

UNCLE JIMMIE'S IDEAS.



"TAIN'T right!" squeaked little Pete Doolittle, wiping his red nose fiercely on the back of his hand.

"What aint?" asked Uncle Jimmie

"This here crowdin' o' the

old folks fur a passel o' boys 'n' girls. But I s'pose it's the way o' the world; an' I don't see's the church is any better."

"What are ye drivin' at, Peter? I didn't know as anybody was crowded, leastways not in our church, 'ceptin' on funeral occasions."

"Taint that," snarled Pete. "It's yer Sunday schools, an' concerts, an' sech. I tell ye, the old folks is pushed to the wall an' the young folks is put forred, 'tel they'r that sassy the's no gittin' along with 'em."

Uncle Jimmie replenished the old-fashioned box-stove with sundry hickory chunks, adjusted the dampers to his liking, so that the wind fairiy hummed through the little open quadrants in the stove-door, until the crackling wood sent back showers of sparks, and fishing out of the depths of a keg of saw-dust a couple of clean clay pipes, passed one to little Pete, without a word, and filled the other from a box on the counter.

We do not propose to excuse Uncle Jimmie in this. Indeed, he would not have excused himself. We simply state the facts: Our Uncle Jimmie, him of the "Ideas," like Carlyle enjoyed a smoke.

Pete broke off his pipe-stem to an orthodox shortness, blew carefully through it, patted the bowl upon his palm, filled and lit his tobacco in the hot ashes, and was soon deep in the enjoyment of what Uncle Jimmie expressed as: "Somethin' wonderful mellerin'."

"Well," said Uncle Jimmie, reseating himself on his nail-leg, as soon as he supposed the aforesaid 'mellerin' was commenced, "You an' I don't alrus think alike, Pete. 'Twas jest so when we 'jined farms down at Falls-creek. Ye see 'Squire," said he, turning to Squire Broaders who as usual occupied the chair, literally and figuratively, "I alrus kep' the warmest place fur the lambs. Sometimes the old sheep 'ud stan' a sight o' hardship; but ef I wanted thrifty lambs I hed to give them a warm place and the best o' care. But Pete Doolittle here, he didn't believe in coddlin' of 'em." Sez Pete, 'ef the old sheep can't tak care o' the'r own lambs, I hain't a join' to do it fur 'em.' Well, what with foot rot, an' head rot, an' the sogs, Pete lost pretty nigh onto all he had in the sheep line."

"You mind that big snow, 'at come so late in the spring of—well, I can't call the year, but 'twas when the meetin' house sheds broke down?"

The 'Squire "minded" the storm very distinctly.

"Well," said Uncle Jimmie, "I hed as nice a flock o' lambs that spring as ever sot eyes onto. An' Pete he done pretty tol'able well with his'n. Well, I was just a finishin' up my horses when I see that 'ere snow-squall comin' up the creek, an' I grabs a tin sh and a handful o' salt—fur I

wouldn't lie to a dumb critter no more'n I would to a person—an' I cuts fur the lot where the sheep wus. By that the big flakes a'most blinded me, but I found the sheep all huddled up in a holler where the snow drifted all o' ten foot deep afore mornin'. I'll take that back, fur the sheep found me fast, and the hull flock starts fur me full drive. Ye see I made pets o' them ever since they was little lambs, an' they knowed me, and follered me, an' 'twant ten minutes 'tel I had 'em under cover warm an' cosy.

"Well, when they was a follerin' me, a tumblin' over one another to get clost up, I heerd Pete acrost the creek a callin', 'Kuda-a! kuda-a! kuda-a!' But the more he kuda-aed the scarter they was, an' the harder they run. He couldn't do nothin' with 'em an' every one was snowed under. 'Twas three or four days afore we found 'em, an' when we shovelled 'em out, there they was, with the snow over 'em jus' lik' a ruff. The old sheep was middlin' spry considerin', but the lambs was every one o' them dead.

