

GROWING.

A little rain and a little sun,
And a little pearly dew,
And a pushing up and a reaching out,
Then leaves and tendrils all about—
And that's the way the flowers grow,
Don't you know?

A little work and a little play,
And lots of quiet sleep;
A cheerful heart and a sunny face,
And lessons learned and things in place—
Ah, that's the way the children grow,
Don't you know?

—*Little Men and Women.*

THE ENCHANTED GROUND.

BY BEECHHOLME.

"Mother said 'Come straight home,'" urged Jessie.

"Well, this is straight; it's only going through the wood instead of along the dusty old road. Come along, Jess. Look how shady and pleasant it is in there;



LEARNING TO READ.

just like Dene Wood, where we used to gather primroses before we came to live here. Perhaps there will be primroses and violets here."

"Mother does love violets," said Jessie; "but then, Edgar, we know our way over every little bit of Dene Wood, and this looks so big and—"

"Well, come or not, just as you like," shouted Edgar, already half over the stile leading amongst the tempting shades; and poor Jessie could not choose but follow, for she was too timid to attempt to go home alone.

And indeed it was lovely in the wood—"far nicer than Dene Wood," Edgar declared, and Jessie soon forgot her fears when, in a clear place among the trees, on the loveliest fairy-like banks, she found two or three real violets.

"You see, Jessie," said Edgar, "the path leads quite straight along the side of the road, so we are going straight home after all."

But, unnoticed by the children, they

were gradually leaving the edge of the wood and going farther into its depths. After walking what seemed to Jessie a very, very long time, she ventured to put into words a thought that was in Edgar's mind also. "Aren't we a long time getting through the wood?"

"We shall be out directly," said Edgar doubtfully.

But they seemed every moment to get into more difficulty as the trees grew thicker, and they could hardly see the path.

At last Edgar gave up. "We are lost, Jessie," he said, with a very pale, anxious look on his face.

"Like the babes in the wood," said Jessie, feeling quite important for a moment. "O Edgar, what will mother do?" And Jessie at that thought began to cry.

"We shall not be lost long; don't cry," said Edgar, trying to speak cheerfully. "Be quiet, Jessie, while I shout." And he put his hand up around his mouth and gave a long, shrill "Halloo."

Both children were terribly startled

"My little gentleman, did you ever read about Christian and Hopeful getting on the Enchanted Ground and then to Doubting Castle? That was because they thought the path ran straight by the side of the road. But there, perhaps you know no better."

"Yes," said Edgar slowly. "Mother told us to come straight home. It was all my fault."

"Well, well, child, you have had your punishment. Come now with me and rest a bit."

"Can't you tell us the way home?" said Jessie, who had quite decided the old woman was good, as she had read "Pilgrim's Progress." "Mother will be so frightened."

"Who is your mother, my dear child?"

"Mrs. Rogers, and father is the Wesleyan minister at Bursham."

But Jessie was more surprised than ever when the old lady gave her a hearty kiss, and told her she was the image of her father.

"Do you know him?" said Edgar.

"I do very well, my boy, and, what's more, he is coming to preach at our little chapel to-night, and you can stay with me till he comes."

Edgar looked as if he would like to do so, but Jessie said, "Oh, thank you; but mother would be so frightened."

"Well, my dear, she very likely would, but you can't possibly find your own way home, and I have no one to send with you, and it is too far for my old legs—and for your young ones, too, I'm afraid. Well, come and rest a bit, at any rate." And the children thankfully agreed.

What a nice little cottage it was! only so lonely—just on the outskirts of the wood.

Mrs. Spire—that was the old lady's name—gave them some bread and butter and milk; and then she remembered that Jones' milk-cart passed every night, and she was sure he would take the children to Bursham, as it was only a little out of his way.

So the children's adventure ended happily—more happily than at least one of them deserved—for the ride in the milk-cart was quite a treat. But when they drew up at their own door, and saw mother's pale face, and heard her tell how alarmed she had been at their long absence, they resolved, or, perhaps, I should say, that Edgar resolved—not to travel from the straight road onto the Enchanted Ground again without a sure guide.

Later on in the summer their father took them himself through the wood to see old Mrs. Spire. You may be sure she was delighted to see them, and Jessie told her how she had taken her for a fairy, which amused the old woman very much indeed.

Trust in God and always do right.