

Family Reading.

The Sheep at Grandpa's Farm.

Of all the lovely things we do, My sister Maud and I, In summer days at grandpa's farm, Where hills are green and high, There's nothing that we like so well As being sent to keep All through the shady afternoon, A flock of milk white sheep. You see each lambskin knows its name; And when we call aloud, From every corner of the field, The fleecy darlings crowd At twilight when the sun goes down, To let the stars outshine, We bend for them some willow boughs, Or dainty budding vine, And grandma bids us give them salt; They think it quite a treat, Just as we think of sugar plums, Or bonbons nice and sweet. But when the frisky little ones Eat quick and run away, "Excuse them, please they're very young," Their mothers seem to say. I wonder people think them dumb. I'm sure the wise old ewes Could tell some things to giddy girls Who have no wit to lose. How patiently they pace along, And let the lambskin play, And chase their shadows on the grass, And skip about all day. One never sees them looking cross; And that's what grandpa meant— That "silly" once, in older days, Was pure and innocent. And in the good book Maud and I Together love to read Of pastures green and waters still, Where happy flocks may feed. We know the Shepherd loves the lambs, And oft we pray to him At eve low kneeling at our beds, When all the earth is dim; And when we wake and laugh and play, And when we go to sleep, We trust that He will keep us safe, As we have kept the sheep. —Harper's Young People.

Only Rocks and Stones.

MY DEAR MRS. ELLIS: It is, I assure you, with great pain that I find myself obliged to ask you to withdraw Robert from school. He either cannot or will not learn, and is simply wasting his time. Yours truly, MARY LEACH.

This was the note which Robbie Ellis brought home from school one day, and, evidently ignorant of its contents, handed to his mother, and then went out to drive up the cows.

"What does this mean, Robert?" asked his father that evening, after reading aloud the note his wife gave him. The boy he addressed was not very attractive in appearance. Small of stature, with thin legs and arms, an unusually large head and a sallow complexion, it was no wonder he was so often told that he would never be hung for his beauty. And yet, to any one who cared to notice it, there was a pathos in the blue eyes and a sweetness in the smile which so often wreathed his large mouth, that told of something better than beauty behind the defects that were so prominent.

Robbie looked up from the corn he was shelling, and answered his father timidly: "I don't know, sir; I try to learn my lessons, but I cannot seem to understand them, and when I go up to recite, I can hardly ever remember anything about them."

"That is because you don't pay attention. Your mind is taken up with those nonsensical stones with which you are forever filling your pockets. I have no money to throw away on your education, I can tell you, sir, and if you won't learn you will have to get along the best way you can, by being an ignoramus all your life. Carry that corn out now; give the cows a little more feed, see that the horses are well bedded, lock the stable, look to the chicken-house and the piggery, and then go and see what Ralph has for you to do.—It is discouraging," continued Mr. Ellis after Robbie was gone; "that boy will never amount to anything—a lazy good-for-nothing—"

"Oh! no; don't say that, father," interrupted Mrs. Ellis a little warmly. "Robbie is neither lazy nor good-for-nothing. I am sure I do not know what any of us would do without him. He is everybody's right-hand man, and

certainly earns his living. Besides, he writes a beautiful hand and draws well."

"That may be," answered Mr. Ellis pettishly. "I dare say he is useful enough, in his way, and so is a donkey. But look at the other boys, bright, spirited fellows, sure to whip right through college without a stumble, and get on well in the world."

Mrs. Ellis sighed, and said, after a pause: "I do not think Robbie has ever recovered from the effects of the fever he had when he was six years old, when he came so near dying, and did not know us for so long. You remember, before that, we thought him the smartest of our children, but for years after it he was dull, and complained so much of his head hurting him. He has never been strong since, and we must have patience with him."

"Well," answered her husband, "you may have patience with him if you choose. As for me, I am done with him as far as sending him to school is concerned. I shall not spend another dollar on his books until I see a change for the better—and Mr. Ellis took up his newspaper, showing that he considered the conversation at an end.

It was past 8 o'clock, and Mrs. Ellis arose and stepped into the next room, where a party of young people, four of her own and several from neighboring houses, were enjoying themselves together.

