

The Banner of Progress.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 1868. LYCEUM DEPARTMENT.

"Angels where'er we go attend Our steps, whate'er we do; With watchful care their charge defend, And evil turn aside." - CHARLES WESLEY.

NOTICE.

THE CHILDREN'S PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM of San Francisco will assemble on Sunday, (to-morrow,) January 4th, at half-past 10 o'clock, at Temperance Legion Hall, Post street, near Kearny. All friends of the Lyceum are cordially invited to be present.

From the Banner of Light. The Old Cradle.

By Mrs. C. A. K. POORE.

'Neath the mouldering roof, where the dark shadows lay, Where the pure, golden sunbeams but fitfully play, In a silence as deep as the hush of the night, Stands no rich and stately, with its carved and shining, But a dingy old cradle, unpainted and bare, With its scarred, battered sides, time worn and dust-strewed; It seems to our vision a thing senseless and lone.

Far little we know of the hopes and the fears Garnered up in its dimpled and aged years; When first infant form to its pillows were pressed, And a mother's sweet lullaby smoothed them to rest. And our mortal art, with its dull, material strings, Catches not the soft rustle of angelic wings! We see not the bright angels with tender care, And the old cradle moved by a shadowy hand!

For a mother's love clings to the babes that she bore, Though her footsteps may tread on eternity's shore; And full of the soft glow around the low bed, Where she laid in soft slumber the innocent head, Though the bright, household band, once cherished, may be Broken, scattered, and severed by land and by sea, Yet a mother's eye notes them with tender care, And follows each wanderer with blessing and prayer.

O, mother's love! best, noblest, and truest of earth! Thy undying power speaks thy heavenly birth; For thou sparest the fathers of death and the tomb, To dispel from our spirits their darkness and gloom. And thy strength and devotion remain still the same, Through darkness and sunshine, through glory and shame; When we falter or faint, still thy gentle hand Is pointing us upward to a far better land.

Jennie Ristoe's Lilies.

THE STORY OF A COUNTRY MAIDEN.

BY A FRIEND OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH.

"Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin, nor yet gather into barns. Yet your heavenly Father feedeth them."

[To my best loved sister I dedicate this simple little story, praying, that in experience she may fully realize the beauty and truth of these touching lines of the greatest American poet, John G. Whittier:

"The night is mother of the day, The winter of the spring, And ever upon the daisy's head, The greenest mosses cling. Behold the cloud the sunlight larks, Through shadows and beams fall: For God, who loveth all His works, Has left His love with all."

CHAPTER I.

HER HOME.

