

SUNBEAM

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No. 17.



THE PLAYMATES.

THE OSTRICH.

The ostrich, because of its resemblance to the camel, has been said to be the connecting link between beasts and birds. There is a horny excrescence on the breast of both the dromedary and the ostrich, on which they lean while resting; they have similarly formed feet; the same muscular neck; their food is much the same, and

both can go an incredibly long time without water. Moreover, an ostrich never flies, nor is it possible for it to lift itself from the ground in the slightest degree by the use of its wings; but, like the camel, it is very swift-footed. In its native country the shells of the eggs afford almost the only household utensils used. An egg will weigh from three to four

pounds, and is equal to two dozen hen's eggs. It requires thirty-five minutes to boil one, and longer if required hard. A fresh egg is worth twenty-five dollars.

The keeper of an ostrich farm says they are the only thing he ever tried that he has not succeeded in taming. They are known to live to be seventy-five years old, and some think they will reach a hun-

dred. They are about eight feet in height. Their hearing and sight are very acute, and these seem to be about all the sense the bird is blessed with. His legs are very powerful, and his only weapon of defence; when he attacks his enemy, he does so by kicking, but always strikes forward and never backward.

The choice "ostrich feathers" are found only in the wings; the undressed feathers vary in price, having been as low as twenty-five dollars per pound and as high as three hundred dollars, and there are from seventy to ninety feathers in a pound. A single bird rarely furnishes more than a dozen fine feathers; and the birds themselves, if fine ones, are valued at one thousand dollars per pair.

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TORONTO, AUGUST 23, 1902.

A BRAVE EXAMPLE.

John was sent to a boarding-school. He had been a Christian for two years, and his mother had received his promise that he would read his Bible and pray every night before getting into bed. When he arrived at the school he found that he was to sleep in a room with three other boys, a year or two older than himself. They were lively boys, and seemed disposed to be friendly with him. When they were ready to jump into their beds one of them, named Andrew, said: "Why don't you go to bed, John?"

John was on the point of giving up his duty, when he asked himself: "Am I more afraid of these three boys than I am of offending the Lord?" Then he said: "I am going to read a chapter in the Bible and say my prayers, first."

"O, you are, are you?" said Andrew.

"But I've got something to say about that." Then, turning to the others, he said: "We don't want any saints in this room; do we, chums?"

The chums made no answer to this, and Andrew began humming a tune as loudly as he dared. John took his Bible and read a chapter, and then knelt down and prayed. Upon rising he was surprised to find two of his room-mates on their knees, and Andrew staring at them with tears in his eyes. All three of these boys had been trained to Christian duty, but on coming to this school had fallen into the temptation of being afraid of one another, and had left off this good old habit. If John, through a cowardice, had not been brave enough that night, very likely all of the boys would have gone farther away from their duty and from their Lord.—*Westminster Junior Quarterly.*

"WHAT DID YOU SAY?"

In a beautiful village, a boy, about ten years old, lay very sick, drawing near to death, and very sad. He was dying, and his heart longed for a treasure worth more to him than all gold. One day I came into his room. I sat down by him, took his hand, and, looking into his face, asked him what made him so sad.

"O!" said he, "I want to love God. Won't you tell me how to love God?"

I cannot describe the piteous tones in which he said these words, and the look of trouble which he gave me. I said to him: "My boy, you must trust God first, and then you will love him without trying at all."

With a surprised look he exclaimed: "What did you say?"

I repeated the exact words again, and I shall never forget how his large eyes opened on me and his cheek flushed as he slowly said: "Well! I never knew that before. I always thought I must love God first, before I had any right to trust him."

"No, my dear boy," I answered; "God wants us to trust him. That is what Jesus always asks us to do first of all; and he knows that as soon as we trust him we shall begin to love him. That is the way to love God—to put your trust in him first of all."

