

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

VOL. XVI.]

TORONTO, NOVEMBER 21, 1896.

No. 47.

The Sin of Omission.

BY MARGARET E. SANOSTER.

It isn't the thing you do, dear,
It's the thing you've left undone,
Which gives you a bit of heartache
At the setting of the sun.
The tender word forgotten,
The letter you did not write,
The flower you might have sent, dear,
Are your haunting ghosts to-night.
For life is all too short, dear,
And sorrow is all too great,
To suffer our slow compassion,
That tarries until too late.
And it's not the thing you do, dear,
It's the thing you leave undone,
Which gives you the bit of heartache,
At the setting of the sun.

SELF-SACRIFICE.

Susie came hurrying home from school one afternoon to prepare for a long walk in the woods which her teacher had promised the class. "We are to carry our lunch-baskets, mother," she cried, "and have a picnic. Won't it be splendid?"

"I hope you'll enjoy it, dear," replied her mother faintly; and then Susie noticed for the first time that her mother was really sick. Little Bessie, too, had a very lonely look as she sat on the floor with her toys.

"You have one of your bad headaches, mother, I am afraid," said Susie, "and I had better stay at home to-day." But Mrs. Parker could not bear her daughter to lose such a treat, and urged her to go. Susie hesitated a little; it was pretty hard to give it up; but presently she smiled, and, kissing her mother, said, "No, I could not be happy to leave you when you are so sick; I must take care of you."

Then she bathed the aching head, and urged her mother to try and sleep, while she kept little Bessie so quiet that presently the child fell asleep in her arms, and she put her gently in the cradle. Next, she got supper ready, so that when her father came in he found mamma looking better and everything ready and in order.

In answer to his question, Susie heard her mother say, "Oh, I am much better, for I have had the rest I needed. Susie has been so good, and gave up her afternoon's pleasure of her own accord to stay at home and help me. She is such a comfort, I do not know what I should do without her."

And when, added to this praise, Susie received her father's hearty kiss and words of approval, she felt more than repaid for the sacrifice she had made. She was following the dear Saviour, who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister unto (or serve) others.

PARENTS AND DAUGHTERS.

The poorest girls in the world are those who have never been taught to work. There are thousands of them. They have been taught to despise labour and depend upon others for a living, and are perfectly helpless. The most forlorn and miserable women belong to this class. It belongs to parents to protect their daughters from this deplorable condition. Every daughter ought to be taught to earn her own living. The rich are very likely to become poor, and the poor rich. The good Lord, whose Son worked with his own hands, intended that none should be idle.—Morning Star.

A GOLD MEDAL.

I shall never forget a lesson I received when at school at A. We saw a boy named Watson driving a cow to pasture. In the evening he drove her back again, we did not know where, and this was continued several weeks.

The boys attending the school were nearly all sons of wealthy parents, and some of them were dunces enough to

look with disdain on a scholar who had to drive a cow.

With admirable good nature Watson bore all their attempts to annoy him.

"I suppose, Watson," said Jackson, another boy, one day—"I suppose your father intends to make a milkman of you?"

"Why not?" asked Watson.
"Oh, nothing. Only don't leave much water in the cans after you rinse them—that's all."

The boys laughed, and Watson, not in the least mortified, replied: "Never fear. If ever I am a milkman, I'll give good measure and good milk."

The day after this conversation there was a public examination, at which ladies and gentlemen from the neighbouring towns were present, and prizes were awarded by the principal of our school, and both Watson and Jackson received a creditable number, for, in re-

had unintentionally caused the disaster, none followed to learn the fate of the wounded lad. There was one boy, however, who witnessed the accident from a distance, who not only went to make inquiries, but stayed to render service.

"This boy soon learned that the wounded boy was the grandson of a poor widow, whose sole support consisted in selling the milk of a cow, of which she was the owner. She was old and lame, and her grandson, on whom she depended to drive her cow to the pasture, was now helpless with his bruises. 'Never mind, good woman,' said the boy, 'I will drive the cow.'"

But his kindness did not stop there. Money was wanted to get articles from the apothecary. 'I have money that my mother sent me to buy a pair of boots with,' said he, 'but I can do without them for a while.' 'Oh, no,' said the old woman, 'I can't consent to that, but

ask you was there not true heroism in this boy's conduct? Nay, Master Watson, do not get out of sight behind the blackboard. You were not afraid of ridicule, you must not be afraid of praise."

