

DEAN'S

Illustrated Farning Books.

CARELESS WORDS.



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## CARELESS WORDS.



“OH, dear!” exclaimed Nellie Martin, as she came in from school, and threw her books down on the table, “I do think a boarding-school is the worst place in the world.”

"Why," replied Mabel Lee, "I thought you liked it ever so much; you said you did, yesterday."

"Well, I thought so then, but I don't now, for the girls are making unkind remarks about me; and I mean to write to mamma, and ask her if I may come home."

A slight smile spread over Mabel's countenance, as she rejoined:

"I suppose *you* never say anything against the other girls, do you?"

"No, indeed, not as they do, I am sure. Why, if I said one half as many things about Gertrude Leland as she does about me, I should be ashamed to shew my face anywhere."

"Well, Nellie, suppose you and I each take a piece of paper and write down every slanderous expression that we hear each other use this evening, and at nine o'clock compare our papers."

"Well, I am willing, but I don't believe we shall have anything to write; at any rate, I think *your* paper will be blank. If you would only try it with the girls in the next room, there would be some fun in it."

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The evening wore away, and nine o'clock arrived. As soon as the first stroke of the bell was heard, Nellie pushed aside



her books, saying, "Now, Mabel, let me hear what *you* have to say; you must read first, because you have the longest

list. Indeed, it seems to me your pencil has done nothing but write, write, all the evening."

"And it strikes me that your tongue has done nothing but run, run, all the evening. But I must begin, or we shall not be in bed in time. I have—let me see—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten breaches of the Ninth Commandment against you on my paper."

"Not so many, I know; let me hear."

"In the first place, when you opened your books to commence studying, you thought Miss Lane was therossest teacher that ever lived, she gave such long and hard lessons."

"I remember that, but that is the strongest expression I have used, is it not?"

"We will see. Then, you asked me if I intended to keep my two silent hours this evening; I told you no, not until to-morrow morning; upon that, you called Mrs. —— an unfeeling creature, for requiring to keep them at all.

"Soon after that, the fire needed some attention. You went to the coal-box for

some coals, and accidentally tore your dress on a nail which was sticking in the inside of it. You declared that the next time you had a box sent you from home, you hoped your brother John would have nothing to do with nailing it up; the 'little scamp,' I think was the epithet you



used. You sat down to mend your dress, but could not find your thimble; I reminded you that you lent it to Fannie, yesterday, and you replied that you wished she had been at the bottom of the Red Sea, before she came in here borrow-

ing your things. I could not help smiling, then ; for I remembered that you borrowed hers a week ago, and lost it ; and she was obliged to use yours instead.

“ About eight o'clock, Sarah came in to ask you where the History lesson commenced ; you told her ; but no sooner had she left the room, than you exclaimed, ‘ I hope I shall never be accused of following her example ; she had better keep her ears open when the lesson is given out. I believe she always hears with her elbows.’

“ Our lamp went out, a few minutes ago. You called the lady with whom we board, a ‘ stingy old woman ’ that could not afford to supply us with decent lamp-oil.”

“ Oh, Mabel, did I really say that ? I don't remember it ; why, how wicked it was ! It was entirely my fault that the lamp did not burn well ; for when I had sealed my letter, I played with my sealing-wax until I had nearly covered the wick with it. Well, please don't read any more to me, for I am heartily ashamed of myself. In future, I will try

to keep a strict watch over my tongue; and over my thoughts, too, for I suppose I should never *say* such things if I did not *think* them first."

As Mabel lay in bed that night, thinking over the events of that day, this verse came into her mind: "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; but he that refraineth his lips is wise."

