

THE LITTLE FOLK.

The Forgotten Birthday Speech.

BY CHAPLAIN GEORGE SANDERSON.

Grandma would be eighty-five years old on the morrow, and her grand children had planned to give her a birthday surprise. In Germany, where Grandma and the children lived, they make a great deal more over a birthday event than we do in our country.

The children had consulted Mamma, and she had not only given her cordial sympathy to their plans, but her hearty co-operation as well. First, there was to be a lovely, large sugar birthday cake, with beautiful ornaments of frosting on top. Then there was to be an extra large loaf of rye bread, filled with lots of caraway seeds and other nice condiments, of which Grandma was very fond. And Mamma had promised to pick and arrange a nice bouquet of flowers. Chris had composed a little birthday speech which Gretchen had committed to memory and would recite on the morrow.

The sun rose clear and bright on Grandma's birthday. The children formed in line and started for Grandma's room. First came Lena carrying the lovely birthday cake; then little Louisa, struggling to keep her arms around the huge loaf of rye bread. Gretchen carried Mamma's bouquet, and Chris brought his book with the birthday speech written in it, so as to be ready to prompt Gretchen if she should fail to remember.

Grandma was sitting in her accustomed place, in the easy chair by the fire-place, reading the Bible. It was a merry party that lined up in front of her chair that beautiful November day. Even Fritz, the little white dog, who had followed the children in, wore a more than usually happy look on his face. Grandma looked from one to the other, and wondered what it was all about. Chris nudged Gretchen to begin her speech, and in a timid, trembling way she commenced:

"Dear Grandma, we bring you—"

and then she hesitated, and finally stopped. Chris whispered the words of the next line in her ear, but she was so nervous by this time that she didn't really know what she was saying, and before she was aware of it she repeated the first line:

"Dear Grandma, we bring you
Our offerings of—"

and stopped again. At this juncture little Louisa, who was having great difficulty in keeping the large loaf of rye bread from falling to the floor, toddled forward and lisped:

"Dear Grandma, I've bring 'ou rye bread." Whereat they all laughed.

Louisa's interruption restored the missing lines to Gretchen's memory, for she made a third attempt and acquitted herself in a creditable manner. Here it is:

"Dear Grandma, we bring you
Our offerings of love,
And try, by this act,
Our affection to prove.

We wish you great joy,
And sincerely pray
Our dear Lord will bless you
On your happy birthday."

"Lord bless the dear little children," said Grandma, as she gathered them in her arms and kissed them. "May they always scatter sunshine in their pathway through life."

A little girl who had mastered her catechism confessed herself disappointed "because," she said, "though I obey the Fifth Commandment and honour

my papa and mamma, yet my days are not a bit longer in the land, because I am put to bed at seven o'clock."

The Dog Under the Wagon.

Come wife," said good old farmer Gray,
"Put on your things 'tis market day—
And we'll be off to the nearest town,
There and back ere the sun goes down.
Spot? No, we'll leave old Spot behind."
But Spot he barked and Spot he whined,
And soon made up his doggy mind
To follow under the wagon.

Away they went at a good round pace,
And joy came into the farmer's face;
"Poor Spot," said he, "did want to come,
But I'm awful glad he's left at home;
He'll guard the barn, and guard the oot,
And keep the cattle out of the lot,
"I'm not so sure of that," thought Spot,
The dog under the wagon.

The farmer all his produce sold,
And got his pay in yellow gold,
Then started homeward after dark,
Home through the lonely forest. Hark!
A robber springs from behind a tree—
"Your money or else your life," said he,
The moon was up, but he didn't see
The dog under the wagon.

Spot ne'er barked, and Spot ne'er whined,
But quickly caught the thief behind;
He dragged him down in the mire and dirt,
And tore his coat and tore his shirt,
Then held him fast on the miry ground;
The robber uttered not a sound—
While his hands and feet the farmer bound,
And tumbled him into the wagon.

So Spot he saved the farmer's life,
The farmer's money, the farmer's wife;
And now a hero grand and gay,
A silver collar he wears to-day,
Among his friends, among his foes,
And everywhere his master goes,
He follows on his horny toes,
The dog under the wagon.

The Changing Year.

From bud to leaf, from leaf to branches grey,
From flower-besprinkled meadows all aglow
To broad expanse of bright, white cheerless
snow;

From early Spring to Winter's sombre day—
The year has speeded on its changeful way
And yet the year dies not, for well we know
He does but sleep to live anew, and so
"The year is dead! Long live the year," we
say.

So, too, with man: he hastens from his birth
To Youth, to Manhood, to Maturity,
And then, at length, when his life-work is done,
He does but sleep awhile beneath the earth,
To wake anew the Father's face to see,
In changeless realms of never-ending sun.