As Watson, with blushing cheeks, came forward, a round of applause spoke the general approbation, and the medal was presented to him amid the cheers of the audience.

BROWNING AS A BOY.

You might easily guess that Robert Browning would not be like other boys, but there are some points of difference wherein it would be well for the "other" boys to be like him. The first point I would hold up for imitation is his kindness to animals. He had great love for them, and the knowledge of animals shown in his writings is largely due to his friendship for them in his childhood.

"It is a mark of a king you know, according to Dr Conwell. You have heard probably how passionately fond of dogs were those kings of poetry, Scott and Byron, and how that queen of art, Rosa Bonheur, tames animals, even the king of beasts, by love and kindness alone. But Browning did not only love those animals which most boys love; he still further showed his kingship by loving those which most boys hate, and tease, and kill.

Have you ever read "Aunt Jo's" pretty story of the little girl who started out to found a hospital for needy animals and insects, and who took in first a wounded snake, whereat she thought she obeyed the command, "Love your enemies"? Well, Browning loved them, not as enemies, but as friends; and his father used to come home sometimes bringing his pockets full, not of sweetmeats, but of snakes, for his little boy, who admired their beautiful colours and graceful curves.

He also made pets of toads and frogs; he never threw sticks at them or gave them any reason to fear him in any way. Having gained the confidence of one particular toad, it became so attached to the future poet that it would follow him. He used to visit it daily, where it burrowed under a white-rose tree, call it forth by a few grains of gravel dropped into the hole, and the creature, recognizing the signal, would crawl forth and allow its head to be gently tickled, and would reward the act with a loving glance of the soft full eyes, to which Browning refers to in one of his poems.

Browning was a handsome boy; vigorous, fearless, very active; and it may comfort some of us to know he had a fiery temper. He was very affectionate, however. He never had a brother or sister, and so I do not know whether he would have teased them or not, but his mother "filled his heart." He never could sit beside her otherwise than with an arm around her waist, and never, even when he was a grown-up man, went to bed at night without a good-night kiss, when he was where his mother was. If this had been all there was to his affection, the outward show only, it would have been worth very little; but all his acts and words "accorded thereto," and in his reverence for his mother, Browning was a model son, as he was afterward a model husband.—Selected.

A little fellow who had his wits about him, when the contribution-plate was passed at church, administered a rebuke to his mother, who, on the way home, was finding fault with the sermon. "Well, mother," he said, innocently, "what could you expect for a cent?"

"Do you sell good, honest goods, my man?" asked the fussy man. "Well," said the baker, thoughtfully rubbing flour on the end of his nose, "I have an idea that the soda-crackers are square, but, to tell you the truth, I am almost sure that the pretzels are crooked."



SELF-SACRIFICE.

spect to scholarship, they were about equal. After the ceremony of distribution, the principal remarked that there was one prize, consisting of a gold medal, which was rarely awarded, not so much on account of its great cost, as because the instances were rare which rendered its bestowal proper. It was the prize of heroism. The last medal was awarded about three years ago to a boy in the first class who rescued a poor girl from drowning.

The principal then said that, with the permission of the company, he would relate a short anecdote.

"Not long since, some boys were flying a kite in the street, just as a poor lad on horseback rode by on his way to the mill. The horse took fright and threw the boy, injuring him so badly that he was carried home and confined some weeks to his bed. Of the boys who

here is a pair of heavy boots that I bought for Thomas, who can't wear them. If you would only buy these, we should get on nicely.' The boy bought the boots, clumsy as they were, and has worn them up to this time.

"Well, when it was discovered by the other boys at the school that our scholar was in the habit of driving a cow, he was assailed every day with laughter and ridicule. His cowhide boots in particular were made matter of mirth. But he kept on cheerfully and bravely, day after day, never shunning observation, driving the widow's cow and wearing his thick boots. He never explained why he drove the cow, for he was not inclined to make a boast of his charitable motives. It was by mere accident that his kindness and self-denial was discovered by his teacher.

"And now, ladies and gentlemen, I