

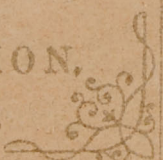


THE
BROKEN BACK.



SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION.

200 MULBERRY-STREET, N. Y.



THE

THE DAY-BOOK OF
100 NUMBERED STAMPS NEW YORK

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JOE GREGG was not a good boy. At home his parents let him do as he pleased, and at school he made trouble all the time. None of the boys liked him, or cared to play with him, he was so harsh and bold and rough. All the folks who lived in the town knew him, but they did not

praise him. They knew him as a boy who would do any bold bad thing that came into his head.

He liked above all things to tease and abuse the old and the poor, the sick and the lame. Aunt Molly, a poor old woman who lived close by the school-house, was the object of many a cruel laugh and wicked joke. She had to come into the playground of the school-house to get water from the well. A hard task it was for her too, for she was very

much bent, and had to go with a crutch.

But if Joe was there when she came out he always made great sport of her. "Only look at her," he would say. "Isn't she a letter S now, with an extra crook in it?" and then he would go close up to her, with a loud laugh, and walk like her, and mock her voice and her ways.

She took no notice of these things for a long time, till one day she turned around and looked at him

6 THE BROKEN BACK.

with her mild eyes and said slowly, "Go home, child, and read the story of the bad boys and the two bears that came out of the wood."

The other boys had never joined him in mocking the old woman, but now they spoke out, "Shame! shame!" and Charles Mann came up and said, "Now it is too bad for you to do so, Joe. Don't you know that she lost her health by taking care of her poor sick boy, and lifting him about night and day?"

"I don't care what made her so," said Joe; "I know one thing, I would not stay in the world if I was such a looking thing as that. Do look!"

"For shame!" said Will Dean, "you may get your own back broken one of these days, who knows?"

"Never mind that bad boy, Aunt Molly," said Charles, "we love you all the more for being so kind to your poor son. Let me get the water for you, ma'am," and he took the pail gently from her hand.

Aunt Molly's voice shook, and the tears came into her eyes, as she said, "Thank you, my dear boy; may God bless you, and grant that you may never suffer such things."

"If I should," said Charles kindly, "it would be the duty, and it ought to be the wish of spry young folks to help me. And after this we will take turns, and one of us will bring your water each day, so that you need not come for it, won't we, boys?"

“Yes, that we will,” went from lip to lip; “and more than that too for good Aunt Molly,” cried Will Dean at the top of his voice.

“God bless you! God bless you all!” She wiped away her tears, and went back to her poor old house, but its walls grew more bright to her when she thought of the good-will of those kind boys.

The master had heard this bold attack of Joe upon poor Aunt Molly, and to show the lad how great a

10 THE BROKEN BACK.

wrong he had been doing, he said that he should not go out to play with the boys during recess for a week to come.

While Joe was thus kept from the play-ground, Will Dean, who took the first turn after Charles Mann in getting water for Aunt Molly, was away from the play-ground too, but not for the same cause. The good old lady was telling him the story of her son's illness and death, and his little heart was getting better and

better while he learned to love poor old Aunt Molly and other good folks much more than ever. But Joe's heart was growing harder and harder, while he made up his mind that he would hate more and more the master who kept him in, and Aunt Molly, who he said was the cause of it. So good things always link with good to help those who wish to do right, and evil with evil to make those worse who love to be bad.

On the fourth day that Joe had

been kept in, he sat by the open window while the boys were out, and looked at their sports. He saw that the master was busy at his desk, and all at once with a shout he leaped right out into the midst of the boys.

“Now let him catch me if he can; let him punish me again if he dare,” he cried, and threw up his arms with a loud laugh, and ran backward across the play-ground. All at once his voice stopped; there was

a heavy plunge, and a loud groan, and he was gone out of sight.

