

THE  
CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION;

And Treasury of Knowledge.



1879.

W. B. HORNER, 27, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.

PATERNOSTER STEAM PRINTING WORKS, 27, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

CONTENTS.

Articles.

	PAGE
A Night in a Snowstorm .. .. .	8
A Voice from a Country Churchyard .. .. .	48
About Goats .. .. .	116
Ashtaroth, or the Moon .. .. .	90
An Early Loss .. .. .	46
Bel, or Bellus .. .. .	70
Duke Erie's Recompense .. .. .	76
Ernie's Escape .. .. .	28
Fanny and the Goat .. .. .	123
Five Golden Mice .. .. .	120
"God is with Me" .. .. .	12
Hide and Seek .. .. .	52
Let Me Take It .. .. .	59
Light in Darkness .. .. .	78
Little Katie .. .. .	105
My Great Sins and My Great Saviour .. .. .	35
Ornithology .. .. .	23, 35
Passing Away .. .. .	133
Peeps at Foreign Countries—Naples .. .. .	25
"    "    Vesuvius and Pompeii .. .. .	37
"    "    Discovery of Pompeii .. .. .	68
"    "    Venice .. .. .	73
"    "    Persia .. .. .	95
"    "    Chicago .. .. .	124
"Remember Me" .. .. .	77
Sin and Grace .. .. .	119
Snowdrops and the Sleeping Babies .. .. .	13
The Bible Baked in an Oven .. .. .	57
The Bible in Chinese .. .. .	21
"The Blood Blotted Them All Out" .. .. .	118
The Fox .. .. .	3
The Goldfinch .. .. .	66
The Handwriting on the Wall .. .. .	79
The Hare .. .. .	15
The Little Emigrant .. .. .	130
The Mistletoe and the Druids .. .. .	1
The Otter .. .. .	42
The Passing Year .. .. .	139
The Prairie Fire .. .. .	107

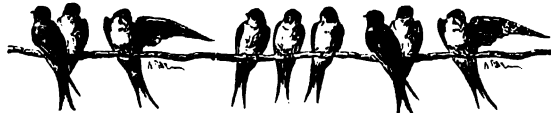
	PAGE
The Rabbit .. .. .	33
The Ransom .. .. .	105
The Rejoicing of the Jews .. .. .	88
The Rose Garden .. .. .	80
The Sailor and the Alligator .. .. .	114
The Skiddaw Hermit .. .. .	101, 112
The Song of Miriam .. .. .	122
The Story of the Church .. .. .	9
The Story of the Gentiles .. .. .	6, 57
The Sun and the God Baal .. .. .	131
The Swan and the Fox .. .. .	106
The Wolf .. .. .	60
The Two Approaches to the King .. .. .	83
The Weasel .. .. .	53
The Wonders of Water—Springs .. .. .	29
"    "    The Destruction of Szegeden .. .. .	45
"    "    Rivers .. .. .	49
"    "    Rivers, Cataracts, and Lakes .. .. .	61
"    "    Lakes .. .. .	80
"    "    The Ocean .. .. .	92
"    "    The Sponge .. .. .	97
"    "    The Pearl and Common Oyster .. .. .	109
"    "    and the Medusa .. .. .	109
"    "    The Cephalopod, or Cuttle .. .. .	127
"    "    Fish .. .. .	127
"    "    The Whale .. .. .	135
Under the Flags .. .. .	134
Work for Jesus .. .. .	56

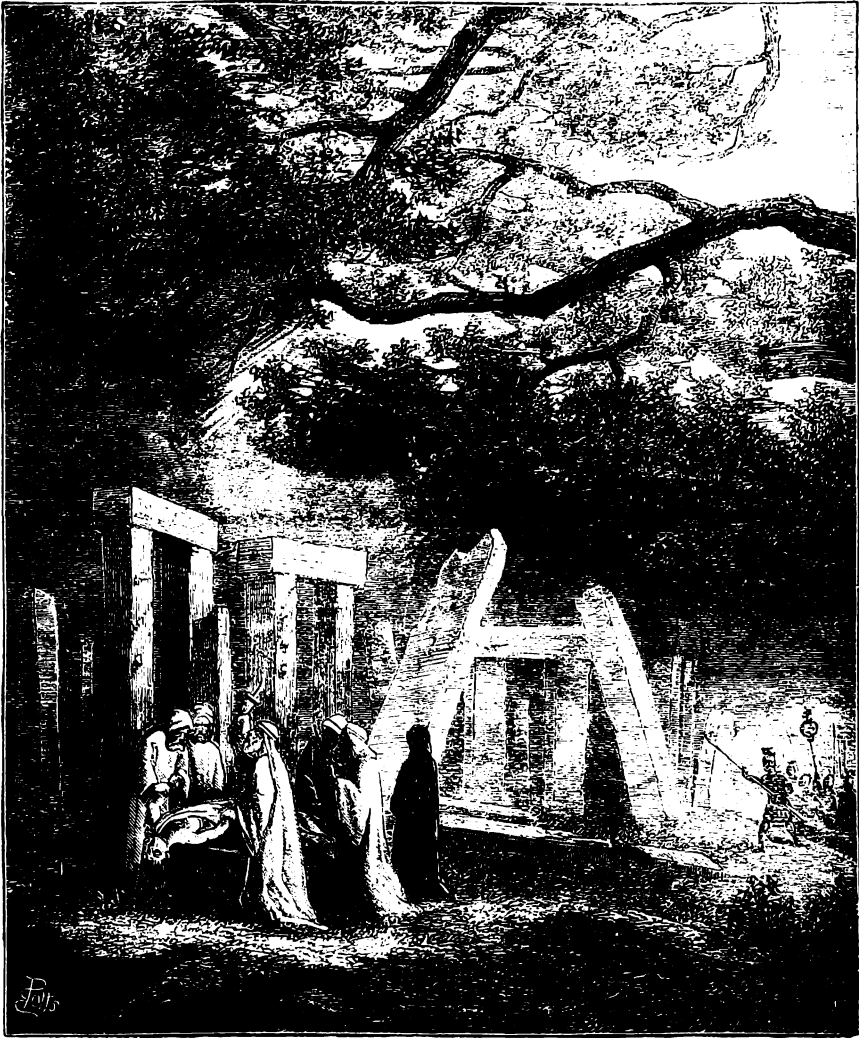
Poetry.

A Child's Evening Dream .. .. .	108
A Little Boy and a Caged Canary Bird .. .. .	5
Good News .. .. .	83
Hedgerow Flowers .. .. .	87
I am Coming .. .. .	36
The Birth of Jesus .. .. .	138
The Pilgrim's Refuge .. .. .	96
The Ransom .. .. .	100
The Truths of Jesus Gathered up .. .. .	47
The Voice of Jesus .. .. .	72

## Illustrations.

	PAGE		PAGE
Druids Offering a Human Sacrifice .. .. .	1	Bridge of Sighs, in Venice .. .. .	75
A Temple of the Ancient Druids .. .. .	3	The Handwriting on the Wall .. .. .	79
Foxes at Play .. .. .	4	Rose-Buds .. .. .	85
A Winter Scene .. .. .	8	The Rejoicing of the Jews .. .. .	89
The Little One's Grave.. .. .	13	The Eastern and Western Hemispheres .. .. .	92
The Snowdrop .. .. .	14	Great Waves in the Ocean .. .. .	93
Hares .. .. .	16	A Persian Dinner Party .. .. .	95
Dashing and Leaping over Rocks and Stones .. .. .	18	The Sponge Attached to its Rocky Bed .. .. .	97
Formation of Clouds by Evaporation .. .. .	20	The way Sponges receive their Nourishment .. .. .	98
View of Naples .. .. .	25	Fishing for Sponges .. .. .	99
Hot Springs .. .. .	30	The Fox, its Little Ones and Prey .. .. .	106
A Boiling Fountain .. .. .	31	Dredging for Oysters .. .. .	109
Vesuvius and Pompeii .. .. .	37	The Medusa .. .. .	111
Eruption of a Volcano .. .. .	39	Boy and Goats .. .. .	117
Mississippi Steam Boat .. .. .	49	The Song of Miriam .. .. .	122
Scene on the Mississippi River .. .. .	51	The Cuttle Fish .. .. .	127
The Weasel .. .. .	55	A Monster Cephalopod Caught by the French Corvette <i>Atecton</i> .. .. .	129
Falls of Niagara .. .. .	61	A Country Churchyard .. .. .	133
"    View from the Canadian Side .. .. .	64	The Whale .. .. .	137
The Interior of a Restored Roman Villa .. .. .	69		
The City of Venice .. .. .	73		





DRUIDS OFFERING A HUMAN SACRIFICE.

## THE MISTLETOE, AND THE DRUIDS.



ONCE more we greet the birth of another year, and unite in the time honoured salutation, (as we assemble round the breakfast table, or meet our friends,) of "A happy new year!" Dear children, I sincerely wish you God's blessing through the coming year, and if it is His will that we should

pass through its days and months, I trust we may live them to His glory, and grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

At this season we have few, or no flowers in our gardens, or plains, but the eye is enlivened by the dark green holly with its red berries; the graceful ivy; and that really beautiful and

most popular of plants, the pale green *Mistletoe*, with its twin leaves, and waxen white berries. What little child, or grown one either, is there who does not love the sight of the graceful branching sprays of old England's *Mistletoe*?

Perhaps you will be surprised when I tell you that I never saw a spray of *Mistletoe*, until after I was nine years old, for the *Mistletoe* does not grow in the country where I spent my childhood; and at that time it was not brought about in ships in such large quantities as it is now, so in the country place where I lived, we had no pretty *Mistletoe* on new year's eve.

When I first visited England, I was greatly pleased with the new year's decorations which I saw in the shop windows; and my interest was greatly aroused about this curious *Mistletoe*. But really it is not a plant, but a rootless offshoot, for it does not grow in the ground like other plants, but springs out of the trunks and branches of old apple trees, and oaks, etc., so that when it is broken off it has no fibrous roots. It is always most plentiful and produces berries about the end of the old year, or the commencement of the new; and is found in woods or orchards. In ages long past, when Britain was a heathen country, and the people were called Celts, or ancient Britons, the *Mistletoe* was considered a sacred thing.

The poor Britons were very savage and ignorant, and often wore no clothes, but stained their bodies with a blue dye called woad, which they considered very becoming; like all *fashions* it had its day, but I do not think it is ever likely to come in vogue again. They did not know about the Bible or the true God, but believed many false things; their priests were called Druids, and these persons had the chief authority in the kingdom; they used to compose songs or poems about all the great events which happened amongst them, and teach them to their "Bards," or harpers and this was the only way they had of remembering the history of their Island. They believed in the existence of several strange and cruel gods, but the one whom they considered the greatest,

they called *Tentates*, from two old British words "Deu-tatt," signifying, God and parent, or, as we would say, Creator.

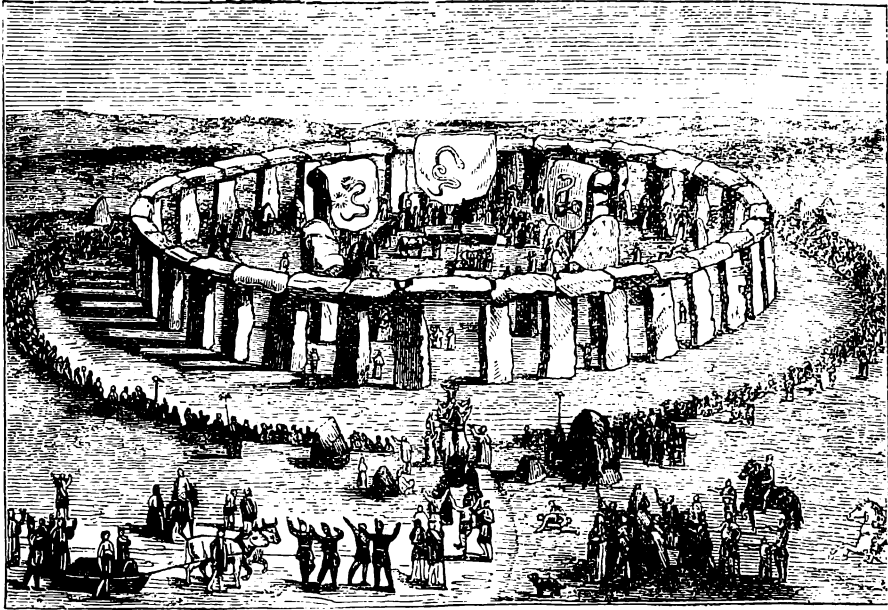
Their idolatrous rites were performed in groves, of which the *oak* was the favourite and most esteemed; and they paid high veneration to the *Mistletoe*, particularly if it grew on that tree. When the season for it approached, the Druids set out in procession to gather it and sacrifice to their gods. If it was plentiful they deemed it a very favourable omen; but if scarce or blighted, they then dreaded some calamity was about to happen, and used to offer up human sacrifices to *Tentates*; criminals and evil persons were preferred, but if there were none of these, then innocent persons were immolated. They frequently made a great wicker image and filled it with human beings, and set fire to it; was not this barbarously cruel? When the Druids found some *Mistletoe*, they spread a banquet under the oak, and tied two white bulls to the tree by their horns; then the Arch-druid ascended the tree, and with a golden sickle, cut off the *Mistletoe*, this was gathered as it fell by the other Druids, in a white cloak, called a *Saguin*.

The sacred groves were surrounded by mounds, and in the centre was a circle formed of large stones, this was a temple; and close by the *Carnedde*, or sacred mount, stood the *Cromlech*, or stone of sacrifice. There are many remains of these old Druid temples still to be found in Britain and Ireland, and also *Cromlechs*, or altars of sacrifice. I have seen some of them; perhaps my little readers have also. The *Cromlech* was generally composed of three immense blocks of stone; two for support, and one to form a slab or table; many of these are now as immovable and moss-grown, as the natural rocks of the surrounding country, and remain as silent witnesses of the dark, heathen days of our Islands.

Serpents were also worshipped by these Druids, and they built long winding circles of stones to represent that reptile; their crest, or favourite emblem was the *serpent's egg*. How many heathen nations made this evil beast an

object of worship! We know it was in the form of a serpent that Satan tempted Eve to disobey God, and so I suppose he encouraged these poor idolators to worship the serpent,

wane, and as we look on it, we have deep cause for gratitude to God for "His great love wherewith He loved us," in sending the glad tidings of the gospel of His dear Son to



A TEMPLE OF THE ANCIENT DRUIDS.

because it was an emblem of himself, for he is called in the Bible, "*the old serpent.*"

Our beautiful British Mistletoe still comes fresh and bright as ever, though grass wax and

our land, and burying these sad superstitions in the graves of the past.

K. B. K.

## THE FOX.

**F**OXES, I think I may say, but for the sport they provide for the hunter, would have been exterminated in our country long ago. He is about the most destructive of all our wild animals, making terrible ravages on the poultry yard, and is a sworn foe to rabbits, hares, and other small creatures. Great efforts are made by the lovers of this sport to keep up a supply for their exciting diversion. For this, however, the farmer has

to pay dearly. Spite of every precaution, the fox will run off with your lambs, ducks, geese, and poultry—dainties on which he chiefly lives. If hard pushed by hunger, Master Reynard will betake himself to field-mice, frogs, weasels, and even insects. Such as live near the sea-coast, for want of other food, will devour crabs, shrimps, or shell-fish. What makes the Fox so great an enemy to the farmer is the ugly fact that he is not content with destroying sufficient to satisfy his hunger. If once he

gets the chance, he will kill every living thing in the poultry-yard, and, before he begins to eat, will carry off the whole and bury what he is unable to devour. In France and Italy the Fox is exceedingly destructive to the vineyards, by feeding on the grapes of which he is very fond. My young readers will remember the fable of the Fox and the Grapes as an illustration of this.

Of all animals the Fox has the most significant eye, by which he expresses every passion of love, fear, and hatred. As you all know, the great characteristic of the Fox is his cunning:

When attacked she will run for an hour with one in her mouth, and never drop it till she becomes breathless from the chase. Sometimes she has been known to deposit her cubs at a bottom of a hollow tree, ascending and descending twenty feet to get to them.

Foxes when young are exceedingly playful, and like kittens are fond of catching their own tails. If captured very early, and treated with great kindness, the Fox may show some regard for the person who feeds it, but never seems to lose its suspicious character. It has never been known to manifest the attachment or



FOXES PLAYING.

“As cunning as a Fox” is a daily proverb. The female generally has from five to eight cubs. The entire care of these is cast on herself. Her nest is made generally at the bottom of a deep burrow, and formed of dry leaves, moss, and hay. She manifests the greatest solicitude for her young, employing every artifice to keep them concealed, and if attacked, defends them with undaunted courage. Should she suspect that her home is discovered, she will seek what she conceives a more secure retreat, and carry them thither one by one.

gratitude of the dog. It is ever shy of strangers, and will often repay a kindly approach with a snappish bite. But it is quite impossible to tame a full-grown Fox. If taken captive it is very impatient of restraint, makes every effort to obtain its freedom, and if unable to succeed, refuses food, becomes spiritless, dejected, and dies. Foxes, like the dog, have a good many intonations of the voice: they can yelp, bark, and scream, and they have a peculiar murmur when pleased. Foxes have wonderfully keen senses, especially those of



hearing and scenting. Their limbs are exceedingly pliant, and they are very swift on foot. Without doubt the brushy tail of the Fox is one of his most marked features; it is so flexible that he can wrap it round its nose, which it often does in cold weather. He is a very solitary animal, nearly always dwelling alone, and, as I have said, always leaves the charge of the cubs to the mother. He displays great intelligence in escaping detection; never trusts to his courage until perfectly exhausted, but then will turn round and defend himself to the last gasp.

During the day the Fox keeps as snug as possible, rarely being seen out, except it be, on some warm day, when he will seek a retired spot to bask and sleep in the sun. It is when the shades of evening come creeping on, this destructive fellow steals forth with motionless step to prowl for his prey. With his acute senses of hearing and smell he listens and sniffs the wind. Alive to every sound and scent, his eyes gleam as he creeps along in a crouching attitude. Stealthily he surprises the rabbit gambolling near his burrow; the hare, with all her quickness, cannot escape him, and the poultry on their perch constantly fall a prey to his cunning.

The speed of the Fox is very great, and his powers of endurance such that he has been known to run before the hounds for fifty miles on a stretch. He has remarkable craft in eluding a pack of hounds, and an old Fox, who has had many a tough run, is more than a match for the sagacity of twenty or thirty dogs.

They have a great love of liberty, and have been known to bite off their own leg when

caught in a trap, rather than be taken. On one occasion a fox was observed tenaciously to stick to the wood, instead of taking, as is their wont, to the open country; he dogged from point to point, leaping over first one dog and then another, performing remarkable evolutions, and for a long time eluded his enemies. At last he had to give in, and poor Reynard was killed; but you may judge the surprise of the hunters, who had witnessed all this long-continued agility, when they found he had only three legs!

When hard pressed they neither lose their self-possession nor their courage; they resort to every expedient that cunning can dictate to baffle or elude their pursuers, and if all fails the Fox dies, defending himself to the last.

In some respects the Fox is much like the common dog. His teeth and the general formation of his bones are the same, but his lengthened and sharp pointed muzzle, the round head, the erect and triangular ears, the long body, short limbs, and elongated, thick, and bushy tail are altogether different from those of the dog. There is also a wonderful difference in the construction of their eyes. The dog is undisturbed by the brightest light: it is never oppressive to the dog. With the Fox it is not so. Excessive light is painful to him, and he is forced to close the pupils of the eye to such an extent as to render their vision very imperfect during the day. But when night comes he can sally forth in the full possession of his perceptive faculties. Here, then, we have a clear proof that, like the owl, the bat, and some other creatures, the Fox is fitted for his night prowling.

## A LITTLE BOY AND A GAGED CANARY-BIRD.

THE BOY TO THE BIRD.

O, beautiful canary!  
 With hop so light and airy,  
 Eye so bright and song so clear,  
 'Tis God who made thy beauty,  
 So kindness is my duty,  
 And I'll never cause thee fear.

O, birdie! eating, drinking,  
 Of God who gives ne'er thinking,  
 What have I that is not thine?  
 A soul that lives for ever!  
 May I forget Him never,  
 Life bestowing, thine and mine!

## THE STORY OF THE GENTILES.

### PART II

**B**ECAUSE of the wickedness of the children of Israel (as we recently saw), God not only suffered them to be taken into captivity, but also He gave all-ruling power into the hands of the Gentiles. We saw, too, that God gave the history of this Gentile rule from the beginning to the very end in a vision to the first and greatest king that ever reigned. There were to be four great kingdoms, two of which have already been described. The third monarchy, that of Greece, gained ground under Alexander the Great, who overcame Persia and its tributary kingdoms, including Judea. It is thought that brass is used to symbolise Græcia, because the Greeks were called "brazen-coated." The conduct of Alexander towards the Jews was wonderfully ordered by Him "who turneth hearts as the rivers." When he was approaching Jerusalem (then recently rebuilt) at the head of his army, the high priest, knowing, by the prophecies of Daniel, that success would be on the side of the Greeks, and guided by God, went forth from the Holy Temple, robed, and accompanied by all the priests in sacred garments, to meet the monarch in peaceful procession. Alexander, profoundly awed, saluted the man of God with religious veneration, and explained to his followers that he adored, not the high priest, but the God of whom he was the minister. He then went with the priests to the City and the Temple, and offered sacrifices to God. After this he showed great favour to the Jews, granting them the free exercise of their religion, and exemption from the payment of taxes every seventh year, in which their law required that they should neither reap nor sow. Conquest was Alexander's passion—and in gratifying it, his restlessness brought on a fever which terminated in his early death, when his empire was divided between four of his generals.

It is to the honour of the Grecian monarchy, that the Old Testament (the only God-inspired

Scriptures that then existed) was translated from the Hebrew tongue, known but to few, into the Greek, which was generally cultivated as the finest and most correct of all languages, as also the one spoken throughout the great empire. This was another means of preparing the way of the Lord, for the Book which contained the prophecies concerning Him, and the proofs of His divine mission, was made ready for the examination of both Jew and Gentile. Soon, soon it was shown that He was, as He is, THE GOD, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles (Rom. iii., 29; ix, 24).

This translation was called the Septuagint, because it was translated by seventy learned men. It exists to this day, and has been of great use ever since. It was this translation that the Lord Jesus used when He quoted the Scripture.

Is the Old Testament a book for the Jews only, is it not for the Gentiles also?