Then I spoke to him of the Lord Jesus, and how God sent him, that we might believe in him; and how, all through his life, he tried to win the trust of men; how grieved he was when men would not believe him, and how every one who believed came to love without trying to love at all.

He drank in all truth; and simply saying, "I will trust Jesus now," without an effort put himself in Christ's hands that very hour. And so he came into the peace of God, which passeth understanding, and lived in it calmly and sweetly to the end.

None of the loving friends who watched over him during the remaining weeks of his life doubted that the dear boy had learned to love God without trying to; and that dying he went to Him whom, not having seen, he had loved.

SING IT.

When I was a little boy I used to play with my brother and sister under the window where mother sat knitting. She rarely looked out, but the moment we got angry she always seemed to know, and her voice would come through the window, saying: "Sing it, children, sing it!"

Once, I remember, we were playing marbles, and I shouted out to my brother: "You cheated!"

"I didn't!"

"You did!"

"Sing it, children, sing it!"

We were silent. We couldn't sing it. We began to feel ashamed. Then came the sweet voice, the sweetest but one I ever heard, singing, to the tune of "O, how I love Jesus!" the words:

"O Willie, you cheated!

O Willie, you cheated!

O Willie, you cheated!

But I did not cheat you."

It sounded so ridiculous that we all burst out laughing.

You cannot sing when you are angry; you cannot sing when you are mean; you cannot sing when you are wicked; in other words, you cannot sing unless you feel in some degree faith or hope or charity.—*Selected.*

SLEEPY TOWN.

BY JOSEPH O'CONNOR.

In Sleepy Town

They think a night-cap worth a crown,
And there the law commandeth peace,
And all good people take their ease:
A wise old owl, big-eyed and brown,
He is lord mayor of Sleepy Town.

In Sleepy Town

The wheels are shod with eider-down,
The pavements are all silk and wool;
The quiet there is beautiful;
A bumble-bee in gold-black gown
The beadle is in Sleepy Town.

In Sleepy Town

Black shadows never fall or frown,
Nor do they feel the sunshine's glare;
But gentle twilight reigneth there,
While poppy scents blow up and down
The gardens fair in Sleepy Town.

For Sleepy Town

We'll mount a cloud of vapour brown,
We'll close our eyes and fold our hands
And call a wind from distant lands;
O'er valley's rim and mountain's crown
We'll float away to Sleepy Town.

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WHAT ARE YOU GOOD FOR?

BY EMILY HUNTINGTON MILLER.

"What are you good for, my brave little man?"

Answer that question for me if you can:
You, with your ringlets as bright as the sun,

You, with your fingers as white as a nun.
All the day long with your busy contriving,

Into some mischief and fun you are driving.

See if your wise little noddle can tell
What you are good for—now ponder it well."

Over the carpet the dear little feet
Came with a patter, to climb on my seat;
Two little eyes, full of frolic and glee,
Under their lashes looked up unto me;
Two little hands, pressing close on my face

Drew me down close, in a loving embrace;
Two little lips gave the answer so true,
"Good to love you, mamma—good to love you!"

LESSON NOTES.

THIRD QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

LESSON IX. [Aug. 31.]

THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

Num. 21. 1-9. Memorize verses 6-8.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.—John 3. 14, 15.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

What were the Israelites still doing? Wandering in the wilderness? How long did they wander? Forty years. To what mount did they come? Mount Hor. Who died there? Aaron. What did the people do? They spoke against God and against Moses. What were they tired of? The manna. What came among them? Fiery serpents. What did they do? They bit the people until many died. What did the Lord send? A cure. What was it? A serpent of brass that Moses raised upon a pole. What cured the people? A look at the brazen serpent. What was this the sign of? Christ upon the cross.

DAILY STEPS.

Mon. Read about the serpent in the wilderness. Num. 21. 4-9.

Tues. Find what Jesus said about it. John 3. 14, 15.

Wed. Learn the Golden Text.

