

THE  
READER.

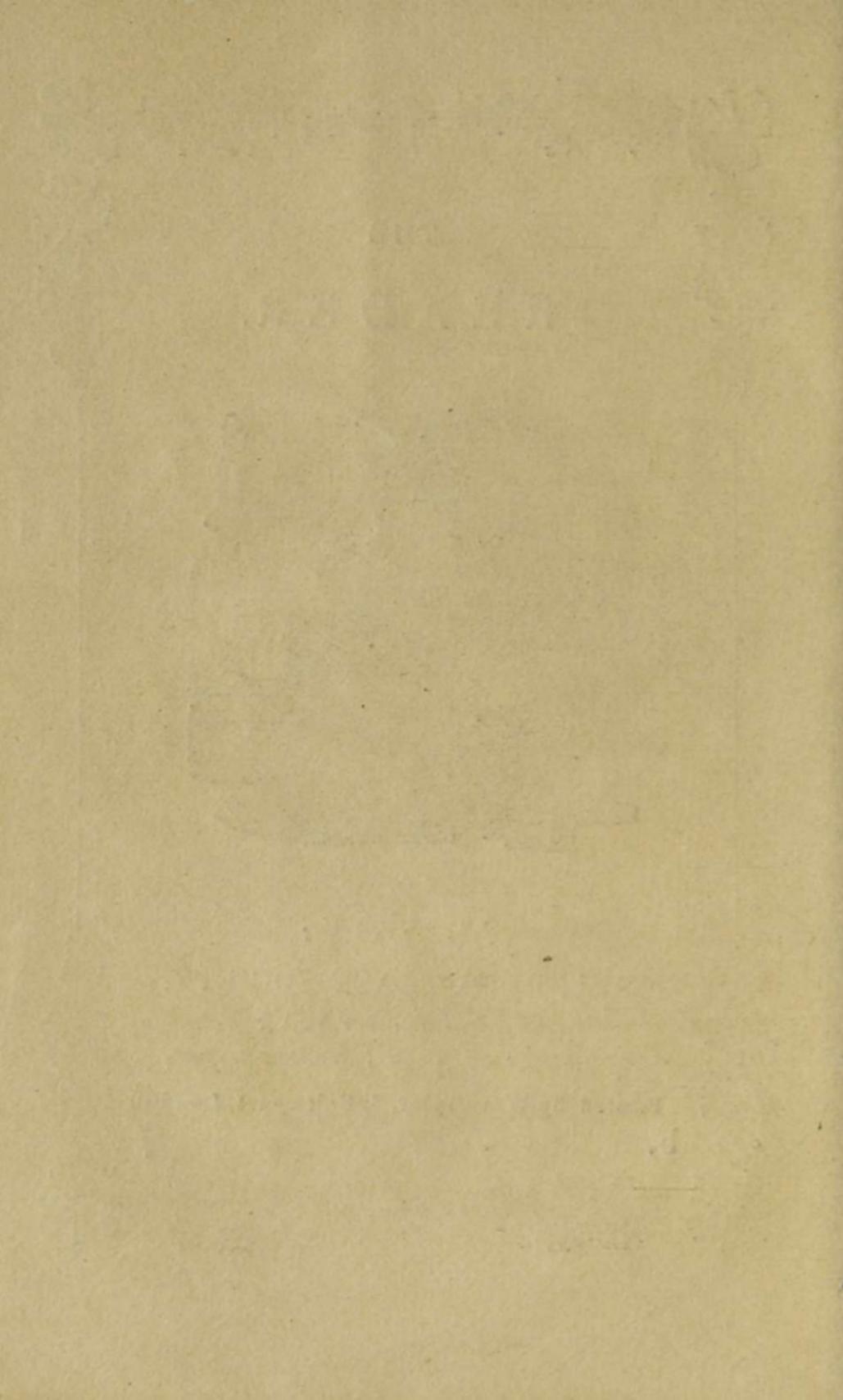


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RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY,  
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# THE READER;

OR

THE PLEASURE OF BEING ABLE TO READ.

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Boys and girls who have learned to read are able to examine the holy bible, which is the book that tells us about God, and from which we learn about our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

They can also read this blessed book to aged persons who were not taught when they were young, and to blind people, or those who are sick.

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Printed by William Tyler, Bolt-court, London.

I am going to relate a little story upon this subject.

Mr. Williams was one day walking in the fields. As he passed through a meadow in



which some sheep were feeding, he saw a little boy about eight years old sitting under a tree. He was quite idle, and gaped and stretched his arms about as if he felt very uncomfortable.

Mr. Williams stopped and said, "My boy, are you well?"

“O, yes,” answered the boy, “I am very well; but I am quite tired, and I do not know what to do.”

*Mr. W.* Have not you to look after these sheep?

*Boy.* Yes, and I have been here ever since six o'clock this morning.

