

THE DREAM PEDDLER.

P the streets of Slumber-town
Comes the crier with his bell ;
Calling softly, up and down,
" Dreams to sell ! Dreams to sell !
Will the children choose to buy ?
Such a world of them have I !

" Here are dreams for merry spring,
Fashioned where the blossoms wake ;
Where the fields and meadows ring
With the songs the breezes make ;
Dreams ! dreams ! come and buy ;
Who has merrier dreams than I !

" Here are dreams for summer sleep ;
Fancies light as thistle-spray,
Woven where the fairies keep
Carnival and holiday ;
Dreams ! dreams ! buy and try ;
Who has daintier dreams than I !

" Dreams to sell in Slumber-town !
Sure you'll buy these glowing dreams :
Warp and woof of red and brown
Chosen from the autumn's gloams !
Ah, no peddler far or nigh
Sells such gorgeous dreams as I !

" Here's a dream that winter brought
From his palaces of snow ;
Well his frozen fingers wrought
All its wonders, long ago,
When the stars shone, pure and bright,
On your blessed Christmas night !

On the streets of Slumber-town
Ever sounds a silver bell,
As the crier wanders down
With his curious wares to sell,
Crying softly : " Come and buy !
Who has sweeter dreams than I !"
—Wide Awake.

A "RUM ONE."

" Poke him up, boys ! Poke him up ! He's deader'n a log ! " And the boy who was the ringleader in the troop urged the others on to torment the wretched man who lay prostrate on a cellar-door.

A loud laugh answered his speech, and the group gathered round the drunken man. But just then a bare-headed girl came flying down the street, and with clinched fists and flashing eyes defied the crowd of boys " Let him alone, every one of you ! " she cried. " Jest touch him if you dare ! I'll thrash you every one, if you try it ! "

" Hallo ! what you got to do with it ! " growled one of the larger boys, edging up to the girl. " I'd like to see a girl thrash me, I would ! "

" You will see it, if you don't stand off ! " threatened the girl. " He's my father, that's what I've got to do with it ! Tom Dobbs knows he's my father, and you shan't touch him, if he is drunk ! "

Another big boy laughed a loud, jeering laugh. " Yes, he's your father," he said. " And a rum one he is, too ! Come on, boys ; let the girl alone. We'll find fun round the corner. "

He led the troop away ; while the bare-headed girl, looking after them, said bitterly—O so bitterly for such a child : " Yes, he's a ' rum one,' but not the way you meant, Tom Dobbs. If it wasn't for rum, he wouldn't be here ; I know that as well as anybody. "

She knew that Tom had only used the word as it is used in its " street slang " sense. But alas ! she realized its bitter, bitter truth. Rum had, in reality, made her father what he was—a hanger-on at low saloons, a curse to himself and every one who came near him.

Rum had made her, poor Minnie, a miserable drunkard's child, almost an outcast. Many times, when he had come home in a drunken fury, he had

driven her into the cold streets, and she dared not return until he had fallen asleep.

Many nights she had crouched, wild-eyed and afraid, in porches and deep door-ways, seeking shelter from rain and tempest, gazing, with eager, long-ing gaze, through lighted windows into happy homes, and vainly wondering why she need be so wretched while they were so warm and well clad and joyous.

Ah, poor Minnie ! That one word held the answer—a " rum one"—one of rum's victims ; not a man, but a thing ; a slave to an evil passion, unfit to be called by the names of husband and father, unfit for anything !

Who can mention one single right or duty or privilege for which a drunkard is fit ? No ; a " rum one " lives for but one miserable object—to gratify the dreadful appetite which has made him what he is.

O dear young readers, do all you can to help break down this fearful rum-temple, wherein so many, many thousands of victims—the innocent and heedless, as well as the guilty—are every year sacrificed. Talk against it, work against it, fight against it, pray against it ; and who can tell how far your influence will reach !

Not a great city in our land—alas ! many little ones—but hides thousands of poor children, whose days are spent, not like yours in happy play and healthful study, but wandering from corner to corner, hearing and learning all that is bad in the streets, searching saloons, alleys, cellar-ways, to find the drunken father who should be caring for his children ; coaxing him to the miserable home, and then shrinking and hiding from his cruel blows and fierce anger.

O children, pity these poor little ones, if you cannot pity the drunkard who causes so much misery. Do all you can to aid and rescue them, and never, never add one cruel word, one mocking laugh, to the burden of scorn and shame they already have to bear.

Poor little Minnie ! Worse than fatherless ! Wandering the streets, the jest of rude boys and idle girls, untaught, unloved, uncared for ! Heaven be merciful to her, and the many thousands like her, and bring the day speedily when in all our broad, bright land there shall be no " rum " fathers, no neglected drunkards' children !—*Careful Builders.*

BEAVER KITTENS.

