

I see." "No, Lil is not my sweetheart; she is my sick sister," said the boy, as his eyes flashed and his dirty chin quivered. "Lil's been sick for a long time, an' lately she talks of nothin' but flowers an' birds, mother told me this mornin' that Lil would die b-b-before the birds and flowers came back."

The boy burst into tears. "Come with me to the florist's, and your sister will have a bouquet." The little fellow was soon bounding home with his treasure. Next day he appeared, and said, "I came to thank you, sir, for Lil. That bouquet done her so much good, and she hugged and hugged it till she set herself a-coughing again. She says she will come bime-by and work for you, soon's she gets well." An order was sent to the florist to give the boy every other day a bouquet for Lil.

It was only the day before yesterday that the boot-black appeared again. He stepped inside the office door and said: "Thank you sir, but Lil—Lil (tears were streaming from his eyes) won't—need—the flowers any more." He went quickly away, but his brief words had told the story. Lil won't need the flowers any more, but they will grow above her and the birds will sing around her just the same.—*Detroit Free Press.*

AUNT ABBY'S WINGS.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

"Well, children," the father spoke slowly,
As one who has bad news to tell,
Looking 'round on the half-score of youngsters
And 'round at his help-meet as well,

"It appears Uncle Abram left nothing,
He died in the West a poor man;
Can we make a warm place for Aunt Abby?
Mother Ruth, do you think, dear, we can?"

Then the house-mother, shutting down softly
Some housekeeper's doubts out of sight,
Giving up in her heart the big closet,
The "spare room" draped newly in white.

Beating back all the questions she queried,
If Abby would worry at noise?
Was she nervous, or full of queer notions?
Would she lecture and scold the two boys?

Still answered, "We'll welcome Aunt Abby,
Won't we children?" as brave as could be:
And Jotham said softly, "God bless her,
I knew very well how 'twould be."

So she came with an October sunset,
(And the stage) to the wide open door;
A meek little form, clad in mourning,
A waif from Death's desolate shore.

You never would guess that an angel
Could come in a stage—without wings—
But the household of Jotham will tell you
'Tis one of life's possible things.

When the fever came stealthily creeping,
And touched, save herself, ev'ry one,
Did Abby need wings to proclaim her
A blessing as bright as the sun?

Didn't she hold the mother's head drooping?
Didn't she rock the baby to rest?
Didn't she kiss the boys ev'ry morning?
And cuddle Kit up on her breast?

And when the sad season was over,
And health came among them to stay,
When the circle at prayers rounded perfect,
And Jotham could say, "Let us pray."

Giving true, hearty thanks for all mercies
By which the dark hours had been blest,
Ruth whispered "Amen," while he counted
The chiefest and dearest their guest.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Vesper Prayer.

"If we die" so pray the children,
And the mother's head droops low,
(One from out the fold is sleeping
Deep beneath the winter's snow)—
"Take our souls"—and past the casement
Flits a gleam of crystal light,
Like the trailing of his garments
Walking evermore in light.

Little souls that stand expectant,
Listen at the gates of life;
Hearing far away the murmur
Of the tumult and the strife.
We, who fight beneath the banners,
Meeting ranks of foemen there,
Find a deeper broader meaning
In a simple vesper prayer

When our hands shall grasp the standard
Which to-day you watch from far,
When your deeds shall shape the conflict
In this universal war,
Pray to Him, the God of battles,
Whose strong eye can never sleep,
In the warning of temptation
Firm and true your souls to keep.

When the combat ends, and slowly
Clears the smoke from out the skies.
Then far down the purple distance
All the noise of battle dies.
When the last night's solemn shadows
Settle down on you and me,
May the love that never faileth
Take our souls eternally.

A Street Scene in Montreal.

Early the other morning a strong, ragged young fellow evidently of late importation, was seen sitting on the door step of the Bonaventure building near the *Witness* office. A Scotchman rushing past, stops abruptly in front of him. "What's up," says he, "that you're sitting idle at this time of day." Ragged one—"I'm waiting for my mate; he's getting shaved i' yon shop." "An' when he comes out what are you goin' to do." "The emigration man wants to send us tae a railway past o' Lake Superior. We're just out from England." "You're no English, anyway." "No, I'm Scotch, and just landed here frae Leith." "Do you drink?" "Hoot, sic a question! Na, I dinna drink, tho' I can tak' a gill at a time." "Is't no whiskey that put that fringe at the fit o' yer breeks, and tore the buttons frae your vest, and sent you out without a collar to your shirt? Man alive, I could tell your history the instant I clapped eyes on ye. How auld are ye?" "I'm no twenty, but I look a sight aulder." "What's yer name?" "You're fond of speering. My name's John May, frae the town o' Dundee. Ony thing meer ye would like to ken?" "Look here, John, how many souls do you have?" "Now you're laghan at me, ye ken fine na body has only a soul." "Yes, I ken that, and what I want to say is that if you dinna gie o'er drinking whiskey as sure's death ye'll lose yours." "Na; fear, do ye think I have na read the Bible?" "An' what does it tell you about drink." "I dinna mind, its a gey while since I read it, but I believe every word o' it." "The devils also believe and tremble." "Y'er no gain to lippen me to the devil I hope." "No dear boy, I don't. God forbid, but I want to impress upon you that unless you possess such a belief in the Word of God, and such a grip of Jesus Christ by faith, as will lead you to abandon your cups, depend upon it whiskey will rob you of your soul." "Weel it's real kind o' you to speak to a chap that way. You may be right, I'll think about it, but there's my mate, as clean as a whistle, so I maun go, but if a' the Scotch folk here are like you you'll mak it gey het for the whiskey men."

They shake hands and go, one east the other west.—*Witness.*