

## The Drummer-Boy.

"CAPTAIN GRAHAM, they were sayin'  
Ye would want a drummer lad,  
So I've brought my guid boy Sandie,  
Though my heart is wofu' sad,  
But nae bread is left to feed us,  
And nae siller to buy more,  
For the gudeman sleeps forever,  
Where the heather blossoms o'er.

"Sandie, make your manners quickly,  
Play your blitheest measure true—  
Gie us 'Flowers of Edinboro'  
While you sifer plays it, too.  
Captain, heard ye o'er a player  
Strike in truer time than he?"  
"Nay, in truth, bravo Sandie Murray  
Drummer of our corps shall be."

"I gie ye thanks—but, Captain, maybe  
Ye will hae a kindly care  
O'er the friendless, lonely laddie,  
When the battle wark is sair;  
Our Sandie's aye been good and gentle,  
And I've nothing else to love,  
Nothing—but the grave off yonder,  
And the Father up above."

Then her rough hand lightly laying  
On the curl-circled head,  
She blessed the boy. The tent was silent  
And not another word was said;  
For Captain Graham was sadly dreaming  
Of a benison long ago  
Breathed above his head, then golden,  
Bending now, and touched with snow.

"Good-bye, Sandie." "Good-bye, mither,  
I'll come back some summer day:  
Don't you fear—they don't shoot drummers  
Ever. Do they, Captain Gra—?  
One more kiss—watch for me, mither;  
You will know 'tis surely me  
Coming home—for you will hear me  
Playing soft the reveille."

After battle. Moonbeams ghastly  
Seemed to blink in strange affright,  
As the scudding clouds before them  
Shadowed faces dead and white.  
And the night-wind softly whispered  
When low moans its light wind bore—  
Moans, that ferried spirits over  
Death's dark wave to yonder shore.

Wandering where a footstep careless  
Might go plashing down in blood,  
Or a helpless hand lie grasping  
Death, and daisies from the sod;  
Captain Graham walked swiftly onward,  
While a faintly beaten drum  
Quickened heart and step together;  
"Sandie Murray? See; I come!

"Is it thus I find you, laddie?  
Wounded, lonely, lying here,  
Playing thus the reveille?  
See—the morning is not near."  
A moment paused the drummer-boy,  
And lifted up his drooping head;  
"O, Captain Graham! the light is coming,  
'Tis morning and my prayers are said.

"Morning! See the plains grow brighter,  
Morning, and I'm going home;  
That is why I play the measure,  
Mither will not see me come;  
But you'll tell her, won't you, Captain—"  
Hush, the boy had spoken true;  
To him the day had dawned forever,  
Unbroken by the night tattoo.

## Auntie Parsons' Story.

I TOLD Hezekiah—that's my man.  
People mostly call him Deacon Parsons,  
but he never gets any deaconing from  
me. We were married—"Hezekiah  
and Amariah"—that's going on forty  
years ago, and he's just Hezekiah to  
me, and nothin' more.

Well, as I was saying, says I:  
"Hezekiah, we aren't right. I am  
sure of it." And he said: "Of course  
not. We are poor sinners; Amy; all  
poor sinners." And I said: "Heze-  
kiah, this 'poor sinner' talk has gone  
on long enough. I suppose we are  
poor sinners; but I don't see any use  
of being mean sinners; and there's one  
thing I think is real mean."

It was jest after breakfast; and, as  
he felt poorly, he hadn't gone to the  
shop yet; and so I had this little talk  
with him to sort o' chirk him up. He  
knew what I was comin' to, for we had  
had the subject up before. It was our

little church. He always said: "The  
poor people, and what should we ever  
do?" And I always said: "We shall  
do nothin' unless we try." And so  
when I brought the matter up in this  
way, he just began bitin' his toothpick,  
and said: "What's up now? Who's  
moan? Amariah, we oughtn't to speak  
evil one of another." Hezekiah always  
says "poor sinners," and doesn't seem  
to mind it, but when I occasionally say  
mean sinners, he somehow gets on easy.  
But I was started, and I meant to free  
my mind.

So I said, says I: "I was goin' to  
confess our sins. Dan'l confessed for  
all his people, and I was confessin' for  
our little church.

