

The Lyceum Banner.

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No. 17.



Written for the Lyceum Banner.

WILLIE JOHNSTON.

BY UNCLE WILLMER.

AFTER leaving the hunter, "Ike," with the dead wild-cat slung over one shoulder and his rifle on the other, tramping off toward the village, not far away, Willie hastened home to tell his mother of his adventure, and nar-

row escape through the timely appearance of this man, who, as you may well suppose, in little Willie's estimation, was a wonder, indeed, and one of whom he was anxious to learn something more about.

Mrs. Johnston listened to the story of her little boy with much interest, feeling truly thankful for the timely appearance of the hunter, and in answer to the question of Willie, what he meant by saying, "She'll know what I mean," Mrs. Johnston said, "Oh, dear me! how this brings up that terrible scene in the woods with Alice and Hero.

"What, mother," said Willie, "what was it? Do tell me all about it. Please, mother, now do?"

It required some little coaxing to get Mrs. Johnston to satisfy the eager curiosity of her little boy, for the fearful scene was too deeply impressed upon her memory to be called back

by a recital of it, as it seemed too much like the reality of that terrible afternoon. But Willie won at last, and went off to bed that night with his little brain buzzing and whirling with all sorts of sounds and sights from the unusual excitement of this eventful day. As he cuddled down into his comfortable bed, tired and sleepy, the tall, rough figure of "Ike," with his bear-skin cap and leather leggings,—the child-like cry from the wood—the

terrible struggle between Hero and the wild-cat—the sharp crack of the rifle—all mingled and jumbled together in such strange confusion, that it is no wonder the little sleeper should start from his troubled slumbers and cry out, “Oh, dear! hark! Ike! Hero! *mother!*” But the trembling, fainting, frightened boy soon found that “*mother*” was the only real thing of it all, for there she was, clasping him in her loving arms, soothing and quieting as only a mother can, when frightful and troubled dreams, or any other ill, disturb and vex the dear one.

The next morning Willie was up bright and early, for this little boy was one of the wide-awake, lively, frolicsome kind, and very seldom was found in bed after sun-rise; and as Willie was a farmer’s boy, there was much that even such a little fellow could do, both in the house as well as out of doors, to help along with the necessary work of the day.

There were the chickens to feed, wood to be brought in, cows to be driven to pasture, and Willie was quite “handy” at many kinds of house-work, which little boys should never fail to learn something about, if the opportunity offers, for it is quite sure to be of more or less use to them before they have finished the journey of life. Some boys think it beneath them to do any kind of “girl’s work;” but such notions come of a debasing pride, which I hope all the readers of the LYCEUM BANNER are too sensible to indulge in.

Now, while Willie Johnston was a model boy in so many respects, so cheerful, obedient, respectful, kind, and withal so bright and intelligent, yet he was not without some faults, though they were faults which caused himself more trouble and sorrow than any one else.

Full of life and animation, doing with all his might, and with a whole-heartedness, whatever he undertook, whether at work or play, this little boy was sometimes inclined to be careless and venturesome. To better explain what I mean by this, I will tell you of an instance where this little boy came very near meeting with a sad mishap, and all because he was too venturesome.

Willie had an “Uncle Jerry,” who lived but a short distance from his own home, and of whom he was very fond of visiting, and I believe his Uncle Jerry was just as fond of his little nephew. Uncle Jerry had no children of his own, which perhaps was the reason he was so glad to have other people’s children come to see him. Such capital stories Uncle Jerry could tell, it was a wonder to the children where they all came from; always something new, each one better than the last.

It was really quite an interesting sight to see this kind old man, seated before the blazing wood-fire, during the long winter evenings, or in the cool shade in summer-time, with an eager, earnest group of young listeners drawn around him. Uncle Jerry always wore a funny-looking night-cap, of many colors and a tassel hanging over the back of his head, and though everybody else as old as he was wore some kind of a coat, Uncle Jerry would always wear a jacket. People used to say he was an “odd stick,” but the children all loved him, and he loved the children, and that was quite enough for the little folks.

Once when Willie was making one of his many visits with his Uncle Jerry, it was in the strawberry season, and of course, they were sure to go berrying a part of the time.

They started one bright, beautiful day, with their baskets for some strawberries, in a field by the side of a pond. Willie was as happy as happy could be, and ran and capered to his heart’s content, sometimes making believe that he got a tumble, and then again tumbling in real earnest into the tall grass, laughing and shouting with great glee.

But he soon tired of the sport, and went to work filling his basket with berries, which was soon done; and then before starting for home, Willie proposed to his uncle that they get some lines and fish in the pond for a while. But Uncle Jerry was too tired, and said they would go fishing some other day. But while his uncle was resting a little before starting for home, Willie started away toward the pond, and amused himself in skipping stones on the surface, and watching the fish darting about in the clear water below.

Knowing how careless and venturesome Willie was, Uncle Jerry called out, and cautioned him about falling into the pond. Willie responded:—“Yes, sir, I will be careful.” There was a bank five or six feet high, with a tree growing on the edge of it, and a limb projecting out over the pond. Willie thought it would be rare sport to climb out on that limb, and look down into the clear water.

It was but the work of a moment to climb the tree, but to venture out over the deep water on that narrow limb, required more time, and you will wonder why Willie did not remember his promise just made his uncle, about being careful.

But here was the great difficulty with Willie Johnston; he seemed to be blind as to consequences, when once he thought of something he wanted to do.

Creeping along on the limb till it seemed almost ready to break, the little fellow enjoyed the excite-

ment of the thing very much, but in trying to get back to the tree again he lost his balance and fell headlong into the pond.

Down he went into the deep, cold water, which filled his mouth, eyes and ears, shutting out the beautiful sunshine, making horrible noises in his ears, and stopping his breath. The first thing he thought of was his promises to be careful, and what his dear mother would say. When he rose to the surface again, there was a wild scream, a glimmer of daylight again, and then the horrible rumbling and choking of the water as when he first fell in.

Uncle Jerry heard the splashing of the water—then the scream, and ran to the bank, but when he reached the pond, Willie was just crawling out of the water. When he sank the second time he caught hold of a stick under water, which was fast to the shore, and drew himself out just in time to catch hold of the hand of Uncle Jerry, who drew him up the bank a wiser boy, I think, for he never forgot his venture on the limb of that tree by the pond.

Written for the Lyceum Banner.

THE MEMORY OF GOOD DEEDS.