In a moment the boys ran to the spot. It was the well where Aunt Molly got her water. Some men were at work to clean it out and mend it, and the curb was off, and just at that time the men were away. Joe in his wild and wicked glee did not think of it. He ran back and fell into it. The boys ran up and looked over the top, but the well was very deep, and they could not see Joe.

14 THE BROKEN BACK.

Charles Mann, who was a brave boy was the first to seize the well rope and tie it round him and go down into the well. The boys let the rope down at the top, and he went down, down to where Joe lay quite still at the bottom. The water had been drawn out, so that there was very little left, not enough to drown him. Charles took up the poor boy, tied him with himself to the rope, made a sign to those above, and was soon drawn up again.

How still the boys were when they all saw Joe's pale face, and while they bore him to the house of poor Aunt Molly.

She had seen him fall, and had come out on her crutch to have him brought to her house, the very boy that had called her such bad names and used her so ill. There he lay on her little bed, and she did all she could for him; as the Bible says, "Do good to them that hate you."

She brought out her vials, and took

16 THE BROKEN BACK.

from her scanty store of old linen some to wrap up his head, which was very much hurt, and she sat down by his side to rub his hands and his feet, praying for him all the while as if he had been her dear friend.

Some of the boys ran for the doctor and some for his parents, and after the doctor had done what he could the poor boy was borne to his house. They hoped he would live, but they did not know; he was very

much hurt, how much they could not then tell. It was a sad, sad thing, and a deep gloom hung over the school and all who heard of it.

The day wore off and school closed, but the boys waited to hear more from Joe. Many of them were still in the play-ground when Charles Mann came near. They knew that he had been to see Joe, and they all got round him. They saw the tears in his eyes, and that the sobs choked his voice. They feared the

worst, and Will Dean asked, "Is Joe dead?"

"No, he is not dead. He has looked up; he is able to speak; but, O boys!" and Charles burst into tears again, "poor Joe's back is broken."

There were no dry eyes among that group of boys for the next half hour. They all went to Aunt Molly's house and told her, and she had them come in, and they talked it all over in great sorrow. Then they all knelt down,

and Aunt Molly prayed that the life of poor Joe might be spared, and that even this sad event might at last do him some good. O it is a great comfort to go to God when sorrow comes over the heart, and nothing else could have soothed them as thus to leave the case of poor Joe in the hands of the good Lord.

And Joe, who can tell his agony of body and mind as he lay for long months upon his bed of pain. But when he rose from it with a bent

and feeble body, and a scar like the mark of Cain on his face, he was changed in heart also, changed for the better. When the boys came to see him one by one he threw his arms around the neck of each and burst into tears, and could only say, "Forgive, forgive!"

His first visit was to the house of poor Aunt Molly. They had a long talk, just they two alone. I don't know all they said, but I can guess what it was about, for they read the

Bible and prayed too, and when Joe went away he begged that he might put his arms about her neck and kiss her old and faded cheek. Ah, Joe was a changed boy.

After that he spent much of his time with Aunt Molly. He begged his papa to build her a neat little cot on his land and let her have it rent free, and almost every day in the year Joe may be seen going over to her cot with some warm nice dish from their own table. He says now

22 THE BROKEN BACK.

that the young ought to love and care for the old who have done their part in the world. He says it would have been much better for him not to have found this out so late, but because he was so bad it was but just in God to punish him by making him a crooked hunchback and a cripple for the rest of his life.

I hope all my dear little friends that read this will try to be kind to the old. God loves to see this, and

if you get to be old and helpless I hope that all young folks will then be kind to you.

DEEDS OF KINDNESS.

“ Suppose the little breezes,
Upon a summer's day,
Should think themselves too small to
cool
The traveler on his way ;
Who would not miss the smallest
And softest ones that blow,
And think they made a great mistake
If they were talking so.

24 THE BROKEN BACK.

“How many deeds of kindness
A little child may do,
Although it has so little strength,
And little wisdom too.
It wants a loving spirit,
Much more than strength, to prove
How many things a child may do
For others by his love.”

THE END.

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