

## Our Boys and Girls.

### THE KETTLE SONG.

BY MILTON L. MURDOCK.

What is the song that the kettle sings,  
Droning along like a buzzing fly,  
Dancing away with its see-saw swings,  
Fast, ay, and faster as time jogs by?  
"Home and welcome and right good cheer,"

—A jolly good song it sings, I wot—  
"A good warm stew when the good-  
man's here,  
And a cup of tea that is piping hot."

What is the song that the kettle sings,  
Gushing away with its geyser jets,  
Spuming and spouting in spiral rings,  
Clapping its cover like castanets?  
"Dainty dishes, unstinted joys,"

—A cheery chorus of right good will,—  
"Hungry and happy girls and boys,  
And glad home-coming when days  
are chill."

What is the song that the kettle sings,  
Hissing away like a silly goose,  
While Polly washes the supper things,  
And scalds them well for the morrow's  
use?

"Warmth and comfort, a long night's  
rest,"  
—I wis 'tis a song of rare delight,—  
"A good, hot jug for each sleepy guest;  
For 'tis bedtime, mother, and so good-  
night."

—Chris. Register.

### A Boy Who was more Afraid of Untruths than Demerits.

BY B. V. C.

Jamie Norris was a little Scotch lad-  
die, who came all the way from his far  
away home—beyond the great ocean—to  
his uncle's home in America, alone. He  
was only eight years old, when a low  
fever carried off both father and moth-  
er in a single week. After they were  
buried, neighbors wrote to Jamie's un-  
cle and asked what was to be done with  
the orphaned boy. "Tag him for Bax-  
ter, Illinois, U. S. A., and ship him by  
express to me," was the reply. So af-  
ter a fortnight's journey he reached the  
station to which he had been shipped  
and was taken in charge by his uncle,  
who was waiting for his arrival.

Jamie was homesick and tired after  
his long trip, but he was a brave little  
fellow and winked back his tears when  
his aunt kissed him and welcomed him  
to the prairie home. There were three  
children in the Norris home, Bruce,  
aged eleven, Francis, ten, and little Jean,  
just Jamie's own age.

It was Saturday that he completed his  
long journey and on Monday he went  
with his cousins to the village school.  
The boys laughed at his Scotch plaidie,  
and mimicked his Highland brogue, but  
he walked off, knowing very well that  
he was too small to defend himself  
from their rudeness and that it was bet-  
ter to endure their taunts quietly than  
be worsted in a fight.

In the evening when the roll was called,  
Jamie observed that most of the  
scholars answered "merit;" a few said  
"demerit" when their names were called,  
but not understanding what they meant  
by the answers, when it came to "Jamie  
Norris," he simply replied, "Here," as  
he had been accustomed to in the school  
across the big waters.

"Are you 'merit' or 'demerit,' asked  
the teacher, glancing up from her day-

book; and when Jamie said he did not  
know what was meant by these answers,  
she explained: "If you haven't whisper-  
ed one word during study hours, answer  
'merit,' but if you have, 'demerit.'"

"Then I'm 'demerit,'" replied Jamie,  
"for I whispered several times."  
"How often," questioned the teacher.  
"I don't know," Jamie returned, quiet-  
ly.

"As many as two?" urged the teacher.  
"More than that," said Jamie.  
"Three, four or five?" asked Miss  
Ray.

"More than that," was the answer.  
"Six, eight or ten times, I suspect."  
"I didn't know the rule and so didn't  
keep count."

"Then I'll have to give you zero," said  
the teacher sternly. "You ought to know  
not to whisper in school, even if you  
were not told."

"You're a gilly, to tell," said Bruce on  
the way home in the evening.

"But I did talk; ever so much," in-  
sisted Jamie. "What else could I do  
but tell?"

"Why, answered 'merit' like the rest  
of us, of course. The teacher didn't see  
you, and it'll spoil your report dread-  
fully. Just think of it! zero the first  
day. Father will think it is awful. He  
always wishes us to get 'merit.'"

"Not if you do not deserve it," Jamie  
returned. "And I can't see what dif-  
ference it makes whether the teacher  
saw me or not. I saw myself, and  
that's the same."

"No it isn't," contradicted Bruce.  
"That sort of whispering doesn't count,  
and in the future answer like I do. Why,  
we all do that kind of talking. Making  
signs and writing notes aren't talking."

"But they are breaking the rule, and  
that's the same," persisted Jamie. "I'll  
try to keep from breaking the rule after  
this, but if I forget, I'll not answer  
'merit.'"

And he held to his Scotch resolution  
despite the twitting of the scholars  
about his soft conscience and big "de-  
merits." If he whispered or did things  
against the rules, he did not call them  
by some other names, or try to sneak  
out of them, and yet despite his poor  
report the teacher said he was one of  
the quietest, most obedient pupils in the  
school. His lessons were always well  
prepared, though it was a matter of re-  
gret that no honors went his way.

A series of prizes for high standing  
in classes and best reports in conduct  
were to be distributed on the closing  
day of the term, and, as usual, much in-  
terest was felt in the outcome of the  
contest.