AN INCIDENT OF MY LIFE.

BY MRS. L. T. WHITTIER CONGAR.

WHEN a little girl I attended a country school in my happy New England home, At the same school were three little brothers by the name of Webber. The father of these children was a very indolent man, and the mother was, for very many years, an invalid, so at times they suffered for food and clothes.

Cyrus, the eldest of these, was partially idiotic. Although he was regularly sent to school, he never could learn more than to spell out a few easy words.

As is sometimes the case at school, where one is poor or less brilliant than others, naughty boys and girls would laugh at this foolish boy because he could not learn, and was too poor to wear good clothes. Perhaps I would have done the same had not my mother taught me better. She used to visit Mrs. Webber during her illness, and take her food and clothing. And when she stored my dinner basket with nice bread and butter, cakes and apples, she would often say, "I will put in more than you want, so you can give some to Cyrus Webber, as he has no dinner." This I always did, and he would look up so *thankfully*, and *slily* away into a corner and greedily devour it.

When I was about thirteen of years age my parents moved West, and the idiot boy was forgotten.

Some time after the advent of modern Spiritualism, I became a medium for various phases of manifestations, and was one evening sitting quietly with some friends, when a sudden tremor passed over me, indicative of spirit control. Remaining passive a few moments, the front and upper portion of my brain, or the reasoning faculties seemed entirely paralyzed; while the lower or perceptive remained as usual. Presently my head drooped, my hair, which was worn short, fell over my face, and I felt much as one would suppose an idiotic person would feel, but still possessing sufficient of my former consciousness to realize the change.

Remarking this to my friends, and that I had no idea what it meant, or whose influence I was under, they counseled me to wait the result. This I did, and after many attempts to articulate distinctly through my organ of speech, the controlling influence succeeded in saying, "I shall never forget your many kindnesses to me at school." With this returned my former consciousness, and to my mental request for the name of the spirit, no audible response could be given, but a very distinct and positive impression saying, "Cyrus Webber.

Then it all passed before me—my childhood days, the poor idiot boy, the kind words and gratefully received lunch from my dinner-basket.

But what of the death of the poor boy? This as yet, remained a mystery. But within the following year my mother received a letter from an eastern friend, and among the items of news was the one of Cyrus Webber having been drowned from a small boat on the Kennebec river at such a time, dated prior to the scene above related.

No little incident of my life has afforded me more genuine pleasure than this kindly remembrance by this unfortunate little spirit. It has helped to teach me that true happiness or heaven can be out-wrought from good deeds, however small.

My little reader, if you are ever tempted to sport or treat with disrespect, any one, because they are poor or unfortunate, remember this *true* story of the idiot boy; and that good deeds, like kind words, never die; and the sunshine of your after years may be smiles of loving spirits whom you have made happy.

NEW YORK.

A CHILD'S THOUGHT.—Little three year old Gertie, with mild blue eyes and golden hair, was one day looking at some geese, from the window of her Western home, when her mother heard her say, "Poor deese, haint got no hands on."

For the Lyceum Banner.

THE SHADOW OF A WORD.

BY EMMA TUTTLE.

I chanced to hear a sinful elf
Talking in this wise to himself:
"I do not like myself to-night;
I swore because I took affright.

My lips feel black as German Ink,
And all my head is black, I think;
My teeth are nothing more nor less
Than pegs of ebony, I guess.

My tongue, I fear, is leather hue,
And all my throat is black and blue.
My heart has turned to something new,
As dark and hollow as my shoe.

I feel as if, from head to foot,
A powder buff had lain on soot.
I was as joyous as a bird
Until I said that wicked word.

And since it makes me feel so sad,
It can be nothing else but bad;
So, here, on this dark winter night,
I leave it in a snow-grave white.

I hope its ghost may not arise
To haunt my tongue or blur my eyes;
But stormy demons guard their own,
While I, in peace, walk on alone "

THE LITTLE DYKEMAN.

FROM THE FRENCH OF MADAME EUGENIA FOA.

A LONG time ago, a very long time ago, a man and a woman lived in the city of Harlem, in Holland. The man was a dykeman, that is to say, a man who takes care of the dykes. Do you know what the dykes are? No!

I am going to tell you. Holland is a country surrounded by canals, rivers, and rivulets. If the water were not held back by the dykes, Holland would be more frequently under the water than over it, and that would be neither healthy nor agreeable to the inhabitants. Now this flood is kept in its place by immense wooden doors, which are set a great distance from each other, and shut off the entrance to the reservoir which holds the water. When the land needs moisture, the dykeman raises the gates a little, or much—if it is necessary to have much water—just as you would move the handle of a pump! But he always closes the gates before he goes to bed, for fear the water should run in the night and overflow the banks, or flood the country and destroy the inhabitants. That is well known; even the children are aware of that.

But I must tell you about the dykeman. He had a little boy about eight years old. One day this little boy asked permission to carry a cake to a poor old man, who lived near the flood-gates.

"Go, but do not stay long," said his father.

This the boy promised and went away. The blind man was pleased with the cake, for he was poor and did not have such a treat every day. The boy was glad that he had made the blind man happy; and as soon as he had seen him eat the cake, he said "Good-by," and obeyed his father by returning home immediately.

All along the borders of the canals—filled with water, because it was in October, when they are flooded by the autumn rains—the boy sang, and stopped to gather flowers—little blue flowers—which his father dearly loved. And gaily, thoughtlessly, like any child of his age, he stooped and rose again, sang, and threw his sweet, fresh voice out on the air, and at the same time cast to the winds the same pretty little blue flowers, that he cared for no longer. The path became still more lonely, and the country seemed deserted; for you could no longer hear the footsteps of the cottager going to his home, or the voice of the wagoner shouting to his mules. The little boy very soon saw that the blue tint of the little flowers could not be easily distinguished from the green leaves of the larger bushes. He looked at the sky; night was approaching. Not like a dark winter night, but a clear, serene and beautiful one, in which objects could be seen distinctly, not quite so plainly as in daylight, but still very clearly. The boy thought of his father and of his advice; and he began to climb out of the hollow, into which he had descended, and to ascend the hill. Suddenly, the faint sound of water, trickling over the stones, arrested his attention. He was near one of the great flood-gates of the dyke. He looked about, searched for the place where the sound came from, and soon discovered a crack in the wood, and through the crack the water was running.

