

The Children's Page.

Make Childhood Sweet.

Wait not till the little hands are at rest,  
Ere you fill them full of flowers;  
Wait not for the crowning rubeose,  
To make sweet the last sad hours,  
But while in the busy household band  
Your darlings still need your guiding hand,  
Oh! fill their lives with sweetness.

Wait not till the little hearts are still,  
For the loving look and phrase;  
But while you gently chide a fault  
The good deed kindly praise.  
The word you would speak beside the bier  
Falls sweeter far on the living ear;  
Oh! fill young lives with sweetness!

Ah! what are kisses on clay cold lips  
To the rosy mouth we press,  
When our wee one flies to her mother's arms,  
For love's tenderest caress!  
Let never a worldly babble keep  
Your heart from the joy each day should reap,  
Circling your lives with sweetness.

Give thanks each morn for the sturdy boys,  
Give thanks for the fairy girls;  
With a dower of wealth like this at home,  
Would you rifle the earth for pearls?  
Wait not for death to gem love's crown,  
But daily shower life's blessings down,  
And fill young hearts with sweetness.

Remember the homes when the light has fled,  
Where the rose has faded away;  
And the love that glows in youthful hearts,  
Oh, cherish it while you may!  
And make your home a garden of flowers,  
Where joy shall bloom through childhood's hours,  
And fill young lives with sweetness.

Johnny says—Hero.

"I never knew Jack myself. He was grown up, and a great big man long before I was born; and I'm only ten now. But I give you the story just as grandmother told it to me; and then you can see for yourselves if Jack wasn't just gay.

"Grandmother lived then. She didn't live where she does now, but in a big brown house that stuck out on the rocks on the edge of a town called Belleport. I wish she did live now. Wouldn't I have fun going fishing and catching crabs, and sailing all around the island! And I never'd come home to dinner—no, not once! And I'd build a hut down on the beach where the sea dashes in, just like all the other fishermen. Oh, dear! But I began to tell about Jack, so I must hurry!

"Well—he was in Belleport. That's where grandmother first knew him. And he didn't have fun at all—not a bit of it. He was in a hateful, dreadful old school, where he had been ever since he had been a little bit of a boy. And the master just pinned him down to work, work, all the time. And when he wasn't studying he was always carrying pails of water, and setting tables and blacking the other boys' boots and the master's. I'd burn them first, I would! Grandmother knew what he did, 'cause Mrs. Higginson, that's the master's wife, used to tell about it, and to laugh, and say that was all Jack was good for. The idea! When—well, I won't tell till I get through my story, and then you can see if you don't think Jack was worth all the rest of the folks in that old house put together!

"Jack was hungry often, grandmother said, 'cause she found him down on the rocks one day, when he thought there wasn't nobody 'round; and he kept wiping his eyes on his jacket sleeve pretty fast. And she got it out of him what the matter was. And then I tell you, she took him home with her, and stuffed him good. Don't I wish I'd been there to see him eat! At any rate, he had one square meal. Grandmother says I musn't say that, 'tish't nice. I don't see why—well, any way, he went home feeling good. And after that, grandmother'd always watch when he went by on errands, and give him cookies and apples and doughnuts, and Jack would always say she was the best friend he'd got! and how he wanted to do something for her, and all that! And grandmother'd laugh and tell him to run along—he worked enough at home. If he'd only grow rosy and fat, that's all she'd ask.

"Well, he didn't grow fat and rosy; no, not with all grandmother's stuffing; but he just got thinner and thinner every day till the boys called him 'Old Shingle' for a new name. He had lots of other names before. I can't begin to tell 'em all; but grandmother says she used o hear them shouting 'em out all the time. And he couldn't hurl them back and give it to them 'cause then the master'd had an excuse to turn him out of the class rooms; and he was dreadful fond of study, Jack was! Oh, almost crazy over it! I don't see how he could be, but he was! And he'd get up just as soon as he could see a wink every morning, and dig away like everything. And he was always at the head of every class except when he had to stay out to be whipped for something or other; or to go of an errand. And that made the other boys angry. So then they'd 'shoo' him round and complain of him. And then he'd get more boots to black and more pails to carry and so on till it got worse and worse.