The fourth monarchy, that of Rome, the last part of the image that portrayed Gentile dominion, or foretold the history of the "Times of the Gentiles," to the astonished Nebuchadnezzar, established itself with iron force upon the ruins of Greece. Even before the golden head of Babylon had destroyed Jerusalem, Rome had its small beginning in a distant part of Europe, as yet uncivilized, but God, who "sees the end from the beginning," perceived whereunto it would grow, and the Holy Ghost moved the prophet Isaiah, at the close of a series of predictions of judgments upon Judah and Jerusalem, to declare what should befall them from a people whose existence had just then commenced (Isaiah v., 26, 30). Also, at an earlier date, Moses had prophesied more fully of the nation that should be brought from afar, with "fierce countenance" to "put a yoke of iron" upon the neck of the people who had forsaken God; and forgotten the wonders He had done for them (Deut. xxviii., 48, &c.).

Having conquered most of Europe, and a

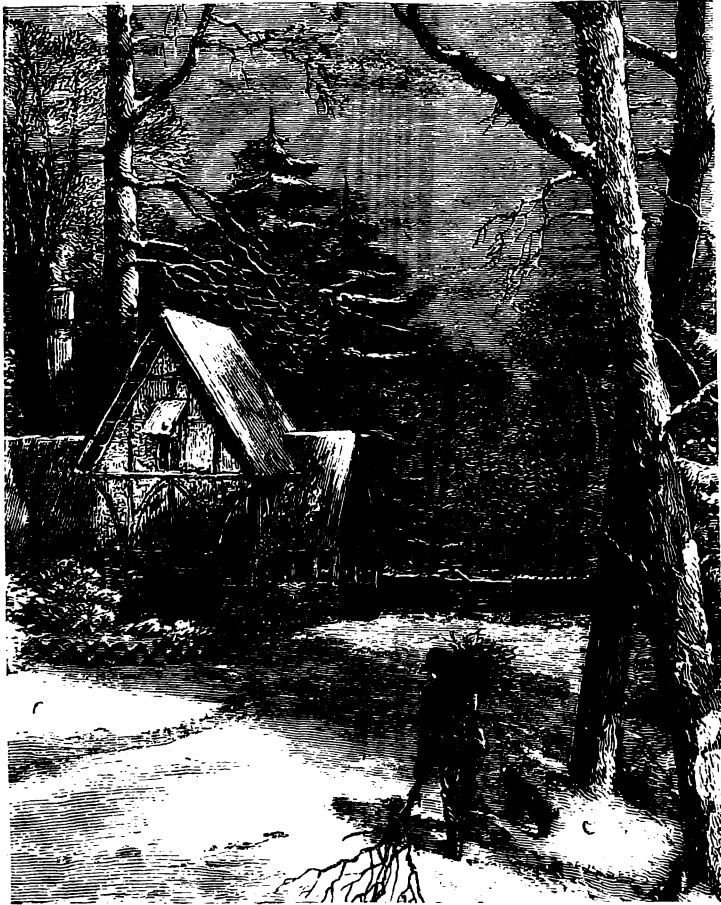
considerable portion of the only part of Africa then known, the Roman armies entered Asia, and the Jews, distressed as they were by external foes, and internal divisions, sought assistance from the new comers. The Roman general Pompey took impious advantage of the occasion, and profaned the Holy of Holies, after which he never prospered, and a little later Crassus pillaged the temple of ten thousand talents of silver. Rome, thus extended, became the fourth monarchy, *i.e.*, the iron portion of the image that prefigured Gentile dominion over mankind in general, but especially over the fallen people of God, and their desolate city and land. Iron does indeed express the character of this sway, which has endured under various modifications to this day.

When Rome had thus united all the principal nations under her yoke, events occurred, the greatest that earth had ever known, or ever can know, proving the mighty love of God for the world, and the hatred of mankind to God and His love. The Son of God came to the earth He had created, to men whom He had formed, not in His glory, before which sinners could not stand, but (as prophets had foretold) in the lowly form of a babe, born in Bethlehem of Judea, a village near Jerusalem. There, shepherds, taught by angels, found the infant lying in a manger, and praised and glorified God; and sages, led by a miraculous star, came from the east, and fell down and worshipped Him.

Here begins a new period; time being now reckoned from the birth of Christ. Each year is termed *Anno Domini* (year of the Lord), or, as sometimes expressed, beautifully and truly, the Year of Grace.

When grown a man, by whom were done the works of God, acting in mercy, twelve men were called around Him, as His disciples, and followed Him as He went about doing good, within the limits of the land of Israel. Satan (the evil spirit, through man's disobedience become "prince of this world") knew that Jesus, the Son of God, was come to destroy the works of the devil, and to save the

lost world; and therefore, in excessive rage, he stirred up mankind against their Saviour. Vain, however, had been the malice of all foes, had not the words of Jesus to the Roman governor expressed the blessed truth, "Thou couldst have had no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." It was the will of God that He should save His people from their sins, and lay down His life for the life of the world; therefore, by the council of heaven, were the Jews permitted to deliver Him to be crucified, and the Gentiles to nail Him to the cross; all of them conspirators against their Redeemer and their King. The death and burial were followed by the Lord's resurrection and ascension, the descent of the Holy Spirit, the announcement of Salvation for all men, and the gathering of believers, both Jews and Gentiles, in gradually increasing numbers to the name of Christ. Thus was formed a body, in English called the Church—in the original Greek "*Ecclesia*," signifying "an assembly or society of men called out of mankind by the word of God. The three divisions of men that have filled the earth, ever since Christ and the resurrection were first spoken of by the apostles. "The Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God," have been together under the fourth monarchy, which is denoted in the last, the iron part of the metallic image. Above all powers, and invisible, has been the Providence of Almighty God, overruling evil for good, whilst the Church has had special guidance in the Holy Spirit given to dwell within her, to lead her, according to the written Word of God, not to an earthly, but to a heavenly inheritance. The Gentiles, rulers of this world, persecuted by turns the Jews and the early Christians, until it was found that these last were better subjects than other persons. At length the Roman emperor Constantine declared himself a Christian, and his influence induced multitudes to profess the faith he recommended. The very sad effect of the emperor thus professing Christianity, and the corruption that followed, I must tell you about in our next number.



A WINTER SCENE.

## A NIGHT IN A SNOW-STORM.

**W**INTER'S short, gloomy, and dark days are here! Some, thinking only of the drizzly rain, the bleak winds, the driving tempests, or the blinding snows and pinching cold, may imagine there is no pleasure like that of a warm room and a blazing fire. Quite true, many days in January are altogether uncomfortable. The cold sleet drives in your face, the wind howls about your head, and if forced to face the storm, you are glad soon to find a shelter. But this is not all misfortune. It is good even for children some-

times to battle with the tempest. You will find life itself will have its winters. You will have to pass through many a storm. The winds of adversity will rise where least expected, and beat and drive about your path. It will be well for you in your early days if you learn to brace yourself for the conflict, and now and then face and battle with the fierce elements of a winter's storm.

Shall I tell you, boys, of one such struggle in the morning of my life? Many winters have come and gone since then, but the memory of that conflict is as fresh as ever.

Christmas eve was just approaching; I was then an orphan lad, and on that night I was about to start a fifteen mile journey across a wild country, to spend a holiday with a beloved widowed mother. You may not yet have learned the intense joy of such a moment. The morning broke with flakes of snow, descending with all that gentleness that makes such a scene one of the most beautiful in nature. It continued quietly falling all day, and all day the prospect of that journey got darker and darker. But I was young, vigorous, and strong, and my young love laughed at difficulties. The church bells had chimed their ninth hour as I passed from the busy town to the quiet of a country lane. For an hour or two it seemed easy work to wade through the feathery light laid snow; but dark clouds began to gather thick and black; a low moaning sound came melancholy through the leafless trees, then a fitful gust, and soon a howling tempest came headlong on. The heavy clouds rapidly disgorged their feathery load. Fast and blinding the snow seemed to come from all points, and then began the struggle not easy to be forgotten. Certainly, not in England have I seen such a night since then. At every gate or opening in the edge, the driving wind drifted the snow completely across the country lane. Many times I found myself up to the middle before I could break through the drift. Except the raging storm,

not a sound was to be heard, save now and then a farmer's dog seemed to join in the howl of the tempest. But on and on I struggled; once or twice the dim light from a lonely cottage window tried my courage, and tempted me to beg for shelter, but the joy of a waiting mother's welcome, and the conviction that even if I stayed all night the snow would still have to be faced (for no coach could travel then), I renewed my failing strength, and on I battled with the storm.

Many a time that night did I lift up my heart to God that He would guide my feet, and keep me from the many deep places by the wayside now filled up with snow, into which I might have fallen and perished long before any trace of my whereabouts could have been found. And God, who just before that had saved me from a worse storm—even the storm of divine judgment against my sins—brought me safely through; for after many a rest by the way, and many a failing heart, after eight long hours of terrible struggle, home, sweet comfortable home, was reached at last. I have never forgotten that night, but I have often felt it was not in vain to have had one's energies and strength and courage tested even to the utmost. So, young friends, if you find the storm beating about your head in the cold bleak days of January, battle with it, and be determined to conquer.

## THE STORY OF THE CHURCH

**S**T. PAUL named three divisions of mankind upon the earth in his day, "the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God" and this reckoning holds good now; for we are at the end of the same age or dispensation which began in the time of the Apostle Paul. A short account has been given you of the Jews and the Gentiles, in previous pages. Now let us consider the "Church of God." What is it? The thought is very low,

and very false, which is conveyed by the common manner of speaking,—when some building, reared by human hands, no matter how skillfully or magnificently, is pointed out, and called "a church." Nothing like that could have been meant by St. Paul. In his time there were no fine buildings constructed, and set apart for Christian assemblies: but there was a church, which God was building of "living stones, enlarging daily, and which He is still adding to, for it is not yet completed, nor

will be, until the last believer, dwelling perhaps at the farthest end of the earth, shall be brought to it.

The first place where the Church of God is mentioned is in the sixteenth chapter of the gospel according to St. Matthew.

No words can be compared with those which God the Holy Spirit has inspired, therefore dear children, read the passage, first asking the Lord to teach and to bless you by it. You will perceive that there were various opinions current among men as to who the gracious stranger was, who was going about among them doing them good,—and that all gave proof of total ignorance. As the time of His sojourn among them was passing away, He then put to His own followers and disciples the important question “*Whom say ye that I am*”—*Who He is* is the point of first and greatest import to each and every human being. The first who answered was Simon Peter,—who said “*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,*” a wonderful confession, including the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and the twofold nature human and divine of Jesus the Saviour: for the word *Christ* signifies *anointed*, and “*Thou art the Christ,*” means “*Thou art the one Man anointed with the Holy Ghost*”—and “*Thou art the Son of the living God,*” means “*Thou art God, one with thy Father, the living God.*”

“*And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, or son of Jonah (as in John 1. 42) for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.*” Such knowledge is too wonderful for mere human nature—man unaided cannot attain unto it, but God hath revealed it to Simon.

This was the same truth that was miraculously declared at the beginning of the gospel; when at the baptism of Jesus, “the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, “*Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased.*”

By what means God the Father had revealed

to Simon this wonderful truth we are not told—but great was the change it made in him who had thus received “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” The Lord Jesus immediately notified the change by giving a new name, thus “I say also unto thee that thou art Peter,” \* *Petros*; which signifies a stone, as if He had said “I make thee part of myself, part of the Rock Petra, on which I will build my church.” The Lord had twice previously alluded to a change of name of this disciple. St. John records (John i. 42), that when Jesus first beheld him, brought by Andrew his brother, He said in the tongue, thus commonly spoken in that country, “*Thou shalt be called Cephas*” which is by interpretation *a stone*; and St. Mark iv. 16, mentions that when the twelve were chosen, “*Simon He surnamed Peter.*” No doubt these two first times looked forward to the third, that grand occasion when Simon Peter so fully confessed “the Christ the Son of the living God,” and received the confirmation of that new name which linked Him with the Giver;—who then immediately spoke of the Church He was preparing to build, of which Himself was to be the rock foundation, and Peter one of the stones. The Lord’s words “*I will build my Church,*” prove that it did not then exist. He adds those blessed words “and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it”—by which we understand death shall have no power to hinder it, for the Jews, (whom he was addressing) thus named a plan, where the spirits of those who died were concealed, awaiting Judgment.

It is impossible to imagine words grandeur than these in which the Lord first speaks of His Church,—to be founded by Himself on His own strength, and that strength to be proved by victory over death. It is impossible to imagine higher honor than a place in the Church of Christ. Simon Peter, the first confession of “Christ the Son of the living God,” was the first appointed to it: not to be alone,

\* Pure Hebrew, the written language of the Old Testament was no longer spoken, but a mixed Chaldean and Syriac.

for soon after, we find the Lord instructing all His disciples concerning His Church, and conferring on them positions and privilege in it similar to those He had given to Peter. Having thus revealed to His followers their association with Himself in the Church that he was going to build, beyond the power of death, "He began to shew them how that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." His death must take place before blessing could be shed forth. Darkness was thickening around His path.

His own, the nation of the Jews, to whom He had come, had thoroughly rejected Him, and chief priest and rulers were even plotting to slay Him, whilst He, the Almighty, would not resist them, nor seek to be saved from the terrible hour of death under the burden of the sin of the world, saying, "for this cause came I to this hour." All that He thus had on this earth, of which He was the creator and sustainer, were those few followers from the despised province of Galilee, to whom from time to time He delivered "exceeding great and precious promises."

We do not find "the Church again named in Scripture until the Son of God had finished the work that His father had given Him to do, until He had made the one sacrifice for sin on the cross; had been raised from among the dead by the glory of the Father, received up into heaven, and thence had sent down the Holy Ghost according to His promise. Often had He alluded to the Holy Spirit whom He and the Father would give, when Himself should be glorified, but with special clearness and tenderness in His last private intercourse with His disciples before His crucifixion did He tell them of the Comforter who should be given to "abide with them for ever"—"the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him, but ye know Him, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."—Again and again in the course of that wonderful farewell address, did the gracious Lord return to com-

municate more and more about the Holy Spirit the Comforter, what He would do for them and enable them to do. Yet there remained something more, which He uttered not until He had seen them again and been with them forty days after His resurrection, and was on the point of ascending into heaven; "ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Until this promise should be fulfilled, they were commanded not to depart from Jerusalem—so there they continued in prayer and supplication with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and with His brethren—(the number of the names together were about an hundred and twenty) all disciples or learners of the Lord in whom they believed.

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." The words before cited that the blessed Lord Jesus had spoken to His own ere He left them were about to be fulfilled.

Acts i. 5. "John truly baptised with water; but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Surely these words contain indirect allusion of John the Baptist. "He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost *and with fire.*" Luke iii. 16.

Already on the day that He arose from the grave, He had breathed on His disciples, and said "Receive ye the Holy Ghost"—so then, the Holy Spirit was *within* them; but further by an *outward* act, power is to be given them, which is to be seen and known by all men. The Holy Spirit whom Jesus had breathed *into* them, was now to "come *upon*" them in a form to be seen. Read Acts ii. 4. Why was the form of tongues chosen? We read in Genesis x. & xi. that the very grandsons of those who had been saved with Noah in the ark became disbelievers in God's goodness and promise, and began to build a city and a high tower in defiance of Him. "And the Lord said the people is one and they have all one language, "let us there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." "So He scattered them abroad from

thence upon the face of all the earth,"—having made it impossible for them to act together. But when in due time the Son of God had come, and would have salvation made known to the ends of the earth, He would not permit even the multiplicity of tongues to hinder His word from running swiftly. Therefore on that day of Pentecost the disciples were mir-

aculously gifted to speak with other tongues as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance, of which grand fact the cloven tongues of fire that rested upon them was a suited sign. Men of many nations, who at that time were dwellers in Jerusalem, heard each in his native language the wonderful works of God, and were amazed.  
(*To be continued.*)

## "GOD IS WITH ME."



**A** LITTLE girl, who had been taught of the Lord Jesus, and His love for her soul and body, was sent out one evening to pay a bill for her grandmother. The distance from home was pretty long, and the way somewhat lonely. After she had paid the money and received the change, she turned to go home, but it became dark before she reached there.

As she passed along, a man met her in the dark. Surprised at finding a little thing like her alone, he asked, "Little girl! are you not afraid to go in this lonely place in the dark?"

"Oh, no!" she answered, "for God is with me."

And then both of them kept on their ways, and after a little while she reached home, led safely by Him in whom she trusted.

The little girl soon forgot the matter. There did not seem much to remember in simply being asked by a man if she was not afraid; and a little child of nine years can soon find enough new things to think of, without keeping such trifles of the past in mind.

But this was no trifle; and God made use of it, as He makes the little seed dropped without meaning to grow into a bush or tree, after many days.

This little girl was sent to Sunday school after a while, and became fond of her teacher and was very much beloved by her.

One day her teacher called her back and told her that her husband wished to see her. So

she went with the lady to her home, and after she had taken dinner with her, the husband of the teacher said to the little child: "Do you remember, many months ago, meeting a man on the road in the evening, who asked you if you were not afraid?"

"Yes, sir," she answered, "I do."

"Well," he said, "I was that man; I was drunk at the time; but your answer, that God was with you, clung to me, and I thought it over when I became sober, and it has really been made use of by God to lead me to become His child by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to thank you, and let you know, dear child, that the Lord used you in my salvation, not only from drunkenness, but from hell."

Do you not think this dear child felt very happy and very solemn, in hearing such words?

I know her to-day, a young woman, as a dear, happy Christian, having had a great affliction in her own body, but still able to say, "I am not afraid, for God is with me."

It is a very precious thing to be able to say that; but every reader of this, by simply believing what God tells us of His Son and of His love for us, and resting on the death and resurrection of Christ, can have all that, and be forever sure of it. We have peace about our sins, by taking what God says about the work of Christ on the Cross; and then peace about everything that happens, by casting all our cares upon Him, knowing that in everything He cares for us.





THE LITTLE ONE'S GRAVE.

## SNOWDROPS; AND SLEEPING BABES.



OW beautiful are the falling snow-flakes! How fair in its cold white purity is a snow-covered landscape! and how darkly every other object stands out in contrast. The white cottages which looked neat and clean in

their fresh coats of white-wash before the dazzling white snow fell, now appear quite dull and grey; and the poor shivering sheep look almost like dirty woolly pigs. There is nothing fairer in all nature's winter landscapes, than a country scene after a heavy fall

of snow; farm-yard, orchard, and plantation all alike look so pretty when covered with this chaste white drapery; it hangs in masses on the trees, making them resemble plumes of feathers; it thatches the tops of hayricks and cottages until they look like frosted cakes; and it even gives to commonplace objects quite a picturesque appearance, by covering up their soiled everyday garb.



THE SNOWDROP.

The month of February brings us one dear little flower, the *Snowdrop*; it springs up from the hard dark ground with a grass-like leaf and a tender stem, from which drops the fair green veined white bell. These little flowers have been named "FAIR MAIDS OF FEBRUARY," as

they generally greet the eye in this cold damp month; and frequently rise in newborn beauty from the bosom of a snow-covered garden or turf. The Snowdrop has been considered a floral type of the Resurrection, as it springs from a bulb which has lain hidden in the earth for some time before the flower makes its appearance; and when all nature lies cold and death-like, this dear little gem suddenly appears in its pure delicate dress. To me it seems a sweet type of little children, who have died and gone to Jesus; we place their little bodies in the cold earth and leave them there, just as we do the bulbs or roots of the Snowdrops, while the chill rain and the bright sunshine alternately fall above the earth where they lie. But a day in the spring of God is coming, when the little ones will rise from the earth in a far more beautiful and perfect form, than the poor little weak body, which we laid to rest in the cold clay; just as from the bulb of the Snowdrop rises the fresh green leaves and beautiful flower.

The small white bulb is a nice little thing to look at, but no one who has seen *the flower* would wish to keep the *bulb* above ground for its own sake; we plant it in hopes of being repaid by the blossom. So with our dear little ones whom God has laid asleep in Jesus, and whom we have placed in the green graveyards of earth, we shall meet them again at the morning of the resurrection, when the Lord comes for His people and His infant jewels. How we shall rejoice to see the perfection which that glorious change will have effected in those dear little ones, whom we mourned to part with on earth!

Many years ago, I lost a baby brother; he was the youngest member of our family, and he came to us in the middle of dark stormy January, like a little snow-flower. My father died two months after he was born, and this cast a sad gloom over us all, and poor little James' first earthly dress was trimmed with black ribbons; but he was not to spend many years in this world, for just as he was one year and six months old, he became very ill and died. Although I was very young myself at the time, still memory recalls his pale face and wasted baby form, as he lay in a very small coffin; his skin was so fair and transparent, that the colour of his deep blue eyes could be traced through the delicate closed lids. But he was a happy babe to be taken away from this evil world, and admitted at such a tender age into the presence of the Lord; for He said Himself when on earth, "of such is the kingdom of heaven."

I have still a pale golden lock of his hair, which was cut off before he was buried, and that is all little James left behind him in this world, just a few locks of his baby hair. When I look at it I think with awe of my brother, for although he is in Paradise, and I am on earth, yet he is *my brother still*. When I meet him again I do not expect to see a baby boy; no! but a fair youth in his Father's house, that house of many mansions. A baby is but an imperfect thing, it cannot run about strongly, nor speak plainly, and I do not believe there

will be any imperfect persons or things in heaven : so our dear little infants will have ripened into perfection before we meet them again. How wonderful it is to reflect that they know more than we do, who have lived to grow old—for they have seen Jesus, and been many years with Him, while their sorrowing parents, and brothers and sisters have been travelling through the long journey of life ; many of whom, alas ! do not care to know or see the Lord.

I will tell you some pretty verses, about the death of an infant, which were composed by a poor French locksmith, "*Jean Reboul*." I thought them so nice that I translated them into English myself.

"THE ANGEL AND THE BABE."

"A radiant-visaged Angel stood,  
Bending over a cradle's hood,  
Contemplating his image there  
In the babe—as reflection in brooklet fair.

"'Lovely child! could resemblance be,  
More like to myself!—oh come,' said he,  
'With me; this world deserves thee not;  
And we'll blend together our blissful lot.

"'Ever 'midst festive scenes on earth,  
The soul feels pangs in its wildest mirth ;  
'Midst tones of joy lurk sorrow's wails,  
And worldlings sigh when enjoyment fails.

"'In their festivals *Fear* is ever a guest,  
And rarely a day of serene calm rest  
Can they count on—free from the gloomy  
dread  
That a morrow's tempest lurks over head.

"'And what! shall grief or fear's alarm  
Have power to cause thy pure brow harm,  
And sully by life's bitter tears  
Thine azure eyes in after years ?

"'Never shall anyone below  
Darken thy garments' primal snow ;  
Received by thee as life's first dower,  
Still pure, they'll deck thy latest hour.