*Mr. W.* How have you employed yourself during that time?

*Boy.* Why, what could I do? I have done nothing, and I feel quite tired.

*Mr. W.* Why did not you bring your testament with you, and read a few chapters, or learn some verses by heart while looking after your sheep? you would not have felt so tired, and would have gained some useful knowledge.

The boy did not reply, but held down his head, and looked quite ashamed.

*Mr. W.* I suppose you forgot to bring your testament; I am going further, and I will lend you mine till I return; here it is.

The boy looked still more ashamed, but did not say a word.

*Mr. W.* Why do not you take it? I am

afraid you do not know how to read ; is that the case ?

*Boy.* Nobody ever taught me, sir ; and I cannot teach myself ?

*Mr. W.* Poor boy ! then you never read the holy word of God. I am very sorry for you, it is the best of books, and by attending to what it tells us, even a child may learn how to become wise and happy.

*Boy.* Indeed, sir, I wish I could read, for I am quite tired of having nothing to do while I mind the sheep.

*Mr. W.* I do not wonder at this ; you would not only pass your time more pleasantly if you read the bible, but you would also learn about our Lord Jesus Christ, and how he died for sinners ; the bible teaches us to love him, and to seek to do his will.

Mr. Williams then advised the boy to ask his master's leave that he might go to the Sunday-school ; and said, that when the long winter evenings came, he might get one of his companions to help him, and he would very soon learn to read.

This kind gentleman then walked on till

he came to a cottage where a weaver lived, to whom he wished to speak respecting some work.

Mr. Williams found the weaver very busy at his loom, and while they were conversing, he heard the voice of some young person who was reading in the next room. It was the parable of the sower, which I dare say you recollect is in the 4th chapter of St. Mark's gospel. It was read in a very distinct and proper manner, as if the person who read understood it.

When Mr. Williams had given his orders, he asked who was reading in the next room.

*The Weaver.* It is my neighbour's daughter; she is a very good girl, and comes every day to read the bible to my aged mother, who has been blind for the last three months, so that she cannot read for herself; and I like to hear her as I sit in my loom.

*Mr. W.* How old is she?

*The Weaver.* She is not much above eight years old; but she is more steady than many of ten or eleven.

Mr. Williams then went to the room door,

and saw the little girl sitting by the old woman's chair, reading a large bible which lay on the window-seat.

She read very distinctly, as I mentioned just now ; she minded her stops, and took pains to pronounce every word properly, so that it was very easy to understand what she read. She did not gabble it over like some little folks I am acquainted with, as if she were trying to get the words out of her mouth as fast as possible.

The weaver's aged mother listened very attentively, and appeared very thankful to hear the blessed word of God ; when the little girl had finished the parable she stopped, and the old woman explained what was meant by the good seed. She said that it was the word of God which taught us about the Saviour, and that when this good seed was sown in our hearts by him, and we were enabled to understand it by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, then we loved him for all he had done and suffered for us ; and, being cleansed from our sins by his precious blood, we desire to do his will.

The little girl listened very attentively and after asking some questions, began to read again.

Mr. Williams then went into the room and after asking the old woman how she was he turned to the little girl and said, "My dear, I dare say you are very happy to be able to read; as you can read not only for yourself, but also you are able to make this good old woman very happy too."

The little girl replied, "Yes, sir I am very glad to read to our kind neighbor; do you know, sir, that she taught me to read three years ago."

*Mr. W.* Did you find it very difficult?

*Little Girl.* It was rather hard, sir; but she taught me a little every day. She was very particular that I never missed coming to her, and I soon found that it became easier.

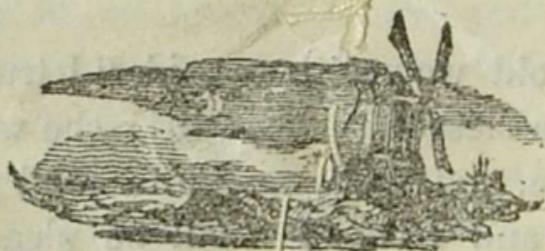
The old woman then said, "I trust that God has blessed this little girl; she was very attentive, and soon learned to read the testament, and I hope we will be pleased, by his Holy Spirit, to enable her to understand

