

Poetry.

THE LITTLE PET PLANT.

A florist a sweet little blossom espied,
Which bloom'd by its ancestors, by the road-side;

Its sweetness was simple, its colours were few,
Yet the blossom look'd fair on the spot where it grew.

The florist beheld it, and cried—"I'll enchant
The botanical world with this sweet little plant:
Its leaves shall be shelter'd and carefully nur-

sed;
It shall charm the whole world, though I met
with it first—

Under a hedge."

He carried it home to his hot-house with care,
And he said—"Though the rarest exotics are
there,

My little pet plant, when I've nourish'd its stem,
In tint and in fragrance shall imitate them;
And none shall suspect from the road-side it
came.

Rodium Sidus I'll call it—a capital name;
While botanists look through their glasses, and
view

Its beauties, they'll never suspect that it grew—
Under a hedge."

The little pet plant, when it shook off the dirt
Of its own native ditch, soon began to be pert,
And toss'd its small head, for perceiving that
none

But exotics were round it, it thought itself one.
As a wild flower, all would have own'd it was
fair,

And praised it, though gaudier blossoms were
there;

But when it assumes hot-house airs, we see
thro'

The forced tint of its leaves, and suspect that
it grew—

Under a hedge.

MORAL.

In the by-ways of life, oh! how many there are
Who, being born under some fortunate star,
Assisted by beauty or talents, grow rich,
And bloom in a hot-house instead of a ditch.

And whilst they disdain not their own simple
stem,

The honours they grasp may gain honour for
them;

But when, like the pet plant, such people grow
pert,

We discover their origin lay in the dirt—
Under a hedge!

The Family.

Preaching to the Children.

"Feed my lambs."—BIBLE.

"And He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children,
and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come
and smite the earth with a curse."—*Mal., last chapter and
last verse.*

During the last thirty or forty years, it has
been our privilege to listen to the stated
preaching of the word of life, from week to
week; and if memory serves, we have heard
at least an average of one hundred sermons per
year. This would produce an aggregate of
some three or four thousand sermons. Among
this large number we recollect only some eight
or ten addressed specially to children. One
of these was in very early childhood, from the
text, "Even a child is known by his doings,
whether his work be pure or whether it be
right." Another from the text, "Remember
thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Both
these discourses left impressions upon the
mind's tablet, indelible and salutary.

Recently we listened to an excellent sermon
to children, from the fifth commandment.
The pupils in the Sabbath School occupied
the front seats in the body of the Church, and
all felt that the sermon was for them. The
expressions of deep interest on many young
faces contrasted strongly with the marked in-
difference and restlessness so often observed
among the juvenile hearers of learned discourses,
so learned and metaphysical that they can-
not begin to comprehend their import. We
left the Church at the close of the exercises,
uttering mentally—Oh that ministers would
preach more to children!

And why should they not? Here is an im-
portant moral field, inviting cultivation. *Mind*
in its forming stage, impressible and enquir-
ing; not pre-occupied, gospel hardened, or
blinded by the deceitfulness of sin. The at-
tention can be more readily arrested by saving
truths, than in riper years, the affections more
readily won, the purposes of the heart more
easily moulded to the right. Why then should

this moral "seed time" be so neglected by
many of the under shepherds, on whom the
Great Shepherd has enjoined so imperatively,
"Feed my lambs?" Why should parents be
indifferent in this matter? Why should they
take their children from Sabbath to Sabbath
to the place of worship and Christian instruc-
tion, and sit with apparent unconcern while
their little ones hear the gospel "in an un-
known tongue;" or become so tired of listen-
ing to what they cannot understand, that they
yield to the temptation to spend the time of
worship, in reading some book they have just
drawn from the Sabbath School library; and
thus form a fixed habit of disrespect to the
pastor, and inattention to the services of the
sanctuary.

The state of things among Christians, must
surely be imputed to the fact that, as a general
thing, the hearts of the fathers are not suffi-
ciently turned to the children. And, as a con-
sequence, the earth, to a fearful extent, is smit-
ten with the "curse" of misrule in families,
disobedience to parents, and a dearth of re-
vivals, staying the onward march of the car of
salvation. It is quite manifest that our com-
mon Adversary is ever ready to sow tares,
wherever he finds ground unoccupied; and
where he perceives the time and attention of
the young not otherwise engrossed, he consi-
ders them a ready prey and is on the alert to
lay snares for their ruin. And shall not the
church and her honored leaders do what may
be done for their rescue? If frequent instruc-
tion from the sacred desk be a means essential
to their highest good, shall they not have it?

Extraordinary Avarice.

