Poetry.

"IF I ONLY HAD."

[Mr. Moody, at one of his Brooklyn meetings related a thrilling incident of a man whom he had long followed with entreaties to be saved, who had often promised and yet delayed until his dying hour, when Mr. Moody again urged upon him the Gospel; but the man then insisted that it was too late, and died repeating to himself the despairing words—"*If I only had.*"—*Observer.*]

If I only had admitted the Saviour to my breast,
If I had submitted to Jesus, and found rest,
What wealth of living pleasure my soul would now enjoy,
What store of heavenly treasure, without the least alloy!
If I only had attended upon the Spirit's call,
I only had extended my hand and heart withal,
O, then what sweet indwellings had evermore been mine,
What fountains now upwelling of life and joy divine!
If I only then had heeded the voice of God within,
If I only had succeeded against the strength of sin,
O, then I had been walking, in light and love to-day.
If I only had rejected the world's bewitching power,
If I only had neglected the pleasures of the hour,
O, then I would have gotten real ease from Satan's snare,
And found in me begotten a love for praise and prayer.
But yet to day the message accosts my soul again
"Come untome, ye laboring and heavy laden men!
I come, I come, dear Jesus; I know thou wilt recsive;
I come because thou callest; O, help me to believe!"

THE MOUSE.

I'm only a poor little mouse, ma'am!
I live in the wall of your house, ma'am!
With a fragment of cheese, and a *very* few peas,
I was having a little carouse, ma'am!
No mischief at all I intend, ma'am!
I hope you will act as my friend, ma'am!
If my life you should take, many hearts would it break,
And the trouble would be without end, ma'am!
My wife lives in there in the crack, ma'am!
She's waiting for me to come back, ma'am!
She hoped I might find a bit of a rind,
For the children their dinner do lack, ma'am!
'Tis hard living there in the wall, ma'am!
For plaster and mortar will pall, ma'am,
On the minds of the young, and when specially hung—
Ry, upon their poor father they'll fall, ma'am!
I never was given to strife, ma'am!
(*Don't* look at that terrible knife, ma'am!)
The noise overhead that disturbs you in bed,
'Tis the rats, I will venture my life, ma'am!
In your eyes I see mercy, I'm sure, ma'am!
Oh, there's no need to open the door, ma'am!
I'll slip through the crack, and I'll never come back,
Oh, I'll never come back any more, ma'am!

—*Laura E. Richards, in St. Nicholas.*

The Fireside.

A SCHOOL-BOY'S TRIAL.

BY E. C. S.

"Halloo, Dick! Wait a minute till I catch up with you. Phew! Isn't it cold, though?"

"Well, yes, a little. Don't walk so fast, Fred," and Dick Felton changed his brisk pace to a slower one, at the same time taking the arm of his companion, Fred Stevens.

"I want to tell you something, Fred. Of course you've seen that aristocratic young spoony, Dickson, who entered our school yesterday. Spent recess talking to the teacher! After school I called out to him, 'Look here, pale-face, do you expect to be teacher's pet?' You ought to have seen him flush up. I tell you, he'll be a rare sport for us, if he is what I think he is. Now, let's lay a plan to find him out, to-day."

"You mean that small fellow, kind of weak-looking, that came into our room with his mother yesterday forenoon?"

"Yes, that's the one. His name is Wallace Dickinson."

"Here comes Carl Robbins, as jolly as ever. How are you, Smiley?" said Fred to the new-comer, who joined them from a side street.

"Good morning, boys. Better be smiling than looking as solemn as Dick there. What's up, Felton?"

"Wait a minute, Fred and Carl. We're very near the school-yard, and I want this thing settled. Stand still here, under this elm tree."

The three boys clustered together, and Dick Felton rapidly unfolded his plans. Dick was a leading spirit among his companions, both on account of his superior intelligence and the readiness with which he entered upon any plan for a good time; yet, of course, he had many faults, and conspicuous among them were pride and envy. Any boy or girl who entertains those guests will find them hard masters.

This was Dick's proposal: When the new-comer, young Dickinson, should come into the school-yard, at recess, the boys should tease and annoy him, and as he became angry, they would get big Jennings to fight with him. Thus the school-boys expected to find out what this pale, weak-looking lad was "made of." A mean, cruel plot, yet they thought it fun. Carl Robbins did make some objections, but they were not heeded.

The school-yard with its throngs of merry boys presented a cheerful appearance at recess-time; but to Wallace Dickinson, leaning so forlornly against the step-railing, there was nothing very delightful about it. The young stranger, was indeed, somewhat pale and of rather a slight form, but he possessed a fine countenance, and a frank, pleasing manner. Cheery blue eyes and wavy brown hair complete the description. Several of the younger boys of the school approached and saluted him by such pleasing titles as, "snobby!" "spoony!" and one grim-faced little sinner, hailed him by the name of "fashionable flamingo!"