Little Jennie Ristoe was born in the country, far away from the noise and dirt of the large city of New York, but in the same State. She was the only child of an honest, industrious, and loving couple, who thought it no shame, but rather a joy and pleasure, to be able to work for each other's support, and for the comfort of their sweet little Jennie; whose loving ways fully repaid them for their care and toil, from the time when, as a baby, she sat upon the floor playing with her toys, or throwing up her hands in a transport of babyish glee, until she reached the age of three years, when my story commences, and when she was old enough to run out to greet her father upon his return from a hard day's labor in the fields, and then being seized by him and raised to his broad shoulder, to find a safe resting-place, while, clapping her little dimpled hands together, she would cry out, "Papa's tum, mamma, papa's tum." At this summons, Jennie's mother, a sweet-faced little woman, would leave her work, come to the door, and with smiles upon her face greet her fond husband. Then with a pleasant smile she would come around the table, spread with Mrs. Ristoe's snowy cloth, and containing plain, substantial, country fare. Jennie seemed to spend most of the time set apart for eating, in talking, and in her broken, childish prattle, till papa what she had done all day. Let it not be supposed, however, that my little heroine starved in consequence of not eating at meal times, for her unvarying health, and her frequent calls for "bread and milk" would testify to the contrary. Perhaps our young readers would like to know how Jennie passed her time; for her little feet were never still, during the long summer days. Farmers, you know, rise very early, and there were many steps to be taken to "help mamma" in the morning, when the little maid thought herself of great importance if she was allowed to put a plate upon the table or dust a chair. When the time came for the chickens to be fed, Jennie would run for her little pail, which her mother would fill with grain or meal for the "chickies," and stand by, looking on smilingly, when, in answer to Jennie's musical call, "ticky, ticky, ticky," the fowls crowded around and eagerly devoured the food given them by so fair a hand. Jennie took special care of the little "ticky," and stood in no fear of the old ones, who clucked so loudly when she tried to catch one of their offspring. Besides these employments, Jennie had many amusements and pleasures. Her father's cottage stood in the midst of a nicely-kept lawn, traversed by two gravel walks, which led around a circle to the large white gate. This central spot was devoted to flowers, and Jennie had her particular bed, in which she planted seeds given her by her mother; on the right branches extended over a portion of the cottage. Under this tree Jennie loved to play, and many were the imaginary guests she invited to her "tea-parties," with acorn cups and saucers and oak-leaf plates. But the favorite resort, when she grew to be four years old, was a beautiful, clear brook, which bubbled near the fence of Mr. Ristoe's little domicile. Jennie's mother was not afraid to trust her little daughter to go here alone, for the brook was not deep enough to drown her, and she was always obedient and careful. Jennie knew well where the early spring flowers were to be found, and great happiness did she have in their companionship, for they were to her like little playmates. Sweet was the language which these evidences of a father's love spoke to her pure, childish heart and mind. Jennie never would pick a flower, and grieved when her father brought her home choice bouquets from the deep, dark forest, where she was not permitted to go. She always said, on such occasions, "Poor flowers! they

were so happy growing out there, and now they will drop down their heads and cry themselves to 'def.' While Jennie seemed to love all flowers, her favorite was the delicate, drooping lily of the valley; perhaps it was because she was so strong, healthy, and rosy-cheeked, and her protective nature was called out by the sight of the downcast head, and pale, purple leaves of her favorite. Her mother often talked to her of the goodness and loving kindness of the Father above, who gave us such a beautiful world to live in, and her words sank deep into the heart of Jennie, there to spring up and bear fruit. Her childish mind was full of thoughts beyond her years, of God, "the source of all blessings," and her heart seemed a deep well of the joy and gladness of love. The more you drew from it, the clearer and more abounding were its waters. Thus Jennie passed her days, until, almost before her father could realize she was more than a baby, she had learned from her careful mother how to read and write, and had reached the age of six years.

But about this time a cloud came over the face of Jennie's hitherto bright and sunny happiness. She noticed that her mother was often in tears, but she was far too intuitively delicate to ask the reason why, but wondered why it was that "mamma always had a cheerful smile for papa, but papa seemed gloomy and sad, and appeared to have forgotten their old romps." She was pondering over this one day, when, with basket on her arm, she crossed the brook, and, advancing toward a patch of strawberry vines, sat down upon a stone and commenced picking some of the ripe fruit for tea. Very soon her eye was attracted by a beautiful blue bird, in a tree overhead. She arose softly to look at it more closely, but Mr. Bird flew away. She followed, calling to him softly, but he would not listen, and led her a wild chase. Finally, out of breath, she gave up trying to look at him, and threw herself on the ground to rest. While lying there, she saw some lilies growing at a short distance, and instantly her fatigue was forgotten, and she sprang toward them, she exclaimed, "Sweet lilies! you would not run away from Jennie; you know she would not hurt you." Thus she talked to them for some time; then, remembering that her mother wanted the berries, she hurried back, and taking up her half-filled basket, was about to resume her picking, when the voice of her mother was heard calling, "Jennie! Jennie!" She sprang up and rushed toward her, expecting to be called upon for the berries; however, her mother did not mention them, but taking her daughter's hand in hers, she walked quietly up to the house, and sitting down on the step, took Jennie in her lap, and in a gentle, low voice, said: "Jennie, you have often said you loved mamma and papa better than all the world beside, and I know that my little child is true and loving; but you have never been called upon to make any sacrifice to prove this love; now the hour of trial for my little daughter has come, and I trust that the Father and his blessed angels will help her to overcome nobly." Then she told her, in simple words, that her father had been unfortunate, and had gone as surety for a sickly brother, who had died without a cent of money, and now their farm must be sold to pay his debts. Jennie must give up her flowers, her chicks, her big oak tree, her squirrels, her birds, and her beautiful brook, and they would all have to move into the large city, where Mr. Ristoe was sure of getting work as a mason. "All this Jennie heard with wonderment and silence; but when reference was made to the flowers, two large tears gathered in her blue eyes, and rolled slowly down her plump cheeks. After waiting a few moments, her mother said, softly, "What does my darling say?" Then in a moment the little arms were around the neck of that fond parent, and broken by grief, she said these words: "O, mamma! I love you better than all my birds and my flowers, and where you and papa go I want to go." The mother's heart beat for joy as she heard this beautiful reply; and drawing her little daughter close to her side, she remained silent for a few moments, while in her heart she offered up a prayer of thanksgiving to God, for giving her so precious a boon in little Jennie.

