

In The Play Room.

"Mild or wild we love you, loud or still, child or boy."—SWINBURNE.

(The editor of this department will be pleased to receive letters from young contributors. Contributions such as puzzles, short stories, poems, etc., will be welcomed. Address, Play Room Editor, in care of this paper.)

The Children.

When the lessons and tasks are all ended,
And the school for the day is dismissed,
And the little ones gather around me
To bid me good-night and be kissed;
O! the little white arms that encircle
My neck in a tender embrace;
Oh! the smiles that are halos of heaven,
Shedding sunshine of love on my face.
And when they are gone I sit dreaming
Of my childhood, too lovely to last;
Of love that my heart will remember,
While it wakes to the pulse of the past,
Ere the world and its wickedness made me
A partner of sorrow and sin;
When the glory of God was above me,
And the Glory of Gladness within.
O! my heart grows weak as a woman's
And the fountains of fleeting will glow
When I think of the path steep and stony,
Where the feet of the dear ones must go;
O'er Life's Ocean and rough cruel waters
Of the tempest of fate blowing wild;
O! there's nothing on earth half so holy
As the innocent heart of a child.
There are idols of heart and of households;
There are angels of God in disguise;
His sunlight still sleeps in their tresses;
His glory still gleams in their eyes.
O! those truants from home and from heaven,
They have made me more manly and mild
And I know now how Jesus could liken
The kingdom of God to a child.
I ask not a life for the dear ones,
All radiant as others have done,
But that life may have just enough shadow
To temper the glare of the sun;
I would pray God to guard them from evil
But my prayer would bound back to myself;
Ah! a seraph may pray for a sinner,
But a sinner must pray for himself.
The twig is so easily bended,
I have banished the rule and the rod;
I have taught them the goodness of knowledge,
They have taught me the wisdom of God;
My heart is a dungeon of darkness;
Where I shut them from breaking a rule;
My frown is sufficient correction
My love is the law of the school.
I shall leave the old house in the autumn,
To traverse its threshold no more;
Ah! how I shall sigh for the dear ones
That meet me each morn at the door!
I shall miss the good-night and the kisses,
And the gush of their innocent glee,
The group on the green and the flowers
That they bring every morning to me.
I shall miss them at noon and at even—
Their song in the school and the street;
I shall miss the low hum of their voices,
And the tramp of their delicate feet.
When the lessons and tasks are all ended
And Death says, "The school is dismissed!"
May the little ones gather around me,
To bid me good-night and be kissed.

Answers to Puzzles. (From Last Issue.)

- No. 1. ENIGMA.—A bed.
No. 2. CHARADE.—Palmerston—Palmerston.
No. 3. ENIGMA.—Lay-bell—Label.

Puzzles.

DIAMOND.

A consonant, juice, a gang, warning, to color, a spot or point,
a consonant.

Word Square.

A county in England, a musical instrument, a color, a county in
England.

Charade

My FIRST is an expanse of water.
My SECOND is a vowel.
My THIRD is a fruit we all know,
My WHOLE is a town in India.

Charade.

My FIRST is a masculine name,
My SECOND's the color of war,
My THIRD is ambitious of fame,
And hope shineth therein as a star,
(To guide us o'er life's troubled sea,
To cheer an existence like this;
May it ne'er set for thee or for me,
But guide us to regions of bliss!)

Thus formed, a gentle, winged creature I ween,
May warbling midst gardens and orchards be seen;
And oft, when chill frosts bind the bosom of earth,
He claims our protection, and flies to our hearth.

Diamond.

1. A consonant of hissing sound.
2. An article that's often found.
3. The traveller's stay and good support.
4. What happens oft with casks of port.

5. A poet now comes to our view;
A goodly poet he is too.
6. The farmer's great delight we see.
7. And food for you and food for me.
8. What ne'er with man is thought too stale.
9. A vowel now doth end the tale.

Numerical Charade.

I am composed of 17 letters; my 7, 8, 13, 9, is a habitation;
my 4, 5, 3, 6, 2, 13, 11, 7, is a station for troops; my 13, 5, 2, 7,
9, is a person eminent for piety and virtue; my 10, 5, 9, 14, 6, is
a colorless fluid, and my whole is a well-known general.

