

A BIT OF CHEER.

Perchance you feel like sighing, dear,
Just check the sigh and smile;
And cheer some wayworn wanderer
O'er many a weary mile.
A kindly word, a loving smile,
Great blessings doth bestow;
The power have they to charm away,
A heavy load of woe.

Alas! the many aching hearts,
Along the circling years,
Though there be dearth of all things else
Is never dearth of tears.
Then put aside thy griefs, dear heart,
Nor grudge a smile to dole;
'Twill cheer thine own sad lot, and bless
As well thy neighbor's soul.

For there was One whose spirit oft
Was wrapped, methinks, in gloom.
Before Him rose dark Calvary's cross,
The agony of the tomb.
And still He ever strove to cheer
The wayworn pilgrim lone;
Jesus! Imperial Prince of Peace,
From Heaven's eternal throne!

'Tis not the costly gift bestowed
That cheers the aching heart,
It is the kindly sympathy,
It is love's magic art.
And blessed shall thy memory be,
Though naught thou hast to give
But kindly words and loving smiles;
And lo! thy soul shall live.
—Ingar Ingram, in Minneapolis House-keeper.

A KNOT IN THE SKEIN

By Mrs. Chas. C. Marble.

THEY made a pretty picture, did grandmother and little Dot. Grandmother sat in her low rocking-chair, with her glasses pushed back above her forehead, and before her stood Dot holding outstretched a brilliant skein of wool upon her chubby little hands.

"Hurry up, drandma," said Dot, with a slight frown, "you're so slow."

Grandma took no heed, apparently, but went on with the utmost precision. Slowly the yarn reeled over the chubby thumbs, slowly went on the winding about grandma's ball.

Dot stood first upon one foot, then the other, like a barn-yard fowl, and gave at intervals a tremendous sigh as evidence of her weariness.

"You's 'zasperatin'," she at last broke out; "really and truly, drandma, you's old 'zasperatin' hisself."

"What?" cried the startled old lady, who had been intent upon her winding or perhaps lost in a reverie of other days; "what is that you are saying, Dot?"

"I said you was a 'zasperatin' old poke," replied Dot, firmly. "I is most tired to deaf, and there you go on windin' jes' as if you was asleep."

"Well, I never," gasped the old lady. I pretended to be intent upon the work before me, yet could scarce refrain from laughing aloud.

"Tired, eh?" queried grandma, with a twinkle in her eye; "well, we will soon be through, and you can lie down and rest."

"No, I'm going out to jump rope," incautiously said Dot, "with Willie and Rose. They're jumping now, don't you hear 'em, drandma?"

"Ah, you are going to rest your weary limbs by jumping rope," replied grandma. "Well, so that you won't be entirely used up, suppose you sit on this chair," pulling one beside Dot.

Dot sulkily complied, but as she did so dropped her hands in feigned weariness.

"See," cried grandma, "you are letting strands of the wool slip over your fingers. Hold up your hands, dear, and we will soon be through," and on went the old lady, placidly and slowly winding as before.

Dot for a space looked the picture of youthful resignation, but soon her impatience returned.

"Hurry up," she cried, vehemently. "You're enough to 'zasperate' the patience of Job," and again I saw her slyly drop a loop or two from her fingers, as she moved restlessly upon the chair.

Grandma looked at her reprovingly, but hastened somewhat her movements. There was a pause presently in the winding. The old lady brought

her spectacles down from her forehead, and peered at the skein of wool. "There's a snarl," she said, "dear, dear, how did that come?"

"It's an awful hard knot," cheerfully said Miss Dot, after grandma had made several attempts to disentangle the snarl. "I dese you had better get it all right, drandma, and we'll wind the ball 'nother time."

"Oh, no, Dot, we'll get it all right now," replied grandma, with a jerk.

Snap went the strand. Several minutes were consumed in straightening the skein, and grandma carefully knotted the broken threads together before resuming her winding.

The sounds of laughter and jumping outside the window came borne in upon the stillness of the room. Another petulant movement from Dot.

"I is so nervous, I can't hold still," she next exclaimed, impatiently tugging at the wool.

"Dear, dear, another knot," cried grandma, peering over her spectacles at Dot. "Why, at this rate, we will never get through."

But at last it was done, and away scampered Dot, every vestige of ill-humor banished from her pretty face.

