

SUNBEAM

Vol. XXVII.

TORONTO, JANUARY 6, 1906.

No. 1.

THE LIFE SCHOOL.

My little boy came from his school to-day
With his heart in a flurry of glee.
"O, papa! they've taken our pencils away,
And I'm writing with ink!" said he
And his breast is filled with a manly pride,
For it joys him much to think
He has laid his pencil and slate aside,
And is writing his
words with ink.

O, innocent child! Could
you guess the truth,
You would ask of the
years to stay
'Mid the slate and pencil
cares of youth
That a tear will wash
away;
For out in the great big
world of men
The wrongs we may do
or think
Can never be blotted out
again,
For we write them all
in ink.

OUR DUMB

FRIENDS.

Various species of the brute creation have been adapted in the instincts given them to become co-operators and helpers to men. Horses are powerful and invaluable servants, and should ever be treated kindly. Cows have in all ages proved valuable to the family. Many kinds of fowl are almost indispensable to human comfort. Sheep, and in some countries goats, have great value as an adjunct to human existence. In the Orient, camels and elephants hold a most important relation. Among smaller animals, cats cling to human society and fill an important place. A nobler place is that of dogs, an almost universal companion and friend to man, from the equator to the icy regions far toward the poles. In many countries the service of dogs is above estimate, and

everywhere their watchful instincts are recognized. They are the natural guardians of the palace, the cottage, the hut, and the tent. When the inmates are asleep the dog is the ever-vigilant soldier on duty at the door. Many of the species, indeed, are worthless, as of the human species as well, and ought to be exterminated.



Others are noble and fill admirably the sphere appointed them by the Creator.

Of their relation in human companionship, especially as touching upon boy life, a writer in Peck's Sun discourses thus happily:

"A boy who owns a dog has good com-

pany. They are true friends, and neither would think of going back on the other. Their friendship is true and faithful. If you meet one, you are pretty sure to see the other near; and if one got into a quarrel, the other is sure to take a hand. Did you ever notice a boy and a dog that have been together any length of time?

Of course you have. Why, they understand each other as well as two boys would—and better, in fact. The dog knows exactly what his little master means when he speaks, and will stick up his ears, turn his head to one side, then to the other, and look the boy square in the face with all but human expression in his countenance when he is being talked to. It is love me, love my dog with every boy. To insult one is to insult the other, and an insult to the other is resented by both. You could no more buy that dog of his young master than you could hire him to kill his best friend. The wag of that dog's tail is of more value to that boy than anything else except his mother's love. A dog is a most excellent companion to a boy. The dumb brute will be true even to death, and his faithfulness does, to a certain extent, create a true and faithful disposition in the boy. A boy is in good company when he and his dog go out into the woods and fields, and the parent has a reasonable

security for the boy in such company.

Among the Arabs, when a crumb of bread drops on the ground, they do not let it lie there, but pick it up and put it in a place where the birds may find it, saying, "God's gifts must not be trodden under foot."

THE MORNING NAP.

BY EMMA CHURCHMAN HEWIT.

Slowly swinging to and fro,
Baby, doll and doggie go,
While the breezes softly blow.

Near by, nodding flowers keep
Closest watch o'er baby's sleep.

But soon the puppy restless grows,
A buzzing fly lights on his nose,
He yawns till every tooth he shows
And then, O naughty little pup!
He slyly wakes the baby up.

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Sunbeam.

TORONTO, JANUARY 6, 1906.

BILLY'S CRUTCH.

"Will you please buy my geranium, sir?"

If a musical voice, a bright face, and a beautiful plant, all belonging to a young girl with dimpled cheeks and laughing blue eyes, will not bring a man to a standstill, then it must be that he is hurrying through the world too fast and wants nothing to come into his life that will gladden his heart and renew his youth.

I came to a full stop and would not have missed that sight for a great deal. As the girl stood there on that bright October morning, it was difficult to tell where the sunshine left off and where the girl began. They seemed made for each other; it was a perfect match, with the dividing line hard to discern.

"Have you any objection to tell me your name?"

"Oh, no, sir! My name's Gertrude Wilson."

"What a beautiful geranium you have there!"

"Isn't it lovely?"

"Indeed it is, and the finest I ever saw. Where did you get it?"

"About three years ago a lady left a slip lying on the seat in a horse-car. I took it home, got the richest dirt I could find, put it in this old paint-can, and then set the slip in it, and it began growing right away. I've given it plenty of water to drink, and kept it in the sunshine as much as possible."

"Why, I should think you would love it very dearly."

"Love it! I guess I do love it. It seems just like a part of myself."

"Well, my dear, if you love it so much, pray tell me why you want to sell it?"

