

A LITTLE GOOSEY.

The following exquisitely simple verses, from the pen of an "Unknown," will touch the heart of every father and mother:

THE chill November day was dour,
The working world home faring;
The wind came roaring through the streets
And set the gas-lights flaring;
And hopelessly and aimlessly
The wared old leaves were flying;
When, mingling with the sighing wind,
I heard a small voice crying—

And shivering on the corner stood
A child of four or over;
No cloak or hat her small soft arms,
And wind-blown curls to cover,
Her dimpled face was stained with tears;
Her round, blue eyes run over,
She cherished in her wee, cold hand,
A bunch of faded clover;

And one hand round her treasure, while
She slipped in mine the other.
Half scared, half confidential, said,
"O, please, I want my mother."
"Tell me your street and number, pet;
Don't cry, I'll take you to it."
"Cobbling," she answered, "I forget;
The organ made me do it."

"He came and played at Miller's steps;
The monkey took the money,
And so I followed down the street.
That monkey was a funny
I've walked about a hundred hours
From one street to another;
The monkey's gone, I've spoiled my flowers—
O, please, I want my mother."

"But what's your mother's name, and what
The street? now think a minute."
"My mother's name is mamma dear—
The street—I can't begin it."
"Put what is strange about the house,
Or now, not like the others?"
"I guess you mean my trundle-bed,
Mama and my little brother's."

"O dear, I ought to be at home
To help him say his prayers,
He's such a baby he forgets,
And we are both such players—
And there's a bar between to keep
From pitching on each other,
For Harry rolls when he's asleep;
O! dear I want my mother."

The sky grew stormy, people passed
All muffled homeward faring,
"You'll have to spend the night with me,"
I said at last, despairing.
I tied a kerchief round her neck—
"What ribbon's this, my blossom?"
"Why, don't you know?" she smiling asked,
And drew it from her bosom.

A card with number, street and name;
My eyes astonished met it;
"For," said the little one, "you see
I might sometimes forget it;
And so I wear a little thing
That tells you all about it;
For mother says she's very sure
I would get lost without it."

A COURAGEOUS ACT.

LAURENCE BALDWIN was the oldest son of a clergyman living in the suburbs of a seaport town on the New England coast. The position of eldest son is always of more or less dignity, but when there are five younger brothers, and as many sisters, it is a position of responsibility and importance as well. At least that is the way Laurence looked at it. No doubt he often presumed upon his position—most boys in the case would have done so; but on the whole, he was rather above the average elder brother, and his rule was more kind than severe. Sometimes, however, his same position was more irksome than pleasant. This was the case one afternoon in April, when Laurence was called away from a comfortable spot in the library, where he was settled with a book, to drive into town and

execute several commissions for his mother. It was cold even for April. A violent storm had occurred the day before, and, although it was now over, there were sufficient traces of it left, in the shape of mud, wind, and clouds, to make a cosy library a desirable place. But duties must be done, however distasteful, and Laurence, though he grumbled a little, shook himself together and started. As he drove from the house he noticed one of his younger brothers playing in a skiff which was drawn up on the shore at the foot of the lawn. The little fellow had a pole and seemed trying to push the skiff out into the water. "Come out of that, Horace!" he called; "you will get adrift, and the tide will float you away." "I'll come in a minute, Laurie," the boy answered, as his brother drove down the road. Laurence had not driven very far when he met his father, who wished to use the horse Laurence was driving. It was a little aggravating to be stopped, but there was nothing to do but to turn back and get another horse. As Laurence had to wait some little while for the coachman to make the desired change, he went up to his mother, who was ill in her room, to receive further directions about his various commissions.

While there, his little brother Eugene ran into the room, and, catching him by the coat, tried to attract his attention. "Be quiet, child!" he said, impatiently, "I can't talk to mother if you bother so." "But, Laurie, I must speak to you," said the boy, in a frightened whisper. He looked into the troubled face of the child, and saw instantly something was wrong. "What is it?" he asked, hurriedly. "Horace is adrift in the skiff." One glance from the window which overlooked the water showed him the skiff adrift, and empty. "The boy is overboard!" he exclaimed, as he rushed down-stairs, tearing his coat off as he ran. When out on the lawn he could clearly see the empty skiff, and far out in the water a little black speck, upon which the setting sun, which just then broke through the clouds, shone with brilliancy. He raised a shout: "Keep up, I'm coming!" and worked desperately with his shoes to get them off.

Just then he was seized and held back by the coachman, an old and valued servant. "Don't go, Mr. Laurie," he begged, "you can never do it!" "Let me alone," he cried, and shaking him roughly off, he dashed into the water. He was an experienced swimmer, but even to him its icy coldness was terrible. It was hard work; but he was brave and strong, and encouraged by the shouts of those who had collected on the shore, he reached at last the little head, and caught desperately at it just as the benumbed and well-nigh senseless boy was about to sink beneath the surface of the water for the last time. Seizing the child, now a dead weight, if alive at all, Laurence hastened to swim back; but a new difficulty arose. The tide was running out with a force that required great strength to resist it.

