

THE LITTLE MOTHER.

SHE sat in the miner's cabin,
In a little rocking chair,
A mite of a busy woman,
Tender and sweet and fair,
With a laugh like a ripple of silver,
For all her burden of care.

A tiny scrap of a mother,
Just turned of five years old:
Cheeks that were dancing with dimples,
Hair, a tangle of gold,
And fat arms cradling a bundle,
Large for such arms to hold.

"She loves to take care of the baby,"
Said her mother, with smiling pride.
A woman so worn and faded,
Pallid and weary-eyed,
To whom life had brought its troubles,
Its comfort and ease denied.

"She loves to take care of the baby
And the baby loves her best;
You see that my children are crowded,
Close as birds in the nest—
Four of them; she's the biggest,
And she's helped with all the rest."

You beautiful little darling
Away on the western slope,
Whose life in the early dawning
Seems darkly indeed to ope!
What that is rich and stately
For your childish heart may I hope?

When others with dolls are playing,
Undimmed by a thought of care;
You are rocking a tiny brother
In your dear little swinging chair,
And crooning a sleepy song, dear,
And calling him sweet and fair.

I trust that the baby brother,
And the other children, too,
Grown tall and strong and clever,
One day may take thought for you,
And prize at her worth the sister
So gentle and fond and true.

Who began in life's gray dawning
Her woman's lot to bear,
To sweeten the sad with singing,
And lighten the load with prayer,
And laugh in merriest cadence
At the menace of grim despair.

A tiny scrap of a mother,
Just turned of five years old,
With cheeks aglow and dimpled,
And hair, a tangle of gold,
And round arms cradling a bundle
Large for such arms to hold!

—Good Cheer.

ETHEL'S IDEA.*

BY D. W. ELL.

"GIRLS, I have an idea!"
exclaimed Ethel Eaton, one
May morning, as she and
her nine intimate friends
sauntered under the trees
during the morning recess
of Miss Morton's school.

"What! have you really
an idea? I never knew
you guilty of one before!" said Mabel
Fisher, the sauciest, but most popular,
of the girls.

"Hush, Mabel!" said Helen Whit-
ney. "Let's hear your idea, Ethel?"

"Well, I'll tell you," rejoined Ethel,
"for I want you all to help me carry it
out. When we were house-cleaning
last week, I was dusting a lot of books
which had accumulated in our upper
hall closet, because we had no more
room in the library. There was a
dozen or more good story-books among
them, which Hal and I have read till
we're tired of them, but it struck me it
was a pity that they should lie there
so utterly useless. That afternoon I
was thinking, 'What can we do with

those books?' when mamma came in
from the Home Missionary Sewing
Society, and said, 'Ethel, Mrs. White,
our president, says there are several
Sunday-schools, among the home mis-
sionaries out West, which are greatly
in need of libraries. I wish we could
help them.' And then, girls, my idea
suddenly flashed upon me, and the
long and short of it is this: Let us
collect all the second-hand books we
can, which would do for a Sunday-
school library, and send them out
West."

"It's a good idea," said Helen. "I
have ever so many books at home
which I would be glad to give."

"And so have I," responded Julia
Carew.

"We have a pile of books we are
tired of reading," said Jessie Blake,
"but some have rather shabby covers."

"I tell you what, girls," exclaimed
Mabel, "I've an idea too! We'll all
meet at some house, and cover all the
books with pretty shades of paper
cambric, and then they'll all look neat
and attractive too."

"My brother has a papyrograph for
copying," added Amy Hotchkiss, "and
I will print off enough labels with the
name of the Sunday-school on them,
to paste on the front pages."

"And I'll put the numbers on the
back and catalogue them," said Bessy
Gale.

"You are all angelic," said Ethel;
"but now, how shall we send them?"

"Mother sends her boxes as freight,"
said Patty White, whose mother was
president of the Ladies' Home Mis-
sionary Society. "I'll see to getting
a packing-box; but the most important
thing is where to send them, and how
to get money for the freight bill."

"I'll write to the superintendent of
Sunday-schools in some Western state,
if your mother will give me an address,"
said Ethel. "He will tell us who
needs a library most; but how shall
we get the money for the freight?"

"Well," said May Moody, "let's
first see if we have books enough to
send."

The school bell rang just then, and
as the girls hurried in, Ethel called
out, "Bring all the books you can to
our house, before next week—say,
Friday. We'll have the first meeting
of the Camden Library Association
then."

That evening Ethel wrote to the Rev.
Mr. Case in Colorado, and the next
week she received from him a long
letter in a big yellow envelope.

In the meantime the girls looked
over their books, and selected all they
could give away.

When they met on Friday at Ethel
Eaton's, they were astonished at the
great pile of books which covered the
dining-room table.

"Girls," said Ethel, "it's too good
to be true. We have a hundred and
twenty-one books, and mamma and
Uncle Tom say they are all excellent
for a Sunday-school library."

"Who would have thought we
could have collected so many with no
trouble at all?" said Jessie; and the
girls crowded delightedly around the
table examining the books, until Ethel
displayed her yellow envelope from
Mr. Case, and then read the letter:

"COLORADO SPRINGS.

"DEAR MISS EATON: I recommend
that you send your library to the
following address: Mr. D. D. Kramer,
Mancos P. O., via Durango, Colorado.

