

ONLY A BOY.

ONLY a boy, with his noise and fun,
The veriest mystery under the sun;
As brimful of mischief and wit and glee
As ever a human frame can be,
And as hard to manage as—ah! ah! me!
'Tis hard to tell,
Yet we love him well.

Only a boy, with his fearful tread,
Who cannot be driven, but must be led;
Who troubles the neighbours' dogs and cats,
And tears more clothes, and spoils more
hats,
Loses more tops and kites and bats,
Than would stock a store
For a year or more.

Only a boy, with his wild, strange ways,
With his idle hours on busy days;
With his queer remarks and odd replies,
Sometimes foolish and sometimes wise,
Often brilliant for one of his size
As a meteor hurled
From the pleasant world.

Only a boy, who will be a man
If Nature goes on with her first great
plan—
If water, or fire, or some fatal snare
Conspire not to rob us of this our heir,
Our blessing, our trouble, our rest, our care,
Our torment, our joy,
"Only a boy."

HOW MAY TOOK CARE OF THE
BABY.

ONE day when May's mamma sat by the
window sewing, and May was on the floor
playing with baby, Sammy Green came
running in all out of breath and said that
his little brother Dick had fallen into the
cistern, and there was nobody to get him
out. May's mamma said to him, "Take baby
into grandma's room, and she will take care
of you till I come back." Then she ran
back with Sammy as fast as she could.

So May said, "Come, Robbie"—baby's
name was Robbie—and she helped him get
up, for he could only walk a very little by
himself, and they went to grandma's room,
but grandma was not there. Then May
went all around the house calling, "Grand-
ma, grandma, come and take care of Robbie
and me. Mamma's gone away."

But grandma had gone out a little while
before, and there was no one to answer
May.

She was not used to being left alone, and
it was so still, and the big clock in the
sitting-room made such a loud tick,

tick, tick," that she began to be fright-
ened. So she went to the window to
see if mamma was not coming. But there
was no one to be seen but an old beggar
man coming down the road. He had a bag
on his shoulder and he looked up at the
house, and May felt sure he was coming to
put the baby into his bag and carry him
off.

What should she do? She knew. She
would take baby and go to find mamma.
So she took hold of his hand and they went
into the back yard. She was afraid to go
out the front way because the man with the
bag was there. Besides Sammy Green
came to the back-door, and Sammy's mam-
ma, too, when she came every week to wash
for May's mamma, and May thought their
house must be out there somewhere. She
pulled open the big gate and went out into
the street, but Robbie was too tired to walk
and May had to carry him. Pretty soon
they came to a corner and there was the
church. There was no other house to be
seen, and May thought she should never
find the one where mamma had gone. She
was just ready to cry when she remembered
that mamma had told her the church was
God's house. "If we should go into God's
house," she said, "he would take care of us."
So they climbed up the steps. The door
stood open and they went in. Then May
knelt down and said, "Dear God, Robbie
and me have come to your house for you to
please take care of us till mamma comes
home. For Jesus' sake. Amen."

And now she did not feel afraid any more.
But Robbie was tired, and when he found
mamma was not there, he began to cry. So
May sat down and cuddled him up in her
arms and sang to him as mamma used to do,
and pretty soon he was fast asleep. Before
long May was asleep too.

When May's mamma got to Sammy
Green's house she found that the water in the
cistern was not deep enough to drown Dick,
and she soon helped him out. His mother
came home just then, so May's mamma
went back to her own house.

When she found that May and Robbie
were gone, and that grandma, who had just
come in, did not know where they were, she
was very much frightened, and called their
papa in from the field. They went all
around looking for them, and some of the
neighbours helped look too. After awhile
May's papa and another man went into the
church, and there they found the children.
When May woke up and saw her papa, she
said, "We were so 'fraid, and we couldn't
find mamma, so we went to God's house and
he took care of us."

WHAT IT WAS.

OH, they were as happy as happy could be,
Those two little maids who were down by
the sea,
As each with a shovel grasped tight in her
hand,
Like a sturdy young labourer, dug in the
sand.

And it finally happened, while looking
around,
That, alongside a big shell, a star-fish they
found,—
Such a wonderful sight that two pairs of
blue eyes
Grew huge for a moment with puzzled
surprise!

Then—"I know," said one, with her face
growing bright,
"It's the dear little star that we've watched
every night;
But last night, when we looked, it was no-
where on high,
So, of course, it has dropped from its home
in the sky!"

"IT BELONGS TO ME."

"MAMMA, may I take 'Dollie' into bed
with me?" pleaded a little blue-eyed
speaker.

"Why do you want 'Dollie' in bed with
you?" asked the mother, smiling.

"Because I love her," was the ready
answer.

"Why do you love her, darling?"

"Because she belongs to me."

"And why do I love you?" still ques-
tioned the mother.

"Because I am your own little girl," said
the child, looking up affectionately.

"Then, dear one, you know how and why
the good Lord Jesus loves his little lambs!"

"I WILL BE GOOD."

AT the age of twelve it was thought nec-
essary to tell Victoria that she was the near-
est heir to the throne. It was done in a
very quiet way. A genealogical table was
put into her historical book. When the
princess opened it, she read on to the end,
and then remarked to her governess, "I see
I am nearer the throne than I thought."

"So it is, madam," replied her teacher.

After some silent moments, Victoria very
gravely said, "Now many a child would
boast, but they don't know the difficulty.
There is much splendour, but there is more
responsibility."

She then gave her hand to the governess,
saying, "I will be good—I will be good."