

The Family
Little May's Lesson-Book.
She sits as steadfast as her task;
As mother's other sleeping child;
A foolish word I passed to ask;
She answered me, but never smiled.
From lip, nor brow, nor studious eye,
Could I now win one passing look,
That sign of treason should imply,
To yonder old brown spinning-book.
And as I watch the earnest grace
Of little, tender, dark-eyed May,
Whose foot is foremost in the race,
Whose laugh rings merriest at play;
I pray that she may read aright,
A deeper lesson yet in store;
A lesson learned by heaven's light,
Or not at all for evermore.
I pray that she may never scorn
Trifles that are life's daily food;
Respect towards the humbly born;
The gift of self for other's good;
The kindly look, the gentle tone;
The insight that divines a grief;
The silent sympathy alone,
Whence silence best may speak relief.
Thus, standing upright to the mark
Which measure's highest workmanhood,
In nothing stooping, where 'tis dark,
And might may scarce be understood,
Perchance her lesson may be learned
So well that dying ones may say,
Their love, their hope, their faith was earned
From little, tender, dark-eyed May.
Ranny Susan Wynn.
Mother's Staff.
"Lean on me, mother dear."
"You are not strong enough to bear me, Ernest."
"Yes I am, mother; and if I were a man
I would carry you instead of letting you walk."
"It will do me good to walk, thank you, my boy."
"Well, lean as heavily on my shoulders as
you can. I shall be glad when I am tall enough
for you to take my arm." I earnestly
embraced myself proudly, and looked as much like
a man as he possibly could.
Mrs. Fletcher had been ill. For several weeks
she had not left her bed, and the house had to
be kept quiet still for fear of her being disturbed.
The doctor came to see her every day, and for a
long time she always went away with a very
good face, for she seemed to get worse instead
of better. But at length, when Ernest had
feared and prayed and waited for a long time,
a change took place, and the doctor's face looked
brighter, and he told the nurse that he thought
Mrs. Fletcher would recover now if great care
was taken. She soon told Ernest, for she knew
that he loved his mother, and he was so glad
and thankful that he could not say so often
enough.
Mrs. Fletcher had no daughters, and only one
son. It would have been very sad indeed if he
had been a bad boy. But he was too fond of his
mother for that; he loved her so well that for
her sake he tried to do the right always, and
though that was not the best motive he could
have had, it was one which all boys should feel.
Ernest waited upon his mother as quietly and
tenderly as a girl could have done it. He
brought her fresh spring flowers, primroses and
violets and everything he could find. With his
own pocket-money he bought her some oranges
and grapes, and any nice thing which he fancied
she would like. As soon as she was well enough
to listen he bought a book and sat by her
bedside reading it to her; and when she was tired
he sat quiet still, and did not disturb her. When
he had learned any fresh piece to sing he sang
to his mother; and if anything happened that
he thought she would like to hear he always told
her.
The boys wondered that Ernest did not come
out to play more frequently, but he was quite
happy to stay with his mother.
"You are the best mother in all the world,"
he said, "and I would rather not leave you."
But the very happiest time was when Mrs.
Fletcher was well enough to take a short walk.
As she was still very feeble and weak she asked
Ernest to go with her, and it was then that he
said, "Lean on me, mother."
They did not walk far, but Ernest thought a
good deal. It was so nice to feel his dear
mother leaning upon him that he thanked God
who had spared her, and he made a resolution
which he intended to keep. It was that, whatever
he failed in, he would be his best in all respects,
and he would never be any other than kind and
loving to his mother.
She noticed how quiet he was, and spoke to
him presently.
"What are you thinking of, Ernest?"
"I am thinking that I should like to be
mother's staff as long as I live," he said.
"If you remain as you are now, my son, I think
you will be," said his mother. "I hope that
God will spare you to become a good man, and
to live an upright life, so that your mother may
never have to weep over your wrong doing."
"I hope so too, mother," said Ernest thoughtfully.
This was when he was about ten years old.
When he was twelve his father died. It is a
sad thing to lose one's father, and Ernest felt it
so. But I think it is sadder still for some boys
when the mother dies. Ernest had his mother
left, and as he stood by his father's grave he
thought of the best mother in all the world.