I have told you before, that there was not a child in Holland who did not understand the mischief this would make. The stream of water which was no bigger at first than your finger, would soon enlarge the hole—increase, become a cascade, a great sheet of water, a torrent, then a terrible inundation, which would cause the ruin of the inhabitants, and perhaps their death. The little Hollander did not hesitate a moment; he threw away the flowers that he held, and climbing from stone to stone, until he reached the crack, boldly pushed his finger into the hole, and saw, with delight, that the water ceased to run—it could not get out.

It was all very well at first; the boy was rejoiced

at his stratagem; but the night grew darker, and with night and darkness came the cold. The boy looked about—he called—no one came; nobody heard him. He determined to wait until the day dawned. But alas! the cold became yet more intense, and the finger that was placed in the hole was quite benumbed; and from the finger the numbness spread to the hand, and then to the arm, and reached the shoulder; but the boy did not stir from the spot. His distress became more intense and more intolerable. The little dykeman cried; he thought of his mother's anxiety, about his father, and about his little bed at home, where he could sleep so soundly, but he did not stir; for if the water had burst through the restraint, which his little finger opposed to its fury, he would have been drowned; and not only him, but his father, his mother, and even the whole village. So he wept, but did not stir.

Daylight found him in this perilous position without his courage having failed for an instant. At that time the curate, who was returning from passing the night by a dying man, came that way on his return to the parsonage. As he heard groans in the pit, he looked down, and saw a child seated upon a stone, with a pale face, eyes filled with tears, and almost writhing in pain.

"What are you doing there?" inquired the curate.

"I am keeping the water from running out," replied the little boy innocently, who had displayed in a night the courage and fortitude of a hero.

Can you believe that history has not preserved the name of the little dykeman who saved his country?

Written for the Lyceum Banner.

NEVER FORGET MOTHER'S INJUNCTIONS.

WHEN a boy some fifteen years old, I went from my home in the South to New Orleans, accompanying my elder brother and some others, who were supplied with fifty thousand dollars in large notes of the United States Treasury, those first issued, to enter lands in the "Red River country." It was before the days of iron safes, and when the responsibility of hotel-lords was not so generally recognized as now. My older companions wishing to visit the opera the first night, and not deeming it safe to take with them so large a sum, concluded to have me remain at our hotel, with the treasure in charge. Accordingly my pockets were stuffed to distention with the precious bills, and it was particularly and repeatedly enjoined that I should not leave the tavern, but go early to bed, securely locking the door.

For some time with much self-importance I promanaged the public office, then alike the bar-room of the hotel, frequently feeling my pockets, to see if their rich contents had not taken wings—unwittingly drawing attention to the fact, that they contained much of value. Quite early in the evening I inquired at the desk what room was allotted me, and I was told that No. 5 was, and contained all the beds requisite for our company. I delayed retiring yet awhile, and when at last I asked for key and candle, was informed that the key had been taken up, and supposing that it had been done by the servant, I proceeded with my light to No. 5, and finding it open, selected one of the beds. Depositing the money under my pillow, and undressing, I remembered that my dear mother's last words were—"Son, don't forget your prayers in New Orleans." I hesitated, for it seemed to me that in so large a city God would not see or know of such an omission; but my promise and the shame I would feel on my return home, before my mother's tender but searching eye, decided the matter. I kneeled down, when I saw the hitherto concealed body of a robber under that very bed—the bed which my guardian angel, perhaps, had protectingly led me to select! It required but a moment's thought to disarm and secure the intruder, by seizing his foot, raising and straining it hard against the sharp edge of the bedstead. It was in vain he struggled and with his other foot kicked and bruised my hands, for my loud calls for help soon brought the police of the house to my relief and his capture.

He confessed his guilty intentions, said that he had during the evening noticed my frequent reference to my pockets, and had hoped to rob me of their values by getting first concealed under one of the beds in my room; that he had heard the clerk designate No. 5 as my room, of which he obtained the key and entered in advance of me. How well he would have succeeded had I forgotten my dear, good mother's injunction, I leave it to your young readers to determine.

Hotel, Chicago.

TRAVELER.

THE ARABULA AND STELLAR KEY PREMIUMS.

ORANGE, N. J., March 17, 1886.

Dear Mrs. Brown:—I send you by to-day's express (paid) four copies each of "Stellar Key" and "Arabula," and six of "Death and the After Life." Please give one copy of "Stellar Key" to any person who will send you the names of three yearly subscribers to the LYCEUM BANNER; one copy of "Arabula" for four yearly subscribers, and one copy of "After Life" for two yearly subscribers.

Fraternally yours, MARY F. DAVIS.

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MINISTERING SPIRITS.

Twenty years ago little raps were heard in a town near Rochester, in the State of New York. These sounds announced to the world new truths. They answered the question so often asked, "If man die shall he live again?" This wonderful problem so long enveloped in mystery and enshrouded in darkness, was solved by the angel voices of our brothers and sisters coming from the spirit land, to tell us that we should live always. The little band who first listened to the good tidings increased in numbers day by day, until millions came to join the throng, and the sounds of rejoicing were heard all over the land. Despised and ridiculed at first, treated with the jibes and jeers of the ignorant and unthinking, the noble pioneers in the cause of Spiritualism, held on to the truth which they had learned until it came to be confirmed by wisdom and refined by experience. To-day, there are but few who do not know that angels talk with us, that those who have gone to the beautiful land are not lying dead in the grave, but are ministering spirits ever with and around us, watching us, guiding us and loving us; they come to us with kindly hearts and smiles of earnest love to help us on in life. When we die, or when our bodies go back to earth, we shall go to them, the ties of love and affection will be renewed, and down the river of Life Eternal shall we sail forever more. To our readers we would say, do not fear to pass to the other life; "Death is but a kind and welcome servant who unlocks with noiseless hand life's flower-encircled door to show us those we love."

The 31st of March the children in most of the Lyceums celebrated the advent of Modern Spiritualism by music, marching, speaking and listening. Some of the Massachusetts Lyceums had a splendid turn-out in Boston. They marched in grand procession through the streets, keeping time to sweet sounds. At the Hall they had a fine exhibition—just about as good as the Lyceums of the West will give at our proposed convention.

