

cornfield and haystack stood right in its path, and towards those the bright flames were steadily moving. Must they be destroyed? The little family could ill afford to lose corn and hay this fall. And so this brave woman toiled on; fighting the fire across the prairie; fighting it ostentimes at the very border line; mopping it off the burning rails which fenced in the corn and hay. But never giving up, never ceasing, over winning, inch by inch, in the terrible struggle.

Hour after hour the little feet dragged after her. Often she heard their complaints:

"Mamma, I'm so tired. Mamma, Frankie's so cold."

But she had only time to give the little fellow a hasty caress and the word:

"Hold on a little longer, baby boy; mamma's most through."

"Pretty soon: mother, I'm awful hungry. Can't I have something to eat?"

"Not yet, Johnny. We must put out this big fire and save the hay and the corn and the house."

But words could not long pacify them.

"Mamma, I'm so tired. I want to go home; I want to go home."

"Yes, yes, baby boy; mamma knows you are tired. Mamma's tired, too; oh, so tired. But be a good little boy, and we'll soon be going home."

"I am a good little boy, and I want to go home. Come, mamma, I want to go home."

"Mother, I've hurt my foot. Oh, oh. And I'm hungrier than an owl. Can't we go home?"

"No! Johnny, not just yet. There, there, Johnny, be a brave boy and I guess it won't hurt long. Remember, papa wants his little boy to be brave."

"I can't be brave. I'm so hungry."

And then, cold, tired, hungry and hurt, the poor little fellows lay down together, weeping as if their hearts would break.

But the mop never stops, though the mother's heart bleeds for her suffering babes. Stroke follows stroke, and the baffled flames die sullenly away, leaving acres and acres in its track covered with smouldering debris. The sun has gone down. The chills of night have settled around her. Two little boys, all grime and dust, are heavily sleeping. But the mother keeps on. Her task must be done—all done. The stars come out, and the earth grows black. At last the fire is all out. It is a dark, cold night. The woods look gloomy and forbidding, as the lone woman, tired as few women ever are tired, wakes up her sleeping boys, gathers the younger to her bosom, and slowly drags her homeward way.

Yes! her home is still there. The fire has come and gone, and left only blackness and ashes in its wake. Another cannot follow. She has conquered. Her little home and crops are safe.

This tale is true. I knew her long and well who fought that fire. I know and love her still. *I was one of those boys.—Golden Rule.*

"Still alive, Uncle Reuben, I see."

"Yes, sah; yes sah; and I'so gwine to to lib anudder yeah, aiah." "How do you know that?" "Why, sah, I'so nos' allui notias dat when I lib fru do monf of March, I lib fru do whole yeah."

"A picture of the Jesus child Held on his mother's arm. If you will bring your lovely twins, They shall be safe from harm."

And so, ere many days had passed, The mother brought her boys To where the handsome painter lived, Who gave them sweets and toys.

And played with them and fondled them, And so acquaintance made, Till they to come there every day No longer were afraid.

And then each day he painted them As first he saw them stand, One chin up on the folded arms, One resting on the hand.

And made of each an angel-child With wings like little bird: And placed them at the feet of Him Whose story they had heard.

And still though centuries have passed, The glorious picture stands Just as it left, so long ago, The painter Raphael's hands.

And still the fair Italian twins With earnest eyes you see Just as they stood that summer's day Beside their mother's knee.

THE TWINS OF ITALY.

BY MRS. WILLIAM S. CARTER.

TWO years ago, across the sea, Two lovely baby boys Filled a small home with merry glee, With laughter, fun, and noise.

Their young Italian mother sat Beside her door and spun, While by her side her lovely twins Rolled laughing in the sun.

Till, tired at last, they'd leave their play, And by her side recline, While she of little Jesus told, The babe of Palestine.

One day a handsome stranger passed The humble cottage door, And standing at their mother's knee The pretty pair he saw.

Not laughing now, but rapt and still, With calm uplifted eyes, Hearing the oft-repeated tale, With over-fresh surprise.

The stranger heard the story too, And to the mother said: "And will you bring your boys to see A picture I have made?"

"A picture of the Jesus child Held on his mother's arm. If you will bring your lovely twins, They shall be safe from harm."

And so, ere many days had passed, The mother brought her boys To where the handsome painter lived, Who gave them sweets and toys.

And played with them and fondled them, And so acquaintance made, Till they to come there every day No longer were afraid.

And then each day he painted them As first he saw them stand, One chin up on the folded arms, One resting on the hand.

And made of each an angel-child With wings like little bird: And placed them at the feet of Him Whose story they had heard.

And still though centuries have passed, The glorious picture stands Just as it left, so long ago, The painter Raphael's hands.

And still the fair Italian twins With earnest eyes you see Just as they stood that summer's day Beside their mother's knee.

BE BRAVE, BOYS.

HENRY MAAG was a factory boy in Cincinnati. The factory caught fire. Instead of running out to save himself

he ran upstairs to tell the girls on the fourth floor. The stairways were already filled with smoke, and in going down, after giving the alarm to the girls, he lost his way. Instead of leaving by the main floor he went down into the cellar. Thence there was no escape. There his dead body was found the following day. It was in a kneeling posture, and his hands were clasped. He was a brave boy.