Grandma's glance met mine. "The wool is for her own stockings," quietly said she, as if in answer to something she read in my eyes, "and I intend these knots shall teach her a lesson which mere words would fail to accomplish. Youthful experience, if rightly impressed, may serve to guard the future from sterner ones."

The old lady's favorite expression, "I know," played about her firmly closed lips, but she gave no utterance to them as with ball in hand she sat gazing upon the pictures of the past—pictures whose lights and shadows were reflected in her own dim eyes, in the fitting smile upon brow or lip.

Well, if grandma had been slow in winding the ball, it was more than she was in lessening it again. How fast her needles flew! Early in the morning, late at night, went on the knitting. Dot's eyes watched the progress of the stockings, and her admiration was unbounded over their hue.

"Red stockies, and a red hood, and red mitties! My, it 'pears Sunday won't ever come!"

"Crimson," corrected grandma; "not red." But it mattered little to Dot what the color was named when she drew the bright stockings upon her chubby legs and over them again a pair of shining new shoes.

"You will be proud of these stockings," said grandma, on Saturday night, as she rounded the toe with a bit of white wool, "because you helped me to wind the wool, you know, Dot."

"Yes," assented the little one, with a proud air, "wasn't I dood, grandma?"

"And you so tired, too," went on grandma, ignoring her question.

"And so nervous," responded Dot. "Yes, and you called me a 'zasperatin' old poke," gravely answered grandma, "and snapped the thread on purpose to make me give over the winding."

Dot opened wide her eyes. "How did you know that?" she queried. "Now don't say a 'little bird' told you, drandma, 'cause I'ae tired to deaf hearin' that story."

"Never mind how I knew, Dot. The fact remains that there were knots in my fair ball of wool, and knots, you know, can never be straightened out, never!"

Dot looked at her grandma reflectively.

"Didn't you ever make knots in your drandma's wool?" she asked, soberly. "None but what I had to pay for," replied the old lady, suppressing a smile. "Knots are troublesome things, Dot, as you may find out before you are many days older."

Off to Sunday school hied Dot the next morning, resplendent in new attire. Grandma smiled grimly when she returned with a perceptible limp in her gait.

"Somefin' is hurtin' my heel," she informed us at dinner, reluctantly.

"Your new shoes. I suppose," suggested her mother, "you had best take them off and put on your old ones."

But Dot demurred, and like her elders, sometimes, for vanity's sake, en-

dured the torture the remainder of the day.

Grandma said never a word. Bed-time came, and with a sigh of relief Dot drew off her shoes.

"It's in my stockie," said she, after due examination; "there's two dreat big knots in the heel."

"Knots?" echoed grandma. There was no stupidity about our bright Dot, and she understood all the meaning conveyed in grandma's tone and look at once.

"Knots of impatience, Dot," I could not refrain from saying, "for which you have suffered all day long."

"And undutifulness," added grandma, "and covert untruthfulness."

Dot turned the color of her stockings.

"You might have smoooved 'em out," she said, carefully examining her blistered heel.

"Out of the wool, perhaps," answered grandma, earnestly, "but not so easily the knots when formed in the skein of character, Dot."

Several days after grandma beckoned me to approach an open door. Within could be heard the voices of Dot, Willie and Rose. An altercation was evidently in progress concerning the destruction of a doll. In a rocking-chair sat Dot with a pair of grandma's spectacles upon her nose. Gravely she peered over them at the flushed face of Willie.

"Who broke dolly's head?" she questioned.

"Rose!" answered he, promptly.

"Dear, dear," exclaimed Dot, bending forward, "such a snarl as you are dettin' the skein into, Willie!"

"What skein?" asked he, sulkily.

"Did you or didn't you break dolly's head?" she continued, without answering his question.

"No, I didn't!" this very emphatically.

"Nother knot in the skein," said Dot, imitating grandma's tone and manner to perfection, "nother dreat big knot, my child, 'cause—'cause I saw you do it."

An impressive silence, broken only by Willie's sniffles.

"Keep on tellin' stories, Willie," gravely went on the little monitor, "and you'll det all tangled up like—like a skein of wool when you let your hands drop. Then comes knots, and knots can never be smoooved out, never. They'll get knitted into your hide, my child, and—div' you a heap of torment. I know!" and pushing the spectacles back upon her head, Dot sank into a gentle reverie, so much like her grandma's that the smile died from our lips, and the dear old lady, as we tip-toed back to our room, said in trembling tones: "Heaven bless the child!"—N. Y. Observer.