This flight of genius was greeted with shouts of laughter, which even attracted the attention of the older lads. These were apparently just finishing some general consultation, and now a few of them strolled leisurely towards Wallace. How his heart beat with the hope that these boys, his classmates, would speak to him, and help him to become used to his strange surroundings.

Felton was in advance of the others, his dark eyes sparkling maliciously, "We're very sorry that your swellship should have had to cut loose from mamma's apron-strings, and come to our school. We cannot promise you the milk-and-water diet to which you have been accustomed."

At the conclusion of this unkind speech, Dick adroitly knocked Wallace's hat off, and another boy, seizing it, threw it quickly into a puddle of water. Meanwhile, Felton's companion continued a volley of insult and abuse at the new-comer.

He seemed bewildered, at first, but when he saw their evident intention, he reddened with honest indignation, and said impulsively, "You're a fine set of fellows!"

"Come on! I'll give it to you for that," shouted Jennings, attempting to draw Wallace into a fight.

But Wallace had now recovered his self-control, and saying coolly, "I never fight," he passed the bully, and picked the unfortunate hat out of the mire.

"That settles it," said Felton, sneeringly, "he is a spoony and a coward."

"Coward! coward!" shouted the school-boys; and Jennings, to confirm his victory, gave Dickinson a push. Though not a very hard thrust, yet it came unexpectedly, and Wallace was slightly bewildered by the derisive shouts. He lost his balance and fell backward into the mud of the yard.

"Good enough for the dandy," laughed Felton. "Guess he'll fight now," remarked Fred Stevens.

Wallace was on his feet directly, and turning to Dick Felton, who was plainly the instigator of this rude reception, he said, somewhat bitterly, "I am sorry I cannot oblige you by fighting. I should like well to do it, but I promised mother I never would fight, and I will not break my word."

As he spoke of his mother Wallace resolutely put aside his anger, and by a great effort added calmly, "If you give all new-comers welcomes, they must have tough times of it," and glancing playfully at his muddied attire, he re-entered the school-building.

Some of the boys, delighted with the true manliness which young Dickinson had exhibited, started a cheer; but they were promptly snubbed by Dick Felton, who said sarcastically, "Oh, yes! Isn't he a hero? Won't fight, and boasts of being tied to mamma's apron-strings. A regular milk-sop, as I thought!"

Dick's comrades did not all agree with him, and their opposition served to strengthen his hatred and envy of Wallace Dickinson. Felton, with quick penetration, saw that he now had a rival, and inwardly resolved never to be friendly towards the new-comer, but to annoy him in every secret way that he could devise.

The dreaded first day was over at last, and other school-days came and went. Wallace took a high rank in his class after the monthly examinations. Felton was number one, Dickinson, number two; though Carl Robbins dared to say that if Dick had not plagued and cheated Wallace during the examinations, the places would have been reversed. However, Wallace bore it patiently, as he endured all the many petty annoyances to which he was subjected. He knew who was the cause of them all, yet he treated Dick Felton with the same polite good-nature which he showed towards the other boys.

Dick's dislike increased instead of diminishing on discovering that Wallace was proficient in his studies, and as he saw, moreover, that Dickinson had become quite a favorite among his classmates. There were several of Dick's followers who shared in his unreasonable prejudice. These did not fail to taunt and jeer at Wallace whenever they had an opportunity, but he did not heed them.

One moonlight evening, about a month after Wallace entered the school, a party of boys went skating. Stevens, Felton, Dickinson, Robbins, and many others, made up a merry company, and the hours flew by, while the mirthful band lightly glided hither and thither over the shining ice, now swiftly as a bird, now slowly, with the latest "New York Fancy" to astonish beholders. This sometimes astonished the performer himself as he would frequently sit down rather hastily. In the midst of the fun, a loud scream startled those at the end of the pond. Soon four of Felton's associates came skating rapidly away from the upper portion of the pond.

"The ice is thin—Dick's gone through!" they exclaimed.

"What have you left him for?" asked the boys.

"Why, the ice is all cracking fearfully, up there! Any one who stops an instant will break through."

"Dick can't swim, and he will be frightened to death," said Robbins. "I'm afraid he will drown. What can we do?"

As soon as Wallace heard anything of the matter, he asked quickly, "who knows where there's a long board?"

Hardly any one seemed to know how to do anything, so he hastily took off his club skates, ran two or three rods down the street, and picked up a board he had noticed lying there in the morning. Darting back again, he put on his skates in a few seconds, and before the terror-stricken boys could say anything, he was far on his way towards the weak ice. He heard Dick groaning, and calling faintly through his chattering teeth, "Help! help!" and saw as he approached that Felton was clinging to the edge of the ice. Whenever the half-frozen boy tried to climb out, the treacherous ice cracked and broke. Wallace quickly placed the board so that one end of it was within Dick's reach. Then by holding down the other end, Dick's weight would be more evenly distributed over the frail ice.