CHAPTER II.

THE REMOVAL.

Next day the packing commenced, and during that week very little time was left for regrets, as Mrs. Ristoe wished to take with her all the furniture with which she commenced house-keeping, and which was endeared to her by a thousand recollections. On Tuesday they were to start on their day's journey, so Monday was set apart as the time to bid friends and neighbors "good bye." Accordingly the little cottage was filled all day with acquaintances. Mr. Ristoe felt sad in parting from many, who had been kind to her and had known her as a child, a girl, and a mother, but Jennie shed no tears over the separation from the little girls, who had sometimes been her playmates; but great was her anguish when she walked out to take a last farewell of her favorite haunts, and of the wildwood flowers which had been her companions; when she came to the pale lilies, they seemed to look sorrowful; perhaps they whispered to her; at any rate, a sudden thought came into her mind, and she flew back to the house and begged her mother to allow her to take two of her lilies along in a flower-pot. Her mother, always willing to grant her a reasonable pleasure, readily consented, and with buoyant step Jennie hastened back to the spot in the wood where she had found the beautiful lilies, and, carefully digging up two by the roots, and putting them in a large crock, she placed them gently in a large crock, and, exerting her girlish strength, carried them to the house. She found the family all ready to start, and in a neighbor's carriage they were soon on their three-mile ride to the depot. Sad and silent was that ride, and many the lingering, fond looks cast at the deserted cottage, by the three who had left such a happy home. Jennie's tears flowed freely; but she was a child, and, when once on the cars, the novelty of flying by houses, trees, and fences at such a swift rate was so astounding and interesting that her face was soon wreathed in smiles.

Before five o'clock they had reached the city. Jennie did not seem to be frightened by the strangeness of scene in that great whirlpool of life, New York, but walked firmly along by the side of her mother, until they reached the horse-cars, which took them nearly to the door of their new home. This was a house larger than their country cottage, but Jennie's heart did not feel very light when she saw that it stood directly upon the street, and there was not a speck of grass or a flower to be seen. However, she still had her lilies, and when they were placed in the little parlor—which Mr. Ristoe had furnished during a previous trip to the city—she thought it looked very cheerful and pretty. The next two weeks was a busy time, getting all their things arranged, and Jennie proved quite an efficient help to her hard-working mother. During these long, hot days, when the sun shone with such blazing heat upon brick pavements and roofs, when the air seemed to scorch one, Jennie and her mother often wished for the cool shade of their oak tree, one drink from the brook, or a breath of the pure country air. Yet they were brave spirits, and Mrs. Ristoe often said, "We have much, very much to

be thankful for; we all have good health, and your dear papa has work enough so that we can live comfortably. Besides, we have conveniences here which we did not possess in the country; every place has its peculiar advantages, and we must be content with that which the heavenly Father sees is best for us."

