

# **THE POWER OF KINDNESS. And Other Stories**

**A BOOK FOR THE EXAMPLE AND ENCOURAGEMENT  
OF  
THE YOUNG.**

**By T. S. ARTHUR**

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## **The Power of Kindness.**

I HATE him!”

Thus, in a loud, angry voice, spoke a lad named Charles Freeman. His face was red, and his fair white brow disfigured by passion.

“Yes, I hate him! and he had better keep his distance from me, or I—”

“What would you do, Charles?” asked the lad’s companion, seeing that he paused.

“I don’t know what I might not be tempted to do. I would trample upon him as I would upon a snake.”

For a boy fourteen years of age, this was a dreadful state of mind to be in. The individual who had offended him was a fellow-student, named William Aiken. The cause of offence we will relate.

Charles Freeman was a self-willed, passionate boy, who hesitated not to break any rule of the institution at which he was receiving his education, provided, in doing so, he felt quite sure of not being found out and punished. On a certain occasion, he, with two or three others, who were planning some act of insubordination, called into the room of William Aiken and asked him to join them.

“It will be such grand sport,” said Freeman.

“But will it be right?” asked the more conscientious lad.

“Right or wrong, we are going to do it. Who cares for the president and all the faculty put together? They are a set of hypocrites and oppressors: make the best you can of them.”

“They don’t ask us to do anything but what is required by the rules of the institution; and then, I think, we ought to obey.”

“You are wonderfully inclined to obedience!” said Charles Freeman, in a sneering voice. “Come, boys! We have mistaken Master Aiken. I did not know before that he was such a milksop. Come!”

The other lads retired with Freeman, but they did not insult Aiken, for they knew him to be kind-hearted and honourable, and felt more disposed to respect him for his objections than to speak harshly to him for entertaining them. Aiken made no reply to the insulting language of the hot-headed, thoughtless Charles Freeman, although his words roused within him an instant feeling of indignation, that almost forced his tongue to utter some strong, retaliating expressions. But he controlled himself, and was very glad, as soon as his visitors had left him, that he had been able to do so.

On the next morning, before daylight, some persons, unknown to the faculty, brought from a neighbouring field a spiteful ram, and tied him, with a strong cord, to a post near the door of the president’s dwelling. The president, who was very near-sighted, always read prayers in the chapel at five o’clock in the morning. At the usual hour he descended from his chamber, and came out at his front door to go to the chapel, which was distant some fifty yards. It was a little after break of day. In the dim morning twilight, the

president could see but indistinctly even objects that were very near to him.

The ram, which had, after his fierce struggles with those who had reduced him to a state of captivity, lain down quietly, roused himself up at the sound of the opening door, and stood ready to give the president a rather warm reception the moment he came within reach of him. Unconscious of the danger that menaced him, the president descended from the door with slow and cautious steps, and received in his side a terrible blow from the animal's head, that threw him, some feet from where he was standing, prostrate upon the ground. Fortunately the ram had reached within a few inches of the length of his tether when the blow was given, and could not, therefore, repeat it, as the object of his wrath was beyond his reach.

The president was rather severely hurt; so much so that he was unable to go to the chapel and read morning prayers, and was confined to his chamber for some days. No investigation into the matter was made until after he was able to be about again. Then he assembled all the students together and stated to them what had occurred, and the pain he had endured in consequence, and asked to have the individuals who had been guilty of this outrage designated. All were silent. One student looked at another, and then at the assembled faculty, but no one gave the desired information, although many of those present knew the parties who were engaged in the act. Finding that no one would divulge the names of those who had been guilty of the outrage against him, the president said,—

“Let all who know nothing of this matter rise to their feet.”

Charles Freeman was the first to spring up, and one after another followed him, until all had risen except William Aiken. The president paused for some moments, and then ordered the young men to take their seats.

“William Aiken will please to come forward,” said the president. As the lad rose from his seat, several of the faculty, who had their eyes upon Freeman, and who had reason for suspecting that he knew about as much of the matter as any one, noticed that he cast a look of anger towards Aiken.

“It seems, then, that you know something about this matter,” said the president.