"Take hold of this, Felton, and put your weight upon it as gradually as you can," called Wallace, and Dick obeyed.

It was a dangerous experiment, and the result might have been fatal to both; but a merciful Providence helped our hero, and Dick was once more on the ice. Shaking from head to foot with chills, as Wallace helped him across the pond, he only said, "Is it possible that *you* have saved me, Wallace Dickson?"

When they reached the firm ice and met the other boys, Dick asked Stevens and Jackson why they had not staid to help him; yet not waiting to hear their weak excuses, he hurried home. Wallace suddenly seated himself on the bank bordering the whole pond. He felt faint and sick after the nervous excitement. Carl Robbins, always a sympathizing friend, took off Wallace's skates and walked home with him.

There is little more to tell. Wallace was ill for a few days, and he had no more constant and loving attendant than his former bitter enemy. Dick Felton had been taught a hard lesson, and he never forgot it. It made him a better and nobler boy, and a life-long friend of Wallace Dickinson.

Are you wondering, my boy readers, at the strange conduct of my hero? I will tell you the secret of it. He was a *Christian.*

TALKS ABOUT COMMON THINGS, CLOCKS AND WATCHES.

Next to a knife, there is nothing that pleases a boy so much as a watch. Perhaps we ought to have put the watch first, but as that is an expensive article, and requires care in handling, the knife is generally first thought of, and the longing for a watch comes when the boy is a little more matured in years. But to use a knife care and caution is always needed, and we are sorry to say we have known thoughtless and mischievous boys commit sad havoc, first upon their own fingers, and then upon doorposts, and even furniture, with the sharp little instrument which they ought to have employed only for pointing their pencils, or fashioning a boat or some other toy, or cutting string, or for the many other little purposes for which it is properly intended.

Not very many centuries ago there were no such things as clocks or watches, but from early days in the world's history there were time measurers of one kind or another. The want of some means by which the flight of time might be shown was soon felt, for work and other things had to be reckoned by it, though our forefathers might not have wanted to know "the time of day" so frequently as we do, as there were not so many matters to take their attention, or so many engagements for them to fulfil as we have.

In the first instance the sun used to be the great time-keeper, and people could tell, roughly, what time it was by observing the sun's apparent motion from rising to setting. The shadow it would make when a post or other object was watched for the purpose was some sort of guide; but it was very uncertain, because the hour lines would not be the same in winter and summer. Then sundials were invented, such as we now see occasionally in gardens or churchyards, or in old buildings. The word "dial" comes from the Latin, *dies*, a day; and the dial is a very ancient instrument. Then there was the clepsydra, which measured time by the dropping of water, and so became known as the water-clock; but the water would be subject to many disturbances, and this sort of clock, therefore, was but a rough approach towards proper time-telling. Then there were hour-glasses, through which fine sand ran, just as it does in what we know as "egg-boilers;" and another method of telling the time was the candle, with certain marks upon it, which is said to have been used by King Alfred the Great.

It is related of this King that, when he was a fugitive in his own country, he resolved that if he should be restored again he would devote a third of his time to the service of God. This he afterwards did by setting apart eight hours of the day to acts of religion, eight to public business, and as many to sleep, study and refreshment. To measure and rightly divide his time, he adopted the following plan:—He procured as much wax as weighed seventy-two pennyweights, which he ordered to be made into six candles, each twelve inches in length, with the divisions of inches distinctly marked. The candles being lighted one after another regularly, burnt four hours each. Thus the candles burnt twenty-four hours. One of the chaplains attached to the king's household had to attend to the candles. But a candle would burn a little more quickly at one time than at another; it would be affected by draughts of wind and so on. Therefore, with all possible care and attention, there was nothing like the true time which we can see in a moment by a clock or watch which needs no looking after at all, except winding up within a certain number of days or hours as the case may be.

When wheel clocks were first invented is not known. It seems, however, that clocks with weights and wheels were in use in monasteries seven hundred years ago, and St. Paul's Cathedral, in London, had a public clock in the year 1286—nearly six hundred years ago—and Westminster Abbey had one a few years later. We can well imagine with what curiosity the people used to look up at these, though probably a good many were puzzled how to tell the time.

The oldest clock of which there are any records of how it actually was made is one by a German named Henry Vic, or De Wyck, who erected it in the tower of the palace of Charles V., King of France. This clock was the foundation, upon which modern clocks are formed, and it is said that the part which causes the clock to strike is the same now as then.

We are accustomed to think very little of clocks now-a-days, but if they were removed from all churches and public buildings—to say nothing of those in our own houses—how we should miss them!