Thur. See how the Israelites treated God. Psa. 78. 40-42.

Fri. Find the result of their sin. Psa. 107. 4, 5.

Sat. Learn the way out of trouble. Psa. 107. 6.

Sun. Learn what the cross means to us. John 12. 32.

LESSON X. [Sept. 7.]

THE PROPHET LIKE MOSES.

Deut. 18. 9-19. Memorize verses 17, 19.

GOLDEN TEXT.

This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.—John 6. 14.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

What did the Lord give his people before they came into Canaan? Many words of counsel. Who were they to live near? Idolaters. What did they sometimes do? Make their children pass through the fire. What were the Israelites told to do? To have nothing to do with them. What other people did Moses warn them to avoid? Witches and fortune-tellers. Whom did he promise them? A prophet. What did he say of him? That he should be one of their brethren, like Moses. Why did the Lord wish to come in the form of a man? That the people might not be afraid. What did he wish them to do? To listen to his words. When did he come? About fourteen hundred years afterward. Who was he? The Lord Jesus Christ.

DAILY STEPS.

Mon. Read the lesson verses. Deut. 18. 9, 19.

Tues. Find the Lord's promise of Canaan to Abraham. Gen. 13. 14-17.

Wed. Find the same promise to Isaac. Gen. 26. 2-5.

Thur. Find the same promise to Jacob. Gen. 28. 13-15.

Fri. Learn whom the promised Prophet was. Isa. 9. 6.

Sat. Learn the Golden Text.

Sun. Read a hymn about the Prince of Peace. Hymn 121, Methodist Hymnal.

THE HAPPIEST BOY.

Once a king had a son whom he loved dearly. He gave him beautiful rooms to live in, and pictures and toys and books, a pony to ride and a boat on a lake. He provided teachers to give him knowledge that would make him good and great. But the young prince was not happy. He was always wishing for something that he did not have.

One day a magician came to court. He said to the father of the son: "I can make your son happy, but you must pay me my own price for telling the secret."

"Well," said the king, "what you ask I will give."

So the magician took the boy into a private room. He wrote something with a

white substance on a piece of paper. Next he gave the boy a candle, and told him to light it and hold it under the paper, and then see what he could read. He then went away and asked no price at all. The boy did as he was told, and the white letters on the paper turned into a beautiful blue. They formed these words "Do a kindness to some one every day." The prince made use of the secret, and became the happiest boy in the kingdom.

That is good advice for every boy and girl. Do you not think so? If you do not, try it for a few days. Keep your eyes open, and you will find chances to speak kind words and do little helpful acts that will bring joy to others and happiness to yourself, and you may be as happy as a king.—*Little Ones.*

THE LITTLE CRICKET.

