

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?

I'm not a grown-up woman ;
I'm only twelve years old ;
But that I have a neighbour,
I never need be told.

I go to church on Sundays,
And hear good people say
That we must love our neighbours,
And help them every day.

I hear it from the pulpit,
And sometimes from the pews ;
But, though I do not know much,
To me th it isn't news.

I've loved my little neighbour,
How long I couldn't tell.
When she is sick, I cheer her,
And help to make her well ;

And when she's poor—that's always—
I give her pretty clothes ;
She likes them—just as I do—
As, by her smiles, she shows.

I give her handsome dolls, too,
All dressed up nice and fine.
Why, if I didn't do it,
I couldn't play with mine !

For I would be unhappy,
In knowing she had none,
And then I would be wishing,
Myself, I hadn't one.

I share with her my pleasures ;
Dear papa says I may ;
But, oh ! it is so pleasant
To give good things away.

Her name—my little neighbour's—
Is just as sweet as she ;
But I'll not let it out now ;
'Twould be unkind in me.

For it might hurt her feelings ;
And wouldn't it be sad
To grieve my little neighbour
Whom I have made so glad ?

To find her—I will tell you—
I haven't far to go,
For she lives 'round the corner,
And that's close by, you know.

Oh ! I have just been thinking
—I wonder if it's so—
That none who want a neighbour
Have very far to go.

—*Rosalie Vanderwater, in N. Y. Independent.*

"NEVER AN ENCOURAGING WORD."

"He never speaks an encouraging word to us," said a servant of Mr. Towne. "Is that so?" "You may try your life out to please him, and he never speaks an encouraging word. It is life under the harrow there, and I've left."

His children cannot leave home. He has two boys. They are sometimes at work in the garden, pulling up weeds, cutting the grass, making martin houses and windmills. They put no heart in their work ; it is dull and spiritless. They are for ever haunted with a furtive fear. Try as they may, and try they do, their father never encourages them. Nothing but a dismal drizzle of fault-finding falls from his lips. A sound scolding, a genuine cuffing when they deserve it and children know they deserve it sometimes like a thunderstorm, purifies the air and make everything the better and brighter. Then the clouds clear away, and the gladdest sunshine follows. That is not Mr. Towne's way. He is never thunder and lightning and over it, not he ; but a perpetual drizzle, damp, dark murky. Nothing pleases, nothing suits him. Putting his eye on his boy is a mark of ill-favour. Every child dreads his gaze, shuns it, is ill at ease, awkward, squirming, until it wriggles out of the way and is gone. There are no glad voices in his presence ; no outspoken, frank, honest utterances ; only hesitation, inconsequence, self-contradiction ; for fear always beclouds the brightest mind and the simplest hearts.

"There is no use telling it before father," the boys say in bringing home a bit of news or a tale of an adventure.

But, worst of all, "There is no use in trying," as they often say. And the disheartenment will presently merge into indifference, possibly into something more active. They will run away. Evil "speaks pleasantly," at least, and many a young person has turned from home and sought other companions for no other reason. The heart, with all its warm impulses, and with them its sense of shortcoming and incompleteness needs enlargement,—must have it in order to grow strong.

"Not one encouraging word from father!" Poor boys! Bridget can leave, they cannot.

Nor can his wife leave. Poor woman! She is a brave woman, too. What a hopeful smile she often wears. It is because she will hear up ; and smile she must, an answering smile to the love of friends, the courtesy of society, the beauty of flower and grass, and the slant sunshine through the trees. But there is no joy within. Home is a joyless spot ; for her most careful housewifery there is never an encouraging word ; for the taste and grace with which she tries to make home attractive, there is never an encouraging word. To her love, her devotion, her painstaking, her sweet solicitudes to please, there is never an encouraging word. The glance of her husband's eye only takes in what happens to offend ; the word of his mouth only expresses what he finds, and those are faults, spots, something forgotten or overlooked. She dreads him, she fears him, she shrinks from him. *There is no freedom or sunshine in his presence.* Perhaps in her yearning woman's heart she has longed for his return, forgetting in his absence the small tyranny of his exacting spirit ; but the thrill of his coming is soon deadened—"no encouraging words" ; and she silently slips out of his sight to swallow her disappointment and heart-breaking alone.

There is a sense of misery in the house which no stranger can detect ; perhaps this is too positively expressed ; it is rather an absence of joy, everything spontaneous and cheerful and glad held in check. A minor tone runs through the family life, depressing to