The work which Mr. Ristoe relied upon did not continue long, and instead of the steady employment and good wages he expected, he was engaged only about three days out of the week, and oftentimes without work for many hours and days. This was trying, and Mrs. Ristoe must now tax her brain to devise ways of economizing in household expenditures. Then came harder times still, and Mr. Ristoe was seldom at work, while his patient wife was compelled to take boarders to eke out their support and pay rent for the house. Three great men came, in answer to their advertisement, who ate so much that Mrs. Ristoe's time was employed in inventing dishes to suit their large appetites; so with her hard work, the foul air of the city, and her anxiety, she was stricken down by severe sickness, and lay long hours upon her bed of pain, with little Jennie for a nurse. The hitherto strong father was so impatient under his trials that he could seldom control himself sufficiently to wait upon his wife. Thus many cares fell upon Jennie, among them the task of comforting and consoling Mrs. Ristoe. Her noble child-spirit seemed to rise triumphantly under the heavy burdens put upon it. Although only a little over seven and a half years old, she it was who suggested that the "big men" be sent away. This gave Mr. Ristoe an idea, so he dismissed their grumbling boarders, and rented out the rooms in the house, only reserving the kitchen and one bedroom for their little family. But, notwithstanding all this economy, matters grew worse and worse, for there were doctor's bills to be paid and medicine to be bought; so article after article of Mrs. Ristoe's furniture was sold from the different rooms, thus rendering the rent less, and gaining for their bread for their present necessities, and a few delicacies for the suffering but uncomplaining invalid. During these trying months, frequent were the long talks held by this good woman with her rebellious husband and womanly child. Mr. Ristoe cursed God for his trouble, his sorrow rendering him blind to the loving hand behind the cloud. "O, Richard!" the gentle wife, now hovering between life and death, would say, "O, Richard! it is out of these very trials that God is to bring good; we know not the depth of our natures until they are sounded by the line of sorrow; and by the keenness of our suffering, the anguish of our souls, then do we realize our capacity to enter into those joys which are in store for us, if by a patient continuance in well doing, and a submission to the wisdom of the Hand who controls our destinies, we develop those principles and germs of love which will render us fit to live with the angels of light."

Mr. Ristoe listened with respect to his wife's words, but they did not enter into his soul; it was not prepared for the good seed; the plow must be sunk yet deeper into the soil. He did not wish to, therefore he would not believe that his wife's journey through life was drawing to a close. So great was the shock when she called him to her bed one morning before light, and taking his hand in hers, and with the other, holding Jennie's, she said: "Dearest ones, the angels call me to the 'Morning Land,' and this earthly sun will rise on 'my body, while I myself, will be where it is day forever, the day-light of my soul. O, my loved ones! grieve not for my departure from your sight; you will come to me, and I will live, watch over, and guard you. Jennie, dear, dear daughter! never forget that in all sorrows and troubles your loving mother's spirit will be near you; and, O, Richard! my loved husband, my best love, be not cast down! O, heed me! O, remember that God rules, and that He is a loving parent!"

So saying, she kissed them both, and with a sweet smile upon her lips, her pure spirit sighed itself away. Then, O, who shall depict the anguish of those two stricken ones, when at this moment the first beams of daylight entered their room, and fell upon the still face of her whom they loved? Mr. Ristoe broke down utterly, and throwing himself upon his knees, he gave vent to the wildest cries and sobs that ever came from the lips of man. Then it was that little Jennie seemed to have become a woman. She placed her arm around her father's neck, and said, "Dear father, don't cry; we will see mamma again, and ought we not to be glad that she is in such a beautiful land? Please don't cry, dear father, for she is here in spirit, and it grieves her soul; you have your little Jennie here." With these and similar words did the little girl, so sorrowful her self, seek to bring the "balm of peace" to her father's mind; but her loving ministry seemed vain. 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