

# If Mother Would Listen.

If mother would listen to me, dears, She would freshen the faded gown. She would sometimes take an hour's rest And sometimes a trip to town. And it shouldn't be all for the children, And the fun and the cheer and the play; With the patient drop on the tired mouth And the "Mother has had her day!"

True, mother has had her day, dears, When you were her babies three, And she stepped about the farm and the house As busy as ever a bee. When she rocked you all to sleep, dears, And sent you all to school, And wore herself out and did without And lived by the golden rule.

And so your turn has come, dears, Her hair is growing white, And her eyes are gaining the far-away look That peers beyond the night. One of these days in the morning Mother will not be here; She will fade away into silence, The mother so true and dear.

And, if mother would listen to me, dears, She'd buy her a gown of silk, With buttons of royal velvet, And ruffles as white as milk. And she'd let you do the trotting, While she sat still in her chair; That mother should have it hard all through It strikes me isn't fair.

—The Interior.

## What He Forget.

MARY E. RAMFORD.

I did think that Oscar might offer to go for that yeast-cake," stated Mrs. Hitchcock.

She and her daughter Alice were walking home together in the moonlight. They had been visiting a neighbor, and, on their rising to go, about half-past eight o'clock, the neighbors, Mrs. Knapp, said—

"You wait a minute, and I'll walk down with you. I've got to have a yeast-cake to-night."

Her son Oscar, a young man, was sitting by the table, comfortably reading the evening paper.

"You're going down this time of night to get a yeast-cake!" commented Oscar in a scornful tone. "You'll find the store shut."

"No," returned his mother, going into the next room for her shawl, "not yet."

"Yes, you will," insisted Oscar, I hope you will! Serves you right for going down as late as this for a yeast cake!"

"I've got to have it," replied his mother, patiently. "I must wet up some sponge to-night, and bake bread to-morrow. We are almost out of bread."

"The store'll be shut," repeated Oscar.

"I know that the grocery-stores are," explained his mother, pinning her shawl, "but the fruit-store where I get our yeast-cakes won't be shut. It always stays open till nine o'clock, or after."

"Oh!" returned Oscar.

He sat there comfortably with his paper, and let his mother go on the errand. He was used to letting his mother do all such things. She could remember when it was such a rest, sometimes, to have a little boy to "run errands for mamma," but somehow Oscar never offered nowadays, and Mrs. Knapp did not want to ask him. She was not sure but he would refuse, and she would rather go on any number of errands than have him do that.

The fruit-store was open, as Mrs. Knapp had said it would be, and she got her yeast-cake, and Mrs. Hitchcock and Alice walked part of the way back with their neighbor. But after they had said "good-night" to Mrs. Knapp, and had separated from her, Mrs. Hitchcock made that remark about thinking that Oscar might have offered to go for that yeast-cake.

"He ought to," agreed Alice. "It isn't fair, the way Mrs. Knapp has to do everything. Don't you know how she came into our house the other day with that butter? She said they had to have it for dinner, and she had to go down. And she did look so tired!"

"She works too hard," returned Mrs. Hitchcock. "Now, I know she was all tired out washing to-day, and to-morrow she's got to iron and bake. She ought not to have to go down for that yeast-cake. I suppose Oscar's got so old she doesn't like to ask him to do errands."

"Well, he isn't as old as she is, and he ought to think about her being tired!" charged Alice, indignantly. "He's strong and well. Don't you know you asked him the other day, if he didn't get tired Sundays, having to walk so much, being one of the ushers in that big church, walking so continually to seat people? And he said he didn't mind it at all. He wouldn't have had to walk a bit more than that if he'd gone down to get a yeast-cake to-night!"

Meanwhile Mrs. Knapp was hurrying home alone. She hastened in at the gate, went around to the kitchen,

soaked the yeast-cake, sifted her flour, made up the bread to rise over night, put the molding-board over the pan, and drew a tired sigh as she looked around the room.