"Truth is," says I, "ours is allus  
called one of those 'feeble churches,'  
and I am tired about it. I've raised  
seven children, and at fourteen months  
old every boy and girl of 'em could  
run alone. And our church is fourteen  
years old," says I, "and it can't take a  
step yet without somebody to hold on  
by. The Board helps us, and General  
Jones, good man, he helps us—helps  
too much, I think—and so we live  
along, but we don't seem to get strong.  
Our people draw their rations every  
year as the Indians do up at the  
agency; and it doesn't seem sometimes  
as if they ever thought of doing any-  
thing else.

"They take it so easy," I said.  
"That's what worries me. I do not  
suppose we could pay all expenses, but  
we might act as if we wanted to, and  
as if we meant to do all we can.

"I read," says I, "last week, about  
the debt of the Board, and this week,  
I understand, our application is going  
in for another year, and no particular  
effort to do any better, and it frets me.  
I can't sleep nights, and I can't take  
the comfort Sundays. I've got to  
feelin' as if we were a kind of per-  
petual paupers. And that is what I  
meant when I said, 'It is real mean!'  
I suppose I said it a little sharp," says  
I, "but I'd rather be sharp than flat  
any day, and if we don't begin to stir  
ourselves we shall be flat before very  
long, and shall deserve to be. It has  
just been 'Board,' 'Board,' 'Board,'  
this last fourteen years, and I am tired  
of it. I never did like boardin'," says  
I, "and, even if we were poor, I  
believe we might do something toward  
settin' up housekeepin' for ourselves.

"Well, there's not many of us:  
about a hundred, I believe, and some  
of these is women folks, and some jest  
girls and boys. And we all have to  
work hard and live close; but," says  
I, "let us show a disposition, if nothin'  
more. Hezekiah, if there is any spirit  
left in us, let us show some sort of  
disposition."

And Hezekiah had his toothpick in  
his teeth, and looked down at his boots  
and rubbed his chin, as he always does,  
when he's going to say somethin'. "I  
think there's some of us that shows a  
disposition."

Of course, I understood that hit,  
but I kep' still. I kep' right on with  
my argument, and I said: "Yes, and  
a pretty bad disposition it is. It's a  
disposition to let ourselves be helped  
when we ought to be helping ourselves.  
It's a disposition to lie still and let  
somebody carry us. And we are grow-  
ing up cripples—only we don't grow.

"Kiah," says I, "do you hear me?"  
Sometimes when I want to talk a  
little he just shuts his eye, and begins  
to rock himself back and forth in the  
old armchair; and he was doin' that

now, so I said: "Kiah, do you hear?"  
And he said: "Some!" and then I  
went on. "I've got a proposition,"  
says I. And he sort o' looked up and  
said, "Hov you? Well, between a  
disposition and a proposition, I guess  
the proposition might be better."

Ho's awful sarcastic, sometimes. But  
I wasn't goin' to get riled, nor thrown  
off the track; so I jest said: "Yes;  
do you and I get two shillin's worth  
apiece a week out of that blessed little  
church of our'n, do you think? 'Cos,  
if we do, I want to give two shillin's a  
week to keep it goin', and I thought  
maybe you could do as much." So he  
said he guessed he could stand that,  
and I said: "That's my proposition;  
and I mean to see if we can't find  
sombdy else that'll do the same. It'll  
show disposition, anyway."

"Well, I suppose you'll hev your  
own way," says he; "you most allers  
do." And I said: "Isn't it most allers  
a good way?" Then I brought my  
subscription paper. I had it ready. I  
didn't know jest how to shape it, but  
I knew it was something about "the  
sums set opposite our names," so I  
drewed it up, and took my chances.  
"You must head it," says I, "because  
you're the oldest deacon, and I must  
go on next because I am the deacon's  
wife, and then I'll see some of the rest  
of the folks."

So Kiah sot down, and put on his  
specs, and took his pen, but did not  
write. "What's the matter?" says I.  
And he said: "I'm sort o' shamed to  
subscribe two shillin's. I never signed  
so little as that for anything. I used  
to give that to the circus, when I was  
nothin' but a boy, and I ought to do  
more than that to support the gospel.  
Two shillin's a week! Why, it's only  
a shillin' a sermon, and all the prayer-  
meetin's thrown in. I can't go less  
than fifty cents, I'm sure." So down  
he went for fifty cents, and then I  
signed for a quarter, and then my sun-  
bonnet went onto my head pretty  
lively; and says I: "Hezekiah, there's  
some cold potato in the pantry, and  
you know where to find the salt; so,  
if I am not back by dinner time don't  
be bashful; help yourself." And I  
started.