"Oh, I wouldn't let it go if I did not want to help God answer Billy's prayer. Don't you think it splendid to help answer somebody's prayers?"

"How do you know I believe in prayer?"

"Oh, I am sure you do, for you have such a prayerful look."

She broke out into a merry laugh, and I joined her in it as I said: "Yes, I do believe in prayer. Now, tell me who Billy is?"

As I made this request a joyous look came into her face, and her large blue eyes shone with delight; and as the dimples deepened in her cheeks I beheld a picture that was worth going a long way to see.

"What, Billy? Oh, he's the nicest and best little fellow in all the city. Well, he is goodness, sunshine, and music all in one lump. Somebody let him drop when he was quite young and broke his hip, and ever since he has been a cripple. But his leg is the only crooked thing about him. My mother says that Billy's mother was the best Christian she ever knew. Well,

when she died last year everybody in our tenement-house wanted to adopt Billy, so you see, he belongs to all of us. He pays his way by selling newspapers, and no one with good legs can get around livelier than Billy can with a crutch. But yesterday his crutch caught in a hole in the sidewalk, broke in two, and let him fall. He managed to get into the house, and was not hurt. Well, last night, just as I was going to bed, I heard Billy praying. His room is next to mine, and only a board partition between—so I could hear it all. Oh, I shall never forget his words as he said:

"Dear Lord, I've never complained about my broken hip, and I am willing to go through life with it, but I can't get on without a crutch. I've no money to get another, and I don't know who to ask; so please, dear Lord, send me another one. Mother always told me to go to you when I was in trouble, and so I come now: Please, dear Lord, answer my prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen."

"I laid awake a good while thinking of that prayer, and it was the first thing I thought of this morning, and I began wondering if I couldn't do something to

help God answer Billy's prayer. Well, while I was wondering, I saw my geranium, and then I said, 'Oh, maybe I can sell it and get enough to buy another crutch!'"

"Now you know who Billy is, and why I want to sell my geranium. Won't you please buy it?"

I was greatly moved and interested, and I'll own up to a great deal of moisture about my eyes as I inquired, "How tall is Billy?"

"Oh," she quickly responded, "I've got the measure of his old crutch, if that is what you mean."

"Yes, that is just what I mean; so if you please, Gertrude, we'll go and see about a crutch."

It did not take us long to find a store where such things were to be procured, nor a great while to get the keeper of the store as much interested as I was in the girl's story. Just the right kind of a crutch was found, and a minimum price was put upon it."

"Well," I said, "I'll give you that much for the geranium, Gertrude, and it is very cheap at that."

"Oh, thank you," she said, and her eyes fairly danced with gladness. "I'll take the crutch, please, but Billy mustn't know a word about where it came from. Isn't it just splendid to help God answer Billy's prayer?"

The moisture in my eyes didn't subside one bit, as I said: "I want you to do me a favor, Gertrude. I am hundreds of miles away from the place where I live, and I can't carry this plant around with me. Would it be too much trouble for you to keep it for me?"

"What, do you want me to take care of it for you?"

"Yes, my dear, if it will not be too much trouble."

"Oh, you splendid man, you! I'll be glad to do it, and I'll take just as good care of it as I did when it was mine."

I carried the plant, while she carried the crutch, and after reaching the house, Billy was called in to see me, while Gertrude smuggled the crutch into his room and came back with a face as happy as a face could be, but never betraying to Billy, by word or look, that she had been answering Billy's prayer.

To sum it all up, Billy got a new crutch, and he is the happiest cripple in the big city. Gertrude helped answer his prayer, and a happier girl doesn't live. I own the handsomest geranium bush I ever saw, and the one who takes care of it for me is as proud as I am of the plant.

Unselfish and noble acts are the most radiant epochs in the biography of souls. When wrought in earliest youth they lie in the memory of age amidst the melancholy waste of ocean.

MY PLAYTIME.

BY ANNA PIERPONT SIVITER.

When mother went over the ocean

She took me along, for she knew

I couldn't be happy on this side

With my mother on that, would you?

But, oh, it was so very lonesome!

Whv, in that strange, far-away land,

Not one thing the children were doing

Or saying could I understand.

And I used to watch them and wonder

At their words, and their looks, and
their play.

And I'd wonder if mother would love me

If I looked as funny as they!

One day as I sat at the window,

I saw coming down the long street

A dear little girl and her kitty;

They both looked so cunning and sweet,

I jumped up and ran straight to meet
them.

For I said to myself, It must be,

A child who can love a dear kitty

I am sure cannot help loving me.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

WORDS AND WORKS OF JESUS AS RECORDED
IN THE BIBLE.

LESSON II.—JANUARY 14.

THE WISE MEN FIND JESUS.