A train on the Cincinnati railroad was running thirty or forty miles an hour. The fireman threw open the door of the furnace to throw in coal, and the flames burst out with a tremendous roar. They caught in the woodwork and enveloped the engineer. He could have jumped from the engine and saved his life. But if he had the train would have rushed on, and the flames would have rushed back and burned the passengers. He would not desert his post. He seized the lever, reversed the engine, and stood still among the flames until the train was stopped. The lives of all the passengers were saved, but he was so badly

burned that he died in a few hours. He was a martyr to his duty. He was a brave man.

One night a fire broke out in a tenement house in New York city. A family who lived in the fourth storey escaped to the street, but in the terror of the moment left the baby behind. The baby's older brother, a little boy of twelve, bravely mounted, through smoke and flame, the three flights of stairs, not knowing whether he should be able to get back or not. He found the baby, caught it up in his arms, and brought it in safety down. He saved the baby and was saved himself, but he was so badly burned that he had to be carried to the hospital to be nursed and taken care of. He was a brave boy. He was willing to suffer for the sake of his baby sister.

A little boy and girl were playing by a bonfire. The girl was sitting before the fire when somehow her apron of cotton caught fire and began to blaze upon her. She screamed with terror. The little brother did not scream or run for help; he caught hold of the blazing apron and tore it off her, and threw it upon the ground and trampled the flames out. He carried the scar of the burns on his hands for many days. It took a brave boy to do that; a boy who was willing to suffer to save his sister.

At the time of the gold fever in California a man went from England to the diggings, and after a while sent money for his wife and child to follow him. While on the voyage a fire broke out on the ship. With their utmost efforts the sailors could not extinguish it. The boats were got out; the strong pushed into them, and the weak were left to their fate. As the last boat was pushing off this mother pleaded for her boy. The sailors said there was not room for both; they would take one. The mother kissed her son, handed him over the side of the vessel, and gave him this message to his father: "Tell him," she said, "if you live to see him, that I died to save you." He escaped; she died. She was willing to die to save another. She was a brave woman.

This was the very spirit of Jesus Christ, who suffered that he might make others happy, and died that he might make others live. Be brave, boys! You cannot be like Christ unless you are brave; unless you are willing to suffer for the sake of others.

"In the world's broad field of battle In the bivouac of life, Be not like dumb, driven cattle; Be a hero in the strife."

PHYSICAL TRAINING.

M. R. J. L. HUGHES, Inspector of Public Schools, Toronto, in a lecture on "Physical Training" before the Central Circle of the Chatauqua Literary Society at Shaftesbury Hall, said parents should avoid giving the little folks too much work to do, for while they were young their bones were soft and easily bent. For the same reason they should not let them keep in any position that would be apt to bend their spinal column, for no one could be strong unless that part of their body was perfectly straight. Ladies should not allow their children to wear tight clothes when they were young and growing, and they should make their boys hold up their heads. He thought

that every time they could get a boy to hold up his head better they made him a better boy morally. They should never work or exercise too soon after eating, and they should not exercise immediately before eating nor too soon after rising in the mornings. They should exercise in the open air, and light exercise continued for some length of time was better than violent exercise. Work when done at night was more exhausting than work done in the daytime. He thought girls should exercise just as much as boys, and they should be trained just as boys were until they were fourteen.

AT THE PAWN-SHOP DOOR.

IN the Winter morning early, when only a few were astir, And the shutters were up at the windows, and the snow lay white in the streets, As the wheels of travel and traffic were beginning to whiz and whirl, And the sunshine drove the shadows like ghosts from their dark retreats, From out the tenement-houses, from cellars so cold and damp That the humid blossoms of death gleam whitely on wall and floor, The watchful sentinels stole away from the waking camp. And shivering with cold, and hunger, appeared at the pawn-shop door.

There was one in her widow's weeds who had striven from day to day To keep her children in comfort, with plenty of food to eat, But the rent would be due to-morrow, she'd not the money to pay, And oh, the disgrace and horror of being turned into the street! She looked about in her anguish for something that she could spare From her tenderly hoarded treasures—a scanty yet precious store— And bearing away the jewel that proudly she used to wear, In the dust of a winter morning she stood at the pawn-shop door. There were others who gathered round her, whose faces too well betrayed The shrine at which they had worshipped, the vice that had bitten in Through the fibre of all their being, till unblushingly they displayed The tokens of their enslavement, the taints and traces of sin. There are the regular comers, by the demon of drunk accursed, The lazy and tattering "bummers," albeit of breadth and brawn, Who are driven at early morning by the scourge of a terrible thirst— Ah! little have they to hope for, whose souls are already in pawn!

But there outside of the group, with fingers aching and red, A little boy with a bundle slips into a vacant place; There are no shoes on his feet, not much of a cap on his head, And the great big tears run over the shrunken and careworn face. He is hungry and cold and wretched; there is no fire on the hearth, Not a bit of bread in the cupboard, nor even a scrap of meat; And the little brothers and sisters are strangers to joy and mirth, When they're pinched by the cold of Winter, and haven't enough to eat. Ah! sad enough is the picture, and little we dream or know Of the arctic storms encountered, the anguish and sore distress Of many we daily meet in our journeying to and fro, Whom we never have thought to pity, and never have cared to bless. And driven before the wind of a merciless cruel fate, Like vessels shorn of their sails, and urged to a rocky shore, Bereft of their early hopes, and swept from their high estate, Pitiful wrecks! they're stranded close to the pawn-shop door.

—Harper's Weekly.

JOSEPH BILLINGS has made his success by throwing a peculiar spell over the public.