

all just put on the shoes and sing, beating time with their hands, and while they sing—so it seems—they get to feeling that they must beat time with their feet too. Thereupon another says, "What do you say? Suppose we beat time with our feet once, taking care not to tumble?" Upon which all exclaim together, "Just so! That's the idea! We'll do it once taking care not to tumble." And when they lift up their feet they just roll over, and then they are beaten to death and their blood is drawn off. So the story goes.

Still this is a story from away over in China, and whether in old times it ever happened or not—that I do not know; however, one does come across a good many of this kind of Shōjo nowadays and here in Japan. The moral of the story is not a difficult one to understand, and one would not make a very great mistake in adding "and here in Canada also." II.

"LET NOT THE SUN GO DOWN UPON YOUR WRATH."

"FATHER, forgive us," is our daily prayer,
When the worn spirit feels its helpless
dearth;

Yet, in our lowly greatness, do we dare
To seek from Heaven what we refuse on
earth.

Too often will the bosom, sternly proud,
Bear shafts of vengeance on its graveward
path;

Deaf to the teaching that has cried aloud,
"Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

We ask for mercy from the Throne above,
In morning worship and in vesper song,
And let us kindly shed the balm of love,

To heal and soothe a brother's deed of wrong.
If ye would crush the bitter thorns of strife,
And strew the bloom of peace around your
path—

If ye would drink the sweetest streams of life,
"Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

Were this remembered, many a human lot
Would find more blessings in his home
below;

The chequered world would lose its darkest blot,
And mortal record tell much less of woe,
The sacred counsels of the Wise impart

No holier words in all that language hath;
For light divine is kindled, where the heart
Lets not the sun go down upon its wrath.

—*Eliza Cook.*

"ACTIONS speak louder than words,"—and so does inaction. The man who does a mean act in spite of his verbal professions is likely to find his condemnation in that act. But the Christian who professes service to his Master, and yet does no specific work for him,—does not his inaction speak his condemnation in spite of his words?—*S. S. Times.*

The Birds' Christmas Carol.

Continued.

SARAH MAUD couldn't have scrubbed with any more decision and force if she had been doing floors, and the little Ruggleses bore it bravely, not from natural heroism, but for the joy that was set before them. Not being satisfied, however, with the "tone" of their complexions, she wound up operations by applying a little Bristol brick from the knife-board, which served as the proverbial "last straw," from under which the little Ruggleses issued rather red and raw and out of temper. When the clock struck three they were all clothed, and most of them in their right minds, ready for those last touches that always take the most time. Kitty's red hair was curled in thirty-four ringlets, Sarah Maud's was braided in one pig-tail, and Susan's and Eily's in two braids apiece, while Peoria's resisted all advances in the shape of hair oils and stuck out straight on all sides, like that of the Circassian girl of the circus—so Clem said; and he was sent into the bedroom for it too, from whence he was dragged out forgivingly by Peoria herself, five minutes later. Then—exciting moment—came linen collars for some and neckties and bows for others, and Eureka! the Ruggleses were dressed. A row of seats was formed directly through the middle of the kitchen. There were not quite chairs enough for ten, since the family had rarely all wanted to sit down at once, somebody always being out, or in bed, but the wood-box and the coal-hod finished out the line nicely. The children took their places according to age, Sarah Maud at the head and Larry on the coal-hod, and Mrs. Ruggles seated herself in front, surveying them proudly as she wiped the sweat of honest toil from her brow.

"Well," she exclaimed, "if I do say so as shouldn't, I never see a cleaner, more stylish mess o' children in my life! I do wish Ruggles could look at ye for a minute! Now, I've often told ye what kind of a family the McGrills was. I've got some reason to be proud; your uncle is on the po-lice force o' New York city; you can take up the newspaper most any day an' see his name printed right out—James McGrill, and I can't have my children fetched up common, like some folks. When they go out they've got to have close, and learn ter act decent! Now, I want ter

see how yer goin' ter behave when yer git there to-night. Lets start in at the beginnin' n act out the whole business. Pile into the bed-room there, every last one of ye, an' show me how yer goin' ter go in't the parlor. This'll be the parlor 'n I'll be Mis' Bird." The youngsters hustled into the next room in high glee, and Mrs. Ruggles drew herself up in her chair with an infinitely haughty and purse-proud expression that much better suited a descendant of the McGrills than modest Mrs. Bird. The bed room was small, and there presently ensued such a clatter that you would have thought a herd of wild cattle had broken loose; the door opened, and they straggled in, all the little ones giggling, with Sarah Maud at the head, looking as if she had been caught in the act of stealing sheep; while Larry, being last in line, seemed to think the door a sort of gate of heaven which would be shut in his face if he didn't get there in time; accordingly he struggled ahead of his elders and disgraced himself by tumbling in head foremost.

Mrs. Ruggles looked severe. "There, I knew yer'd do it in some sech fool-way,—try it agin' n if Larry can't come in on two legs he can stay ter home!"

The matter began to assume a graver aspect; the little Ruggleses stopped giggling and backed into the bed-room, issuing presently with lock step, Indian file, a scared and hunted expression on every countenance.

"No, no, no!" cried Mrs. Ruggles, in despair. "Yer look for all the world like a gang o' pris'ners; there aint no style ter that; spread out more, can't yer, an' act kind o' careless like—nobody's goin' ter kill ye!" The third time brought deserved success, and the pupils took their seats in the row. "Now, yer know," said Mrs. Ruggles, "there aint enough decent hats to go round, an' if there was I don't know's I'd let yer wear 'em, for the boys would never think to take 'em off when they got inside—but, anyhow, there aint enough good ones. Now, look me in the eye. You needn't wear no hats, none of yer, an' when yer get in't the parlor 'n they ask yer ter lay off yer hats, Sarah Maud must speak up an' say it was sech a pleasant evenin' an' sech a short walk that you left yer hats to home to save trouble. Now, can you remember?"

All the little Ruggleses shouted, "Yes, marm," in chorus.