

Only a Little Sparrow.

I'm only a little sparrow,
A bird of low degree;
My life is of little value,
But 'twas God who gave it me.
He gave me a coat of feathers,
It's very plain, I know,
With never a speck of crimson,
But it was not meant for show.

But it keeps me warm in winter,
And shields me from the rain;
Were it border'd with gold and purple,
Perhaps it would make me vain.
But now that the spring-time's coming,
I'll build me a little nest,
With many a chirp of pleasure,
In the spot I like the best.

I fly through the thickest forest,
I light on many a spray,
I've neither chart nor compass,
Yet I never lose my way.
And fold my wings at twilight,
Wherever I happen to be,
For I know there is someone watching
That no harm may come to me!

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, OCTOBER 20, 1894.

FATHER'S SERMON AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE.

BY SALLIE V. DUBOIS.

"CHILDREN," said father, one morning at the breakfast-table, how many of you would like to help our church-board in building a little church in the West?"

"What for?" said Willie.

And father continued: "You know last summer Mr. Bedine was in Dakota, and he told me yesterday of a little sod-church he visited there. They used a dry-goods box for a pulpit, and the seats were only rough boards. It had been announced that he would preach, and the house was crowded—the greater portion being children who had come with their parents from over the far-spreading prairies. In the midst of the service rain set in, and the roof leaked. He was dismayed, and wondered what the people would do; but they sat quite still, listening to every word that fell from his lips. Mr. Bedine stayed at the parsonage—a little unfinished frame building. When night came, there was no room to accommodate him, so he slept in the little sod church, back of the pulpit-box.

"But why don't they have a better church than that, father?" said Mary.

"Dear, the people are poor, and can only afford the bare necessities of life. Mr. Bedine said the pastor's wife had a can of peaches that had been given her years before, but which she still kept as a curiosity. Bed-quilts were hung up as substitutes for doors; and meat was an almost unknown luxury at the table; yet the people are saving every cent they can

possibly spare in order to build a house where they may worship God.

"Now children," said father, "how many of you are willing to help them in building a church?"

"But, father," said Willie, who was saving all his money to buy a bicycle, and who counted every penny accordingly, "why don't they call on the home-mission board to help them?"

"Ah! Willie," said father, sadly, "if you knew of the demands upon this same board, and how often they are obliged to refuse because they have not the means to comply, you would not ask that question. Now, the church is coming out and is asking the children to help them. How many of you are willing to be little church-builders?"

"Father," said Mary, "may we give you just what we please?"

"Yes, dear, if what you give is your own."

"Then I have just fifty cents to begin with."

With Willie the struggle was hard, and a fierce battle must be fought with self before he could give of his earnings. In ten weeks he had gathered together ten dollars; and, while he loved Jesus and had promised to serve him, yet the very thought of giving away his precious money made him sick at heart.

"Father, I cannot do it!" he said.

"Nor have I asked you to do it, Willie," father answered.

Harry, who had listened to the whole conversation without a word, slipped grandma's Christmas gift—a shining gold dollar—into his father's hand; and baby Nellie stole from her chair, and, with the words, "Me, too, papa," offered her single penny.

Brave, manly Willie, taking from a hidden corner his precious dollars, said: "I could not give them to those boys and girls, father, but I can and will give them to the dear Jesus Christ."

"HE FIND ME."

YAM SING came from China to California, and was brought to know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. When examined before baptism concerning his experience and faith, someone asked him how he found Jesus.

"I no find Jesus at all; he find me," was the answer of the converted; an answer which was more than satisfactory to the questioner, and which showed that he had learned something of the love of him who came to "seek and to save that which was lost." And not only Yam Sing, the Chinaman, but every other happy child of grace can truly say—

"Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the throne of God;
He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed his precious blood.

"Oh, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter
Bind my wandering heart to thee."

SOMETHING A NICE GIRL WILL NOT DO.

SHE will not start off to school in such a hurry that she must stop and tie her shoes along the street.

She will not use her pocket handkerchief to keep her face clean when she ought to use soap and water.

She will write her name in her books and not leave her thumb-marks on them, as people used to do to mark their property before the days of writing.

She will enjoy swinging in the hammock, but not when mother has to wash and wipe the dishes.

She won't almost smother her baby brother with kisses and endearing terms when he comes from mamma's hands neatly dressed and his hair curled, and call him a troublesome thing and push him out of the way when he comes to her crying, his face streaked with dirt, and puts his muddy hands upon her dress.

She will not sharpen her pencil upon her book, nor in her lap, nor upon the carpet, but will go to the waste-basket, or door, or some other place where refuse matter will not be so much out of place,

She won't put on a clean apron to hide a dirty dress, nor clean gloves to hide dirty hands.

She won't leave the stopper out of her cologne or ink bottle, and scold her little sister for upsetting it by pulling at the table cover.

She won't cultivate wrinkles upon her face in the place of smiles.

She won't be always excusing herself for doing and saying disagreeable things by claiming she forgot.

THE GRAIN BESIDE THE RAILROAD TRACK.

