Poetry.

THE FARMER'S WIFE.

The farmer came in from the field one day;
His languid step and his weary way,
His beaded brow, his sinewy hand,
All showed his work for the good of the land:
For he sows, sows, sows,
For he hoes, hoes, hoes,
And he mows, mows, mows,
All for the good of the land.

By the kitchen fire stood his patient wife,
Light of his home and joy of his life,
With face all aglow, and busy hand,
Preparing the meal for her household band:
For she must boil, boil, boil,
And she must broil, broil, broil,
And she must toil, toil, toil,
All for the good of the home.

The bright sun shines when the farmer goes out,
The birds sing sweet songs, lambs frisk about;
The brook babbles softly in the glen
While he works so bravely for the good of the men:
For he sows, sows, sows,
For he mows, mows, mows,
And he hoes, hoes, hoes,
All for the good of the land.

How briskly the wife steps about within,
The dishes to wash, and milk to skim;
The fire goes out, the flies buzz about;
For the dear ones at home her heart is kept stout.
There are pies to make, make, make,
There is bread to bake, bake, bake,
And steps to take, take, take,
All for the sake of the home.

When the day is o'er, and the evening has come,
The creatures are fed, the milking done,
He takes his rest 'neath the old shade-tree;
From she labor of the land his thoughts are free;
Though he sows, sows, sows,
And he hoes, hoes, hoes,
And he mows, mows, mows,
He rests from the work of the land.

But the faithful wife, from sun to sun,
Takes her burden up that's never done;
There is no rest, there is no play;
For the good of her house she must work away:
For to mend the frock, frock, frock,
For to knit the sock, sock, sock.
And the cradle to rock, rock, rock,
All for the good of the home.

When autumn is here, with its chilling blast,
The farmer gathers his crops at last;
His barns are full, his fields are bare;
For the good of the land he ne'er hath care.
While it blows, blows, blows,
And it snows, snows, snows,
Till winter goes, goes, goes,
He rests from the work of the land.

But the willing wife, till life's closing day,
Is the children's guide, the husband's stay;
From day to day she has done her best,
Until death alone can give her rest.
For after the test, test, test,
Comes the rest, rest, rest,
With the blest, blest, blest,
In the Father's heavenly home.

The Fireside.

LIFE OR DEATH.

AN ALLEGORY.

On the banks of a large, broad river lived May Benson. She had always lived there, all the eighteen years of her life. I must describe the river to you. It was, as I have already said, very broad; it also had a strong current, so that boats on its surface were carried swiftly along without much exertion on the part of the people in the boat. For this reason it was the delight of parties on excursions. The river's bank was lined with rich vegetation, tall trees, and thick under growth; all this made it a beautiful spot, especially on a warm summer day.

A story had been going the rounds, started by an old hunter, that away down stream, a hundred miles or so, the river came suddenly to a precipice and leaped sheer down fifty feet and shivered itself into a spray on the rocks below. Some doubted this story, but others believed it, as some years before a gay party had gone down the river on a pleasure trip and had never returned. This was a fact which could not be disputed, but where could they have gone? Those who believed the report of the hunter were sure that they had gone over the falls and were dashed in pieces. But those who doubted the existence of the falls were as sure their friends had landed safely and were living on its banks. Each party believed themselves in the right, and for that reason those who thought the story true chose a beautiful lake for their excursions. The community was divided by this difference, and were named for this reason, the Lake Party and River Party, and neither would sail on the other's water.

May Benson, as has been stated, lived on the banks of the river, she and her father,—and having lived there all their life they had become much attached to their river, and disbelieving all reports about the terrible falls, just as they would repel any slander about any friend.

May had, however, been on the lake a number of times with her friend and lover, Fred Appleton, who was a strong lake man, though she was equally strong the other way, perhaps only for the reason that she was born and brought up there and so became one of them. Finally, as they became more and more intimate, Fred wanted her to leave the river and come with him—to be his wife; he thought it unsafe even at that distance from the falls. But May was not willing to give up the river, at least, not entirely, for she loved it too well to leave it for good, and her father thought it safe enough; yet she said she would go with Fred on the lake a part of the time and a part on the river. But Fred would not consent to this, although on the lake he would be obliged to row the boat in order to make any progress, and on the river the boat moved with the current, whether you would or no, yet to save her from any possible peril he must remain firm.