We give below a part of the closing speech made

on the occasion by Mrs. Mary F. Davis. We clip it from the *Banner of Light*:

"My friends, as I saw the exercises of these beloved children, even their physical exercises, I felt grateful to the Giver of all good that our children were now about to be developed physically into beautifully proportioned bodies, not that they may go to battlefields and pour out their lives in strife; not that they may go to the brutal prize ring, and there contaminate each other's bodies by blows of force, and destroy each other, but they are going to be developed into beauty and proportion, in order that they may find in their physical nature, a representation of the Divine being. And, my friends, you must have felt, with me, when you saw that glorious army of young immortals out here in the streets of Boston and on Boston Common, with their banners flying and each one keeping step to this divine music—you must have felt with me, that the time was near at hand when all the nations of the earth would enlist under the banner of peace. I could not but see, in vision, as I watched that glorious army, that the nations over this broad earth were to be brought, through the influence of this new religion and this new philosophy, into one great brotherhood of souls, that the armies of earth are to be marshaled under the white banner of peace, and that over the nations will preside the spirit of love which we feel upspringing in our hearts, and which we pray may flourish, through these beloved children who are coming forward to take our places, until the nations of the earth become one—one in love, one in truth, one in wisdom and everlasting liberty."

PERSONAL.

—E. V. Wilson made us a short call the other day. Time and toil have withened his hair, but left no wrinkles on his brow. He has more calls to speak than he can answer.

—Robert Dale Owen has been with us. He gave us three able and highly interesting lectures. Mr. Owen is a gentleman of rare gifts; he is, indeed, Nature's nobleman.

—Mr. and Mrs. J. Murray Spear sailed from New York for England, April 4th. Their mission is in some way connected with a World's Convention, which they desire to bring about, at some not far distant day, and which we hope may be accomplished. They can be addressed while in Europe, care J. Burns, No. 1 Wellington Road, Camberwell, London, England.

☞ The song in this number of the LYCEUM BANNER is published by permission of the author. Mr. Blackmer, who has it in sheet form, with chorus, making it a most effective piece of music. Price 30 cents. Orders may be addressed to Mrs. Lou. H. Kimball, Drawer 5956, Chicago.

To learn the value of money, try to borrow.



Written for the Lyceum Banner.

THE SWALLOWS.

BY GERTIE GRANT.

I HAVE some news, Gertie," brother Walter said one morning in May, as he came in from the barn with a pail of milk. "Guess, Gertie, what I know." I was just then looking at my toes peeping out of old worn shoes, so I said, "I guess mother has found some money to get me a pair of new shoes." "You will have to guess again," mother said, "for my purse is as empty as your last year's robin's nest."

Now I am sure you can guess, for mother has half told you," Walter said.

"But I can't guess, Walt; what is it?"

"What have you been keeping us all watching the Almanac the last month for?"

"Oh, I know now!" I said. "I wanted to see when was the time for the old robins to come back; mother said they would come in the middle of May."

"I don't mean robins; but what bird says 'trip, trip, tru, tru; trip, trip, tru, tru?'"

"The swallow! Have they come, Walt? Where are they? How did you find them?" I was up with my old straw hat in my hand, ready for a march in search of swallows.

"Better stop and eat your breakfast," Walter said, very coolly; "by that time may be I can answer some of your questions. And, then, I want to tell you something else."

"What about?" I asked, impatiently.

"About how to keep the swallows. Last year you watched them so closely they flew away. I saw a barn swallow, a real steel-blue, with wings and tail as black as ink. I think she was looking for a place to build her nest; and as I came along by the old house I saw a pair of chimney swallows billing and cooing. Now, if you'll let me manage matters, I'll have the old house chimney full of birds."

"I'll let you, Walt, so sure as I'm born," I replied, glad to do anything to keep the birds with us.

After breakfast Walter and I went out to consult

about how best to keep the swallows. We saw a pair of little brown birds sailing about, heads down, as if looking for something they had lost. They flew to the old house chimney, and then alighted. "Is that Bill and Coo?" I asked Walt.

"These are chimney swallows," he said, "but I do not know their names."

"But you did say, Walt, that you saw two live birds, Bill and Coo."

"I said I saw two birds billing and cooing, which means talking about nest-making, that's all."

"I don't care," I said, "they must be named, so I'll call them Bill and Coo."

Walter and I gathered sticks and got a box of mud and some feathers and put them on the roof of the old house. Then we used to save bits of meat and crumbs of bread, and scatter them over the top of the house. By-and-by another pair of birds came. We called them Kit and Rob. These four little things were the happiest creatures in the world. In the morning they were out in the garden picking their breakfasts out of the fresh mold, and then they would go about their nest-building. They used a part of the things we left on the roof; but some of the sticks did not please them. Bill would pick one up, and, poised upon his wings, exhibit it to Miss Coo. If she disliked it she would sail by, give it a hit, and he would drop it and find a better one.

After a while Rob and Bill would take their sails alone. They would go away singing "trip-tru, trip-trip-tru." They would often return with some

tit-bit for the lady-birds who were left at home. In June the little birds came creeping out of the chimney top. The old ones would take them into the garden and feed them on bugs and worms, but never disturb the vines or plants. The barn-swallows joined the company, and such a "trip-trip-truing," I never heard.

We used to call them around the door with bread and seeds. They became so well acquainted with us that they would alight on the broom, axe, or anything about the door.

When the days shortened and the nights grew chill the swallows from the barn and house held a sort of mass meeting in our back yard. There was much guessing and wondering among us in the house about the meaning of this meeting. But next morning we were aroused by a thousand voices in the air. Looking out we saw a great army of swallows on the wing, moving south. Our birds had joined the company of emigrants—gone.

Years have come and gone since the swallows came and went, but to-day I look at this pleasant picture, and wonder if my pets still live; if Bill and Co, Kit and Rob, live together; if they still love each other, and if we may not all meet again in the land beyond the grave.

FRIENDLY VOICES.

FROM G. B. D.

Your little paper is a very welcome visitor with us all. The children have learned to love it as much as the Lyceum itself, of which they very naturally deem it a part.

Yours fraternally,
Washington, D. C.

G. B. DAVIS.

FROM A. C. B.

I have taken the LYCEUM BANNER from the first, and have read every number, and not having a child at home, I give the papers to my neighbor's children to read. It may not be common for men of my age (fifty-five years old) to take interest enough in a child's paper to read it regularly; but it is abundantly worthy of being read by grown people, as well as the little ones. This is my judgment, and I have been a newspaper publisher and teacher, and superintendent of schools, many years of my life.

Sincerely yours,
Albia, Iowa.

