road does go the way I go when I go to the school house when I go to school. Around the ranch house are fields. When the mowers cut down the grass they do also cut down the corn-flowers. I follow along and I do pick them up." She makes them into a guirlande for William Shakespeare, a grey horse, "whose ways are ways of gentleness. I talk to him about the one he is named for. And he does have understanding."

Here is a typical passage: "After the mamma had switched me for not getting back sooner with the milk, she told me to fix the milk for the baby. the baby is now in bed asleep. The mamma and the rest of the folk is gone to the ranchhouse. When they went away she said for me to stay in the doorway to see that nothing comes to carry the baby away. By the step is Brave Horatius (the shepherd dog). At my feet is Thomas Chatterton Jupiter Zeus (a most dear velvety wood rat). I hear songs—lullaby songs of the trees. The back part of me feels a little sore, but I am happy listening to the twilight music of God's good world. I'm real glad I'm alive."

The trees growing along the lane are all her friends. "I call them Hugh Capet, Saint Louis, Good King Edward I, Charlemagne, and the one where the little flowers talk most is William Wordsworth.

"I stopped to night to give each a word of greeting. I am printing this sitting on the wood box where the mamma put me after she spanked me after I got home with the milk. Now I think I shall go to the bedroom window and talk to the stars. They always smile so friendly. This is a very wonderful world to live in."

The day she took Peter Paul Reubens (the young pig) to school, because when he followed her a lump came in her throat and she couldn't tell him to go back to the pig-pen. The new teacher "did look long looks at me"; she said "I'm screwtineyesing you! It is a new word. It does have an interest sound. I think I will have uses for it."

Nothing in nature came amiss to the child; in all she found delight. Her work was to pick up the potatoes as they were dug and pile them in piles. "Some of them were plump. All of them wore brown dresses. Potatoes are very interesting folks. I think they must see a lot of what is going on in the earth; they have so many eyes. All the time I was picking them up, I did have conversations with them." She thought of their growing days and all the things they did hear. "Earth voices are glad voices." She remembers that this is the going away day of St. Francis of

that this is the going away day of St. Francis of Assisi and the borning day of Jean François-Milet. So she took as many potatoes as they years did dwell upon the earth. "I did thinks to have a choir: First I did sing Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus." There was a good number of folks in the choir—all potato folk wearing brown robes. Then I did sing one 'Ave Maria." The choir and those commemorated would have

probably gone on interminably, but the "chore boy gave me three shoulder shakes, and he did tell me to get a hurry on me and get those potatoes picked up. I did so in a most quick way." Poor little dreamer! "Being a potato must be interest—specially having so many eyes. I have longings for more eyes."

How sweet the picture of the calf, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and the child putting her arms round its neck, because "there was a lone-some feel in her mooings"; or when it on hot days wears her sun-bonnet—"It does so help the sun from hurting her beautiful eyes." How tragic the butchering of Peter Paul Reubens, who used to grunt "Amen" at her cathedral services! How brutal the soul that made her make the sausage "where every time I did turn the handle I could heard the little pain squeal." She would go into the wood and search for his soul.

Solomon Grundy, his successor was christened in a robe made of a new dish towel, for which her "ears were slapped until I thought my head would pop open." Solomon Grundy had previously a warm bath and was sprinkled with the baby's talcum-powder. Perhaps her greatest undertaking was christening of the twelve little chickens who were all arrayed in christening robes, which she sewed when she was under the table for a punishment.

Minerva, the mother, wore a little white cap tied under her bill. We, alas! have no space to describe the kindness of the "man that wears grey neckties and is kind to mice"; or to tell of the shadows that touched the blind girl with their velvet fingers. We cannot describe the death of the grey horse, William Shakespeare, that she had "lonesome feels" for, but is glad he can't be whipped any more. "There are little blue fleurs a-blooming where he did lay him down to sleep." But we urge our readers to read for themselves—this book, so imaginative, so instinctively religious, so pathetic and appealing. So sacred in its revelation of a child's soul.

Her naughtiness, for which she is continually being spanked, only adds to the fascination of her character, for it is always the overflowing of her enquiring and eager temperament. Truly it may be surmised, "Of such are the kingdom of Heaven."

WORD FOR THE WEEK.

Bring me men to match my mountains, Bring me men to match my plains; Men with empires in their purpose And new eras in their brains."

Love therefore labour; if thou should'st not want it for food, thou may'st for physic. It is wholesome for the body, and good for the mind; it prevents the fruit of idleness.—William Penn.

previous page next page