"But no," she said, "if he don't care for me enough to go with me a part of the time at least, why he may go."

Fred thought this unjust, for it was because he loved her that he was compelled to take this ground, even at the forfeit of her love. But May could not see it in that light, and in the heat of excitement they said a great many things which, on a sober second thought they would not have said. And another thing, May's father, in whom she had the utmost confidence, had told her that the river was free from any possible harm; and even if the report about the falls were true, how cruel it would be for a person to be dragged over them and be destroyed.

The old hunter guide had spoken very plainly, but his words were misconstrued, giving different meanings than were intended, and perhaps owing to the beauty of the river and its delightful current which carried them along without any effort of their own, they did not wish to understand the guide's words any different.

Harry Pratt, a cousin of Fred's, had been watching all their movements, and seeing how matters stood, and being also attracted by May's gentle ways, he offered himself to her, which offer, after some agreements on the part of both, was accepted. Harry had been brought up near the lake, never going on the river, and the doubt that the river was not dangerous had not once entered his mind; but on his acquaintance with May he said to himself that he could not afford to let such a prize go, and for such a little thing as that, and besides couldn't they come off from the river any time if they saw any danger?

One day, Harry and May started on an excursion down the river, along with several other parties, intending to be absent a number of days. They launched their boat on a pleasant morning and joyously floated along with the current. How pleasant and bright everything seemed! How sweetly the birds sang in the trees that lined the river's bank! Nothing appeared to trouble or disturb them. But one day as they glided along, rather swifter than when they started, though it was imperceptible to any of the gay party, the sun began to beat down upon them and the air became sultry, and Harry guided the boat under the shade of the trees. The heat, together with the gentle rocking of the boat, overcame them and they dropped asleep. Two hours later they were startled out of their sleep by a loud clap of thunder, followed by peal upon peal. They sprang to their feet and were amazed to find that the river bank where they had fallen asleep was nowhere to be seen; they had omitted to secure the boat, and while they slept they were carried far down the river; and a storm had risen with wonderful rapidity; the sky, which two hours before was bright, was hung dark with thick, black clouds, and the lightning flashed and the thunder rolled. No wonder they were astonished and bewildered; no wonder that they had grasped the oars and tried to get to the shore; but the water, which only a little while ago lulled them to sleep by its light dancing motion, now hurried them along with terrible speed, threatening to overwhelm them at any moment. But what was that which they heard, above the rattle and roar of the thunder? a deep, ominous rumble that seemed to shake the earth! Could it be that the story of the old guide was true after all? Now they were compelled to believe it. What where they to do? they rowed until the oars snapped. Then—what? The boat was dashing along with an eager, frantic haste, while only a little below could be seen a great cloud of mist and spray rising in the air, showing them that they would soon be in eternity. Nothing could be done to save them, and they clasped each other in a close embrace and with a crash that would have made one shudder, the boat with its living freight was hurled into the yawning abyss below; while the river glided on as if nothing had occurred, as relentless and cruel as before.

Let us return to Fred Appleton. Finding that May had gone on the river with Harry, he went to the old guide and asked him to follow them and try to persuade them to come back. The old hunter had said with perfect distinctness, that the river was dangerous, and that there surely was destruction to any one if they continued in it, although some tried to prove by his own words to the contrary. He went along the banks of the river as fast as possible and finally overtook them, and with distinctness warned them against going any farther. But they would not heed him, and went on, laughing and singing as before. Notwithstanding this, the guide still kept warning them whenever they came near to the shore. They pretended to have a strong regard for the guide, but put a wrong meaning to his very plain words, and so kept on. Without tiring, the guide followed, night and day; till just before sleep overtook them and he warned them again. There were other parties on the river who had heard the previous warnings and some few had listened to him and came ashore, and they, too had warned their more thoughtless companions of the approaching danger. To this last appeal, Harry and May, partly aroused said that they would soon, perhaps when they reached that cool, shady maple which overhung the river half a mile down stream. Meanwhile others, startled by the earnest entreaties, landed. Soon Harry and May reached the tree, but would not come ashore, they wanted to rest awhile first. The gentle motion of the boat and the heat of the atmosphere caused in them an irresistible drowziness and ere long they were asleep. The friends, when they found that they were almost saved, as they thought, relaxed their vigilance and began to look around and to enjoy the scenery. But the boat had not been fastened, and now it was out in the middle of the stream, which had grown much swifter and wider than at first, without any one to guide it; faster and faster it rushed along till a bend in the river hid them from the view of their friends; then the wind began to blow; and faint growls of thunder could be heard every now and then. The clouds began to fly across the sky Suddenly, the storm which had been coming on so fast, broke upon them with a rattle and a crash, the lightning darted and played, and the thunder rolled and muttered, till it seemed as if a whole legion of fiends were trying to exceed each other in madness.

