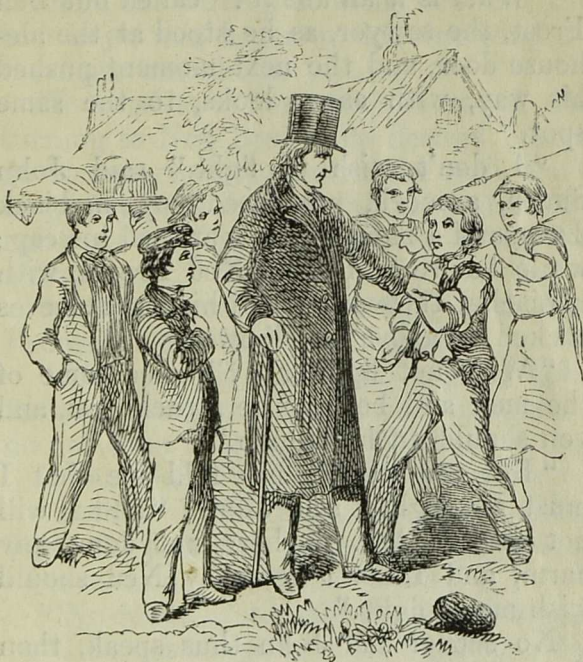
A decorative border made of oak leaves and acorns surrounds the text. The border is composed of several sections: a top section with a central diamond-shaped arrangement of branches and acorns; two vertical sections on the left and right sides; a horizontal section at the bottom; and a bottom-left corner section. The oak leaves are detailed with veins, and the acorns are shown in various orientations.

**ALWAYS
DO RIGHT.**

RELIGIOUS TRACT
SOCIETY:
56, PATERNOSTER ROW;
164, PICCADILLY.

New Short Stories.—1.

ALWAYS DO RIGHT.



“A FIGHT! a fight!” cried Will Racket, the wheelwright’s boy, as he threw down his hammer, and ran up the green lane.

“Fight him! fight him!” shouted Fred

Parker, the baker's apprentice ; at the same time, placing his tray on the ground, he rushed to join a crowd on the village green.

"What is it all about?" called out Ben Frost, the sawyer, as he stood at the ale-house door, and the next moment pushed his way, with eager looks, to the same spot.

"I don't wish to fight," said John Smith, a meek, pale-faced boy, in black dress, and a band of crape around his cap ; while before him stood Ned Brown, with his jacket thrown off, and his shirt sleeves tucked up above his elbows.

"Why not fight him?" cried some of the men and boys : "he struck you, and you should hit him again."

"But my mother has told me that I must not fight," said John ; "and I will not disobey her. I have not done any harm, and I don't see why Ned should wish me to fight."

No sooner did John thus speak, than the crowd began to mock and shout aloud, "He is a big coward, that he is. He is afraid to fight because his mother says he must not ;" and Ned Brown stamped with his foot, and looked fiercer than ever.

Just at this instant, Mr. Morris, the schoolmaster, was drawn by the noise to the place; and quickly making his way through the throng, he stood between the two boys, and began to inquire what all the noise was about.

He soon saw how matters stood, and turning to Ned Brown, he desired him to go at once to his work in the mill, while he gently took John Smith aside from the noisy crowd, that he might ask him a few questions.

“Why would you not fight with Ned Brown?” said the schoolmaster.

“If I were to fight him,” replied John Smith, “perhaps I should hurt him, and I do not want to do him any harm.”

“Very good,” said Mr. Morris.

“And if I did not hurt him,” added John, “I fear that he would hurt me, as he is a stronger boy than I am.”

“No doubt of it,” said the schoolmaster.

“I do not think, sir, that fighting is the right or best way of settling a quarrel.”

“That is quite correct,” added Mr. Morris. “I wish everybody thought as you do; the world would be all the better for it.”

“Then, sir, I would rather be called a coward than do what I know to be wrong.”