"'Ever unclouded be thine eyes ;  
Ne'er on their gaze a graveyard rise.  
When soul 's un stain'd, as at thine age,  
That day is best which ends life's stage.

"'Yes! in the realms of bliss above,  
With me thou'lt ever soar—God's love  
In grace exempts thee from the span  
Of years thou oughtest to pass with man.'

"'Rustling his white and glistening plumes,  
The Angel at these words resumes  
His flight towards the eternal shore,—  
The mother weeps,—her babe's no more!''

K. B. K.

## THE HARE.



N every creature that God has made we may readily see marks of divine wisdom peculiar to each. Very clearly are they seen in the construction of the Hare. Scarcely any animal has so many enemies, is so defenceless, and none possess more of that preserving passion, timidity or fear. This keeps it alive to every cause of alarm. If carefully examined, each limb and every instinct will be found to be so formed as to give every possibility, not for defending itself, but for making its escape from its enemies. It is of first importance that its hearing should be very

acute, and that it should be able to detect sounds of danger from a great distance. So we find its ears are formed on this very principle ; they are long, open at the ends, and can be turned in every direction, so that they act like a speaking trumpet to a deaf person. Then its eyes should not only be quick of sight, but able to perceive danger from every side at the same moment. We find they are not only large and prominent, but so fixed as to be able to receive the rays of light from all sides. Swiftmess of flight is, perhaps, more essential to the Hare than any other quality ; to secure this its hind legs are remarkably long, and

furnished with strong muscles. This formation gives an especial advantage over its enemies in ascending steep places: and so sensible is the Hare of this, that it always makes towards rising ground when pursued.

All these advantages are the more needful as it never burrows underground, like the rabbit, or finds a place of safety in hollow trees, like the fox. And as it is always on the ground, its feet are preserved above and below with a thick and warm covering of hair. Then the Hare is gifted with a large amount of cunning or sagacity. We have spoken of the cunning of the fox when pursued, but the Hare is said to display ten times as much when running before the hounds. She will, while in view, go straight away, but the moment she is out of sight of her eager pursuers, she begins the most remarkable sagacious manœuvres. She will return in her track some distance, then make three or four enormous leaps, and

start off again at a right angle with her former course; she will then, if in a wall country, jump to the top of a wall and run some yards along the top, then descending with a long jump, she will perhaps squat till she sees the result of her manœuvres. Of course all this is well calculated to throw the dogs off the

proper course, as by this means they completely lose the scent of her track.

Should this prove useless, she will try other means, such as running through a flock of sheep, or water, or through a covert and back again, coming out at the same opening and running up the ditch, and off again on a fresh circle. She will pass alongside of a furze or thorn bush, some few feet distance from it,

then returning she will carefully follow her former course and from it will throw herself into the bush, calmly waiting till the dogs have rushed by her. Then the Hare shows great skill in wisely husbanding her strength. From experience she soon finds out that the most rapid flight at the commencement is not always the most likely means to secure safety, so she regulates her speed according to the dogs that pursue her. If a common hound, she takes it easily, but if the greyhound, she flees from the very start with all her power.



HARES.

She knows that in passing through shrubs, by contact with them, she leaves a stronger scent on her track, and so, when followed by terriers, who hunt by scent, she avoids all thicket, running as much as possible on the beaten roads. But if followed by greyhounds, who are guided entirely by sight and have

no scent, she takes a straight course to the woods, where she hopes the better to elude her pursuers.

Thus do we see what a wonderful provision has been made for the protection of the poor timid Hare. And let me assure you, dear young friends, that the more you examine every creature that God has made, the more will this wisdom and care be made manifest.

The Hare prepares no home or hiding place. It conceals itself amongst ferns and other plants, or the underbrush of a young plantation, and sometimes with no other concealment than the uneven ground will afford. Here it crouches during the day, from which it makes a regular track to its adjoining feeding grounds. It is very particular always to go and return exactly on the same track. Its feeding time is the evening or during the night, when it issues forth and will spend the whole night searching for its food and satisfying hunger. The poacher is a great foe to poor Puss, and in the neighbourhood of preserves their tracks are so numerous and so plainly seen that he has no difficulty in fixing his nets so as to secure his prey.

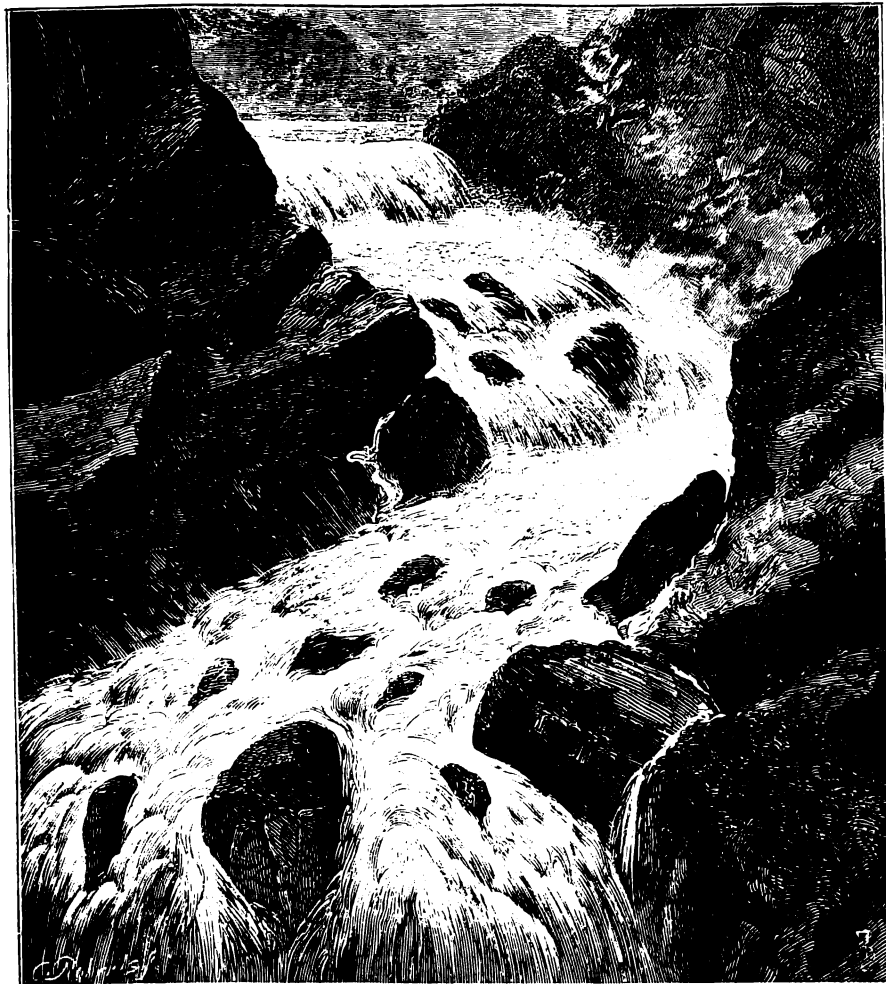
In favourable circumstances, like the rabbit, the Hare increases very rapidly. They begin to breed when a year old, and will have three successive broods of from three to five each time. The young leverets, as they are called, are born covered with fur, are able to see and can soon fend for themselves. But to secure this the soil must be sandy and dry, as well as food plentiful. A damp clay soil is unfavourable, and being tender creatures, they are soon cut off in large quantities by disease. In all large parks, where the fern is allowed to grow thick, it is a beautiful sight, as evening closes in, to watch the quick, nervous, timid actions of the old ones and the gambols of the young leverets.

The oldest of writers mention the Hare-hunt as one of the sports of the ancients. Amongst the Romans its flesh was considered quite a delicacy. It came, however, within the forbidden animals as food by the law of Moses, "because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof" (Lev. xi. 6). But in

all ages and nations the poor Hare has been an object of sport for the hunter.

The Hare, however, proves most destructive to the farmers' carefully prepared and well tended crops. He eats great quantities of vegetation, but does not confine himself to these. They will sometimes destroy whole fields of young wheat. In winter they scatter and wander a great distance in search of food, and prove very destructive to plantations of young trees by gnawing the bark.

All my boy readers know how common it is to tame the rabbit. He is a common pet. Hares also notwithstanding their great timidity have often been tamed, so as to eat from the hand and run about the house. The writer of the Natural History of Cornwall tells of one of his own training which would play about the garden, but always return to the house. It had a greyhound and a spaniel as companions, which would romp in company and at night lay together on the hearth. This was the more remarkable as both dogs were used in the same hunt, and would often sally forth on their own account in pursuit of hares, but were never known to harm their play fellow and companion. Sonnine had a tame Hare which lived with a hound and two Angora cats. Dr. Townson brought a young one into such a state of familiarity, that he would run and jump about his sofa and bed; it leaped on his knees, patted him with its feet, and frequently whilst he was reading would knock the book out of his hand, as if, like a fondled child, to claim the preference of his attention. Indeed I could tell you many such instances, all showing how easy it is to make almost any animal attached to you by a little kindness. If you have not read the interesting account that Cowper gives of his *Tiney, Puss and Bess*; of the much pleasure he found in his solitary hours in watching them gambol, by all means make yourself acquainted with them; and especially with his amusing account of the hunt after one, when men, women, children, and boys, chased poor puss through the village, and of the remarkable manner in which she was rescued from so many dangers.



"DASHING AND LEAPING OVER ROCKS AND STONES."

## THE WORLD OF WATERS.

**L**AST year we spent pleasant hours conversing together, as it were, about many interesting subjects. Month after month we noted the varied and interesting changes in spring, summer, autumn, and winter, and each season gave us many beautiful lessons. The land was the sphere of most of our talks. But if the dry land has its wonders

the world of waters is not less wonderful, and this year, if the Lord will, month after month, I would like us to chat together about the many, many strange and interesting matters connected with water.

The youngest of my readers has seen a tiny stream trickling down some hill side; and perhaps in trying to find where it came from, you have traced it to a little bubbling spring, or

fountain ; and then you have followed its downward course as it rippled along its pretty stony bed, leaping over pebbles here, and there losing itself amidst the forget-me-nots, and violets, and bluebells, as it wanders through some rich meadow ; and soon you found it dropping into another stream, perhaps not much larger than itself. On you have gone, and first on this side, and then on that, one after another similar little streams have dropped into it, until it has become quite a brook ; and now, if it be a hilly country, it begins to dash and roll and foam, here leaping over large rocks and stones, there gliding deeply and slowly through some dark deep ravine, till it reaches a low expanding valley, where it is lost by joining some broad deep flowing river. Such a river as in America or Africa might run on for thousands of miles, ever deepening and widening, as river after river comes tumbling into it. And now great and powerful steamers laden with thousands of tons of merchandise, and hundreds, or it may be, even thousands of men and women crowd their decks : and still on rolls the mighty river till it has become so wide you could scarce see from one bank to the other ; and at last it also is lost in the mighty ocean of waters.

In our small English Island of course we have no such long rivers as in America and Africa. The Thames, our longest and most important river, is only 240 miles in length. The next longest is the Severn, only 210 miles long.

But, says one, where does all this water come from ? I saw the tiny fountain bubbling up near the top of a hill, but how did it get there ? The answer is easy. The rain fell on the hill-top, the earth swallowed it up, and it found its way through the earth and crevices of rocks, till it came trickling out of the fountain. But where did the rain come from ? The clouds. Why don't the clouds soon get empty ? That is an important question and lies at the very foundation of our subject. Fountains produce the streams ; streams make the rivers ; rivers always find their way to the ocean ; and

so you might be led to say, Fountains, streams, and rivers produce the seas and the oceans. No, dear young friends, it is the very opposite. Seas and oceans are the parents of not only fountains, streams, and rivers, but of the very clouds from which descend the rains that water the earth and fill all the rivers that flow to the sea.

Does this seem a wonder to you ? are you ready to exclaim, How can that be, I never saw water go upwards ; it always finds the lowest place, and I should have thought that all the seas and great oceans were filled by the mighty rivers pouring such vast volumes of water into them. Though you do not see the water ascend, yet it is not the less true, that every drop of water first finds its way from the ocean and the earth.

Let me explain this to you. You all know that around the earth there is what we call the atmosphere. This is composed of certain gases which we breathe, and without which, neither man, animal, nor plant could live. But besides the gases, the atmosphere contains a vast mass of invisible vapour held in it, much in the same manner as water is held in a sponge. This atmosphere extends for many miles—about forty, all round the earth, and there is constantly going on a process by which immense bodies of water are carried up above the earth. This is called evaporation, and by its means infinitely small particles of vapour constantly ascend. Heat and electricity (though what that is no one can tell) are the agents by which all this is produced. So wonderful is the effect of this evaporation, that it is difficult for me to make you understand it. It goes on not only from great bodies of water, but also from the dry land, from vegetation and trees. Nearly the whole of this process is quite invisible ; yet scientific men have been able to make instruments by which it can be accurately measured. In England not less than thirty-two inches of water over the whole surface of the island are elevated every year into the air ; but in some parts of the world where it is very hot, the

evaporation is much greater, over nine feet of water being annually lifted up into the atmosphere. Now, water one inch deep over England alone would weigh over four thousand million tons; but this means a body of water which neither you nor any one else can comprehend. Instead of the great rivers supplying the oceans, if they all could be suddenly dried up, and all the rivers were to continue flowing as now, it would take forty thousand years before the ocean filled up. When I come to tell you about the quantity of water, you will be surprised to find what a great portion of the surface of the earth is covered with it. So great is the body of water, that if the earth were one level surface, the water would cover the whole, and be 600 feet deep in every part.

But this wonderful process is not altogether invisible. You have all seen a beautiful



FORMATION OF CLOUDS BY EVAPORATION.

white cloud of vapour over a sheet of water or a river. This is water ascending so densely that it becomes visible. The other day, I walked through Greenwich Park after a night of severe frost, and no sight could be more beautiful. Every blade of grass, and every twig on the grand old trees was covered with sparkling diamonds, white as virgin snow. This again was evaporation. As the vapour formed in infinite particles and before it could wing its way aloft, it was frozen into all those brilliant gems. When you look aloft and admire the white fleecy clouds skimming so beautifully along, these are but water drawn up by heat; and when you see the black

thunder-clouds come rolling and deluging the earth with tremendous rains you see again the effect of evaporation; every drop of that rain had been previously drawn up from the earth.

All this is according to the Word of God. "He calleth for the waters of the sea and poureth them out upon the face of the earth." And again, "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again." In this process we have indeed perpetual motion, vapour ever ascending from the earth and returning thither again.

I need not tell you what a blessing this wonderful process of evaporation is to the whole world. Were it to cease but for a short time, universal desolation and death would follow. In hot countries long droughts are not uncommon. In 1827, there was such a time in Buenos Ayres, when all the brooks dried up, all vegetation failed, and over one million head of cattle died. The dust blew about in such clouds, as to cover all landmarks, and none could tell where their estates began or ended. During such a dry time in Africa, wild beasts, especially elephants, have in a body invaded the towns to get possession of the wells, and regular battles have been fought between them and the people. At such a time, wild horses in immense multitudes will travel many miles in search of a river, and when reached thousands of those who arrive first are overwhelmed and crushed to death by those that follow.

What so common or so precious as bread and water? without water the world would become at once one universal scene of desolation. Without bread we must all perish. But have you, dear young friends, drunk of the "living water?" eaten of that bread which came down from heaven? Let me ask you to read the first Psalm and Jeremiah vii. 7, 8, where you will see what a precious thing this living water is.

Having told you thus much about the evaporation of water, if the Lord will, next month I will tell you some interesting facts about springs and rivers.



THE BIBLE IN CHINESE.



WONDER if any of the readers of the CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION have ever asked themselves what can be the meaning of the curious marks which they see on the tea-chests in the grocers' shops. These marks are Chinese words which, generally, tell the name of the place or warehouse where the tea was grown or packed. Most likely, if you have known that those marks are words, you have thought that the Chinese language must be a very difficult one to learn. There is no doubt but it is, and yet many of the Lord's servants have learned it for the purpose of preaching the Gospel to the many millions of Chinese. The Bible has been translated, and many thousands of copies circulated in China. The words on the next page are Psalm xxiii. The Chinese write from the top of the page downwards and begin with the right hand column; so the short line on the right is the title of the psalm, and if we arrange the words in our order, they will read thus:—

大 關 詩 第 二 十 三 篇  
 Ta p'ih shí ti ur shí san p'ien

David's poems, number twice ten three section; that is, Psalm xxiii. The first verse fills the first column after the title, and the pronunciation and meaning are as follows:—

耶 和 華 爲 我 之 牧 者  
 Yay ho hwa wei wo chi muh ché  
 Jehovah become my Shepherd he

我 不 致 匱 乏 兮  
 wo puh chi kwei fah hi  
 I (shall) not (be) made to want !

In this verse the word 我 *wo* (I) occurs twice, *i.e.*, in "My Shepherd," and "I shall not want." It occurs sixteen times altogether in the psalm. If you will take an English Bible and count the number of times that the words, "I," "my," "mine," "me," occur,

you will find seventeen; the reason of the difference is, that in verse 4, of the Chinese translation, it is only printed three times instead of four, as in the English, as though it were, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, (I) will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

We should like to explain some of the words to you, and will begin with the word 名 *ming*, "name;" in the expression, "for his name's sake" (verse 3). The word has two parts, 夕 *si*, the upper horn of the moon, meaning "evening;" and 口 *k'au*, "a mouth." When these two characters are combined into one word, the Chinese give them the meaning of "name," because in the *evening*, when it is too dark to see people distinctly, you call (with your *mouth*) their *names*. The word is in the third column, the seventh from the top. The other words are 生 *sang*, "life," and 日 *jih*, "days,"—in the sentence, "all the days of my life;" the first and fourth words of the seventh column. 生 *Sang* stands for "life," because it is like a tree springing from the ground, having four branches, and a *leaf* on one of the branches, which shows that it is *alive*. 日 *Jih* stands for "day" or "days," because it is the modern form amongst the Chinese of writing the representation of the sun, which they, as well as the Egyptians and Assyrians, anciently employed,—☉, a circle with its centre. The *sun* appears to cross the heavens once a *day*.

We will not now explain any more to you, but perhaps some of you will take your Bibles and compare the psalm in English and Chinese, and find out something more by yourselves. It has pleased God to bless the preaching of His word to many of the Chinese. Let those of you who know His love pray to Him to send many more labourers into the great harvest in that wonderful land, and who knows but some day He will send one of yourselves.

## PSALM XXIII. IN CHINESE.

## 大衛詩第二十三篇

耶和華爲我之牧者，我不致匱乏兮。使我  
 臥於茂苑，引我至得憩息之水濱兮。彼使  
 我靈復蘇，爲其名導我行於義路兮。我行  
 死蔭之谷，必不忌憚於受害兮。蓋爾必偕  
 我，爾杖爾梃必慰我兮。爾五必在我敵前爲  
 我設席，爾會以膏沃我首，我爵溢兮。我六在  
 生之諸日，惟恩寵與矜恤隨我兮。我將居  
 於耶和華之室，迄於永遠兮。

## ORNITHOLOGY.



THE title of this, although it may look a dreadfully long word, to our young reader, will be found quite easy if divided into five syllables, and pronounced, thus:—Or-ne-thol-o-je.

Every lad, who has a feathered pet, should, if he has not done so before, now master this big word. But why? Because Ornithology means the "science of birds." That is to say—just as tarts and sweetmeats are called Confectionery, so that knowledge which has been gained by those who have applied themselves to the study of birds, is called Ornithology. If you tried to remember the latter word you would soon be able to, as it is not so long as "Confectionery," a word little people are mostly familiar with.

Now, knowing that the first long word—Ornithology—treats of birds, can you tell what a *bird* is? When a little girl of four years old was once asked this question she sharply replied:—"Of course I can! a bird's a *dickie!*" a rather indefinite explanation. The chief characteristics that distinguish a bird from other vertebrata, or animals having a backbone, are: firstly, its horny beak; then, its fore limbs being developed into wings, mostly clothed with feathers and used for flight; and, its young being hatched from eggs.

The countless myriads of birds, God has been pleased to create, are, as everyone well knows, not all alike in appearance or in their ways. A visitor to the Zoological Gardens in London will have noticed that some birds have tiny beaks; others, such as the hornbills, enormous ones; some again very short legs, others like "grandpapa" stork, slender long ones! then with regard to habits, some, as the woodpecker, are always (except, of course, when asleep) actively climbing about trees in search of food, whilst many others are unable to climb at all; books and books have been written respecting such peculiarities alone. Well, all different kinds of birds are scientifi-

cally classed—according to qualities found similar in certain individuals—into what are called Orders; which are sometimes divided into Tribes, Tribes again into Families, sub-families, and so on.

It is not to be wondered at, when we consider the difficulties to be encountered in such an undertaking, that, in classifying birds into Orders, ornithologists differ in their modes of arrangement. The arrangement we will endeavour here to give, is, however, one well known.

## ORDER I.

HERE belong "*Birds of Prey*"—like the vulture, eagle and owl—noted for their powerful hooked beaks, muscular feet, strong claws, and wings adapted for long sustained flight.

The eagle, on account of its superior strength, is called the "King of birds," and ranks among them as the lion does among the four-footed animals; but, being rapacious, it is, as despotic sovereigns are, very cruel. Tales are even told, alas, too often, of little children falling its victims. The following anecdote, related by Bishop Stanley, shows, however, how God can enable the weak to resist the strong, just as he empowered little David to slay the great giant Goliath.

The adventure occurred in the parish of St. Ambrose, near New York.

"Two boys, the one seven and the other five years old, were amusing themselves by trying to reap while their parents were at dinner. A large eagle soon came sailing over them, and, with a sudden swoop, attempted to seize the eldest, but luckily missed him. The bird, not at all dismayed, alighted at a short distance, and in a few moments repeated his attempt. This bold little fellow however, gallantly defended himself with his sickle, which he fortunately held in his hand, and when the bird rushed upon him, resolutely struck at it. The sickle entered under the left wing and the blow having been given strongly . . . proved fatal. . . . The brave little boy did not receive a

scratch, though there can be little doubt that had the bird not been weakened by hunger, a blow or two from its sharp strong beak would have penetrated through the skull into the brain and caused instant death."

#### ORDER II.

THIS is a very interesting Order, as "*Perching Birds*" constitute it. We have, therefore, a great many of those feathered friends, more generally known, classed together here—such as the thrush, blackbird, nightingale, lark, sparrow, canary, crow, swallow, robin redbreast, &c.—An anecdote from Wood's Natural History of the last-mentioned bird may serve to link in the memory the order of the birds of prey to that of the perchers. ". . . . Being present one day when a golden eagle (caged) was fed, a robin to my surprise, took the eagle's place on the perch the moment that he descended to the ground, to eat some food given him, and when there picked off some fragments of fat or scraps of flesh; this done, it quite unconcernedly alighted on the chain by which the rapacious bird was fastened."