In the award, Jamie's name was not  
mentioned at all, but after the result of  
the winter's contest had been announced  
and the prizes distributed, the president  
of the Board, who had been spokesman  
on the occasion, said, "I have another  
prize to bestow tonight; one not men-  
tioned in the list of honors. It is a  
gold medal and goes to Jamie Norris,  
the boy who always prefers 'demerits'  
to untruths, and in consequence carries  
away a report below the average,  
though according to the teacher's esti-  
mation in both work and conduct he  
stands higher than any other pupil in  
school."—Chris. Intelligencer.

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are reading it. He is very near.

### JOHN EARLE'S NOON HOUR.

John Earle was employed in one of  
the largest cotton mills in Lowell. The  
work was hard, the hours long, and  
worst of all, the pay small, with little  
or no prospect of increase. His con-  
dition was no worse than that of hu-  
dreds of others employed in the same  
mill, but somehow it seemed to dis-  
turb him more. He believed that he  
was capable of better things. One  
noon, while eating his dinner beside  
the machine he operated, the thought  
occurred to him, "Why am I wasting  
the noon hour each day?" Each year  
he spent three hundred days or there-  
abouts in the mill, and the possibilities  
of those three hundred noon hours ap-  
pealed to the young man. Two weary  
at night to turn his attention to serious  
study, he had about given up hope of  
bettering his condition.

Being naturally a good penman, and  
fond of mathematics, he turned his at-  
tention to figures and bookkeeping. He  
thought that during the ensuing five  
years, while his companions were idling  
and telling stories, he could master the  
subject that interested him.

The following morning, on his way  
to the mill, Earle purchased an arithme-  
tic and, when the noon hour came, hav-  
ing eaten his dinner, he made a begin-  
ning on the course he had marked out  
for himself.

Of course, the men laughed when  
they saw him at work with his paper  
and pencil—that was to be expected—  
and Earle was not disturbed in the least.  
In fact, he was so engrossed with his  
work that he heard but few of their  
jibes. The only thing that seriously  
annoyed him was the one-o'clock whis-  
tle.

One noon the superintendent of the  
mill chanced to pass the young man  
while he was busy with his study. He  
noted the nature of the book, but said  
nothing. That afternoon, however, he  
referred to the occasion, asking the fore-  
man who the young man was, and what  
was his ability as an employee.

"Oh, you mean John Earle," said the  
foreman. "He's the best workman in  
my room, sir, but I'm afraid he isn't  
going to stay with us long."

"Keep your eye on him," said the su-  
perintendent, "that kind of a man is  
worth holding."

Five years, the time that Earle had  
first allotted for the completion of his  
studies, had passed. One morning the  
foreman stopped before Earle's machine  
and informed him that the superin-  
tendent wished to see him in the office.

"Haskell has a bone to pick with you,  
John," said the foreman, striving des-  
perately to conceal a smile, as he noted  
Earle's bewilderment. "Don't think ill of  
me, John; I had to report you."

"Report what?" demanded Earle,  
flushing.

"You will find out when you reach  
the office," said the foreman, beating a  
hasty retreat among the noisy looms.

"Mr. Earle?" queried the superinten-  
dent, turning in his chair as the young  
man approached his desk a few minutes  
later. The "Mister" perplexed Earle  
even more than the foreman's words.  
Ordinarily the employees, when ad-  
dressed by the heads of the departments,  
were spoken to in a most concise form.  
The "Mister" was quite without pre-  
cedent, but he replied in the affirmative.

"I think that it was nearly five years  
ago that I chanced to see you one noon  
at work over some problems. I spoke  
to your foreman about it, and told him  
to keep a sharp eye on you. We have  
been quite a while in coming to a de-

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cision in the matter, but we finally de-  
cided that you have outlived your use-  
fulness as an operator."

Poor Earle crimsoned clear to the  
roots of his hair. He knew that he had  
attended to his work faithfully, and  
for a moment the seeming injustice of  
the superintendent's remarks fairly  
stunned him.

The superintendent nervously stroked  
his beard as he noted Earle's amazement,  
and then resumed. "For some time past  
we have been dissatisfied with the work"  
—John was deathly pale now, for he  
had time to recall the fact that there  
was rent due, and fuel to buy, and  
strive as he would, he was unable to  
keep back the tears—"of our first as-  
sistant bookkeeper," finished the super-  
intendent, smiling for the first time;  
"today we discharged him. Are you  
ready, Mr. Earle, to take his place?"—  
*Sunday School Herald.*

*The Demon, Dyspepsia.*—In olden  
time it was a popular belief that demons  
moved invisibly through the ambient  
air, seeking to enter men and trouble  
them. At the present day the demon,  
dyspepsia, is at large in the same way,  
seeking habitation in those who by care-  
less or unwise living invite him. And  
once he enters a man it is difficult to  
dislodge him. He that finds himself so  
possessed should know that a valiant  
friend to do battle for him with the un-  
seen foe is Parmelee's Vegetable Pills,  
which are ever ready for the trial.

The pure, unclouded pleasure of en-  
joyment sanctioned by duty amounts to  
a kind of rapture which we cannot ex-  
plain otherwise than by the sunshine of  
God's approval falling upon it.

Blessings are like clock-ticks. Usually  
we do not notice them; and we begin to  
realize them only when they stop.—*Sol.*