Senator Wanted to Visit the Cook.

Representative Jones, of Virginia, tells this story on his father: "Directly after the war Jones senior was sent to the state senate. An old slave who had belonged to him was also elected to the senate. The two drew adjoining seats. Senator Jones was very courteous, and in addressing his former slave always called him senator. The old negro stood it for some time and finally said: 'Massa William, I don't like dis senator business. Kain't I come down to yo' house and visit that cook of yours? I subtly would like permission to visit yo' kitchen.' The request was granted, and while Senator Jones was in his library the other senator was down in the kitchen visiting the cook."—Troy Times.

Most Elastic Substances.
Rubber, spun glass, steel and ivory are the most elastic substances.

Directoire Evening Cloak.

An evening cloak which is a perfect work of art and a combination of the Louis XVI. and directoire periods is of black embroidered mousseline de soie lined with cloth of gold. The embroidery on the mousseline de soie is of jet and silver flowers. At the back there is a hood of mousseline de soie, caught up in the center with a gold butterfly. At the neck, sleeves and front edges of the cloak are ruchings of mousseline de soie, tinted gold color to match the lining of cloth of gold.—Washington Star.

FALCON ISLAND REAPPEARS.

The Little Island in the Pacific Which Disappeared Comes Again Into View.

Falcon island, which early last year was reported to have completely disappeared beneath the waves of the Pacific, is again showing its flat surface above the water. The life history of this speck of land has been unusual and interesting. A cable dispatch from Europe printed in April last year said that after a brief life of 14 years Falcon island had ceased to exist. It was thought that no trace of it would ever be seen again. But Mr. Vossion, the consul general of France in the Tonga group, announces that Commandant Ravenhill, of the cruiser Porpoise, has returned to those islands from a cruise in the Pacific with the news of the re-emergence of Falcon island. He says that the highest part of the island is now about 16 feet above sea level.

The island was formed by a great volcanic eruption at the bottom of the sea in 1885. It took the waves and storms of the ocean 14 years entirely to obliterate it. Mr. J. J. Lister, who visited the island a short time before it disappeared, said that it was rapidly being torn to pieces by the action of the waves. Unless a fresh volcanic outburst occurred he thought it would soon disappear. His prediction came true, and a steamer that visited the place about the beginning of last year reported that not a trace of it was to be found above the water level.

The island was built up in the neighborhood of the Tonga group about 35 miles from the Island of Tofoes. A submarine volcano had reared from the bottom of the ocean a mighty mass of ejecta, and on this foundation rested the outpourings which rose above the water. The island consisted of two distinct parts. One of them was a hill of gentle slope and wider base, whose height was 153½ feet. On one side the hill ended abruptly in a cliff, whose base was washed by the sea at high water. The other part of the island was a flat, extending away from the base of the hill in a northerly direction and only ten to twelve feet above the high tide level. The whole bit of land was just a bare, brown heap of ashes around which the great rollers broke and swept up the black shores in sheets of foam. The island was entirely destitute of any vegetation save for a half dozen seeding plants that had found lodgment there.

It will not be strange if the island is torn to pieces and again disappears from view within a very few years. Its reappearance now is doubtless due to another volcanic eruption. Volcanic islands seldom endure many years unless they are so large or so well protected against the sea that there is time for them to become covered with dense masses of vegetation before ocean storms have an opportunity to tear them to pieces.

Some of the finest sugar mills in the world, costing \$1,000,000 each, are found in Hawaii, and there are planters in the islands who produce \$800 worth of sugar and \$500 worth of rice to the acre.

Dissatisfied with the result of the United States census, Raleigh, N. C., took one of its own, and found only 31 more people than the number reported by the official enumerators.

A number of orders for printing presses have been sent to the United States from Mexico recently. Apropos of this fact, the first printing press of the American continent was set up in Mexico City.

While the established belt adapted to the cultivation of the prune extends from the state of Washington to Arizona, by far the larger percentage of the product is yielded by California.

Of the 6,753 Finns who came to this country last year only 17 were sent back; only 62 were unable to read and write, and only 14 were said to be likely to become public charges.