

A Little Pilgrim

One summer evening, ere the sun went down,
When city men were hastening from the town,
To reach their homes—some near at hand, some far,—
By rapid train, by omnibus or car,—
To be beyond the reach of city's din,—
A tram-car stopp'd, a little girl got in,
A cheery looking girl, scarce four years old;
Although not shy, her manners were not bold;
But all alone! one scarce could understand.
She held a little bundle in her hand—
A tiny handkerchief with corners tied,
But which did not some bread and butter hide;
A satin scarf, so natty and so neat,
Was o'er her shoulders thrown. She took her seat,
And laid her bundle underneath her feet,
And smiling prettily, but yet so calm,
She to the porter said, "May I lie here?"
He answered instantly, "Oh yes, my dear."
And there she seemed inclined to make her stay,
While once again the tram went on its way.
The tall conductor—over six feet high,
Now scanned the travellers with a business eye;
But in that eye was something kind and mild,
That took the notice of the little child.
A little after, and the man went round,
And soon was heard the old familiar sound
Of gathering pence, and clipping tickets too—
The tram was full and he had much to do.
"Your fare, my little girl," at length,
She looked a moment, shook her little head.—
"I have no pennies; don't you know,"
said she,
"My fare is paid, and Jesus paid for me?"
He look'd bewildered—all the people smiled:
"I didn't know; and who is Jesus, child?"
"Why don't you know he once for sinners died,
For little children, and for men beside,
To make us good, and wash us from our sin:
Is this His railway I am travelling in?"
"Don't think it is! I want your fare, you know."
"I told you Jesus paid it long ago:
My mother told me just before she died,
That Jesus paid when he was crucified:
That at the cross his railway did begin,
Which took poor sinners from a world of sin;
My mother said his home was grand and fair;
I want to go and see my mother there—
I want to go to heaven, where Jesus lives,
Won't you go too? My mother said he gives
A loving welcome—shall we not be late?
O let us go before He shuts the gate:
He bids us little children come to him."
The poor conductor's eyes felt rather dim,
He knew not why—he fumbled at his coat.
He felt a substance rising in his throat.
The people listened to the little child,
Some were in tears—the roughest only smiled,
And some one whisper'd as they looked amazed,
"Out of the mouths of babes the Lord is praised."
"I am a pilgrim," said the little thing;
"I'm going to heaven. My mother used to sing
To me of Jesus and his Father's love,
Told me to meet her in his home above,
And so to-day when aunt went out to tea,
And looking out I could not father see,
I got my bundle—blessed my little kit;
I am so hungry—won't you have a bit?
And got my hat, and then I left my home,
A little pilgrim up to heaven to roam:
And then your carriage stopped and I could see
You looked so kind. I saw you beckon me.

I thought you must belong to Jesus' train,
And are you just going home to heaven again?"
The poor conductor only shook his head;
Tears in his eyes—the power of speech had fled.
Had conscience by her prattle roused his fears,
And struck upon the fountain of his tears;
And made his thoughts in sad confusion whirl;
At last he said, "Once I'd a little girl,
I loved her much; she was my little pet,
And with great fondness I remember yet
How much she loved me. But one day she died."
"She's gone to heaven," the little girl replied;
"She gone to Jesus—Jesus paid her fare.
Oh, dear conductor, won't you meet her there?"
The poor conductor now broke fairly down;
He could have borne the harshest look or frown.
But no one laughed; but many sitting by
Beheld the scene with sympathetic eye.
He kissed the child, for she his heart had won.
"I am so sleepy," said the little one,
"If you will let me, I'll lie here and wait
Until your carriage comes to Jesus' gate;
Be sure you wake me up and pull my frock,
And at the gate just give one little knock!
And you'll see Jesus there!" The strong man wept!
I could but think as from the car I stept,
How oft a little one has found the road,
The narrow pathway to that blessed abode;
Through faith in Christ has read its title clear,
While learned men remain in doubt and fear.
A little child! the Lord oft uses such
To break or bend, the stoutest heart to touch,
Then by His Spirit bids the conflict cease,
And guides us once for ever into peace,
And then along the road the news we bear,
We're going to heaven—that Jesus paid our fare!

