

OLD EDWARD.

TO WHICH IS ADDED
THE BLACKSMITH.



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OLD EDWARD.

OLD Edward had suffered much trouble, and at length lost his senses. He was quite harmless, but used to walk about the streets oddly dressed, with five or six hats on his head, and by his behaviour shewed that he was quite silly. While thus wandering about, the people in general pitied him ; but there were some wicked children who used to hoot after him, and call him names ; he would bear this patiently for a long time, but sometimes when his persecutors teased him more than usual, he would at last turn round



and throw stones at them, or any thing else he could find.

One day, Old Edward passed by Mr. Wilson's house, and as this gentleman opened the window to see what caused the noise, to his great surprise and sorrow, he saw his son Henry among the crowd of boys who followed the poor man, calling him names and pelt-ing him.

In the evening, Mr. Wilson said

to his son, "Who was that old man that I saw you following and hooting after, to-day?"

Henry. Surely, father, you must know him; it was Old Edward; he is out of his mind.

Mr. W. Poor Man, what caused him to lose his senses?

Henry. Oh, I don't recollect just now; but I have heard all about it. I believe a friend deceived him, and he lost his property, and that drove him out of his mind.

Mr. W. Suppose he had come to you when he first heard of his losses, and had said, "Henry, I am in great trouble; I have lost all my property, and I do not know what to do." Would you then have laughed at him, and called him names?

Henry. No father, I hope not ; I should be very wicked to laugh at any one in misfortune. We ought to be kind to them and help them.



Mr. W. Is he better off now than he was then ?

Henry. Certainly not ; I think he is in a much worse condition.

Mr. W. But what have you done to him, to-day ?

Henry. I feel I have done wrong; forgive me; I am very sorry I have been so naughty.

Mr. W. I willingly forgive you, since you see and acknowledge your fault; but there is some one else whom you have to ask for pardon.

Henry. Do you mean Old Edward?

Mr. W. If Edward was in his right mind it would be proper to ask his pardon. But, as God has seen fit to deprive him of his senses, it would be useless to speak to Edward.

Henry. Then, father, you mean I should pray to God to forgive me.

Mr. W. Yes; for we are all as He sees fit to make us, and if we mock others for any defect of body or mind, we mock God. The

Bible tells us, " Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker ; and he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished. (Prov. xvii. 5.) Now you do this whenever you make game, as it is called, of others, or laugh at them for any misfortune or trouble that God in his providence has seen fit that they should suffer. Old Edward is in this situation ; so, by mocking or making game of him, you in fact reproach God, and forget that he could at once put you or me in the same situation as this poor old man. Think also of the Saviour ; how different is the example he has set us, and which we should pray that we may by his grace, be enabled to follow.

Henry felt his error, and repeated words of prayer to God to

forgive him ; but I fear he did not really wish his heart to be turned. However, for some weeks, he remembered what his father had told him, and not only kept from teasing Old Edward, but persuaded several of his companions also to leave him alone.

But good resolutions, when formed only in our own strength, seldom last long. One day Edward and his persecutors passed by, and Henry thought he would follow at a distance, just to see how they plagued him. The next day Henry made one in the crowd, and joined in their cries. From bad he went on to worse. The third day he was foremost in the throng ; animated by their new companion, they were unusually active ; Old Edward could bear it

no longer ; he turned round, and catching up a large stone, he threw it at his little tormentors ; Henry was foremost ; the stone hit him on the face, and wounded him very severely.

Henry returned home covered with blood, and crying bitterly. " You are justly punished," said his father. " But why," said Henry, " the other boys have often treated him much worse than I have, and they are not hurt."--- " Have not you," said his father, " been better taught than they have been, and does not this make your wickedness so much the greater. As your father, I have told you not to teaze this poor man ; and I have shewed you that it was sinning against God. Your offence is therefore greater than



theirs, and your punishment is greater, as you deserved it should be. Remember, Christ said, 'That servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required.' "

My little readers, this story may give you a useful lesson. May it teach you to be more watchful over yourself, and to pray to God to forgive you your sins for Christ's sake, who died on the cross for our salvation.



THE BLACKSMITH.

As Mr. Wilson passed late one evening by the shop of a blacksmith, he heard the sound of his hammer, and stopped to ask the reason why he worked so much beyond his usual time. "I am not at work for myself," said the blacksmith, "but for one of my poor neighbours, whose cottage was burnt down last week; he has

lost every thing. I mean to work an hour earlier in the morning, and two hours later at night for him. This is all I can do to help him, for I have to earn bread for myself and my family; but provisions are cheap, and a little now will go further than it used to do."

"This is kind of you," said Mr. Wilson, "for I suppose your neighbour will never be able to pay you again." "I do not expect it," replied the blacksmith, "but if I was in his situation, and he in mine, I am sure he would do as much for me."

Mr. Wilson thought he had better not hinder this good man any longer; so he wished him good night, and went home.

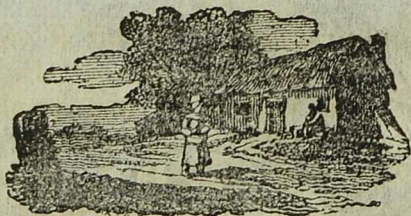
The next morning he called again on the blacksmith, and wish-

ing to reward his kindness, he offered to lend him ten pounds, without interest, that he might be able to buy his iron at the cheapest rate, and undertake more work, and thus increase his profits. His surprize was great when the blacksmith said, " Sir, I thank you, but I will not take your money ; I would rather not have it, because I have not earned



it. I can pay for all the iron I want at present, and if I should want more, the person I buy of

would trust me." "But if you took this money to some one else," said Mr. Wilson, "you would perhaps be able to buy cheaper." "Why, as for that, Sir," replied the smith, "I can't say I think it would be right on my part; I know he is a fair dealing man, and when I first took this forge, and had nothing I could call my own, except the clothes on my back, he trusted me; surely I ought not to go and deal elsewhere now. Keep your money, Sir, I thank you for the offer:—or stop, perhaps you would lend it to the poor man who was burnt out; it would go far to help him in rebuilding his little cottage. And this would be helping me too, you know; for then I need not work quite so hard for him." Mr. Wilson complied



with the blacksmith's request. The loan of the money was very useful to the poor cottager; and Mr. Wilson had the pleasure of making two persons happy instead of one, as he had at first intended.

My reader, remember the words of Christ; "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." Matt. vii. 12.

