

Suppose.

Suppose the little cowslip
Should hang its golden cup,
And say, "I'm such a tiny flower,
I'd better not grow up."
How many a weary traveler
Would miss its fragrant smell!
How many a little child would grieve
To lose it from the dell!

Suppose the glistening dewdrop
Upon the grass should say,
"What can a little dewdrop do?
I'd better roll away."
The blade on which it rested,
Before the day was done,
Without a drop to moisten it,
Would wither in the sun.

Suppose the little breeze,
Upon a summer's day,
Should think themselves too small to cool
The traveler on his way.
Who would not miss the smallest
The softest ones that blow,
And think they made a great mistake
If they were talking so?

How many deeds of kindness
A little child may do.
Although it has so little strength,
And little wisdom, too!
It wants a loving spirit
Much more than strength to prove
How many things a child may do
For others by its love.

"Step in my Tracks, Jack."

BY BELLE V. CHISHOLM.

Everybody in Easton said that Dr. Throckton was a confirmed drunkard. There had been a time—at no great distance back, either—when no man in the village was more highly prized or respected than just Dr. Philip Throckton. In those halcyon days his wife was a leader in society, and his prettily-dressed children were the envy of many a doting mother.

But times had changed since then, not for the better, either, since King Alcohol had wrought the change. The Doctor had not always been a subject of this tyrannical master; nor had the change from freedom to bondage through which he had passed, been either sudden or miraculous. On the other hand the transition had been very gradual, and altogether natural.

At first it had been a sip to warm him when a long cold ride was to be undertaken; or a dram to revive him when exhausted by the excessive heat. After a while it took a glass to steady his nerves before undertaking any difficult surgical operation, and—well, when he was well he took it to keep him from getting sick, and when sick he took it to make him well. He sneered at the people who could not take a glass and stop; and ridiculed the "modern notion" that there was safety only in total abstinence. Even after he had become addicted to its use, and knew that he was in danger, he resented every appeal of the true friends who dared lift a warning voice. He was a man proud of his strength, and while he kept his reason, no one should presume to dictate to him!

So, as the months and years came and went, he kept on adding link after link to the chain that was slowly but surely binding him hand and foot, until, at last, he found himself an abject slave—a slave to a merciless tyrant, whose only wages were wretchedness and woe. His patients left him; his friends forsook him; and after a little even the home to which he had brought his bride, and where his children had been born, was taken from him. The savings of years, laid up for a rainy day, went into the hands of the keeper of the "Red Lion"; and thither followed his books and instruments, his wife's jewelry, his children's food and clothing, even the dainty little shoes in which were still to be seen the dints of his dead baby's feet.

The burden of bread-winning fell upon his delicate wife and eldest boy, Jack, and often, when the thirst for drink was consuming the wretched man, he would compel poor Jack to give him his hard-earned money in order to satisfy his appetite. Though the friends who at times delighted to honor the Doctor's family now past by on the other side, the mother kept on faithfully, trying to do her duty to her children and to keep a house, though ever so humble, to which they could return when the days of toil and care and temptation were ended.

Though ridiculed and shunned by the boys at school, Jack's ambition never flagged, and even when his father sank to the lowest, and he could not obtain work to keep the wolf from the door, he held up his head proudly, determined come what might, he would never stoop to do a single mean or dishonest act.

Jack was an unusually bright, active boy, and when he asked for the privilege of building the fires and sweeping and dusting the Academy in return for a year's drilling in the institution, Doctor Lascomb agreed at once to give him a trial. Everybody agreed that he made a capital janitor, and when the boys found how much he really knew about books, they protested against "drunken Doc Throckton's

boy" carrying off the honors of the class by winning the Thanksgiving medal, a prize that heretofore had always gone to gentlemen's sons. The medal was a gold one, and was given every year to the student in the junior class who held the highest average grade for the term, which always closed on the day preceding Thanksgiving.

Jack's most bitter opponent in the contest was Stephen Gordon, a boy two years his senior, who, up to this date, had led the class.

One bright Indian summer morning—it was on the thirty-first of October—Stephen gathered his followers around him to discuss some means of punishing Jack for his impudence in daring to keep the post of honor, when he desired to fill it himself.

"If he will not withdraw from the contest in a quiet way, I am going to see what power there is in the argument called 'ridicule,'" he said meaningfully. "Of course, Dr. Robe would not admit the legality of such a method, but on Halloween necessity knows no law, and all means are fair in war."