“Very good again,” said the schoolmaster, as he laid his hand on the head of the peace-loving boy.

“And more than that, sir, to fight is not only against what my mother has taught me, but also against the commands of our Saviour, who has told us to love one another.”

“That is right,” said Mr. Morris. “I see, John, that you remember last Sunday’s text: ‘Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, *even as God, for Christ’s sake, hath forgiven you.*’* In the fear and love of God your Saviour, always do right.”

“Yes, sir, my mother tells me to keep close to the Bible, and then I shall be kept in the way in which I should go.”

“True, quite true,” continued Mr. Morris. “How ‘shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto accord-

* Ephesians iv. 31, 32.

ing to thy word.'* That holy book will teach you to do right in small things, as well as great things; and to do right, not only when it is easy to do so, but when it seems to be hard."

"I think, sir," said John, "that if I once do a thing that is wrong, I may soon do it again."

"To be sure, John; there is great danger of this. If we begin to sin from fear of being laughed at, there is no knowing where we may end. Like a boy running down hill, we may be unable to stop, and rush on to our ruin. And one word more, John: Never forget that Jesus Christ came into the world, not only to die for our sins on the cross, but to save us from doing wrong, and to teach us how to do right. If you look to him in faith, you will find that he is a Saviour from the *power* of sin as well as from its *guilt*. And if you ask for the help of his Holy Spirit, grace will be given you to forsake what is evil, and to follow that which is good: then you will grow up to be a brave, manly Christian."

John Smith went home with a light and

* Psalm cxix. 9.

ALWAYS DO RIGHT.

happy heart that day; and was not ashamed to tell his mother all that had taken place. When she heard how her son had acted, she thanked God who had enabled him to do right, even when he had to bear with scorn and mockery for so doing.

For some days it was the talk of the rude boys of the village that John Smith was nothing better than a coward, because he had refused to fight Ned Brown; yet it was not long before they had to change their minds on the subject.

One afternoon, as John was going on an errand for his uncle, he came to the old stone bridge, which crosses the river near to Gaffer Wood's, when he heard loud cries of distress. On looking along the bank towards the old mill, where the waters run strongly, he saw a lad struggling in the stream. The unhappy boy had tried in vain to reach the shore, and was now ready to sink.

In a moment John Smith cast off his coat and shoes, and plunged into the water, for he was a good swimmer. He soon reached the drowning lad, and with one hand clasped him firmly by the arm, and with the other struck out for the

shore. With much skill and courage he brought the lad to land; and to his great joy found that he had been the means of saving fighting Ned Brown from an early death.

Ned was not a little touched at the conduct of John Smith, and grateful for being saved from a watery grave. He took his deliverer with both hands, and as the tears fell down his face, thanked him over and over again. Then he asked to be forgiven for having so often spoken unkindly to him, and for so wickedly trying to provoke him to fight.

“You will not strike me again,” said John; “will you, Ned?”

“No,” cried the penitent boy; “and I will take care that no one else does; that I will.”

It was soon reported through the village that John Smith had, at the risk of his own life, saved Ned Brown from being drowned. Whatever had been the opinion before among the young men and boys, there was now no doubt in their minds who had shown true courage. They all agreed that John was a brave boy; and when he passed the cottages, with Ned by his side,

many a kind and civil word was spoken to him both by old and young. Even the wheelwright's boy and the baker's apprentice now received him with much respect, and thought that it was quite plain that a lad might be truly brave at heart, even though he would not fight.

“Let the conduct of John Smith,” said Mr. Morris, just before the village school broke up one day, “be an example to you all. He who dares to obey his parents, and who seeks to fear God, though it draws upon him an ill name, proves that he has a truly brave spirit. While he who is ashamed to walk in an upright course, lest those who are around should mock him, is without true courage. If all people were of John Smith's mind, the world would be much happier than it is. Mind what I say, my boys—and I would say the same to girls also:—ALWAYS DO RIGHT—in all things, in all places, and at all times.”

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