“All I know about it,” replied Aiken, “is, that I was applied to by some of my fellow-students to join them in doing what has been done, and that I declined participating in it.”

“For what reason, sir?”

“Because I thought it wrong.”

“Who were the students that applied to you?”

“I would rather not answer that question, sir.”

“But I insist upon it.”

“Then I must decline doing so.”

“You will be suspended, sir.”

“I should regret that,” was the lad’s manly reply. “But as I have broken no rule of the institution, such a suspension would be no disgrace to me.”

The president was perplexed. At this point one of the professors whispered something in his ear, and his eye turned immediately upon Freeman.

“Let Charles Freeman come forward,” he said.

With a fluctuating countenance the guilty youth left his seat and approached the faculty.

“Is this one of them?” said the president.

Aiken made no reply.

“Silence is assent,” the president remarked; “you can take your seat, young man.”

As Aiken moved away, the president, who had rather unjustly fixed upon him the burden of having given information, tacitly, against Freeman, said, addressing the latter:—

“And now, sir, who were your associates in this thing?”

“*I* am no common informer, sir. You had better ask William Aiken. No doubt *he* will tell you,” replied the lad.

The president stood thoughtful for a moment, and then said,—

“Gentlemen, you can all retire.”

It was as the students were retiring from the room where this proceeding had been conducted that Freeman made the bitter remarks about Aiken with which our story opens. It happened that the subject of them was so close to him as to hear all he said. About ten minutes after this, against the persuasion of a fellow-student, Freeman went to the room of Aiken for the satisfaction of

telling him, as he said, “a piece of his mind.” Aiken was sitting by a table, with his head resting upon his hand, as Freeman came in. He looked up, when his door opened, and, seeing who it was, rose quickly to his feet, and advanced towards him a few steps, saying, with a smile, as he did so:—

“I am glad you have come, Charles. I had just made up my mind to go to your room. Sit down now, and let us talk this matter over with as little hard feelings as possible. I am sure it need not make us enemies. If I have been at any point in the least to blame, I will freely acknowledge it, and do all in my power to repair any injury that I may have done to you. Can I do more?”

“Of course not,” replied Charles, completely subdued by the unexpected manner and words of Aiken.

“I heard you say, a little while ago, that you hated me,” resumed William. “Of course there must be some cause for this feeling. Tell me what it is, Charles.”

The kind manner in which Aiken spoke, and the mildness of his voice, completely subdued the lion in the heart of Freeman. He was astonished at himself, and the wonderful revulsion that had taken place, so suddenly, in his feelings.

“I spoke hastily,” he said. “But I was blind with anger at being discovered through you.”

“But I did not discover you, remember that, Charles.”

“If you had risen with the rest—”



“I would not, in word or act, tell a lie, Charles, for my right hand,” said Aiken, in an earnest voice, interrupting him. “You must not blame me for this.”

“Perhaps I ought not, but—”

Freeman left the sentence unfinished, and rising to his feet, commenced walking the floor of Aiken’s room, hurriedly. This was continued for some minutes, when he stopped suddenly, and extending his hand, said,—

“I have thought it all over, William, and I believe I have no cause of complaint against you; but I acknowledge that you have against me. I have insulted you and hated you without a cause. I wish I could act, in all things, from the high principles that govern you.”

“Try, Charles, try!” said Aiken with warmth, as he grasped the hand of his fellow-student.

“It will be no use for me to try,” returned Freeman, sadly. “I shall be expelled from the institution; my father will be angry; and I shall perhaps be driven, by my hot and hasty spirit, to say something to him that will estrange us, for he is a man of a stern temper.”

“Don’t fear such consequences,” said Aiken kindly. “Leave it to me. I think I can make such representations to the president as will induce him to let the matter drop where it is.”

“If you can do so, it may save me from ruin,” replied Freeman, with much feeling.

William Aiken was not deceived in his expectations. He represented to the kind-hearted but rather impetuous president the

repentant state of Freeman's mind, and the consequences likely to arise if he should be expelled from college. The president made no promises; but nothing more was heard of the subject. From that time the two students were warm friends; and Freeman was not only led to see the beauty and excellence of truth and integrity of character, but to act from the same high principles that governed his noble-minded friend.

