

make some dresses of sheets and pillow-cases and then go around leaving candy at the doors of our friends." We thought her idea was a good one. Halloween came—a lovely evening. We dressed up and, each taking a bag of candy, we started out. We knocked at several doors and in sepulchral voices stated our errand and presented our gifts. Some were frightened and others tried to catch us, and altogether we had a most joyous time, and on our way home we gave a "Hurrah!" for "The Hammer."  
—Ida Hagen,  
Ninth Grade. 190 Hurlbut Street, Crookston, Minn.

**HOW THE MUSE WORKS.**

I used to think it would be very easy to compose poetry or write books or stories and that all any author had to do was to set the "muse" at work and poetry and song would gush forth like a spring from a hillside. One of my favorite poems, which I have committed to memory, is:

When Freedom from her mountain height,  
Unfurled her standard to the air,  
She tore the azure robe of night,  
And set the stars of glory there.

Some of the other selections I have committed to memory are: "Nearer Home," "Sandalphon," "Seventy-Six," "Summer," "Lincoln's Gettysburg Address" and "To a Waterfowl." The reading of these, with the study of the biographies of Shakspeare, Scott, Dickens, Bryant, Longfellow, Whittier and Holmes in connection with their writings has been a kind of "hammering in" of the real meaning of the oft-repeated stanza—

The height of great men reached and kept,  
Was not attained by sudden flight;  
But they, while their companions slept,  
Were toiling upward in the night.

Seventh Grade. —Ernest A. Francis,  
Williston, N. D.

**RESENTS ITS NEW USE.**

My father, who is a telephone expert, once owned a little hammer which he prized very highly because of its many uses. But, alas, for the hammer! It did not remain in papa's possession very long, for one night about twenty of us girls serenaded the professor of our school, who had that day returned with his bride. Among our instruments was this little hammer. While rendering one of our favorite selections this hammer was broken in some way and we tried in vain to fix it. The next day when papa learned the fate of his hammer, he was very angry, and since then I have never taken any of papa's tools without permission.  
—Inez Hagen,  
Eighth Grade. Northwood, N. D.

**AN OBSTINATE WINDOW.**

One day in spring when I was about nine years old, I was told to open the window. I tried and tried, but could not raise it. The lock at the top was rusted shut. I did not say anything, but went for the hammer. I hammered for awhile, but could not budge it. At last I lost patience and was going to hit it again, when the hammer slipped and went thru the pane. My mother said: "There you have done it." I began to cry, but she said: "Never mind. Hereafter you must not lose patience so easily." I have never taken a hammer to a window since, for fear the hammer would slip and I would break another window pane.  
—Catherine Hodge,  
Sixth Grade. Lake Park, Minn.

**LIVELY YELLOW-COATS.**

We had two yellow-hammers, which were very pretty in the sunlight. They were quite tame and we called them Daisy and Dick. When any one came in they would sing their very best. Every day they were let out to take a bath. One day they tipped the basin of water over and when we came in they were sitting on the back of a chair screaming with all their might. After awhile they flew down to see if we had filled the basin again, and they took their bath without tipping the basin. When they were hungry they would hammer on the floor of the cage till we gave them something. One day we hung the cage in the door, the wind blew the door open and that was the last we saw of our yellow-hammers.  
—Esther Johnson,  
Sixth Grade. 809 West Clark St., Albert Lea, Minn.

**TWO STUBBORN BOARDS.**

One day I planned to go to town in the afternoon. I rose early in the morning and began to clean the yard. I was busy raking and picking up tin cans, when I came to a board which I wanted to take away with the rest of the things. I tried to pull it out of the ground, but I could not. So I went on with the rest of my work. I hammered and pulled at other things, until I came to another board. I tried to pull it out of the ground, but it was too hard. When I had finished cleaning the yard I went over it to see if I had done it well. Then I came to the board which I had left before. I took a board from the wheel-barrow and put it under the one which was in the ground and pulled. I hammered away until it came out. Then I went to the other board which I had also left. I took another board from the wheel-barrow and used it in the same way that I had used the other. But when I pulled this time I broke a piece off the one which was in the ground. This made it much harder. Then I put another stick under and hammered away until that, too, came out. It took a long time to clean the yard, but I hammered away at it and when it was done it looked very tidy.  
—Loretta S. Koehmstedt,  
Fifth Grade. Minto, N. D.  
District School 108.