NAN'S OBJECT-LESSON.

Nan was very critical on a certain summer morning.
"I don't like cream toast. I want some peaches," she moaned.
"But yesterday morning you wished for toast," said the mother. "Jane made this on purpose for you."
"It's burned," said the child.
"Oh, no; only browned the least bit too much."
Nan managed to eat a few mouthfuls, but there was a scowl on her smooth forehead, and her face, that could be very sweet, was decidedly sour.
"She isn't feeling well," thought mamma. "The morning is hot, and she is tired out with school."
This was partly true. But Nan was a robust little body, and easily regained her physical losses. The fact was that she had been petted a great deal, and had come to think her wishes ought to be the law of the household.
After breakfast the seamstress, who was making a frock for Nan, required sewing silk and buttons.
The child was asked to go to the shop for them. "But, mamma, my toe hurts," was the instant excuse. So Miss Gardner was set at something else till Bob should come up from the office and could be sent on the errand.
At dinner time nothing was quite satisfactory. The roast beef was too rare; the pudding sauce too tart. Papa exchanged glances with mamma.
"This must be stopped," he said, but Nan did not understand what they meant. That evening the little girl went up to papa full of enthusiasm about a little drawing she had made. The father scowled in a most unamiable way, and found all the fault possible with it. Nan tried hard to keep back the tears, but finally gave up and went away sobbing.
"How could you?" said mamma

In a day or two there was to be a ride into the country, a lunch with a friend, and a return by moonlight. Nan supposed that she would go as a matter of course. But she soon found out that she was to be left at home.
"It is too much trouble to take you," said papa.
"And your toe," added mamma.
"And the warm weather which you are afraid of," continued papa.
"My toe is better," pleaded Nan.
"But the lunch won't suit your fastidious taste," said papa. "The Browns live very plainly."
Nan ran sobbing to grandma's room. The dear old lady drew the child within her loving arms.
"Do you not see," said the gentle voice, "that your father and mother are trying to show yourself as in a mirror? Papa found fault with your drawing that you might see how very unpleasant it is to be criticised. You took great pains with your little sketch, but mamma takes pains every day in ordering the dinner, and Jane takes pains in cooking it. You wish to have the pleasure of the drive, and the visit; but you do not care to be helpful when help is needed and so give pleasure to others."
The lesson was a very plain one, that even a child could understand. It was hard to see the carriage drive off without her on that bright afternoon; there were tears and sobbing, but the experience was not in vain.
When the father and mother came home that night, they found a subdued, appreciative little girl who was very glad to be talked to and kissed, very pleased with the flowers and bonbons that had been sent to her by the little Browns, and very resolute in her determination to be sunny and satisfied with what came to her instead of sour and complaining.—Examiner.

LIE—NEVER.

Not long ago, on board an English steamer, four days out from Liverpool, a small boy was found hid away behind the cargo. He had neither father nor mother, brother nor sister, friend nor protector, among either passengers or crew. Who was he? Where did he come from? Where going? Only nine years old, the poor little stranger, with ragged clothes, but a beautiful face, full of innocence and truth! Of course he was carried before the first mate.
"How came you to steal a passage on board this ship?" asked the mate sharply.
"My step-father put me in," answered the boy. "He said he could not afford to keep me or pay my fare to Halifax, where my aunt lives. I want to go to my aunt."
The mate did not believe the story. He had often enough been deceived by stowaways. Almost every ship bound to this country finds, one or two days out to sea, men or boys concealed among the cargo, trying to get a passage across the water without paying for it. And this is often troublesome, as well as expensive. The mate suspected some of the sailors had a hand in the little boy's escapade, and he treated him pretty roughly. Day after day he was questioned about his coming, and it was always the same story—nothing less, nothing more. At last the mate got out of patience, as mates will, and, seizing him by the collar, told him unless he confessed the truth, in ten minutes he would hang him at the yard arm. A frightful threat indeed!
Poor child, with not a friend to stand by him! Around were the passengers and sailors of the mid-day watch, and before him the stern first officer, with his watch in his hand, counting the tick, tick of the minutes as they swiftly went. There he stood, pale and sorrowful, his head erect, tears in his eyes; but afraid?—no, not a bit!
Eight minutes were already gone. "Only two minutes more to live," cried the mate. "Speak the truth and save your life, boy."
"May I pray?" asked the child, looking up into the hard man's face.
The officer nodded his head; but said nothing. The brave boy then knelt down on the deck, with clasped hands and eyes turned heavenward, and said the Lord's Prayer, and then prayed the dear