"Where is Robbie?" she asked; but receiving no answer she went on to the kitchen, where she found the boy busy by the light of a small lamp cleaning a gun. Mrs. Ellis went up to him, laid the brown curly head against her bosom, and with eyes full of tears bent down and kissed his forehead. "Isn't it time you were going to bed, Robbie?" she asked.

"Yes, mamma; but Ralph is going shooting early in the morning, and I must finish this gun for him."

"I should think Ralph could clean his own gun," remarked his mother.

"O yes, mamma!" answered the boy with a bright smile, and unmindful of the implied censure in his mother's tone; "of course he could, but he wanted to talk to the girls, and so asked me to do it for him."

"Robbie! go 'out to the pump and get a pitcher of water, and bring it here with some glasses," called his sister Lucy, opening the sitting-room door.

"I must wash this black off of my hands first," said Robbie, preparing to rise.

"Sit still, Robbie," said his mother, "I will get the water!"

"Indeed you shan't mother!" answered the boy, quickly jumping up.

"Do you think I would let you go out to the pump, when I am around?—and seizing a pitcher from the table, he darted out of the door, while Mrs. Ellis got some glasses ready on a waiter.

"Well, Rob, you are a sight!" exclaimed Lucy, as he entered the room with the water. "Before I would come before company looking that way."

"Rob thinks his beauty can't be spoiled," said Harry.

"He's right," answered one of the other young people, "and that's the advantage he has over the rest of us. It doesn't make a particle of difference with Rob, whether he is clean or dirty; dressed up or not; he is just as handsome one way as the other."

All laughed, and Robbie said good-naturedly, "You seemed in such a hurry for the water that I did not take time to wash my hands, but I will retire now. Good night!"

And the door was closing behind him when Ralph called out:

"Be sure you finish that gun, Rob; and mind you don't oversleep yourself to-morrow morning. I want that kitchen fire burning when I come down, so that I can have a cup of coffee before starting out."

"All right!" answered Robbie, and he went to work again at the gun until it was as clean and bright as new. Then standing it in a corner, he took the lamp and went up to his little room, away up the steep roof. It was his own wish to have this room off from the other apartments, and he had stipulated that he would take care of it himself, and not trouble his sisters; a wise provision, for certainly either of the girls would have been in despair if called upon to create order out of the

chaos in which Robbie now entered. But the boy glanced around with pleasure as he locked the door and placed his lamp on the small table. This table, on which were writing and drawing materials and a number of small boxes, stood in the middle of the room. An iron bedstead, a dressing bureau with half the glass gone, and two rickety chairs completed the furnishing. But the decorations were more elaborate. Under the table, under the bed, under the chairs, piled up in the corners, choking up the sill of the one window, were what Robbie called his specimens, his treasures, stones, pebbles, quartz, lumps of clay, fossils of every shape, bits of lead and iron ore, coal and slate, and numerous little boxes containing sand of different colors; these to the uninitiated made up a heterogeneous mass of rubbish; but no king was ever prouder of his crown jewels than was Robbie of this collection, which spoke to him a language intelligent and most dear. Many of the articles were neatly labelled with bits of paper gummed upon them, and each one meant something to Robbie, representing either some new fact gained, or the promise of knowledge which to him, at least, seemed important. They represented, too, many a long tramp over the wide prairie and across the hills on the other side of the river, many an hour's hard work with pick and shovel, and also many a scolding from his father and a scolding laugh from his brothers and sisters. But he loved them every one, and seated at his table with a cheap microscope he would patiently examine them, making notes of their peculiarities, admiring the beauty of many of them, and drawing conclusions which were afterwards carefully written out for future reference. Night after night, for he had little time during the day, Robbie spent an hour or more, as long in fact as his light lasted, studying out the secrets which Nature hides so jealously in the bosom of mother Earth. To his family his tastes appeared foolish to the last degree, and from no one but his mother did he receive aught but ridicule and scolding. She, wise woman, believed that nature would not have given to the boy such a decided taste, if she had not intended him to make use of it and profit by it. Therefore, while she encouraged Robbie to do all he could in his school studies, she did not discourage what seemed to her at the worst a harmless fancy, and gave the delicate boy inducements for out-of-door pursuits which he would not otherwise have had. For, except to attend to innumerable small chores, he was of not much use on the farm, his strength soon failing under any continuous labor. So, when not at school, he had generally been left to help about the house or barnyard, having everything given him to do that was especially disagreeable to the others. But in his amiable simplicity of heart he thought it was all right, and was never known to grumble or show any impatience over all that was required of him.

