The Children's Prayer.

"Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Three white-clad forms beside the bed,
With little hands upheld,
When all their toys are laid away,
And the noise of day is quelled;
And mother hears them each repeat,
With voices earnest, low and sweet,
The simple prayer
She teaches there:
"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child."

Fond kisses and 'good nights' for all,
As rosy cheeks are laid
On snowy pillows, then, calm sleep
Till dreamy night shall fade.
Good angels bend above each face
That silent lies in smiling grace!
Though toil and care
Our lives must share:
"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child."

O loved and sinless little ones,
When years have led you on,
And she who lingers o'er you now
To her reward has gone;
When the toys of life are laid away,
And evening comes, still may you pray,
With faithful hearts,
As life departs;
"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child!"

—*Evening Post.*

Jeannette's Self-Denial.

The Germans tell a story about a little girl named Jeannette, who once went to see a grand review. She found a capital place from which to see the soldiers pass, and was looking to see them march, when she noticed a poor old woman in the crowd behind her, trying very hard to get where she could see the soldiers. Jeannette pitied her, and said to herself—

"I should like to see the soldiers march, but it isn't kind in me to stay in this nice seat and let that old woman stand where she can't see anything. I ought to honor old age, and I will."

So Jeannette called the old woman, and placing her in the nice seat, fell back among the crowd. There she had to tiptoe, and peep, and dodge about to catch a glimpse of the splendid scene which she might have seen fully and easily if she had kept her place. Some of the people said she was a silly girl, and laughed at her. Was she sorry for giving it up? No, she was glad, because she had given pleasure to a poor old woman. Thus Jenoette was rewarded in her heart for her kindness to old age.

A few minutes later, a man covered with lace elbowed his way through the crowd, and said to her,—"Little girl, will you come to her ladyship?"

Now Jeannette could not imagine who her ladyship was, but she followed the man to a scaffold within the crowd. A lady met her at the top of the stairs, and said—

"My dear child, I saw you yield your seat to the old woman. You acted nobly. Now, sit down here by me. You can see everything here."

Thus Jeannette was rewarded a second time for honoring old age by denying herself. You are glad, are you not? You admire her conduct, don't you? If not, I think you need to take a lesson not only from Jeannette, but also from the pure and blessed Jesus. He denied himself enough to quit his heavenly throne and come to earth to die for you. Surely you ought for his sake to deny yourself little pleasures, when by doing so you can add to the enjoyment of the poor, the feeble, the sick, or the aged. If you will, your heart will grow glad under the smile of Jesus; and if no rich lady or gentleman rewards you here, yet, in the great fatherland above, Jesus will say to you—

"I saw you give up your own pleasure to make another happy. I was pleased with you. Sit down on my throne."—*The Quiver.*

So Hard to be Good.

Tommy Wilson came home one day with tears in his eyes; he ran and laid his head on his mother's lap, and sobbed aloud. She pushed the curls back from his forehead, kissed him, and said: "What is the matter, my son?"

"O, ma," he answered, "it's so hard to be good."

"What makes you think so, Tommy?"

"Why, you know, mamma, yesterday was Sabbath, and you talked to me in the evening about having a new heart, and told me that I must pray to God, and he would give me one, and that then I would love every body, and always feel happy, and not be afraid to die. And I thought that I would like to have such a heart; and I prayed when I went to bed, and kept thinking about it till I fell asleep, and as soon as I woke up in the morning I remembered about it, and prayed again; and it seemed to me as if I *had* a new heart—I felt so happy, and when I went to school. I tried to be kind to all the boys, and to learn my lessons, and to be good. But this noon George Johnson snatched my ball, and I got angry and called him a thief. And when we were playing Charley Smith struck me, and before I thought I struck him back again. And coming home this afternoon, James Lewis called me a coward, and I called him a liar. And so, ma, I keep forgetting and doing wrong, and no matter how hard I try, I can't be good. It is so easy to get angry, and bad words come out so quick. What's the reason, ma, that we can't be good when we want to, and that we are wicked when we don't want to be?"

Mrs. Wilson thought a minute and then said: "Do you remember, Tommy, riding down hill on your sled, last winter?"