"Well, the boy that was the hatefulest to him of the whole lot was the master's son. And he was bad to his father and mother too. And then he'd beg Jack not to tell of him when he saw him flogging things, and getting at the jam-pot and everything else, and they always called him 'Herbie, love'; that's what grandmother says—his father and mother did. But he wasn't 'Herbie, love' to the other boys. They just hated him, he was so mean and sly; but they'd go shares with him in plaguing Jack though, and trying to find out ways to spite him.

"One day, grandmother says, she heard Mr. Higginson telling the boys they could have a half-holiday. 'All but Jack,' he said. He wanted him to go down to the Point to buy some fish. Such a hurrahing and tossing up of caps, grandmother said, as followed then! She was in Mrs. Higginson's parlor, and heard the whole. And pretty soon she started home to be there ready to hand out the cookies when Jack went by with his basket for the fish.

"'Dirty old fish-boy!' sang the master's boy, sitting on the highest post out by the gate, seeing Jack's face when the master said 'half-holiday.' 'I tell you, Jack, ain't I glad you won't be along with us. We are going to have fun! I'm going after gull's eggs—that's what I'll do with my half. Yes, sir!'

"'Oh, no, Herbie, love,' screamed Mrs. Higginson. And grandmother says she ran down the path, and she

hoped she was going to box his ears. Not much use to hope that. 'If anything should happen you, darling!'

"'Hoh! no fear of that,' he said, squirming over to the back part of the post out of the reach of her arms. 'Let go, mother, do!' as she grasped hold of one of his feet; she was so afraid he would go.

"'Hey! hey! what's that?' said the master, coming down the path, and standing close by the post. 'What are you saying about gull's eggs? No, no; you mustn't go near those rocks. It's the most dangerous place around here. Remember.'

"Grandmother didn't hear any more, for she was going down the road just as fast as she could, to get home in time. She was there when Jack came along with his big, old, fish-smelling basket. Grandmother'd always make him set it as far off from the house as he could, in the tail grass, while he stopped for 'goodies,' 'cause it smelt so bad. And she petted him up—I tell you she can pet a fellow up real nice. I know, 'cause I've tried it—and told him how sorry she was he couldn't have fun along with the rest. So Jack went off feeling a little bit better, with his old basket slung on his back.

"'About four o'clock, I know 'twas 'cause grandmother's told me so a hundred times, the big clock had just done striking, when, all of a sudden, she heard the greatest noise and racket over at the school. Such a screaming and commotion, she said she knew at once something must be the matter; and she flung up the window and was just putting her head out when Jim Fletcher, a great big fellow—one of the biggest there—who could run like a deer, was streaking it off 'cross lots to grandmother's house, lively. 'Mercy!' says grandmother. That's what she says she said. But I don't believe she stopped to say anything. But, anyway, she pulled Jim Fletcher in, who was panting dreadfully, and made him tell what he wanted.

"'Oh, do come, Mrs. Dole,' he begged. 'He wants you so bad. Herb was a dreadful heavy pull, and—'

"'Is Herbie hurt?' asked grandmother, stepping back a bit.

"'Hurt?' screamed Jim, as loud as he could for his panting. 'No, catch him! Don't we fellows wish he was! But—but—it's Jack; and he turned abruptly away.

"'Boy,' grandmother says she pinched him bad just then, and I guess maybe she did, for he said 'Ow!' just as I did when Jane used to pinch me to make me let go of the raisins. That was years ago though, when I was little.

"'Do you just tell me quick,' says grandmother, still keeping hold of his arm, though letting up a little on the pinch, 'what's happened—in a few words now—and then I shall know what I'm wanted for.'

"'Why, Herb did go for gull's eggs,' said Jim, gazing up into grandmother's eyes. 'We all did; and he said we'd put some into Jack's basket and make believe he'd got 'em, so's to get him a beating. We heard him come whistling down the road. He whistles to the birds, you know.'

"'Go on,' said grandmother, 'and be quick.'