Children is jus' lik' lambs, Pete. If ye want to save 'em ye must give 'em the best of care, an' make 'em know you'r the'r friend. But ef we make 'em kind o' strange in the church, pay no 'tention to 'em at all, or hustle 'em down into some damp, forbiddin' old oasement, bimeby when the storms of life beat hard on 'em they'll be liker to go to the devil, than to the good Shepherd. I tell ye, Pete, He stopped right in the middle o' His sermon, to take 'em up into His arms an' bless them, an' ef we old folks don't make His Church a kind o' homelike fur the children, we're not His disciples."

There was a long silence, only broken by the measured puffs of the pipes, and the busy ticking of Uncle Jimmie's little clock within, and by the whistling and sighing of the wind, or the tapping of the big snow-flakes on the window without. But the men were thinking. Pete Doolittle was thinking of the long years spent in sin, when he was "fraider'n death" of preachers and churches, wondering whether he was not like one of his own sheep in the snowstorm, and whether things would not have been different with him had he been taught in youth to love the Shepherd and the fold. Uncle Jimmie's thoughts ran further. He was in the habit of saying: "The'r lots of allowance to be made fur anybody like Pete Doolittle, that kind o' growed up promiscuous-like, an' never sot foot inside of a church nor gave a cent for any thing till he was more'n fifty." And now he was thinking what Pete might have been if his heart had been won to Christ, before it grew so gnarled and shriveled. Then Uncle Jimmie's thoughts wandered out through the blinding snow, to the spot unknown, where his own boy was wandering, a prodigal in a far country, heard from at long intervals, now in the mines, now on the Pacific coast, once in prison.

The old postmaster was questioning whether he had not in making his lambs gentle, forgotten the dearest lamb of all. It seemed duty then, to hold "a pretty stiff rein" on the head-strong, generous lad. He saw now that he should have taken for his "lines" the cords of love. But he had one hope: he knew that a strong cable of love for the wayward wanderer was anchored in his 'vn heart, and taking a wind around a certain sacred spot

where the mother slept, made connection as he hopped with his boy's heart. Would it bring him back? Uncle Jimmie heaved a deep sigh. The 'Squire started from his doze, and his paper fell rustling to the floor. Pete Doolittle knocked the ashes from his pipe, and put it into his vest pocket, saying as he pulled up his collar and cap down over his ears ready to face the storm:

"Mebbe yer right, Jimmie. Mebbe yer right."

WHAT WE OWE TO POOR CHILDREN.

THE world owes some of its richest treasures to those who were deemed unfortunate in youth, and who looked to others in that unsheltered period for pity, protection, and help. Our country was discovered by Columbus. He was a hard-worked boy, and often knew the want of sufficient food. We owe our freedom of religion, which has made our institutions what they are, to Luther. The reformer once sung ballads in the street to procure the means of an education. Our advances in science started with Franklin, yet the inventor ate his penny roll in the city of Philadelphia when a lad, and knew what it was to feel alone in the world. We owe the beginning of our cotton mills to Sir Richard Arkwright. He was the youngest of a poor family of thirteen children, and his father was a barber. The curse of slavery was removed from our land by the pen-stroke of Abraham Lincoln. He ate the bread of hardship in childhood, and went as poorly clad as the humblest child in the streets of any country village to-day. The President-elect of the United States was once a poor, hard-working, friendless boy. The great missionary of the century is Dr. Livingstone. He learned Latin from a book on his loom while at work, and he once said proudly on completing his education, "I never had a dollar that I did not earn." Professor Heyne, one of the greatest scholars that Germany or the world ever produced, was a penniless child. "Want," said he, "was my companion from childhood. I well remember my mother's distress, when without food for her children. I have seen her on a Saturday evening, weeping and wringing her hands as she returned home, having been unable to sell the goods that my father had made." A kind family helped him in his distress at school, and in so doing honoured themselves and their country in a way of which they did not dream. Some forty years ago, there lived in one of the country towns of New York a slender little factory girl. She speaks of her early recollections of noise and filth, bleedings hands, sore feet, and a very sad heart." She said, "I used often to rise at two o'clock in the morning, and do the washing for the family." She found friends. That girl was Emily Chubbuck Judson. He who protects, assists, educates friendless children, makes the best contribution to the future that human resources can find. He built himself a monument, not imarble, but influence. Lips will call him blessed when the moss is filling the letters of his cenotaph. He lives for ends that do not terminate in himself.

