

SILVER DIMES.

By MRS. NANNIE STEELE MOORE.
Poets may sing of pleasures rare,
And pen their lays in blissful rhymes,
But not to me that good old fare,
A good old song, a good old rhyme,
I love to read their works complete,
And hear them sing of sunny climes,
But not to me that good old fare,
Or tinkling, ringing silver dimes.

I love to hear a good old song—
There is sweet magic in its lines—
But give me madie it abides—
A good old rhyme, a good old dimes,
I'm fond of flowers, rich and rare—
For all these pure my spirit shines—
But not to me that good old song—
I set on pure old silver dimes.

Numerous friends will crow your way;
That would not read your simple rhymes;
But let them to or let them stay,
How good old rhyme abides—
While others climb the steep of fame,
And from its lofty summit shines,
Just as the world goes by—
And gather the silver dimes.

I love their chiming, tinkling sound,
Friends! tried in these, in hard times;
The world may be a shambles, bound—
With good old friendly silver dimes.
Then here's a toast to all to day,
To all the good old rhyme,
Let the wide world wag as it may,
Give me a pocketful of dimes.

—*Mezzo-Ledger.*

THE LOST CHILDREN.

There were three of them—Kitty, Mary and little Tommy—the children of the station-master at Black River Junction, on the Great Southwestern railroad. The station stood alone on the open prairie, miles and miles away from anywhere in particular. Black river flowed through the mountains, a hundred miles away to the north, and on clear days the snowy mountains were to be seen gleaming on the glassy horizon. The line leading to the Black river met the Southwestern here, and thus it was that the place was called Black River Junction.

The station-master and his wife and three children lived in the little depot quite happily, but there was not another family within ten miles in any direction.

At times the children thought it rather lonely. There was nothing in particular to be done, except to watch the train that stopped at the junction several times a day. Once in a while a freight car would be left on the side track, and the children would find that an empty freight car makes a capital playhouse. They could keep house in the corners and make visits, or sit by the open door and make believe they were having a ride.

One morning they were awakened by a curious humming sound out of doors, and they all scrambled up and looked out of the window. How the wind did blow! It whistled and roared round the house, and plucked upon the telegraph wires upon the roof as upon a huge harp. As the wires were fastened to the roof, the house became a grand echo-box, with the children inside.

After breakfast the morning trains arrived, but the wind was so high the trains went away, and the great wind-harp on the roof sang louder than ever.

The station-master said it blew a gale, and that the children must stay in the house, lest they be blown away into the prairie and lost. The station-master's wife said that it was a pity the children must stay in the house all day. They could not go to the freight car on the side track; perhaps they might play in that. The station-master thought this a good idea, and he took Kitty by the hand, and Tommy in his arms, while Mary took hold of his coat, and they all went out to the empty car. Whew! How did it blow!

They certainly would be lifted up by the wind and blown quite into the sky. The empty car was warm and snug, and, once inside, they were quite out of the way of the wind.

"We must keep cool, warm, and go steady, or we shall run out of coal and water, and come to a standstill on the line."

The woman said not a word, but nodded mournfully, and leaned against the side of the cab for support, and the fireman gave her his seat, where she could look out ahead over the line. How the engine roared! It sounded like the roar of a freight train on a side track; perhaps they might play in that.

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"We are keeping the wind," said the engineer. "If we can keep up this pace, we shall soon overtake them."

"How long have they been gone?" shouted the fireman, above the roar of the engine.

"I don't know," screamed the woman, without taking her eyes from the horizon where the rails met the sky. "It may have been two hours or more. They were playing in the empty car."

"How did she get out of the siding?" (He meant the car.)

"It's one of the new switches," said the engineer. "Cars can easily jump out on the main line."

"Ahh! something ahead. Was it the runaway car? No, the next station. What a terrible pace! Twenty miles already."

"O, don't stop," cried the woman, as she saw the engineer put his hand on the throttle valve.

"I must, marm; we are getting out of water. And perhaps we can learn something of the runaway."

The sudden arrival of a solitary engine containing two men and a woman started the station-master, and he came out to see what it was. He seemed to guess at the truth, for he said:

"After the runaway car?"

