

*Mr. Howe:*—I think whispering is a very bad practice, and I will try to offend no more. E. G. D.

A very good scholar, and died young at Detroit.

*Mr. Howe:*—I whispered twice—once I asked T. F. Rochester how to spell a word. The other time S. W. Whitney and H. B. Livingston were talking about what animals there were in a show. H. B. L. asked S. W. W. what animals there were, and I said llama. I acknowledge that I did wrong, and promise not to do so any more; at least I will try. T. D. P.

*Mr. Howe:*—Whispering is a very bad practice. This morning I was told to stop whispering. I asked the boy to put my name in his composition. I don't mean to follow the practice. S. B.

#### PLEDGE.

We, the subscribers, do hereby agree not to whisper without permission:

D. H. Fitzhugh,

Augustus Wilson,

W. H. Adams,

G. B. Hubbell,

A. P. Howell.

### MY FATHER'S CANE.

#### WHAT A LITTLE VINE DID TO A BIG STICK.

THE Rev. Samuel Storrs Howe, of Iowa City, Iowa, has just called at the Mission House, and as he is something of a veteran he brought with him a curious walking stick. He said that he inherited it from his father, who cut it with his own hands many years ago. From end to end it shows a spiral groove, evidently produced by some little vine, which wound itself around it as it grew, and partially embedded itself in the trunk which it had chosen for its support. It struck me as a beautiful illustration of the fact that there is scarcely any person or thing in the world that does not exert some influence. I was reminded of one little child and another of my acquaintance who had clung with twining

affection to a father until a deep groove of influence had been made in the strong man's character. More frequently, perhaps, it is a dear little girl who exerts this wonderful power. I believe that every good child leaves more or less of a groove on those about him. But the most remarkable thing about this cane was not the groove, but the fact that the little vine had given its own twist to the trunk itself. The cane, which would naturally have been a mere stiff straight stick, is bent—the entire body of it—into the same graceful spiral as the groove itself.

In other words, it was not the thick trunk which controlled the form of the little vine, which, in seeming weakness, clung to it for support; but, on the contrary, it was the tender, pliant vine which took the stiffness out of its big neighbor and finally had it all its own way! This seems almost like our Savior's representation of the weakest things as the strongest, and the humblest as most exalted. If it were possible for a vine to *love*, I should say that this thick cane had been conquered and moulded by a clinging affection. Anyhow, that is the lesson that my mind seemed to draw from it as my eye followed its graceful curves while I talked with my friend.

Are my little readers forming any grooves in anybody or anything? Perhaps some leave only the scars and blemishes of an evil influence. But this graceful spiral can only be produced by *entwining*. In its very form and nature it speaks of love. Yes, you have a thousand opportunities all around you and some far away in distant lands. You can bend the stiff obstinacy of the ignorant and degraded if you entwine around them your sympathies and your prayers. Here is a wicked world for which Jesus even died. After His example, wind your love about it and try it.—*Dr. F. F. Ellingwood, in the July, 1883, Foreign Missionary.*

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