According to the late Mr. E. J. Wood, where clocks were adopted at cathedrals, and churches, and palaces, there used to be officers appointed to take charge of them. These persons were called custos or setters, and in the households of kings, they were considered to be of much importance and were regularly appointed by royal command. To us it would seem as if they had an easy life, but then clocks in those days used often to get out of repair, and only the "setters" had any special knowledge of them.

We could tell many stories of celebrated clocks, including the wonderful one at Strasbourg Cathedral, the maker of which became blind before he had completed it, but he finished it, notwithstanding his want of sight, being anxious that no one but himself should have the credit of doing so.

We should state, however, that the Strasbourg clock was made not only to tell the time, but to show the motions of the sun, moon, stars, the day of the week, the date in the year, and many other things. The clock had also a number of moving figures, including a cock, which, after the chimes played, stretched out its neck, flapped its wings, and crowed quite naturally.

Not many years ago there was a clock at the church of St. Dunstan, Fleet street, London, where the quarters of every hour were struck on outside bells by two figures of men with clubs. The men used also to move their heads. This curious clock was one of the sights of London.

Now for watches. Of course the beautiful and delicate piece of workmanship which people, in the present day, carry in their pockets, and which children like to hear "tick," did not come into existence all at once. It has gradually grown to its present state of perfection during a period of just about four hundred years. The first step was to get a little machine that could be made to go by means of a spring, instead of by weights and pendulum, as in the clock. Who actually invented the spring is not known, but the credit of producing the first watch—at any rate, in Europe—is generally given to a clever man, named Peter Hale, of Nuremberg; so Germany which to the present day sends us wonderful moving toys, originated—at any rate in Europe—that most useful and remarkable little machine, the watch, and, as we have already seen, one of the most noted "clockmen" was a German. But watches did not then bear the name we know them by—they were called Nuremberg eggs, for they were frequently egg-shaped; and sometimes they were called pocket-clocks. They were of various forms; sometimes like skulls, and even coffins were imitated by the clever and eccentric men who made them—a queer fancy, they must have had! There is still in existence a skull watch which formerly belonged to Mary, Queen of Scots; and there are others, belonging to about the same time, which are shaped like ducks, and which certainly present a more pleasing appearance than the skull.

A boy or a girl looking at a watch, as it is compactly enclosed in its case, would perhaps never imagine that it is made up of several hundreds of pieces. But it is. According to Mr. Wood, whom we have already mentioned, a good watch, as usually made, requires no less than one hundred and thirty-eight pieces, without the chain, which contains sixty-three links, and forty-two rivets to every inch, and, being generally six inches in length, comprises six hundred and thirty pieces, thus swelling the contents of the watch to seven hundred and sixty-eight separate pieces, to construct which gives occupation to no less than thirty-eight or forty different kinds of workmen. The hair spring, which may be seen on the balance wheel, as it moves rapidly backward and forward, is a wonderfully delicate construction. Four thousand of these springs weigh about an ounce only, but they often cost more than a thousand pounds! A watch ticks about seventeen thousand times in an hour, yet such is the accuracy of first-rate English lever watches that, with all this work, they will not vary more than a few seconds in a week.

The chief seats of the watch trade in England are Clerkenwell and Coventry. A large number of watches come from Switzerland—principally from Neufchatel, where Sir John Bennet, when on a visit there, found no less than twenty-thousand women employed in making the most delicate parts of the movements. C. H.

EXCELLENT SPONGE CAKE.—Four eggs, two cups of sugar, two cups of flour, three quarters of a cup of hot water, one teaspoonful of soda, two teaspoonfuls cream of tartar, one-half teaspoonful of vanilla.

LEMON PIE.—One cup of sugar, two eggs, one tablespoonful of corn starch, a pinch of salt, one cup of boiling water, juice and rind of one lemon. Take the yolks of the eggs and beat them well; then add the sugar, salt, and corn starch; grate the rind, squeeze in the juice, and stir all together. Then pour on the boiling water, set on the stove, and stir constantly till the mixture boils. Have your crust baked and pour it in the crust. With the whites, beaten to a froth, make a frosting, pour it over the pie, and set it in the oven a moment to brown.

AN OLD-FASHION INDIAN PUDDING.—Scald one pint of milk, turn it on to one-half cup of Indian meal; stir in one egg, two-thirds of a cup of molasses; salt and cinnamon to taste. Add one pint of cold milk, and bake about two hours, stirring two or three times while baking it.

FROSTED FEET.—To relieve the intense itching of frosted feet, dissolve a lump of alum in a little water, and bathe the part with it, at the same time, warming the part affected before the fire; one or two applications are sure to give relief.

A PREVENTIVE OF COLD FEET.—Warm your feet well in the morning, and covering the soles with common paper, then carefully draw on your socks and then your boots or shoes.

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