**WHAT THE JUDGE THOUGHT.**

The pupils of our school and of another were to give a declamatory contest. Three prizes were to be given and papa said if I won the first prize, which was four dollars, he would add half to it, making it six dollars. The title of my recitation was "The Execution of Montrose." There was one girl who had a fine chance to win the first prize and some were sure she would. I wanted to win the first prize, so I hammered away at my recitation. I could hardly think of anything else. When I was studying my lessons my thoughts would wander, and instead of reading the words in the book, I would find myself reciting my piece. When in company I would say it to myself and when I was alone I recited it as loud as I could. I hammered so hard at it, I could not have hammered any more, if I had wanted to. The evening of the contest came. The hall was filled with people, but I was so excited I did not see or hear anything. As soon as I was on the stage I grew calmer and more composed, and recited my poem better than I thought I would. The

other pupils recited well—better than I did—I thought, so you can imagine my surprise when one of the judges arose and said: "The first prize is awarded to Miss Petersen."  
—Beatrice Petersen,  
Ninth Grade. Ferley, Minn.

**RATHER DO IT HERSELF.**

One day as I was busily engaged in my work I heard some one crying in the kitchen, and I hurried to see what the matter was. Upon entering the room I saw that it was my sister. I asked her why she was crying and she answered: "My teacher told me if I could not remember better what was said in class she would hammer it into my head." I told her to take the hammer to school and lay it on the teacher's desk and always look at it to remind her of what the teacher had said the foregoing day. But she, not heeding my advice, took the hammer and pounded her head till it was quite sore. The next morning she told her teacher that she had hammered herself. Miss Clair laughed and said: "Then there is no need of my hammering my scholar's little curly head."  
—Anna Locher,  
Eighth Grade. Arlington, Minn.



**THE SCARE-CROW**

Mr. Binks (very shortsighted)—Eh, what is there to look at over there? I don't see anything, my friend.  
—Pick-Me-Up.

**BROTHER KNOWS HOW.**

One day I decided to make a playhouse. I took some nails and boards and began hammering away. When I had almost finished, papa took the hammer away from me and said, "If you ever touch this hammer again I shall punish you severely." The next day, when he had gone back to the store, I took the hammer and began to pound again. Finally, when I had finished and was going to put it away, I noticed that something had fallen off. I had lost the head of it and had only the handle left. I was frightened. I hunted and hunted for quite awhile; soon I found it. But the question was how to get it on again. At last I thought of a good plan. I ran to my brother and he fixed it. But after that papa had no need to fear that I would touch his hammer.  
—Ellen Peterson,  
Sixth Grade. Warren, Minn.

**STRANGE CARPENTRY.**

One day several girls and I were playing out-of-doors, when suddenly we spied a hammer lying in the corner of the woodshed. This brought happy thoughts into our minds and we at once decided to play that we were carpenters. One girl took the nailbox and another the hammer and we went where our mothers could not see us. After we had run a little over a block, we stopped and started our work. We took turns in pounding our initials into the sidewalk. Now, whenever we see them, it reminds us of the day when we were carpenters.  
—Eunice Rundquist,  
Seventh Grade. Red Wing, Minn.  
Central School.

**WHEN MAMA IS NEAR.**

One evening not long ago I was practicing my music lesson. After I had played a piece called "Slumber Song" I decided to play another called "Jolly School-boys." There were many staccato notes in this piece and some to be held while others were played and there were other difficult things. I started to play but my fingers would not go right. I tried over and over again, but my fingers would not mind. I went into the dining-room where mama was and told her all about it. Then she came in and stood by me, and when I started to play again I could play all right. But I hammered and hammered before I could make my fingers mind.  
—Amy Sandy,  
Sixth Grade. Lester Prairie, Minn.

**THE AMBITION FAILS.**

When I was about three years old I always said that I was going to be a carpenter and have a lot of nails, and best of all, I was going to have a real hammer. One evening papa was laying a new sidewalk and I went out to watch him. The first thing I did was to knock over the nails, then lose the hammer and do wrong most everything that could be. The next morning papa went to work without taking his nails or the hammer so I went out and pounded nails into the doorstep. Mama told me I must not pound nails in the sidewalk, so I went away from the door wondering where I could go next. Soon a happy idea came to me. I would finish making the fence. It was not very long until mama came out again and told me I must not pound nails in the fence. "Oh dear," I said, "where can I go now? Mama won't let me pound nails any place." While I sat thinking where I could go I kept on pounding nails into the ground, when—before I could tell what had happened, something had hurt my finger. "Oh mama," I cried. "My finger! My finger!" Mama came out and seeing my finger bleeding she knew I had hurt it on the nails. "Why were you not careful?" she asked. "I was," I answered, "but that horrid old nail

had to hurt me and I'm mad at that nail, too. Aren't you mama? I won't be a carpenter now."  
—Kalma Thompson,  
Seventh Grade. Barnesville, Minn.

**EASE FOR THE BRUISES.**

One day when I was about five years old papa was taking some nails out of boxes, and said if I would hammer them straight he would give me a quarter. I took the nails and went to the back-yard. I had five nails hammered straight when I hammered my finger instead of the nail. That was the end of my hammering for that day. I wrapped my finger up, but papa laughed at me and said I did not know how to use a hammer. After working at straightening nails for five days, I learned how to use a hammer. Papa gave me a half dollar instead of a quarter, half for pounding my finger and half for learning how to use a hammer.  
—Lillie Schultenburg,  
Seventh Grade. Preston, Minn.

