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Poetry.

Like a Child.

By Louise Chandler Moulton.

Playing there in the sun,

Chasing the butterfly,

Following his golden toy,

Holding it fast till it dies;

Singing to match the birds,

Calling the robins at will,

Glancing here and there,

Never a moment still—

Like a child.

Going to school, at last,

Learning to read and write,

Puzzled over his slate,

Busy from morn till night,

Striving to win a prize,

Careless when it is won,

Following his joy in the throng,

Not in the thing that is done,

Busy in eager trade,

Buying and selling again,

Cursing a golden prize,

That of a tramping gamin,

Always beginning anew,

Never the long task over,

Just as it used to be—

The butterfly before.

Seeking a woman's heart,

Winding it for his own,

Then, too busy for love,

Letting it turn to stone,

Sure of his plighted troth,

What more had a wife to ask?

Is he not doing for her

Each day his daily task?

A child, to pine and complain!

A child, to grow so pale,

For want of some fond words,

Shall a woman's faith fail?

Watch! he said them once—

What need of anything more?

Does one who has entered a room

Go back and wait at the door?

Baby Mary and Kate

Never can climb his knee;

Mothers arms are open—

"Father is busy, you see."

Too busy to stop to hear

A babble of broken talk,

To mend the jumping jack,

Or make the new doll walk.

So busy that when Daddy comes

He pleads for a little delay,

If not to finish his work.

At least agree to say—

A word to wife and child.

A sentence to tell the truth,

That he loves them now, at last,

With the passionate heart of youth.

The kisses of death are cold,

And they turn his lips to stone;

Out of the warm, bright world,

The man goes all about,

De angels wait for him there

Over the soulless sea.

He goes, as he came, a helpless wight,

To a new world's mystery—

Like a child.

—*Harper's Monthly.*

Selected Story.

THE MINISTER'S BLACK VEIL.

A Parable by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

The sexton stood in the porch of Milford

meeting-house, pulling hastily at the bell-

rope. The old people of the village came

stooping along the street. Children,

with bright faces, tripped merrily beside

their parents, or mimicked a graver gait,

in the conscious dignity of their Sunday

clothes. Spruce bachelors looked side

long at the pretty maidens, and fancied

that the Sabbath sunshine made them

prettier than on week days. When the

throng had mostly streamed into the

porch, the sexton began to toll the bell,

keeping his eye on Rev. Mr. Hooper's

door. The first glimpse of the clergy-

man's figure was the signal for the bell

to cease its summons.

"But what has good Parson Hooper got

upon his face?" cried the sexton in aston-

ishment.

All within hearing immediately turned

about, and beheld the semblance of Mr.

Hooper pacing slowly in his meditative

way toward the meeting-house. With

one accord they started, expressing more

wonder than if some strange minister

were coming to dust the cushions of Mr.

Hooper's pulpit.

"Are you sure it is our parson?" in-

quired Goodman Gray, of the sexton.

"Of a certainty it is good Mr. Hooper,"

replied the sexton. "He was to have

exchanged pulpits with Parson Shute of

Westbury; but Parson Shute sent to ex-

cuse himself, yesterday, being called to

preach a funeral sermon."

The cause of so much amazement may

appear sufficiently slight. Mr. Hooper,

a gentlemanly person of about thirty,

though still a bachelor, was dressed with

due clerical neatness, as a clerical wife

had starched his band, and brushed the

weekly dust from his Sunday's garb.

something awful, only by hiding his

face."

"Our parson has gone mad!" cried

Goodman Gray, following him across the

threshold.

A rumor of some unaccountable phre-

nomenon had preceded Mr. Hooper into

the meeting-house, and set all the con-

gregation a-tir. Few could refrain from

twisting their heads towards the door;

many stood upright, and turned directly

about; while several little boys clamber-

ed upon the seats, and came down again

with a terrible racket. There was a gen-

eral bustle, a rustling of the women's

gowns and shuffling of the men's feet,

greatly at variance with that hushed re-

pose which should attend the entrance

of the minister. But Mr. Hooper appear-

ed not to notice the perturbation of his

people. He entered with an almost

noiseless step, bent his head mildly to the

pews on each side, and bowed as he

passed his oldest parishioner, a white-

haired, great-grandfather, who occupied an

arm chair in the centre of the aisle. It

was strange to observe how slowly this

venerable man became conscious of some-

thing singular in the appearance of his

pastor. He seemed not fully to partake

of the prevailing wonder, till Mr. Hooper

had ascended the stairs, and showed him-

self in the pulpit, face to face with the

congregation, except for the black veil.

That mysterious emblem was never once

withdrawn. It shook with his measured

breath as he gave out the psalm; it threw

its obscurity between him and the holy

page, as he read the Scriptures; and

while he prayed, the veil lay heavily on

his uplifted countenance. Did he seek

to hide it from the dread being whom he

was addressing?

Such was the effect of this simple piece

of crape, that more than one woman of

delicate nerves was forced to leave the

meeting-house. Yet perhaps the pale-

faced congregation was almost as fearful

a sight to the minister, as his black veil

to them.

Mr. Hooper had the reputation of a

good preacher, but not an energetic one;

he strove to win his people heavenward

by mild, persuasive influence, rather than

to drive them thither by the thunders of

the word. The sermon which he now

delivered was marked by the same

characteristics of style and manner as the

general series of his pulpit oratory. But

there was something, either in the senti-

ment of the discourse itself, or in the im-

agination of the auditors, which made it

greatly the most powerful effort that they

had ever heard delivered from their

pastor's lips. It was tinged, rather more

darkly than usual, with the gloom of Mr.

Hooper's temperament. The

subject had reference to secret sin, and

those sad mysteries which we hide from

our nearest and dearest, and would fain

conceal from our own consciousness, even

forgetting that the Omnipotent can de-

tect them. A subtle power was breathed

into his words. Each member of the

congregation, the most innocent girl and

the man of hardened breast, felt as if the

preacher had crept upon them, behind his

awful veil, and discovered their hoarded

iniquity of deed or thought. Many

spread their clasped hands on their

bosoms. There was nothing terrible in

what Mr. Hooper said; at least, no vio-

lence; and yet, with every tremor of his

melancholy voice, the hearers quaked.

Unthought pulses came hand in hand

with awe. So sensible were the audience

of some unwonted attribute in their min-

ister, that they longed for a breath of

wind to blow aside the veil, almost be-

lieving that a stranger's visage would be

discovered, though the form, gesture and

voice were those of Mr. Hooper.

At the close of the service, the people

hurried out with indecorous confusion,

eager to communicate their pent-up

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