A. C. BARNES.

LETTER FROM HINGHAM, MASS.

Editor of the Lyceum Banner:

What a welcome guest your paper is to our Lyceum! How much we delight in reading the various letters from the members of Lyceums in

different parts of the country—the kind expression of each towards all! But in our Lyceum we have enjoyed more particularly the music. "The Spirit Greeting," "Chant the Chorus," "Something Do," and the song in the last number, are worth double the amount they cost to any Lyceum. My only regret is that all Spiritualist bodies or gatherings cannot have a much larger amount of just such music; it is the thing most needful.

We, too, had our anniversary gathering. In fact, we united our first annual with the Twentieth National Anniversary, and a most happy time we had. Speaking and singing in the first part of the evening, the children doing their part very nicely, and they received the applause of the audience. The after part of the evening was spent in dancing.

The pleasures of this glad and happy meeting closed at one o'clock. All expressed themselves amply paid for time and labor. Last Sunday we commenced the year for the second time. Ranks full and officers at their posts; everything looking favorable.

Accept again our many thanks for your kindness in forwarding us the free copies of the BANNER. Say to him who contributed the five dollars, that Hingman will remember him with kindness as often as the songs are sung. When any of them fall on my ear my heart responds, and a deep thanksgiving wells up within me for the spirit that was kind enough to prompt, and the heart generous enough to give. Could that friend look in as we sing the songs, I know that he would feel that that one act had made many happy hearts, pleasant thoughts and happy days, in his earthly life. Let many, as often as they have opportunity, do likewise.

Our Lyceum meets every Sunday afternoon at half past two o'clock, in Temperance Hall. Mrs. Susan M. Dow, Guardian; Edwin Wilder, 2nd, Conductor.

Yours fraternally,

EDWIN WILDER.

We are constantly receiving inquiries in regard to Singing Books for the use of "Children's Progressive Lyceums." We are happy to state that Mr. Blackmer, who has furnished several pieces of music for the LYCEUM BANNER, is preparing a work designed especially for the children, and to supply a want that is being felt wherever Lyceums are organized. The work will not be an expensive one, but will come within the reach of all; and we feel warranted in saying, from the experience of the author, both as a teacher and composer, that the forthcoming book will be one that will meet the demands of the Lyceum children.

Written for the Lyceum Banner.

THE SHADOWY NIGHT.

BY MARIA HARROLD.

Oh, blessed night! with dark and wavy wings,
 Bringing sweet peace to aching heart and brain,
 And to the weary soul thy presence brings
 Release from care, from sorrow and from pain.

Sweet dreams you bring of loved ones far away,
 And thrice loved forms flit by me calm and still;
 They go, but yet I fain would have them stay;
 The chambers of my soul with joy they fill.

And through the shadowy land an echo rings,
 That makes the silent sleeper start and smile,
 There's a footstep and a rustling of soft wings,
 As blessed angels stoop to watch the while.

Dear shadows of the loved ones gone before!
 Come to the Earth to speak with us again;
 Voices we thought were hushed forever more,
 Fall on our senses like the falling rain.

Loved angels, from the Isle beyond life's sea,
 Come to us in the silent hours of sleep,
 And while we slumber, soft and silently,
 Through all the night their loving watch they keep.

The peaceful hours, like blessings from above!
 We thank Thee, Father, for the rest divine,
 Which brings to us the ones we most do love,
 And seems to draw our lives so near to Thine.

For all we have we thank Thee, Father, dear,—
 For all that seemeth good unto Thy sight,
 And as we kneel before Thy footstool here,
 We thank Thee for the still, the shadowy night.

Written for the Lyceum Banner.

WHEN TO ASK QUESTIONS AND HOW TO ANSWER THEM.

WHAT is this, Auntie?" said little Minnie Banks, holding up her rose-leaf of a hand, upon which rested a lady-bug.

"Oh, I don't know. Go and sit down, and ask no more foolish questions," petulently replied Aunt Fanny, continuing to beat the eggs before her.

Minnie turned, and with tears rolling down her cheeks, silently seated herself upon the door-step.

Now Aunt Fanny did not mean to speak unkindly, nor to withhold an answer to a question that was *not* foolish; neither did the extreme sensitiveness of her niece occur to her at that moment, else she would have spoken more gently,—but she was very weary in body and anxious in mind. Minnie did not know it was an unsuitable time to inquire when her aunt was busy. I hope all children who read this will never ask ill-timed questions, and so do I earnestly hope parents and guardians may not irritably, nor carelessly, turn from

their questioning little ones, but in words kindly and pertinently spoken, promise a full and correct response at the earliest opportunity. The budding intellect of a child turns as naturally to more developed intellects to be warmed into expansion, as a flower-bud turns to the sun. Let them not become dwarfed for the want of a little time, a little patience.

Minnie had an insatiable thirst for knowledge, but found the road thereto often obstructed by rough stones and stinging briars, that she knew not how to remove. She was an orphan, living with her grandmother, whose sons and daughters bestowed a double share of love upon her on account of her orphanage, and invariably heaped her plate with a Benjamin's portion of every delicacy a well-stored larder could supply.

Like most young, unreflecting persons, however, they were great lovers of "fun," and when freed from the labors of the day, their pet was called to contribute to their amusement. She always greeted them with an avalanche of questions, which, with her quaint remarks and fanciful comparisons, often convulsed them with laughter. Thus uproarious merriment and unsatisfactory replies often startled the little one, and made her fear their laughter was a *mockery*, and their explanations *untruthful*. Unconsciously, they were starving her intellect and wounding her acute sensibility. Slowly, but surely, her doubts became convictions, until she shrank within herself, like a tortoise within its shell, and the avalanche of interrogations dwindled to a few, and those far between.

There were no children of her own age to associate with—her elders did not understand her, and so she was forced into frequent communings with nature and herself. Hours were given to the twittering swallows and chirping sparrows, and frequent visitings made to the half-hidden violets, and mossy-couched arbutus. Any new thing was borne home in triumph, with a pleasant request for its history; hence, her unseasonable call upon her aunt with the lady-bug.

Her grandmother had taught her to reverence age; her attentions to her grandfather were consequently unremitting; indeed, so strong was her veneration, that almost any old person or thing called it into exercise.