"I do believe I'm through at last," she sighed.

Her eyes were on the great pile of clothes folded and ready for tomorrow's ironing.

But tomorrow's work was not to-day's. She took her lamp and turned toward the dining-room. As she did so, she saw, by the little kitchen clock, that it was half-past nine.

"Mother!" called Oscar from the dining-room.

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Knapp, wearily.

"Have you made that case for my slide-trombone yet?" asked Oscar.

"No, I haven't had time," answered his mother.

"Well, can't you do it tonight?" questioned Oscar, with a little impatience in his voice. "I'm going to orchestra rehearsal tomorrow evening, and I want something to carry that trombone in."

Mrs. Knapp hesitated. She was so tired! But what time would there be tomorrow to make that case?

"Well," she answered.

Oscar did not notice how tired the voice was. He watched his mother go to a clothes closet and get some green cloth for the case, and he directed her about cutting it out and sewing it.

He was very particular about the looks of the case, and Mrs. Knapp had to do some of the work a second time before he was satisfied. At last, however, the case was finished.

"I guess that will do," said Oscar. He took the case and a small lamp and ran upstairs to his own room.

Mrs. Knapp turned and looked at the mantel clock. It pointed to eleven.

She was alone. Upstairs she could hear Oscar moving around in his room.

He would not come down again to-night. His father, tired with the day's work, had gone to bed long before.

Mrs. Knapp put her head down on the table. A few slow tears dropped on her hands.

"Oscar didn't even thank me," she whispered. "And I was so tired to begin making that case!"

She cried a little, charging herself, meanwhile to stop. She was very tired, and somehow she remembered that Oscar, when he was quite a little fellow, used to come sometimes and put his arms around her neck, and say, "Thank you, mamma, for fixing my kite."

Mrs. Knapp cried when she thought of it.

"Now, stop!" she commanded herself, wiping her eyes. "Oscar does care for his mother just the same as he used to. And I'm real proud of him! He's vice-president of the young people's society at our church, and he's assistant librarian of the Sunday-school, and they always put him in as delegate to the conventions of the Young Men's Christian Association, and he's going here and there, 'most every evening, to some church committee, or social, or something connected with the church. No wonder he can't find time to think of home things! I oughtn't to feel as if he must run and do things for me when he's trying to do so much good. And even that case I made for his trombone is connected with his church work, for he plays the instrument in the Sunday-school orchestra, and he is going to rehearsal tomorrow night. I've got a good boy, and I'm proud of him!"

Mrs. Knapp rose, and took her lamp. She would not voice, even to herself, the thing that made the ache come into her throat. She would not acknowledge to herself that Oscar did not seem to see or care how many steps she took or how tired she was. He was busy at the store most of the day, but he had all his evenings. If there had been a religious convention of young people anywhere near, or if there had been a meeting at his own church, where he might be needed as usher, Oscar would have gone there that evening and worked heartily. But he did not count an errand for his mother as truly a service to God as going to some meeting would have been.

Oscar had often sung in the young people's prayer-meetings that hymn of consecration—

"Take my feet, and let them be. Swift and beautiful for Thee."

Oscar meant that his feet should be the Lord's "errand-runners." But somehow Oscar never had opened his eyes to the fact that walking down to the grocery once in a while for his mother might be carrying out that prayer which he had sung as truly as walking down the aisles, seating people Sundays, might be. He did not mean to lose sympathy with the tired feet at home. And then—though perhaps Oscar did not know it—there was really, down in the depths of his

heart, a slight consciousness that to be an usher in his large, well-attended, prosperous church was to occupy a position where he was somewhat prominent; he knew that he was quite a good-looking young fellow, and he had no aversion to being a little conspicuous. So, although he really did mean to serve the Lord by being an usher, yet Oscar had a little element of self about his service after all, as with quick steps he politely conducted one person after another to the pews on Sundays. Oscar was looking confidently forward to having the large centre aisle as his portion in the near future. And in so working, in traveling here and there, Oscar felt that he was serving the Lord.