The robin regularly visited the eagle's abode at feeding-time, even when there was no severity of weather, and, although it escaped unscathed, as much cannot be said for another robin which occasionally entered the kitchen, and sang there. Having one day alighted on a cage in which a toucan was kept, this bird, with its huge bill, seized and devoured it in a moment.

#### ORDER III.

HERE are arranged together the "*Climbing Birds*," for example—the woodpecker, wren, cuckoo, and polly parrot. This order our little reader is readily enabled to link in his thoughts with that of the perching birds, by thinking of the nursery rhyme about the marriage of Cock Robin and Jenny Wren. Of course such a wedding never occurred; and, although these familiar winter visitors are often seen together, when other of their brethren have migrated to warmer climes, they are never related, by family ties, to one another. But because robin redbreasts are called "*Cock*" Robins, and wrens "*Jenny*" Wrens, you must not think there are only *gentlemen* robins and *lady* wrens; for a little piece of poetry says,

"Of redbreasts and wrens,  
There's both cocks and hens!"

In more ancient lore than the nursery rhyme referred to, the wren is termed the king of all birds, his title to royalty resting on his defeat of the eagle in upward flight. The story runs that the birds assembled to choose a king, and that the election should fall on the bird who soared the highest. Up sprang all the birds into the sky, but highest of all towered the eagle who, after mounting until his wearied wings could beat no more, proclaimed himself the sovereign of the birds. But all unperceived the little wren had been quietly perching between his shoulders, and, as soon as the eagle ceased to mount, the wren sprang into the air, and rising on tiny pinion far above the wearied eagle, twittered forth the victory of wit and intellect over bulk and physical strength.

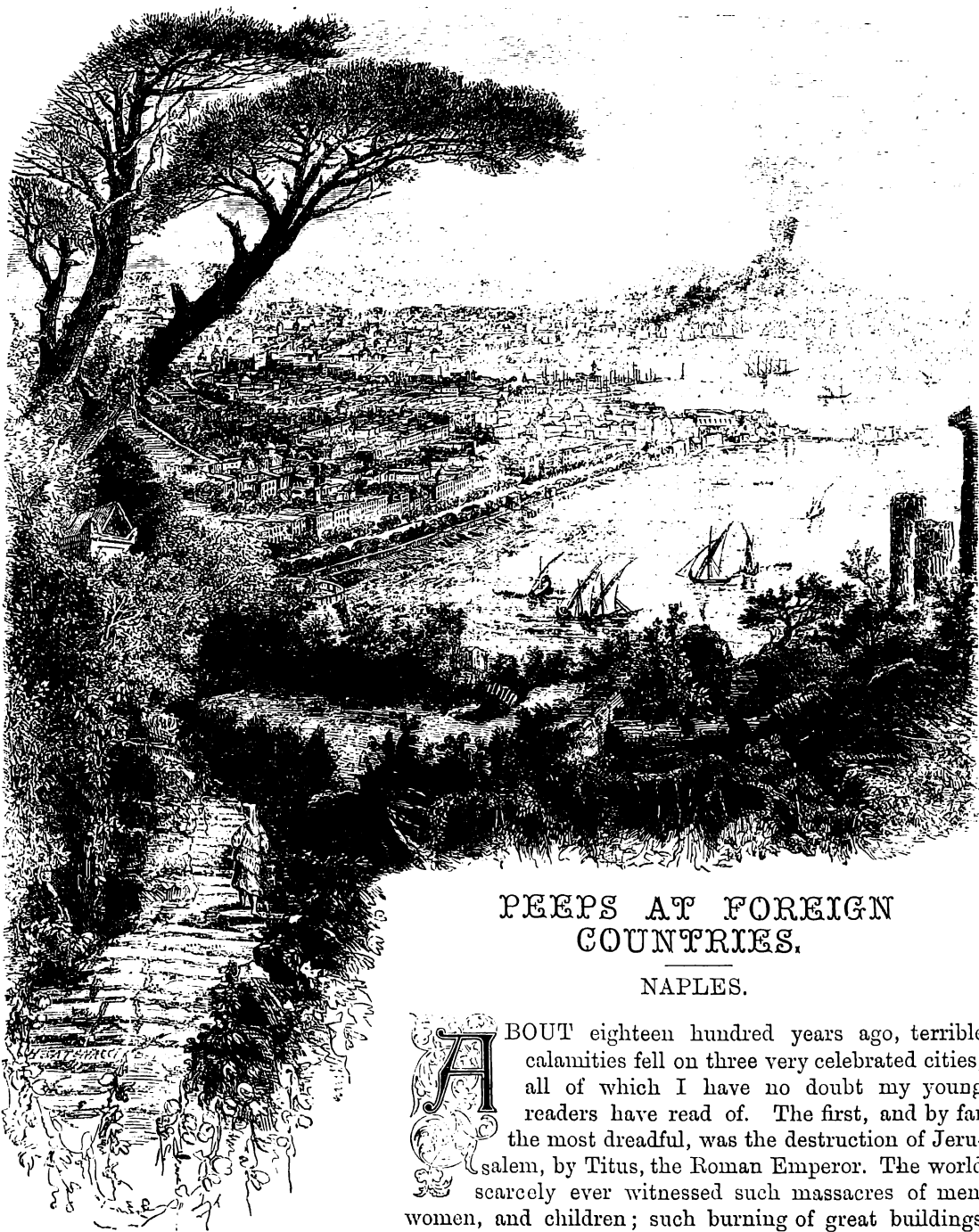
#### ORDER IV.

WE now come to one of the most useful divisions of birds, forming, in their domesticated state, no inconsiderable source of profit to those who rear them for the purpose of sale, for this is the order of "*Poultry Birds*," which includes fowls, turkeys, partridges, pheasants, doves, pigeons, also the ostrich. But we must not forget to mention here the peacock—so prized, for the table, in olden times. "A gentleman in Ireland owned one of these gaudy birds whose great amusement was to frighten his chickens. There were two iron troughs in which the food for the chickens was placed daily, and to which they always resorted as soon as their food was poured into their troughs. No sooner had they all assembled than the peacock would erect his train, rattle his quills together, with that peculiar rustling sound that is so characteristic of these birds, and march slowly towards the chickens. The poor little birds would slowly back away from the trough as the peacock advanced, not liking to lose sight of their food, and not daring to remain in defiance of their persecutor. By degrees he got them all into a corner, crouching together and trembling, when he would overshadow them with his train, place the ends of the feathers against the wall, so as to cover them completely, rattle the quills heartily, so as to frighten them extremely, and then walk off, looking quite exultant at the trick he had just played."

A. S. R.

(To be continued.)

# THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



## PEEPS AT FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

### NAPLES.

**A**BOUT eighteen hundred years ago, terrible calamities fell on three very celebrated cities, all of which I have no doubt my young readers have read of. The first, and by far the most dreadful, was the destruction of Jerusalem, by Titus, the Roman Emperor. The world scarcely ever witnessed such massacres of men, women, and children; such burning of great buildings

and such dreadful cruelty. Between two and three millions were either destroyed, or, when the killing was over, taken captives into foreign countries.

A few years before that they had crucified the Son of God, and the Lord who knew all about it, had foretold this dreadful calamity, and so terrible was it, that He wept when He spoke about it.

Do you see that smoking mountain in the right of our picture? Well, that is Mount Vesuvius, and just about the time that hundreds of thousands of little children were cruelly put to death in Jerusalem, there stood two cities not far from that burning mountain. The name of one was Herculaneum, of the other Pompeii. Who has not heard of the buried city of Pompeii? They were Roman cities, and very rich people were there; and they had many places of amusement, amphitheatres, banqueting houses, beautiful baths and gardens, and a great number of grand buildings. No doubt the rich people were enjoying their luxuries, little children were playing about the streets, and all were full of life and business, little dreaming that danger was near. Suddenly a great cloud of smoke burst from that mountain close by, and with it huge masses of fire; burning stones and cinders were hurled high in the air, and great bubbling masses of liquid lava boiled over the sides, came rolling towards the cities, and all were suddenly buried up, either with red hot burning lava, or showers of ashes, fine as snow-flakes, and so destroyed. What a scene of terror and death must this have been!

Many in Jerusalem would know the cause of its destruction, but what shall we say of Herculaneum and Pompeii?

Ah! you in England, where the light of the word of God shines forth, can form no idea of the unclean abominations, and the filthy wickedness, that everywhere abounded and defiled even the greatest works of genius before the gospel was known. The whole people of the cities though rich and refined and elegant were living in such indecent sins

as we dare not talk about. All this is made quite certain by horrible paintings, and filthy inscriptions which have recently been discovered in these buried cities.

Like Sodom and Gomorrah, they were overwhelmed by the judgments of God in the heyday of their sins.

So completely were these cities buried up by the lava and burning ashes, that their very sites were lost for seventeen hundred years, but about a hundred years back they were discovered by accident, and some day I may tell you a wonderful story about them.

But now I want to tell you a little about Naples, where I now live, a large city built a few miles from Vesuvius, and the two buried cities, and containing over half-a-million of people.

There are two cities that claim the most beautiful sites in the whole world; one is Constantinople, the other is this great city of Naples. And Naples is indeed a beautiful place. As you see by the picture, it is situated on a magnificent bay, and most of it on a fine hill, sloping down to the water's edge. It is very old, and like most old cities, is divided into two parts, the old and the new, and these are very different one from the other. The old is full of narrow dirty streets, lofty old buildings, and mostly inhabited by poor wretched people; but the new abounds with wide avenues, fine modern mansions, grand squares and park-like gardens. But it is the suburbs especially that make Naples look so beautiful. Everywhere you find rich vineyards, highly cultivated gardens, smiling villages and hills and dales. All the most beautiful trees seem to grow here, vines, olives, and mulberry trees; and the finest fruits and vegetables in the world.

The bay is beyond description; beautiful boats, yachts, and steamers are sailing about in all directions. Its waters are intensely blue, and so clear, that sailing across it you can see the dolphins gambolling deep down in the water, and as they shoot up above the surface they dash the water into spray which shines and sparkles in the sun like a shower of dia-

monds. And it is from the sea, as you approach the city, that its great beauty is seen.

The shore of this bay is over fifty miles in circumference. Standing out to the sea, in front of Naples, are a number of beautiful islands, all of which are covered with buildings.

One of these islands is of great interest, its present name is Pozinoli, but if you look to the Acts of the Apostles xxviii. 13, you will find its ancient name "Puteoli." It was here Paul landed a prisoner, on his way to Rome, after the terrible shipwreck at Melita, now called Malta, and here he found brethren, and tarried with them seven days. This was but a few years before the terrible destruction of Herculaneum and Pompeii, and it is not impossible that amongst those who perished, and those that fled for their lives, there may have been some devoted followers of the Lord Jesus.

It is from these islands you get the most striking view of Naples. It is in the form of an amphitheatre, curving round the shore, and rising about the slopes, which culminate in a high precipitous rock, on which stands a great castle. Every spot along that fifty-three miles of coast presents scenes of wonderful beauty; and in the distance rise ridges of lofty mountains. One of the most striking scenes in Naples is a grand promenade, running along the shores of the bay. It is said to be the most beautiful in the world. It has long avenues of trees, gardens, groves of orange and oleander, fountains, and statues. The purity of the air, the brilliant blue of the sea and sky, the distant mountains, and especially Vesuvius, with its columns of smoke, present a combination of beauty no where else to be met with.

It is now winter, and often the weather is wet and stormy, yet even in winter we have many days, so warm, so bright, so sunny, you could scarcely think it was mid-winter. The blue sea ripples and sparkles under so bright a sun that ladies are glad of their parasols, and even gentlemen and country people are glad to use their umbrellas to shade them from its blazing rays.

The most beautiful trees are plentiful in

Naples. The feathery pepper tree growing side by side with the eucalyptus, or blue gum tree of Tasmania, everywhere meets the eye. The pointed shiny leaves of the latter contrast well with the light green of the former. The eucalyptus is extensively planted in Italy, and is considered of great value in preventing a kind of fever very prevalent in some parts of the country. The fig tree is also very common here. Just now their leafless branches are much less attractive than we shall find them a month or two hence, when they will be laden with luscious fruit. Their broad leaf affords ample shelter in summer from the burning rays of the sun. You will remember that it was under such a tree that Nathaniel was musing and praying when Christ saw him.

Many houses here have flat roofs which make them look very different from English houses. Then they are built in flats, a separate family living on each floor. The staircase goes quite up to the roof, and each flat opens on to this stair. Now the roof is a great addition to the house, and is generally let off with one of the flats. Sometimes it is used as a garden, or for drying clothes, or as a play-ground for children. It is especially a pleasant spot to which to retire after the toil and heat of a hot summer's day.

It was on such a house-top that Peter was praying in Acts x., when in a vision the wonderful sheet was let down from heaven. You all know the meaning of that vision, but did you ever think of the precious little truths that are brought out in that narrative? How it illustrates that word "The eyes of the Lord are in every place," and that other word "The very hairs of our head are all numbered." The Lord knows whether every one of His own lives inland or by the sea; the name and trade of the master of the house, and the hour at which they pray, just as in the ninth chapter of the Acts, He gives the name of the street in which Saul of Tarsus was lodging at Damascus, with that of the owner of the house. It would be a real blessing to us all if we ever remembered the watchful care of God over every one of His children.

## ERNIE'S ESCAPE.

**I**N the August number for last year, of our "Bible Companion," I gave my young readers a short story about a little girl named Ernestine, who was sometimes rather giddy, but who, I am glad to say, has become much more sensible and obedient; yet like many other little heads, hers is sometimes thoughtless and forgetful. What this latter failure of memory once led to, I will now tell you. Ernie's papa had desired his little girls not to go near ponds, or streams of water, when they were out walking, as many sad accidents have occurred from children playing on the banks of rivers and ponds. But it so happened that one fine day in sunny June, Ernie quite forgot this warning; she was out walking with her maid Sarah, and her sister Bertha, who was one year younger than herself, also a very little sister called Dorothy. They found the day rather sultry, and turned out of the road into a nice park; Ernie observed, some distance off, a little girl who was bending over a pond of water, trying to catch minnows. At first she ran forward to see what the child was doing, and was followed by Bertha; when they came to the water's edge, they saw a hedge-hog in the shallow water, and believing it to be alive, and forgetting their father's caution, they ran close by the brink to take it out, but found that it was dead.

Just then some one called the little girl away, and Ernie and Bertha began trying to catch the minnows in their fingers. When Sarah and little Dorothy came up to the pond, the children prevailed on their maid to make a fishing net for them. The nurse took off her hair-net, tied it to a skipping-rope, and baiting it with a worm, let it down into the water. Bertha went to the other side of the pond, made a caul with her handkerchief, and also tried to entangle the minnows in it. They had been engaged in this manner for a short time, when Bertha suddenly heard a splash, and

looked across; what did she see? Poor Ernie floating on the water!

She had been lying on the soft mossy bank and overreached herself, when it suddenly gave way, and she slipped into the pond. Sarah made an effort to catch her, and draw her out; but Ernie being much frightened, and her clothes heavy with water, she pulled the servant in also. Sarah fell in face foremost, and her feet and boots were alone visible above water. Little Dorothy, although so young, had the courage to catch at Ernie's long floating hair, and hold her head above water, screaming to Bertha for help; the latter ran round to the scene of the disaster, and succeeded in catching Ernie under the arms and pulling her out, in an almost insensible state, with closed eyes, and a trance-like smile on her face; but finding herself once more safely on land, she recovered consciousness, and began to cry. And now Bertha's attention was directed to poor Sarah, who had sunk a third time, after two fruitless efforts to rise; aided by the terrified Ernie, brave Bertha succeeded in raising her, when she clung to the bank, and scrambled out. She could scarcely realize what had occurred, and the children were hardly able to lead her to a cottage near the pond, where a kind woman took off their dripping clothes, and lent them some of her own. What a dismal figure poor Ernie looked, as she stood before the fire, clad in the cottager's long gown and jacket, in which plight she was obliged to return home.

Poor little girl! she was very much afraid of incurring her parents' anger, for having forgotten her father's express injunction to keep away from water; but when he heard that his little girl had so narrowly escaped being drowned, or smothered in the water, he forgave her; as she had really *forgotten* his advice, and not been guilty of intentional disobedience.

Bertha's friends agree in thinking, that she, and little Dorothy ought to have been presented



with the "Royal Humane Society's Medal, for saving life."

I cannot help remarking that I *think* Sarah the maid was most to blame on this occasion, for encouraging her little charges in such a dangerous amusement, as fishing for minnows on the brink of a pond, with a hair net and skipping rope, but as I know her to be a nice steady girl in other respects, I can only suppose that she was tempted to be thus silly, from over indulgence to the children.

And now, my little friends, I have told you

this story as a warning not to play near water, as it is at all times unsafe, for we never know when an accident may occur, and perhaps if you were alone, you might be drowned, or even if other young friends were with you they might be drowned also, for you might drag them in.

It is always well for children to ask themselves, when they go into dangerous places, Would my parents approve of me being here? And then memory would act its part as a faithful monitor.

K. B. K.

## THE WONDERS OF WATER.

### SPRINGS.

**W**E have seen that by an invisible, but universal agency, called evaporation, water is constantly ascending alike from the ocean and the land. This invisible vapour being drawn together in the atmosphere again descends, sometimes in gentle and fertilizing showers; or, at others, in deluging torrents, spreading death and destruction in their path.

What a beautiful sight is a spring! Whether gently it oozes from the verdant bank, or gushes furiously from the riven rock. Sometimes it is found hidden away in a retired dell, where its pure murmuring waters flow on, giving birth to mosses, flowering plants, and the richest verdure. Some springs are of great force, bubbling up from the surface of the earth, or from crevices in rocks. More wonderful still, in some places they are found in the sea itself, where immense volumes of pure fresh water boil up, even to the surface.

Springs and wells are as ancient as the world. The history of not a few may be traced back thousands of years. Every one of my readers will remember the wells and springs of Scripture. How Hagar's heart must have leaped for joy, at the sight of the well whose waters saved her cast out and perishing child.

Who has not been moved by the touching story of Abraham's servant and the fair damsel Rebekah, at the side of a well? How important they were in the history of Abraham and Isaac. It was at a well that Jacob first saw and loved his Rachel. Who will ever forget that well where the Lord Himself sat, wearied and thirsty, but both of which were soon forgotten in ministering living water to that poor one who found Him there?

In England we value water cheaply, but in hot sandy deserts what a source of life, what a little paradise is produced by a spring! Often it is the only spot in a boundless district giving shade and refreshing water to the tired famishing traveller. Many thrilling stories have been told of Eastern travellers on their camels, when their water was all exhausted, making desperate efforts to reach some well known spring, arriving only to find the water dried up; and hopeless, to lie down and die.

Do you ask, How are springs formed? Let me try and make this plain to you. Very much of the rain and melted snow soon finds its way by runnels, streams, and rivers, back to the sea; but immense quantities sink into the earth. Do you say, That water then must be lost? By no means. It may be out of sight, but it is never lost. All that water after-

travelling it may be miles and miles, and sinking even deeper than the sea, will somehow or other find its way back again to the surface. You know that most soils and many rocks are pervious; that is, will let water sink through them, and besides, sometimes there are crevices or great cracks in rocks. Through these, the underground water will make its way lower and lower. But soon it will come to a very hard and impervious rock or solid bed of clay, through which it cannot pass. If this be in a

surface. With other drops it works its way through crevices and tunnels of the rocks, perhaps many thousand feet deep, until it reaches some rock through which it cannot make further way downwards. But all this time it has been followed by other drops, which form an accumulation of water, and press heavily upon it. By this means the pent up water if it cannot find crevices downwards, may find its way through cracks and passages upwards, and so it will wind up and



HOT SPRINGS.

hilly country, the water will follow the rock or clay, till it finds surface ground about its own level, and then it will come bubbling out in a spring.

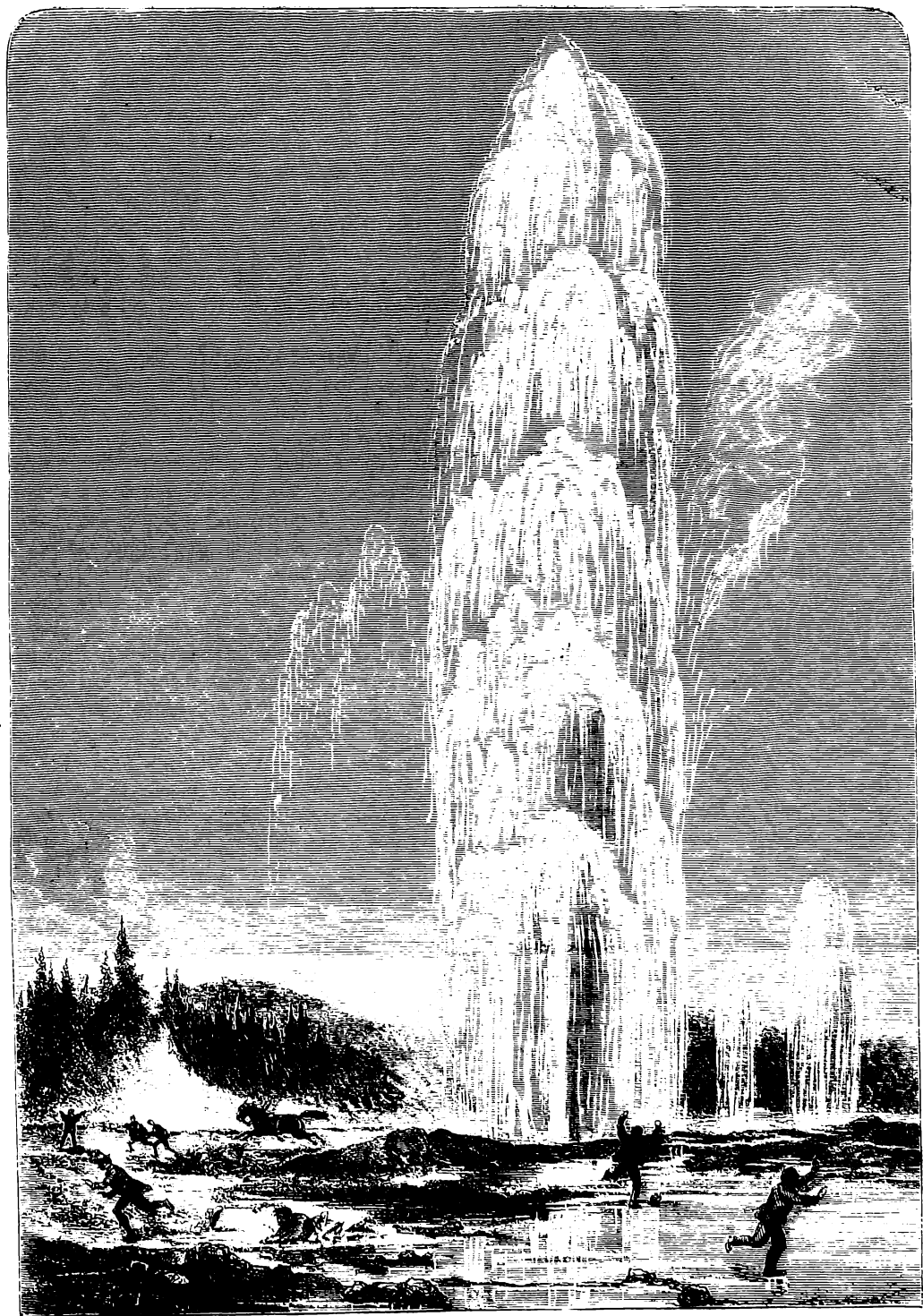
But underground water will descend below the valleys, or even, as I have said, below the bottom of the sea, and yet at last it also will find its way to the surface again. Let us follow a particular drop of water from the time it sinks into the earth as rain, to the time, when after a long journeying up and down in the bowels of the earth, it at last comes to the

down till it comes to the surface again, and there it breaks out as a gushing spring.

