

WRITING A LETTER.

Two urchins, ragged and dirty and brown,
On my front door stone steps sat them
down.
"To write a short letter," so one of them
said,
While the other one gravely nodded his head.
I cautiously watched, through the friendly,
closed blinds,
And listened to efforts of young, untaught
minds.
"How glad mother'll be, when she hears
from us boys!"
And they both smiled reflective at thought of
her joys.
"Now, Howard, you tell her about your new
hat;
'Twas somebody's old one, but don't tell her
that!
And, brother, just say we have very good
clothes,
And shoes too—don't mention they're out at
the toes.
We find work in plenty, and very good pay;
How much, you know, Luther, we need
never say.
Of what we've left over, we send you a ton,
For tea and white sugar for you and small
Ben.
"Toll Annie and Rosie we miss their small
talk,
And often we wonder who takes them to
walk.
And how mother, darling, you'll be glad to
hear
That we don't chew nor smoke, neither drink
wine nor beer.
And now farewell, mother, don't cry and get
blue,
For soon we'll take care that you've nothing
to do,
But just what you fancy to busy your mind,
For work keeps a fellow from thinking, we
find."
From my dream I am startled, a voice smites
my ear,
And our girl Bridget's harsh accents I hear:
"You dirty young beggars, get off of this
stoop!
Or else I will swape you off with a good
swoop!"
I open the door, and the boys, hats in
hand,
Before the stern maiden in all meekness
stand:
"Good morning, young gentlemen, won't you
come in,
And finish your letter, from out the streets
din?"
Only two street-boys with letters to write—
Two boys who sit by my side, night after
night—
Two embryo gentlemen, each with grand
mind—
I wonder how many such boys we can find
In homes of the wealthy, or e'en on the
street!
Good, generous and noble, and free from
deceit.
That mother is poor, but I envy her joys,
And would feel myself rich, with but one of
her boys.

—Mary E. Lambert.

IT'S ALL THE LITTLE BOOK.

SOMETHING more than a year ago, as
the writer was sitting in a railway
carriage, a pleasant voice sang out:
"Paper, sir? Paper, sir? Morn-
ing paper, ma'am?"
There was nothing now in the words,
nothing new to see a small boy with a
package of papers under his arm; but
the voice, so low and musical—its
clear, pure tones, as mellow as the
flute, tender as only love and sorrow
could make—called up hallowed mem-
ories. One lock at the large, brown
eyes, the broad forehead, the mass of
nut-brown curls, the pinched and hol-
low cheeks, and his story was known.
"What is your name, my boy?" I
asked, as, half blind with tears, I
reached out my hand for a paper.
"Johnny—;" the last name I
did not catch.
"You can read?"
"Oh, yes; I've been to school a
little," said Johnny, glancing out of

the window, to see if there was need
of haste.

I had a little brother once whose
name was Johnny. He had the same
brown hair and tender, loving eyes;
and perhaps it was much on this
account that I felt much disposed to
throw my arms around Johnny's neck
and to kiss him on his thin cheek.
There was something pure about the
child, standing modestly there in his
patched clothes and little half-worn
shoes, his collar coarse, but spotlessly
white, his hands clean and beautifully
moulded. A long, shrill whistle, how-
ever, with another short and peremp-
tory, and Johnny must be off. There
was nothing to choose; my little Testa-
ment, with its neat binding and pretty
steel clasp, was in Johnny's hand.

"You will read it, Johnny?"
"I will, ma'am, I will."
There was a moment—we were off.
I strained my eyes out of the window
after Johnny, but I did not see him;
and, shutting them, I dreamed what
there was in store for him—not for-
getting his love and care for the desti-
tute, tender-voiced boy.

A month since I made the same
journey, and passed over the same
road. Halting for a moment's respite
at one of the many places on the way,
what was my surprise to see the same
boy, taller, healthier, with the same
calm eyes and pure voice!

"I've thought of you, ma'am," he
said; "I wanted to tell you it's all
the little book."

"What's all the little book, Johnny?"
"The little book has done it all. I
carried it home and father read it.
He was out of work then, and mother
cried over it. At first I thought it
was a wicked book to make them feel
so bad; but the more they read it the
more they cried, and it's all been
different since. It's all the little
book; we live in a better house now,
and father don't drink, and mother
says 'twill be all right again."

Dear little Johnny, he had to talk
so fast; but his eyes were bright and
his brown face was aglow.

"I'm not selling many papers now,
and father says may be I can go to
school this winter."

Never did I so crave a moment of
time. But now the train was in
motion. Johnny lingered as long as
prudence would allow.

"It's all in the little book," sounded
in my ear; the little book had told of
Jesus and his love for the poor, perish-
ing men. What a change! A com-
fortable home, the man no more a
slave to strong drink. Hope was in
the hearts of the parents; health
manned the cheeks of the children.
No wonder Johnny's words came
brokenly! From the gloom of despair
to a world of light; from being poor
and friendless the little book told them
of one mighty to save, the very friend
they needed, the precious Elder
Brother, with a heart all love, all
tenderness.

Would that all the Johnnies who
sell papers, and fathers that drink,
and mothers that weep over the ruins
of once happy homes, took to their
wretched dwellings the little book that
tells of Jesus and his love! And not
only these, but all the Johnnies who
have no parents, living in cellars, and
sleeping in filth and wretchedness—
would that they could learn from this
little book what a friend they have in
Jesus.—*Appeal.*

THE LIGHT IN THE WINDOW.