There is not one of our young readers who cannot see what sad consequences might have arisen, if William Aiken had not kept down his indignant feelings, and been governed by kindness instead of anger.





## Ada and her Pet Fawn.

THERE was once a dear child named Ada, who was of so sweet a temper that she only knew how to love; and the consequence was, that everybody and everything that could know her, loved the sweet little girl in return. I do not believe that a servant in her father's family ever spoke unkindly to Ada, she was so good. There are but few of my young readers, I am afraid, that can say so of themselves. Cook scolds, the chambermaid is so cross, and nurse is out of temper, whenever you come near them. Yes, you know all that; but, my young friends, I am afraid it is all your own fault. Now, examine closely your own feelings and conduct, and see if you do not make this trouble for yourselves. Do you always speak kindly to those around you; and do you always try to give them as little trouble as possible?

As for Ada, everybody loved her; and the reason, as I have already stated, was plain: she didn't know any feeling toward others except that of love. Even the dumb animals would come to her side when she appeared. The cat would rub against her, and purr as she sat in her little chair; and when she went out to play among the flowers, would run after her just as you have seen a favourite dog run after his master. She never passed Lion, the watch-dog, that he didn't wag his great tail, or turn his head to look after her; and if she stopped and spoke to or put her hand upon him, his old limbs would quiver with delight, and his face would actually laugh like a human face. And why was this? It was because love prompted Ada

to kind acts towards everything. Love beamed from her innocent countenance, and gave a music to her voice that all ears, even those of dumb animals, were glad to hear. Yes, everything loved Ada, because she was good.

The father of gentle, loving Ada was a rich English lord—a certain class of wealthy and distinguished men in England, as most young readers know, are called lords—and he had a great estate some miles from London, in which were many animals; among them, herds of deer. When Ada was three or four years old, her father went to live on this estate. Around the fine old mansion into which they removed were stately trees, green lawns, and beautiful gardens; and a short distance away, and concealed from view by a thick grove, was the park where roamed the graceful deer.

Under the shade of those old trees, upon the smoothly-shaven lawn, or amid the sweet flowers in the garden, Ada spent many hours every day, one of the happiest of beings alive.

One morning—it was a few weeks after Ada had come to live in this fair and beautiful place—she strayed off a short distance from the house, being lured away by the bright wild flowers that grew thickly all around, and with which she was filling her apron. At last, when her tiny apron would not hold a blossom more without pushing off some other flower, Ada looked up from the ground, and discovered that she was out of sight of her house, and among trees which stood so thickly together that the sky could scarcely be seen overhead, nor the light beyond, when she endeavoured to look between the leafy branches. But Ada did not feel afraid, for she knew no cause for fear. She loved everything, and she felt that everything loved her. There was not any room in her heart for fear.

Still Ada felt too much alone, and she turned and sought to find her way out of the woods and get back again. While yet among the trees, she heard a noise of feet approaching; and turning, she saw an animal that was unlike any she had seen before. It came up close to her, and neither of them felt afraid. It was a fawn, only a few months old. The fawn looked into Ada's face with its dark bright eyes, and when she spoke to it, and laid her hand upon its head, the young creature pressed lovingly against the child.

When Ada found her way out of the woods, and came again upon the green lawn, the young deer was close by her side. As soon as Lion saw the fawn, he gave a loud bark, and came dashing toward the timid creature. But Ada put her arm around its neck, and said,—

“Don't be afraid. Lion won't hurt you. Lion is a good dog.”

And Lion seemed to understand the act of Ada, for he stopped short before he reached them, wagged his tail, and looked curiously at the new companion which Ada had found. First he walked round and round, as if the whole matter was not clear to him. He had chased deer in his time, and did not seem to understand why he was not to sink his great teeth into the tender flank of the gentle creature that had followed his young mistress from the woods. But he soon appeared to get light on this difficult subject, for he came up to be patted by Ada, and did not even growl at the fawn, nor show any disposition to hurt it.

