

# SUNBEAM

Vol. XXIII.

TORONTO, MAY 3, 1902.

No. 9.

## WHAT NAN COULD DO.

Nan was in a cosy sitting-room, her rosy face resting in her hands, watching the bright tongues of flame in the cheerful fireplace, now darting up in spiral beauty, only to fade away again in a tiny volume of smoke.

"I'm just like them," she exclaimed, slowly. "I try to do something to be useful, and sometimes I can never accomplish anything."

"If we do the best we can," reproved grandmother, gently, "we are not the ones to measure the good we do!"

"I—suppose—so," said Nan, slowly, "but then, what can a girl no older than I do? If I had money, I might establish reading rooms for the poor, or lunch counters, where poor working girls could get a nice warm lunch without paying anything for it, or something else really worth doing."

"Never mind, child, there are things you can do just as worthy as those you mention—things, too, that perhaps nobody else could possibly do."

Just then the warning bell rang, and with a good-bye kiss Nan gathered up her books and hurried away to school.

All the morning she kept thinking

of grandmother's remark, "Things that perhaps nobody else could possibly do."

"I wonder what they can be?" and Nan rested her serious little face in her hands with her elbows on the desk.

As she was standing near the cloak-

room door at recess, she overheard Maud Atkins refer to Beth Johnson's grief at her mother's death.

"I pity her," said Maud, "but I don't feel that I can do anything for her; she's not of our set. Her mother has done our

very thin. "Her mother's," thought Nan.

Quietly slipping to her side, Nan took one little hand in hers, and when the girls came back to their seats at the ringing of the bell, Beth's face wore its first smile since her mother's death.

All the remainder of the session Nan felt happy. "I guess it's what grandmother meant," she thought.

The next day, and the next, she found some little way to help, all unconsciously, somebody about her. The old janitor felt pleased all day long at the smile with which she greeted him as she passed him in the entry.

"Bless her, she's a sunshine ray for sure," he murmured, as she closed the door behind her.

Miss Norcross, the teacher, as Nan took her hand and bade her good-night, felt the cares of the day grow lighter and her work less irksome.

She took her little sister out into the fields in the evening.

"I tell you, Nan," said her brother Ted one morning, as she whispered to him not to mind the weather, for another day would surely come in which he could try his new bicycle, "you do a fellow good just by your sympathy."

I'd advise you, little sister, to put out your card—'Sympathy Bureau!' Conducted by Nan Armstrong, who is always ready to sympathize with any one in trouble. Office hours, from morning till bedtime. And as for pay—"



OUR MABEL.

washing for years, you see—that's how I happened to know of her."

Nan turned, and as she did so she saw Beth, who hadn't left her seat at recess, with a mournfully pinched face, fondly regarding a tiny plain gold ring, worn

"Pay! O Ted," interrupted Nan smiling, "that comes without asking. Ever since I've tried to be kind and helpful to others—"

"You've found," broke in grandmother Allen, "a joyful, contented little self all the time—and that there are some things that nobody else could possibly do!"—*Zion's Herald*.

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## Sunbeam.

TORONTO, MAY 3, 1902.

### REVIVING THE SWALLOWS.

It had been a cold wet spring. The swallows appeared before the world was ready for them. They came buffeted by the storms, weak and tired, and a number of their little corpses were found strewn about on the gravel path leading up to our door.

The next day the children found three which had taken refuge through the open window of the nursery. One lay on the floor apparently dead, another hung by his feet, head downwards, from a towel-horse, the third crouched in the corner of a shelf.

"Poor thing!" said Susy, following me with one of the birds in her hand. "What can I do for it, papa?"

"There is nothing for the swallows to eat, that's all that's the matter with them," said I.

"It isn't quite dead; the little heart beats; papa, you must cure it," said Susy, jumping on my knee and joggling my elbow.

Fat little hands took hold of my face and shook my chin, "Papa, you must doctor it," was the chorus.

"Go and ask in the kitchen for a little broth," said I.

The children went off together and presently returned together bearing the broth in a cup.

"Now papa, what next?" said the company eagerly, each child with a bird in hand crowding around me.

"Make haste, papa," cried Tommy, "mine is almost gone."

"The broth's too hot," said I. "You must cool it; pour a few drops into the saucer."

