

The First Step.

To-NIGHT, as the tender gloaming
Was sinking in evening's gloom,
And only the glow of the fire-light
Brightened the darkening room,
I laughed with the gay heart-gladness
That only to mothers is known,
For the beautiful brown-eyed baby
Took his first step alone!

Hurriedly running to meet him
Came trooping the household band,
Joyous, loving, and eager
To reach him a helping hand,
To watch him with silent rapture,
To cheer him with happy noise,
My one little fair-faced daughter
And four brown romping boys.

Leaving the sheltering arms
That fain would bid him rest
Close to the love and the longing,
Near to the mother's breast:
Wild with laughter and daring,
Looking askance at me,
He stumbled across through the shadows
To rest at his father's knee.

Baby, my dainty darling,
Stepping so brave and bright
With flutter of lace and ribbon
Out of my arms to-night,
Helped in thy pretty ambition
With tenderness blessed to see,
Sheltered, upheld, and protected,
How will the last step be!

See, we are all beside you,
Urging and beckoning on,
Watching lest aught betide you
Till the safe near goal is won.
Guiding the faltering footsteps
That tremble and fear to fall—
How will it be, my darling,
With the last sad step of all!

Nay! Shall I dare to question,
Knowing that One more fond
Than all our tenderest loving
Will guide the weak feet beyond!
And knowing beside, my dearest,
That whenever the summons, 'twill be
But a stumbling step through the shadows,
Then rest—at the Father's knee!

"This Piggy Went to Market."

THIS is a picture of true happiness. It would be difficult to decide whether of the two represents the greater amount of that not over-abundant commodity, HAPPINESS. Now, you look closely at the picture, and say which you think is the happier of the two. Mother is imparting happiness, and the effort reacts upon herself, in that she is the happier for making her little son happy. It is not necessary to enquire whether the child understands about piggy and the market; it is enough that mother is playing with his toes, and saying something which he thinks to be funny and nice. Have you forgotten when you sat in mother's lap, and played "piggy went to market?" Have you forgotten when you sat on your throne, your papa's knee, and played "piggy went to market?" Don't you remember how delighted you were, and said, "more, more." Even now some of you like to see Father and Mother play "piggy went to market," with your little brother's or sister's toes.

Learn one lesson: Try to make others happy. At home, at school, or at play, try to make others happy. If you set your heart upon it, you'll soon find plenty of ways to make others happy, and you'll feel happy and happier in making others happy. Don't trouble about your own happiness, only try to make others happy. Ask Jesus to help you and you'll succeed wonderfully. Some young people, and even some old people, are very anxious to be happy, they are all the time searching after it, searching in vain. The short and sure way to happiness is to try and make others happy.—*Ensign.*

Dreaming and Working.

"I HAVE done at length with dreaming,
Henceforth, O thou sole of mine,
Thou must take up sword and guntlet
In the warfare must divine."

That was what a little girl eleven years old had written in a fair round hand in her diary, on that pleasant summer morning out under the trees.

'Why, Hattie Jordan, what dreadful spelling!' exclaimed her sister's voice behind her. 'You had better stop dreaming, at all events, till you learn how to spell the words, and go to studying your spelling book instead. Why, there are six words wrong there.'

'I wouldn't peek, anyway,' answered Hattie, springing up flushed and angry.

'I really didn't, dearie,' replied wise Agnes, drawing her down to her side, 'I called you twice, but you did not answer. But now tell me, Hattie, what are you going to do in the place of dreaming, for you know you've spent a great deal of time in that?'

'O sister, I want to do everything that's strong and good. Sometimes I think I'll be a great scholar, as Margaret Fuller was, or a writer like Mrs. Stowe, or a lecturer, or something. O Agnes, what would you do first?'

'Well, dear, I think the first thing I would go to the dictionary and study until I could spell every word in that pretty verse of yours correctly, and every day of this vacation I would write out one page of something, and then study it out in the same way, until I could do better. What do you say, for I must go now?'

But Hattie only shrugged her shoulders, and left alone, leaned back against the tree and watched the birds flitting about, and thought of doing great things by-and-by, until the dinner-bell called her in to more practical things.

After dinner Hattie's father, who was a minister, came out on the piazza and asked the little girl to write a note for him, as his right hand was bound up from a very bad cut, and every one else was busy.

'Ask Deacon Conners if he will please send the choir up here,' her father said, for they often practised with his organ. So Hattie wrote, 'Please send the choir up here,' and the note went by her younger brother. And about one hour later, who should come up the steps but Deacon Conners, who was a bookseller, and in his arms several packages.

'I didn't know what kind you wanted, sir, so I brought several,' he said wiping his hot face.

Mr. Jordan looked in surprise at the various styles of paper, and finally said, 'Why, you're very kind, deacon, but I was not needing any paper just now.'

Then the deacon took out Hattie's note, and such a laugh as they had over it sent the poor child in tears to Agnes.

'You will believe me now, dear,' said her sister, 'that if you want to be of any use or help in the world, you must be willing to begin improving just where you see you need it. Singing of doing is not working, dear. Now you know you are a poor speller; just begin there, and that will be one step.'

