

A PRETTY GOWN

All the shop windows in town are full,
Of silk and cotton and gingham and wool,
But none of them show a gown so gay
As the one Mrs. Humming-bird wears to-day,

'Tis the very same fashion her grand-
mother wore,

And hasn't a seam or a pucker or gore:
The sun doesn't fade it, the rain doesn't
spot,

And it's just the right thing, whether
chilly or hot.

'Tis a perfect fit, and it won't wear out.
But will last her as long as she lives, no
doubt.

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Happy Days.

TORONTO, MAY 23, 1897.

A CHILD'S FAITH.

The unbounded faith of little children in their fathers, mothers and nurses, or anyone who has charge of them, is one of the most beautiful things in life. Such a trust was commended by Christ when he taught his disciples to become as "little children" to enter the kingdom of God. This implicit confidence of a child sometimes, however, provokes a smile.

Little Robert Smith was the oldest of a house full of children. His mother procured the help of a kind nurse named Elizabeth Hogan, familiarly called "Betsy." She won the heart of little Robert by her watchful care of him, and he supposed there was nothing too difficult for her to accomplish.

Taking a ride through a picturesque section one day with his mother, who saw him admiring the bluffs mantled with evergreen, she thought it a good time to teach him a lesson about the Creator. She asked: "Robbie, who made the world?"

Without the least hesitation he looked up and said, "Betsy made it."

WHAT SHALL WE SAY TO PAPA?

Then he is far away, that is evident Oh, yes, far away from his boy and girl: and between his home and the country of his adoption a wide waste of water spreads. He is not away on business to get rich, but is on the King's business, and bringing to the poor of his subjects the best of all riches. The father of Gerty and Bob is a missionary.

"I say, Gertie, let's send him a real jolly letter; won't he be glad to get it out there?"

Yes, that he will. Now, what shall I say next, Bob? Let's see, I have told him all the school news; all the home intelligence, including that about Jacko jumping through the kitchen window, and I have sent him some of the best mignonette from the front garden.

"Look here, Gerty, I'll tell you what. Let's fill all the rest up with love."

"What a good idea, Bob! But what shall I say?"

They put their little heads together, and, written in Bob's bold and better copper-plate, were added these words:

"Oh, darling papa, we love you so much, and if we had all the words in the dictionaries we could not tell how much we love you. God bless you a thousand times, dear father; don't be down-hearted if you are tired, and the black people are not nice with you. We are praying for you ever so much. Last night poor Gerty was lying awake with the toothache, and after she had repeated all the verses she knew, she said: 'Now I'll pray for papa, till I go to sleep.' Good-bye, father darling; we kiss this letter for you, and tell it to carry all the love it can to you—xxx xxx—that's three from each of us."

About a month after this a weary missionary was sitting under a tree in a far-off land; he had spoken the Word of Life and felt just a bit down-hearted—the people were so ignorant and so far from God. Presently a black native came running to him with a bit of paper folded like an envelope. It had come up from the coast. He broke open the seal, and with trembling fingers held the letter from his boy and girl. Tears came so fast that it took him a long time to get through it; and when it was done he put it near his heart, and, looking up to that blue heaven, which also looked down upon his home in America, he said: "Lord God, I thank thee for this message of love and hope from my dear ones." And so he took heart, and the people said the white man had found a treasure. Yes, so he had.

Negroes of all ages go to school down South. In one school a woman seventy-five years of age goes with her children, and in another a man ten years older is learning his A B C.

"O mother!" said a dear little girl, "it seems when I lay my head on the pillow, and am going to sleep, as if God was speaking sweet to me." How blessed to go to sleep so!

BARKIS.

Leslie brought him home one day. He had jumped from a passing train, and his owner had not cared enough for him to return and claim him. So he stayed with us—a little scrap of a little black and white dog, with friendly eyes, a stubby tail, and a bark joyous and incessant.

Everybody made jokes on that bark.

Hal, the punster of the family, assured visitors that our dog's "bark wasn't on the seas (seize)!"

Father called the dog "Hickory" at first, because "his bark stuck so tightly!"

But it was mother who gave him his real name, for, when the family were discussing the question as to whether the newcomer should stay, she remarked that "Barkis was willin'."

And thus Barkis found a home and a name, and, we may add, soon proved himself to be a friend, and the protector of the family.

One night when everybody was sound asleep, grandma and little Leslie were awakened by Barkis' tiny but energetic "bow-wow."

"Seems as though he was making more noise than usual," said Leslie, sleepily.

"That's so," said grandma. "He comes tearing up the steps and then rushes down to the barn again. I guess he must be baying at the moon."

Leslie crept out of bed and went to the window, standing there a minute or two in his white nightgown.

Suddenly he whispered excitedly, "O grandma! I believe some one is trying to steal Sam!"

Sam was father's beautiful cream-coloured horse that was worth ever so many dollars.

"I hear a noise down at the barn," continued Leslie. "There is a sound as if some one were throwing things at Barkis, and he gives a yelp and starts up barking again."

Grandma sat up in bed, the white frill of her night-cap bristling around her face.

"Better run down-stairs and rouse your parents, child," she said, adding, "I suppose we'll be laughed at, though."

But nobody felt like laughing, for when father and the hired man left the house they heard the sound of hurried footsteps down by the barn, and when they reached the building there was the big door open, and Sam, wild-eyed with fright, standing in his stall with part of his harness on.

Horse thieves had been there sure enough.

And wasn't Barkis delighted that he had aroused the folks in time! He jumped and leaped and wagged his stubby tail. He didn't mind now how the thieves had pelted him with potatoes from the bin in the barn—the yard was sprinkled with them.

Good, faithful Barkis! how all the family loved him after that, and the best bone was always given him. Nobody complained of his noise. He might bay or howl, yelp or whine, he was sure to get a friendly pat and the complimentary words, "Good dog! he saved our Sam!"