Upon the shore all was excitement. Dr. Baldwin, the boy's father, who was unable to swim, was giving orders in quick, peremptory tones, which no one obeyed. Children running hither and thither, the more courageous calling out to encourage the swimmer, the others crying in childish grief and

fright. Augustus, next in age to Laurence, on one of the carriage horses, and the coachman on the other, were trying to ride them into the water that they might swim out and bring Laurence and the boy to land. But frightened by the coldness of the water, they refused to obey, and by their stamping and rearing added to the general confusion. The poor sick mother was alone in her room, praying. At length somebody fastened a rope to a small log of wood, and winding the other end hastily about it, sent it floating out, hoping the tide would carry it within Laurence's reach, so that, by lashing the boy to it, he could swim with greater ease. But one end of the rope had not been securely fastened. The action of the waves loosened it, and floating about, it caught on a rock, which anchored the log fast. For one dreadful moment all seemed hopeless. Laurence felt his strength leaving him. The boy seemed to grow heavier with each stroke. The little pale face looked so quiet, the child must be dead. Laurence was almost discouraged. It seemed so much easier to give up than to struggle on. He would give one cry for help, and the others must do what they could. The cry was given, but unheard amidst the tumult on the shore, and useless if heard. No one could come, no one could help.

Suddenly there came to Laurence a thought of the sick mother alone in her room, praying, as he knew she was, for her boys. This thought seemed to nerve him with new courage. With a deep-felt, though unuttered prayer, he gathered all his remaining strength and pushed boldly for the shore. The group there had grown strangely silent. They were all standing close together, anxiously watching. Not a sound was heard. Nearer and nearer he came. The water grew less deep. Home and safety seemed almost a certainty. Suddenly the group on the shore broke into a loud cheer, which reached the anxious mother's ears. Dr. Baldwin rushed neck-deep into the water. Laurence placed his burden in his father's arms, and sank unconscious. He knew nothing of the willing hands that pulled him ashore, nor of the efforts to restore Horace to consciousness. He was first roused by feeling the cook dash at him, and violently rub his head with a warm toddy which had been prepared. Finding no one capable of drinking it, she determined it should be utilized in some way.

He managed to escape from the well-meant efforts, and was carried off to bed, where, rolled up in blankets, he soon fell asleep. Laurence was a hero. For a long time after that everybody was speaking of his courage and bravery. Boy-like, he enjoyed it. Horace, too, felt he had a share in the glory, for he was heard to say: "Laurie would never have had all this, if it hadn't been for me!"—*Anna M. Talcott.*

THE head of the house brought home a thermometer one very cold night, and hung it in his bed-chamber. Before morning the fire went out, and the temperature in the room fell a great many degrees. His wife got up first in the morning, consulted the thermometer, and, in a tone of surprise, exclaimed, "Why, Harry, it has run down! You must have forgotten to wind it up last night!"

WINGED WORDS.

IF words
Were birds,
And swiftly flew
From tips
To lips
Owned, dear, by you;
Would they,
To day,
Be hawks and crows?
Or blue
And true,
And sweet? Who knows?

Let's play
To-day
We choose the best;
Bird's blue,
And true,
With dove-like breast!
'Tis queer,
My dear,
We never know
That words,
Like birds,
Had wings and flew!
—*St. Nicholas.*

A KNOCK-DOWN ARGUMENT.

A NOTED infidel having concluded a lecture in a town in Yorkshire, representing his doctrines to the people, called upon any person present to reply to his argument, if they could. A collier arose in the assembly, and spoke somewhat as follows:

"Maister, me and my mate Jem were both Christian folk till one of these infidel chaps came this way. Jem turned infidel, and used to badger me 'bout attending prayer-meetings; but one day, in the pit, a large cob of coal came down upon Jem's head. Jem thought he was killed; and, ah! mon! but he did holler and cry to God!" Then turning to the lecturer, with a knowing look, he said:

"Young man, there is now't like cobs of coal for knocking infidelity out of a man."

The collier carried the audience with him, for they well knew that a knock on the head by a big chunk of coal would upset the courage and with it the skepticism of stronger infidels than "my mate Jem." Many an infidel has discarded his infidelity and cried to God for mercy in sickness or in danger, both on land and sea; but who ever heard of a Christian turning from his faith in the hour of peril, and forsaking God when death was at the door!—*Sabbath Reading.*

A SERPENT AMONG THE BOOKS.

A GENTLEMAN in India went into his library one day, and took a book from the shelves. As he did so, he felt a sharp pain in his finger like the prick of a pin. He thought that a pin had been stuck by some careless person in the cover of the book. But soon his finger began to swell and then his arm, and then his whole body; and in a few days he died. It was not a pin among the books but a small and deadly serpent. There are many serpents among the books nowadays. They nestle in the foliage of some of our most fascinating literature; they coil around the flowers whose perfume intoxicates the sense. We read, we are charmed by the plot of the story, by the skill with which the characters are sculptured or grouped, by the gorgeousness of the word-painting—we hardly feel the pin-prick of the evil that is insinuated. But it stings and poisons. When the record is made up, on what multitudes will be inscribed: "Poisoned by serpents among the books."