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THE
TWO KINDS OF FEAR.



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WHAT keeps back some wicked people from many evil things they would wish to do? They are afraid of *being punished*.

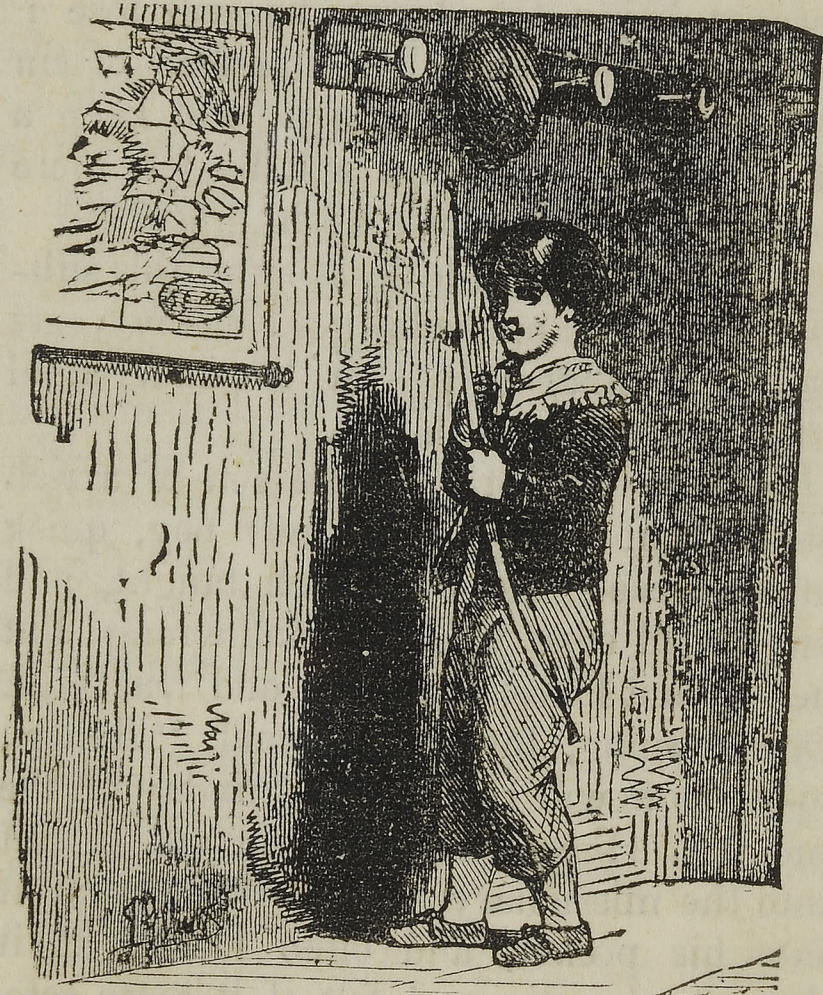
What keeps good children, the children of God, from doing what they know is sinful? They are afraid of *sin*.

There is a great difference, my dear children, between these two kinds of fear—the fear of punishment, and the fear of sin. The first will only keep a child from some sins, at some times; and if he often escapes being found out, he will lose it almost altogether. But the fear of sin itself, because God forbids it, will keep a child from any sin, and will be felt more powerfully as he grows up in grace.

I will tell you a little story on this subject, which happened a good many years ago, and may help you to understand what I mean.

Robert Wright was the son of a rich gentleman. He was a clever boy, quick at his lessons, had been well taught, and knew well what was right and wrong; but he had not learned to love and fear God. One morning, his mother said, “Robert, to-morrow will be the first Sunday of the month. Here is a shilling for you to put into the missionary box.” Robert put it into his pocket, and often looked at it through the day and felt if it were safe. On his way home to dinner, he passed a

shop where a variety of tarts and cakes were in the window. He stopped to look, and then thought how he would like to have some. He felt if he had a penny to buy one tart. No; but there was the



shilling, and the thought came into his mind, how much that would buy! "But

would it be right to use it? No; and if papa found it out, I should be severely punished?" He was just going to turn away, when he thought again, "Why be afraid of being punished?" How can papa and mamma ever know?" He stayed and looked a little longer, then ran into the shop, filled his pockets with good things, gave the shilling, and went away.

I cannot say that he had much pleasure in eating them, after all; for his conscience told him that he had done a great sin; and next day, when he saw the missionary-box, he felt unhappy.

The same evening, when it was dark and cold, another little boy left his home. It was no nice cheerful home, like Robert's, with warm fires, and bright lights. It was one small room, and in the grate only a few cinders. On a bed of straw in a corner his mother lay very ill. As he went out, he said, "Mother, try to sleep; I will not be late coming back." He worked in a factory not far off, and it being Saturday night, he knew he would not be kept late. As he was coming

home, weary and cold, thinking of his poor mother, and how he would like to take something that would do her good, his eye rested on some beautiful fruit at a shop-door outside the shop. He saw that no one was near; he could touch them in passing. The temptation was too great—the little fellow quickly put three lovely apples into his pocket, and ran down the street. When he got to the lamp-post at the corner, he took out the apples and looked at them. “They will make my mother well, perhaps; but then, are they mine to give her? I could easily make her think a lady gave them to me; but God would know.” Then, looking at them again, he said aloud, “*Thou God seest me!* That is my Sabbath-school ticket for to-morrow. No, mother must not have them. I cannot sin against God.”

He then ran back, and had just returned the apples into the basket, when the shopman seeing him, thought he was stealing, seized him by the arm, and dragged him in. The poor child, with tears, told the whole story, and asked

pardon for what he had done. The man had a feeling heart, and children of his own; he was just at a loss to know whether to believe him or not, when a kind old gentleman, who had seen all that passed, had followed the boy, and heard what he said at the lamp-post, came in, and told him that the story was true. He then bought the apples, and many other nice things, and gave them to Harry, to take home to his mother, saying as he did so, "Never forget what has happened this evening; and let your ticket for tomorrow be your motto through life—'*Thou God seest me!*' and you are sure to prosper."

These two boys both lived to become men. Harry Brown grew up a decided and consistent Christian. He was trusted and respected by all who knew him; he got into good employment, married a pious wife, and saw his poor mother end her days in his happy home. Robert Wright became a prosperous man. He had a fine house, a carriage, and servants, and all that money could buy. And yet often

he did not look happy after all. And at last, one morning, the town rang with the news of a dreadful event: Mr. Wright, the rich merchant, had been found dead in his bed, with a bottle of poison beside him. On looking at his papers, it was discovered that his business was going wrong—that he had forged bills to a great amount; and now, seeing he must be found out, the *fear of punishment* was more than he could stand, and, by his own hands, he rushed into an eternal world.

Try to remember the lessons taught by this story? Pray to the Holy Spirit to put the true fear of God and fear of sin into your hearts, for Jesus' sake? And remember, when temptation comes, "Thou God seest me!"