One day her attention was attracted to an odd-looking insect slowly marching across the floor. "Oh, look, grandmamma!" she exclaimed, "there is a spider upon stilts." A loud and prolonged shout from the younger members of the family caused her to look up wonderingly, to ascertain what was causing such hilarity. "That, my dar-

ing," said her grandmother, "is a grand-father long-legs."

"Why, grandmamma; is he grandfather to all the little spiders?" inquired the inquisitive child.

This was too much for the gravity of her sober protectors, and laughing heartily, the father of the family remarked, that the old gentleman on the floor could boast of a larger number of descendants than himself. No farther explanations were given, and for years she believed that insect was the ancestor of all the house-spiders; and whenever and wherever she met one, it was treated with great consideration—always turning from her path that it might not be frightened, and assisting those who were disabled, as far as lay in her power. Years afterwards she learned it was an insect of the genus *Tipula*; but she never lost her reverence for it.

One or two additional anecdotes and I have done. She was once riding in a sleigh, and observed numerous snow-covered hillocks in the fields on each side of the road. She looked up to inquire concerning them, but the fear of ridicule restrained her; so she communed with herself, and after a short self-debate decided that they were the graves of giants. When she could read, she found both pleasure and profit in a work entitled, "Original Tales in Verse." A story of a *pin* made an indelible impression. This early lesson still impels her to pick up a pin wherever she finds one, whether in a solitary room, or in the crowded street of a city. Fortunately for little Minnie, her mind was a rich soil, and if weeds occasionally sprang up, many lovely, mental and moral flowers likewise flourished; but we are warned by her case that a too luxuriant imagination should be pruned, and truth separated from falsehood. The kind angels who watch over children strengthened in her memory that first lesson (playfully but not truthfully given) of veneration for age, which is now her chief characteristic. They also still talk with her through the birds and flowers she loves, and are thus trying to make up for the shortcomings of her giddy relatives.

Do the young readers of the LYCEUM BANNER wish to learn the history of the lady-birds, which Aunt Fanny gave Minnie a few days after she had brought the beautiful stranger into the house?

AUNT JULIA.

Ocean Springs, Miss.

A CHILD'S IDEA OF PHYSIOLOGY.—"Mother," said Emma, "does the food we eat go up into our heads?" "No, my child, why do you ask that?" replied the mother. "Then, said the thoughtful looking child, "what makes our heads grow?"

Questions and Answers from Philadelphia Lyceum.

[Reported for the Lyceum Banner by Mrs. Dyott.]

Question—"What is Truth?" the following answers were given:

TEMPLE GROUP, No. 1.—"Truth is a sure guide—the foundation upon which we must build, to be secure.

EVANGEL GROUP.—"Truth" is the real substantial evidence of things as they are.

"Truth" is a manifestation of God, both in the Ideal and Real.

BANNER GROUP.—"Truth" neither means what is thought, nor what is said, but what is *permanent*, and ought to be relied upon, because upon sufficient data, it is capable of being demonstrated or shown to exist.

STAR GROUP.—"Truth" is the light of the world, which cannot be destroyed or hid.

"Truth" is a fixed Star—a glorious central Sun.

OCEAN GROUP.—"Truth" is a gem, more precious than pearls or diamonds; it can never die. It is a heavenly principle; it will always guide the willing soul aright.

"Truth" is a compass by which we guide our little barque on the ocean of life.

"Truth" is sincerity of purpose.

On the same day, the question—"What do we come to the Lyceum for?" was answered by the following groups:

STAR GROUP.—"We come to the Lyceum" to be educated physically, intelligently and morally.

"We come to the Lyceum" to learn what is naturally and truly spiritual.

OCEAN GROUP.—We come to learn to be natural.

GARLAND GROUP.—"We come" to learn to be good.

"We come" to learn to live true to ourselves and others.

"We come" because everything is bright, beautiful and cheerful here.

"We come" because the exercises of the Lyceum are in harmony with the teachings of Spiritualism.

"We come" because we love to march.

"We come" because we learn the truths of Spiritualism, so that when we arrive at manhood and womanhood we may be an ornament to the cause, and an honor to our parents and teachers.

SYLVAN GROUP.—"We come to the Lyceum" with glad hearts to meet our faithful Conductor, Guardian and teachers, believing that to do good and to be good is the only way to secure happiness.

RIVER GROUP.—To learn to sing.

To learn to love the Father.

To learn Truth and Wisdom.

"We come" to prepare for the Summer Land.

"We come to learn to think.

Written for the Lyceum Banner.

LETTER FROM MRS. BALLOU.

DEAR LITTLE READER:

THE LYCEUM BANNER is such a welcome guest, laden with a feast of good things for young and old, that I, too, long to be engaged in a work that shall add to the entertainment of the dear young folks through the land; and now, with the permission of kind Mrs. Brown, I propose to write you a series of life sketches, as time and health will permit.

As all have their childhood days, with their lights and shadows, perhaps the real experiences of past days, may not be entirely without interest.

Were ever the readers of the LYCEUM BANNER passionately fond of pets, with the misfortune of the poet, who "Never loved a dear gazelle, but it was sure to pine and die," they will understand how wrecked even my fondly cherished hopes, after I shall have given them a history of some of them.

First, and nearest my heart, were my dollies, with their many names and forms; first in memory, was the hunch-backed, crook-necked squash, who, I supposed, had suffered from an attack of small pox, with a doubtful recovery, which had given the orange hue to its complexion. This one was "Miss Susan," and when I tired of it I found a change of companionship in "Jack," the old bedwrench, with its stiff, straight body and long arms; and for a sleeping companion, Pa's handkerchief made into the inevitable baby, lulled me to sleep with the responsibility of a charge.

Later a beautiful dollie found its way from the maternal arms of a cousin, in New York, to mine. Never was a juvenile matron more proud or doating than I, with such a sweet face to peep into, its blue eyes and rosy lips and cheeks, heightened in their charms by the robe of pink silk and soft laces, were sources of infinite happiness to me, till one by one they passed out of my care, but out of my memory—never. Alas! for the uncertainty of earthly things.

Miss Susan, after weeks of endearment, showed her depravity by falling down stairs and breaking in pieces; Jack lost his arm after a winter or two of constant nursing; pa's handkerchief had a way of coming unpinned in the morning, and of being absent all day; and my little New York dolly didn't stand importation very well. She got her skull cracked, too much air "settled on her brain" and she "gave up the ghost," after three years of medical attendance.