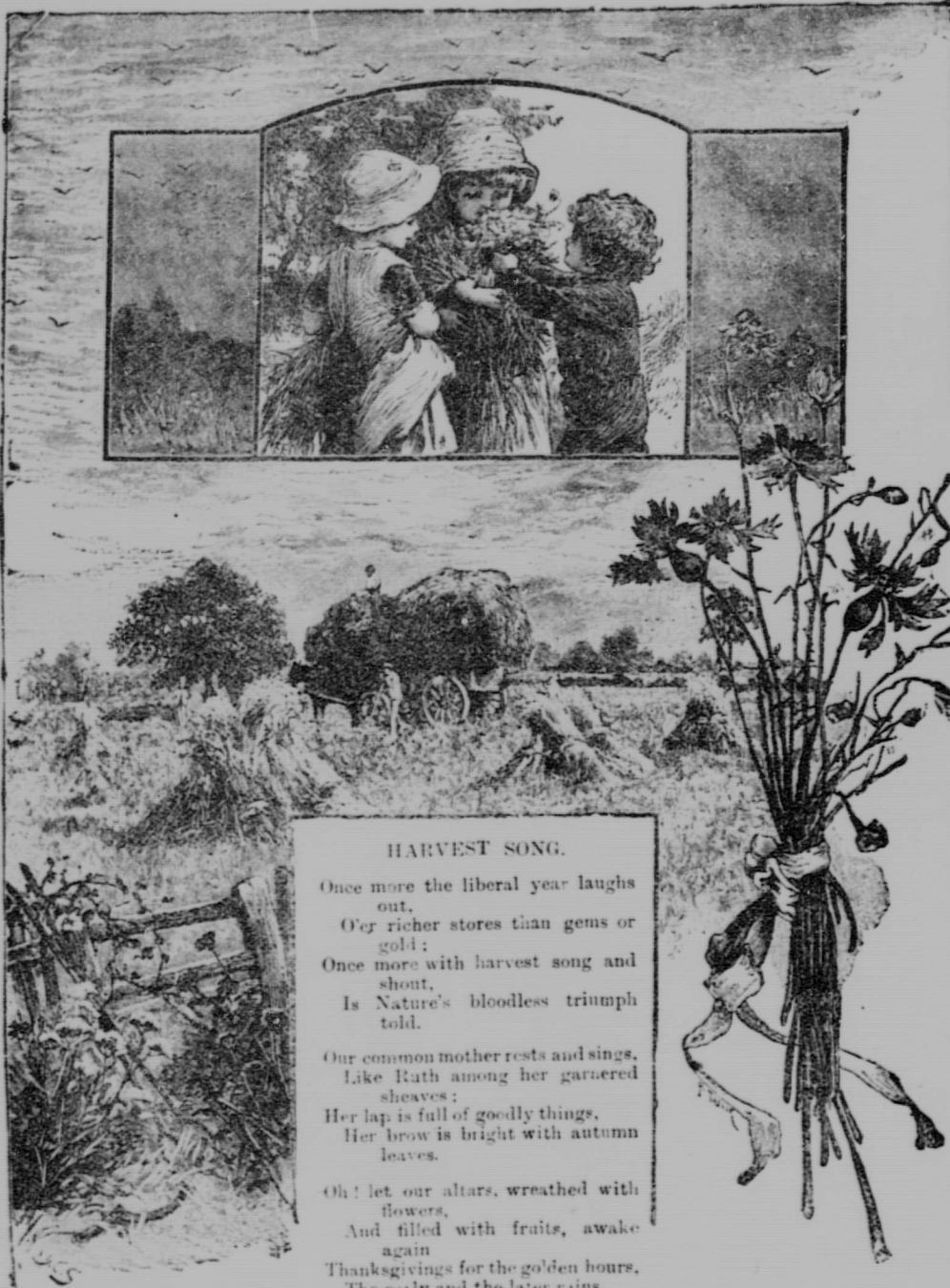
What are you saying
You dear little cricket,
Chirping so shrill
In the dark-green thicket?
Chirping and singing
The whole night through,
Don't you get tired,
And wet with the dew?

I will try to be like you,
You dear little cricket,
Chirping away
In the dark-green thicket.
Whatever God bids me
I'll do with my might,
Though it's only the singing
A song in the night.

—*Picture World.*

HOW BIRDS DRESS WOUNDS.

Many birds, particularly those that are prey for sportsmen, possess the faculty of skilfully dressing wounds. Some will even set bones, taking their own feathers to form proper bandages. A French naturalist writes that on a number of occasions he has killed woodcocks that were, when shot, convalescing from wounds previously received. In every instance he found the old injury neatly dressed with down plucked from the stem feathers and skilfully arranged over the wound, evidently by the long beak of the bird. In some instances a solid plaster was thus formed, and in others bandages had been applied to wounds or broken limbs. One day he killed a bird that evidently had been severely wounded at some recent period. The wound was covered and protected by a sort of network of feathers, which had been plucked by the bird from its own body and so arranged as to form a plaster, completely covering and protecting the wounded surface. The feathers were fairly netted together, passing alternately under and above each other, and forming a textile fabric of great protective power.—*Youth's Chronicle.*



HARVEST SONG.