DEAR PLAYROOM EDITOR.—This morning papa said I might
write to the editor of the L. P. W. if I liked, and I'm going to do
so now, because papa changes his mind sometimes and he may in
this. I like all your stories, and am very glad when the day brings
you. Sometimes our mails are behind, we have a long way to go
to the post office; so when the weather is bad we have to wait for
a finer day and that leaves you late. When you come we all run
to see who will get you first. I liked so much your story about
"Little Forgetfulness." It is just like some girls and boys too I
am ashamed to say; I often forget things mamma tells me to do,
but I always remember anything for myself, don't you think that it
is selfishness? Mamma says it is, and is always trying to make me
a better boy but it is a hard thing I am afraid. Mamma is so good
to me, she never scolds nor is cross when I forget anything for her,
she talks to me and tells me to try and remember next time, and so
I do. Now, I am going to ask you to write us a little story on
selfishness; I think your story about "Little Forgetfulness" did
me some good and perhaps one about selfishness would too. Very
sincerely yours

STANLEY T.

A Visit to the Fair.

To-day is Fair day, and we were up bright and early for Father
is going to take us to the grounds to spend the day.

We never had a show in our village before; so you will not
wonder at our being curious to see one will you? We have been
looking forward to it all along, and Maria Johnson who has made
a quilt, patched some crazy-work, painted a picture on the largest
pumpkin that grew in their garden, and done a lot of other things
hopes they will give her a good place in the main building,—I
think that is what the city people call the largest room in the place,
—to show off her things.

Then I must tell you what we sent. Mother knitted a pair of
stockings, of the softest red wool, from one of our finest lambs,
and sent some of the best jam she had. Martha sent a wall pocket,
—made of cedar twigs and finished off in plush; and a few fancy
toilet covers, made specially for the show.

Amanda made a quilt,—log cabin I think they called it,—such a
pretty one it was too; then she made some frocks for children, an
apron or two, and sent in a specimen of her writing, because there is to
be a prize given for the one who writes the best, and every body in
the village says our Amanda does; so we coaxed her to send in a
copy.

I'll tell you how she learnt if you don't tell. Well, she went on
a visit to Daytown, to see an aunt of ours, and while she was
there my aunt who was taking lessons in writing, got her to do the
same.

The Professor of penmanship who taught them, said she would
make one of the best pupils he had ever seen; so Amanda made up
her mind and took lessons. Oh! But you should have seen the
lovely letters she sent home to us, just written beautifully, then she
used to put Esq., to father's name, and he liked that, of course it
was a long time before we found out what it meant, but when some
one told Martha and Martha told Father it pleased him the more.

Well, to get back to the Fair again.

Mary Jane sent in a pair of mitts made of green wool, with an
orange stripe up the back of them; Mrs. Doyle said "they were the
finest she ever seen," and I guess they were too; Mary Jane took
a long time to make them, and I think they are to be given to
Mark Wilson after they come from the show; won't he be proud
of them. My! A pair of prize mittens on his hands. Then
Father sent some spring lambs, a colt and a young heifer, one of
the finest. James sent a prize horse "a beautiful beast" farmer
Adams said it was, and some cucumbers and onions.

Senica, my youngest brother would not send anything he is a
lazy sort, and thought it not worth the worry at all, it was jolly
fun for us to put things in the show, besides, all the folks are try-
ing to out-do one another, but I don't think many of them can
beat our Amanda at writing, and mother's yarn the stockings are
knit with is the finest in the village. I did hear that Lucinda
Hall had sent in some of her jam along with some bread and cakes
she had baked, but I don't know how true it is.

Then Aramantha White put up some gherkins, made a cake of
seven storys, covered it with pink and white icing, and sent up a
pail of honey.

Here comes Father! He is ready to start, everyone is getting
into the democrat so I must be off too.

* * * * *

The loveliest time I ever spent in my life I spent at the show yesterday.
Oh! Wasn't our girls proud of our things; we first went all over
the building, and saw everything worth seeing.

I was standing by the table where our articles were, and some
strangers came along,—some of the folks from Cedarville I guess
they were,—and stood to look.

There was our Amanda's wall-pocket and beside it her writing
in a frame.

You ought to have head the folks when they looked at that;
one said "such writing I never seen," another, "if our Tom could

do half as well as that his fortune would be made I know." So I
listened to all the comments, and did not hear one speak against it.

I guess our Amanda will get the prize any way. Every one was
congratulating her and praising her up, even the minister
thought she deserved something.

I saw Mark Wilson looking at the mitts Mary Jane made, I
asked him what was his opinion? And he said he "thought
them real smart they were kind of "ristocratic looking." I
know Mary Jane will feel overjoyed when I give her Mark's opinion
of the mitts.