My attention was then turned to cats. A big school girl tempted me into servitude for two

weeks, making sorrel pies, making ink out of skokeberries, and gathering sweetbriar, etc., with the promise of a kitten. How eagerly I waited an opportunity to get my darling home—my secret wholly my own. At last a day came that I had to do an errand near the home of my mistress. I ran, leaped and bounded for joy when I felt the fine, soft fur of my little stupid kitten. Alas! it is but a moment from joy to sadness. I was not allowed to bring my little trembling charge into the house, but directed to take it at once back to its owner. The bitter tears I shed were of no account, my two weeks' labor lost, my hopes crushed, and I alone with bitter reflections.

A band of Indians camped near my father's having a singular pet for them to carry—a "tortoise shell" cat. My father bought it to catch the mice on the farm. Old "Merok" always went by her Indian name, and was pronounced splendid by every one, so I felt safe in allowing my affections to go out towards her.

My father had a choice lot of Poland hens, which he had taken great pains in procuring and raising. He had a long box partitioned off into nests for them to lay their eggs in, and often the nests would be filled with broken shells, and never an egg in them. Old Merok slept in the hen house, and she was ever looked upon with suspicion.

Days went by and I kept her in the house days what I could and brought the eggs in at night, but no use. Stronger and stronger grew the suspicion, and surer and surer the proofs, till at last one day some eggs were wanted for cooking. I looked around for Merok—she was gone—so was my father. I rushed to the door just in time to see her pulled from the nest—then I didn't look any more. My father said she wouldn't eat any more eggs—she didn't.

As soon as we could, without being seen, my two little brothers and I, hastened out to where she lay, straitened her limbs, made her a grave under an appletree, and placed at her head and hind feet the half of a barrel stave, and bade her adieu, hoping that in the "cat heaven" to which she had gone, the one weakness of her nature might be forgiven.

This is but a faint outline of the many shadows that fell across my track, such shadows as fall over the pathway of all the little ones—great grievances to them—but not to be shared by older ones, who have passed on to greater disappointments.

Little ones, there is one who knows that the trials of your day are to you as great as the larger ones to those who are grown to meet them.

A. L. BALLOU.

Written for the Lyceum Banner.
SPRING.

Spring is here; pleasant, smiling spring, How good it seems, after our long, cold winter! The blue-birds and robins are with us with their sweet songs. The pretty "cheer-up" of the robin sounds pleasant in our ears these bright spring mornings, as they hop about in the trees near our house. By and by they will be building their nests, preparatory to raising a brood of little ones.

The flowers, too, begin to bloom. The dwarf-lily, crocus, hyacinth, myrtle and violet are among our earliest garden flowers. The buds on the trees begin to swell—pretty soon they will burst into tiny leaves.

In the woods we already find the trailing arbutus creeping along very close to the ground, with a rough leaf, but a sweet, pale pink blossom. The prairie grass is beginning to spring, and the wild flowers will soon come forth. The little ones how they will love to be out on these bright, sunny days. I almost see their cheerful, smiling faces, as they skip about the yard at play. We all love the beautiful spring, with its wealth of flowers, and greet it with a hearty welcome. L. M.

Rochelle, Ill.

LETTER FROM JOSEPH E. COOK.

St. Louis, April 14th, 1868.

Dear Lyceum Banner:

Being a constant reader of your interesting columns, and noticing a great many letters from Lyceums throughout the country, I thought probably you would like to hear how we here in St. Louis are doing.

We have nearly two hundred members, and an average attendance of about one hundred. Our officers and leaders are earnest, whole-souled workers, and are fast becoming *perfect* in the management of the Lyceum. Our Conductor, Mr. Myron Coloney, is exactly the "right man in the right place." The children all love him, and he returns their love twofold. Under his leadership the Lyceum conquers all opposition, and it is conceded by all, that when we undertake anything, we are sure to carry it through.

One great feature of our exercises is our monthly "Convention of Groups," which we hold on the second Sunday of each month. This "Convention" is to give the members a chance to speak pieces, give select readings, or sing songs and choruses—in fact, to do anything they may choose in the way of rostrum exercises. They are not trained at any rehearsals except at their own homes. We have had these Conventions for over a year, and I

defy any school of like number of members to get up any better exercises than we had on Sunday, the 12th inst. We have established a new group in the Lyceum, and call it "Constellation Group." It is for persons from eighteen to sixty years of age—in reality an adult group. Mr. Charles A. Fenn, the worthy President of our society, is leader. It has already furnished some excellent answers. We expect much from our "Constellation." The target is sky-blue, with silver letters and stars, badge the same.

We publish a monthly paper, called the "Convention-Day Journal," which contains our programmes, and which we distribute over the hall on Convention day. We intend to make a number one paper of it yet.

Yours for truth,

JOSEPH E. COOK.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

MEMORANDA OF PERSONS, PLACES AND EVENTS, embracing authentic facts, visions, and impressions, by ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS, with an appendix, containing Zschokke's great story of Hortensia, vividly portraying the wide difference between the ordinary state and that of Clairvoyance.

Price, \$1.50; postage, 20 cents. For sale at this office. Mr. Davis has written many excellent books, but none that will interest and instruct all classes of minds more than "Memoranda."

DAWN.—Published by ADAMS & Co., Boston. For sale at the *Banner of Light* office, Boston, Mass. Price \$2, postage paid.

"Dawn" contains many grand thoughts that have been felt and understood, but never spoken, because the world has not seemed quite ready to accept them. The writer of this unique book has gone to the soul of things, and explained the laws of life.

By her reasoning we see whence the discord, the sickness of soul, and early deaths, that curse and sadden the human heart. Do not fail to read "Dawn."

LITTLE HARRY'S WISH; or, PLAYING SOLDIER. One of the Vine Cottage Stories. By Mrs. H. A. Greene.

The *Banner of Light* says—"It is a very apt and taking juvenile, aiming to impress the plastic heart with a love of peace rather than war. It will do much good wherever it is read."

THE SPIRITUALIST. This is the title of a quarto sheet commenced in Appleton, Wisconsin, devoted to Spiritualism. It is to be published monthly, at \$1.00 per year, Joseph Baker editor

and proprietor. Bro. Baker is an earnest, honest, and worthy worker in the reform field. He richly merits the patronage of the public.

CONVENTION-DAY JOURNAL. This little paper comes to us from the St. Louis Lyceum. The Journal is a commendable and noble enterprise. It will be a grand success. Editors, S. B. and Mary A. Fairchild.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT.