The Ellises lived on a large farm in one of the Western States, to which they had retired at the end of the war, when Mr. Ellis found his once flourishing business broken up by his four years' absence in the service of his country, and his health impaired by the fatigues and exposures to which he had been subjected. He had thought it would be an easy matter to run a farm successfully, even though he had not an atom of experience to help him. But a five-years' trial convinced him that it was up-hill work indeed to one not to the manor born, and profitable farming was impossible to one like himself, trammelled not only with a large family, but with tastes and requirements entirely incompatible with the kind of life it was evident a Western farmer must lead in order to be successful. In those five years he had ploughed under and buried in various ways on that farm all that he was worth in the world except the farm itself and a few hundred head of stock, and the boys were growing up and must be educated, must go through college—that the father, a Yale graduate himself, was determined upon—and the girls needed some advantages of refined society; and at the time our story opens, it had begun to be a serious question how all this was to be accomplished. The girls were the oldest; then came Ralph and Harry,

two fine boys of sixteen and eighteen, hating the farm, though they had tried to perform cheerfully their share of its duties, while they yearned for better educational advantages than the district or town schools afforded; and then fourteen-year-old Robbie whose teacher, had just written that it was of no use to send him to school. Mr. Ellis was much worried, and had many a talk with his wife over their gloomy prospects, and his inability to see his way to anything better.

"Harry must go to college the coming fall," he said; "I have provided for his first year's expenses by the sale of War Eagle, poor fellow!—he carried me safely through many a battle, and I would like to keep him, but he could not be sacrificed to a better cause. But were the money for the next year to come from, and bow I am to put Ralph through and give the girls any advantages, I do not see. As to Robbie, there is no hurry about him. He will never amount to anything, anyhow!"

"Dear child!" said Mrs. Ellis, "he is the most affectionate and dutiful of my children, and I do not fear for him. Only give him time."

But time was precisely what none of the family seemed willing to accord to the quiet boy, now that he was out of school. It was: "Robbie do this," and "Robbie fetch that," and "Robbie run here," or there from morning until night, making it a mystery how the household machinery had been worked an hour without him, and his mother wondered if his sisters thought it possible for him to get tired.

"I say, Rob" said Ralph one afternoon, entering the kitchen and throwing down half a dozen mallard ducks, "I left a lot more of those fellows in the ravine between the two chestnut trees over the ridge. I couldn't bring all with my gun and other traps. I wish you would saddle the pony and go after them before night."

Robbie had been doing chores all day, and had besides just returned from an errand a mile away for one of his sisters; but he sprang up with alacrity, and his face shone with pleasure as he took down his coat and hat, and prepared to do his brother's bidding.

"What's the matter with Rob?" said Fanny, "I never saw him move so quick and look so glad to be disturbed."

"It's the chance for the ride; he doesn't often have that, you know," answered Lucy.

"Yes, I suppose that is it," rejoined her sister, as she watched Robbie galloping off over the prairie.

The chance for the ride? Yes, indeed, that was it that made Robbie's glad heart jump right into his eyes when his brother proposed the errand to him. The ravine over the ridge between the two chestnut trees was at least three miles away, and to that spot Robbie had wandered one day months before, and made a discovery which he suspected was a most valuable one, but for want of time he had not been able to push his investigations as far as he wished. He had tried repeatedly since to get time to go back to it, but there was always too much for him to do around home, and he had begun almost to despair when this lucky chance was offered to him. What would his father have thought, if he had known how and why the boy's heart fairly throbbed with excitement? And what would his sisters have said, if they could have seen him an hour later down on his knees in the ravine digging away the earth with an old trowel he always carried in his pocket, now gathering up broken bits of stone to examine them, now a handful of earth, and then digging again with such a grave, earnest look on his face? He had found the ducks and fastened them to the saddle when he first reached the ravine—a wise precaution, as it turned out for Robbie was soon exploring beyond the ravine, and crawling over the rough ground, apparently following a trail. Time passed unheeded by him, and it was not until the gathering darkness made even the prairie grass indistinct that Robbie was recalled to time and circumstance, and looked up to find himself half a mile from the ravine, and the pony nowhere to be seen. Before he could quite realize the situation, however, he heard the neigh of a horse, and turned to see his brother Harry galloping towards him.