By this process there is always a vast amount of water accumulated in the bowels of the earth, and these sometimes collect in vast underground reservoirs.

I will now tell you a little of the many kinds of springs that are found.

1.—*Perennial*: These never cease to flow. They may be called living fountains. The longest drought scarcely affects them, and no doubt they come from those vast reservoirs I



have just named. Such is the celebrated spring of St. Winifred, at Holywell, in Flintshire, one of the finest in the world. Not less than eighty-four hogsheads, or twenty-one tons of water per minute, rushes from the rock, and in its short course to the sea, of about a mile, turns no fewer than eleven mills. This is but as a drop compared with some springs in foreign countries. There is one at Vaucluse, in France, which sends forth an average of over 9000 cubic feet of water every minute, sufficient to form a good sized river.

2.—*Artesian Wells.* These fountains are very ancient, and of great interest. In many parts of the world, even on very low levels, by boring to a great depth through solid rocks, not only are large bodies of water found, but it comes bubbling up to the very surface. They have been long in use at Artois, in France, and hence their name. The explanation of these wells is very simple. In the way I have just described, this water has found its way from very high ground, it may be immense mountain ranges, hundreds of miles distant. It has got under strata of solid rock in which no upward cracks could be found. Such is the pressure of the great body of water from the distant hills, or high ground, that the moment that rock is pierced by boring, the water is forced upwards, and would continue to rise, till it reached the level from which it originally came.

There are many such wells in London. A great supply of the purest water has been obtained for Chicago, in the United States, by this means, and there have been Artesian wells in Stuttgart for many hundred years. It will readily be seen how valuable such wells must be in great sandy deserts. Already several have been sunk in the great desert of Sahara, by the French government; some of which give forth over 6000 gallons of water per minute. Great was the rejoicing when the first was completed, and the water came rushing out of the ground. The poor Arabs sprang in crowds to the spot, bathing themselves in the welcome water, into which mothers dipped their children, and not a few fell on their knees and

wept. The time may yet come when great tracts of barren land may be turned into fruitful gardens by this simple means.

3.—*Tidal Springs.* These are springs that continually ebb and flow, like the tide. The pool of Siloam is a remarkable spring of this kind. Some are to be found in our own country, and many abroad. The cause of these has never been fully explained, and it would take me too long to tell you all the conjectures about them.

4.—*Thermal Springs.* You have all heard of hot water springs. It is well known that deep down in the earth there is immense heat. Many of these springs are supposed to come from these great depths. We have many in England. I have bathed in those at Buxton, which are exceedingly refreshing, and the warmth of which never varies, day or night, summer or winter. There are others at Stoney Middleton and Matlock. Those in the south of England, especially at Bath, are much warmer. They chiefly abound in countries of extinct or active volcanoes. There are many about Naples, Rome, the Alps, and in Iceland. Indeed they are found in nearly every part of the globe. On landing on one of the Fiji Islands, the beach was found to be absolutely steaming, and a short distance off were five springs; the waters of which, were at boiling point.

5.—*Ebullient Springs* are the last I shall be able to tell you about. These are sometimes quiet, at others very violent, and send off vast clouds of steam, and throw up their scalding water to a great height. In the island of St. Michael, one of the Azores, is found a round deep and lovely valley, its sides covered with myrtles, laurels, and mountain grapes, with wheat, Indian corn, and poplars. Here are many boiling fountains, but the chief one is found on a gentle eminence, near a river, and boils with great fury. Many are met with in Iceland. Within a circle of two miles in one district, above a hundred are to be found. One of these, the largest in the world, presents a most magnificent spectacle, an engraving of

which, by the kindness of the Editor of "The Leisure Hour," we are able to present to our readers. It is thus described by an eye-witness: "At the distance of several miles, we could see from the clouds of vapour that were rising in the air, the spot where one of the most magnificent scenes in nature is displayed." The great fountain in its quiet state presents the appearance of a large circular mound, formed by the depositions of the fountain. Ascending the mound, a spacious basin is seen, filled with hot water, clear as crystal, and gently bubbling. The basin is about 150 feet round, and when full, the water is about four feet deep.

Such is the fountain when asleep! The whole scene changes when it is in action; ex-

plosions in the bowels of the earth, like cannons, shake the ground, warning any who are near to escape for their lives; the water commences to boil furiously, and at last, it is suddenly thrown into the air, in a succession of jets, till a magnificent column is sent up to a great height. This is the grandest part of the exhibition. The atmosphere is filled with immense volumes of steam, rolling over each other as they ascend. This has been seen by many travellers, and sometimes the jet will be thrown over 200 feet in height.

Such are some of the wonderful incidents connected with springs. In our next chapter, if the Lord will, we shall come to rapids, rivers and lakes.

## THE RABBIT.

**M**ANY of you are aware, the Rabbit is the most fruitful little animal in our Island, and if it were not prevented from multiplying by many enemies, it would speedily eat up every green thing. An old heathen writer, named Pliny, who, like Solomon, made himself acquainted with nearly everything in the world, well observes that nature "hath showed great kindness in causing those things to be most prolific that are the most harmless and the properest for our food." If we say God, instead of nature, this is true of the Rabbit. Pennant, whom I have quoted before, and who wrote much on birds and animals just one hundred-and-two years ago, tells us they will breed seven times a year, and bring eight young ones each time; should this continue without interruption for four years, one single pair and their progeny, would produce no fewer than 1,274,840 Rabbits.

But, as I have said, they have a large number of enemies who effectually prevent this enormous increase. In our country, an immense number are constantly killed for food.

Then the ferret, the squirrel, the weasel, and the hawk, are also his deadly foes. Still, ancient history tells us that in the Balcaric Islands, situated not far from Spain, and in the time of the Roman Empire, Rabbits multiplied so plentifully that the whole Islands were overrun, and the people had to implore the help of soldiers from Augustus, the Roman Emperor, to rid them from the calamity.

It is pretty clear that the Rabbit has not been many hundred years in our country. The time when it first settled in Britain is unknown. The general conviction is, that it was first introduced to Spain from Africa by the Romans; from which country it gradually spread, and became naturalized throughout the temperate parts of Europe. Five hundred and fifty years ago, they were so scarce in England as to be worth sixpence each, a great sum in that day, and sufficient to purchase a whole pig. History tells us that at a great feast, the installation of the Abbot of St. Austins, six hundred Rabbits were served up as a great dainty. As a proof of how rapidly they increase, I may tell you that it is only a

few years since a few were taken to Australia and let loose, and now they have increased to such an extent as to have become quite a nuisance.

I have no doubt many of my boy readers have got their tame rabbits, as I had when I was a boy, and you know their interesting little ways; what they like to eat; how needful it is to keep them from the damp; and that they must only be taken up by their ears; you know too, how tame little Bunny will become, and how gladly he will nibble the parsley from your hand. Much that I have forgotten you will know very well, and your little sisters too, who love them quite as much, and perhaps more tenderly than you do. Moreover, as it is our wild animals I am telling you about, let me give you some account of the Rabbit in its wild state of freedom.

All I need to say about its description is, that it is very like the hare, only smaller. Its habits are very different. The hare provides itself with no well-formed home; but is content to squat in any concealed place on the ground: it lives a solitary life; it always trusts to flight or stratagem for safety; it never seeks security in the earth or in trees; nor does it ever prepare a nest for its young. In all these particulars the habits of the Rabbit are the very opposite. He likes to live in a country which has deep dells, and steep banks of red sandstone or sand. If on the surface there is a rich growth of tender grasses, and sweet-smelling herbs, Bunny is all the more delighted. In these sand-hills he digs deep burrows, along which he forms quite a number of chambers. Here is his home, and to this he immediately flies in case of danger. He is said to be very particular about the formation of this burrow or dwelling. If possible, the entrance is lower than any other part of it, so that it may never be flooded by rains. At the very end of a separate burrow the female builds a home or nursery for her baby Bunnies. She bestows great care on this home, making a most com-

fortable nest of moss and dry leaves, and then thickly lining it with the soft warm fur from her own body.

In this we see a clear illustration of those wonderful instincts which God has given to all His creatures. If the Rabbit took no more precaution for the protection of its young, perhaps every one of them would perish. The hare provides no nest whatever, because her young have no need of such a shelter.

They are born covered with fur, and able to see, and can almost immediately feed themselves. How different with the young of the Rabbit! They are so naked, that the least exposure to cold would destroy them; they are totally blind and helpless for ten or twelve days, and not able to leave the burrow till they are four or five weeks old. It is said that every time she leaves her family the mother carefully covers them up to protect them from the cold. Now who has taught those two animals in some things so much alike, all this difference in the care needed for their young? It is not experience; for the young mother Bunny makes as much provision for her first family as her last. No, we can trace all this forethought and tender affection, as in a thousand other instances, to the wisdom and care of Him who at first made all things "very good."

Rabbits, like hares, are found most where there is a rich covering of ferns, in parks or commons covered with furze, and especially in woods, from which they sally forth in search of food. They are so valuable for the market, and increase so rapidly that large commons or waste lands are devoted to their feeding and increase. These are called Rabbit warrens, and here immense numbers congregate together, where at the close of the day, and especially on a warm moonlight night, many hundreds may be seen for hours, sporting in the most amusing manner. They will gambol together and chase each other with wonderful rapidity, but the moment there is the least alarm, their flight to the burrows is instant and surprising.

## MY GREAT SINS AND MY GREAT SAVIOUR.

**I**T was a snowy day in February that a man, living amid the snow capped mountains of Persia, appeared in his Koordish dress, with his belt of ammunition, his dagger at his side, and his gun thrown over his shoulder, at the school of the missionary, amongst the Nestorians, to see his daughter, then in the seminary. It proved to be the time of spiritual awakening with the children; and among others that had sought and found the Saviour, was his own child, who soon appealed to her father, with deep feeling, to seek the salvation of his soul, and asked him to go along with her and pray.

The hardy mountaineer laughed, but went with her, and as she prayed, "Lord, save my father from going to destruction," he raised his hand to strike her; but God kept her from harm.

They left the place of prayer; but God heard that child's cry. The father grew more fierce—Christians pleaded with him in vain, and the missionary at last said, "I see you do not wish me to speak with you of your soul; but I can still PRAY for you."

The missionary turned, and was about leaving him, when he burst into tears, and said, "My sister, I need this salvation. I will go and pray for myself."

"My sins, my sins!" was the bitter cry of his soul, "they are higher than Jelu mountains." But he was soon able to rest his soul on the precious atoning blood of Christ, and his cry became, "My great sins, and my GREAT SAVIOUR!"

Returning to his mountain home, he gathered his old companions, and ever after delighted to tell them "of sin and of Christ," and laboured hard to win their souls to the Saviour; while the mountain passes were made to ring with the notes of the hymns, "*Rock of Ages*," and "*There is a fountain filled with blood*," as he went through the districts telling of "sin and salvation," till he was called to glory, shouting, "OH, IT IS FREE GRACE! FREE GRACE!" while his child, with whom he first knelt in prayer, was at his side, and her voice in supplication was the last earthly sound that fell upon his ear.

Dear young Reader, let me ask you,—Have you received the "free grace" of God which this Persian sinner proved sufficient for salvation? If not, come now to Jesus, as you are; for He "will in no wise cast out," and you shall soon join the mighty throng before the throne, from every kindred, clime, and tongue, and

"Hail Him who saved you by His GRACE,  
And crown Him Lord of all."

## ORNITHOLOGY.

### ORDER V.

HERE we have the "*Waders*," for example, the crane, water hen, and the solemn-looking stork—a most affectionate parent. As these species live seeking their food generally amongst the waters, some swim, but those that cannot are provided with long legs, for wading, or long bills, for penetrating the mud, usually both.

A rare, and very peculiar-looking bird,

belonging to this Order—which has, too, a very long beak and very long legs—is the Australian Jabiru. It is one of the giants of the feathered race. Dr. Bennett, in relating of one he possessed, writes:—"When he was first placed in the yard where some poultry were kept he started at the fowls, and they ran away on his approach, although he did not make the least attempt to molest them; and when striding

round the yard all the poultry fled before him, although it did not appear to be an intentional chase on his part. There happened to be a pugnacious fussy little bantam cock in the yard, who would not permit the intrusion of any stranger, and, on seeing the Jabiru, he strutted up with expanded and fluttering wings and ruffled feathers, in a violent state of excitement, cackling and screaming most vehemently, and making efforts as energetic as so diminutive a bird was capable of, to frighten and drive him out of the yard. The Jabiru, with his keen eyes, regarded the little fluttering object with cool contempt, and walked about as before; the bantam followed. At last the Jabiru turned and strode after the consequential little urchin as if to crush him under his feet; when the bantam, seeing matters take this serious turn, made off as fast as possible, like all little bullies, and did not again venture to attack so formidable an opponent."

#### ORDER VI.

WE now proceed to the last order—that of birds having *webbed feet*, and can swim; consequently the goose, swan, pelican, gull, &c., cause it to be a curiously interesting one. At the Zoological Gardens many of these birds are to be seen; and, one summer's morning there, a little family of cygnets was basking on the bank of one of the islands, while the parent birds were swimming near complacently watching their little ones. Suddenly a carrion crow made a dash at one of the cygnets. The enraged father seized the felon on the instant with his bill. In vain the surprised crow struggled to get free; the old swan dragged his enemy into the lake and held it under water until it was drowned.

Having now seen how birds are scientifically classed, try to remember them, thus:—

Order.	1—Birds of Prey (Example: the Eagle)
"	2—Perching Birds ( " the Robin)
"	3—Climbing Birds ( " the Wren)
"	4—Poultry Birds ( " the Peacock)
"	5—Wading Birds ( " the Jabiru)
and	6—Web-footed Birds ( " the Swan)

Now, every little and big bird known has, as well as its English name, a Latin, one; so every little boy who learns Latin should endeavour to get on, and, instead of exclaiming when he finds a difficulty, "there can't be use in learning Latin," let him think of that encouraging little verse,

"If you find your task is hard,  
Try, try, try again.  
"Time will bring you your reward,  
Try, try, try again."

Later in life were he to study Ornithology, a knowledge of the Latin language would be of very great service to him.

Should, however, you, little reader, ask "What is the good of Ornithology?" you should know that those who wish for illustrations of the wonderful works of God's creation can scarcely have their desires more fully gratified than in studying Ornithology—to learn of the instincts and habits of birds, "Whereby" says an esteemed writer, "they are enabled, in many instances, to surpass efforts of man's ingenuity, foresight, and philosophy."

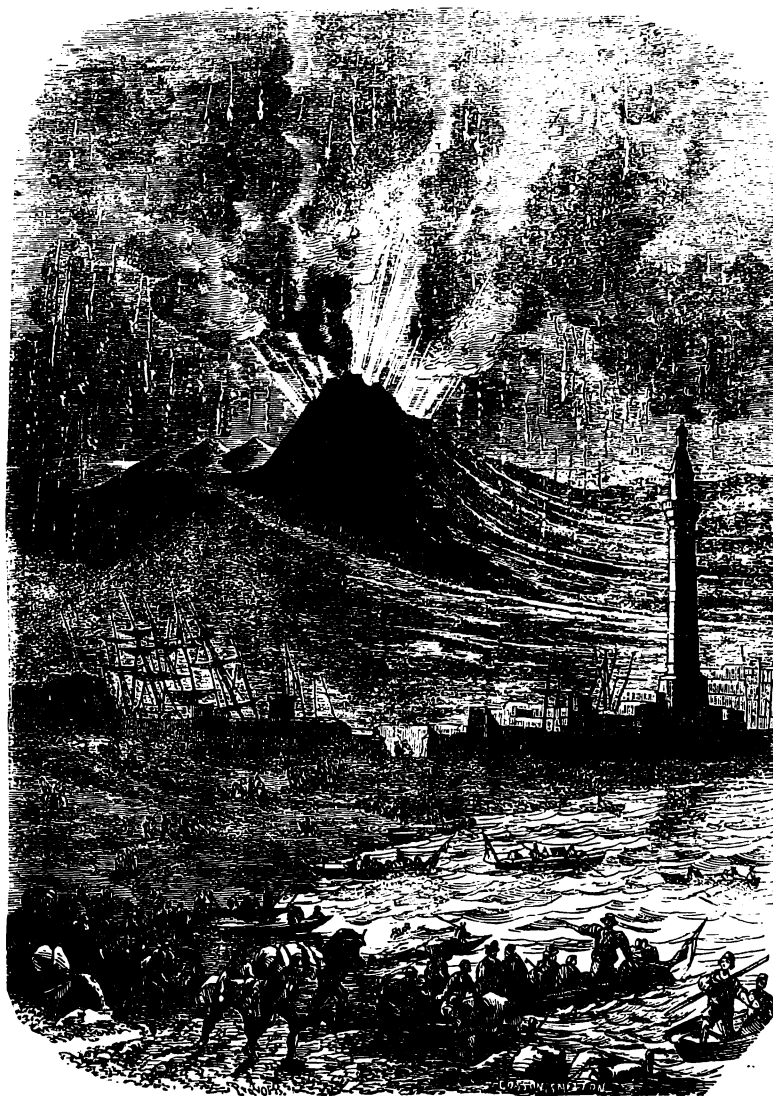
A. S. R.

### I AM COMING.

I AM coming, little children,  
I am coming in the air;  
From my Father's home in heaven,  
To take My loved ones there.  
My trumpeter's preparing,  
I will bid him soon to go;  
The archangel, he is pluming  
His wings to fly below.

Yes, children, I am coming,  
Aye! surely, quickly, soon;  
I'll not say, 'twill be morning,  
I'll not say, 'twill be noon.  
But I want you to be ready,  
I love you all so well,  
You are poor, and weak, and needy,  
Then come and with Me dwell.





PEEPS AT FOREIGN COUNTRIES.  
VESUVIUS AND POMPEII.

**L**AST month, we took a peep at the beautiful city of Naples. This month, I will tell you a little more about the burning mountain Vesuvius, and the long buried but recently discovered Pompeii.

It is quite clear now that far back, many hundred years before our year one, and before any history was written, there had been volcanic eruptions in all that district, but there was no such mountain as now exists. There was a slight eminence and precipitous rocks,

and something like a crater, that is, a great centre basin, but all this was covered with the most luxuriant verdure, rich vines and delicious fruit trees of every description. The land sloped down to the water's edge in all directions, and vast magnificent mountains bounded the view at a great distance from the sea. The summer climate especially was most luxuriant. So that you see all things conspired to make this spot most suited to those who lived for all the enjoyment this world could possibly give.

And so when Rome grew up to be the mistress of the world, and a great many of her citizens, by commerce and war, became exceedingly rich, this was one of the places they flocked to, where they built the beautiful cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii, and covered the whole country round with elegant villas, all decorated with marble statues and rich paintings, and all that can gratify the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life.

Of Herculaneum little can be said as it was buried from fifty to a hundred feet deep with solid melted lava, but recent discoveries have made known that Pompeii was a city of about 20,000 people, that it had a large number of public buildings, especially heathen temples, places of amusement, and mansions belonging to the most noted Roman poets, statesmen, and citizens.

There is not much to be said about the history of these places, till about 300 years before their destruction. They were, however, very ancient places, walled cities, and had had their share of wars and sieges, which I pass over to come at once to their terrible downfall.