PUZZLE.

WITH A MORAL.

The 4, 29, 48, 87, 21, day 11 called 17, 16, 15, 2, 21, 1, 8, 88, 84, who prides herself upon 28, 86, 21, extreme 12, 7, 54, 49, 14, 20, 6, 10, and during conversation 18 discovered beneath 50, 51, 52, marble 30, 26, 47, 27, 22, 56, a delicately wrought spider's web, 18, 19, 9, 61, 85, 44, 88, 84, 50, 41, be 18, 21, 5, 81 sign 48, 89 an untidy house-wife.

With 82, degree of exultant pride 1, 58, 58, 11, 84 "I'd 10, 58, 8 no more about 12, 46, 54, 18, 14, 7, 85, 58, 1, 57 I were in 8, 17, 59, 21 place 57, 4, 21 although I make no boasts in that direction 11, do 12, 17, 18, 19, 44, 45, 52 cob-webs 88, 12, 5, 40 house.

Returning home I sat down 88, 14, 30, 40 cozy chair, with my 57, 7, 8, 18, to 18, 19, 90 grate 44, 47, 84 what 84, 23, 40, 24, 42, 18, 19, 11, 88, 25 I saw? Why, a genuine spider's web beneath my 55, 9, 16, 49, 60, 46, just as I saw 26, 27 my neighbor's.

The moral to the above story is a key to the puzzle,

L. T. W. C.

ENIGMAS.

I am composed of 22 letters.

My 2, 8, 19 is a color.

My 1, 20, 4, 11, 5, 20, is a vegetable.

My 10, 11, 14, 2, 7, 15, 17 is a girl's name.

My 18, 21, 8 is a term of affirmation.

My 18, 2, 8, 9, 12, 6 is the fourth word of this enigma.

My 22, 7, 16 is a verb.

My whole comforts me when I look in the glass.

EVA W. FRAMBES.

I am composed of 11 letters.

My 2, 11, 5, is worn on the head.

My 1, 9, 8, 5 is a water-fowl.

My 10, 7, 6, 4 is a small insect.

My 1, 8, 5 is an animal.

My whole is a town in Tennessee.

W. F. BATES.

I am composed of 18 letters.

My 11, 18, 13, 6, we love in winter.

My 9, 8, 4, 11 travels through the country.

My 6, 4, 5, 2, is the name of a bird.

My 8, 5, 6, we see in summer mornings.

My 7, 5, 6, 11, is a class of people.

My 9, 1, 10, 5, is what we little folks like.

My whole was a great man.

CHARLES E. KERR.

I am composed of 90 letters.

My 1, 7, 9, 12, 6 is a ferocious animal.

My 10, 19, 8 is what all boys and girls love.

My 6, 19, 9, is where pussy takes her nap.

My 5, 15, 19, 20, is a kind of fruit.

My 8, 7, 18, 12, is a river in Africa.

My 4, 19, 4, 7, 12, is a girl's name.

My 4, 19, 8, is one of the heavenly bodies.

My 15, 7, 9, 2, 1, is the absence of darkness.

My 1, 7, 14, 16, is an article used on chairs.

My 10, 6, 19, 11, 1 is a production of the earth.

My 10, 12, 8, 17, 18, is an inclosure.

My 4, 15, 7, 14, 8, is what boys love to do in winter.

My whole is a flourishing institution in Illinois.

JENNIE R. KLEIN.

WORD PUZZLES.

My First is in sour, but not in sweet ;

My Second is in road, but not in street.

My Third is in boy, but not in man ;

My Fourth is in oyster, but not in can.

My Fifth is in bird, but not in hawk ;

My Sixth is in trot, but not in walk.

My Seventh is in head, but not in feet ;

My Eighth is in carrot, but not in beet.

My Ninth is in hall, but not in room ;

My Tenth is in bride, but not in groom.

My Eleventh is in dog, but not in cat ;

My Twelfth is in weasel, but not in rat.

My Thirteenth is in ice, but not in snow ;

My Fourteenth is in wind but not in blow.

My whole is the name of a distinguished speaker.

NETTIE BUSHNELL.

My First is in Helen, but not in Nellie.

My Second is in Fred, but not in Eddie.

My Third is in Amy, but not in Clara.

My Fourth is in Bertha, but not in Lottie.

My Fifth is in Harry, but not Willie.

My Sixth is in Flora, but not in Jennie.

My Seventh is in Walter, but not in Frank.

My Eighth is in Myron, but not in Horace.

My Ninth is in Alice, but not in Retta.

My Tenth is in Hattie, but not in Graele.

My Eleventh is in Levi, but not in Ernest.

My Twelfth is in Cash, but not in Jay.

My Thirteenth is in Mary but not in Mollie.

My Fourteenth is in George, but not in Stephen.

My Fifteenth is in Samuel, but not in John.

My whole is the name and residence of an authoress whose articles you often read and love.

L. B. M.

ANSWERS IN No. 15.

Rebus—United we stand, divided we fall.

Enigma, by Daniel L. Short—General U. S. Grant.

Word Puzzle, No. 1—Kentucky.

Word Puzzle, No. 2—Wachusset.

Answered by Jane Stephenson, Isett Stephenson, Emma J. Henry, Etta Phelps, Nettie Bushnell, Jennie Klein, Lucie Hynden, Elthera E. Curtis, Phebe Dinmore, Lucy Christian Charles W. Hunt, and Jennie E. Ray.

☞ "Dawn" is for sale at this office. Price \$2.00, postpaid.

"GIVE ME THY HAND, MOTHER."

Words by BARRY CORNWALL.

Music by E. T. BLACKMER.

1. The night is closing around, Mother, The shadows are thick and deep, All
 2. I would sleep a long, long sleep, Mother, So seek me a calm, cool bed, You may

round me they cling like an i - ron ring, And I can - not, can - not sleep. Then
 lay me low in the vir - gin snow, With a moss-bank for my head. I would

give me thy hand, thy hand Mother, Let me lie on thy throbbing breast, They have
 lie in the wild, wild woods, Mother, Where naught but the birds are known, Where

smitten my brain with a pierc - ing pain, And I can - not, can - not rest.
 nothing is seen but the branch-es green, And flowers, o'er greensward strown.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year A. D. 1886, by LOU H. KEMMALL in the Clerk's Office of the Dist. Court for the Northern Dist. of Ill.