Lord Jesus to take him home to heaven. He could die; but lie—never! All eyes were turned toward him, and some broke from stern hearts.
The mate could hold out no longer. He sprang to the boy, took him in his arms, kissed him, and told him he believed his story, every word of it. A nobler sight never took place on a ship's deck than this—a poor, unfriended child willing to face death for truth's sake.
He could die; but lie—never! God bless him! Yes, God stands by those who stand by Him. And the rest of the voyage, you may well think, he had friends enough. Nobody owned him before; everybody now was ready to do him a kindness. And everybody who reads this will be strengthened to do right, come what will, by the conduct of this dear child.—Sel.

THE CROOKED TREE.

"Such a cross old woman as Mrs. Barnes is! I never would send her jelly or anything else again," said Molly Clapp, setting her basket hard down on the table. "She never even said, 'Thank you,' but 'Set the cup on the table, child, and don't knock over the bottles.' Why don't your mother come herself instead of sending you? I'll be dead one of these days, and then she'll wish she had been more neighbourly." I never want to go there again, and I shouldn't think you would."
"Molly! Molly! came quick and see Mr. Daws straighten the old cherry tree!" called Tom through the window; and old Mrs. Barnes was forgotten as Molly flew over the green to the next yard.
Her mother watched with a good deal of interest the efforts of two stout men as, with ropes, they strove to pull the crooked tree this way and that, but it was of no use.
"It's as crooked as the letter S, and has been for twenty years. You're just twenty years too late, Mr. Daws," said Joe, as he dropped the rope and wiped the sweat from his face.
"Are you sure you haven't begun twenty years too late on tobacco and rum, Joe?" asked Mr. Daws.
"That's a true word, master, and it's as hard to break off with them as it is to make this old tree straight. But I signed the pledge last night, and with God's help I mean to keep it."
"With God's help you may hope to keep it, Joe," responded the master. "Our religion gives every man a chance to reform. No one need despair so long as we have promises of grace to help."
"That's my comfort, sir," said the man, humbly, "but I shall tell the boys to try and not grow crooked at the beginning."
"Mother," said Molly as she stood by the window again at her mother's side, "I know now what is the matter with old Mrs. Barnes. She needn't try to be pleasant and kind now, for she's like the old tree; it's twenty years too late."
"It's never too late, with God's help, to try to do better, but my little girl must begin now to keep back harsh words and unkind thoughts; then she will never have to say, as Joe said about the tree, 'it is twenty years too late.'"
—Child's World.

How many of us have spent weary, wretched hours over our mathematics—and to those to whom figures do not come with ease, what a task it is! There was, however, a young French lad, named Blaise Pascal, whose father had to hide his books so that the boy might not study mathematics too much. At the age of twelve, Pascal rediscovered for himself elementary geometry. At sixteen, he composed a treatise on Conic Sections, and at nineteen he invented a calculating machine to aid his father, who had taken a position in the Treasury Department of the French government. You see this boy could not be kept down, so great were his gifts. Though he died in 1662, before he was forty years old, he lived long enough to become one of the greatest philosophers and scholars of his time; to-day his writings are read all over the world, and he remains one of the most astonishing of the famous men of all times.—Old Heads on Young "Chubbies," by Arthur Hoebel, in the June St. Nicholas.