ALL of our readers have some knowledge of the kittens that play so nimbly about our homes, but which one of them has seen a beaver kitten ! In some Indian homes are found some of those cunning little kittens belonging to the beaver family. A gentleman who has seen them in their homes gives the following description of them. He says :

" One dwelling harbours from four to twelve individuals, rarely more, though eighteen or twenty have been noted, all of the same family, but of two generations, representing litters of kittens of two successive years. The young make their appearance usually in May, and are from four to eight in number, five being the average. Queer-looking little fellows they are too, with their heavy heads, big, cutting teeth, flat tails, and fine, mouse-like fur, not yet disfigured by the long, coarse hair so noticeable with adults.

When taken at an early age they are easily domesticated, and are so esteemed as pets in the far West and fur countries that almost every trading-post or camp can exhibit three or four. It is no uncommon occurrence to see one running about an Indian lodge, submitting patiently to the wiles and caprices of the little savages, or joining in their sports, and frequently receiving with the papoose the nourishment from the maternal breast. The cry of the ' kitten,' too, is so exactly like that of an unweaned child that one is readily mistaken for the other by even the initiated. On one occasion I visited a wigwam at Little Traverse, Michigan, for the purpose of viewing a ' real, live, baby beaver.' ' Ho cry all the same as papoose,' remarked the squaw, as she brought the little fellow forward, at the same time giving him an unmerciful pinch that caused him to set up a doleful little wail that, had I not been forewarned, I should certainly have believed to proceed from a minute, black-eyed specimen of an aboriginal infant that, swathed in cloth, beads, and bark, and bound fast, mummy-like, to a board, stood leaning up against the wall. "

WINTER EVENINGS ON THE FARM.

LIVE on the farm would lose half the monotony and dulness of which many, and especially young people, complain if there was a more general understanding of the wonderful processes of nature and the history of the common things that are continually under observation. The hard, wearying toil of the farm need not necessarily rob a man of all the pleasures of superior knowledge. It is always best to have something good and useful to think about while the hands are employed. More study and reading of good books on the farm would after a while drive out the pestilent gossip, and petty backbiting, the bane of so many country neighbourhoods.

Gossip is almost a sure sign of intellectual barrenness, of empty minds, if not of empty heads. Give men and women something that calls for earnest thinking and they will cease to belabor each other with their tongues.

Debating clubs, lyceums, spelling schools, and other gatherings where mental improvement is the chief aim, are worthy of support and encouragement. In country neighbourhoods the school-houses may generally be depended upon for meetings of this kind. A debating club conducted on business principles is one of the very best means for stirring up the minds of young and old, and stimulating to independent study and research. Not the least among the benefits of such meetings are the promotion of pleasant social intercourse and an increase of neighbourly kindness and consideration.

MY SAVIOUR.

THE sun's rays stole through the windows of the school-house, gently lighting on many a fair face. It was Sunday, and the children were listening again to the old story of the Saviour's love. With tears in eye and voice, a lady was picturing something of what our dear Lord suffered and bore for us.

The lesson had been brought to a close, school dismissed, teacher and

scholar passed forth into the June air, when the lady caught sight of one little loiterer all alone—and silently weeping.

" Jessie, what is the matter ! " she asked.

" I never felt before what my Saviour went through for me ! Oh, what can I do for him ! "

There was a moment's silence. The lady knew the wayward heart to which she spoke.

" Jessie, darling," she said, " you can try to be the very best girl in all the class and school for his sake. "

That week the lady was called away for some months to a distant county. On her return she was speaking with the school-mistress, when the latter, knowing nothing of that Sunday afternoon's talk with the child, said, suddenly—

" I can't think what has come over Jessie Brown. She used to be so tractable, now she is the best child in all the school. "

Little reader this is true. Resting on and trusting in Jesus' love did indeed work this great change in Jessie's life. Has it done the same in yours ? Have you ever said, like her, " What can I do for my Saviour, who did so much for me ! " Ah ! perhaps not—perhaps the reason is, you do not yet know or love him, though he loves you, and is calling you to himself. Will you obey his call ! " Hear, and your soul shall live ! "

THE BOY'S BARLEY CAKES.

LITTLE did that Jewish mother think, as she ground the grain, and mixed the dough, and heated the oven, and gave the five cakes to her little boy as he started for the great outdoor meeting, that her little cakes, passing through the hands of the Prophet of Nazareth, were to feed the five thousand men who gathered to hear his words of grace. And little do we think, when we are doing some trifling service, how great a blessing God may pronounce upon the labour of our hands. What a story that boy had to tell his mother when he went home from the meeting ; and what stories will be told to us when we reach the eternal home, and learn that our feeble service, our faintly-spoken words, our little things done in the Master's name, have been crowned with a blessing that shall abide throughout eternity. Let us do our work heartily for God, and pray that he may accept the labour of our hands, and crown it with his eternal benediction.—*Little Christian.*

READING FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

WE are certain that many parents are very neglectful of their children as to the matter of reading. It requires effort to prevail upon children to read good books, and because of this fact the subject is not urged upon their attention, and they are allowed to fall into reading habits which are positively pernicious, or are permitted to grow up with none at all. And as they do not learn to draw pleasure from good books, they seek it in other directions, the theatre, the dance, the card and wine table, and to young men the billiard saloon and other resorts more questionable still, present attractions which take the young people away from home and subject them to influences which are dangerous and often destructive.