

Children's Department.

Pussy Willow

Before the bluebird wings its way
To northern glade and dell,
There comes a dear and happy day
When buds begin to swell.

Perhaps they see (we know not how)
Some secret, beckoning sign,
For soon on every willow bough
The silvery catkins shine.

By singing streams so lately dumb
The merry children shout
(Oh, joyful news!) "The spring has
come
The pussy-willow's out."

"It will Clear up Presently."

"It will clear up presently!" said little Kate to her brother Frank when they started from home on that wet Sunday morning for their walk of a mile or more across the fields to the Sunday-school.

"I'm afraid it's going to be wet all day," replied Frank rather sulkily.

"Mother's big umbrella will keep us nice and dry," said Kate; "besides, I am sure it will clear up presently!"

But it kept on raining all the way, and the March wind whistled round about the little folks, and every now and then blusteringly shook the big umbrella and almost turned it inside out. Yet Kate kept so very cheerful that Frank soon lost his moody tone, and they both felt so glad that they had not stayed at home when their teacher met them at the school-room door, with a bright "Good-morning; I hardly expected to see you on such a wet day!"

Yes, it is so. A sprinkling of rain, or a few inches of snow, keeps many from the Sunday-school. But when the Christmas party is to be held, and every scholar expects something from the Christmas tree, the wind may blow, the snow may fall, the rain may pit-

eously pelt all day and all night for the matter of that, and yet boys and girls will hurry along to be in time, and the school-room is packed from end to end! All the children are at such times ready to say with little Kate, "It will clear up presently!"

But it didn't clear up on this particular morning of which we are speaking, and when school was over and Kate and Frank walked along the well-worn path to the old church, the rain still came down, and the wind still blew in angry gusts, making the trees sigh and sob as if they seemed to say, "Why can't you leave us alone and let us rest on Sunday of all days in the week?"

Ah! what a difference the wind and the rain made to the congregation that day! The clergymen were there—it was not too wet for them; the bell-ringers were there—it was not too wet for them; the organist was there—it was not too wet for him; the organ-blower was there—it was not too wet for him; the singers (well, nearly all of them) were there—it was not too wet for—well nearly all of them! But the "dearly beloved brethren," oh, how few were there! The big, strong, burly men and youths, who on the week days scorned umbrellas, and were out in all sorts of weather—oh, they could not come out to God's house on this Sunday morning, it was so very wet! Those stalwart heroes would go through fire and water, if needs be, on week days to seek their living—why, they couldn't possibly venture through the rain on this wet Sunday to seek God's blessing in His house! And the women too,—the mothers and sisters who had wraps, and cloaks, and rubbers, and all kinds of warm clothing and contrivances for keeping themselves nice and dry when they went out on wet Saturdays to do their shopping, or on wet Mondays to have a cup of tea and a pleasant chat with their neighbors—had positively nothing at all suitable to protect them from the weather on wet Sundays, and so they stayed at home; yes, and made it a rule to stay home on wet Sundays!

How much better to make it a rule to go to church on wet Sundays. God sends the rain as well as the bright, warm sunshine, and if He sent us one whole year of bright, warm weather, without a single wet day, oh, how those very people who now forsake His house because of the wet Sundays, would grumble and complain of the drought and sigh for the sweet refreshing showers! "God knoweth best," and the showers are of His own good bounty just as much as the sunshine.

"We plough the fields and scatter
The good seed on the land;
But it is fed and watered
By God's almighty hand;
He sends the snow in winter,
The warmth to swell the grain,
The breezes, and the sunshine,
And soft refreshing rain.
All good gifts around us
Are sent from Heaven above;
Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord
For all His love."

Beautiful words! how glorious they sounded at the last harvest festival, and yet how many of those who sang them then stayed at home last Sunday because it was a wet Sunday, and God of His great goodness, had sent the "soft refreshing rain."

No, it is surely time for young and old to turn over a new leaf, and to shake off that God-dishonouring habit of staying at home on wet Sundays.

"She Spoke so Kindly."

Dick Martin was very hungry, and he looked in at the confectioner's window with longing eyes. A white card, inscribed in large letters, published the fact that fresh, hot buns were to be had for twelve cents a dozen. "That's a penny apiece," reckoned Dick. But what was the use of reckoning? They might as well have been twelve cents apiece, for all of his having.

Daisy Lee, tripping lightly down the street to the bakery for her mother just then, caught sight of Dick's pale, pinched, hungry-looking face, and her own saddened for a moment. She had been sent for a dozen of those same hot buns, and in one hand held a dime and two pennies—the money for the buns—and in the other hand a single penny, given her for herself.

Dick watched her enter the store with wistful eyes, and watched the owner as he counted out the buns into a clean, white paper bag. It seemed to the hungry boy as if he could smell their goodness through the window-pane.

"Wouldn't you like one, boy?" asked a sweet voice at his elbow the next moment.

Dick started. He had not heard Daisy step up to him. He blushed and stammered, but his hunger overcame his bashfulness, and he said, "Thank you, miss," and took one. As Daisy saw it disappearing so quickly, it came to her that he must indeed be very hungry to take so large a bun in three bites. She never remembered having been so hungry as that herself, and she thought it must be a dreadful feeling, so she asked:

"Would you like another?"
"Your mother mightn't like your giving 'em away," Dick suggested—he knew his mother would have objected; but then, his mother had so little.

"Oh, no, mamma won't mind, when I tell her how it was. Please take another, and—and—" Daisy's voice faltered—"you can have this too," and she pushed her penny into Dick's hand, and hurried off.

Dick stood as though petrified for a moment, and then he said slowly,—"She's just an angel, that's what she is!" and he devoured the second

Cottolene
A SHORTENING.

Down the street through the busy way
A lady passed on marketing day.
Who, pausing at a grocery store,
Stepped quickly in at the open door.
With bated breath and anxious mien
She queried: "have you COTTOLENE?"

The grocer, leaving off his work,
Interrogated every clerk;
But none up to that time had seen
An article called "COTTOLENE."

"What is it?" said he to the dame,
"That answers to this curious name.
What is it made of? What's its use?
My ignorance you'll please excuse."

"You're not the merchant for my dimes,
I see you're quite behind the times.
For COTTOLENE, I'd have you know,
Is now the thing that's all the go,
An article of high regard;
A healthful substitute for lard.
Its composition pure and clean;
For cooking give me COTTOLENE."

As from his store the lady fled,
The grocer gently scratched his head—
On his next order, first was seen,
"One dozen cases COTTOLENE."

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bun as eagerly as he had done the first, and went on his way, clasping the penny in his hand, and thinking long and gratefully of the little girl who had spoken so kindly to him.

"Did I do right, mamma?" asked Daisy as she told her mother of the circumstance. "I didn't know whether I ought to take the buns or not, but he did look so hungry; and I thought if there wasn't enough left, I could do without any."

And what could the mother do but answer "yes," as she looked down upon her daughter's anxious face.

In doing kind actions, we often accomplish more good than we ever hoped for. When Dick Martin obtained a position as errand-boy that day, he laid it all to the little girl's account, telling his mother, "She spoke so kindly as to put heart into me."

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Rumford Chemical Works, Providence, R.I.

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