In the year 1792, an extraordinary instance
of avarice occurred in France. A miser, of
the name of Foscue, who had amassed enor-
mous wealth by the most sordid parsimony and
the most discreditable extortion, was request-
ed by the Government to advance a sum of
money as a loan. The miser, to whom the in-
terest was not inducement sufficiently strong
to enable him to part with his treasured gold,
declared his incapacity to meet this demand;
he pleaded severe losses and the utmost po-
verty. Fearing, however, that some of his
neighbours, among whom he was very unpo-
pular, would report his immense wealth to the
Government, he applied his ingenuity to dis-
cover some effectual way of hiding his gold,
should they attempt to institute a search to as-
certain the truth or falsehood of his plea.—
With great care and secrecy he dug a deep
cave in his cellar; to this receptacle for his
treasure he descended by a ladder, and to the
trap door he attached a spring lock, so that, on
shutting, it would fasten itself. By-and-by the
miser disappeared: inquiries were made; the
house was searched; woods were explored,
and the ponds were dragged; but no Foscue
could they find; and the gossips began to con-
clude that the miser had fled with his gold to
some part, where, by living *incognito*, he would
be free from the demands of the Government.
Some time passed on; the house in which he
had lived was sold, and workmen were busily
employed in its repair. In the progress of
their work, they met with the door of the se-
cret cave, with the key in the lock outside.—
They threw back the door, and descended with
a light. The first object upon which the lamp
was reflected was the ghastly body of Foscue,
the miser, and scattered around him were hea-
vy bags of gold and ponderous chests of untold
treasure; a candlestick lay beside him on the
floor. This worshipper of mammon had gone
into his cave to pay his devours to his golden
god, and became a sacrifice to his devotion!
What must have been the sensations of that
miserable man—what the horrors of his situa-
tion, when he heard the door close after him,
and the spring lock effectually imprison him
within his secret mine! How bitter must
have been the last struggle of that avaricious
soul! How terrible must have been the ap-
peals of conscience within that sordid sinner!
How each bag must have disgorged its trea-
sure, and each piece of gold have danced, in
imagination, around him as a demon! How
hated when the gnawing pangs of starvation
came slowly upon him must have been that
yellow vision; his very heart must have grown
sick at that which he once so dearly loved!
Gold in bags; gold in chests; gold in piled
heaps; gold for a pillow; gold strewn upon
the ground for him to lie upon! Whilst his
taper lasted, turn where he would his eyes,
nothing met them but his gold. But when its
last flicker died away, and the miser was
left in darkness to dwell upon his coming death,
and upon his many sins, how awful must have

been the agonies of conscience! How sure-
ly, amidst the gloom of that sepulchre of gold,
must the poor whom he had ruined by his
avarice, have risen up to reproach him; and
when the mind became fevered by its last dea-
dly struggles, how the faces of haggard poverty,
of hate and loathing for the miser, must in
one loud, discordant chorus, have cried for
vengeance and retribution upon his guilty soul!

PLAIN DEALING.

We have lately noticed the fourth edition of
Rev. N. Howe's century sermon. As an in-
stance of plain dealing of a minister with his
people, we make the following extracts:

"You are sensible that my health has some-
times been poor, and my mind greatly depress-
ed: poverty has stared me in the face.

"My brethren, may I ask a question; a plain,
simple question? How shall I obtain your
consent? Shall I take silence for consent?
Your countenances discover a willingness.

"The question is this: Do you know by
what means I have become so rich, as to have
a great house, finished and furnished; a farm,
a herd of cattle, a flock of sheep, horses, and
money at interest? I say nothing about my
debts to-day.

"Shall I answer the question? The prin-
cipal reason is this: because I have been doing
your business, and neglecting *my own*. What
is your business? Your business is to support
your minister; and that is what I have been
doing for more than twenty years. And what
is *my business*? My business is to study, and
preach; and in this I have never abounded.
It is true I have been absent from public wor-
ship not more than four or five Sabbaths for
twenty-five years; but I have frequently been
present, and attempted to preach, when it has
been mortifying to me, and could not have
been edifying to you. I have sometimes ad-
ministered reproof, both to the church and the
society, in a manner that has been thought to
discover some degree of severity; but in these
cases you have always had good sense enough
to know, you richly deserved it."

"Your habits are so firmly fixed, that no re-
formation is to be expected during my mini-
stry; and, indeed, it would require more power
in the Deity to effect it, than it did to create
the world. For when he created the world,
he had only to say, 'Let there be light, and
there was light.' He had no opposition. But
to bring you to a sense of justice and equity,
he must overcome your private, personal at-
tachment to your own *supposed* worldly inter-
est; and that would require more power than
it did to create the world!

"And beside, my life is so far spent, that,
should you reform, it is doubtful whether it
would produce any very beneficial effects on
my labours. I mean to tell the whole truth
without partiality, or respect of persons."

MARRIAGE IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

The intervention of an ecclesiastical func-
tionary was not deemed necessary to a mar-
riage until the Council of Trent, in 1409;
when a decree was passed interdicting any
marriage otherwise than in the presence of a
priest and two witnesses. Before the time of
Pope Innocent III., 1118, there was no solem-
nization of marriage in church; but the bride-
groom came to the bride's house and led her
home to his own, which was all the ceremony
then used. Banns were first directed to be
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