

SUNBEAM

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No. 17.

LIFE'S FURROWS; OR, THE FALLOW FIELD.

The sun comes up and and the sun
goes down;
The night mist shroudeth the sleep-
ing town,
But if it be dark or if it be day,
If the tempests beat or the breezes
play,
Still here on this upland slope I lie,
Looking up to the changeful sky.

Naught am I but a fallow field;
Never a crop my acres yield.
O'er the wall at my right hand
Stately and green the corn-blades
stand,
And I hear at my left the flying feet
Of the winds that rustle the lending
wheat.

Often while yet the morn is red
I list for our master's eager tread,
He smiles at the young corn's tower-
ing height,

He knows the wheat is a godly sight,
But he glances not at the fallow field,
Whose idle acres no wealth may yield.

Sometimes the shout of the harvesters
The sleeping pulse of my being stirs,
And as one in a dream I seem to feel
The sweep and the rush of the swing-
ing steel,

Or I catch the sound of the gay
refrain
As they heap their wains with the
golden grain.

Yet, O my neighbors, be not too
proud,
Though on every tongue your praise
is loud,

Our mother Nature is kind to me,
And I am beloved by bird and bee,
And never a child that passes by
But turns upon me a grateful eye.

Over my head the skies are blue;
I have my share of the rain and dew;
I bask like you in a summer sun
When the long bright days pass one
by one.

And calm as yours is my sweet repose
Wrapped in the warmth of the win-
te' snows.

For little our loving mother cares



LIFE'S FURROWS.

Which the corn or the daisy bears,
Which is rich with the ripening wheat,
Which with the violet's breath is sweet,

Which is red with the clover bloom,
Or which for the wild sweet-fern makes
room!

Useless under the summer sky,
 Year after year men say I lie.
 Little they know what strength of mine
 I give to the trailing blackberry vine;
 Little they know how the wild grape
 grows,
 Or how my life-blood flushes the rose.
 Little they think of the cups I fill
 For the mosses creeping under the hill;
 Little they think of the feast I spread
 For the wild wee creatures that must be
 fed—
 Squirrel and butterfly, bird and bee,
 And the creeping things that no eye may
 see.
 Lord of the harvest, thou dost know
 How the summers and winters go.
 Never a ship sails east or west
 Laden with treasures at my behest;
 Yet my being thrills to the voice of God
 When I give my gold to the golden-rod.

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Sunbeam.

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TOM'S BATTLE.

"There isn't any use in trying to do good, mother," said Tom Winter, on Sabbath afternoon. "I've tried so hard this week, but it didn't do any good. I get angry so quick. I think every time I never will again; but the next time anything provokes me, away I go before I know it."

"You can conquer your enemy if you meet him in the right way. Remember how David went out to meet Goliath. Who would have thought that he, with only his sling and the little stones he had taken from the brook, could defeat the mighty Philistine? But he did, because he went in the name and strength of the Lord of hosts. Now your temper is your giant.

If you meet him in your own strength, he will defeat you; but if, like David, you go out in God's strength, you will overcome. Try again to-morrow, Tom. Ask God to go with you and help you; and when your enemy rises up against you, fight him down. Say to him that he shall not overcome you, because you fight with God's help and strength."

"Well," promised Tom, "I'll try, but I can't help being afraid."

Everything went smoothly the next day until play hour. The boys were playing ball, and one of them accused Tom of cheating. Instantly his face crimsoned, and he turned toward the accuser, but the angry words died on his lips. His conversation with his mother came into his mind. "I will try, if God will help me," he thought. It was a hard struggle for a minute. He shut his eyes tight together, and all his heart went out in a cry for help and he conquered.

"David killed Goliath, and that was the end of him," said Tom, that night; "but my giant isn't dead, if I did conquer him once."

"I know," said his mother, "but if victory makes you stronger and him weaker; and when the warfare is over, there is a crown of life promised to those who endure to the end."

SALLIE AND THE FLOWERS.

While all persons delight in the beauty and the fragrance of flowers, some few seem to discover in them a spirit of intelligence, and sympathy, and love, capable of responding to the gentle approaches of a human soul.

Sallie was one of these. From the time when she began to manifest any peculiarities of disposition whatever, she began to show a special fondness for flowers. She would move among them as if they had been little children endowed with feelings similar to her own. She sought their companionship and seemed to be most at home with them when most alone with them.

Every colored leaflet, whether found on a slender stalk near the earth, or on the branch of a tree overhead, attracted her attention and kindled her admiration. Quietly and lovingly she would place her hand around every rose or flower of any kind within reach of which she came, and kindly press it toward her face, while inclining her head to it, to behold its beauty and to receive its fragrance. And she would walk under fruit-trees in the spring-time, and look up lovingly and tenderly at the branches covered with white or pale-red blossoms.