"O yes, mamma, the hill was covered with snow, and it was beat down until it was almost as smooth as ice; and we went down so fast that it almost took away my breath!"

"Well, my son, but did you go up as fast?"

"O no, ma! it was slow, hard work getting up. We would slip back at almost every step, and we couldn't go up at all in the place where we slid down, but had to go round to the other side, where the snow was not worn so smooth and slippery!"

"Then it was easier to go down than to go up, was it?"

"O yes, ma, it's always so with hills."

"And the oftener you went down on your sled, the smoother the snow got, and the faster you could go?"

"Yes, mamma."

"Well, Tommy, when God made Adam and Eve, and put them in the garden, it was as easy for them to do right as to do wrong. It was like walking on level ground; they could go one way as well as the other. But they choose to do wrong, and ever since then the world has been like the side of a mountain. It is up-hill toward heaven, and down hill toward hell. I cannot tell you my son why it is so, any more than I can tell you why God made a hill out there instead of a level plain; but every body finds it so. And then by doing wrong, we make the down-hill more and more slippery all the time. Our evil habits are like yoursel; they smooth the way so that we go faster and faster. It's hard work even to stop doing wrong, just as hard as for you to stop your sled when half way down, and going like a race-horse. And it is still harder to go up. We are all the time slipping back. We find our old habits tripping us up at every step!"

"Then, ma, we might as well give up trying," said Tommy, in a sad and bitter tone.

"Did my little boy say so last winter, when he was climbing up hill to ride down on his sled? He slipped a great many times, and once or twice fell quite down in the snow; but he scrambled up again and kept on trying, because he wanted to have the pleasure of riding down so swift over the smooth snow. Will Tommy care more for a few minutes' sport than for being good and going to heaven?"

Tommy felt ashamed of what he had said. He laid his head in his mother's lap, and what his thoughts were I cannot tell. But after a while he looked up, as earnest as a hero, and said:

"Ma, I've been a foolish boy. I thought I could be good right off, and with hardly any trouble. But I see now that it is not so, and I mean to try with all my might; and I know, ma, that I shall be happier even while I am trying; and God will help me, won't he, ma?"

"Yes, my son, if you are humble and don't think that you can be good of yourself without his help. You have learned to-day how weak your own strength is; how easily your best resolutions are broken, and I hope that you will pray every day, and often every day, for God to watch over you and keep you from falling, and raise you up when you fall. And that you will watch yourself, my dear boy, and try to overcome all your wicked habits, and remember what a *down-hill*, slippery world this is, and that we must expect hard work in getting though it to heaven. But heaven will be worth all the efforts of a thousand such lives as this!"

And Tommy followed his mother's advice, and is now a good man. He says he often remembers that Monday, when he thought it was so hard to be good, and the hill, and the snow, and the sled; and he hopes that the story will lead every boy who reads it, to quit *slipping down*, and try to climb up, and persevere, and pray to God; and so hopes UNCLE JESSE.

Little Children.

I think them the poetry of the world—the fresh flowers of our hearths and home: little conjurers, with their "natural magic," evoking by their spells what delights and enriches all ranks, and equalizes the different classes of society. Often as they bring with them anxieties and cares, and live to occasion sorrow and grief, we should get on very badly without them. Only think—if there were never anything to be seen anywhere but grown-up men and women, how we should long for the sight of a little child! Every infant comes into the world like a delegated prophet, the harbinger and herald of good tidings, whose office it is "to turn the hearts of fathers to the children," and to draw the "disobedient to the wisdom of the just." A child softens and purifies the heart, warming and melting it by its gentle presence; it enriches the soul by new feelings, and awakens within it what is favorable to virtue. It is a beam of light, a fountain of love, a teacher whose lessons few can resist. Infants recall us from much that engenders and encourages selfishnes, that freezes the affections, roughens the manners, indurates the heart; they brighten the home, deepen love, invigorate exertion, infuse courage, and vivify and sustain the charities of life.

Temperance.

What a Tract Did.

A lady was once travelling on a railway train and reading a little temperance tract called "A Word to the Wise." I don't know how she came by the tract, but just as she finished it, the cars were running slowly past a long row of miserable hovels on the outskirts of a great city. There were dirty children playing in the gutters, dirty men smoking in the doors, and dirty women looking out at the windows.