"Where have you been?" cried Harry, pulling up beside him; "mother is frightened to death about you. When the pony came home on a rearing run, she felt sure you were stretched out stiff somewhere. What have you been doing? Hunting rocks, I'll bet!"

Conclusion next week.

Don't trouble yourself with Her.

"Let her go, let her go. Don't trouble yourself with her."

This is the answer that I received in reply to some questions asked, in reference to a young girl in whom I had become interested. Her mother was a dissolute woman, and the girl, bright and winning, was giving reason for a suspicion that she was following in the footsteps of her parent. This answer is painfully suggestive. The poor woman who uttered it little thought that she was proving herself to be one of a great company who by their unsympathetic negligence are permitting the ruin of scores whom they might save by timely warning and exhortation.

Many of the girls who are now pure and unstained might be saved from a life of shame, and become a blessing to the world, if people were not so ready to accept it as a foregone conclusion that they are beyond hope, and so slow in trying to prevent it. Many of the boys who are now treading with timid steps the haunts of vice, might be lured from their danger, if, instead of pronouncing them incorrigible and leaving them the undisputed prey of the tempter, some loving heart should recognize the possibility of a brighter future, and seek to convince them of its reality.

There is, indeed, a fearful responsibility resting upon the one who by whatever device seeks to ensnare the youth, but our garments are not clear from the blood of any lost soul who might have been saved by our watchfulness and care. It is not wise for us to pronounce any case hopeless that is in danger, and especially so, not until we have tried every means to convince them of their folly, and point them to the better way.

A destiny has often hinged upon a single word of warning, or a kind reproof. None are so low that it is worth our while to "let them go." It is a suggestion of the devil, ruinous to ourselves and others.—Exchange.

Booth's Department.

Scripture Enigma.

No. 191.

Here is an important injunction given to the young by King Solomon, consisting of 37 letters:

Write down the numbers 1 to 37, then take Nos. 12, 10, 5, 1, 19, 8, 11, and they will be found to be a synonym of love.

Nos. 3, 2, 13, 12, 26, are what every sinner needs.

Nos. 22, 7, 25, 8, 16, are what is required in all religious exercises.

Nos. 21, 18, 35, 30, 31, are the principal word of Pilate's great question.

Nos. 36, 19, 3, 14, are "a fragment of eternity."

Nos. 6, 7, 24, 32, are the mortal part of man.

Nos. 37, 28, 20, 4, 33, are a saccharine product of insects.

Curious Questions.

No. 438.

Curial a unit, and leave uppermost.

"a legal claim, and leave a falsehood."

"a large tooth, and leave a cooler."

"a sovereign, and leave a relative."

"a meal, and leave a payment."

"a current of air, and leave success."

439. Form a diamond of 11 letters:

1. half "the poor Indian."

2. a narrow passage.

3. the shape of a worm.

4. a city in Italy.

5. a soft white metal.

6. the head of cow.

440. Behold a bright color, and leave a delicious fruit, and leave an organ of the body.

"an earthen vessel, and leave a large stone."

"a man, and leave a beverage."

"a dangerous fish, and leave a call for silence."

"a heavy measure, and leave a third of two dozen."

Find answers to the above, write them down, and see how they agree with the answers to be given next week.

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

No. 190.

Jeremiah in the dungeon. Jer. xxxviii. 6-13.

Answers to Curious Questions. No. 435. Zig-zag. No. 436. 1. Bear. 2. Antelope. 3. Wolf. 4. Starling. 5. Rat. 6. Whale. No. 437. To All Works: 1. Site—right. 2. Yell—yale. 3. Aunt—ant. 4. Read—red. 5. Some—sum. 6. Miner—minor. 7. Would—wood. 8. Sent—cent. 9. Knew—new. 18. Maid—made. 11. Hart—heart. 12. Grate—great. 13. Son—sun.

Denominational.