One day she was found, when quite a small child, trying to climb the bent trunk of a small peach-tree, some of whose blossoming branches hung just above her head; and, when asked what she was doing there, said that she was "mellin' the flowers."

It was not her fortune always to find her home where flowers grew in great abundance, and richness, and variety. She did not eschew any, however common or poor they might be, that she chanced to find. She seemed capable of discovering soul of beauty even in those that were the ordinary eye the least attractive.

The last place which was known to her as home on earth had a vegetable-garden, but few flowers, and these were not of rich quality. Nevertheless, she would about them and caress them as if they had been the richest and the rarest, and would talk as she stood near them, as if in communion with them. To have heard her and not to have seen her, one would have supposed that she was gently pouring of her soul in confidence to some loved and loving friend.

She never broke forth in exclamations of ecstatic delight in beholding the beautiful things. She rarely uttered words of exalted admiration in regard to them. Usually a smile would dimple her cheeks while she would softly and caressingly speak of something that she had culled from the scanty stock in the garden: "Isn't sweet?" in very much the same manner and tone in which one would speak of a beautiful child.

She loved them, and went about them and talked to them, rather than praise them. She seemed to hold them precious in her heart, rather than on her lips. They were her sisters, gentle, tender, and amiable, like herself; and she, like them, bloomed in beauty for a time, and then faded from the earth.

The last summer went by, and then the flowers, one by one, breathed out their lives. She was left for a season without them, and then she perished, too. When last I saw her grave, I found flowers blooming in brightness and beauty by the side of it, as if they had come to watch and to wait till she should awake and commune with them again.

PITY THE CHILDREN ACROSS THE SEA.

Pity the children across the sea,
 Who never the name of the Christ have heard;
 Dumb idols they worship on bended knees,
 Which see not and hear not a single word.

Pity the children across the sea,
 The Master proclaims in a voice of love;
 "Suffer these children to come to me—
 Of such is the kingdom of God about the city."
 Pity the children across the sea,
 Give them your pennies and pray to-day;
 And God's richest blessings from heaven shall be
 Poured on your hearts when him you obey.

WHEN TO SAY "NO."

"No" is a very little word;
 In one short breath we say it—
 Sometimes 'tis wrong, but often right;
 So let me justly weigh it.
 "No" I must say when asked to swear,
 And "No" when asked to gamble;
 "No" when strong drink I'm urged to
 share;
 "No" to a Sunday's ramble!
 "No," though I'm tempted sore to lie,
 Or steal, and then conceal it;
 And "No" to sin when darkness hides,
 And I alone should feel it.
 Whenever sinners would entice
 My feet from paths of duty,
 "No," I'll unhesitating cry—
 "No, not for price or booty."

God watches how this little word
 By everyone is spoken,
 And knows those children as his own,
 By this one simple token.
 Who promptly utters "No" to wrong,
 Says "Yes" to right, as surely—
 That child has entered wisdom's ways,
 And treads her path securely.

LESSON NOTES.

THIRD QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT FROM
 ISAIAH TO MALACHI.

LESSON IX.—AUGUST 27.

JEREMIAH IN THE DUNGEON.
 Jer. 38. 1-13. Memorize verses 8-10

GOLDEN TEXT.

Blessed are they which are persecuted
 for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the
 kingdom of heaven.—Matt. 5. 10.

DAILY STEPS.

Mon. Read the lesson verses. Jer. 38. 1-13.

Tues. Read Zedekiah's talk with Jeremiah. Jer. 38. 14-24.

Wed. Find where Jeremiah was when Jerusalem was taken. Jer. 38. 28

Thur. Read what was done with him. Jer. 39. 11-14.

Fri. Also what was done for the Ethiopian. Jer. 39. 15-18.

Sat. Learn the Golden Text.

Sun. Read a lament of the captivity. Lam. 5.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

What is Jeremiah sometimes called?
 Why? Who followed Jehoiakim as king
 of Judah? What kind of a man was he?
 Proud and wicked. Who was besieging
 the city? How long was he besieging it?
 Two years. What did Jeremiah tell the
 people? Who were angry with Jeremiah?
 What did they do? What was the king's
 answer? What did they then do with
 Jeremiah? Who was with Jeremiah in
 that awful place? The angels of the
 Lord. What kind man thought about

him? What did he do? What did the king
 say? How did they make it easy for
 Jeremiah? Where did he stay after this?
 What was done for Jeremiah when the
 siege ended? And what for the Ethiopian?