The mischief the boys invented during that hour materialized when on Halloween night they placed in front of Dr. Throckton's poor, tumble-down house two paddies, supposed to represent the Doctor and his son. Stephen claimed to possess some skill as an artist, and the features he had drawn on the muslin faces of the dummies were enough like those of his victims to provoke laughter in the passers-by. The larger figure was dressed in tattered garments, and on his head was cocked a hat, all bruised and battered. The paddy was bent half over, holding in one hand a jug, and with the other was clutching at a brass medal, which the boy-dummy was holding out. To one side hung Doctor Throckton's old sign, all battered and bent out of shape, while overhead, suspended by a stout cord was a long strip of cardboard, upon which in large letters, was printed:

"Chip off the old block. I'm glad you got it, sonny, for I'm mighty dry. Won't we have a jolly time over the little brown jug? That's right, boy! Step right in my tracks! Never be ashamed of your old father."

Dr. Throckton waked the next morning with a confusion of voices under his window. Peeping out, he saw that the merriment came from a crowd of boys and men who had congregated on the opposite corner of the alley. Thinking that the boys had been playing some practical Halloween joke, as usual, he slipped on his clothes, and shuffled down stairs and out of the front door, just in time to hear a young man say:

"I would have known the profiles a hundred miles away. They are certainly correct."

"The artist was no fool," said another. "The pictures are true to life."

As the Doctor made his appearance the crowd began to disperse, but there were some unfeeling enough among those who stood their ground, to jeer and taunt the unfortunate man about his photograph. He could not help seeing his own likeness in the miserable caricature, and lost to fatherly affection as he was, a groan escaped his lips at the thought of bright, manly Jack walking in his footsteps. Was it any wonder that the boy was ashamed of him? There was no need to read those burning words a second time, for he could never forget just how they looked, swinging back and forth in the bright sunshine. For a few minutes he stood there, almost paralyzed with the reality of the picture; then, as he saw Jack approaching he moved out of sight, for he could not meet the boy just then.

Jack had gone out early, before it was cleverly light, to attend to his chores around the Academy, and so was ignorant of the cause of the sport until he came within the shadow of the offending figures. One glance satisfied him as to the moral intended, and also as to the perpetrators of the cruel joke. He clutched his fingers tightly, grew white to the lips, and then with his breath coming hard, he sprang forward, jerked the dummies down, trampled them under his feet, and then in a firm voice said:

"I would like to treat the cowards who put that concern up in the same way."

"It was only a joke, Jack," said a bystander, kindly.

"I don't relish such jokes," returned Jack. "I can swallow an insult myself, but I will not have my father slandered."

"He is not worthy of you, Jack," replied the man. "You are a brave boy, but he—well, everybody knows from what a high place Doc Throckton has fallen."

"No matter; he is my father," answered Jack shortly, as he walked away.

"He is a mighty plucky little chap,"

admitted the man. "Doc ought to be proud of him, but he isn't."

"But he is," muttered the wretched father, who from his hiding-place had heard all that passed. "He is, I say, and the day is not far off when he shall be proud of his father, too," he added in a firm voice, as he turned in at his own gate.

"Go on, and win the medal, Jack, and you shall never have cause to be ashamed of your father again," he said, as he ran against the boy in the entry. "If you will lend me a hand, I'll try and see if I cannot give up my cups."

"I'll stand by you, father, cried Jack, taking the twitching hand that was held out to him in both of his own. "It was a mean thing for Steve Gordon to do, but he'll repent it some day."

"It was too true, Jack, too true—my part, I mean," said the Doctor, thoughtfully. "Perhaps it is well for us to show ourselves as others see us sometimes. But, God helping me, I'll never drink a drop of anything intoxicating while I live."

"Amen," said Jack solemnly. "You'll stand by me, Jack, my boy?"

"Indeed I will, father," replied Jack heartily. And he did. The Doctor was in earnest, and besides Jack's helping hand, there was another hand—that of the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother—stretched out to help him over hard, uneven places. Jack won the medal, but his father won a greater victory; and the day did come when not only Jack, but the whole town, was proud of Doctor Throckton; and it came through that Halloween joke, too.

