

THE

RUSTY NEEDLE:

A STORY

FOR YOUNG CHILDREN.

“ I love them that love me, and those that
seek me early shall find me.”

THIRD EDITION.

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THE HISTORY OF

RUSSELL

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THE
RUSTY NEEDLE.

“LUCY, look at this little fly I have caught,” said her mamma, “it is not much larger than a pin’s head,—I can hardly see it, but will make it look presently as large as a plum; put it into this glass, which is called a microscope, and when you shut one eye, and look through the glass, you will see how large the fly will seem. “Dear mamma,” said Lucy, “how large the fly is, his head is like black velvet, and his wings are all sorts of colours, blue, red, yellow, and purple—what is the long thing that sticks out of his mouth?” “That, my dear,” said her mamma, “is what the fly sucks his food with, and is called its proboscis;

is it not beautiful and smooth? we could not make any thing like it."

"A fine needle is as smooth," said Lucy. "I will convince you that it is not," said her mamma; "here is one of my nicest needles, feel it." Lucy did so and felt quite sure it would be as smooth when put into the glass: her surprize, however, was great, when she saw that it looked quite rough. "Now look at a rusty needle"—"O," said Lucy, "I shall never believe any thing nice again, till I put it into this glass!" "Then, my dear Lucy, when you take up your needle, think of yourself as you have now seen it; and that all your faults are as plain to the eye of God, as the rust on the needle is, in the glass, though you think yourself very good, and may seem so to others. For you know when you first looked at the needle, you thought it very smooth, yet soon found it quite rough and ugly! so nothing that man can make, is perfect! God only, can

make perfection in any thing, and we should watch our actions, not to let our minds grow rusty, but should try to correct our faults, by the study of the Holy Bible. And we must pray for the grace of God, and for the influence of His Holy Spirit, to enable us to act aright, through our Lord Jesus Christ; and when you are able to read the word of God, you will know what you are to do, and learn your duty in the Gospel.

“Dear mamma, when shall I be able to do this?” “As soon as you can spell, Lucy, then you will soon read.” “I will begin directly,” said the little girl, her eyes dancing with joy—“and will learn another lesson in the evening, if you will read to me about Adam and Eve, and about Noah, and the flood, and the miracles of Jesus Christ, who made the blind man to see, the dumb man to talk, and the lame man to walk.”

“Indeed I will,” said her mamma,

“and remember, when you take up your needle, to think of the way it appeared to you in the glass; and that your faults are as much in need of being corrected, as the needle wants to have the rust rubbed off, and that it is Jesus Christ alone that can wash away your sins.” “Indeed I will,” said Lucy, “and when I think of your little story of the needle, I will think of what I find in my heart that tells me I am naughty.” “My dear child, it is the voice of God that tells you so in your conscience, and gives you warning and time to repent. If you always mind what God says, you will always do right, you will be his child, and go to heaven, through the merits of Jesus Christ, who died that we might live, and not die eternally, the punishment every sinner deserves.” “O mamma,” said Lucy, “teach me God’s commands, that I may know what to do, and tell me more about Jesus Christ, that I may go to heaven.” “That is

a good child," said her mamma, "you shall begin to-morrow."

The next day Lucy awoke early, and called her nurse to dress her, at six o'clock, that she might be up in time to learn to read; but as her mamma was not awake, she was obliged to wait till eight o'clock.—Every minute she was running to the clock, and thought the hand would never stir—at last she called out pettishly—"it will never strike, just because I want it," and she stamped with her foot and was going to beat the clock, when her mamma's bell rang.

Mrs. Roberts had heard Lucy scolding the clock, and called her into the bed-room to represent to her, how improper her conduct was, and the sin she was guilty of, in giving way to impatience. The clock was quietly pursuing its regular course, and her wishes would not advance or retard it one moment; but her passion made her dislike every thing which did not

exactly suit her wishes. Her desire to get up and read, was because it was new—losing her temper made her unfit to hear the Holy Scriptures read; but if she was really sorry, she would have shewn it by her actions.

“Did you say your prayers this morning?” said Mrs. Roberts. Lucy held down her head. “My dear child,” said her mamma, “you have not surely ventured to leave your room without saying them—you cannot be certain that God will not immediately punish you for this neglect, for you did not ask the protection of God, to keep you through this day, which He has safely brought you to the beginning of—if you do not pray for His mercy, you cannot tell that He will preserve you in it with His mighty favour—and grant that you do not fall into sin, or run into any kind of danger. Had you said your prayers, you probably would not have been so impatient about the clock—your mind

would have been composed, and you would not now be crying.—I hope however they are tears of repentance, and not of petulance.” “Indeed they are,” said Lucy. “Shall I say them now mamma? and will God forgive my neglect, and I will never forget them again?” “Do, my child, and for the sake of Jesus Christ, I hope you may be forgiven.”

