

JENNY THE CRIPPLE.

THE little cripple passed along
The quiet village street—
The clothes she wore were patched and old,
Yet very clean and neat.
Though she was sickly and deformed,
Her face was sweet and fair;
And the glossy curls around her brow
Proclaimed a mother's care.
Ere long she passed the village school,
As from the open door
A train of boys came shouting forth,
Glad that their tasks were o'er.
A few, more boisterous than the rest,
Themselves erect and strong,
Began to mock the humpbacked girl,
Who quietly walked along.

Once Jenny uttered sharp retorts,
When jests like theirs she heard;
But now that grace had changed her heart
She answered not a word:
Only the blush that dyed her cheek,
And the tear that down it stole,
Showed that the coarse, unfeeling taunts
Had sunk into her soul.

Arrived at home, poor Jenny sought
Her chamber small and bare—
Methinks those thoughtless lads had wept
If they had seen her there.
Beside her lowly bed she knelt,
And sent this prayer to heaven—
"O Father, help me to forgive
As I have been forgiven!"

Dear children, 'tis from God above
Health, strength, and beauty come,
And He in wisdom has withheld
These precious gifts from some:
Be kind to such, and learn to keep.