THREE LITTLE LESSONS.

We have learned that—
 1. God's children often pass through
 deep troubles.
 2. He is very near to them then.
 3. And brings them out with a great
 deliverance.

LESSON X.—SEPTEMBER 3.

THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH.

2 Chron. 36. 11-21. Mem. verses 19-21.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Be sure your sin will find you out.
 Num. 32. 23.

DAILY STEPS.

Mon. Read the lesson verses. 2 Chron. 36. 11-21.

Tue. Read the warning of Jeremiah. Jer. 25. 8-11.

Wed. See how the foolish king treated him. Jer. 32. 2-5.

Thur. Learn what Judah ought to have done. Hosea 6. 1.

Fri. Read some true words about God. Psa. 99. 1-5.

Sat. Learn the Golden Text.

Sun. Read a song of the captivity. Psa. 137.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

What sad story have we to tell? Of
 what is it a picture? Who was Nebuchad-
 nezzar? How did he rule the captive
 nations? What change did he make in
 Judah? How old was Zedekiah when he
 became king? Whose grandson was he?
 Was he like his grandfather? What did
 he do? Who followed him? How did
 the Lord try to bring them back? What
 did he have to do at last? What was the
 fate of Solomon's temple? Can you tell
 what they took away to Babylon? What
 about the people? What does Jeremiah
 tell us about it? Can you tell the story of
 the escape? Where was the king taken?
 Why did all this trouble have to come?

THREE LITTLE LESSONS.

We have learned that—
 1. If we sow weeds we must also reap
 them.
 2. If a king will not rule well he must
 learn to serve.
 3. The field and the kingdom belong to
 God.

NELLIE'S TEMPTATION.

"What little girl is this?" the teacher
 asked, and she looked kindly at the child
 who wore a faded dress too small for her
 and a queer hat trimmed with faded rib-
 bons.

"Nellie Potter knows her," said one of
 the scholars.

"I don't either!" said Nellie, and she
 drew her pretty dress away and looked
 ashamed and cross.

"Why, Nellie Potter! I saw you play-
 ing with her last Saturday."

"What of that?" said Nellie, her cheeks
 very red. "I tell you I don't know any-
 thing about her."

"Never mind," said the teacher, "she
 is a little new scholar, and we are glad to
 see her; we will all be very kind to her
 and make her want to come again."

So the children gathered about her and
 were very kind, all but Nellie Potter, who
 kept to one side and looked unhappy. No
 wonder! Poor, foolish, naughty Nellie
 had told what was not true.

The new little girl was the daughter of
 their washerwoman, who lived down on
 Lane Street; only the Saturday before she
 had been at Nellie's home with her mother
 and had played with Nellie for an hour.
 But because she came to Sunday school in
 a faded dress and a queer bonnet, Nellie
 was ashamed to say that she knew her.

It was not strange that, as the lesson
 went on, she began to cry so hard that she
 could not hear what the teacher said, for
 the lesson was about Peter, how he said
 that he did not know Jesus.

"I was just like that, naughty Peter,"
 she told her mother, sobbing bitterly.
 Then mother turned the leaves of the
 Bible and found where it told how sorry
 Peter was, and how Jesus forgave him,
 and Nellie promised that she would never,
 never be so mean again.

A GRASS POULTICE.

When Willie kicked his little sister his
 mother told him she would punish him.
 He forgot or did not care. So he kicked
 her again. His mother called him in the
 house.

"Didn't mother say that she would
 punish you if you kicked your sister
 again?"

"Yes, mother," Willie answered.
 "Well, go into the dining-room and
 wait till mother comes."

Then his mother went out into the yard.
 There she pulled an apronful of grass.
 She came into the house with the big
 bundle. She found her little boy crying.
 He was very much scared. She told him
 what a naughty foot he had. She said
 she must put a poultice on it. So she put
 the grass on Willie's foot and tied it up in
 an apron. She made him lie down on the
 lounge. Poor Willie! He cried and he
 sobbed and he moaned. A gentleman
 came in just then.

"Why, what's the matter with Willie?"
 he asked.

"Oh, he has a naughty foot," his
 mother said. "It will kick his sister. I
 have put on it a grass poultice."

"Oh," the gentleman said, and he un-
 derstood it all, and Willie was so ashamed
 that he didn't look up.



DUEL BETWEEN A LIZARD AND A SCORPION.

SOMETHING ABOUT LIZARDS.