Steve Gordon did apologize for his cruel joke, but it was not until after Jack had blessed God over and over again for the good he had brought out of the evil; so forgiveness was granted long before it was asked, and had not Steve known this, I am sure he would never have been brave enough to seek a reconciliation.—*Christian Advocate.*

A Brave Fellow.

A number of boys were skating and sliding in Yorkshire. On a sudden the ice gave way almost in the middle of the lake and one poor fellow fell in. There was no house near where they could run for help; no ropes which they could throw to their struggling companion. The boys stood on the bank with pale, sorrowful faces, afraid to try to reach their friend, lest the ice should give way and the water swallow them all up.

But one boy suddenly remembered that although you cannot stand a board upright on thin ice without its going through, yet if you lay the same board flat on the ice, it will be quite safe. Not only that, but he knew that he could run along the board without fear of cracking the ice.

It only took him a moment to remember all that; next he spoke to his friends something after this fashion: "I will lie down flat on the ice near the edge; then one of you must come to my feet and push me along till you too can lie down. If you all lie down in that way and push the boy in front of you, we will make a line long enough to reach Reuben."

Thus, taking the post of danger himself, the boy was able, by his living rope, to reach his friend. He pulled him out, though he was not one moment too soon, for he was so exhausted with his efforts to keep his head above water that he would very soon have sunk.

A Boastful Boy's Downfall.

A little boy who had won a prize for learning Scripture verses, and was greatly elated thereby, was asked by a minister if it took him a long time to commit them.

"Oh, no," said the boy boastfully, "I can learn any verse in the Bible in five minutes."

"Can you, indeed? And will you learn one for me?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then in five minutes from now I would like very much to hear you repeat this verse," said the minister, handing him the book and pointing out the ninth verse of the eighth chapter of Esther:—

"Then were the king's scribes called at that time in the third month, that is, the month Sivan, on the three and twentieth day thereof; and it was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, unto the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces which are from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language."

Master Conceit entered upon his task with confidence, but at the end of one hour, to his mortification, could not repeat it without a slip.

Horseshoe or Hair-Spring?

A boy is something like a piece of iron, which, in its rough state, isn't worth much, nor is it of very much use; but the more it is used the more valuable it becomes. A bar of iron that is only worth \$5 when in its natural state is worth \$13 made into horseshoes; and after it goes through the different processes by which it is made into needles its value is increased to \$350. Made into pen-knife blades it would be worth \$3,000, and into hair-springs for watches, \$250,000.

But the iron has to go through a great deal of hammering and beating and rolling and pounding and polishing; and so if you are to become useful and educated men you must go through a long course of study and training. The more time you spend in hard study the better material you will make. The iron doesn't have to go through half so much to be made into horseshoes as it does to be converted into delicate watch-springs; but think how much less valuable it is! Which would you rather be, horseshoe or watch-spring? It depends upon yourselves. You can become whatever you will. This is your time of preparation for manhood.—*Selected.*

Boys!

Treat mother as politely as if she were a strange lady.

Be as kind and helpful to your sisters as to other boys' sisters.

Don't grumble or refuse to do some errand which must be done, and which otherwise takes the time of some one who has more to do.

Have your mother and sisters for your best friends.

Find some amusement for the evening that all the family can join in, large and small.

Be a gentleman at home.

Cultivate a cheerful temper.

If you do anything wrong, take your mother into your confidence.

Never lie about anything you have done.

HE NEEDED AN INTRODUCTION.—A fond father blessed with eleven children, and a very domestic man, tells this story:

One afternoon, business being very dull, he took the early train back to his happy home, and after a time slipped up-stairs to help put the children to bed. Being missed soon, his wife went up to see what was going on. Upon opening the nursery door she exclaimed:

"Why, dear, what in the world are you doing?"

"Why, wifey," said he, "I am putting the children to bed and hearing them say their little prayers."

"Yes," said wifey, "but this is one of our neighbor's children, all undressed."

And he had to re-dress it and send it home.—*London Moonshine.*

Young Peoples' Column.

Edited by C. E. BLACK, St. John, N. B.

[Owing to the illness of the puzzle-editor from an attack of la grippe, he was unable to prepare the MS. for the Puzzle Column this week.]

Minard's Liniment relieves Neuralgia.

SUPPOSING.

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WM. FLEMINGTON,
Editor Reporter,
Delhi, Ont.

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