On the return of the guide he went directly to Fred, who anxiously inquired if he had saved May and Harry. The guide shook his head and said:—"He that heard these sayings of mine and did them not I will liken him unto a foolish man that built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house and it fell, and great was the fall thereof."

Then he related to Fred how, after they had stopped under the maple and had drifted away again, the words of the poet came to him:—

"Almost persuaded," harvest is past,
"Almost persuaded," doom comes at last!
"Almost" can not avail;
"Almost" is but to fail!
Sad, sad that bitter wail—
"Almost, but lost."

WHAT A RABBIT DID.

While my friend Clyde and myself were out in the hills back of Golden Gate, last week, a jack rabbit came along and stopped to look at us.

"If I had thought to bring my revolver along, we would have jack on toast for breakfast to-morrow," I remarked.

"Not with my consent," he replied.

"What reason can you give for not consenting?"

"A rabbit saved my life and I have not killed one since, and will never kill one again."

"How did he manage to save your life?"

"Three years ago I was living in a Mountain. A smelter had just been built and it created a demand for silver rock. I owned an interest in a lead that had been sunk on thirty feet. Thinking the time had come to make it available, I concluded to go there and get some ore and have it tested. I did so; and reached the place just in time to take shelter in the mine from a terrible hail-storm. I lighted my candle, went to the bottom, and went to work. I had not been there more than five minutes when I heard a noise that sounded like a cannon. The rocks over my head shook, and in a moment the shaft behind me caved. You can imagine my feelings better than I can describe them when I found myself buried alive. I tremble even at this distant day while I think of that moment. The roof of the shaft was rocks, and when they came down they did not pack so tight but that the air came through.

"There was nothing that I could do to release myself. I knew that if relief did not come from the outside I must perish. No one knew that I had gone there. A road ran past the mouth of the shaft, but it was not travelled much, and I was not likely to attract any attention by calling; nevertheless, I shouted at intervals all day. The following morning I commenced calling again; and all day, whenever I thought I heard a sound I shouted.

"When night came again all hopes of being released had abandoned me. One thing added great bitterness to my sufferings. I owed quite a large amount of money, and should my fate remain unknown, my creditors would think I had tried to defraud them, and my name would be stigmatized.

"I will not dwell on the agonies I endured; I am sorry I can not forget them.

"The morning of the fourth day of my imprisonment I heard something crawl into my grave. I lighted my candle and saw a rabbit. There was only one aperture large enough to admit him; I closed it to prevent his escape. I saw in him food to appease my hunger, and my hand was raised to kill him, when a thought occurred to me that prevented the blow from descending. I had two fish lines; their united length would reach the road. I took off my shirt, tore it into strings, tied them together and on the fish-line. I wore a long gold watch chain; I tied it on the part of the line that would cross the road. I then cut several leaves from my diary, wrote on them my condition, and tied them on the part of the line that would be outside. I then tied the other end of my shirt around Jack's neck and let him out. He soon reached the end of the line, and I knew by the way he was pulling he was making desperate attempts to escape. Soon the tugging stopped, and knowing gnawing to be jack's chief accomplishment, I thought he had cut himself loose. About threehours afterwards I felt the line pulled; then some one called. I tried to answer, but the hoarse noise I made died in the cavern. I then pulled the line to show I was not dead.

"All grew still again, and I knew the man had gone for assistance. Then came the sound of voices; I pulled in the line and it brought me food. It took all the men who could work in the shaft nine hours to reach me.

"A very large pine tree that stood near the shaft had been the cause of my misfortune. It had been dead a number of years, and the storm had blown it over. The terrible blow it struck the ground, had caused the cave to fall in.

"Jack had wound the line around a bush, and tied himself so short that he was imprisoned outside as securely as I had been inside. He was taken to town, put in a large cage, and supplied with all the rabbit delicacies the market afforded. He however, did not thrive, and the boys believing that he 'pined in thought,' voted to set him free. He was taken back to his old girdling grounds and liberated.