The Western Recorder tells the following story: "Father, said a fashionable young lady, 'Am I a member of the church?' 'Yes, my daughter,' her father replied, 'you are a member of the church—I initiated you by having you baptized in infancy.' 'But, father, she answered, 'I have no piety, never was converted, and I do not think I ought to be a church member.' 'The wheat and the tares are to grow together, our Lord tells us in the parable, and you are a tare, I fear, my daughter, only a tare,' replied her father. 'But didn't you say that you initiated me?' she asked. 'Yes,' said he, 'I initiated you in your infancy; but why did you ask?' 'Because,' she answered slowly, 'the Bible says that the one who sowed the tares, was the Devil.' The old man groaned, walked the floor, and made no reply."

The American Baptist Publication Society will soon issue a new Sunday-school paper called Sunshine, as a companion to the Reeper. It will be published semi-monthly, alternating with the Reeper, and will thus enable schools to have a paper every Sunday.

It is recorded of the younger Ryland, that when his father and family had to remove, they settled in a small town, where the only educational institution was the grammar school. Here, of course, the Church catechism formed part of the course of instruction. On the first occasion, when young Ryland stood up with the others, the question (after the qualifications for baptism had been answered), came to him, "Why then are infants baptized when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them?" promptly replied, "Why indeed, sir?"

Dr. Armitage spoke recently of "the brilliant young ministry," which God has given to our denomination in America at the present time. The Chicago Standard says: "Certainly, those who just now are thinking of their own work as nearly done, may well rejoice in the promise for the future, as respects the personnel of our denominational ministry. What a group of ministerial schools like those now doing such efficient service in the east, west, and south, may do in calling out and educating the talent of a Christian denomination is strikingly shown in the character and promise of these brethren who in the last thirty years, have graduated at Newton, Hamilton, Rochester, Crozer, Chicago, and Louisville. We are certain that the American Baptist pulpits never had such an array of talented and devoted men, either young or only on the verge of middle age. Those of us who are soon to turn even our own work over to them, may well rejoice that the hands which are to receive it, and carry it on, are so thoroughly competent. The Baptist denomination in America, under God's blessing, seems assured of a future brilliant in noble service for every good cause."

The editor of the Religious Herald says:—"The widow of a Baptist deacon who died four years ago said to us, a few days ago as we sat in her parlour: 'The great mistake of my husband's life was leaving 200,000 dollars to his children. My eldest son had not been in possession of his portion six months, before he had acquired intemperate habits, and to-day, wrecked in health and morals, he hasn't a dollar left of the thousands his father left him. My daughter married an immoral man, who has spent her portion, and now her life is sad and dreary. It would have been a thousand times better, had my husband devoted his means more largely to Education and Christianity.'

Everybody desires long life, but nobody desires old age. When you bury animosity never mind putting up a tombstone. Be deaf to the quarrelsome, blind to the scornful, and dumb to those who are mischievously inclined. The exercise of the will has very much to do in determining our physical condition. We seldom find people ungrateful as long as we are in a condition to render them service.—Rochefoucauld. Sometimes a fog will settle over a vessel's deck and yet leave the topmast clear. Then a sailor goes up aloft and gets a lookout which the helmsman on the deck cannot get. So prayer sends the soul aloft; lifts it above the clouds in which our selfishness, and egotism, begot us, and gives us a chance to see which way to steer.—Spurgeon. They say that I am growing old, because my hair is silvered, and there are crows' feet on my forehead, and my step is not so firm and elastic as before. But they are mistaken. That is not me. The knees are weak, but the knees are not me. The brow is wrinkled, but the brow is not me. This is the house I live in. But I am young—y younger than I ever was before.—Guthrie.

Gems.

Everybody desires long life, but nobody desires old age. When you bury animosity never mind putting up a tombstone. Be deaf to the quarrelsome, blind to the scornful, and dumb to those who are mischievously inclined. The exercise of the will has very much to do in determining our physical condition. We seldom find people ungrateful as long as we are in a condition to render them service.—Rochefoucauld. Sometimes a fog will settle over a vessel's deck and yet leave the topmast clear. Then a sailor goes up aloft and gets a lookout which the helmsman on the deck cannot get. So prayer sends the soul aloft; lifts it above the clouds in which our selfishness, and egotism, begot us, and gives us a chance to see which way to steer.—Spurgeon. They say that I am growing old, because my hair is silvered, and there are crows' feet on my forehead, and my step is not so firm and elastic as before. But they are mistaken. That is not me. The knees are weak, but the knees are not me. The brow is wrinkled, but the brow is not me. This is the house I live in. But I am young—y younger than I ever was before.—Guthrie.