You offer to send it by freight cars,
prepaid. That is the best way. It
will go safely, though slowly, and will
be doubly appreciated if prepaid. Mr.
Kramer is superintendent of a mission
Sunday-school which I organized in his
district last September. It is the
only religious light for a community of
two hundred souls, nearly one hundred
children. They are thirty-five miles
from the nearest church, and have no
preaching services. The people are
poor, just opening farms or ranches in
one of our fertile Colorado valleys.
They are in the extreme south-west
corner of our state, only twenty miles
from Utah. Several Mormon families
are among them. I found bright,
pleasant children there, and am sure
they will greatly appreciate your gift.
I will suggest that if you choose to
send along a bundle of Youth's Com-
panions, or St. Nicholas, they will be
very useful in a community where
there is very little reading of any kind,
and almost none that elevates the
mind. Wishing you joy in your labor
of love, I remain

"Yours in the cause, H. P. CASE."

"Well, won't it be lovely to send
them all these splendid books?" said
Bessy.

"Just think," exclaimed Julia,
"thirty-five miles from the nearest
church! What lots of good these may
do!"

"I mean to put in a bundle of tracts
against Mormonism," said Mabel,
"and I'll write on each, 'If this little
book converts you from the error of
your ways, you will confer a favour by
informing your converter, Mabel B.
Fisher.'"

"Business, girls; come to order!"
called Ethel in the midst of the laugh-
ter and hubbub. "Will you all come
here to-morrow, at two o'clock, and
cover the books? Patty, you promised
to get the box, and Amy, can you
print off the labels, with that unpronounceable machine of your brother's,
before to-morrow afternoon?"

"Oh! easily," replied Amy; "but
what shall I print?"

After a little discussion the following
was decided upon:

THE
MANCOS SUNDAY-SCHOOL LIBRARY
FROM
THE CAMDEN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION.
MAY, 1884.

"Now," continued Ethel, "will you,
Bessy, have your numbers ready to
paste on the backs; and if you could
come over in the morning, couldn't
you finish the catalogue too?"

Bessy assented, and Ethel went on
to tell how her Uncle Tom had agreed
to forward the money for the freight
and cambric, provided the girls pledged
themselves to raise the same within
one month.

This proposal being gratefully ac-
cepted, and it having been arranged
that Julia Carew and Leila White
should purchase twenty yards of six-
cent cambric, the first meeting of the
Camden Library Association came to
an end.

The next afternoon at three the
girls met again at Ethel's, and for three
hours scissors flashed and needles flew
as the large pile of motley-coloured and
somewhat dingy books on the dining-
room table was gradually transferred
to the sideboard in neat covers of

fresh cambric. Patty and Helen cut
out the covers from the very pretty
olive-green, strawberry-red, and pea-
cock-blue cambric, which Julia and
Leila had tastefully selected.

The other girls, except Amy and
Bessy, sewed the covers neatly in the
inside, and, when each book was
covered, passed it over to Amy, who
pasted its label on the first page.
Bessy put on the finishing touch to
each by pasting on to its back the
number which corresponded to its
title in her catalogue.

At six o'clock the work was done,
and the girls felt proud indeed as
Ethel called in Mrs. Eaton, and her
uncle, Dr. West, to see the neat piles
of useful books. They decided that
Helen and Patty should help Ethel
pack on Monday afternoon, so that
the box might be started on Tuesday.

Accordingly, on Monday the three
girls packed the books in a strong
wooden box which Patty's skilful
begging had elicited from a benevolent
merchant down town. Besides the
one hundred and twenty-one books,
they put in three large packages of
Youth's Companions and St. Nicho-
lases; and also a beautiful scrap-book
of gay-colored silesia, which May made
and sent, with a note requesting Mr.
Kramer to use it as a prize in the
infant class, "to be carried home and
kept for one week by the child who
has the best lesson to the preceding
Sunday."

Just as Ethel was about to call Dr.
West, who had promised to nail down
the cover, Mabel rushed in with a
package of little books in green, red,
and blue paper covers. "Here are
twenty Testaments," said she, "which
papa let me get from the Bible Society.
You know they give each life-member
a dollar's worth of Bibles every year.
Papa always forgets to draw them, but
I happened to think of it, and here
they are; aren't they lovely? So
saying, Mabel all out of breath,
deposited the package in one corner of
the box, and the four girls watched Dr.
West with interest, as he nailed down
the cover, and painted Mr. Kramer's
address in large black letters on the
top.

The box went off on Tuesday, and
during the next fortnight, while
awaiting expectantly Mr. Kramer's
letter, the girls busied themselves
collecting the eleven dollars necessary
to pay for the freight and the cambric.
Some gave their monthly allowance of
spending-money towards the sum;
Amy and Bessy, who painted well,
sold two or three sketches, and gave
the money; Mabel, who disliked
sewing, pledged herself to do the family
mending for a month, for which her
mother gave her in advance a dollar
and a half. Some of the other girls
begged ten-cent subscriptions toward
the "Library Fund;" but nearly all
of the eleven dollars was fairly earned
by the ten girls, and promptly handed
over to Dr. West long before the ap-
pointed time.

At last the long-anticipated letter
arrived, and the girls met at Ethel's
again to hear it read. Dr. West and
Mrs. Eaton looked in, from the hall,
on the delighted faces of the girls as
they listened to the warm and heart-
felt words of thanks which Mr. Kramer
expressed on the receipt of the library.
As they heard how eagerly the people
had welcomed the big freight-box when
he told them its contents, and how
utterly destitute of good books Mancos

* We have pleasure in reprinting this
story from the *S. S. Times*, and hope some
of our readers will send a collection of books to
the editor of PLEASANT HOURS, for donation
to poor schools.—Ed.