



Boys and Girls

WHERE'S MOTHER?

Bursting in from school or play,
This is what the children say,
Trooping crowding, big and small,
On the threshold, in the hall—
Joining in the constant cry,
Ever as the days go by:
"Where's mother?"

From the weary bed of pain,
This same question comes again;
From the boy with sparkling eyes,
Bearing home his earliest prize;
From the bronzed and bearded son,
Perils past and honours won:
"Where's mother?"

Burdened with a lonely task,
One day we may vainly ask
For the comfort of her face,
For the rest of her embrace;
Let us love her while we may,
Well for us that we can say:
"Where's mother?"

Mother, with untiring hands,
At the post of duty stands;
Patient, seeking not her own,
Anxious for the good alone
Of her children, as they cry,
Ever as the days go by:
"Where's mother?"

RUDYARD KIPLING.

All boys and girls who are old enough to read know that the famous writer, Rudyard Kipling, believes in God and supports the Church with all his power because of the good work it is doing.

Almost everyone has heard the beautiful hymn, called the Recessional (No. 357), in which he calls upon people to remember that all power is of God, and that there is something better than worldly pomp and glory and so-called military might. He says:—

"The tumult and the shouting dies,
The captains and the kings depart;
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart."

Another hymn by this author is No. 696. (Of course, I am speaking of the Book of Common Praise, which is the Hymn Book of the Church of England in Canada.) This is a children's hymn. In the third verse he says:—

"Teach us to rule ourselves alway,
Controlled and cleanly, night and day,
That we may bring, if need arise,
No maimed or worthless sacrifice."

Many other Christian expressions are to be found in his writings, which breathe the spirit of service from his first line of poetry to his last line of prose.

Speaking at Winchester the other day to American soldiers, Mr. Kipling said:—

"This is the first time since creation that all the world has been obliged to unite for the purpose of crushing the Devil. You remember, before the war, that one of our easy theories was that the Devil was almost extinct. We find now that the Devil is very much alive, and better at quoting Scripture for his own ends than most honest men."

This man talks just like a minister, doesn't he? He tells people not to forget God, to be kind, and to live pure lives. That is just what mothers tell their children, too, isn't it? In his speech to the Americans he speaks of how necessary it is to crush the Devil.

"I notice," he says, "that the Devil is better at quoting Scripture for his own ends than most honest people."

Children who want to do something to help win this great war and to make the world a whole lot better can do so by reading the Bible and learning portions by heart. May the next generation be able to quote Scripture "to beat the Devil," as, when people can do so, that will be the beginning of the reign of peace and goodwill!

Joseph Freeman Tupper.

THE SLAVERY OF A BAD HABIT.

Thomas de Quincey was one of the most brilliant writers who ever lived. He was a man of extraordinary genius. He has left us twenty-four volumes of writings which abound in exquisite poetic thought and in magnificent English style. And yet this gifted man was the slave of a drug. It was in 1804, at the age of nineteen, that De Quincey first began taking opium to ease rheumatic pains in the face and head. He made the fatal mistake so many young men make when they take a drink because they have a chill or must brace up for some great exertion. De Quincey thought he could stop his pain for a few times with opium, and then he could quit at any time. But he soon weakened his will, and then he could not quit. This dangerous drug was recommended to him by a fellow-student at Oxford. When he first entered that druggist's shop in Oxford, he began to wind about himself the first threads of a coil which grew thicker and stronger every year, and which he was never able wholly to break with the most gigantic efforts. The slavery of a bad habit increases very rapidly. He began with a small dose at first, to relieve his physical suffering, and the habit grew so powerful that by the year 1816, or when he was thirty-one, he was taking 8,000 drops of laudanum per day. But in a few years this man of genius found his slavery terribly tormenting. He found the springs of his will broken. He found himself lying under the weight of incubus and nightmare. Punishment came swift and awful to his body and his mind. He felt that he was bound, hands and feet, with iron chains, and that he could not possibly do his work. At night he had awful dreams to torment his soul. From his thirty-second to his thirty-sixth year he was almost useless to himself or anybody else. After this he broke for a time his shackles of slavery, after a desperate struggle, and his brilliant writings suggest how much greater achievements he could have accomplished if he had not enfeebled his powers by this awful habit. Physically, he was frail, slender-looking, very small in stature, and as pale as alabaster. He suffered from indigestion, and this man of genius never recovered from the injurious effects of this bad habit. He had periods of gloom and despondency, and often was so nervous that life was a burden. How humiliating to see this man of genius dressed almost like a rag-picker, and going to friends to borrow small sums

of money with which to buy the necessities of life, while he left his debts unpaid. This gifted man had weakness of will, irresolution, and the fault of never finishing anything. All his twenty-four books are fragmentary. As a man sows, so must he also reap.

