



AT THE FIRESIDE.

At nightfall by the firelight's cheer
My little Margaret sits me near,
And begs me tell of things that were
When I was little just like her.

Oh, little lips you touch the spring
Of sweetest sad remembering,
And hearth and heart flash all a glow
With ruddy tints of long ago.

at my father's fireside sit
Youngest of all who circle it,
And beg him tell me what did he
When he was little just like me.

JOHN B. LONG

The Wind Over the Chimney.

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

SEE, the fire is sinking low,
Dusky red the embers glow,
While above them still I cower,
While a moment more I linger,
Though the clock, with lifted finger,
Points beyond the midnight hour.

Sings the blackened log a tune
Learned in some forgotten June,
From a school-boy at his play,
When they both were young together,
Heart of youth and summer weather,
Making all their holiday.

And the night-wind rising, hark!
How above there, in the dark,
In the midnight and the snow,
Ever wilder, fiercer, grander,
Like the trumpets of Iskander,
All the noisy chimneys blow!

Every quivering tongue of flame
Seems to murmur some great name,
Seems to say to me, "Aspire!"
But the night-wind answers, "Hollow
Are the visions that you follow,
Into darkness sinks your fire!"

Then the flicker of the blaze
Gleams on volumes of old days,
Written by masters of the art,
Loud through whose majestic pages
Rolls the melody of ages,
Throb the harp-strings of the heart.

And again the tongues of flame
Start exulting, and exclaim:
"These are prophets, bards, and seers;
In the horoscope of nations;
Like ascendant constellations,
They control the coming year."

But the night-wind cries: "Despair!
Those who walk with feet on air
Leave no long-enduring marks;
At God's forge incandescent
Mighty hammers beat incessant,
These are but the flying sparks.

"Dust are all the hands that wrought;
Books are sepulchres of thought;
The dead laurels of the dead
Rustle for a moment only,
Like the withered leaves in lonely
Churchyards at some passing tread."

Suddenly the flame sinks down;
Sink the rumours of renown;
And alone the night-wind drear
Clamours louder, wilder, vaguer,
"Tis the brand of Meleager
Dying on the hearth-stone here!"

And I answer: "Though it be,
Why should that discomfort me?
No endeavour is in vain;
Its reward is in the doing,
And the rapture of pursuing
Is the prize the vanquished gain."

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, AND EZEKIEL.

B.C. 588.] LESSON IX. [Feb. 28.

JEREMIAH PERSECUTED.

Jer. 37. 11-21. Memory verses, 15-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.

I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.—Jer. 1. 19.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

They that suffer with Christ shall also reign with him.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

Chaldeans—A general name for the people of Babylon. Broken up—Broke up the siege. The land of Benjamin—To his home at Anathoth, in Benjamin. Separate himself—Either to go secretly among the crowds, but better, to secure his

share of the food at his residence, or to take possession of his inheritance. He would need the food in the famine when the Chaldeans returned. In the midst of the people—Great numbers would rush out of the city for various reasons. Thou fallest away—Desertest; art a traitor. The princes—Not the friendly ones in the last lesson. Those were taken captive. But the new ones. Cabins—Vaulted cells belonging to the underground dungeon. Many days—Till after Nebuchadnezzar returned to the siege (see 19), having defeated the Egyptians. Court of the prison—Or guard; above ground, where the guard dwelt. A much more comfortable place than the cell of the dungeon.

Find in this lesson—

1. Several things to avoid.
2. Some things to imitate.

REVIEW EXERCISE.

1. How many times did Nebuchadnezzar besiege Jerusalem? "Three times—several years apart." 2. How could the Israelites have escaped? "By turning from their sins and serving the Lord." 3. What did they do to the faithful Jeremiah? "They beat him and put him in a dungeon." 4. Did this make him change? "No; he kept repeating the same warning to the end."

CATECHISM QUESTION.

9. What have we then to do in repentance?

We must think on our transgressions, confess both our sins and our sinfulness to God, and strive to amend our life by the help of the Holy Spirit.

I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.—Psalm 119. 59.

"LITTLE THINGS."

HERE is a little confession taken from the lips of a little school girl, and set down in her own words:

"I've begun to find such little mean streaks in myself that I'm quite frightened. Guess what I was tempted to do the other day? I was washing the dishes for mamma, and when I got to the tins and kettles I was discouraged, they looked so greasy and black, and I've always been a little vain of my hands.

"I am going to Kitty Merrill's party to-night, and I want to keep my hands nice for that. I'll leave this for mamma; it won't make any difference with her hands, because she can't keep them nice, anyway.

"Then something seemed to say to me: 'Oh, you coward! Oh, you sneak! To be willing to have whiter hands than your mother! Aren't you ashamed?'

"I was ashamed, and I washed the kettles pretty humbly, I can tell you. I felt as if they weren't half as black as I. Since then I've watched all my thoughts, for fear I should grow so wicked mamma won't know me. I've learned pretty thoroughly what the minister means when he talks about the 'little foxes that spoil the grapes of a fine character.'

A GIRL'S BEST FRIEND.

LUCY LARCOM says: There came to me in a letter the other day the sentence: "Mother is so unsympathetic," and I wish that I could reach out to the girl who wrote it and tell her what a mistake she had made. And then I suddenly remembered that it was not one girl, but many who had written this, and that there seemed to be a general misunderstanding about it. Don't you think that some of the fault is with you? Don't you think, that as the days of your life go by, you tell your mother less and less of what happens, until she, of all others, is ignorant of your desires, your com-

panions, your hopes, your disappointments? What shall you do?

Remember that the best friend, the best confidante, is your mother. Have no friend with whom she is not acquainted. Make her interested in what you are doing, and if the trials of her life are many, just remember that to gain sympathy you must give it. Make yourself your mother's companion and friend, then she will be yours. Do nothing that you conceal from her, and never believe for a minute that when you have really made her understand, she will not care for what interests you. Mother is not so much older than you after all. It hasn't been such a long time since she enjoyed just what you do, since life seemed as full of brightness as does yours, since she made as many enquiries and tried to think out as many problems as you do, and once you two can meet on this common ground, be sure that you will have nobody who will as thoroughly sympathize with you as does your mother.

Never, my dear girl, permit yourself to say or write this again; try first to find if the fault is not with you, and take as much care to cultivate the friendship of your mother as that of a stranger, and be very sure that it is a thousand times much better worth the having. That it is a friendship upon which you may always rely, and that it will be that most marvelous of all friendships, one where the thought of you will be first and always.

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