Matt. 2. 1-12. Memorize verse 11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

My son, give me thine heart.—Prov.
23. 26.

THE LESSON STORY.

A strange thing happened one day a long time ago in the city of Jerusalem. Some wise men came there looking for a baby King of the Jews. There was already a king named Herod, who ruled over the people, and he was a very wicked man. You can believe that it troubled him to hear that men from far away were looking for a new king. These wise men said that they had seen the star of the baby King in the east, and had come to worship him.

Herod sent for the priests who knew the Old Testament Scriptures to come and tell where Christ was to be born. They said that the prophet had foretold that he would be born in Bethlehem. Then Herod told the wise men to go there and find the new king and come back and tell him so he could worship him too. He means so that he could go and kill him.

When the wise men started to go to Bethlehem the star went ahead of them

and stopped over the stable where the young child lay. The wise men gave him presents of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, and worshipped him. But God told them in a dream not to go back and tell Herod, and so they went home by another way, and Herod was disappointed in his evil plans.

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGEST.

1. Who came to Jerusalem long ago?
2. For whom were they looking?
3. What had they seen in the east?
4. Who had sent them to look for Jesus? The great God.
5. Who was king at this time?
6. Why was he troubled?
7. What did he ask the priests to do?
8. What did they say?
9. Where did they go to find out?
10. What did Herod tell the wise men to do?
11. What did he mean in his heart?
12. How did the wise men find the place in Bethlehem?
13. What gifts did they offer to the young child?
14. Why did they offer gifts to him? Because he was a king?
15. Why did they not go back and tell Herod?
16. What gifts may we offer to our King?

LESSON III.—JANUARY 21.

THE BOY JESUS.

Lukc 2. 40-52. Memory verses 49-52.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man."—Lukc 2. 52.

THE LESSON STORY.

The boyhood of Jesus was spent in the town of Nazareth. There he mingled with other children and was like any other child. He grew naturally and was in every respect a human child. He played at the same games as did other boys, and went to the same school with them. He worked in Joseph's carpenter shop, and no doubt he met with the same hurts that come to any boy using tools.

When Jesus was twelve years old his parents went to Jerusalem, as was their custom, at the time of the Passover. After the festival was over they started for home and had gone a full day's journey before they missed their child. Of course they were quite anxious and hurried back to the city, where they found him in the Temple listening to the learned doctors and asking them questions which showed he was a boy deeply interested in spiritual matters. When reproved by his mother his reply was a strange one, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Even as a boy of twelve Jesus had some knowledge of the purpose of his life, and his knowledge grew with the years.

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGEST.

1. Was Jesus like other children? Yes, he was a real boy.
2. Did he have the same joys and sorrows? Exactly the same.
3. How old was he when he went to Jerusalem? Twelve years.
4. What happened him there? He tarried with the rabbis.
5. What did he do? Asked them questions.
6. What did he reply to his mother who came to seek him? "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"
7. Did he return with her? Yes, and was obedient to her.

A BACKSLIDER.

The minister's little girl and her playmates were talking of serious things.

"Do you know what a backslider is?" she questioned.

"Yes. It's a person that used to be a Christian, and isn't," said the playmate promptly.

"But what do you suppose makes them call them backsliders?"

"O, that's easy. You see when people are good they go to church and sit up in front. When they get a little tired of being good, they slip back a seat, and keep on till they get clear back to the door. After a while they slip clear out, and never come to church at all."

JESUS, A FRIEND.

"What do you do without a mother to tell all your troubles to?" asked a child who had a mother of one who had none.

"Mother told me whom to go to before she died," answered the little orphan. "I go to the Lord Jesus. He was my mother's friend, and he's mine."

"Jesus Christ is in the sky. He is away off, and he has a great many things to attend to in heaven. It is not likely that he can stop to mind you."

"I do not know anything about that," said the orphan; "all I know is that he says he will, and that is enough for me."

GOD KNOWETH.

Men send their ships, the eager things,
To try their luck at sea;
But none can tell by note or count
How many there may be.
One turneth east, another south,
They never come again;
And then we know they must have sunk,
But neither how nor when.

God sends his happy birds abroad;
"They're less than ships," say we.
No moment passes but he knows
How many there should be,
One buildeth high, another low,
With just a bird's light care;
If only one, perchance, doth fall,
God knoweth when and where.



IS IT "BABIES FOR SALE"?

IS IT "BABIES FOR SALE"?

One might suppose that this Chinaman was out selling babies. Is the lady peering into the baskets a purchaser, do you think? Oh, no, the dear little fellows seem to be enjoying their funny baby carriage so much, and seem so very happy and contented we must conclude that they are just being taken out for an airing by their own father. We hope the mission ships will bear their good news to these sweet little innocents. You know

"The mission ships are sailing
Across the waters blue
To tell the sweet old story—
The story ever new;
To carry to the heathen,
So far across the sea,
The news of that dear Saviour
Who died for you and me.

