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The Penitent Children

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THE
PENITENT CHILDREN.



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THE
PENITENT CHILDREN.



A LITTLE boy, about six years old, was in general a very good child, and behaved well. He dearly loved his mother, and minded every thing she said to him. But even good children, and good people, will sometimes do wrong; and this little boy did so too.

One afternoon, after he had been at play, he looked very dull and sorrowful. He was asked if he was ill; he said he was not. But he talk-

ed very little; and he often sighed. His mother thought something was the matter with him; but she did not say much to him about it. At night, he took leave of his dear mother, and went to bed. About an hour after he had been in bed, the maid went to her mistress, and told her that she was very uneasy about the little boy: for he was very restless; she had heard him often sob; and he desired his mother to come to him, as he could not go to sleep till he had told her something that made him very unhappy.

The good mother went to him; and when she came to his bed side, he put his little arms round her neck, and burst into tears, and said to her—"Dear mamma, forgive me! I have been a very naughty boy to-day. I have told a lie; and I have hid it from you. I was playing at marbles with my cousins; I won the game, through a mistake which they did not find out; and I was so much pleased at being conqueror, that I did not tell them of the mistake. I have been very unhappy ever since; and I am afraid to go to sleep, lest that heavenly Father, whom you so often tell me of, should be angry with me. You say he knows and sees every thing.

What shall I do that he may forgive me?" "My child," said the mother, "God is ever ready to forgive those who believe in Christ, are truly sorry for their faults, and resolve to amend. We cannot hide any thing from him. He knows when we do wrong, and when we desire to do what is right. He hears our prayers; and he will teach us what we should do. Pray to him to forgive your fault; and try never to commit the like again, lest you should offend him more by the second offence than by the first."

The little boy thought seriously on the advice which his mother gave him; and prayed to Almighty God to forgive him, and to grant him his grace to do better in future. He then fell asleep; and arose next morning happy and cheerful.

I suppose when he saw his cousins he told them that he had deceived them, and that he was sorry for what he had done; and I dare say he was very careful, after that time, never to tell an untruth, or to deceive any one.

SAMUEL KILPIN.

THE late Samuel Kilpin, a minister at Exeter, says in his life, "When seven years old, I

was left in charge of my father's shop. A man passed, crying, 'Little lambs, all white and clean, at one penny each.' In my eagerness to get one I lost all self-command, and taking a penny from the drawer, I made the purchase.



My keen-eyed mother inquired how I came by the money. I evaded the question with something like a lie. In God's sight it was a lie, as I kept back the truth.

The lamb was placed on the chimney shelf, and was much admired. To me it was a source of inexpressible anguish; continually there sounded in my ears and heart, "Thou shalt not

steal; thou shalt not lie." Guilt and darkness overcame my mind; and in sore agony of soul I went to a hay-loft, the place is now perfectly in my recollection, and there prayed and pleaded, with groanings that could not be uttered, for mercy and pardon. I entreated mercy for Jesus' sake. With joy and transport I left the loft, from a believing application of the text, 'Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee.' I went to my mother, told her what I had done, and sought her forgiveness, and burnt the lamb, while she wept over her young penitent."

SAMUEL WYKE KILPIN.

WE have known children who have done wrong, and have not been sorry for it. They have tried to forget the anger of the great God against sin, and have thought little of the displeasure of their best friends. The following account, which the late Samuel Kilpin gave of his son, is very different to this, and teaches us what our feelings ought to be when we have done wrong. This good man writes—

"On one occasion, when he had offended me, I deemed it right to manifest displeasure, and

when he asked a question about the business of the day, I was short and reserved in my answers to him. An hour or more elapsed. The time was nearly arrived when he was to repeat his lessons. He came into my study, and said, 'Father, I cannot learn my lessons except you are reconciled. I am very sorry I have offended you, I hope you will forgive me: I think I shall never offend again.'

"I replied, 'all that I want is to make you sensible of your fault; when you acknowledge it, you know all is easily reconciled with me.'

"'Then, Father,' said he, 'give me the token of reconciliation, and seal it with a kiss.' The hand was given, and the seal most heartily exchanged on each side.

"'Now,' exclaimed the dear boy, 'I will learn Latin and Greek with any body;' and was hastening to his study.

"'Stop, stop,' I called after him, 'have you not a heavenly Father? If what you have done has been evil, he is displeased, and you must apply to him for forgiveness.'

"With tears starting in his eyes, he said, 'Father, I went to him first: I knew that except he was reconciled, I could do nothing,' and with

tears fast rolling down his cheek, he added, 'I hope, I hope, He has forgiven me, and now I am happy!' I never had again occasion to look at him with a shade of disapprobation."

PHEBE BARTLETT.

PHEBE BARTLETT, a very little girl, went with some other children to gather plumbs in a neighboring orchard. On bringing some of the fruit home, her mother mildly reprov'd her, and said she ought not to have gathered the plumbs without leave, because it was *sin*: God had commanded her not to steal. The child, not being sensible of the evil before, seemed greatly surprised, and bursting into tears, cried out, "I won't have these plumbs!" and turning to her sister Eunice, very earnestly said to her, "Why did you ask me to go to that plumb tree? I should not have gone, if you had not asked me." The other children did not seem much concerned; but Phebe was not easily pacified. Her mother mentioned the circumstance to the owner of the tree, and requested of him that she might have the plumbs; but still she was deeply affected: and being asked what it was that troubled her now; she said that she wept BECAUSE



IT WAS SIN. Children would always do well to remember that God never forgives sin unless we are sorry for it; and that all who mourn over it, and pray for mercy through our Lord Jesus Christ, enjoy his love.

THE END.

1877

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How kind in all his works and ways
Must our Creator be!
I learn a subject for his praise
In every thing I see.

Ten thousand creatures by his hand,
Were formed at first from clay ;
His skill their diff'rent natures plann'd
And they his voice obey.

He condescends to do them good,
And pities when they cry ;
For all their wants are understood
By his attentive eye.

And when our broken spirit turns,
And would from sin depart,
The God of mercy never spurns
An humble contrite heart.