The fawn would not stay in the park after this. Ada's father had it taken back once or twice, but before the day was gone it managed to escape, and came to see its newly-found friend. After this it was permitted to remain; and every day little Ada fed it with her own

hand. When others of the family approached, the timid creature would start away; but when Ada appeared, it came with confidence to her side.

Ada had a brother two years older than she was. He was different from his sister in not having her innocent mind and loving heart. Sometimes he indulged in a cruel disposition, and often he was ill-tempered. When William saw the fawn he was delighted, and tried to make friends with the gentle animal. But the fawn was afraid of him, and when he tried to come near would run away, or come up to Ada. Then, if William put his hand on it to caress it, the fawn would shrink closer to Ada, and tremble. William did not like it because the fawn would not be friends with him, and wondered why it should be afraid of him, and not of Ada. He did not think that it was because Ada was so good, while he let evil tempers come into his heart.

“But how could the fawn know this?” ask my young readers. “The fawn couldn’t see what was in William’s heart.”

No; for if it could have done so, it would have been wiser than a human being. But all good affections, let it be remembered, as well as all evil affections, represent themselves in the face, and picture themselves in the eyes; and there is, besides, a sphere of what is good or evil about every one, according to the heart’s affections—just as the sphere of a rose is around the flower in its odour, showing its quality. Animals, as well as human beings, can read, by a kind of instinct, the good or evil of any one in his face, and perceive, by a mysterious sense, the sphere of good or evil that surrounds him.

You do not clearly understand this, my young reader; nevertheless it is so. If you are good, others will know it at a glance, and *feel* it when you come near them. And the same will be the case if your hearts are evil.

Ada's pet fawn stayed with her many months, and nothing harmed it. The horns began to push forth, like little knobs, from its head; and afterwards it grew up to be a stately deer, and was sent back to the park. Ada often went to see her favourite, which now had a pair of beautiful branching antlers. It always knew her, and would come up to her side and lick her hand when she held it forth.

Such power has love over even a brute animal.





## How to Avoid a Quarrel.

HERE! lend me your knife, Bill; I've left mine in the house," said Edgar Harris to his younger brother. He spoke in a rude voice, and his manner was imperative.

"No, I won't! Go and get your own knife," replied William, in a tone quite as ungracious as that in which the request, or rather command, had been made.

"I don't wish to go into the house. Give me your knife, I say. I only want it for a minute."

"I never lend my knife, nor give it, either," returned William. "Get your own."

"You are the most disobliging fellow I ever saw," retorted Edgar angrily, rising up and going into the house to get his own knife. "Don't ever ask me for a favour, for I'll never grant it."

This very unbrotherly conversation took place just beneath the window near which Mr. Harris, the father of the lads, was seated. He overheard it all, and was grieved, as may be supposed, that his sons should treat each other so unkindly. But he said nothing to them then, nor did he let them know that he heard the language that had passed between them.

In a little while Edgar returned, and as he sat down in the place where he had been seated before, he said,—



“No thanks to you for your old knife! Keep it to yourself, and welcome. I wouldn’t use it now if you were to give it to me.”

“I’m glad you are so independent,” retorted William. “I hope you will always be so.”

And the boys fretted each other for some time.

On the next day, Edgar was building a house with sticks, and William was rolling a hoop. By accident the hoop was turned from its right course, and broke down a part of Edgar’s house. William was just going to say how sorry he was for the accident, and to offer to repair the damage that was done, when his brother, with his face red with passion, cried out,—

“Just see what you have done! If you don’t get away with your hoop, I’ll call father. You did it on purpose.”

“Do go and call him! I’ll go with you,” said William, in a sneering, tantalizing tone. “Come, come along now.”

For a little while the boys stood and growled at each other like two ill-natured dogs, and then Edgar commenced repairing his house, and William went on rolling his hoop again. The latter was strongly tempted to repeat, in earnest, what he had done at first by accident, by way of retaliation upon his brother for his spiteful manner toward him; but, being naturally of a good disposition, and forgiving in his temper, he soon forgot his bad feelings, and enjoyed his play as much as he had done before.

This little circumstance Mr. Harris had also observed.

A day or two afterwards, Edgar came to his father with a complaint against his brother.

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