The plan of Pompeii was oval, and covers an area of about 160 acres of land, the walls were about twenty feet high and twenty feet thick. It had six gates; the streets were narrow, not more than twenty feet wide, but well and regularly arranged. The finest thoroughfare, the street of the silversmiths, was double that width, exceedingly well paved, and as might be expected contained the most magnificent buildings. But the principal part of the city was the forum, a large oblong area, paved with

slabs of marble, richly ornamented with the choicest works of the sculptor, the architect, and the painter. It was the great place of public resort. There came the idle to enquire after the news, men of business to make their bargains, friends to meet their friends, suitors to attend the courts; magistrates here met to execute justice, orators harangued and the people shouted: in short, all public business and sports, and pleasures, were transacted here, and it was large enough to contain the whole population. The Romans were madly fond of cruel sports. No doubt many of my young readers have already read of their gladiatorial and bloody conflicts, men fighting with wild beasts, as spoken of by the apostle in 1 Cor. xv. 32, of prisoners being torn to pieces by them, and of the great numbers of Christians that were so destroyed, because they would not deny Christ. The whole population came together on such occasions, and nothing so much delighted them as to see beasts tear each other to pieces; and even refined women would rejoice and clap their hands to see a bold man slay a wild animal in their theatres; and when one gladiator overcame another, if the vanquished one had displayed the least want of courage or skill they would shout to the victor to cut to pieces his fallen antagonist, and then they would crown the conqueror with laurels. What a proof is all this that not refinement, nor riches, nor intelligence, nor the greatest development of the fine arts, painting, poetry, sculpture, will make men kind one towards another, much less godly. No, it was not till the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men had appeared, that men were brought to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

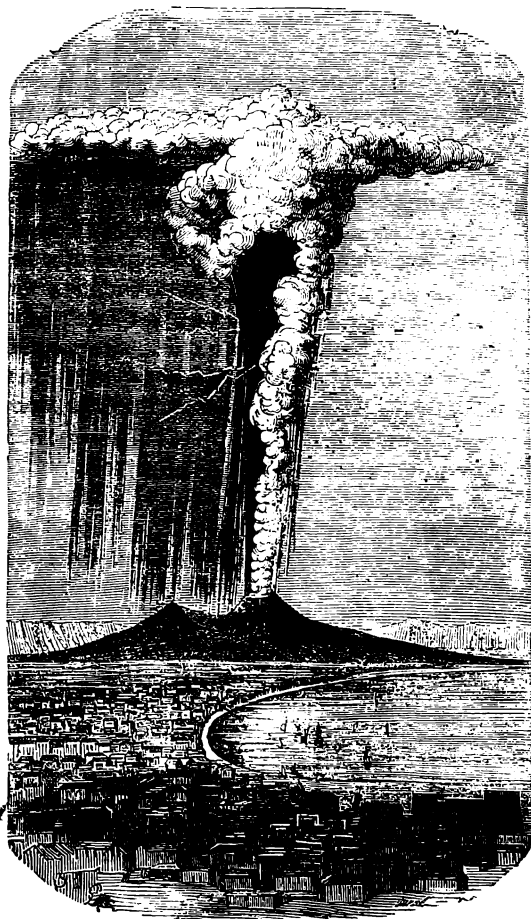
For several years there had been earthquakes which had done much damage to Pompeii, but they were not heeded. Gay people crowded the theatres to witness the gladiatorial fights; busy groups thronged the streets and market every day, and all day long. It was a charming walk through the city—a delightful prospect that

from the market place, of the well-built houses, and elegant temples, backed up by a sky of intense blue, and the outline of the snow-topped mountains in the distance. There was Vesuvius, beautiful Vesuvius, covered to its very top with elegant villas and fruitful vineyards, against which not a thought of suspicion had ever arisen—little did they think it was to become their destroyer. But so it was, on the 24th of August, A.D. 98, after several shocks of earthquake, a dark cloud of vapour and smoke was seen to arise high into the air. It was in shape like a pine tree, with a stem of enormous length, reaching to the very heavens and then spreading out in every direction. This was an instantaneous and enormous discharge of earth and ashes intermingled with flame, showers of stones and mud, the glare and brilliancy of which were beheld at a great distance. The ashes fell far out into the sea which itself retreated some distance from the shore.

We present a sketch of an eruption which took place more than a hundred years ago, a full description of which was written at the time. The column of fire, ashes, smoke and stone rose unbroken 10,000 feet into the air before it dispersed its contents, and then the ashes were so widely scattered that some fell as far as Constantinople in one direction, and Egypt in another.

A very minute account was written by an eye witness, Pliny the younger, of the terrible destruction of Pompeii, which is indeed the only one we have, and heartrending indeed is the description he gives. The buildings all around tottered, the people fled from the city in the greatest consternation, the ground so shook, that chariots were of no use, the sea was driven from its banks by the convulsive motion of the earth. As they were thus hastening away ashes covering them as they went, he turned his head, and observed a thick smoke, which came rolling after them like a torrent, and dense darkness immediately overspread the whole place. Nothing was to be heard but the shrieks of women, the screams of children, and

the cries of men; some calling for their parents, others for their husbands, and only distinguishing each other by the sound of their voices. At length a glimmering light appeared, the forerunner of a terrible burst of ashes, fire, and flames. Then again they were immersed in thick darkness; and he could only come to



the conclusion, that they were all perishing with the world itself. At last this dreadful darkness was dispelled, the real day returned, and the sun appeared once again.

But Pompeii was gone! It was buried under that shower of ashes, stones, and mud, and it is estimated that 2000 people perished in its ruins. There have been many eruptions

since then which have added to that which covered the city. How its very place was lost for 1700 years, and how by an accident its site was discovered, how one third of that

buried city has been disintombed, and what wonderful discoveries have since been made, I must tell you in another number, if the Lord will.

## AN EARLY LOSS.

**K**ATHIE'S papa had been a long time ill, at least it appeared so to the little girl; he had complained for three years of great pain in his back and side; he looked pale, and often could not move about the room without moaning; at last he became so very ill as to be unable to leave his bed, except to lie for a little while on a sofa. He was not an elderly man, for his hair was still black and curly, and his face only looked wrinkled when a spasm of pain passed over it. Kathie loved her papa very much, for he had always been very indulgent to her, and made rather a pet of her; she could remember the time, when he had been well, and able to take her for a walk, or to see sights, so it made her feel sad to see him so very ill; and on two occasions when she came home from spending some time with kind relatives, she could not help crying to see how much worse he was rapidly becoming, and how he moaned with pain if he tried to exert himself.

Poor Kathie was not a converted child; by that I mean she did not love the Lord Jesus, or know He loved her, and had washed away her sins in His blood: she used to learn Scripture lessons, and chapters of the Bible, but she rather disliked that, and thought Sunday a dull wearisome day, because she could not play with her toys, nor paint pictures, nor work on it. She often sat in her sick father's room on Sunday afternoons, and when she had no other book to read she would take his large Bible, and read the strange stories in the "Apocrypha," a collection of historical tales about the Chaldean captivity of the children of Israel, which was frequently bound up in old-fashioned Bibles. Her tender father often

encouraged her to learn her lessons with diligence, or set her a copy with his own hand that she might write nicely when she grew up, and be a well-educated girl. Kathie is now grown up, but she has still in her possession two old yellow-tinged letters which that fond father wrote her when he was away from home trying to get a little better, at a nice place where there were some mineral baths; in these letters he exhorts her to try and be a good girl and please God, and have His blessing; and he tells her how he prayed for her, and her mamma and little brothers and sisters, while away from them; and asked the Lord if it was His will to let him get well again for their sakes.

One cold stormy day in early March, Kathie's papa became much worse; but still his friends did not think death was so near: at nine o'clock in the evening the little girl came in to say good-night, and see her papa before she went to bed; he looked very worn and weary, and was preparing to be settled for the night. As Kathie stood beside his bed he took up his watch to look at the hour, and then wound it slowly; after he had finished he kissed Kathie and said good-night; poor dear papa! he did not then know that it was to be his last interview on earth with his little girl, and a *good-bye kiss* for many long years. She went to bed and was soon asleep, but was awakened at an early hour in the morning by voices talking in the room where she slept; and she looked round, she saw a candle lighting, and her grandmama who did not live in the house, standing at the fireplace speaking to the maid. She was much surprised and asked what it all meant, but was only told that something very sad had occurred, and that she must

lie down like a good child, and try to go asleep again. This she could not do, and at last her grandmama told her that her dear papa had died during the night. After the children's breakfast she was allowed to go into the room where he died; but oh! what a sad sight. There lay a cold white motionless face turned upwards, with half closed eyes, and rigid features; and hands, stiff and immovable on the white covering of the bed: how she cried and sobbed, and when she stooped down to kiss his face what a chill ran through her when she felt how cold and damp he was.

A great sorrow had fallen on all in that sad still house, and poor Kathie felt the loss of her father keenly, for she had been, as I have said before, a very favourite child of his. When she looked on his cold dead form she believed he was with his Saviour; but she did not know, if she *would*, or *could* ever go to that blessed presence herself.

On Sunday morning, three days after her papa's death, her grandmama called her into the room to see him as he lay in his coffin, told her, she might go into the garden, and gather some little flowers, (if she could find any that severe wintry weather,) to place in the coffin before it was nailed down. Poor Kathie wandered sorrowfully into the long winding shrubbery, and found under the trees, some sweet blue violets which she knew her father had planted there himself, and was particularly fond of their sweet fragrance; these she carefully collected in her pocket handkerchief and laid on his mournful coffin. Her grandmama spoke to her of the Saviour's love in dying for poor sinners, and the happiness of those who trusted in Him for salvation; and how God had promised to be a Father to the fatherless; but poor Kathie's heart was full of earthly sorrow then, and it was not until long years afterwards, that she realized these precious truths, and gave her heart to Christ Jesus as her own dear personal Saviour.

Dear children! perhaps some of you who read this may have lost loving parents, but if they knew and loved the Lord Jesus as their

Saviour, and had their sins washed away in His blood, death was to them great gain; for they are at rest in the Presence of the Lord, never to feel pain or sorrow any more. But to all who do not love the Lord Jesus, death is a terrible thing, for it is darkness and misery and eternal night. Oh! which will you choose? Jesus, who invites you to-day, to come to be His, or hardness of heart, and the empty things of *this world*, which the word of God tells us passeth away?

One March day past, in childhood's hours  
I wandered forth to weep,  
And turn'd amidst the pleasant bowers,  
Where early flowerets peep:  
The dearest friend of childhood's years,  
Lay mute in early death,  
He had—(sweet hope 'midst sorrow's tears)  
To God resigned his breath.

I brought amid the wintry blast,  
Some gentle flowerets' bloom,  
To offer—'ere I look my last  
On him—'midst coffin'd gloom.  
The golden crocus bloom'd around,  
I turned from it away,  
His hand had placed it in the ground,  
But still it shone too gay.

I searched the dark-green violet bed,  
It was his *planting* too,  
Already it sweet odours shed,  
Breath'd from its buds of blue,  
I wrapped them in my kerchief white  
And laid them on his heart,  
Sweet embers of that land of light  
Where death shall never part.

Just underneath his shroud they lay,  
The last night on this earth,  
I ever saw that precious clay,  
The mainspring of my birth.  
Their odour fill'd that narrow bed,  
The coffin where he slept.  
A trembling child, I bow'd my head  
Upon its lid--and wept.

Sweet Violets! when I meet you now,  
You call those memories back,  
And 'mind me of that pale dead brow.  
In life's past vista's track;  
And as you bloom each spring anew,  
You whisper, he must rise,  
In *fresh new life*,--my father true,  
When, "God shall wipe all eyes."

K. B. K.

## THE OTTER.

**I**HAVE no doubt, as each of our wild animals has come before us, we have felt how wonderfully God has adapted every one for the sphere in which it is destined to live, both for procuring food suited to it, and for defending itself against its natural enemies. This is especially true of the animal I have now to describe. The Otter is aquatic; that is, it spends much of its time in the water. Hence we see that from its nose to the very tip of its tail it is so formed as to be admirably adapted to aquatic habits. Let me describe its shape and make. From the snout to the end of the tail it is three feet three inches long, the tail being no less than sixteen inches in length. The head and nose are broad and flat, the neck short, and equal in thickness to the head; the body long, the tail broad at the base, tapering off to a point at the end, and it is flattened the whole way from the top to its point. Now no shape could be more adapted for swift motion through the water than this. The eyes are very small, and placed nearer the nose than is usual in quadrupeds—just in that position that, whether the animal is behind, above, or below, the fish it is in pursuit of, it can with slight effort see where it is—the ears are extremely short and their opening narrow. The opening of the mouth is small, the lips strong and capable of being brought very close together; the nose and the corners of the mouth are supplied with very long whiskers. It has no fewer than thirty-six teeth. Its legs are very short, but remarkably strong and broad, and the joints so constructed that the animal is capable of turning them quite back, and bringing them in a line with its body, so as to perform the same service as fins to a fish. Besides this, each foot is supplied with five toes, connected with strong, broad webs, like those of a swan. It would be impossible to conceive of an animal more perfectly fitted to live on the land, and at the same time find its food in the water.

As fish is its natural food, it must live near the water; and to be able to catch its slippery, but most active prey, it must have wonderful agility and power when in the water. Such we find to be the case. It swims and dives with great swiftness. Then its fur, too, is just fitted for the water. It consists of an under coat of close, short, and waterproof wool, and an outer one of long, coarse, glossy hairs. The Otter is exceedingly shy, as much as possible retiring from all observation. On this account, it wanders forth and seeks its food more in the night than in the day. It displays great sagacity in forming its habitation; burrowing underground on the banks of some river or lake, the entrance to which it always makes below the surface of the water. This burrow it continues a great distance, working upwards towards the surface of the earth. Along this lengthy passage the Otter will make a number of lodges, that in case of high floods he may have a place of safe retreat. One singular feature about the Otter's habits is that, fond as it is of the water, where it must spend so much of its time, no animal is more particular to provide itself with a comfortable, dry nest. You may wonder how it manages to get air to breathe, seeing the entrance to its nest or lodge is always below the water. This it provides for by making a very small opening from its lodge to the surface of the ground, just large enough to admit sufficient air, and no larger. Such is its sagacity that even this small opening is always made in the centre of some thick bush, so as more effectually to conceal its retreat. It is here, in a snug, dry bed of leaves, the female Otter brings forth and rears her little family of four or five young ones. She is very motherly in all her attentions; caring for their wants with much solicitude, and defending them with great courage.

History tells us that the Otter was plentiful when the Romans first invaded our island, now, as you know, more than 1900 years ago. Our wild, and almost naked, forefathers spent

much of their time in hunting the Otter ; indeed this sport was one of his chief sources of amusement. And the Otter was as wild as them, and proved himself game worthy of their mettle. But now let me tell you how destructive he is to the fish in our rivers and lakes. He is voracious, bold, and active ; in the deepest waters, though he must live on the land and breathe the air, he is as much at home as the fish themselves ; and, swimming with the greatest swiftness and skill, he never misses his prey.

'Cassell's Popular History' aptly describes the great havoc the Otter makes in our waters. "It follows up its prey silently, and with indomitable perseverance, through every turn and maze, ever keeping the victim in sight, which, after a chase of longer or shorter duration, is exhausted, captured, and killed. Nor is the Otter less remarkable for its graceful elegance than for the vigour of its movements in the water. Whoever has witnessed the feeding of those kept in the gardens of the Zoological Society cannot fail to have remarked the fine sweep of the body as the Otter plunges into the water, its undulating movements beneath the surface while exploring for the prey, the abrupt and arrow-like velocity of the pursuit, and the easy return to the surface with the captured fish, which is taken to its den and devoured. The Otter then returns to the water and takes another, to be dealt with in the same manner, and this process is repeated till no more fish are left. Sometimes, however, instead of catching them separately, it contrives to bring up several at a time, managing not only to seize them with great dexterity, but to carry them hanging from its mouth. Eight or ten fish serve for a single meal ; but it is well known that, in a state of freedom, an Otter slaughters a much larger number of fish than it devours ; and thus some idea may be formed of the annual havoc occasioned by a pair of Otters in a river, or preserve for fish, in order to supply the wants of themselves and their young ones."

In more modern, as well as ancient times, Otter-hunting has been a favourite sport. In England the numbers have greatly decreased ; but in Wales and Scotland it is still hunted with great and cruel avidity. Formerly a breed of rough-haired, powerful dogs were employed in aiding the exertions of the hunters. As the water is the congenial element of the Otter, a single dog has there little chance against so active and resolute a foe ; nor, indeed, could any number bring him to bay. When forced from his retreat, it is to the water, therefore, that the Otter takes refuge ; here a host of dogs assailing him would oblige him to swim beneath the surface as long as he could hold his breath, and, on his rising to breathe, he would be met by a shower of spears, launched at him by the hunters on the bank. Thus attacked on every side, still his activity and resolution would, under ordinary circumstances, enable him to baffle for a long time the most vigilant pursuit of his enemies, and not unfrequently to escape. But, at length the poor animal perished, as too often happened, wounded and oppressed by numbers, yet fighting to the last. In the Highlands of Scotland it is still hunted with dogs of the terrier breed. Parties will sally out with torches at night-time, when the Otter leaves his hole to seek for food. During the day he conceals himself under large bare stones or fragments of rock close to the margin of the sea, forming what is called a *cairn*. It is a difficult matter to force him from his retreat.

The Otter hunt, like most others, is an exceedingly cruel sport, and more to be condemned as it answers no useful purpose, and only serves to inflame the bloodthirsty and cruel passions of those engaged in it. If Otters are found in our rivers or places where fish are preserved, traps, nooses, &c., can easily be used to rid the pond or river of so destructive a guest.

The Otter is not confined to fresh water, but in both Scotland and Wales it frequents the sea, and will sometimes be seen a mile from

the shore, hunting with great vigour its prey.

It has long been a well-known fact that the Otter can be easily trained when taken young, and taught to hunt fish for his master. Mr. Bell, in his "History of Four-footed Beasts," states how this may be accomplished. "For this purpose," he says, "they should be procured as young as possible, and be first fed with small fish, and water. Then bread and milk is to be alternated with the fish, and the proportion of the former gradually increased till they are led to live entirely on bread and milk. They are then taught to fetch and carry, as dogs are trained; and when they are brought to do this well, a leathern fish, stuffed with wool, is employed as the thing to be fetched. They are afterwards exercised with a dead fish, and chastised if they attempt to tear it. Then they are sent into the water after living fish."

Bishop Heber tells us he once saw nine or ten beautiful Otters, tethered with straw collars and long strings, on the banks of the Mattacolly. "Some were swimming about at the full length of their strings, or lying half in and half out of the water; others were rolling themselves in the sun on the sandy bank, uttering a shrill whistling noise, as if in play. I was told most of the fishermen in this neighbourhood kept one or more of these animals, who were almost as tame as dogs, and of great use in fishing, sometimes driving the shoals into the nets; sometimes bringing out the larger fish with its teeth."

James Campbell, near Inverness, procured a young Otter, which he brought up and tamed. It would follow him wherever he chose; and if called on by its name would immediately obey. When apprehensive of danger from dogs, it sought the protection of its master, and would endeavour to spring into his arms for greater security. It was frequently employed in catching fish, and would sometimes take eight or ten salmon in a day. If not prevented, it always made an attempt to break the fish close to the tail; and as soon as one was taken away, it dived in pursuit of more. It was equally dexterous at sea fishing, and took great

numbers of young cod and other fish there. When tired, it would refuse to fish any longer, and was then rewarded with as much as it could devour. Having satisfied its appetite, it always coiled itself round, and fell asleep, in which state it was generally carried home. A domesticated Otter belonging to a poor widow, when led forth, plunged into the water and brought out all the fish it could find. Another, belonging to a gentleman in Scotland, was also very tame, and though he often stole away at night to fish by the pale light of the moon, and associate with his kindred by the river side, his master, of course, was too generous to find any fault with his mode of spending his evening hours. In the morning he was always at his post in the kennel, and no animal understood better the secret of keeping his own side of the house. Indeed his pugnacity gave him a great lift in the favour of the gamekeeper, who talked of his feats wherever he went, and avowed, besides, that if the best cur that ever ran "only dared to 'grin' at his *protege*, he would soon make his teeth meet through him." To mankind, however, he was much more civil, and allowed himself to be gently lifted by the tail, though he objected to any interference with his snout, which was with him the seat of honour.

A person who kept a tame Otter taught it to associate with his dogs, who were upon the most friendly terms with it on all occasions, and it would follow him on different excursions in company with his canine attendants. He was in the practice of fishing rivers with nets, on which occasions the Otter proved highly useful to him by going into the water and driving fish into the net. It was very remarkable that dogs accustomed to Otter hunting were so far from offering it the least molestation that they would not even hunt any other Otters while it remained with them; on which account, the owner was under the necessity of parting with it.

Do not all these remarkable incidents tell us the power of real kindness even with some of the wildest of animals!



## THE WONDERS OF WATER.

**J**UST as I was thinking of the pleasure, dear young friends, of resuming our monthly chats on the wonders of water, to tell you, as I promised last month, about the beauties and striking facts connected with rivers, lakes, and cataracts, the wires flash over the whole earth the appalling news that water, that same beautiful water, has assumed the form of a grim, terrible, vengeful, devastating monster, has swept away one of the large cities of the world, spreading havoc, destruction, misery, and death, in its course, rendering homeless, and robbing of every earthly thing seventy thousands of men, women, and children, and filling every tender heart with sadness and sorrow. And so this calamity has turned my thoughts from the beautiful to the distressing. You look with delight on the bright little stream, like dewdrops, trickling along its pebbly course, which with your finger you could divert this way or that. A little further on it becomes a mill-stream, and with perfect ease man makes it his willing servant, it turns the stones which grind his corn. Or he digs a trench, like the Suez canal, turns the water of the sea into it, and floats through the desert his largest ships, and so saves thousands of miles of slow and dangerous sailing. Or by irrigation, he scatters that water over the surface of the desert itself, and forthwith the wilderness blossoms as a fruitful plain. Or man conducts it for miles, stores it up in immense reservoirs, and keeping it for months he carries it at pleasure to hundreds of thousands of houses, and daily, as in London, supplies the wants of four millions of people. Nay, man builds his great ships, floats them upon the mighty ocean, and dares the tempest and the storm. More still, man produces steam from that very water, which becomes the mightiest power yet known, and by its use, setting the winds at defiance, he traverses the sea as on dry land,—and accomplishes the most

wonderful works the world has ever known. Truly water is a beautiful thing, and when under control a most useful servant.

But this fearful calamity at Szegeden is a fresh illustration of its terribly devastating power, and of man's utter impotency to check its course when once let loose. It is a calamity that will stand side by side with the destruction of Pompeii and Lisbon; and it may well make us all feel what a ruin the fairest scene in this poor world might become.

Get your maps, and trace the Danube which empties into the Black Sea. One of its great tributaries, coming down from the north, is the Theiss enlarged by the junction of the Maros. Just below this junction, built on low ground stood Szegeden, an ancient town of 70,000 or 80,000 people, and one of the largest grain centres in Europe. Both those rivers have their rise in snow-covered mountains to the north and east. The long winter had brought a great deposit of snow, very little of which had melted till the first warm days of March. This warm weather, together with heavy rains, suddenly melted vast quantities of snow, and there descended into the valleys of the Theiss and the Maros a prodigious mass of water, filling both channels, which run through an almost level plain. The whole country above the junction appeared like an unbroken sea pouring its slow but deep current towards Szegeden. This town has always been in danger, and for many years has been protected by a strong embankment, supplemented by a second rampart of earth, and by an immense wall on which was built a railway.

At last, however, though for a hundred years it has defied its foe, its total destruction has come. The cry of alarm sounded throughout Europe. The whole population turned out to work like beavers on their great dyke; immense bodies of soldiers and every able-bodied man, for eight long days and dismal nights, kept up

a terrible fight with their dreaded foe, piling up sand bags and trying to keep the ramparts above the rising tide. Boats full of willing helpers flocked from all parts to aid in the battle. Think, young friends, of the terrible anxiety and fright of those thousands of women and dear little children during that eight days' battle. Again and again the floods made a breach, and no doubt the cry would spread like lightning, "It is all over, we are lost," but again and again were they dammed up by the despairing struggles of the men. On March 11, it was a question of an inch or two between safety and utter ruin, but the cheering news that the rivers above were falling brings welcome hopes, and with redoubled vigour on they work, felling down trees, and piling them up with clay bags. Alas! On the afternoon of that day an easterly wind arose and Szegeden was lost. The vast expanse of water lashed up into foaming waves overleaped the first embankment, soon beat down the second, and the railway wall, and a little past midnight the tocsin sounds the alarm through the city. The whole population, well knowing that all is over, frantically rush to any elevated spot. Some seek strong buildings, others take to boats, but who shall describe the heart-rending scenes of that fatal night? On rushes the flood, houses and streets melt away, and at the moment I write this but a few hundred feet of dry land and a few houses remain, and it is feared even they may be swept away.