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.

FOLLOWS THE PLOUGH.

I AM the lad that follows the plough—
Robin and thrush just whistle for me—
In a hickory suit, pretty well worn,
I get to the fields at early morn,
I help to scatter the golden corn,
Robin and thrush just whistle for me

Out in the meadows, and woods, and coast—
Robin and thrush just whistle for me—
I watch the sheep and lambs at play;
When the grass is high I toss the hay;
There isn't a boy in the world so gay,
Robin and thrush just whistle for me.

I go with my father to shear the sheep—
Robin and thrush just whistle for me—
I fodder the cattle, the mangers fill,
I drive a team, I go to the mill,
I milk the cows with a right good will,
Robin and thrush just whistle for me.

I help the peach and plums to save—
Robin and thrush just whistle for me—
I am the boy that can climb a tree;
There isn't an apple too high for me;
There isn't an apple I cannot see—
Robin and thrush just whistle for me.

When I'm a man I'll own a farm—
Robin and thrush just whistle for me—
Horses and sheep and many a cow,
Stacks of wheat and a barby mow;
I'll be a farmer and follow the plough;
Robin and thrush just whistle for me.

'Tis better to stand in the golden corn—
Robin and thrush just whistle for me—
To toss the hay in the breezy lee,
To pluck the fruit on the orchard tree,
Than roam about on the restless sea,
So, sailor boy, I'll follow the plough.

'Tis better to hear the wild birds sing—
Robin and thrush on the apple bough—
'Tis better to have a farm and a wife,
And lead a busy, peaceful life,
Than march to the noisy drum and fife;
So, soldier boy, I'll follow the plough.

HOW THIEVES ARE MADE.

WHAT with cruelty at home, and suspicion and difficulty of making good sales upon the street, some of the boy street-peddlers have a hard time of it. The following from Gough's "Sunshine and Shadow" is an English boy's way of accounting for the fact that so many of these little street-vendors become thieves:

"What makes boys thieves?" "Vell, sir, because they von't let a boy get an 'onest living." "How's that?" "Vell, I'll tell yer. Suppose my father he says 'Jem, you go out and holler them inguns; you bring me back so much money or enough inguns to make you accounts square or I'll vallop ye;' and boys don't like volloping, it 'urts. So I goes out and 'ollers 'he inguns. I gets tired. I've been at it all day, and don't sell none. I sees a woman a-standing at her gate. I think she's a fly, so I says, 'Please ma'am, do you want to buy any inguns of a poor boy?' 'How d'ye sell 'em?' she says. 'Threepence ha'penny a bunch, ma'am.' 'I'll give ye threepence.' 'Couldn't let ye 'ave 'em for threepence.' 'Then I don't vant 'em.' Now, vot would a ha'penny be to her? Nothing; but it's a good deal to me; so I goes on a-'ollering. Another woman, she says, 'Ow do ye sell inguns?' 'Threepence ha'penny a bunch, ma'am.' 'I'll give ye threepence ha'penny, if you throw a couple of inguns in.' Vell, I 'aven't sold any. I'm tired, and I think perhaps I'll make it up off somebody else; so I lets 'er 'av 'em, and I'm a ha'penny short. And so it goes on; everybody thinking I'm making a fortin selling inguns, and everybody beating on yer down. So I goes home short, and my father vallops me, and sends me to bed without nothin' to eat, and vo precious soon I'm out it's easier to prig than it is to get an 'onest living ven everybody's beating on yer down."