STAND here on the railroad embankment. Two tracks are before us. As far as you can see, the right-hand track has a green fringe of grain-stalks, but there is none along the other track. How did it happen? Along one track go the cars grain-loaded and bound for the east. No such freight is in the west-bound cars.

Sowing where we go; sowing whether we intend it or not; and have as little thought about it as a grain-car. Sowing because we must. These are the lessons taught us, and how it should sober everyone!

Every Sunday at church, every prayer, every chapter read in the Bible, every good deed, word and thought—all that is seed.

That boy idling at the corner, who pulls a cigar from his mouth only to drop out an oath, disobeying his parents and neglecting church—he, too, is sowing; but how terrible the harvest will be from such seed! We sow as we go.

GOD KNOWS BEST.

It was raining hard, and little Charlie was looking out of the window and feeling badly about it.

"I hate the rain," Charlie said. "It's always around when I want to play. I wish it would go away and never come back again."

Just then a dear little bird on a tree began to sing merrily.

"Goodness sake!" said Charlie, "you'd better get back into your nest, and pull the bed-clothes over you. How can you sing when it rains so hard?"

"I sing," said the bird, "to see the rain that has come to make the grass grow, and the flowers come out, and the little brooks run. The dear, kind rain."

"I never thought of that," said Charlie. "I expect it is best." God knows what is best.

TAKE A SHEEP.

THERE is a pertinent temperance lesson in the following anecdote. A farmer once employed a young man to labour upon his farm without knowing anything of his habits. All too soon the farmer found that his new hand was addicted to drinking alcoholics; and this habit interfered with his usefulness.

"John," said the farmer to the man, "I'll give ye one o' my best sheep if ye'll give up drinking while ye work for me."

"It's a bargain," declared the man.

A grown son of the farmer, overhearing this agreement, looked up and asked, "Pa, will you give me a sheep, too, if I will not drink?"

"Yes," replied the father; "you may have a sheep."

Then the little boy spoke up and said, "Pa, will you give me a sheep too, if I'll not drink?"

"Yes, son; you shall have a sheep too."

After a moment's pause, the little boy turned to his father and said: "Pa, hadn't you better take a sheep too?"

"I dunno, I dunno," the farmer replied doubtfully; and then suddenly concluded, "I declare, I'll try it and see?"

The old gentleman was heard afterward to declare that he made the best investment of sheep that season he ever made in his life.—Selected.

THE bank of heaven is the only bank we know of these hard times that invites a run upon it.

The Water-Mill.

BY D. G. MITCHELL.

LISTEN to the water-mill, through the live-long day,
How the clicking of its wheels wears the hours away;
Languidly the autumn wind stirs the green-wood leaves;
From the fields the reapers sing, binding up the sheaves;
And a proverb haunts my mind, as a spell is cast—
The mill will never grind with the water that is past.

Autumn winds revive no more leaves that once are shed,
And the sickle cannot reap the corn once gathered;
And the rippling stream flows on, tranquil, deep, and still,
Never gliding back again to the water-mill.
Truly speaks the proverb old, with a meaning vast—
The mill will never grind with the water that is past.

Take the lesson to thyself, loving heart and true;
Golden years are fleeting by; youth is passing too;
Learn to make the most of life, lose no happy day,
Time will never bring thee back chances swept away;
Leave no tender word unsaid; love while love shall last—
The mill will never grind with the water that is past.

Work while yet the daylight shines, man of strength and will,
Never does the streamlet glide useless by the mill;
Wait not till to-morrow's sun beams upon the way,
All that thou canst call thine own lies in thy To-day;
Power, intellect, and health, may not always last—
The mill will never grind with the water that is past.

Oh, the wasted hours of life that have drifted by!
Oh, the good we might have done, lost without a sigh,
Love that we might once have saved by a single word,
Thoughts conceived, but never penned, perishing unheard!
Take the proverb to thy heart, take and hold it fast—
The mill will never grind with the water that is past.

Love thy God and fellow-man, thyself consider last;
For come it will, when thou must scan dark errors of the past;
And when the fight of life is o'er, and earth recedes from view,
And heaven in all its glory shines, 'midst the pure, the good, the true—
Then you'll see more clearly the proverb deep and vast—
The mill will never grind with the water that is past.

A DAY.

THE day is a pyramid, God-built. He uses sixty tiny, distinct blocks, called seconds, and builds them into another block called a minute. He takes sixty of these minute blocks, each containing sixty second blocks, and builds them into an hour block; and then he takes twenty-four of these hour blocks, each containing sixty minute blocks, each of which contains sixty second blocks, and with them completes the pyramid of a day. When we count up all the hour, minute, and second blocks, we find that the Divine Architect has used 24 of the first order, 1,440 of the second order, and 86,400 of the third order—and that his pyramid of a day has 87,864 blocks. We ought to make use of this beautiful pyramid.

ANXIOUS TO AFFILIATE.

A YOUNG Baptist layman, of Washington, D.C., writes "I belong to the E. St. Baptist Church and to the Society of Christian Endeavour, but I think with many others that we ought to train under the Baptist banner."