"'Well, the first thing we knew Herb was up on the topmost rock; and before any of us could turn round or anything, we heard a splash, and there he was floundering in the water—'

"Grandmother tightened her grasp, so he had to go on. 'And—and—I guess Jack heard us scream, for he dashed right past, and—'

"'He didn't jump in?' said grandmother, hoarsely.

"'Yes he did!' said Jim, his eyes flashing. 'We tried to hold him, for 'twas black and deep, but 'twan't no use and—'

"But grandmother never heard the rest, for she was off just like the wind, speeding over to the big school. They had Jack on a sofa there, amongst them, and they were all crowding round, and fussing over him; and the doctor was there, and everything was just as dreadful as could be. Jack opened his eyes and smiled at grandmother. 'Is Herbie all right?' he tried to say.

"'Oh, my boy—my boy!' said grandmother, hugging him close; and Mrs. Higginson just tumbled down in a heap on the foot of the lounge. Grandmother didn't feel like hating her then; and all the boys didn't look at each other, not once. And Herbie, who'd been standing in his dripping clothes, peeping in the door, just skulked out, and nobody cared where he went.

"And the doctor sewed up Jack's head, where he'd struck on the rock, when the boys had pulled Herbie and him in, just as the cruel old water was going to swallow them both. And then he said he must be kept very quiet or he wouldn't get well.

"'Now,' said grandmother, getting up where she had been holding Jack's head, 'I'm going to take my boy. Not a blessed word shall I hear against it, from any one—he's going to my house, and I'll bring him back to life and strength, please God.'

"'The very thing, Mrs. Dole!' said the doctor. So the master couldn't say a word; only he mumbled something or other that nobody heard. And then the four biggest boys—Jim was one of them—took up Jack. They could not look at him very well, for something was the matter with their eyes. And they went, oh! so softly, until he was laid in grandmother's own bed.

"I tell you, then he had a good time, if he did have a cut head. And all the boys used to beg nice things of Mrs. Higginson, and come over to grandmother's back door; only they didn't dare to come in. And Herbie came and begged Jack's pardon for all the ugly things he had done. He didn't want to, only Mrs. Higginson made him.

"And then, Jack didn't go back to that school; no, not once again. Grandmother sent him—I thought I told you his folks were all dead; and he didn't have much money. I guess not more'n a hundred, or maybe seventy-five dollars—so grandmother sent him to a splendid school far away. And he grew up into a big, smart man. Why, he's a professor now, and he lives in New York, he does. And he comes to see grandmother and he brings me caudy, and once he brought me a gun, and I like him. I do if he does have a scar up over his eye."

Funny Children.

THREE little boys, on a Sabbath day, were stopped on the street by an elderly gentleman, who, perceiving that they had bats and balls with them, asked one of the number this question: "Boy, can you tell me where all naughty boys go who play ball on Sunday?" "Over back of Johnson's dam," the youngster replied.

TEACHER: "Suppose that you have two sticks of caudy and your big brother gives you two more; how many

have you got then?" Little boy (shaking his head): "You don't know him. He ain't that kind of a boy."

ONCE a teacher was explaining to a little girl the meaning of the word cuticle. "What is that all over my face and hands?" "Freckles," answered the little cherub.

A SMALL child, being asked by a Sunday school teacher, "What did the Israelites do after they crossed the Red Sea?" answered, "I don't know, ma'am, but I guess they dried themselves."

A WRITER advises that girls who wish to have small mouths should repeat at frequent intervals during the day, "Fannie Finch fried four floundering frogs for Francis Fowler's father."

TEACHER of spelling class: "First boy may spell foot-tub and give the definition." First boy: "F-oot-tub—a tub to wash the feet in." Teacher: "Second boy may spell knee-pan." Second boy: "K-n-ee-p-a-n—a pan to wash the knees in." He didn't go up to the head.

Bishop Hatto.

The story goes that there once lived in Germany, in a handsome, spacious palace, a selfish, fat old Bishop. His table was always spread with the choicest dainties, and he drank an abundance of wine of the very best; he slept long and soundly, and looked so comfortable and happy and fat that the people whispered to each other, "How grand it must be to be a Bishop!"