I took up my first patient who seemed indeed at his last gasp and lay quite still in my hands. I pressed the sides of his throat to open the mouth and let fall into it a drop or two of the broth. The bird opened its eyes, but closed them again directly. I repeated the dose again, and yet again; he began to shake himself; a little more, and he had hopped upon my hand and in a few minutes had begun to preen his feathers, sitting on the back of a chair.

"He's quite jolly; now you must see what you can do for mine," said Tommy, pressing forward.

This one and the third were more difficult, being long in reviving, but at last they also came to, and the birds all flew merrily out of the window.

In a few days the weather improved, the sun came out, and the swallows began to build their nests under the eaves of the gable of an old house which stands quite near us.

The swallow is about six inches long; but the wide sweep of the wings and the pure white of the body beneath make them very conspicuous. Sometimes a large number of them in their flight will perform a series of tireless and bewildering evolutions over a stream or lake, affording one of the most delightful scenes in nature and giving evidence of unmistakable intelligence.

### MRS. WAGTAIL'S HOME.

There is a bird in England which has the funny name of "wagtail." One day two little wagtails went out to look for a good place to build a home. They found one that they liked, and there they built their nest. Where do you think it was? It was on one of the sleepers of a railway. It was near London, and more than a hundred trains passed each day. Though the wheels came within a few feet of the little nest, and though it shook every time a train passed, the mother wagtail laid her eggs and raised a family of five little wagtails.

Said one little child to another: "Don't ever tell a lie, because God will know it; and he will write it down in his book, and then he will read it out before everybody." But I think that we ought to feel sorriest of all because God himself will know it, don't you?

### TWO WAYS.

When Cousin Alice pays a call  
She takes her cards, so neat and small;  
She always wears her finest frock;  
She stays ten minutes by the clock;  
Then says "Good-bye," and comes away  
Without one single bit of play.

Why, on our square we shouldn't call  
Such visits any fun at all.

I run across to Bessie's door  
In plain old dress and pinafore,  
And Bessie's very sure to say  
"Take off your hat, and then let's play."

We make a playhouse on the floor;  
I stay an hour, and sometimes more,  
And O such games! I wouldn't do  
Like Alice for the world; would you?  
O ours is *much* the nicer way:  
"Take off your hat and then let's play."  
—*Little Folks.*

### RED HAIR AND FRECKLES.

A certain minister believed that every living human body contained a soul, and he was sure that it was his duty to say a word to the soul before him. "What is your name, my boy?" he asked of a lad.

"Tom, sir."

"Well, Thomas, I have noticed that boys with red hair, a great nose, and a large number of freckles always get on well in the world if they try to be good."

No answer from Tom, and the minister went to the meeting-house.

That night the good man's horse received an extra half- $\frac{1}{2}$  eck of oats. When the minister went home the next morning a change was noticed in Tom. He did not spill anything that day, neither did he break anything. He kept out of everybody's way, and a strange fire burned in the eyes that had been dull so long. He was faithful at his work for a few weeks, and then he felt that the minister's kitchen and stable were too small to hold him.

The good man said that boys with red hair, a great nose, and a large number of freckles always get on well in the world if they try to be good" was the plank to which poor Tom lashed himself just before he plunged into what seemed to him to be a great sea, the city. He had many desires, but the most ardent one of them all was that he might be a good boy. God loved him, and guided him to a church where the gospel was preached in its simplicity; and Tom laid hold, by faith, of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. He has grown rich in his business, and is one of the most loved and honoured citizens of his native town.—*Selected.*

### WHICH?

Which will you have, my boy or girl  
With the rosy cheek and golden curl,  
With the sparkling eye and coral lip—  
Will you the wine or water sip?

FRECKLES AND TAN.

Say, what are these wee little freckles,  
And what in the world is the tan,  
That color and sprinkle all over  
The face of our dear little man?

The tan is a heavenly mixture  
Of happiness, sunshine and joy,  
That darkens the shade of the roses  
That bloom in the cheeks of our boy.

The freckles are scars from the kisses  
That angels, in loving embrace,  
There pressed in a careless confusion  
All over our little boy's face.

So here's to the boy with the freckles,  
The boy with the freckles and tan—  
These glorious imprints of heaven  
Have labelled him God's little man.

LESSON NOTES.

SECOND QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS.

LESSON VI. [May 11.]

PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON.

Acts 12. 1-9. Memorize verses 5-7.  
GOLDEN TEXT.