"Kings shall fall down before him,
And gold and incense bring;
All nations shall adore him,
His praise all people sing;
For he shall have dominion
Over river, sea, and shore—
Far as the eagle's pinion
Or dove's light wing can soar."

A NAUGHTY BOOK.

Christine was so busy writing with her new pencil in a big book that she did not hear Aunt Alice come into the room.

"What are you writing, Chris?" said auntie, looking at the big white pages with queer uneven scribbles all over them, for the little fingers had been hard at work.

"I'm yitin' how bad Tommy is," said Christine very solemnly. "He dropped my dollie, and she tan't shut her eyes any

more. Don't you fink Tommy is a naughty boy, Aunt Alice?"

"Perhaps he is sometimes," said auntie; "but I think Tommy is very good to his little sister, too. Didn't I see him give you a ride on his sled yesterday? Did you write that down?"

Christine shook her head.

"And wasn't it Tommy that brought you a big red apple?" said Aunt Alice. "Have you put that down in your book?"

"There's only room for naughty fings in my book," said Christine, looking very wise.

"Don't you think it's a naughty book, then? I think you'd better get a new one; or suppose you turn to the next page, and you'll find plenty of room to write how good Tommy is to you."

So Christine turned over the leaf. "I dross I fordot 'bout yidin' on Tommy's sled," she said; "but I 'member now." And she found so many good things to write about Tommy that she has not found the room to write about another naughty one yet on the new page.

YOUR EYE ON THE MARK.

A light snow had fallen and the boys of L— desired to make the most of it; and as it was too dry for snowballing and not deep enough for coasting, they thought it would do very well to make tracks in. Near by there was a large meadow, and it was proposed that they should go to a tree which was near the centre of the meadow, and that each one should start from the tree to the boundaries of the meadow. The proposition was assented to, and they were soon at the tree. They ranged themselves around the tree with their backs toward it and started, each one retracing his steps to the tree. After they had returned, they each looked back to see how straight the tracks were:

"Whose is the straightest?" said James Alison to Thomas Sanders, who was first at the tree.

"Harry Armstrong's is the only one that is straight at all," said Thomas.

"Why," said Jacob Small, "how could we all contrive to go so crooked when the meadow is so smooth, and nothing to turn us out of the way?"

"How happened you to go so straight, Henry?" said Thomas.

"I fixed my eyes on that tall pine-tree on the hill yonder, and never looked away from it till I reached the fence," answered Henry.

"I went as straight as I could without looking at anything but the ground," said James.

"So did I," said another.

"So did I," replied several voices at once.

It appears that no one but Henry had aimed at any particular object.

They attempted to go straight without any definite aim, but they failed. Men cannot succeed in anything good without a definite aim. General purposes, general resolutions will not avail. You must do as Henry did—fix upon something distinct and definite as an object, and go steadily toward it.

AT MAMMA'S GRAVE.

Maida and Merta's mother has gone to heaven, and now they live with their aunt. On Sunday they go to Sunday-school in the morning; in the afternoon they go and kneel close together at their mother's grave, and pray. Maida is the older one, and this was one of her prayers: "Dear Heavenly Father, you took our mother away from us, but I know you love us and will take care of us, if we live every day as she told us to do. I love to read in her Bible, and I am going to try to do good to everybody, just as she did. Help me to take care of my little sister, Merta. Tell me what to say to her when she cries about our mamma, and says she doesn't want to live any longer, and that she can't be good down here all by herself. Please help her to be good, and when she dies let her go to heaven and live with mamma again." This was little Merta's prayer: "Father in heaven, please hear my little prayer. I miss my mamma—O! so much! I think little girls like me ought to have a mamma all the time. I can't say my prayers good with Maida. She can't tuck the cover round me nicely, like my mamma did. I want to give my good-night kiss to my mamma. I want to feel her arms around my neck. Dear God, I can't get on without her—I just can't! If you can't send her back, let me go and live with her in heaven. Good-bye, dear God. Give my best love to my sweet mamma."

DO YOU KNOW?

Little birdies, do you know
Jesus Christ, who loved us so,
Had not any home, like you,
Where to rest with dear ones true?
Little birdies, do you know,
How the Saviour used to go,
Tired and sad, from place to place,
With the love-light in his face,
Speaking gentle words of peace,
That all harm and sin should cease?
Little birdies, do you know,
How the cruel people so
Drove him from their streets away,
Would not let the dear Lord stay?
Oh, sweet birdies, in your nest,
Sing your very, very best,
All in praise of this dear One,
Son of Man, and God's own Son.