IN a lower room in one of those
narrow alleys of a great city, where
Poverty has her dwelling-place, were
a widow and her son. The boy stood
at the window, gazing out into the
murky darkness, thinking perhaps who
would take care of his poor mother
when he was gone, or looking forward
into the future with youthful hopes
and bright anticipations. But he saw
not his mother bending over the little
trunk, and arranging, with all a
mother's care, each article; he saw not
the doubts and fears which filled her
breast, and like harbingers of evil
weighed heavily on her heart and filled
her eyes with tears. No; and it were
better that he should not.

The boy's dreaming was at length
broken by his mother's voice—

"Charlie, I have forgotten one
thing. Won't you run down to the
store and buy it?"

The boy seized his hat and opened
the door; but, as he looked out into
the heavy darkness, he turned and
said:

"Mother, it is dreadful dark!
Place the light in the window so that
I can find my way back."

The morn had come, and the time
when the mother must take leave of
her boy—her only child; when she
must give him up to the cold, unfeel-
ing world, and see him breasting with
its angry surges.

"Charlie," she said, "take this—it
is your mother's last gift. It is hard
to send you forth into the world all
alone, but forget not the lessons you
have learned at home. Beware of evil
companions! Meet the scoffs and
jeers of those around you with a firm
heart, and turn not from the true way.
Beware of the intoxicating cup!—a
drop may prove fatal—touch it not!"

"Charlie, do you recollect the lamp
I placed in the window last night to
direct you home? When temptations
assail you, when evil ones are around
you, remember the pages of this sacred
book, and let them be as a lamp in the
window; not only reminding you of a
mother's instruction and a mother's
love, but guiding you heavenward to
that holier and happier land above."

More she would have said, but tears
were filling her eyes, and she would
not make heavier his heart at parting.
So placing her hands upon his head
(it might be for the last time,) she
gave him her benediction.

"God preserve and bless thee—good-
bye."

"Noble, true mother! Would that
all were such! Where, then, would
be all this intemperance, destroying
thousands of our young men, and
crushing many a parent's brightest
hope? Where, then, would exist all
this crime, which conceals not itself at
midnight, but stalks abroad openly at
noon-day?"

Mothers, on you rests a great respon-
sibility. To you is given this mighty
work to moralize the world. Now, in
the susceptibility of youth, must those
influences be brought to bear which
will fit them for true manhood.

"Little feet will go astray,
Guide them, mother, while you may."

Impress upon their minds, now,
those simple, healthful lessons; those
noble, elevating truths, which, when
the darkness of sin envelops them,
when temptations assail them, shall be
lights in the window, leading them on-
ward in the straight and narrow way.

OCTOBER.

AND now October has come again—
the month so named in the old Roman
calendar from *octo*, eight, as Septem-
ber was named from *septem*, seven, Novem-
ber from *novem*, nine, and December
from *decem*, ten. The seeming dis-
arrangement of place in the year arises
from the fact that the Roman year
began with March, so making Septem-
ber the seventh month, October the
eighth, and so on.

October is the month of ripeness, of
richness and beauty. Now the har-
vests of the year have been gathered.
Some of the apples yet remain, and the
nuts in the forest offer their peculiar
temptation to the boys. Happy are
the lads who live within reach of the
hickory or the chestnut. We can
scarcely imagine a more genuine delight
for country boys than that of gathering
nuts late in the autumn days, when
the pinching power of the frosts has
loosened them from their stems or
opened their hulls to let the precious
contents drop out. What cares the
hearty lad if the morning be a little
frosty? He will only walk with a
merrier step, and begin his work with
a greater zest. How the memory of
the dear old days comes back to us
out of the dreamy past, when as boy
with basket in hand we went in quest
of these autumnal treasures.

October is the symbol of the rich
fruitage that comes to many a life.
When the spring-time has been spent
in sowing precious seed, and the sum-
mer in faithful and well-directed toil,
there comes by and by the abounding
ripeness of autumn. How rich is that
charm which adorns old age when the
earlier life has been spent in noble
purpose and worthy endeavour. How
sear and naked, on the other hand,
when the morning and the noon have
been wasted in idleness and folly.

But many a sweet life never reaches
this autumnal period. Before the
spring-time passes or summer's noon is
gained the reaper comes. The buds in
their morning beauty are gathered from
their stems, and borne to reach their
perfect bloom and richest fragrance in
the gardens of God. Then let each
young bud of childhood be just as sweet
and just as beautiful as it can—beau-
tiful to the eyes of friends on earth
and beautiful to the eye of God. So
while the earth is robed in so much
beauty, while the forests flame forth
their autumnal glories, and the air is
dreamy in its autumnal haze, let each
resolve to make life as rich, as fruitful,
and as beautiful as it is possible to
make it.

MIND

Your tongue, that it speaks, no
hasty, unkind word.

Your hands, that they neither fight,
steal, nor become idle and helpless.

Your feet, that they lead you not
into temptation, nor stumble in the
way of sin.

Your eyes, that they look not upon
wickedness in any shape. Do not let
them rest upon books that you know
your parents would not approve.

Your ears, that they listen not to
tale-bearing, evil speaking, or any ill
report.

"PADDY, do you know how to
drive?" said a traveller to the Jehu
of a jaunting-car. "Sure I do," was
the answer. "Wasn't it I that upset
yor honour in a ditch two years ago?"