Little did he think they were for his hands; how surprised he
will be when she presents them to him.

We saw Father's stock among the rest and they looked hand-
some I tell you.

The minister's wife said she thought our folks had been a great
help in every way. They did not know what the show would
have been like, but for the things our girls sent, the Johnson's girls
wasn't half so nice. There were lots and lots of things there,
among which I liked the patched and knitted quilts, mother's
stockings, our Amanda's cedar wall-pocket, some cakes Mrs. Bryor
made, the bread and any amount of fancy work the like of such was
never seen at a village Fair for miles round here.

Well, as I say we had a delightful day, but the time was short,
having to come home by six o'clock.

There were no less than seven democrat loads of people drove
up to our place, and all stayed to supper.

Our girls kind of expected it, but of course we are not sure, any
way the minister's wife said some of them proposed they should
give us a surprise party, and this was a good opportunity; so they
all met and discussed it on the show grounds, and the conclusion
was to have supper and dance at our place.

We were glad they came, our school master brought his two
little girls, so I had them to play with; it would have been kind
of dull for me I think if there had been no one but babies to play
with. The minister's wife's baby was about two years old, and then
there were three other people who brought theirs, but some how I
would rather play with the bigger ones, it seems you can have
more fun.

Oh! The supper was lovely.

The girls and me wished there would be a show every week if
that was the kind of suppers we would get.

Of course we had to wait, but we didn't care for that we knew
there would be lots left, so we just sat out on the verandah, and
talked about what we had seen at the show until the folks in the
dining-room had finished. A long time it was too, we thought
they were never going to come out of that room.

We had our supper at last, and when all were ready the dancing
began, such a time! Our Seneca played his fiddle, and Tom
Amerson played what they call second fiddle, then our Amanda
sometimes played on the organ, (she has not been taking music
very long, but her teacher says she is real smart and quick to learn.)

The dancing had been going on until two o'clock, those who
had brought their babies and a few others had gone home, but the
young folks stayed later, some were beginning to get tired, that I
could see, and the school-master's wife said they must go. I beg-
ged for the girls to stay and keep me company, but she said it was
late; one and another "took the hint" as the saying is and soon
all were gone.

Then of course I had to go to bed I was told long before to go
but I wouldn't, then I had to.

I was sorry when it all ended for every body enjoyed—a visit to
the first Fair our village had.

Our Grandmother's Children.

Were the children of our grandmothers' days very different from
what they are now? To hear the old ladies talk, you would think
there were no little golden-locked girls, whose tongues are never
still, because they always have "somesin" to say, nor any mis-
chievous, fun-loving, little Tom, Dick, or Harry, in those days.

"When my Susan Maria was that child's age, she had pieced
two quilts," says one, peering at five-year old Nellie, through her
golden-bowed glasses.

Poor little Susan Maria! The idea of a little "tot" like that
having to begin such work when every bone in her little body
ached to be at play, while the time and patience required to teach
children such work when so young, that they will learn to do nice-
ly and enjoy when a little older, make it a most tiresome business
altogether.

Another thing I would like to know, why children invariably
use such a shrill tone of voice when speaking to each other? I am
often reminded of the little girl in the Youth's Companion, whose
papa said, "Cannot that child be taught to speak? Her lowest
tone is a perfect shriek."

One may as well say "softly, softly!" to the wind, for all the
effect it has on the sharp little voices. "My children," says
Grandmother, "always held their hands behind them, and would
never touch anything we told them not to." So do mine, until
they get near enough to touch the coveted article, when a pair of
handcuffs would scarcely keep them there.

"When we told them to sit down and be quiet, they always did
so." We sigh, as we look around at the flushed faces of the little
ones, who, from five o'clock in the morning till seven at night,
seem to have no object in life but amusement, and almost wish that
we too had lived when log houses and unplastered walls were "all
the go."

How I have tried to make myself believe that there may be a
difference between the children of the past and the present! But
human nature is so much alike that I have come to the conclusion
that there is really no difference, only that the former are seen from
the enchanted point of distance. The little rogues are entitled to
sympathy. The days are long to them sometimes. Our days are
so much occupied with work that we do not stop to think how
much we might be tempted to kick the furniture, bang the walls,
or ask questions, had we nothing else to do.

But, let me whisper it gently, our little ones are not altogether
bad; they are very kind to their little friends who visit them; they
are particularly careful of table linen or carpets, and if asked to
wait at table go away quietly without even a frown, and if they
have a dose of medicine to take, do so without whining.