Once more the liberal year laughs out,
O'er richer stores than gems or gold;
Once more with harvest song and shout,
Is Nature's bloodless triumph told.

Our common mother rests and sings,
Like Ruth among her garnered sheaves;
Her lap is full of goodly things,
Her brow is bright with autumn leaves.

Oh! let our altars, wreathed with flowers,
And filled with fruits, awake again
Thankgivings for the golden hours,
The early and the later rains.

HELPING MOTHER.

"How I love to help mother!" said little Sophie Foster, as, with a sigh of satisfaction, she rose from rocking the cradle. Baby was fast asleep, the gray cat lay winking and blinking before the fire; the sunshine poured in bright and golden, and played with the leaves of the ivy that had been trained over the window. Sophie took a story-book, and sat down to read.

Presently mother came in. She was a sweet-looking lady, with soft-brown eyes and merry smiles, and she came right up to Sophie and kissed her before she knew it. "So baby is asleep. You have been a great comfort to me, dear. My headache is all gone, and now you may put on your red riding-hood and boots and waterproof cloak and go out to play."

Sophie's face was very bright as she skipped over the sidewalk that afternoon. She had denied herself a visit to a little

cousin, that she might help her mother, and she had her reward. An approving conscience is a better thing to have than great possessions.

Do you love to help your mother, little reader? She has done a great deal for you. She has lain awake nights and worked and planned days, all for you. Try if you cannot help her ever so much this week.—*Myrtle*.

A PRINCE OF A BOY.

"He is just a prince of a boy," said Mrs. Hatton of Willie; and I listened and watched, for a prince, you know, is the son of a king, and I wanted to see if Willie was like a king I read of.

When he dropped his hoop and ran in to amuse baby for mamma, and did it so pleasantly, I began to get my answer; when he came out of school, smiling in-

stead of pouting because he had been kept late, I felt pretty sure; but when he cut his apple in two and gave one half to ragged Ned Brown, I was satisfied.

Yes, Willie is a "prince of a boy," because he tries to do just like that King who is kind to all, and like that Son of a King who came to minister, and not to be ministered unto.

BECAUSE.

"There's a lion on my mantelpiece!
There's a pig behind my door!
An elephant and a kangaroo
Are prowling upon my floor!"

"O, aren't you frightened?" "Not at all;
They never make any noise.
I'm not afraid of them, because
They're only the baby's toys."

—*Examiner*.

HITTING THE NAIL.

At a recent Sunday-school concert in an Eastern city, an anecdote which was worth remembering was related to the children.

One of the corporations of the city, being in want of a boy in their mill, a piece of paper was tacked on one of the posts in a prominent place, so that the boys could see it as they passed. The paper read: "Boy wanted. Call at the office tomorrow morning."

At the time indicated a host of boys were at the gate. All were admitted, but the overseer was a little perplexed as to the best way of choosing one from so many, and he said: "Boys, I want only one, and here are a great many. How shall I choose?"

After thinking a moment, he invited them all into the yard, and, driving a nail into one of the large trees, and taking a short stick, told them that the boy who could hit the nail with the stick, standing a little distance from the tree, should have the place.

The boys all tried hard, and, after three trials each, signally failed to hit the nail.

The boys were told to come again next morning; and this time, when the gate was opened, there was but one boy, who, after being admitted, picked up a stick, and, throwing it at the nail, hit it every time.

"How is this?" asked the overseer. "What have you been doing?"

And the boy, looking up with tears in his eyes, said: "You see, sir, I have a poor old mother, and I am a poor boy. I have no father, sir, and I thought that I should like to get the place, and so help her all that I can; and, after going home yesterday, I drove a nail into the barn and have been trying to hit it ever since, and I have come down this morning to try again."—*Selected*.