

'What is it?' panted Rachel, but before he could answer, she saw.

Right behind them a big prairie fire was coming up. Through the tall, dry grass where they had stood just a few minutes before, the fierce fire was sweeping. The flames shot up as high as a house. In a minute the air over them grew full of smoke and flying cinders. Little wild creatures sped by them. And, O, how hot it was!

'O we shall be burned! We shall be burned to death!' sobbed Roxanna.

But Rachel never said a word. She was the kind of girl who keeps still, no matter how frightened she is.

Then there was a horrible rush and roar, and the fire was right above their heads! But the little girls did just what Mr. Pray told them. They put their heads down on the ground, and held them down while the flames were passing. There was no grass close around them to burn; for they were on the bare breaking.

In five minutes the danger was over. The fire had passed. All around them it was black and smoking. They could not step off from the breaking until the ground had cooled. But they were safe.

'O, suppose we had not been near any breaking! Or suppose father had not seen us and called to us!' shuddered Roxanna. 'We should have been burned up!'

And so they surely would have been. But the real thing that saved them from death they never thought of. It was their prompt obedience. If they had not started to run the instant Mr. Pray called to them, the fire would have overtaken them before they got to the breaking. They never thought of that.

Pioneer children were trained to mind.

The Merchants.

(Isabel Mackay, in 'December St. Nicholas.')

I am the Frost,
I'll show you diamonds, laces and
tapestries
Of all variety
At lowest cost;
Weavings of chaste design
Perfect in every line;
Connoisseurs surely will buy of the
Frost.

I am the Dew.
Notice my elegant bracelets and neck-
laces,
'All of rare quality;
Pearls not a few;
Emerald and amethyst;
Opal all rainbow kissed;
Ladies rise early to buy of the Dew.

I am the Snow.
Let me display for you carpets most
exquisite,
Choicest of bordering
Also I show,



—'Little Ones' Annual,' Estes Lauriat, Boston.

Heavy and soft and white,
Spread in a single night;
Folk who have wisdom will buy of the
Snow.

I am the Rain.
Something I'll show you priceless and
wonderful,
Making these offers seem
Tawdry and vain!
'Tis but a cloak of gray
Wrapping the world away—
Happy the few who will buy of the
Rain.

Keep up Your Grit.

The worth of a grindstone lies in its spirit. Sometimes after a stone has stood out in the open sunshine for a long time, it gets so hard that when we try to sharpen some tool on it the effort is a comparative failure. The wheels bearing the stone may go round all right, the boy turning it may sweat like rain, still the stone slips along almost uselessly and you go away with some disgust in your voice as you say: 'That stone has lost its grit. You can't sharpen anything on it!' Lost its grit.

Have you ever seen men who have lost their grit? I met one not long ago, and he was not so very old, either. Just a young man in the high school; but he was saying with a long face and a doleful tone:

'I can't pass my examinations! I shall fail; I know I shall!'

What can a young man do when he has so little heart as that? He is beaten already in the battle. The man who keeps his heart strong and brave is the one who will win.

A farmer boy I knew bought some books and went upstairs in his father's house one winter to study all alone. Some who knew him said he never could do anything that way. He ought to go away somewhere to school. But he bent over those books day after day, learning every lesson as faithfully as he could have done in any school. When the time came he passed his examinations with credit. For three winters that young man toiled on, helping his father during the summer time and digging at the books at odd spells. To-day he is a civil engineer for one of the great railways of this country. His grit was good. It carried him through. —'Sunday School Messenger.'