Then Hattie took her pretty diary and the dictionary, and made those six words right that she had spelt so poorly that morning; but that seemed such a little step towards becoming a great woman.

'I believe I could do better if I had

a verse to go by,' she said to Agnes that night.

'Then here is one for you "By patient continuance in well doing." Six words made right do not seem much to you to-night, but six words every one of the more than three hundred working days in the year makes how many?'

'Most two thousand,' answered Hattie quickly.

'Yes, and if every one of them means, in God's sight, something done so as to make you a wiser and more helpful woman to others, and taking care of the talent he has given you, isn't that worth while, too, darling?'

And Hattie answered very softly, 'Yes;' for she saw then how her life might be like a ladder reaching up to what God wished her to be, and the steps of the ladder would be the patient doing of each little duty or work she found in her way. And right there at the beginning she offered an earnest prayer asking the dear Christ's help. Of course he helped her; and if any of you will look at a true life in just the same way, he will help you, for even the little steps, if there be many of them, take you a long way in time.—*Christian Treasury.*

La Mere Angelique.

BY J. H. ALLEN.

IN the year 1599, there was inducted as novice among the nuns of Port Royal a child eight years old, grave and precocious, second daughter of a celebrated advocate named Arnould, and grandchild of an equally celebrated advocate, Marion. In the view of both father and grandfather, this was simply a convenient way of providing for one of a family of children, which in course of years increased to twenty. To secure for the child the succession to the convent rule, they did not even scruple, a little later, to state her age at least six years more than it was; and, further, to disguise her name by giving, instead, that which she had taken as a sister in the little community. This pious fraud had its effect, not only on the king's good-nature, but also upon the grave dignitaries of the church. At the age of eleven the child Jaqueline Arnould, famous in religious history as La Mere Angelique, became abbess, invested with full authority over the twelve or fifteen young women who then constituted the religious house. Until her death in 1661, at the age of seventy, the story of Port Royal is almost the personal biography of her who was, during all that time, its heart and soul.

For the first few years we may well suppose that it was something like playing in the austerities of convent life. Very quaint and pretty pictures have come down to illustrate this period. A morning call of that gay and gallant king, Henry IV., who, knowing that her father was visiting there, came, curious to see the pious flock under their child shepherdess; the little maid herself, in full ecclesiastical costume, and mounted on high pattens to disguise her youth, at the head of her procession to meet her royal visitor at the gate; the kiss he threw over the garden-wall, next day, as he passed by on a hunt, with his compliments to Madame la petite Abbesse,—these are bright and innocent episodes in the stormy story of the time.

But a great and sudden change occurred, a few years later. The young abbess, not nearly eighteen years of age,

became converted to the most serious and rigid views of the duty of her calling. Gently and kindly, but without an instant's wavering of purpose, inflexible to all temptation and entreaty, she resolved to restore the primitive austerity of the rule of the pious founder, St. Bernard. For one thing this rule demanded that the time of morning prayer should be carried back to two o'clock from the self-indulgent hour of four, and, for another, that all little personal treasures and belongings should be given up for the perfect religious poverty which is the ideal of monastic life. In this, the example of the girl abbess, cheerful and resolute in choosing the hardest task always for herself, early won the day. The crisis of the reform was when, with passionate grief, with tears and swooning, she steadily refused admittance to her own father and brother, hardening herself against their entreaties, anger, and reproach, and would see them only at the little grating that separated the life within from the life without.

The true history of Port Royal dates from the crisis, Wicket Day, September 25, 1609. Just one hundred years and a few days later, early in October, 1709, the malice of the Jesuit party, which for more than half that time had shown a strangely persistent and malignant hostility, had its way. The grounds were laid waste. The sacred buildings were destroyed. Even the graves were dug open and the bodies that had been tenderly laid in them were cast out to be torn by dogs. All was done which insult and wanton desecration could do, to show that the heroic and eventful life of Port Royal was no more.

A Sad Lesson.

As the heavy prison bolts turned on the minister, he looked sadly on the prisoners in their strange garments, and thought with more and more anxiety of his errand. He had come to see a young man of his congregation convicted of forgery. The broken-hearted parents had begged him to visit the prison, hoping the peace of the Gospel might reach even his gloomy cell. As the minister kindly greeted him, the youth scarcely replied, but gazed with a sort of defiance. He began giving the mother's tender message, with the interest all the church felt in his welfare. "Do you know what done it?" "What have I done?" replied the pastor, striving to understand his strange language. "I began the business," returned the youth, speaking very loud, "in your Sunday-school. Don't you remember the Sunday-school fair, when they first set up raffling and hid a gold ring in a loaf of cake! Just for twenty-five cents, too, I got a whole box of little books. I was pleased with my luck, and went in afterwards for chances. Sometimes I gained, and sometimes I lost. Money I must have for lotteries. I was half mad with excitement; and so I used other folk's names, and here I am! Don't let the church come blubbing around me! They may thank themselves! Their raffling was what done it! It ruined me!"

A LITTLE boy, who sat beside a man who had been eating Limburger cheese, turned to his mother and exclaimed: "Mamma, how I wish I was deaf and dumb in my nose!"