"What wretched creatures," said the lady, and then she thought of the little tract in her hand, and threw it out of the window, thinking, I suppose, it might do some good.

The clean little leaf went fluttering down into the mud, but, before it had fairly touched it, there was a rush of eager children after it, and one little barefooted boy seized it and ran off with it.

"Fetch it here, Terence," call out a woman from one of the houses; but when she saw it was only a bit of printed paper, she threw it down on the floor.

"Give it to me," growled a man who was lying on a miserable bed in the corner; "it's many a day since I've seen the news."

The man was laid up with a broken leg, for he had fallen from a freight-train when he was half drunk and narrowly escaped with his life.

"A word to the wise," said he, slowly spelling out the title.

"It's nothing to *you*, then," said his wife, fretfully; "a man that goes drinking whiskey and he on the train—"

"That's thrue for ye," says the man, "but I'll read it all the same; it says, '*Did you ever know any one who grew rich by dram-drinking?*' Faith, an' I niver did, Misther Thrack, but I've seen a hape o' folks brought to rags by it. '*Did you ever know any one who grew great and honourable by dram-drinking?*' Niver in me life, Misther Thrack; but I've known a man that oncet was called Mr. Mulligan come to nobody butould Tim, the more's the pity for him. '*Did you ever know any one to gain a character for honesty and trustiness, faithfulness and intelligence, by dram-drinking?* Did you ever know one who was a better husband and father, a better neighbor and citizen, or a more orderly, industrious man *for dram-drinking?* Have you not seen more misery and suffering, more poverty and crime, more trouble and accidents, resulting from *dram-drinking*, than from anything else in the world?' That's thrue for ye," said the man, and then went on, "'Has it not brought misery upon many whom you knew? Has in not brought misery upon *you?* Are you such a slave that you are willing to give up all your hopes of honor and happiness in this world and the next for the sake of strong drink? Are you not man enough to solemnly promise neither to touch, taste, or handle that which can do you no possible good, but is sure to ruin you, both body and soul?' Faith, an' it's Tim Mulligan that'll do that thing, and here's me fist on it, Misther Thrack," said the man, shaking the paper in his hand.

That night, when the doctor came to see Tim Mulligan's broken leg, he told him he thought he would be able to be at his work in another week.

"And I hope, Tim," said he, "that this will be a warning to you to let whiskey alone. It's the greatest wonder in the world that you was not killed outright, and you may depend you will be some of these dark nights if you don't sign off from liquor.

"Would yer honour be good enough to write me a bit of a pledge?" said Tim, raising himself on his elbow.

"Yes," said the doctor, feeling in his pockets for some paper.

"Write it here, if you please," said Tim, producing the temperance tract.

So the doctor wrote a simple pledge on the little blank at the end of the track, and Tim signed his name to it.

"Now let's see if you'll keep it like a man," said the doctor. "If you do, I shall say the best job you ever did was breaking your leg."

"It wasn't so much me leg, doctor," said Tim, "but when the thrack was praching, me leg kept saying, *That's so*, and it's not Tim Mulligan that'll be after drinking the murdering stuff agin."

EMILY HUNTINGTON MULLER.

—*Good News.*

Agriculture.

The Value of a Ton of Straw.

"People don't know the value of straw," said my plowman to me to-day, "and so careless are folks about it that I have considerable difficulty in preserving mine free from damaging rains. Taking the country generally, straw is looked upon as only fit to spread about open farm-yards to sop up the rains which have lately been carrying away the farmer's profit in the shape of strong tea, leaving him only the tea leaves. As straw can be thatched for sixpence a ton, it does appear to me a grievous neglect lect and waste of valuable property to allow it to stand unroofed, and become rotted by the weather. I produce on my farm of 170 acres, about 200 tons of straw annually, and whether I realize five shillings, ten shillings, fifteen shillings, or twenty shillings, a ton of it makes considerable difference. I wish that our agricultural society would offer a prize for a correct and practical, as well as scientific estimate of the value of straw of all kinds as food, as manure, or as litter. I am convinced, by my own practice, that straw (particularly bean, wheat and oat,) has a considerable value for feeding purposes, when rendered available as food. My laborers often say, "Ah, master, you could not keep half so much stock as you do, if you did not consume your straw." Of course, near large towns, farmers will sell their straw and bring back manure. So important is straw considered as an animal food in Spain, that Messrs. Garratt are making machines, driven by steam power, for "straw-pulping," so that it is rendered soft and silky—in fact, duly prepared for animal digestion. I am assured in all warm Eastern countries straw is always used as food for animals. 'Tis said, "wise men come from the East," and in this case I am sure that our English farmers have something to learn.