I trust every one of my young readers has had his or her heart moved to pity and to prayer by this terrible suffering. No doubt all will be done that can be. Food and tents, and clothing and money, will pour in from all parts of Europe, but hundreds, perhaps thousands, have perished, and many more will suffer from it to the end of life.

How true is the word of God, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

This world has witnessed many such calamities. Shall I tell you of a few. Just fifteen years before to the very day, there was a terrible one

near Sheffield. A large reservoir had just been constructed by throwing up a high embankment between two hills, about six miles above Sheffield. Scarcely was it finished and filled, when, as at Szegeden, a high wind beat the water furiously against the embankment, first came a small crack and then a wide breach, and in an instant, and at midnight too, the furious element was surging through the valley, tearing up and hurling along immense rocks, sweeping down every mill and house in its headlong course, spreading devastation and death for many miles. It was worse for the poor cottagers and mill hands than for the people of Szegeden. There was no previous warning, no tocsin to sound the alarm, all were quietly sleeping in their beds, when suddenly their homes were struck as by an unknown power, and men, women, and dear little children found themselves being hurled, they knew not where or by what; and without time for a cry or a prayer, about three hundred were plunged into eternity.

A few days after, I stood on that fatal embankment by that empty reservoir, gazing on that dreadful chasm through which the waters had poured, and then followed its course from village to village, and, oh children, it was a sight, a scene of desolation never to be forgotten! In every village they were burying their dead, and the thousands who came from all quarters, seemed to realize what a world of ruin we are in.

History, ancient and modern, abounds with such calamities, far more interesting and instructing too than the most exciting novels. Sometimes vast lakes have been formed by a narrow gorge getting filled up with great rocks, or even with masses of ice brought down by the water. These sooner or later either melt or get undermined, when of course an immense and destructive flood is the result. In the year 1818, such a deluge took place in Val de Bagnes, one of the great valleys of the Rhone, about forty miles above the lake of Geneva. Immense masses of ice, falling from a glacier, choked up a narrow gorge to the height of a hundred

feet. Soon a great lake containing 800 millions of cubic feet of water was accumulated. The danger of this breaking away was at once seen, and to avoid this calamity the ice was tunnelled to let off the water gradually. But alas! they reckoned not the power of their foe. In three days the whole barrier was swept away, and the fury of the raging flood and the mighty power with which it swept away rocks cannot be described. Village after village fell in its course leaving behind it the wreck of houses and of furniture, thousands of trees torn up by the roots, and the bodies of men and of animals which it had swept away.

It is thought that in far back ages the upper part of the Mississippi valley was one vast lake sustained by one of these narrow gorges. By some convulsion this gorge was swept away, and perhaps in a few hours a great inland sea rushed with inconceivable violence down the Mississippi valley into the Gulf of Mexico, and the site thereof became a fertile valley. In like manner if the bed of the Niagara Falls were to be worn away but for a few miles more it would empty the vast lakes of Erie, Ontario, Michigan, and Superior. Should such an event suddenly occur who can

conceive of the fearful destruction that would inevitably follow along the whole valley of the St. Lawrence. The downfall of Szegeden would be insignificant compared with that.

Only one more circumstance connected with floods can I now mention to you. The great city of St. Petersburg stands on an extremely low and flat delta formed by the islands of the Neva, which flows into the Gulf of Finland. No part is more than twelve or fourteen feet above the level of the sea, so that a rise of fifteen feet would flood the whole city, and a rise of thirty feet is enough to drown almost any human being. Now it is well known that strong westerly winds from the gulf drive back the descending water from the Neva several feet high. At other times the river is flooded by the melting of snow and breaking up of ice. It is confidently asserted that if ever three things should occur at the same time nothing could save St. Petersburg. Should there be very strong westerly winds from the Gulf of Finland, and high water and the breaking up of the ice at the same moment, St. Petersburg after suddenly rising up like a fairy city from the swamps of Finland, might be entirely swept away in twenty-four hours!

## THE TRUTHS OF JESUS GATHERED UP.

“GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS.”



Round with the basket and gather up all,

Let nothing escape, be it ever so small,  
For all must be good which hath  
passed through His hands,

Each fragment of His our deep reverence  
commands.

Each word, and each act, and each thought which  
He breathed,

Each sorrow, each tear, and each sigh which He  
heaved,

Each glance of His eye, and each step which He  
trod—

So perfect as man, so almighty as God.

Yea, gather up all, though a life's time employ,  
Let nothing escape,—'tis a service of joy;  
A work never ended, a labour e'er new,  
A work He will help us and aid us to do.

E'en angels before us have run in this race,  
And have gazed with delight on the triumphs of  
grace,—

Looked into the things which God's counsel hath  
planned

As the footsteps of Jesus they lovingly scanned.

Then go with thy basket and gather up all,  
Let nothing escape thee, though never so small;  
For all must be good which hath passed through  
His hands

Each fragment of His our deep reverence com-  
mands. M. A.

## A VOICE FROM A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.

WHO does not enjoy a sight of the beautiful sea? Beautiful in its restlessness, beautiful in all its varying moods of storm, mist, and sunshine; grandly beautiful when its waves are rolling high in the fury of the tempest, softly beautiful when quietly sparkling in the radiance of a summer sun. Yes, we all, especially we pent-up Londoners, enjoy a glimpse of the fresh, open expanse of mighty ocean. But there is one beauty that never rests upon the sea; the beauty of repose, it is restless, restless, restless; endowing with buoyancy and motion the mightiest ships that go forth upon its surface; seeming to chant, as it ceaselessly throbs upon the shore, a never-ending dirge over the myriads who lie hidden in its treacherous depths. We seem to hear those words of old, while gazing at this ebbing or flowing blue ocean tide, "There is sorrow on the sea, it cannot be quiet." But, ah! thought I, while walking along the edge of the tall cliff, one glorious spring morning; a time of rest *is* coming, a time of eternal rest: when there shall be no more sea, when every secret of those deep waters shall have been laid bare; an unspeakably blessed truth for those who have loved the Lord Jesus Christ, but an awful and solemn truth for those who have not believed in His Name. Dear children, my purpose was to speak to you about Jesus, and to ask you, whether *you* are prepared to stand in the presence of God, through simple faith in His beloved Son.

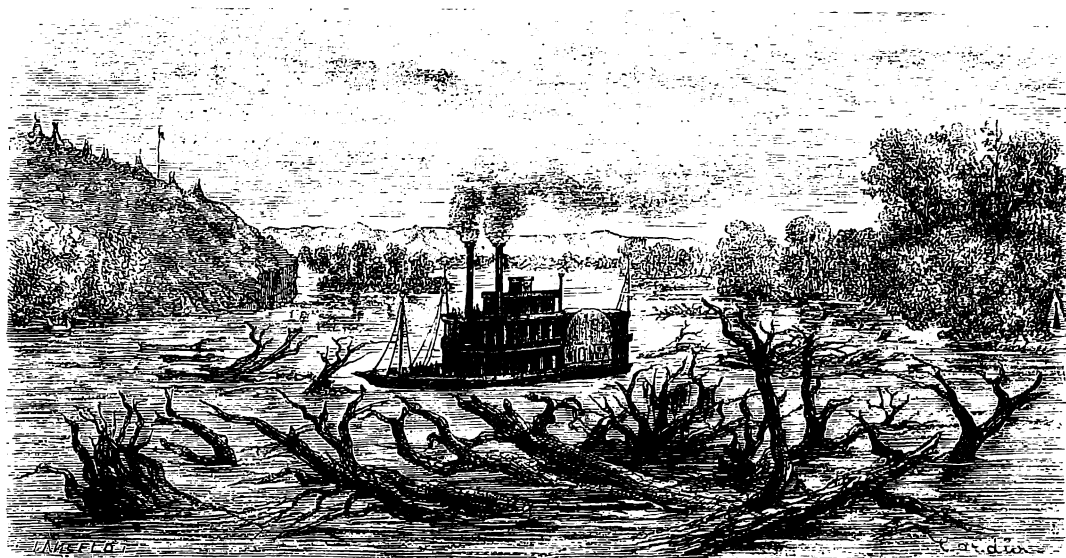
Well, as I said, I was walking along the sea-cliff one bright morning, till at length my path, leading down by easy slopes direct on to the shore, terminated in a quaint little village. Turning inland, I strolled leisurely up the High Street, looking rather inquisitively, I am afraid, through half-open doorways, and altogether enjoying the glimpse of genuine rural life. At last a picturesque little church barred

further progress in that direction, so entering the churchyard, I commenced reading the inscriptions on the numerous stones that spoke of the reality of death. And there, as the sun shone brightly on the waving flowers, and the laughter of the merry groups of children I had passed was borne sweetly on the gentle breeze, I read two inscriptions upon two small mounds raised side by side, that spoke to my very heart.

Six children of one family lay buried there, and simply their names and ages were recorded; I could not help taking a note of this list of tender lives cut short. Fifteen years was the age of the eldest, three months was the age of the youngest. Dear young reader, this may have a voice for you, as it speaks of the uncertainty of life; God forbid, that I should fill any young heart with gloom, but if my pen is taken up at all, it must be to write the truth; and listen! for I have the story of the love of Jesus to tell, you may have heard it a thousand times, and I may have told it a thousand times, but it comes in living freshness still; and it concerns *you*, for Jesus died for *you*. Did I speak of gloom? It were gloom indeed, without Him, but I dare not breathe the faintest whisper of death, if I could not tell you of the One, who "Death by dying slew." Do you love Jesus? if so, it will be your joy to confess, that it is the only real happiness you have ever known; if not, He Himself bids you welcome *now*. Whatever your age, whatever your present condition of health, you cannot count on to-morrow. "Now is the day of salvation." Salvation in the oft-told love of Jesus. Salvation in the oft-repeated Name of Jesus. Jesus who called the little children to Him hundreds of years ago, and blessed them; Jesus who is calling the young ones to Him now, and filling their hearts with the sunshine of His love. To-morrow may be too late, and once again I write, "*Now is the day of salvation.*"

W. J. W.

# THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



## THE WONDERS OF WATER.

### RIVERS.

**I** WAS about to give you some interesting information about rivers last month, when the terrible calamity which swept away the whole of Szegedin, a town of seventy or eighty thousand people, in Hungary, diverted my thoughts to the destructive power of water, and some of the dreadful disasters which floods have occasioned. That calamity has called forth much sympathy, and many nations have contributed large sums of money for the relief of the sufferers. But in this world of ruin and sorrow, so rapidly do catastrophes follow each other, that already Szegedin's overthrow seems completely forgotten. The terrible massacres in the Zulu War, and the bold attempt to assassinate the Emperor of Russia, and fears of more warlike troubles in Turkey and Burmah, have crowded out of

mind even such a calamity as the sweeping away of so great a city.

But now to our subject. How different are the beginnings of rivers; some a tiny spring hidden by pebbles and moss. Such is the Duddon, one of the most beautiful of English rivers, near the top of Wrynose Fell, a desolate solitude; others, like the Sorgues, burst in an imposing manner out of a cavern, and form at once a copious torrent. The Seamander is one of the most remarkable rivers for the grandeur of its source—a yawning chasm in Mount Gargurus, shaded with enormous palm-trees, and surrounded with high cliffs, from which the river impetuously dashes in all the impetuosity of majestic greatness.

To discover the origin of great rivers has ever been a point of much interest. What efforts have been made for more than three thousand

years to discover the source of that wonderful river, the Nile. We can readily enter into the feelings of Bruce, the great English traveller, when he thought he stood at its fountain head. "Kings," he says, "had attempted this discovery at the head of armies, and each expedition was distinguished from the last, only by the difference of the numbers which had perished, and agreed alone in the disappointment which had without exception followed them all. Fame, riches, and honour, had been held out for ages to every one of those myriads these princes commanded, without having produced one man capable of gratifying the curiosity of his sovereign." Alone, with little help, and through innumerable perils, he thought he had triumphed, but more recent discoveries have proved he had reached the head of the smaller of the two great streams that form this celebrated river.

Most interesting and exciting, too, are the narratives of the tracing of rivers from the sea to their beginnings. In Mexico by the early Spaniards; in the southern States of North America, the Mississippi, the Missouri, the Ohio, the Illinois by the early French settlers; and the great rivers stretching far west through the plains and draining the whole country from the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, the Platte, the Arkansas, and the Red River, by many daring adventurers. Dr. Livingstone was the great explorer of the mighty African rivers, and more recently Stanley, his great admirer and follower, has made startling discoveries in the rivers of that great division of the globe.

Rivers have a thousand points in which they are alike, and a thousand points in which they are unlike. Some flow on in one unbroken stream to the ocean; others, like the Susqueanna, the Mississippi, and especially the St. Lawrence, the great American rivers, are studded with innumerable and beautiful islands. It has been ascertained that the St. Lawrence, the great Canadian river, has no fewer than 1,692. Nothing can be conceived more fairy-like and

picturesque than these islands. As you glide along in their beautiful steamers, the scene varies at every turn; sometimes you are in a narrow channel, then you discover a number of openings, like so many noble rivers, and soon you find yourself in the centre of an expansive lake.

The Amazon is the greatest river in the world; it rises in the Andes, and is discharged into the Atlantic Ocean. It is not the longest, being only 3,200 miles in length, but the volume of its waters is beyond all comparison. It receives the waters of five rivers, each over a 1000 miles in length; the upper parts of it are from one to two miles in width, and as it approaches the ocean it widens to over one hundred miles. For two thousand miles in a direct line from the ocean its waters are navigable by ships of the largest burden. For many miles its depth is known to be over 200 feet. The tide rushes up its channel with immense violence, at the periods of the full moon, in two, three, and sometimes four successive waves, each presenting a perpendicular front of from ten to fifteen feet. When the tide subsides in the rainy season, the liberated waters rush out of their channel with tremendous force, and create a current in the ocean which is seen five hundred miles from its mouth.

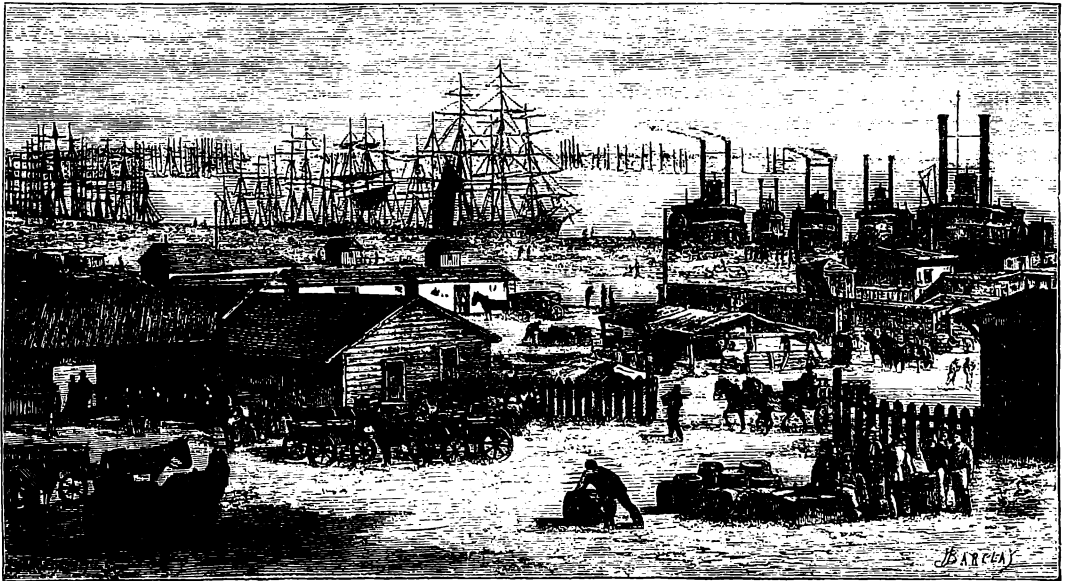
As to length, however, the Mississippi stands at the head of rivers, taking the Missouri branch, which ought to be the name of the united stream, not only on account of its longer course, but because it brings down a greater body of water. Mississippi is an Indian word meaning "Father of waters," and well indeed does it deserve the name, for a great number of truly great rivers flow into it. Amongst them Missouri, 3,300 miles long, the Arkansas 2,500, the Red River, 2,000, the Tennessee, 1,500, the Platte, 1,200, and the Yellowstone, 1,000.

About thirty years ago, it fell to my lot to steam up a large portion of this mighty river, and after that, along some of its important

tributaries, and I assure my young friends it would be difficult to describe to them the exquisite, the wonderful, and the ever varying beauty of the scenes. It was spring; the sun shone brightly; from the melting snows of winter in the far north, and the copious downfall of the spring rains, everywhere the banks were full, and ever and anon they overflowed, and the appearance was more like that of an inland sea than a river. We steamed through dense forests, the trees often dipping their branches laden with the richest verdure, into the very

which has all the grandeur and beauty that nature can furnish to soothe or enrapture the beholder.

Then the winding character of the river is most remarkable. It is truly serpentine. The source of the Mississippi is only 1,200 miles in a straight line from the ocean, yet it travels over 3,200 miles before it reaches that point, it winds about so much that after sailing 20 miles you are surprised to find yourself within a few yards of where you have touched before; not only so, but it meanders in uniform bends,



A SCENE ON THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER.

water. Then we would sail under massive perpendicular rocks shooting up into towers and pinnacles, at a distance looking like the battlements and turrets of some ancient city. It is impossible for an Englishman, who has never witnessed the verdure of a hot climate to conceive the richness of the scene when passing through the Southern States. The cotton-wood tree is most magnificent, among which those brilliant birds of the country, the black and red bird, and the blue jay, flit to and fro or wheel their flight over them, forming a scene

which in many instances, are described with a precision equal to that obtained by the point of a compass. The river sweeps round the half of a circle, and is then precipitated in a diagonal direction across its own channel to another river of the same regularity upon the opposite shore.

The waters of the Mississippi proper, that is above the point where the Missouri joins it, are of the most beautiful blue; those that descend to the Missouri are one mass of light coloured mud, and so immensely great is this

body of water that it rushes completely across the Mississippi and at once completely changes the appearance of that river, and presents perhaps one of the most remarkable sights in the world. On rushes this muddy stream, increasing rather than diminishing the turbulence of its water, till it reaches the Gulph of Mexico. As we approached the mouth of the river, all on board were greatly astonished to see far out in the gulph a muddy, almost white stream rushing through the beautiful green waters of the ocean, and forming for many miles from the mouth of the river a perfectly distinct line.

The Mississippi boats are the most beautiful in the world, and also are so constructed as to afford the greatest amount of convenience and comfort for their numerous passengers. They are of great length. First, there is a low deck, not more than a foot or two from the water. This is reserved for cattle, merchandise, and machinery, and the poor foreign emigrant, who at the time of my voyage crowded every boat. Sorrowful indeed were many of these scenes. They had travelled many thousands of miles to seek a new home. Friends and relatives were left behind, often their little all was gone, and dark and gloomy was their future. Well, above this deck, built on posts about eight feet high, was built a magnificent saloon, running nearly

the whole length of the boat, and surrounded by elegantly fitted up private rooms, for sleeping purposes. Then on the top of this suite of apartments about ten or twelve feet high was a promenade protected from the sun by canvass awnings. From the top of this, often a view of the whole country along the bank of the river was to be had, and my young readers may easily imagine how beautiful that must have been.

Every few miles we came to some thriving village or town, most of which, however, boasted the name of some ancient or modern city. There was always something fresh and exciting at these points. Some had reached the end of a long journey; there was the landing or taking in of fresh cattle or goods, and wood for the furnaces. At that time, there was nothing in all the old world that could be compared to such scenes. Europe was sending out thousands upon thousands of her populations to seek new homes, and, as it were to start life afresh. Alas! how many found only bitter disappointment, suffering, and early death. How many I met with who had gone forth just to better their condition in the world. They knew not God, they sought not this guidance or blessing, and most cast off even what little outward reverence they had once had for the name of Christ, and a formal religious profession.

## HIDE AND SEEK.

“OO-COO!” exclaims a little fellow, not quite five years old.

Papa opening his eyes, rises, and begins the search in good earnest.

“Come,” says he, at the top of his voice, “this will never do, let us look more attentively, I will soon turn him out of some corner, however well hid. If he is sly, let us be prudent; I will seek him everywhere, right and left . . . Listen . . . I hear something stirring! Still muttering to himself, he

spies out with delight, two little feet peering from under the pink curtains, from whence the little rogue could scarcely contain his joyous laughter.

“Granny, if you please, he must be crouching down under your armchair; no, he is not!—Ah! you sly little boy, when shall I catch you? Behind the armchairs . . . the screen . . . the sofa . . . no, nothing! Could he possibly be at the bottom of the great china vase? Still no one!—Surely he must have flown away somewhere, or they have blind-



folded my eyes!" He runs towards the window, brushing passed the curtain, explores every nook and cranny, questions grandmammas, taking good care to forget one place—the *only* place, where his darling is concealed!

Pause, dear children, and consider, is it not very often thus you seek your own sins?

But the Word of God which cannot make a mistake, says; "Be sure your sins will find you out" (Num. xxxii. 23). So if *you* do not, or rather *will* not find your sin and confess it, your *sin* will find you out, which means that it will be on your own head; you will have to account for it to God. For, "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God; they are all gone aside, they

are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Ps. xiv. 2, 3).

Now, there is another and a sweet text I want you to look at, and to ask the Lord to write on your young hearts—"He came to seek and to save that which was lost."

Yes, dear children—

How dark was the night the Lord passed through,  
E'er He found the sheep that was lost.

He came down into this sad, wicked world, that He might bring you the precious gift of salvation through His blood.

Although He is now seated on His Father's throne, and is in the very presence of bliss and glory, yet, He thinks of you, and wants you to be His little lambs, that He may fold you for ever to His loving bosom.

## THE WEASEL.



HE Weasel is one of the fiercest little animals in England, and like most fierce large animals, as the lion, the tiger, the leopard, and the fox, lives on flesh, and so is called carnivorous, which means flesh-eating.