Oh, the kingdom of the lizards!—brown, black, olive-green, leaf-tailed, brown-tailed, turnip-tailed, banded, crested, speckled, but every one a lizard.

In the above statement I did not exhaust the list of colors in the lizard kingdom. We find tints of blue, red, chestnut and yellow. Other features we will notice as together we look at this large, widely-scattered family.

When the spring sun shines on the green lizard, its color is brightest. That master-painter, the sun, when he passes his brush over the earth, does not forget the members of this family. In return, this creature loves the sun. It is just a lazy loafer, seemingly, in localities bathed in sunshine. If one thrust his hand forward as if to seize it, the loafer is gone; he has darted into some safe retreat. Patience and kindness will tame him, and he will come at last and breakfast on gathered flies in one's hand.

There is a lizard called the official skink, which might be loosely translated as the medicinal skink. Once it was highly valued by the doctors. They dried it; they pounded it, and gave it to their patients. "Lizard" was reputed to be a wonderful healer. It is said that the doctors would sometimes prove their belief in this panacea by taking a dose themselves.

This was only fair. They did not hesitate to swallow some of their other remedies, such as "the burnt liver of a hyena," and "the moss from a dead man's skull" was not a dose too difficult for them. Do you laugh? Coming generations may smile and wonder at some of our remedies.

And here is the broad-headed plestiodon, but I will ticket him with an easier name by which he is known—the scorpion lizard. He is a native of our continent; and if he can find the forsaken home of a woodpecker, say, thirty or forty feet above the ground, he is pleased. Without asking who the landlord is, and what the rent may be a month, he drops in at once and is happy. He is called venomous, and can indeed put so much strength into his bite that people will have occasion to remember him at least an hour or two. So that very popular visitor, the mosquito, has enough virulence in his stinger to make us wish him at the bottom of the Atlantic, and yet neither scorpion, lizard nor mosquito is a dreadful creature. This lizard is fond of a home in a tree, lurches on insects, and likes to sip the dew

sparkling on the leaves. Another North American lizard is the five-lined plestiodon, or, as common folks would say, the blue-tail.

And who is this eyeing us out of circular eyelids? This is a house gecko, the fan-foot, common in Egypt. He is an agile traveller, running over the floor or a wall, and is nimble in picking up a bug as he goes along. While common, he is not popular. In Cairo, they nickname him about-burs, or "father of the leprosy." The common gecko, or ringed gecko, is very much at home in India. By day it hides, and here it differs from the lizard that loves the sunshine; for at night the common gecko darts out of his retreat, and is such a soft-footed traveller that ignorant people in India give him a place among supernatural beings. When cold weather sets in, he retires to winter barracks, and is believed to be nourished by means of "two fatty masses" on its body.

CLOTHES THE BIRDS WEAR.

We usually call birds' clothing dresses, and not coats. These dresses are made of feathers, and many of them are very beautiful, much more beautiful than those which girls wear.

Birds change their dresses once in a while, as cats and dogs change their coats. The new dresses of most birds are just

like the old ones, but a few birds have two dresses which look very unlike. They wear one dress a part of the year, and the put on the other. Sometimes the new dress is so unlike the old one that we think the birds are of a different kind.

Some birds have bright red dresses; some have green ones, some have blue ones and some have yellow ones.

A few birds wear only plain blue, brown, or gray clothes, and never put on any bright colors; others have dresses which there are many colors mingled together, so as to make a very showy garment.

The bluebird, which we often see in the summer, wears a dress which is almost a blue.

A woodpecker, which comes about in the summer, and sometimes in the winter, has a bright red cap, a blue-black coat, and nice white vest.

The blue jay wears a light blue head dress and a shawl of the same color. Her underclothes are nearly white, and her overcoat, or cloak, is deep blue, with white border.

There are very many birds, and if we keep our eyes open when we walk along the streets and in the fields, we shall see some very beautiful dresses.

THE WASP AND THE BEE.

A wasp met a bee that was just buzzing
And he said, "Little cousin, can you tell
me why
You are loved so much better by people
than I?"

"My back shines as bright and as yellow
as gold,
And my shape is most elegant too—
behold,
Yet nobody likes me for that, I am told."

"Ah, cousin," the bee said, "'tis all very
true;
But if I had half as much mischief to do,
Indeed they would love me no better than
you."

"You have a fine shape and a delicate
wing;
They own you are handsome, but there's one thing
They cannot put up with, and that is your
sting."

"My coat is quite homely and plain,
you see,
Yet nobody ever is angry with me,
Because I'm a humble and innocent bee."

From this little story let people beware
Because like the wasp, ill-natured they are
They will never be loved if they're
so fair.