I called on the Smith family first; I  
felt sure of them. And they were just  
as happy. Mr. Smith signed, and so  
did Mrs. Smith; and Long John, he  
came in while we were talkin', and put  
his name down; and then old Grandma  
Smith, she didn't want to be left out;  
and so there were four of 'em. I've  
allers found it a great thing in any  
good enterprise to enlist the Smith  
family. There's a good many of 'em.  
Next I called on the Joslyns, and next  
on the Chapins, and then on the Widdie  
Ohadwick, and so I kept on.

I met a little trouble once or twice,  
but not much. There was Fussy Fur-  
bur, and bein' trustee, he thought I  
was out of my spear, he said, and he  
wanted it understood that such work  
belonged to the trustees. "To be  
sure," says I, "I'm glad I've found  
out. I wish the trustees had discovered  
that a leetle sooner." Then there  
was Sister Puffy, that's got the asthma.  
She thought we ought to be lookin'  
after "the sperritocalities." She said  
we must go down before the Lord.  
She didn't think churches could be run  
on money. But I told her I guessed  
we should be just as spiritual to look  
into our pocket-books a little, and I  
said it was a shame to be turnally  
beggin' so of the Board.

She looked dreadful solemn when I  
said that, and I almost felt as if I been  
committin' profane language. But I  
hope the Lord will forgive me if I took  
anything in vain. I did not take my  
call in vain, I tell you. Mrs. Puffy is  
good, only she allus wanted to talk so  
pius; and she put down her two  
shillin's, and then hove a sigh. Then  
I found the boys at the copper shop,  
and got seven names there at one lick,  
and when the list began to grow, peo-  
ple seemed to be ashamed to say no,  
and I kep' gainin' till I had just an  
even hundred, and then I went home.

Well, it was pretty well toward  
candle light when I got back, and I  
was that tired I didn't know much  
of anything. I've washed, and I've  
scrubbed, and I've baked, and I've  
cleaned house, and I've boiled soap,  
and I've moved; and I low that almost  
any one of that sort of thing is a little  
exhaustin'. But put your bakin', and  
movin', and boilin' soap, and all to-  
gether, and it won't work out as much  
genuine tired soul and body as one day  
with a subscription paper to support  
the gospel. So when I sort o' dropped  
into a chair, and Hezekiah said, "Well,  
I was past speakin'," and I put my  
check apron up to my face as I hadn't  
done since I was a young, foolish girl  
and cried. I don't know what I felt  
so bad about; I don't know as I did  
feel bad. But I felt cry, and I cried.  
And Kiah seein' how it was, felt kind  
o' sorry for me, and set some tea  
and my cry, and so mingled my drink  
with weepin', I felt better.

I handed him the subscription paper,  
and he looked it over us if he didn't  
expect anything; but soon he began  
saying, "I never! I never!" And I  
said, "Of course you didn't; you never  
tried. How much is it?" "Why  
don't you know?" says he. "No,"  
I said, "I ain't quick in figures, and I  
hadn't time to foot it up. I hope it  
will make us out this year three hun-  
dred dollars or so."

"Amy," says he, "you're a prodigy  
—a prodigal, I may say—and you don't  
know it. A hundred names at two  
shillin's each gives you \$25 a Sunday.  
Some of 'em may fail, but most of 'em  
is good; and there is ten, eleven, thir-  
teen, that sign fifty cents. That'll  
make up what fails. That paper of  
yourn'll give us \$1,300 a year." I  
jumped up like I was shot. "Yes,"  
he says, "we shan't need anything this  
year from the Board. This church,  
for this year at anyrate, is self-sup-  
porting."

We both sot down and kep' still a  
minute, when I said, kind o' softly  
"Hezekiah," says I, "isn't it about  
time for prayers?" I was just chokin',  
but as he took the Bible he said, "I  
guess we'd better sing somethin'." I  
nodded, like, and he just struck in. We  
often sing at prayers in the morning,  
but now it seemed like the Scrip-  
ture that says: "He giveth songs in the  
night." Kiah generally likes the  
solemn tunes, too; and we sing "Show  
Pity, Lord," a great deal, and this  
mornin' we sung "Hark, From the  
Tombs a Doleful Sound," 'cause Kiah  
was not feelin' very well, and we  
wanted to chirk up a little.

I jest waited to see what metre he'd  
strike to-night; and would you believe  
it? I didn't know that he know any  
such tune. But off he went on "Joy  
to the World, the Lord is Come  
tried to catch on, but he woul-  
lickerty switch, like a steam en-