

THE SAD MISTAKE

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The Sad Mistake by American Sunday-School Union

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AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION

**THE SAD
MISTAKE**

The Sad Mistake.



The Warren Family at home.

THE
SAD MISTAKE.



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THE SAD MISTAKE.

CHAPTER I.

PICTURE OF S—— AND A HOME CIRCLE.

A CHAIN of lofty mountains extends along the edge of a large and beautiful river, forming scenery, but rarely surpassed in loveliness. Receding a little from the shore, the hills curve gracefully back to receive a small stream, which comes dashing down its rocky bed,—as if in haste to be swallowed up by the smooth deep current, that seems quietly to await its coming. Just here where a broad meadow once waved its sea of green, now stands the thriving town of S——.

It is one of the old and steady towns of New England. It has increased in population and wealth since the days of the Puritans; and though never attaining the dignity of a city, has yet greater pretensions than a country

village. To be sure you find a pleasant garden, and a rural cottage here and there, such as you seldom see within the limits of the city; but you also find the paved walks, and regular streets, the modern mansion and stylish architecture, to which the simpler tastes of the neighbouring villagers never aspire.

It is, in fact, the metropolis of the region round about. It is here the steamboat receives its passengers for its daily runs up and down the river. It is here that many go to take the cars as they pause for their living freight, in their flight across the State from day to day. In fact, with many, S— is a *great* place. What is done in S—, must be right;—what opinions prevail in S—, must rule the neighbouring places;—what is worn in S—, must be the fashion. The doctors there must know much more than those around; the ministers must be much greater preachers; the lawyers more learned; the goods bought there must be much superior.

But it is rather with some of the inhabitants of S— that we have to do, than with the place. Whatever may be the opinion of others around them, the people there find themselves much like other people in the world. The same hopes and fears, desires and aversions,

which occupy the minds of others—the same toiling industry and frugal economy necessary to gain a livelihood on the part of some—the same lavish expenditure on the part of others—the same anticipations of happiness, and the often dashing of the cup of bliss from the lip, untasted—the tale of love so often told—the sad story of hearts wrung by sorrow and poverty—by sickness and death—by misery and crime—would make the life-picture of homes and hearths in S——, if it could be drawn, so like that of most others, that no one could tell what place had been sitting for its likeness.

But let us leave the general features of the place, and in the study of a few of its inhabitants, see if we may not learn a lesson of some profit.

A few years ago, before all the modern improvements were known in S——, it was a more quiet place than it is now. And in one of its most quiet nooks, was a comfortable and not inelegant house, in which Mr. Warren resided. The finish around the house and little garden betokened taste and a sense of propriety, though not so much of wealth as some others. It was the pleasant abode of a happy family.

Mr. Warren was nearly in his prime. He

was a merchant; and by steady attention to his business had secured for himself and those he loved, many of the comforts and even elegancies of life. He was called a Christian man. His name for honesty and upright dealing was above reproach. His seat in church was always occupied upon the Sabbath, though he was not one of those usually found at the weekly prayer-meeting. In short, Mr. Warren was one among the many persons we are glad to meet,—moral—kind-hearted—good citizens and neighbours,—but still they are known as open professors of Christ, only by their being found at the Lord's table at the season of communion. He seemed to think he had not the requisite command of language to lead in any act of devotion, or to speak a word for his Saviour, either at home or abroad,—though he was not lacking in conversational powers upon other subjects.

Mrs. Warren was an estimable lady. Even the tongue of village gossip could scarcely say any thing against her. Her kindness to the poor and sick was well known, and her influence was felt as a member of society.

Four pleasant and interesting children filled up the family group. At the time to which we refer, Anna, the eldest, was about fourteen