"Yes, yes. There are three children inside."

"O, marm, I'm sorry for ye. It went past here, going twenty miles an hour, and up the grade begins about two miles out. I was inside when it passed, and didn't see it till it had gone past the door."

"How long took to fill the tender? The engine stopped hot and smoking by the water-tank, and the water came out in a slender stream while the poor mother stood looking on, fearful and impatient."

"Good-by! I'll put up my pipe—Heaven help ye!—the up grade—"

The rest was lost, for the engine shot ahead on and on over the open prairie. The water-tank seemed to sink down into the earth, and the shining rails stretched longer and longer behind.

"Ah! what was that! A cloud of steam on the horizon far ahead. The engineer looked on his time-book and studied it carefully."

"Freight No. 6, bound west, stopping on the main-line siding."

How swiftly freight No. 6 rose above the grade and grew big along the track. The engine stopped hot and smoking by the water-tank, and the water came out in a slender stream while the poor mother stood looking on, fearful and impatient."

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The station-master's wife rolled up her sleeves to put the house in order, while the children were safely out of the way. The station-master, feeling a little cold, were seated on the floor in the engine car, sat in his office, nearly all the morning. At last the bell was made, the dinner put on the stove, and the mother wondered how the girls were getting on in their play-house on the track. She threw a shawl over her head and went out on the platform. At once the wind blew the shawl over her face, and she could not see exactly where she stood. Turning her back to the wind, she began to call the children. The engineer said nothing; but, at that instant, the engine gave a great leap and shot ahead at the rate of fifty miles an hour, up the easy grade. How long the minutes seemed, and yet each came a speck, a black dot on the horizon! The car? Yes, it was the car! It grew bigger and bigger. Now you could see it plainly. The fireman sprang through the forward window and ran along the engine and down upon the cow-catcher. The monster began to slink its terrible pace, and in a moment it struck the car with a gentle jar and stopped.

The fireman thought himself a lively man, but the woman was before him, and sprang up into the car.

Then they lay safe and sound, in a corner of the car—Mary and Tommy fast asleep, and Kitty watching over them.

"Oh, mother! I knew you would come. Mary and Tommy tried themselves to sleep, and I—I—I—"

Nobody could say a word. The fire-

man tried to rub his eyes, and only marked his face with black streaks. The mother laughed and cried all at once. The engineer picked up the little ones and quietly took them into the cab of the engine.

"There, now, my hearties, you have had a risky ride; but it's all right. Come. We're more than thirty miles from home, and it won't do to be late for dinner. Fire up, Jack."

FARM NOTES.

The rain annually pours down to the soil a quantity of nitrate of ammonia fully equivalent to three pounds per acre.

DAMAGED corn is exceedingly injurious as food for horses, because it brings on inflammation of the bowels and skin diseases.

GUINEA fowls will keep all bugs and insects of every description off garden vines. They will not scratch like other fowls, or harm the most delicate plants.

The average butter yield of the Ayrshire cow is one pound from twenty to twenty-five pounds of milk; from the Jersey it is one pound of butter from eighteen pounds of milk.

Turnips are healthful for horses. They should be cut in slices, or what is better, peeled finely and mixed with a little meal and some salt. Rutabagas are better than white turnips.

KEEPING sheep is pleasant and profit-able, as it is said to be. Wool is a good thing every year and brings cash.

PARSNIPS, carrots, turnips, and especially mangold-wheat, will all fatten pigs. These roots ought not to be given in a raw state, but always cooked and mixed with beans, peas, Indian corn, oats or barley, all of which may be ground into meal. When pigs are fed on such cooked food as we have stated, the pork acquires a peculiarly rich flavor, and is much esteemed, especially for family use.

HORSE HINTS.—Rubber bits are the best for winter use on your horses. The mortality among horses is greater between the ages of 4 and 8 years than at all other periods of life. Warm the bit on your bridle in frosty weather before putting it in the horse's mouth. Then fit full of frost, bring it in contact with the tongue, and the horse will not bite.

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