Mrs. G. Yes, my dear, we should never call anybody by any bad name. But it is worse a great deal to BE a liar.

Helen. Mother, what is a liar?

Mrs. G. A *liar* is one who tells lies. A *liar* is a person who tells what he knows is not true.

A *lie* is a wilful falsehood. And the Bible says some dreadful things about liars.

Helen. Tell me, if you please, some of the things that the Bible says about liars.

Mrs. G. It says the Lord hates a lying tongue. God says, "Lie not one to another;" and, "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord." The devil is a liar, and the father of lies. And the Scriptures declare that "Liars shall have their portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone."

Helen. Oh, I hope I shall

never be so wicked as to tell lies. Are there not some little children who are liars ?

Mrs. G. Yes, my dear, I am sorry that there are. Would you like to hear a story about two such children ?

Helen. Yes, ma'am ; please to tell me.

Mrs. G. There were two little children, named George and Mary Gray. Their father and mother were rich, and gave them fine clothes, and a great many presents ; but they never taught them to fear the Lord, and the little boy and girl learned more

wickedness than I should like to mention.

One morning Mary came to her mother, and said, "Mother will you please to let me go upstairs and play with my doll?" "Yes," said Mrs. Gray, "but take care and do not let the old cat follow you into the room, for my tame robin is hopping about the floor, and puss would be sure to kill him." Mary promised that she would take good care, and not let the cat in. She went upstairs, and took her doll out of the drawer. She undressed it and dressed it again, and played with

it till she was weary. At last she thought it would be very diverting to put the doll's cap on the cat.

Helen. Did she not remember what her mother had told her ?

Mrs. G. No; she was a careless child, and she forgot all that her mother had said. She was foolish enough to let puss come into the room, where she behaved very well all the time that Mary was undressing the doll. But as soon as Mary tried to put the cap upon puss, she ran off to the corner of the room, where little

Robin was picking up crumbs. She sat very still for a few minutes, and then jumped suddenly



upon the poor bird, and killed him in an instant.

Helen. Poor Robin! what a pity! But what did Mary do then?

Mrs. G. Mary was very much

frightened, because she knew that her mother would be displeased. She ran out of the room, and the cat ran too, carrying the bird in her mouth. Mary saw this, and tried to make puss drop the bird.

Helen. Did Mary tell her mother ?

Mrs. G. No, she was wicked enough to begin to make up a falsehood. So she took the bird and laid it in the entry. Then she went into the back parlour, and sat down to her sewing. When her mother came into the house, she was surprised

to find her little pet bird lying dead. She asked Mary whether she had not let the cat come in, but Mary denied it. But just as Mary was telling this great falsehood, her brother George came running in with the cat, which still had the doll's cap on. As soon as Mrs. Gray saw the spot of blood on the little white cap, she knew how it had happened; and Mary had to confess the whole truth.

Helen. What a wicked child!

Mrs. G. Yes, my daughter, it was a grievous sin against God. For God sees us, and

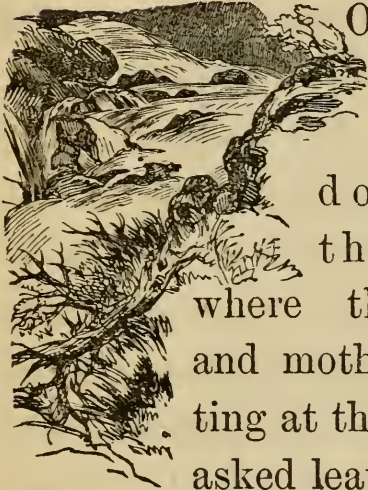
hears us whenever we say a word that is untrue, and he is greatly offended with all liars.

Helen. Please to tell me something more about this little girl

Mrs. G. I will do so ; for I wish to teach you about another kind of falsehood. I mean the breaking of our promises. If you were to promise to stay in the house all the morning, and then were to go out of doors, it would be breaking your promise to me.

Helen. Yes, I know that.

CHAPTER V.



ONE morning George and Mary came down into the parlour where their father and mother were sitting at the table, and asked leave to go and play in the garden. Now, there was a fish-pond in the garden, which was quite deep enough to drown these little children, and Mrs. Gray was very careful to

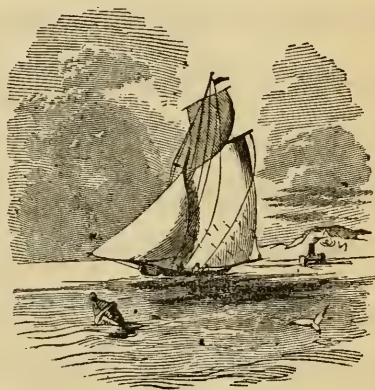
keep them from going too near it. She therefore made them promise that they would keep away from this part of the garden. The children declared that they would not go near the pond, and then ran out to play. After a little time they began to be tired of running up and down the walks, and picking flowers from the borders. Then George said, "I do not think there would be any harm in our just looking at the fish in the pond."

"O," said Mary, "but you know we said we would not go near it."

“Yes,” said George, “but nobody will know it, and we will come right back.”

So the little girl consented to do this evil thing, to break her word, and to disobey her parents. There was a very small boat in the pond, which was not much larger than a large washing-tub, and was made more to look at than for any thing else. The foolish children got into this boat, and sat in it for some time. At last George said he would just put his foot out and push against the bank, to make the boat move a little. But as soon as he did

this, the boat went away off on the pond, and George fell sprawling into the water.



Helen. Oh, I hope he did not get drowned!

