



The Song of the Metro-Gnome.

Hid in his funny, three-cornered home,
Lives the little brown Metro-gnome;
And always when Polly begins to play,
Here's what the Metro-gnome seems to say:
"Tick-tock! Tick-tock!
Poor—little—aching back!
Patient hands, forced to glide
Up and down, inside;
Outside—golden gleams—
Sweet spring sunbeams,
Dull scales—drive her wild
Dear—little—good—child!
Quick, quick! lazy clock!
Tock-tick! Tick-tock!"

But, as Herr Klugmann declares, 'tis clear
Something is wrong with Miss Polly's ear;
For instead of the nonsense that fills her head,
Here's what the Metro-gnome really said:
"Tock-tick! Tock-tick!
Not so slow—that's too quick!
Tiresome child, listen to me,
Each scale is an elfin key,
Guarding close—treasure of song
Till Polly's fingers grow swift and strong.
But oh, when you idle time away,
Being a Metro-gnome doesn't pay!
Wanted: A place in an eight-day clock
—Tick—tock!"

How to Amuse the Children.

To some parents a child's endeavor to "make something" as evinced in his desire for hammer and nails and scissors and glue, is interpreted to mean a spirit of destruction. The little girl in the delightful verse from St. Nicholas, quoted above, put a wrong interpretation on the clock's talk, in much the same way that parents read a child's mind, without first studying its bent.

With a little careful study a mother can direct her child in his seemingly wanton destruction with the scissors.

Mrs. Hughes of Toronto, in an admirable paper on Scissors Work, says:

Every mother knows how to cut the rows of dancing girls and boys, and other things or objects, for her children, and these afford much amusement; but it is much more satisfactory to the child to be helped to get some results from his personal doing.

One simple plan is this: Give the child a strip of paper exactly eight inches long and one inch wide. Show him how to fold it so that the sides match and cut through the crease made, and to continue folding and cutting the sections until the strip is cut into square inches. The eight square inch papers which result from the cutting can then be strung alternately with straws cut in inch lengths, or with soaked peas, beans or loose beads. This necklace can be worn or hung up for ornament. Squares of colored paper, four by four inches, may be used instead of the strips, and cut fold by fold into inch squares.

Another way of using the inch squares of paper is to paste them in a simple symmetrical pattern on a large sheet of contrasting color.

A square four by four inches may be folded and cut, and refolded and cut until it is cut into strips one-half inch wide. The ends of the strips may be lapped over and pasted, making rings, each ring linked through the previous one, making a chain like the dandelion chains which delight the hearts of country children.

The strips can also be pasted on large sheets

to make crude pictures in outline. For example: By pasting one strip vertically on paper, then two others horizontally and near together, touching the other at the top, we have the picture of a flag. Chairs, tables, benches, bird houses, hats, cups, etc., can be made in a similar way.

A half hour spent in guiding the little ones in work is time saved in the end. The spirits of mother and child are strengthened in sympathy, and the child's instinct for activity given an impetus in the right direction. The material need not be expensive, as colored papers are always at hand in some form.

Keep sheets of illustrated papers for the children to cut. Give them large sheets, or a plain scrap-book in which to paste the pictures when cut. Suggest some plan for grouping or organization of the pictures. For example: Make a farm yard page. On it paste groups of fowl, cattle, sheep, the farm dog, etc. Another page may represent the kitchen, and may be furnished from the advertisements in the daily papers. A library, parlor, pantry and nursery may be furnished in the same way.

The most mischievous children are those who have the most force. The tendency to wrongdoing may be overcome, and the force utilized for good without loss, if wisdom, sympathy and patience guide the mothers in dealing with their restless little ones. We can rightly judge of the value and best use of the present moment when we look at it in the light of future as well as present good to our children.

A Mother's Thoughts.

Many little transient ways peculiar to the child should never once be mentioned and they will vanish as suddenly as they appeared, where a constant nagging about the matter may fix them into habits.

We most firmly believe the only punishment that is just or effective is retributive punishment. It is God's way, "as ye sow, so shall ye reap."

