

A BED-TIME SONG.

SWAY to and fro in the twilight gray,
This is the ferry for Shadowtown;
It always sails at the end of day,
Just as the darkness is closing down.

Rest, little head, on my shoulder, so;
A sleepy kiss is the only fare;
Drifting away from the world we go,
Baby and I in the rocking-chair

See, where the fire-logs glow and spark,
Glimmer the lights of the Shadowland,
The winter rain on the window—hark!
Are ripples lapping upon its strand.

There, where the mirror is glancing dim,
A lake lies shimmering cool and still;
Blossoms are waving above its brim—
Those over there on the window-sill

Rock slow, more slow, in the dusky light;
Silently lower the anchor down.

Dear little passenger say, "Good-night,"
We've reached the harbor of Shadowtown.
—Lillian Dymovor Rice.

SOMETHING TO DECIDE.

SHE was homesick, at least not exactly, though it was her first day at school, but she was thinking. It was almost bed-time, and she dreaded it.

For the first time in her life she must get herself ready for bed in a room with three other girls, strangers to her, and two of them at least laughed and chattered so much that they made her nervous. If she could only slip away to her room before the others, and have a few minutes of quiet! But there was no use in trying for that; the moment the bell rang they were all expected to troop to their rooms.

If the truth must be told, Sophie Baker felt a little like a coward. She did not mind brushing out her lovely hair before the girls, nor getting out her pretty dressing-case and using her ivory-handled tooth-brush, nor even putting on her dainty night-dress with its delicate lace trimmings; the thing that she did not want to do was to kneel down before those girls and pray. She knew there were girls who never did this; she had heard Mollie Andrews, only a few days before she left home, laughing about a girl in school who kept her "baby" habits, and always "said her prayers" before she went to bed. And Mollie Andrews had been in boarding-school for two years and knew how things went. What was to be done? Sophie was the youngest of all the girls, and could not bear to be laughed at, and she "most knew," she said to herself, that none of those girls prayed. Yet

she had never in her life gone to sleep without praying, and it shocked her to think of doing so.

Of course she wouldn't, but could it she slip into bed, cover her head closely, and pray as well as she could on her knees? This was what she asked herself with a beating heart, while the girls buzzed around her, busy with a last glance at their next day's lesson.

Sophie had been very carefully taught, she knew that if she were sick and could not kneel down, God would be as well pleased with her prayer in bed as he would on her knees, but how about creeping into bed and praying because she was ashamed to have others see her?

It made her cheeks glow to think of it.

"I'll never do it," she said at last, decidedly. "I shall kneel down and pray just as usual, even if they all laugh and poke fun at me." After that she felt happier, it was so comfortable to know just what she was going to do.

It took her longer to brush her hair than usual that evening, and the merry voices around her did not quiet the beating of her heart, but at last she dropped on her knees and buried her face in the pillow and tried to pray. It was very still all about her; the girls might be planning some fun, but they did it quietly. A sweet sense of being with Jesus stole into Sophie's heart, and when she arose, the loud beating which it had almost seemed to her the rest could hear was still.

But why were the other girls so quiet? She looked about her, every girl was on her knees.

One by one they arose quietly, with no air about them of having done anything strange or unusual; they kissed one another good-night, their voices just as happy as before, but a little quieter, and very soon the light was out, and they were resting on their pillows.

"I have much people in this city." It was a part of a verse that Sophie had learned not long before, and it floated through her mind as she went to sleep.

Perhaps the Lord Jesus has "much people" in that school where she had foolishly imagined herself the only one who prayed! She did not feel lonely any more, and it seemed to her very silly to have been afraid to pray. What if she had jumped into bed without it, and all the others had knelt? How ashamed she would have felt.—*Pansy.*

THERE is no velvet as soft as a mother's lap, no star so lovely as her smile, no music so melodious as her voice, no rose so fragrant as the memory of her love.

THE CHILD'S CATECHISM

A little girl who had heard a good deal about the catechism once asked if there was not a "kitty chism," for the children. She meant a shorter and simpler form having about the same relation to the catechism that a kitten has to a cat. Now, there is such a beautiful little book, specially prepared for the youngest children. A little bit of it will be given with each Sunday-school lesson, in each number of the SUN-BEAM, and we want every one of our little readers to learn it off by heart and say it first to their mother or father at home, and then to the teacher at school. We hope that parents will help the little folk to learn and say this short lesson, and that each teacher will see that it is not neglected. A good plan will be to have it said by the whole class together at the close of the lesson. It will only take a minute, or less, and, if well learned, will never be forgotten, and will be a great blessing to the children all their lives long.

THE BARBER'S H.

BY QUIZ.

It was in cholera times that a man, sitting in a barber's chair to have his beard taken off, spoke of the cholera.

"It is my opinion," said the barber, as he wiped the lather from his razor, "that the disease is in the hair."

"Then you must be very careful about what brushes you use," replied his customer, thinking that, if the barber was right, he was in danger of getting the disease from a hair brush.

"O," rejoined the barber, "I don't mean the air of the 'ed but the hair of the atmosphere."

The gentleman laughed a quiet little laugh, and went away wondering why the barber had not learned to put his H's where they belonged, and not to trot them out where they were not needed. Perhaps he had been told to mind his P's and Q's, but the schoolmaster had forgotten to tell him to mind his H's.

"READY BEFOREHAND."

"I NEVER saw such a girl. You are always finding something to do. What is it now?" "I'm going to sew a button on my glove." "Why you are not going out, are you?" "O no, I only like to get things ready beforehand." And so this little thing, that had been persisted in by Rosa Hammond until it had become a fixed habit, saved her more trouble than she herself ever had any idea of—more time too. Try it. If you do faithfully, you will never relinquish it for the slipshod "time-enough-when-it's-wanted" way of doing.