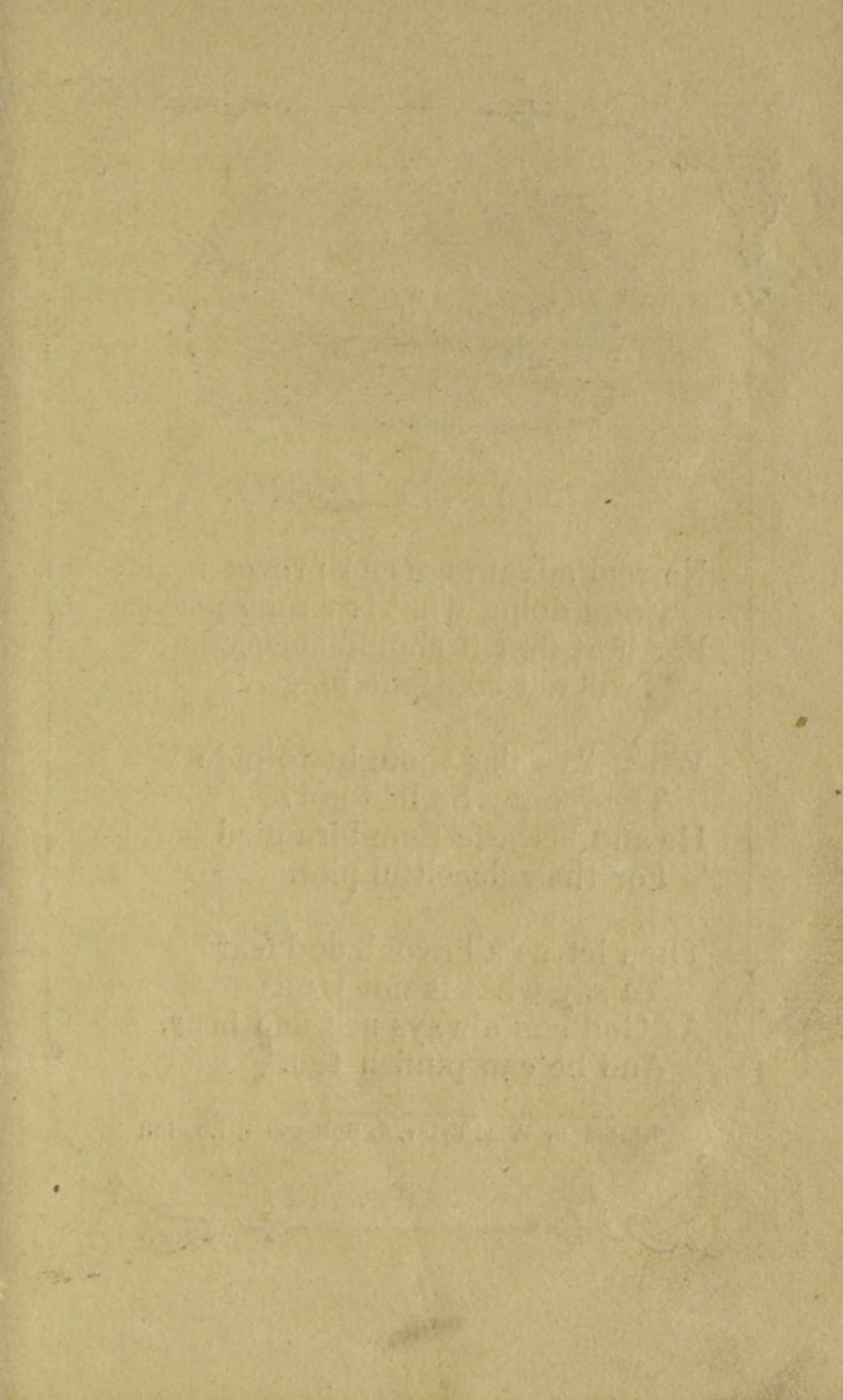
the truths it contains, for she becomes more and more attentive every day.

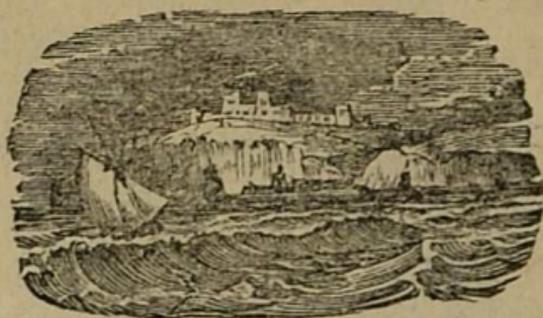
*Mr. W.* Then I am sure that she is happier every day; because nothing can make a child happy but loving the Saviour and doing his will.

*Mr. Williams* then gave his testament to the little girl who had long wished to have one of her own. He advised her to read a chapter every day, and to pray to God for a blessing, and then bade them all good bye.

As he returned home, he could not help thinking what a great difference there was between the shepherd boy who was tired of doing nothing, because he did not know how to read; and the little girl who was so happy at being able to read the testament to her kind neighbour.







### AGAINST LYING.

No real advantage can proceed  
From doing what is wrong ;  
For if at first it should succeed,  
'Twill not continue long.

When Ananias thought to hide  
The money he had got,  
He and his wife Sapphira died  
For their deceitful plot.

Then let us all avoid, and fear  
To say what is not true ;  
As God can always see and hear,  
And he can punish too.

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