And Oscar felt truly. But would he have been serving Him less if he had sometimes consecrated his feet to doing plain, homely errands—mailing letters for his mother, getting soap and eggs and flour for her when she needed them, saving her tired feet?

Ah! let us never forget that the plain homely errands of our lives may as truly be proofs of our consecration as more prominent service would be. In the words of Frances Ridley Havergal: "May every step of our feet be more and more like those of our beloved Master. Let us continually consider Him in this, and go where He would have gone, on the errands which He would have done, 'following hard' after Him."

"And every step is chronicled above His servants take to follow in His way."

## An Interesting Exercise.

"How many things come on the table that begin with A?" The children thought a minute, and one responded, "Apples;" another, "Asparagus;" another "Almonds."

"Is there nothing else we eat that begins with A?" No answer.

"Well, look it up after dinner." "What do we eat that begins with B?"

A simultaneous shout, "Beef; then 'Bananas,' and 'Butter,' 'Beans,' 'Bread,'" followed in quick succession.

"Now I want you to make up lists of all the articles of food used by us, or any humans except cannibals. You may hunt through the cook-books, through the dictionary, through the botany, through the encyclopedias and books of travel. Put each list under its appropriate letter, and at the bottom of each list the number it aggregates. Then the aggregate of the whole. We shall then easily see on what the human race subsists. The one that gets the longest list is to have a prize."

Right after dinner the children made little blank books, leaving a page for each letter of the alphabet, and set to work on their quest. It couldn't be concluded in half a day or half a year, but it was decided that in three months they should compare notes, and see which one had made largest aggregate.

The books were a curious study when they came in. In going over the lists a great many items were struck out, meat being one, though beef, mutton and pork were allowed to remain. What was left when the revision was made represented the original staples used as food.

Of course, some of the pages, as K and Q, were not very well filled.

"I think C is a mean letter," said one of the boys, "it robs poor K of all nearly that belongs to him, and not content with that, filches from S what rightly belongs to him. Indeed, if C gave up all he has taken away from his neighbors, I don't know what he'd have left if H didn't come to help him out."

The children talked over their pursuit in the line of foods with their playmates, and several of them started books and lists, to which, as they read they were continually adding.

If anyone thinks this exercise is not interesting, let him engage in it and see.—*Christian Advocate.*

## Armies of the World.

China has a regular army of \$300,000 men and a war footing of \$1,000,000.

Turkey has a regular army of 355,000 men, a war footing of 610,200, and the annual cost of the army is \$19,643,000.

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Spain has a regular army of 90,000 men, a war footing of 450,000, and the annual cost of the army is \$24,802,940.

Russia has a regular army of 974,761 men, a war footing of 2,733,305, and the annual cost of the army is \$131,812,202.

France has a regular army of 502,764 men, a war footing of 2,753,305, and the annual cost of the army is \$114,279,761.

Germany has a regular army of 445,402 men, a war footing of 1,492,104, and the annual cost of the army is \$98,330,429.

Great Britain has a regular army of 131,686 men, a war footing of 577,906, and the annual cost of the army is \$74,901,500.

India (British) has a regular army of 189,597 men, a war footing of 308,000 and the annual cost of the army is \$84,481,195.

Austro-Hungary has a regular army of 289,190 men, a war footing of 1,125,838, and the annual cost of the army is \$53,386,915.

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"Hetrostog thought reabhet finmtiise foet kawe."

No. 263.—DROP-LETTER.

h-C-r-s-i-n-h-u-d-e-y-h-s-l-f-r-h-g-o-o-o-h-r.

No. 264.—CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

In new, but not in old; In ice, but not in cold; In clear, but not in fine; In one, but not in nine; In ten, but not in four; In ill, but not in sore; In nut, but not in burr; In earl, but not in sir; Whole is a poison off in the mouths of some men.

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