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.—Psa. 34. 7.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

Who was the new ruler over Judea? Herod Agrippa. What apostle had he put to death? James, the brother of John. Whom did he now wish to kill? Peter. Why did he do these things? To please the Jews. How many prison guards had Peter? Sixteen. What did Herod forget? The angel guards that God sends. What were Peter's friends doing? Praying for him. What happened in the night? An angel came to Peter. What did he say? "Arise up quickly." What did he do? Took Peter past the guard to the street. What became of his chains? They fell off. Where did he go? To the place where his friends were praying for him. Was it strange that God set Peter free? O, no; he always helps those who trust in him. What other believers were delivered from prison? (See Steps for Friday.) Who can deliver us from the prison-house of sin? God.

DAILY STEPS.

Mon. Read what wicked King Herod did. Acts 12. 1-5.  
Tues. Read the lesson verses. Acts 12. 1-9.  
Wed. Find what happened another time. Acts 5. 17-20.  
Thur. Learn why Peter could sleep sweetly. Golden Text.  
Fri. Read how Paul and Silas were delivered. Acts 16. 23-26.

Sat. Learn who is near to help Christians. Heb. 1. 14.  
Sun. Learn something to make the heart strong. Psa. 33. 18.

LESSON VII. [May 18.]

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES.

Acts 13. 1-12. Memorize verses 2, 3.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations.—Matt. 28. 19.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

Who preached to the Christian Church in Antioch? Saul and Barnabas and others. What were they told to do? To send out missionaries. Who told them to do this? The Holy Spirit. Whom did they send? Saul and Barnabas. What young man went with them? John Mark, a nephew of Barnabas. Where did they go first? To the island of Cyprus. How long is this island? About a hundred miles long. Where did they land? At Salamis. What did they do? Begin to teach. Who sent for them? The governor. What was his name? Sergius Paulus. What strange man opposed the apostles? Elymas, the sorcerer. What happened to Elymas? He was made blind, and had to be led. Did the governor believe in Jesus? Yes. Where did the apostles go next? To Perga. What is true to-day of people who try to keep others from believing in Jesus? They are blind in heart.

DAILY STEPS.

Mon. Read the lesson verses carefully. Acts 13. 1-12.  
Tues. Learn who sent the apostles forth. Golden Text.  
Wed. Find what God's plan was for Saul. Gal. 1. 15, 16.  
Thur. Learn who led Saul and Barnabas forth. Verse 4.  
Fri. Trace the first missionary journey on the map.  
Sat. Find why Saul had power over Elymas. Luke 10. 19.  
Sun. Think: "What does the Golden Text mean to me?"

BAD APPLES AND BAD HABITS.

"If I put one rotten apple in a box of healthy apples, what will happen?"  
"O, well, when we open the box to have a look at them, we will find what we put in; one bad apple, and all the others quite good."  
"No you won't. Say you have thirty apples, twenty-nine good and one bad; shut them up together for five weeks, and then open the box. What have you got? Thirty rotten apples most likely. The one has touched the others and made them like itself. And so the bad habits of a life will spread and spread, unless we check them, until they spoil the whole."—*Little Folks.*

WHAT THE FLOWERS SAY.

The red rose says, "Be sweet";  
And the lily bids, "Be pure";  
The hardy, brave chrysanthemum  
"Be patient and endure."

The violet whispers, "Give,  
Nor grudge, nor count the cost";  
The woodbine, "Keep on blossoming,  
In spite of chill and frost."

And so each gracious flower  
Has each a several word  
Which, read together, maketh up  
The message of the Lord.

SHAKING UP BRAINS.

"I can't do this sum," said Hal; "I've tried and tried, but I can't get the answer."

"How many times have you tried it?" asked his mamma.

"Three times."

"Well, you go out and ride your tricycle around the house ten times, as fast as you can and then come in and try three times more."

Out dashed Hal, and soon came in again his cheeks glowing. "I tell you it's splendid out," he said; "the fresh air is so good, and I've thought of the way to do that sum, too."

"Got the answer; hurrah!" Hal shouted after a few minutes.

"I thought that your brains only needed a little shaking up," said the wise mamma, "and I knew that a good ride on your tricycle would do it."

Other little persons may learn a lesson from Hal. Exercise brightens the mind and wakes one up.—*Our Little Ones.*

LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

It was Saturday night, and two children small

Sat on the stairs in the lighted hall,  
Vexed and troubled and sore perplexed,  
To learn for Sunday the forgotten text;  
Only three words on a gilded card,  
But both the children declared it hard.