**WHEN COOKIES APPEAR.**

I had long wanted a hammer and one day I was delighted to receive one from my aunt, who was visiting us. I went to mama and demanded some nails. "Why do you want nails?" she asked me. "Oh, I'm going to be a carpenter, I am," I replied. "Go to papa and ask him, I do not know where they are," mama said, and away I flew to papa and received my nails. Then I confined myself to the solitude of the shed and began on what I thought the easiest thing to make—a wagon. One of my friends came over to play, and watched my work with admiring eyes. Thump, thump! Lo and behold! I had split a wheel in two. Thump, thump. "Ouch! That hit my thumb." Whack, whack! Why of all things—that nail turned right over! So it went on, until at last I perceived that my friend's eyes no longer had an admiring look in them. I happened to glance up at this critical moment and there in the doorway stood mama, with an amused expression on her face and a plate of cookies in her hand—and that was the last of my trying to be a carpenter.  
—Bernice Vale,  
Seventh Grade. Washington School. Second Ave. S., St. Cloud, Minn.

**A ROUND DOZEN.**

"Oh-o-o-o! that old hammer! This is about the tenth time it has fallen on my foot today," I said, as I laid the hammer on the shelf again. A little later mama called me and said: "Get the hammer. I want to tack up this picture." As I was pulling some papers out of the way the hammer followed. Down it came, right on my toe. This must have been the eleventh time, so you may be sure my toe felt it. "O-o-o-o" I screamed, and mama, suspecting what the matter was, came in a hurry and soon I was comforted and running about as usual. I was looking at the picture mama was putting up. "How does that look?" she asked stepping down from the chair. "I guess it looks—O-o-o-o-o!" She had moved her foot and down had come the hammer on my foot for the twelfth time that most unfortunate day.  
—Amanda Waale,  
Eighth Grade. Hawley, Minn.

**HOW THE HOUSE CAME ABOUT.**

When I was a small girl mama gave me some tacks, a hammer and pieces of pine board. I used to think it the nicest kind of play to hammer the tacks into the wood. I have not used the hammer very much since, until this summer. My playmate had a nice little wagon and some goats that he drove all over town. When we were riding the sun was so hot that we decided to make a cover for the wagon. He, another playmate and I drove the goats down to the lumber-yard. I asked papa if we might have some boards to make a cover and he said that we could. We filled the wagon full and drove the goats home. We sawed and hammered for a number of days until it was finished. If we did hammer our fingers, we had a good time anyway. Then when it was finished, it was too heavy to put on the wagon, so we used it for a little house.  
—Ruth Westfall,  
Sixth Grade. Salem, S. D.

**HAMMER, HAMMER EVERYWHERE.**

A few years ago I went to the country during the summer vacation. I had been there about a week, when there was a fearful storm. The wind blew and it rained so hard it sounded like a great many hammers tapping on the ground. The wind blew some trees down, tore the roofs from some of the sheds and the lightning killed some cattle that happened to be out. The next day I went out with the farmer to put up some of the fences which had been blown down. The day was cool and pleasant after the rain. When we reached the field the hammers were kept constantly going. First to drive the posts into the ground and then to nail the wire to the posts and the echoes were ringing thru the woods.  
—Alvin Zierdt,  
Eighth Grade. Wabasha, Minn.

**When Good News Traveled.**

A gentleman who is well known for the interest he takes in the welfare of animals recently made the affirmation that dogs have a way of communicating news to one another. This was demonstrated to him in a very singular and amusing fashion about four years ago. "On one of those bitter cold nights, such as a cold wave often brings," says this gentleman, "I heard at my front door the unmistakable sounds of scratching and whining, and found, upon looking out, a pug and a little terrier sitting on the steps. "In the face of the bitter cold it would have been cruel to send them away, so they were made welcome to share the comfortable quarters of my own two dogs. In the morning they took their departure; but great was my astonishment to see them return again in the evening, accompanied by a large Irish setter. "If I had any doubts as to whether my hospitable night's lodgings were discussed among the shelterless dogs of the neighborhood, they were soon removed, for on the third night my three homeless friends returned, their number still further increased by a pug and an old pointer. The mute but eloquent language of their wagging tails and the humble appeal in their sincere eyes were at once amusing and pathetic. "With my own two pets and these five wanderers I had now seven dogs stretched out comfortably before my kitchen grate; but their irreproachable behavior and their many ingratiating ways had ensured for them a welcome at my house as long as the cold wave lasted, which was nearly a week. As soon as the cold subsided they departed and returned no more."