"Dear mother, she has all my life now,"
he said to himself. "I will be all to her. I
will try to make up as much as possible for my
father's loss."
When he went home he found his mother on
the sofa, weeping bitterly.
Ernest went to her, and put his arms around
her, and lifted her head on his shoulder.
"Dear mother, don't cry," he said. "Lean on
me. I will try to be a good son to you always."
As his words comforted his mother, and
made her sorrow the easier to bear. Besides,
he kept his word. He took his mother out when
she wished to go; he stayed at home with her
when she preferred doing so. He saved her as
many steps as he could; he always knew what
she wanted before she asked for it, because he
watched her so anxiously.
She used to say sometimes, "O Ernest, I do
not know what I should do without my son."
When he was fourteen years old another trou-
ble happened to his mother. Nearly all the
money that she had was lost. She had given it
to some one to take care of for her, and through
some carelessness the money was wasted. She
was very much distressed about it.
"I do not know what is to become of us,
and I cannot see what we are to do."
And again Ernest said, "Lean on me, mother
dear."

recommended him, and Ernest had so many
friends to speak good words for him that he had
no difficulty. He became a clerk in an office.
At first, of course, he did not receive much
money, but only a fortnight passed before he
diligent and clever that he can do a man's work,
and, therefore, he shall receive a man's salary."
Think of that! He was able to provide his
mother with the comforts which she had been
used to, and even more. God prospered Ernest
Fletcher because he feared him, and always put
his mother first. Once he had a large sum of
money offered him if he would go abroad. He
thought he would very well like to do so; but
his mother said she did not wish him to go, and
Ernest gave it up directly. But he lost nothing
by it. Whatever he did was successful, and
even when he was quite a young man he was
able to buy a carriage for his mother to ride in.
He was a very good man, and when his mother
grew quite old she died blessing him. As for
Ernest, he lived a great many years and won
the respect and love of all who knew him. Do
you know why? There was one commandment
which he never forgot. "Honour thy father and
thy mother, that may be long in the land,"
which the Lord thy God giveth thee."
London Christian Work.
A Thorn in the Pillow.
How pleasant it is when night comes and
we are weary, to lay our head on a soft pillow
and go sweetly to sleep.
But if often happens that our pillow contains
a thorn! I have just read a paper about a
child who found a thorn in her pillow and it
hurt her very much. Shall I tell you about it?
Well, here is the story:
A little girl went to visit her grandmother,
who lived at some distance from her mother and
she had every thing to make her happy; but
when her grandmother went to look at her eye
she was asleep, she saw tear drops on her eye-
lashes.
"Ah," said the old lady next morning, "you
were a little home-sick last night, my dear."
"Oh, no, grandmother," Mable replied, "I
could never be home-sick here."
It was just so the next night, and the next;
at length grandmother thought, as the child seem-
ed troubled, that she would sit in the next room
until she went to sleep. Presently, although
Mable was tucked up, she began to rustle the
quilt and shake her pillow, and her grand-
mother heard a little sob, so she went to her and
said, "Mable, my child, you have a thorn in your
pillow; what is it?"
Then the little girl hid her face and began to
cry aloud. Her grandmother was very much
troubled. At length Mable answered,
"O, grandmother, when I am alone here I
cannot forget how I said, I won't mother, and I
cannot unsay it; and mother is good and loves
me so much, and—I was so naughty!"
And the tears streamed down the
child's cheeks. Here, then, was the thorn in
her pillow, and she could not withdraw it. And
so it will be, by and by, with the little boy
who is selfish and unkind at home. When he is
away among strangers he will think of the home
of his childhood, and the recollection of some
unkind word or action will be a thorn in his
pillow when he retires at night. And the little
girl who does not care to help her mother now,
will find a thorn in her pillow when that mother
sleeps in the grave.
Temperance.
Drink, but Remember.
If you think it your duty to drink intoxicating
liquor, by all means do so. On no account vio-
late your conscientious convictions, but while
you raise the cup to your lips, remember that
this draught represents the blood of a starving
brother; for the food of at least 6,000,000 per-
sons is yearly grasped by the malster and the
distiller, and its nourishment destroyed.