"'Love,' that is easy; it means, why, this"—

(A warm embrace and a loving kiss);  
"But 'one another,' I don't see who  
Is meant by 'another,'—now May, do you?"

Very grandly she raised her head,  
Our thoughtful darling, and slowly said,  
As she fondly smiled on the little brother,  
"Why, I am only one, and you are another."

And this is the meaning—don't you see?—

That I must love you, and you must love me."

Wise little preacher! Could any sage  
Better explain the sacred page?



OUR BABY BROTHER.

## GATHERING WILD FLOWERS.

It was in the "leafy month of June." Mary Meredith was just recovering from a long and serious illness. In the bleak month of March brought into a low and weak state of health by overwork—she had taken a chill and had been almost beyond hope of recovery through the fever which had followed. An anxious mother watched the girl day and night, and her constant attention and the doctor's skill had been blessed by the Great Physician, and though the months of April and May were anxiously spent by those who best knew how serious the illness was, yet Mary was now getting stronger every day. She had two sisters and one brother younger than herself, and they dearly loved their eldest sister—and often had talked together of the happy times they again would have when they could all go out together again into the woods.

Mary had been down-stairs during the later days of May, but had not been allowed out of doors by the doctor. Many times she had sighed and longed to get out of the house and wander by the stream, and look upon the trees and flowers which seemed to her more fresh and sweet than they had ever before seemed. The sickness of Mary had drawn the hearts of sisters and brothers more closely to her than ever. This is one of the real comforts of a happy home; the more weak

and dependent we are, the more kind, and gentle, and patient are those who are nearest and dearest to us. It was a happier day for sisters and brother in their almost rude health than for Mary herself. Wrapped up in warm, loose-fitting garments—her face bleached with sickness, and bearing evident traces of the severe illness she had gone through, she could only walk a little way without resting. She had never felt how feeble she was till she started off to walk that day. The garden sloped down to the woodside, and the whole air was fragrant with the full scent of May and the delicate perfume of wild flowers.

Bunch after bunch was gathered, and all brought to Mary. As she sat in the wood, while sisters and brother chatted merrily, Mary's heart was almost too full for words. She mused half dreamily, and while her thoughts ran over the past weeks of pain and weariness, she said: "Ah, I have the best mother in the world. I should never have seen the woods again—never pulled through that weakness which made me feel like a little baby—if it had not been for my mother. I did not think of it at the time, but when I felt that I was sinking, her cheering, loving voice bade me hope. God has been very good to me, and his best gift has been my mother's love and care."

And then with as many flowers as they

could carry they returned home to mother, whose anxious watching over Mary had made her look worn and thin. Yes, Mary had the best of mothers, for her first thoughts were about her children; her last about herself.

## OUR BABY BROTHER.

BY IDA FAY.

See him, our darling, our own baby brother!

Where will you find in the whole world another

So pretty, so playful, so gentle, so cheery?  
Our own little brother, our treasure, our dearie!

The summer is coming, you dear little fellow,

With violets purple, and buttercups yellow:

Just hear the birds singing, as if they were trying

To tell all the pleasure of loving and flying.

We'll take you to look at the calf in the stable;

We'll show you the pussy that comes to the table:

You shall see all the hens and the chickens together;

And we'll pluck from the rooster a fine showy feather.

To the pond we will go where the water is brimming

And then we will see all the little ducks swimming;

And baby shall see all the bright garden flowers

That help to make lovely these mild summer hours.

## A SPIRIT-LEVEL TO LIVE BY.

A little boy saw his father using a spirit-level to see if the board that he was planing was "true" and straight.

"What's the use of being so careful, papa?" he asked. "It's pretty good, I guess. It looks so."

"Guessing won't do in carpenter work," said his father, "sighting" along the edge of the board, and shaving it the least bit in the world. "You have to be just right. Folks guess at too many things. God doesn't like that way of living."

"I guess there aren't any spirit-levels for living by," laughed the little boy.

"Yes, there are," said his father earnestly. "You'll find them in the Bible. Try all your actions by that. Make them true and straight, and no guesswork in them."—*Jewels.*

Kind words can never die,  
Cherished and blest,  
God knows how deep they lie  
Stored in each breast.