Lucy knelt down and after she said her prayers, lifted up her eyes in tears, and prayed in a few simple words the dictates of her heart, that she might never forget her prayers again, and be forgiven this time. She then arose and brought her mamma the book out of which she began to teach her, her first lesson; she was very attentive for a quarter of an hour, but then found she could not sit still, nor stand without kicking; the chair was too hard; the sun was in her eyes; she could not see, she had a pain in her leg, and a pain in her back; in short

she was tired, and was longing to go out to walk.

After her lesson was over, Mrs. Roberts said, “come Lucy let us go to breakfast, and then if you are not too bad with the pain in your leg, or your back, I will tell you a story from the Holy Bible, but you must attend to it, and not look at every thing in the room, while I am telling you, because it is great disrespect to think of any thing else while you ought to be listening to the word of God ; as every thing in the Bible is sacred.

“There was a little child called Samuel, whom his mother brought as soon as he was nursed, into the house of the Lord, to be brought up in the service of God ; and he was in the care of Eli, the high priest ; this child was used to sleep in the temple, and lay down near where the ark of God stood. He was a very young child, and used to open the door of the house of the Lord in the morning,

which was all he could do—but it was better to be a door keeper in the house of God, with an humble and pious mind, than to be proud and irreligious, and to live in a fine house with wicked people.

“Samuel was a very good child; and one night God called him by his name, but he did not then know God, and thought Eli had called him; so he got up and asked what he wanted, but Eli bade him lie down again, for he had not called him; and when he lay down, God called him a second time, and a second time he went to Eli saying, here I am for thou didst call me; then Eli perceived that God had called the child; and he bid him, if he was called again to say—speak Lord, for thy servant heareth; and the Lord called Samuel the third time, and he said what Eli had desired him—and God told him all he would do to the family of Eli, because he did not make his sons do right, or correct them

when they did wickedly, for which he should be punished.

“In the morning Eli asked Samuel what God had said, and Samuel told him all the truth, and hid nothing from him. Eli said ‘it is the Lord, let Him do as seemeth Him good.’

“Eli was blind, and he felt he deserved to suffer because it was his own fault; his foolish indulgence to his children, and not punishing them when they were in fault, had brought the anger of God upon him, and upon them. He was blind to the errors of his children, which blindness of the mind is greater than that of the mere loss of sight, and is always punished, sooner or later—and that is one reason, I always punish you, when you do wrong: but remember God can inflict a much greater punishment upon you; pray to Him, then, to forgive you for the sake Jesus Christ, and think often on the word of God, as Samuel did, for as he

grew up, God was with him, and he became one of the prophets of the Lord.”

“What is a prophet? mamma,” said Lucy.

“It is one, my dear child, whom God teaches by His Holy Spirit, to tell events that will come to pass before they happen, which they could not know of themselves; for instance, in the country where Samuel lived, there never was thunder and rain during the harvest—and Samuel for a sign to the people, to shew the power of God, said, there shall be thunder and rain at that time to-morrow, and it was so.”

“But mamma,” said Lucy, “you said it would rain yesterday, and the evening was wet, are you a prophet?”

“No, my dear, I saw a dark cloud, and concluded when a cloud appeared, that it would rain, and that was little more, than if I said, if you drop that book, it will fall down. These

Prophets whom God chose, believed in His promises before they happened, felt assured that he would fulfil them at the proper time; when little children would be taught of God Himself, and great would be the peace of these children, to whom Jesus Christ said--‘Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven: again if ye receive not the gospel as a little child, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, as a child is made an example of humility to grown persons, they should take great care to walk in the fear of the Lord, and to rule their lives by the Word of God, and to learn that Word in time, to impress it on their hearts while they are young, and to listen with respectful attention to their minister, when they are old enough to attend the house of God; for the minister preaches his sermon to call those dear little children, as well as more grown persons, to their

heavenly Father, that he may teach them the fear of the Lord.

Lucy was deeply impressed by what her mother said; she seemed very serious all the day; nor was that all, for the subject had sunk deeply into her heart, though so young, she never forgot it; and as she grew older, these principles thus implanted in her mind, shewed themselves in her actions. After this, Lucy always remembered the text of the sermon at church, and when she had learned to write, used to get a slate, and write down, as well as she could, the substance of what she heard: and long before she could do this herself, she used to tell the words, she wanted to have written, to her maid, to write for her. Sometimes it was no more than this, expressed in the simple language of childhood.

Text—Palm xxxiv. 11. “Come ye children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord.”

We are to love God.

Not to tell lies, or steal.

To keep the Commandments.

Read the Bible—fear God.

Obey our Parents, and trust in Jesus Christ, who will save us from our sins.

Such were the kind of remarks, Lucy used to make, when she was between five and six years old; and afterwards, used to be able to recollect a great deal more—but as every thing must have a beginning; it is hoped, the little children who read this, will, like Lucy, after they return from church, instead of going to play, follow her example, and do likewise.

THE END.