A RICH BOY.

"Oh, my!" said Ben, "I wish I were rich and could have things like some of the boys who go to our school."

"I say, Ben," said his father, turning around quickly, "how much will you take for your legs?"

"For my legs!" said Ben, in surprise.

"Yes. What do you use them for?" "Why, I run, and jump, and play ball, and—oh, everything."

"That's so," said the father. "You wouldn't take ten thousand dollars for them, would you?"

"No, indeed," said Ben, smiling. "And your arms. I guess you wouldn't take ten thousand dollars for them, would you?"

"No, sir."

"And your health?"

"No, sir."

"And your hearing and your sense of smell are better than five thousand dollars apiece, at the very least; don't you think so?"

"Yes, sir."

"Your eyes, now. How would you like to have fifty thousand dollars and be blind the rest of your life?"

"I wouldn't like it at all."

"Think a moment, Ben; fifty thousand dollars is a lot of money. Are you sure you wouldn't sell your eyes for that much, at least. Let's see, now," his father went on, figuring on a sheet of paper. "Legs, \$10,000; arms, \$10,000; voice, \$10,000; hearing, \$5,000; taste, \$5,000; good health, \$10,000; and eyes, \$50,000. That makes \$100,000. You are worth \$100,000 at the very lowest figure, my boy. Now run and jump, throw ball, laugh and hear your playmates laugh, too. Look with those \$50,000 eyes of yours at the beautiful things around you, and come home with your usual appetite for dinner, and think now and then how rich you really are."

It was a lesson Ben never forgot, and since that day, every time he sees a cripple or a blind man, he thinks how many things he has to be thankful for. And it has helped to make him contented.—Children's Companion.

THE BIRD BOY.

Francisco Michelo, a Sardinian boy, left penniless with a mother and sisters, conceived the idea of supporting them by the exhibition and sale of trained birds.

He also trained a young Angora cat to live harmlessly in the midst of his favourite songsters. Such is the force of habit, such the power of education, that, by slow degrees, he taught the mortal enemy of his winged pets to live, to drink, to eat and to sleep in the midst of his little charges without once attempting to devour or injure them.

He went even farther; for, not content with teaching them merely to live in peace and happiness, he instructed the cat and the little birds to play a kind of game, in which each had to learn its own part, and, after some little trouble in training, each performed with readiness the particular duty assigned to it. Puss was instructed to curl herself into a circle, with her head between her paws, and appear buried in sleep. The cage was then opened, and the little, tricky birds rushed out upon her, and endeavoured to awaken her



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by repeated strokes of their beaks; then, dividing into two parties, they attacked her head and her whiskers, without the gentle animal appearing to take the least notice of their gambols. At other times, she would seat herself in the middle of the cage, and begin to smooth her fur with great gentleness and satisfaction. The birds would sometimes even settle on her back, or sit, like a crown, upon her head, chirping and singing as if in all the security of a shady wood.

The sight of a sleek and beautiful cat seated calmly in the midst of a cage of birds was so new and unexpected that when Francisco produced them at the fair of Sussari, he was surrounded instantly by a crowd of admiring spectators. Their astonishment scarcely knew any bounds when they heard him call each feathered favourite by its name, and saw it fly toward him with alacrity.

Delighted with his ingenuity, the spectators rewarded him liberally; and Francisco returned home in the evening with his heart swelling with joy.

This ingenious boy next trained some young partridges, one of which became exceedingly attached to him.

Francisco was now happy and contented, since by his own industry and exertions he was enabled to support his mother and sisters. During the three days of Francisco's illness, preceding his death, his birds flew incessantly round and round his bed, some lying sadly upon his pillow; others flitting backward and forward above his head, a few uttering brief but plaintive cries, and all taking scarcely any nourishment. The death of Francisco showed in a remarkable manner what affections may be excited in animals by a course of gentle treatment. Francisco's birds appeared to be sensible of the loss of a benefactor; but none of his feathered favourites manifested on his decease such real and disconsolate grief as did a partridge known as Rosoletta.

When poor Francisco was placed in his coffin, she flew round and round it, and at last perched upon the lid. In vain they several times removed her; she still returned, and even persisted in accompanying the funeral procession to the place of graves. During his interment she sat upon an adjoining cypress, to watch where they laid the remains of her friend; and when the crowd had departed, she forsook the spot no more, except to return to the cottage of his mother for her accustomed food. While she lived, she came daily to perch and to sleep upon the turret of an adjoining chapel, which looked upon his grave. And here she lived, and here she died about four months after the death of her beloved master.—Young Folks' Weekly.