During a writing exercise in a schoolroom the teacher was conscious that something wrong was progressing among the children whenever she turned to illustrate upon the blackboard. There was no noise, in fact there was an unusual hush. When she faced the school every child was beautifully busy. She observed, however, one vacant seat. Glancing down the aisle she discovered the boy on all-fours stealing noiselessly along. His name was Jehu. Very pleasantly she said, "Jehu, you prefer that amusement to learning to write? Very well, continue doing it through the lesson period." He continued for a few moments when he dropped upon his face with a sob. "I can't do it any longer, I am so tired!" "Are you, dear child? well get right into your seat. The way of the transgressor is hard, isn't it? I wonder which is happier, these children who have learned their lesson so well, or Jehu who has been 'having a good time.'"

When a child is unusually selfish with his playthings say, "Very well, my little one, if you wish to keep your things all to yourself take them, and go to the shed, or some place alone, and have them all by yourself till dinner time." Children can learn that if they wish companionship, they must sacrifice. We know of one child who was compelled to play in perfect isolation for a whole week, not touching even his mother's chairs, tables, etc., thus playing only with his own till he was sick of loneliness, before he could understand the why of sacrifice. A child feels that such a punishment is just, as he also does when he is careless or destructive with his possessions and they are taken from him for a time. There are times when a real transgression should not be punished. The above mentioned Jehu was clipping through the halls of the school building at lightning speed. His teacher stepped out from an alcove and looked her astonishment whereat he rolled up his eyes and said, "I wasn't runnin', did you think that

was runnin'? That was jus' walkin' fast." He was advised there was danger in using such speed through the halls by whatever name he called it.

This incident reminds me of Bobby's troubles. He came to his mamma in tears and sobbed, "That Jones boy is as mean as he can be, he up and kicked me as hard as he could."

"It was wrong for him to do it," said mamma, "but I hope when my boy gets into trouble he doesn't kick back, how is it?"

"Oh, no," said Bobby, "I didn't kick back, I almost knew he would go to kicking, and to get the start of him I kicked first."—Alfa V. Freeman.

School Lunches.

There is a great reform needed in the lunch taken to school by children. Where there is one extended session with a certain amount of hard work and strained attention, there must be an intermission for rest and recreation. This recess is usually employed by children in eating a lunch, and this lunch is too often made up of some indigestible cake or pastry and not enough staple food. A child should not be starved at the period of growing, and the desire for food is natural, but if this desire or appetite is checked by sweets and cakes and such things as often find their way into the average lunch-basket, then when home is reached, exhaustion is the natural consequence. If parents do not know what kind of food children should have for lunch, then teachers should know and be able to give some hints to parents on this subject.

A Soap Bubble Party.

A popular entertainment for children is a "soap-bubble party." The fluid that is recommended to produce the best results is made from an ounce of white castile soap cut into small pieces and boiled three or four minutes in three-fourths of a pint of water. When the liquid is cool add three-fourths of an ounce of glycerine. Make this preparation the day before your party, and put it in a tightly corked can or bottle. The bubbles made in this way are very brilliant in color. Often tin horns about eight inches long and an inch and an eighth in diameter at the big end are used instead of pipes. They can be made at the tinsmith's at slight expense. A long table covered with an old blanket is a very good place for showing off the bubbles.

Dosing Children.

A baby of my acquaintance, a fretful baby, too, but whose mother did not believe in dosing, and who was raised partly on a bottle, grew and thrived wonderfully, was never sick a day all through the long, hot summer, although he taxed his little mother's strength and patience dreadfully. She has the satisfaction of knowing that she has a perfectly healthy baby, a marvel of strength and beauty; and who, what is better, can never say in later life that stimulants given in his infancy created a desire for stimulants in age.

Still, whole volumes written on this subject would not have any effect on some women, who, like Ephraim of old, are "wedded to their idols" (otherwise their foolish notions), "so let them alone."

Teething children may be relieved of convulsions by being immersed in a warm bath with cold cloths on their heads.

The education of delicate, nervous children, may be neglected until the age of six or seven without danger of duncehood.

Those who teach young children should speak to them properly, not lisping or using silly words, for they can understand sense better than nonsense.