One summer, in the neighborhood where the Bishop lived, the rain came down in such torrents, and continued so long, that the grain was utterly ruined, and when autumn arrived there was none to be gathered. "What shall we do," said the poor fathers and mothers, "when the long winter comes, and we have no food to give our children?"

Winter arrived, bringing the cold winds and the snow and the frost. The little ones begged for bread, and the poor mothers were compelled to say the bread was all gone.

"Let us go to the Bishop," at last said the poor pining creatures. "Surely he will help us. He has far more food than he needs, and it is useless our starving here when he has plenty."

Very soon from his palace window the Bishop saw numbers of the poor people flocking to his gates and he thought to himself: "So they want my corn; but they shall not have it and the sooner they find out their mistake, the better." So he sent them away. The next day others came. Still the Bishop refused, but still the people persevered in calling out for food at the gates.

At last, wearied with their cries, but still unmoved by their pitiable condition, the Bishop announced that on a certain day his large barn should be open for any one to enter who chose, and that when the place was full, as much food should be given them as would last all the winter.

At last the day came, and, for a time, forgetting their hunger, the women and children, as well as the men, both old and young, crowded up to the bar door.

The Bishop watched them, with a smile on his deceitful old face, until the place was quite full; then he fastened the door securely, and actually set fire to the barn and burned it to the ground. As he listened to the cries of agony, he said to himself, "How much better it will be for the country when all these rats," as he called the poor sufferers, "are killed, because while they were living they only consumed the corn!"

Having done this, he went to his palace and sat down to his dainty supper, chuckling to himself to think how cleverly he had disposed of the "rats."

The next morning, however, his face wore a different expression when his eyes fell upon the spot where the night before had hung a likeness of himself. There was the frame, but the picture was gone—it had been eaten by the rats.

At this the wicked Bishop was frightened. He thought of the poor dying people he had spoken of as rats the day before, and he turned cold and trembled. As he stood shivering, a man from the farm ran up in terror, exclaiming that the rats had eaten all the corn that had been stored in the granaries.

Scarcely had the man finished speaking when another messenger arrived, pale with fear, and bringing tidings more terrible still. He said 10,000 rats were coming fast to the palace, and told the Bishop to fly for his life, adding a prayer that his master might be forgiven for the crime he had committed the night before.

"The rats shall not find me," said Bishop Hatto, for that was his name. "I will go and shut myself up in my strong tower on the Rhine. No rats can reach me there; the walls are high, and the stream around is so strong the rats would soon be washed away if they attempted to cross the water."

So off he started, crossed the Rhine, and shut himself up in his tower. He fastened every window securely, locked and barred the doors, and gave strict injunctions that no one should be allowed to leave the tower or enter it. Hoping that all danger was over, he lay down, closed his eyes, and tried to sleep. But it was all in vain; he shook with fear. Then, all at once, a shrill scream startled him. On opening his eyes he saw the cat on his pillow. She, too, was terrified, and her eyes glared, for she knew the rats were close upon them.

Up jumped the Bishop, and from his barred window he saw the black cloud of rats swiftly approaching. They had crossed the swift current, and were marching in such a direct line toward his hiding place that they might have been taken for a well-marshaled army. Not by dozens or scores, but by thousands and thousands the creatures were seen. Never before had there been such a sight.

Down on his knees the Bishop fell,  
And faster and faster his beads did he tell,  
As louder and louder, drawing near,  
The gnawing of their teeth he could hear,  
And in at the windows and in at the door,  
And through the walls helter-skelter they pour,  
And down from the ceiling and up through the floor,  
From the right and the left, from behind and before,  
And all at once to the Bishop they go,  
They have whetted their teeth against the stones,  
And now they pick the Bishop's bones,  
They gnawed the flesh from every limb,  
For they were sent to do judgment on him.

Such was the horrible fate of Bishop Hatto; and whether it be perfectly true or not, it is a striking illustration of the folly as well as the cruelty of selfishness.

WHAT is the difference between a blacksmith and the average farmer's wife?—One shoes horses and the other shews hens.