"He not only saved my life, but became the benefactor of all the rabbits in the neighborhood—the miners refraining from shooting any, fearing it might be him.—*San Francisco Golden Era.*

TEACH YOUR BOYS.

Teach them that a true lady may be found in calico quite as frequently as in velvet.

Teach them that a common school education, with common sense, is better than a college education without it.

Teach them that one good, honest trade, well mastered, is worth a dozen beggarly "professions."

Teach them that "Honesty is the best of policy"—that 'tis better to be poor than to be rich on the profits of "crooked whisky," etc., and point your precept by examples of those who are now suffering the torments of the doomed.

Teach them to respect their elders and themselves.

Teach them that, as they expect to be men some day, they cannot too soon learn to protect the weak and helpless.

Teach them by your own example that smoking in moderation, though the least of the vices to which men are heirs, is disgusting to others and hurtful to themselves.

Teach them that to wear patched clothes is no disgrace, but to wear a "black eye" is.

Teach them that God is no respecter of sex, and that when he gave the seventh commandment, he meant it for them as well as for their sisters.

Teach them that by indulging their depraved appetites in the worst forms of dissipation they are not fitting themselves to become the husbands of pure girls.

Teach them that 'tis better to be an honest man seven days in the week than to be a Christian (?) one day and a villain six days.

Teach them that "God helps those who help themselves."

Do all this, and you will have brought them up "in the way they should go."

LITTLE BY LITTLE.—Edwin was one day looking at a large building which was being put up just opposite his father's house. He watched the workmen from day to day, as they carried up brick and mortar, and then placed them in their proper order. His father said to him: "Edwin, you seem to be very much taken up with the bricklayers; pray, what might you be thinking about? Have you any notion of learning the trade?"

"No," said Edwin, smiling, "but I was just thinking what a little thing a brick is, and yet that great house is built by laying one brick upon another."

"Very true, my boy; never forget it. Just so is it with all great works. All your learning is only one little lesson added to another. If a man could walk around the world, it would be by putting one foot before the other. Your whole life will be made up of one little moment after another. Drop added to drop makes the ocean. Learn from this not to despise little things. Learn, also, not to be discouraged by great labor. The greatest labor becomes easy if divided into parts. You could not jump over a mountain, but step by step takes you to the other side. Do not fear, therefore, to attempt great things. Always remember that the whole of the great building is only one brick upon another." W. C.

LITTLE CHATTERBOX.

They call me "Little Chatterbox;"
My name is little May;
I have to talk so much because
I have so much to say.

And oh, I have so many friends—
So many! and, you see,
I can't help loving them, because
They every one love me.

I love papa and my mamma;
I love my sister too;
And if you're very, very good,
I guess that I love you.

But I love God the best of all;
He keeps me all the night;
And when the morning comes again,
He wakes me with the light.

I think it is so nice to live,
And yet, if I should die,
The Lord would send his angels down
To take me to the sky.

A Methodist minister relates the following, to show how Sunday-school speakers sometimes make a strange application of the lesson. The subject of the lesson was, "Ye are the salt of the earth;" and a distinguished visitor who chanced in the school that day, was requested to explain it. He complied, telling the children that salt was an excellent preservative, especially useful in keeping meats, etc. Then, to point the moral and fix the application, he remarked that it was if the Bible said, ministers were the salt of the world, etc. After he rounded his periods satisfactorily to himself, he proceeded to examine his audience. But his catechism proved shorter than the shortest, for his first question brought out a young orator, who, in turn, brought down the house.

"Now, children what did I tell you ministers were good for in this world?"

Up leaped a little hand from a little body quivering and contorted with repressed knowledge.

"I know! Mayn't I tell sir?

"Yes, what is it?"

"They're good to keep victuals from spoiling."

GOOD MORNING.—Don't forget to say "Good morning!" say it to your parents, your brothers and sisters, your school mates, your teachers—and say it cheerfully and with a smile; it will do your friends good. There's a kind of inspiration in every "good morning," heartily and smilingly spoken, that helps to make hope fresher and work lighter. It really seems to make the morning good and to be a prophecy of a good day to come after it. And if this be true of the "good morning," it is also true of all kind heartsome greetings. They cheer the discouraged, rest the tired one and somehow make the wheels of life run smoothly.—*Christian Index.*

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