Remember that so long as you are in health
the liquors are unnecessary; 2,000 million men
have asserted it, and hundreds of thousands of
testifiers have proved it.
Remember that most persons, who not as you
do, injure their health, and injure their lives
by so doing.
Remember that drunkenness alone, but
drinking, fills our jails, our penitentiaries, our
poor houses, and our lunatic asylums; employs
our convicts and our hanged men; works mis-
chief incalculable on all ranks and both sexes,
of which no human institution knows cognisance.
Remember that drinking retards education, in-
dustry, and every branch of political and social
improvement.
Remember that multitudes yearly die a drunk-
ard's death, and go to meet a drunkard's doom.
Remember that every drunkard once tried to
follow the example you set, and, on trial, fell
from his slippery ground into the whirlpool of
intemperance.
Remember that if you sanction the custom,
you are answerable for its fruits.
Remember that the weak and tempted one
look to you, and that, under God, it depends
upon you whether they be drunkards or sober
men.
Remember that "to him who knoweth to do
good, and doeth not it, to him is sin, and there
is a wage to him through whom offence com-
eth to the little ones."
Remember that you cannot be neutral, and
there will be a day when you will be unable to
plead ignorance.
Remember that all this weight of responsibility
rests with you as you raise the cup, if you
think it is right, but we envy not your con-
science.
Mrs. SEWELL, in one of her ballads has thus
described a public-house:
"Sir, did you ever walk along a street,
A low back street, at night, where drinkers
meet?
Where the gin-palace turns the night to day,
And public house and beer shop line the way?
Say, did you listen? What air, did you hear?
Our English workmen were enjoying beer.
Did the rude clamor come from happy men?
Or wild boasts, maddened, raging in their den?
You heard the scolding laugh, the oaths, the
strife,
The curses heaped upon a helpless wife;
The wretched harlot's song, the drunkard's roar;
The noisy fiddle, and the rattling floor;
You saw the ragged mother, sick and pale—
You heard the miserable infant's wail—
That was the English workman's happy lot!
That was the music to the poor man's pot!
You heard it? Yes—our workmen must
drink!
Something to make a sober Christian think!"
TEMPERANCE.—Dr. Jewett, the temperance
lecturer says: "We can carry the country with
us, but God have mercy on the cities!" Chris-
tians in the city have special obligations to ac-
tivity in this department of moral reform. They
at least should imitate the example of President
Madison, who (as one of our exchange states)

for the last fifteen years of his life drank even
no wine. If they set the right example, in this
respect, our cities would not furnish, in their
measure, a parallel to the state of things in Lon-
don, where half a million of people are seen go-
ing to the dram shop instead of the church on
Sundays."
Agriculture.
Planting Apple Orchards.
We have long been under the impression,
brought to us merely by observation, that the
trees in our apple orchards are planted too
too distantly apart. Many farmers look upon
the space usually occupied by orchards as so
much waste. They say, we get so little fruit
from the ground taken up by the trees, and we
cannot cultivate the orchards, as we should like,
from injury to the roots, &c., so that we are
forced, on the score of economy, to abandon
apple raising. Now, particularly an orchard
should be an orchard only. Except for grass,
it should be left uncultivated, after the trees
have reached say about four inches in diameter.
We can see no reason why a good crop of
grass should not be continuously produced for
a quarter of a century, without distur-
bance. A top-dressing of manure once in two
or three years, we know, has produced fine
yields of grass annually of two crops. The
trees have little or no influence upon the crop
of grass; indeed, if they possess any, it is in
affording a heavier sward under the trees.
Hence, instead of setting out young orchards
thirty and thirty-five feet apart, regard the
distance to about twenty feet, in the quantity
form, and if at any time the trees should threaten
to become a little crowded, prevent it by
additional pruning. This is our theory.
The leading purpose of an orchard should be
to obtain fruit; next the crop that will do the
least damage to the trees. This is grass.—
Grass, however, will not do any damage to the
apple trees, but the contrary. It keeps the soil
moist and of a uniform temperature—pro-
tecting the roots in summer against heat and
drought, and in winter against the severe effects
of alternate frost and thaw. It also keeps the
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