Let us see what straw is composed of, and why it should be valuable as food, and especially as a substitute for hay, so as to set free for the growth of corn and roots a larger area. The late Mr. Horsfall said, in that excellent paper of his, (the best, in my opinion, that ever was written,) on Feeding Stock and Dairy Management, (Soc. Jour. vol. 18, p. 172) "I am satisfied that the most economical use of food rich in albuminous matter is together with straw or other materials which are deficient in this element." This I had proved to be true. He especially commends bean straw. He says, "In wheat straw, for which I only pay 30 shillings per ton, I obtain for one shilling and sixpence 32 pounds of starch, (reduced as oil, 18½ pounds from 100 pounds of straw,) available for the production of fat or for respiration." I have long since adopted straw as food, and should consider myself foolishly unprofitable to waste it uselessly in an open and wet farm-yard. I believe that cabbage would have been much more extensively grown, had farmers known how necessary it is to give with the cabbage a large quantity of straw chaff, without which much of the cabbage is wasted.—*J. J. Mechi.*

Points of an Excellent Milch Cow.

A cow of beautiful symmetry is eminently desirable, as physical beauty of any animals will always enhances their cash value. Yet, beauty and superior milking qualities are seldom found in one cow. There are certain signs which can usually be relied on as indicative of a superior animal for milk in large quantities, yet of an inferior quality, either for butter of cheese, providing the cow has been properly reared, and her milking qualities not impaired in any way by improper management, which often misleads or deceives a purchaser, when he is confident he is selecting a good milker.

The first and always infallible indication of a superior milker is an udder and teats of medium size and of fair proportions. Let us see no part of a cow but these, and we will select the *best* milkers and reject the *inferior* ones with almost unerring certainty. A *poor* milker may be detected at a glance, not by a homely form, but by a small udder, and teats too short and diminutive to be grasped by a hand of ordinary size. If a cow be deficient in these points, set it down at once against her that she will never be a superior animal for either butter or milk, except in a small quantity. A cow having a long, disproportioned udder, with teats as large as a man's wrist, and longer than the width of his hand, *may* possess the qualities of a medium milker, but will never be found to yield as much *rich* milk as a cow having a square udder, about as large as a ten-quart milk pail, and four teats only, a good distance apart, and nearly as long as the width of a man's hand.

In addition to these signs of a milker, the color of the skin is one of the most important indications of a superior cow for *rich* milk. A cow having a *black*, or a *white* skin, may give a large quantity of milk, but it will be thin and white, often requiring one-third to one-half more to make a pound of butter or cheese, than the milk of a cow having a *yellow* skin. If a cow have a yellow skin, whether she be of a red, white, brindle, roan, brown, or any other color, and her hair feels like velvet, and she have an udder and teats of the size and form just alluded to, as indicative of a superior milker, if she be as homely as the old cow with a "crumpled horn" that we read of in the "story of the house that Jack built," we may feel assured that she will give rich milk.

Another sign in connection with the other good one is a *striped hoof*, although striped hoofs may be seen on poor cows. But, if a cow have a yellow and soft skin, and a yellow or striped hoof, it shows that she will always give milk of an excellent quality, though she may yield but little of it. A cow having black horns will seldom yield rich milk.

MOST EXPEDITIOUS WAY OF FATTENING FOWLS.—On this subject the *Irish Farmer's Gazette* says: "Coop them in a moderately warm, dark quiet place, with good ventilation, and keep them perfectly clean, and fed on boiled or steamed potatoes, mixed with crushed oats or oatmeal, and blended with sweet milk with a little fine sand added, and given warm, but not hot. If in health and well attended, they will be fit for use in a fortnight. They may also get bean, pea, or barley meal mixed with the potatoes."

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