Mrs. G. No. But he was wet from head to foot; and there was poor little Mary in the boat,

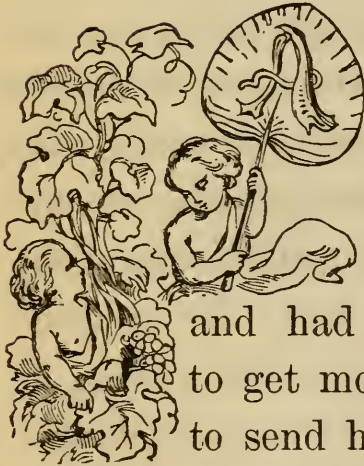
so far from the shore that she could not get out; and George could not reach her. They both began to cry. George was afraid to wade out into the water, for he did not know how deep it might be; and Mary did not know how she was to get out of the boat. But they cried so loudly, that their father heard them, and ran to their relief. When they came into the house, they were very much ashamed of having been so wilful and disobedient.

Helen. I think they deserved to get into trouble, for being so bad.

Mrs G. Yes, we always deserve to suffer when we commit sin; and it is a great mercy that the Lord does not send judgments on us whenever we disobey his commandments. I hope my dear little girl will always speak the truth, and remember that God hears every word you say; and that you must give an account of every wrong word in the day of judgment.

CHAPTER VI.

THE IDLE BOY.



ALFRED SIMS was an idle boy. His father was a poor man, and had hard work to get money enough to send his little son to school. But Alfred thought it was a great hardship to get his

lessons, and was glad to get a chance to stay away from school. Sometimes he would pretend to be sick, to keep from going; and when he was at school, he was hardly ever looking at his book.

Almost every day his teacher had to correct him, but he did not seem to become any better. At last he learned to play truant, and used to stay away from school whole days. Then, when he came home in the evening, he would pretend that he had been studying hard with the other boys.

Once he ran off, and ran a

whole morning through the mud, after a company of soldiers who were parading through the streets. When he came home, he was hungry and tired, and in the night he was taken sick with a fever, and was confined to bed for two weeks.

Another time, he told his father that he was going to school. But instead of this, he went to a public stable, where they used to hire out horses. Here he saw a little pony which the hostler was rubbing down. It was not much larger than a small colt and Al-

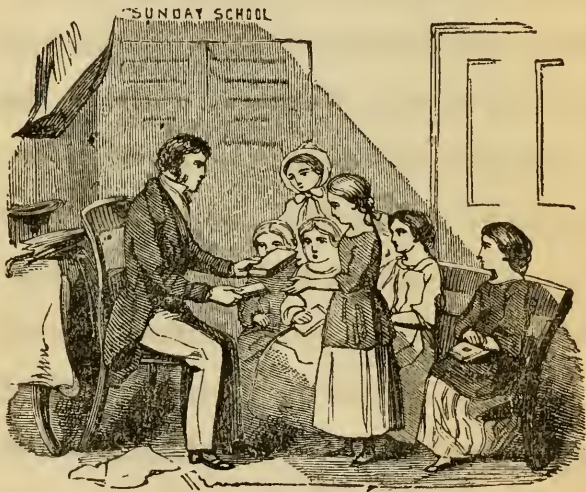
fred wished very much to get on his back and ride. The hostler told him that he was afraid the pony would throw him, but Alfred insisted upon trying to ride. So he mounted the little horse and rode off. But he had not gone a hundred yards, before the pony kicked up its heels, and threw him off against a fence. He was very much hurt, and was carried home, bruised and bleeding.

This cured him of playing truant, but still he did not love his books, and was almost as idle as before. His poor father used to

talk to him, and try to make him learn but Alfred was careless and disobedient. At length his father told him plainly, that if he did not learn, he must be bound out to a shoemaker. Alfred did not like the thought of hard work, and he promised his father that he would be a better boy. But his idleness was not yet cured.

Some of the little boys and girls in the same school used to get beautiful books as premiums for diligence; but while they would be sitting and reading their new books, Alfred would be out on the green playing at ball. Yet

these good children were much happier than he was. For when people do wrong, they never can



feel altogether comfortable or easy in their minds.

There was a little fellow, named **John Boatman**, who lived

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next door to Alfred's house. This boy often tried to persuade Alfred to learn, but his words seemed to be of no use. At last John thought he would try and get him to go to the Sunday-school; for Alfred had never been to Sunday-school in his life. One Sabbath morning John met Alfred just by the door of the Sunday-school, and asked him to go in. At first, he pretended that he had a headache, but finally he consented to go in. He was more pleased than he expected to be. He heard a great many things which he never knew before; and the

singing was very delightful to him.



The next Sabbath he came again, of his own accord. The teacher gave him a little book with pictures in it, and showed him how to get his lesson. Al-

fred wondered to see how busy all the children were; and this too without any scolding or whipping. He began to think it was worth while for him to study also. And it was not long before he became a very diligent scholar.

Alfred found so much pleasure in getting his Sunday lessons, that he made up his mind to learn his week-day lessons too. All the boys saw that there was a great change in him, and the teacher was so much pleased, that he called at his father's, and told him that Alfred had got to

be one of the best boys in the whole school. Mr. Sims was very much rejoiced to hear this, and when he spoke to Alfred about it, he found that it had all come from his going to the Sunday-school.

Alfred learned a great deal out of the Bible, and especially about the history of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was no longer the *Idle Boy*, for he had become quite industrious. And his lessons were so far from keeping him from work, that he did more to help his father than he had ever done before. And besides

this, the things which he learned out of the Scriptures did good to his soul. He grew up to be a sober, kind, honest, pious man, and was for many years a Sunday-school teacher himself.