



OFF FOR SCHOOL.

"STRETCH IT A LITTLE."

TRUDGING along the slippery street
Two childish figures, with aching feet,
And hands benumbed by the biting cold,
Were rudely jostled by young and old,
Hurrying homeward at close of day
Over the city's broad highway.

Nobody noticed or seemed to care
For the little ragged or shivering pair;
Nobody saw how close they crept
Into the warmth of each gas-jet,
Which flung abroad its mellow light
From gay shop-windows in the night.

"Come under my coat," said little Nell,
As tears ran down Joe's cheeks and fell
On her own thin fingers, stiff with cold.
"Taint very big, but I guess 'twill hold
Both you and me, if I only try
To stretch it a little. So now don't cry."

The garment was small and tattered and thin,
But Joe was lovingly folded in
Close to the heart of Nell, who knew
That stretching the coat for the needs of two
Would double the warmth, and halve the pain
Of the cutting wind and the icy rain.

"Stretch it a little," O girls and boys,
In homes overflowing with comforts and joys;

See how far you can make them reach--
Your helping deeds and your loving speech,
Your gifts of service and gifts of gold,
Let them stretch to households manifold.

LOOK OUT FOR THE VOICE.

YOU often hear boys and girls say words when they are vexed that sound as if made up of a snarl, a whine, or a bark. Such a voice often expresses more than the heart feels. Often even in mirth one gets a voice or tone that is sharp, and it sticks to him through life. Such persons get a sharp voice for home use, and keep their best voice for those they meet elsewhere. I would say to all boys and girls, "Use your guest voice at home." Watch it day-by-day as a pearl of great price, for it will be worth more to you than the best pearl in the sea. A kind voice is a lark's song to a heart and home. Train it to sweet tones now, and it will keep in tune through life.

LITTLE TEACHERS.

MR. DENIS was one of the School Board of the town where he lived. It was his duty to visit all the schools, to hear the boys and girls recite their lessons and to say some good, helpful words to them all.

Every child loved Mr. Denis and was glad to meet him in any place. One day he passed along where a group of little girls were playing school. He stopped to say, "How do you do?" and to smile at their pretty play.

"Little girls," said the good man, "do you know that you are all teachers?"

The children looked at each other and then at him. They shook their heads and said, "No, sir."

"Oh, yes, you all are teachers, and I'll tell you how it is. You all have hands."

Every girl looked at her fingers.

"Your hands are your pupils; you teach

them all the time, and they do just as you tell them to do. You must take care of your hands and not let them tear your books, or strike or take hold of things that are not yours. You must make your hands do right and nice things all the time.

"You all have feet; they too are your pupils. You must look out for your feet and not let them run away from school, walk into bad company, or go anywhere a good teacher would forbid them to go.

"Your eyes too are your pupils; they must look just where you tell them to look. Be careful of your eyes, little girls, that they do not wander round the schoolroom. Never look at things it would be better not to see. They must look on your book and mind what a good teacher bids them.

"Then there is the tongue; and it will need more care than any other pupil. It does not always like to obey, and you must make the rules strict and see that it does not get away from you. Don't let your tongue say careless, or cross, or unkind words. Don't let it say, 'I won't' or 'I don't care,' or anything rude or untrue. Make your tongue say only true and sweet and loving words, and it will be the best pupil you will ever have.

"Don't you see, little girls, how easy one of you is a teacher, and you can make your hands and your feet and your eyes and your tongue do just what you please?"

The children looked at each other again and then at their friend; then they smiled and said, "Yes, sir."

So Mr. Denis smiled back at them in a kind way, said "Good-by," and went on his walk.

THE LITTLE SHUT-IN.

WHAT do I mean by a little shut-in? I mean a little lame child who is obliged to stay all the time in the house, who cannot run out to play as other children do. There are many such sick, lame, suffering little children. Don't you pity them?

Well, this little one I am thinking about now is only seven years-old, and suffers very much. He has a beautiful face, and you would wonder to see how cheerful and patient he is.

And he is very kind-hearted. He heard some one telling his mother one day about a poor woman who had no wood to keep her warm in the winter. What do you think he did? He got a little box and asked every person who came in to put a little money in it to buy wood for this poor woman. He got quite a little sum.

He seems to forget himself in trying to help others, and I think he is happier than many who can run about.