There are several kinds in England, the common Weasel, the Marten, and the Polecat. They are much alike in shape and habits, but different in size and colour. The length of the Polecat is seventeen inches, exclusive of the tail, which is six inches. The Marten, says Pennant, is the most beautiful of the British beasts of prey. It is eighteen inches long, the tail ten, or if measured to the ends of the hair at the point, twelve inches. The common Weasel is the least of all, the length of the head and body not exceeding six or seven inches, and the tail not more than two-and-a-half inches long. The Polecat is white about the mouth; the head, throat, breast, legs, and thighs are wholly of a deep chocolate colour, almost black. The sides are covered with hairs of two colours; the ends of which are of a dark hue, like the other parts, the middle of

a full tawny, or yellow, colour. The back, sides, and tail of the Marten are covered with a fine thick down, and with long hair intermingled; the bottom is of a dark grey colour, the middle bright chestnut, the tops black, the head brown, with some slight cast of red; the throat and breast are white, the belly similar colour as the back, but rather paler. The whole upper part of the common Weasel, the head, tail, legs, and feet are of a red tawny brown. The whole under-side of the body, from the chin to the tail, is white; but beneath the corners of the mouth on each jaw is a spot of brown.

Besides these there is another kind of Weasel, called the Stoat, or Ermine Weasel. In nearly every particular its description much resembles that of the common Weasel. The chief difference being that it attacks and lives on larger animals than any of the others, as hares and leverets, and its skin is very much more valuable. There is this peculiarity also about it, that with us in winter it partially changes its colour, becoming nearly white. In the most northern parts of Europe, the Ermine

becomes in the winter most brilliantly white, except the ends of the tail, which remain perfectly black. In Norway, Lapland, Russia, and other northern cold countries, they are found in prodigious numbers, and the trade in their skins is an exceedingly large branch of business. Many hundred thousand are annually imported into England, both from the countries just named and also from the northern parts of Canada. Most of the comfortable furs which keep you warm in the cold winter days have once clothed this little, elegant, but vicious, animal.

Having pointed out to you some particulars in which the various members of this family differ, I will now tell some things wherein they all agree, both as to their form and their habits. They are all long and slender, have a sharp pointed nose and very short legs. Their construction fits them admirably for the manner in which they hunt their prey. They can creep into the most tiny holes. They are most nimble and active, run very fast, will creep up the sides of walls with great agility, and spring with vast force. In running, the belly seems to touch the ground; in preparing to jump, it arches its back, which assists it greatly to take a long spring. Their feet are broad, the claws large and sharp, well adapted for climbing trees, where, in this country, it chiefly lives.

The chief characteristic of the whole Weasel family is their fierceness. They feed on rats, mice, squirrels, and birds. If once they can get into a poultry-house or a rabbit warren, they kill all the inmates, and then content themselves with drinking the blood and eating the brains of their victims. They are bold and fearless little fellows, and there is scarcely any small animal they will not attack. As you will see, by one of the stories I shall tell you, they will even in some cases attack a man. Their bite is very painful, indeed so much does the wound inflame, and so long is it before it heals, that some think it is really poisonous. In attacking a mouse or a rat it springs at once on its head, pierces its brain with its long, sharp teeth, and its victim is dead in a moment,

and without suffering any pain. If attacking a larger animal, it usually fastens itself on the neck, just below the ear, bites through the veins, which it tears open, and its victim speedily bleeds to death. It never eats its prey where it kills it, but carries it off to its young, or its retreat.

The common Weasel is much more domesticated than the other kinds, and will be frequently found near out-houses, barns, and granaries, where it performs good service to the farmer, and makes some atonement for its depredations on the poultry by ridding his stacks and buildings of rats and mice, which, from there great numbers, often destroy an immense quantity of grain. The Weasel hunts by scent, like the dog, and follows mice and even moles with the utmost perseverance, tracking them through all their runs or winding galleries. All these small animals have great dread of the Weasel, and will fly with the greatest alarm if one approaches their haunts. It will even cross the water in their pursuit if its prey be in sight, nor does swiftness avail, for onwards will the Weasel travel till its victim falls from exhaustion.

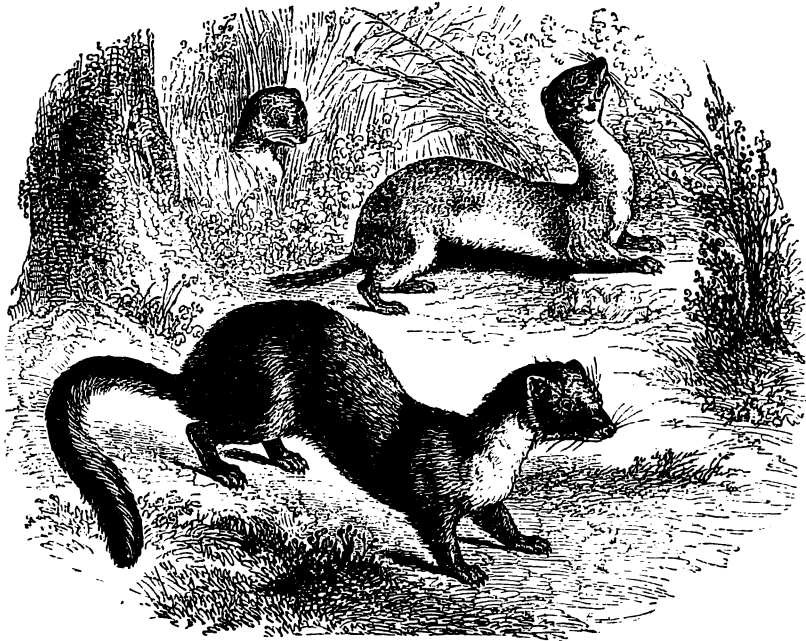
The Weasel breeds two or three times in a year, having a litter of five or six at each birth. She makes her nest of dried leaves; a hole in a bank side, among brambles, or in an old tree is the usual place of her retreat. Should the mother be attacked, she will defend herself and her little ones with great courage and fight to the last.

I know all my readers like stories, especially really true ones, and now let me tell you several about these fierce, destructive little creatures. One day, while riding over his grounds, a gentleman saw a kite suddenly pounce down and take up something in its talons. Shortly, however, the kite began to show signs of great distress; at one moment rising swiftly in the air, at another flying down with all its might, wheeling round and round, and trying to shake off something that was clinging to it. After a sharp fight, down came the kite with a sharp flap, quite dead. On approaching, he saw a

Weasel quietly running away, apparently unhurt. On turning the bird over, it was found that the Weasel had eaten a hole through the skin under the wing, and torn through the large blood vessels.

A Weasel was once seen to attack an eagle, and after allowing himself to be carried high in the air, it succeeded in biting through the throat of the king of birds, and then both fell to the ground. The eagle died, but the Weasel was unhurt.

it this compliment, it will scarcely take a drop. When satisfied, it generally goes to sleep. My chamber is the place of its residence, and I have found a method of dispelling its strong smell by perfumes. By day it sleeps in a quilt, into which it gets by an unsewn place which it has discovered on the edge; during the night it is kept in a wired box or cage, which it always enters with reluctance and leaves with pleasure. If it be set at liberty before my time of rising, after a thousand little playful tricks,



THE WEASEL.

From all this, you would perhaps conceive that the whole Weasel tribe are nothing less than horrid little monsters. But wait a little, till I relate another and a very different story, and then you may see what a wonderful power kindness has over even the fiercest animal. Thus runs the tale:—A certain lady had a tame Weasel, which she greatly petted, and which became exceedingly fond of her. “If I pour some milk into my hand,” says the lady, “it will drink a good deal, but if I do not pay

it gets into my bed, and goes to sleep on my hand or my bosom. If I am up first, it spends a full half-hour in caressing me, playing with my fingers like a little dog, jumping on my head and on my neck, and running round on my arms and body with a lightness and elegance which I have never found in any other animal. If I present my hands at the distance of three feet, it jumps into them without ever missing. It exhibits great address and cunning to compass its ends, and seems to disobey

certain prohibitions merely through caprice.

“During all its actions it seems solicitous to divert and to be noticed, looking at every jump and at every turn to see whether it be observed or not. If no notice be taken of its gambols, it ceases them immediately, and betakes itself to sleep, and even when awakened from the soundest sleep it instantly resumes its gaiety, and frolics about in as sprightly a manner as before. It never shows any ill-humour unless when confined or teased too much, in which case it expresses its displeasure by a sort of murmur, very different from that which it utters when pleased. In the midst of twenty people this little animal distinguishes my voice, seeks me out, and springs over everybody to come to me. His play with me is the most lively and caressing imaginable. With his two little paws, he pats me on the chin, with an air and manner expressive of delight. This, and a thousand other preferences, show that his attachment to me is real. When he sees me dressed for going out, he will not leave me, and it is not without some trouble that I can disengage myself from him; he then hides himself behind a cabinet near the door, and as I pass, jumps upon me with so much swiftness that I can scarcely perceive him. He seems to resemble a squirrel in vivacity, agility, voice, and his manner of murmuring. During the summer he squeaks and runs about the house all the night long; but since the beginning of the cold weather, I have not observed this. Sometimes, when the sun shines while he is playing on the bed, he turns and tumbles about and murmurs for a while.

“From his delight in drinking milk out of my hand, into which I pour a very little at a time, and his custom of sipping the little drops and edges of the fluid, it seems probable that he drinks dew in the same manner. He seldom drinks water, and then only for want of milk, and with great caution, seeming only to refresh his tongue once or twice, and even to be afraid of that fluid. During the hot weather it rained a good deal. I presented to him some rain-water in a dish, and endeavoured to make him

go into it, but could not succeed. I then wetted a piece of linen cloth in it, and put it near him, and he rolled upon it with extreme delight.

“One singularity in this charming animal is his curiosity. It is impossible to open a drawer or a box, or even to look at a paper, but he will examine it also. If he gets into any place where I am afraid of permitting him to stay, I take a piece of paper or a book and look attentively at it, on which he immediately runs upon my hand and surveys with an inquisitive air whatever I happen to hold. I must further observe that he plays with a young cat and dog, both of considerable size—getting about their necks, backs, and paws, without their doing him the slightest injury.”

Nor is this the only instance of such an attachment. A gentleman, named Strozza, felt so strong an attachment to a Weasel, that at its death he wrote a short Latin poem which has been thus translated, and which, you will see, describes the same kind of tenderness and gentle insinuating ways as the story I have just told you. They are beautiful lines, and well worthy of our young friends' perusal.

“Loving and loved! Thy master's grief  
Thou could'st the uncounted hours beguile;  
And nibbling at his fingers soft,  
Watch anxious for the approving smile.  
Or, stretching forth the playful feet,  
Around in wanton gambols rove;  
Or gently sip the rosy lip,  
And in light murmurs speak thy love.”

## WORK FOR JESUS.

WHEN Jesus sent His disciples forth, He told them to go into every city and place, whither He would come. And, oh! is not this a sweet encouragement for us to work, when we know that Jesus is coming again—coming to reward those of His servants, who have been faithful over a few things. You are not too young to work, young friends; if you cannot speak to others of Jesus and His love, you can pray, and if you pray in faith, God will answer you as He has promised. “Whatsoever ye shall ask the father in my name, he will give it you.” (John xvi. 23.)

## THE BIBLE BAKED IN AN OVEN.

**I**N the State of Ohio in America, exists a bible which was once baked in an oven. It belongs to a certain Mr. Schebolt, a member of the Society of Friends. This christian man is a native of Bohemia, and this bible had belonged to his grandfather, who was a faithful protestant in time of persecution.

During his lifetime, an edict was passed to the effect that all peasants in Bohemia, who possessed copies of the Holy Scriptures should without delay deliver them to the authorities that they might be destroyed. The most zealous protestants, however, took divers measures to preserve the precious word of life.

Madame Schebolt, the actual possessor's grandmother, put the family bible in the middle of a loaf she was going to bake, having first carefully wrapped it in a piece of cloth. The bread was baked, and placed on the shelf. The priests searched the house, ransacked

everything and everywhere, but finding no bibles, they withdrew quite satisfied.

When they were gone, these good people took their bible out of the loaf and put it back in its accustomed place, on the peasant's table.

So this christian woman had found out the way of converting her daily food into a spiritual nutriment to her soul, and they both partook of the needed refreshment.

Ah! does this not teach us a lesson, dear children, who are interested in this true devotion to the word of God!

But I will tell you another and even a safer way of hiding the Word that is able to save our souls. It is this, and I earnestly recommend it to your attention.

Daily commit to memory a portion of the bible, and on the Lord's day, carefully repeat over what you have learned. Thus no one, no, not even Satan, our great enemy, will find the means of robbing you of what is life eternal to know and believe.

"The entrance of thy word giveth life."

## THE STORY OF THE GENTILES.

### CHAPTER III.

**I**N January number we saw that Constantine the Roman Emperor, professed to become a christian. Now all persecution ceased, the Bishop of Rome became a very great person, and after the Roman Empire fell, these nations, calling themselves Christendom, or the Kingdom of Christ, acknowledged, in all things spiritual and temporal, the authority of the bishop of Rome, who assumed the title of Pope, Papa, or Universal Father, also that of "Head of the Church," which belongs only to Him who bought the Church with His own blood, the Lord Jesus Christ, "who liveth and was

dead." So passed centuries, named "the middle ages," also by many historians "the dark ages," during which the Word of God lay hidden in old libraries, the people supposing to be true what they were told, that it was not meant for them; whilst their teachers, in general ignorant, or holding false doctrines, were unable to communicate divine knowledge.

A few only remained always faithful to the Lord and His truth, and the bravest of these, from time to time, were slain for their testimony to Jesus. The Jews also have ever experienced cruelty from the Gentiles of papal Rome, without being able to use the Christian martyrs' motto, "sorrowful yet alway rejoicing"

(2 Cor. vi., 10). When evils had grown intolerable, God again shone in the darkness by the energy of His Holy Spirit, and by His acts in providence, and so produced that great movement known as the "Reformation." Luther, and other faithful men, were led to study the holy scriptures, which, through the newly discovered art of printing, were spread abroad, and many servants of Christ gave themselves to the great work of making known the fundamental truths which had so long been neglected. Multitudes were convinced of the necessity of a grand protest against the false doctrines and tyranny of Rome, and those who joined in this were named Protestants, as are their fellow believers at this day. Whole nations were stirred. Some would not break their bonds; others availed themselves of the opportunity to be free. England's king had worldly motives for quarrelling with Rome, but in his kingdom were devout men desirous only of truth, the glory of God, and the salvation of souls. These the Lord made a blessing to their country, and to the world, and with grace he endued them to "be faithful unto death," so to receive from His hand "the crown of life" (Rev. ii. 10). Since then the Bible has been an open Book in this land, and great have been the privileges that have accompanied it.

But, O favoured England, there are other words of St. Paul, which one of your noble army of martyrs three hundred years ago, Bishop Ridley, recalled to you, whilst awaiting the fiery chariot you awarded, "Who hath bewitched you?" Alas! even now, many in this realm are more than inclined to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage, the yoke of papal Rome; whilst another party would dispense with religion altogether, and contrive a past, a present, and a future without God. "The last state 'of Gentile dominion' is worse than the first." These are "the last days," termed by St. Paul "perilous times." What makes them such? Because men are become lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents,

unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." St. Paul adds to his young Timothy, "From such turn away."

Young people, all will soon be changed. Some minds, instructed by the holy Spirit in the holy Scriptures, know this—some hearts, warmed with divine love, long for it; the cry has gone forth, "He cometh"—He cometh, "whose right it is" to be "Lord of all." Nebuchadnezzar saw "that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and the winds carried them away that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Daniel was enabled to explain that this vision signified the fall of the kingdoms of this world before the power of the great God of heaven, who will set up in their stead a kingdom never to be destroyed, nor left to other people, but "it shall stand for ever." This is a brief, yet forcible, description of the fall of Gentile supremacy, when the Son of God and of man shall come in His glory to judge the nations. Other portions of the holy Book give particular events, and the order of them. First, before the Lord descends to earth, His Saints will be caught up to meet Him in the air, both those members of it who now sleep in the grave and those who are awake. At that extraordinary juncture, when no believers in the crucified and risen Saviour shall remain on earth, certain Jews, aided by Gentile nations, will endeavour to set up a godless kingdom at Jerusalem. Then great will be the persecutions endured by a small remnant of Jews, who will not unite in this project, so contrary to the divine law and promises of the old Testament, neither obey the man of Sin, the antichrist, who will

present himself as king of the Jews. In their misery those poor ones will look to the Lord and be enlightened. They will turn in heart to Him whom their ancestors pierced, and "mourn for Him" (Zec. xii. 10). And on their repentance their Messiah will appear in the clouds of heaven, followed by armies of saints and angels. The man of Sin will be destroyed by the brightness of His coming. Of the nations that shall at that time be gathered against Jerusalem to battle, multitudes will be slain, but some will be saved to "know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth" (Psa. lix. 13).

To Jerusalem He will come, and He will make it according to the signification of its beautiful name, "The vision of peace"—peace visible. It will be the place of His throne—the Capital City of the world, whither all Gentile nations will resort at certain times to keep the feasts of the Lord, and to hold communion with heaven itself.

Happy that day when a man "shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats," and "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Heb. ii., 14). And many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths, for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

One special honour is reserved for the Gentiles,—that of bringing "a present to the Lord" (Isa. xviii.). Of what? Something belonging to the Lord, and dear to Him, has long been lost. No one knows where it is, or where

it is not, for it is scattered like sand over the face of the earth, but the Word of the Lord declares that this lost property shall be found and restored to Him, and it is appointed that the Gentiles shall have the joyful privilege of finding and bringing it to the Lord at Jerusalem. This property consists of the ten tribes of Israel who were carried captive by the Assyrians, and have never been recovered.

Thus saith the Lord God to Israel: "Behold I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders, and kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers" (Isa. xlix., 22-23). "At that time shall the present be brought to the Lord of Hosts of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out, and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the Lord of Hosts, the Mount Zion" (Isa. xviii., 7).

Verily the Gentiles have their portion in Christ, even in that genealogy which the blessed Saviour scorns not, as the link between His eternal Godhead, and His adopted humanity (Matt. i. 5). Also a special Apostle has been devoted to them, in the great Jewish patriot, who was constrained to quit his own beloved country and people, and go far from them, to bear to the Gentiles life and immortality in the precious name of the crucified, risen, and ascended Lord Jesus, who, from "the excellent glory," gave to Paul the office of "Apostle of the Gentiles," which office thenceforth (through grace) by life and by death he magnified (1 Rom. xi., 13; Phil. i. 20). M. M. M.

### "LET ME TAKE IT."



**L**ITTLE Mattie was in a temper to-day, so very naughty that I had to send her from the school room to a small room off the landing; she was to stay there the rest of the morning. She went out with a proud

step, slamming the door after her. It was sad to see the little heart so full of anger, and looking around on the faces before me I could see some one else as sad as I about little Mattie. It was her sister Sarah, and I could see her gentle face turned towards me with an

eager look ; soon she came softly up and stood before me. " Well, Sarah," said I, " your face is asking a favour, put it into words."

" It's about Mattie, Miss A."

" Well, what about her ? do you think me too hard with her ? would you think better of me had I let it pass ? "

" No, Miss—Miss A., I think she ought to be punished, but "—

" But what, dear, don't be afraid to speak out."

" I wanted to ask, if you would let me change with Mattie ; she has a cough, and the little room is cold ; I can bear it better."

" But Sarah, dear child, have you thought about it, ever ? one passing through and seeing you there will think you are in disgrace, so you will get the *blame* as well as the *punishment*, and you have always been thought good ; how will you like to lose your good name ? "

" But you would know, Miss A., and I would not care so much for others ; do let me go to

her, and send her in," and the tears which she could no longer keep back, told how much she loved her naughty sister. I could not deny her.

" Well, dear child," said I, " let it be as you wish ; you may go to Mattie."

Her face brightened, and the gentle girl left the room. A moment after the door opened, and Mattie was gently pushed inside and the door closed again. Half unwillingly, and with a look of shame, the little girl glided to her seat, and I was glad to see the angry little face softened into tears, as she bent her head over her desk.

The morning's work went on, but my thoughts were full of that sister's love, and the story it told to my heart. I thought of the punishment hanging over my head, for I had sinned, and of the love of the One who had changed places with me, and who knowing as no one else could how hard it would be to bear that punishment, had said " Let me take it," and I thought of the One who " suffered for us " and of His great love.

## THE WOLF.

**T**HE Wolf was, and is still very abundant in Palestine. It is the same species, as the common wolf of Europe, though it is of lighter colour than it, and larger and stronger. It is a dreadful pest to the shepherds, for it is so excessive crafty, hiding itself somewhere near the folds till dark, that it often manages to run off with its victim unobserved by the dogs. The shepherds are therefore constantly in the habit of firing off their guns in the night, to frighten away any would-be invader.

In John x. 12, Jesus says, " But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth." This is not what Jesus does. He is the good Shepherd—He loves His sheep—He gave His life for His sheep ; He has given His life for you, young friends, and if you only believe on Him, you have everlasting life. " For God so loved the

world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.)

And if you have given yourselves to Jesus, and are striving by the help of the Holy Spirit, to follow in His footsteps, you will meet with temptations and trials, which are like wolves, but Jesus has promised to give us strength, and if we only trust in Him, He will enable us to conquer them all. " Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord." (Psalm xxxi. 24.)

In Luke x. 3, Jesus in sending His disciples forth to preach says, " Go your ways, behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves." It is the same still, when we go forth to work for Christ, we are beset by enemies on every side ; enemies who like wolves are ready to devour us ; but if we have Christ as our Shepherd, and are in His fold, no enemy can harm us. Are you then, young friends, in His fold ?



# THE CHILD'S BIBLE COMPANION.



FALLS OF NIAGARA.

## THE WONDERS OF WATER.

### RIVERS, CATARACTS, AND LAKES.



HOPE each of my young readers has the help of a good atlas while reading these papers. By all means trace out the rivers, waterfalls, lakes, and oceans. It will alike increase your interest and profit.

Last month we gave you some account of the Mississippi, the Father of waters. I want to tell you a little about the Ohio, one of its large tributaries. First, it is the only large one flowing from the east; all the rest, including the Missouri, flow from the west. This river has twelve large tributaries from 200 to 1,200 miles in length. The Ohio has eleven such tributaries, the longest of which, the Tennessee, being 1,500 miles in length. Next, the Ohio is perhaps one of the most beautiful

rivers in America, if not in the whole world. The early French settlers were so charmed with it that its only name to them was the "*Beautiful river*." For 1,500 miles its waters roll on peacefully and uniformly, without the least interruption. Its banks are adorned with the largest sycamores, its waters are clear, and studded with islands covered with the finest verdure, and passing, as it and its tributaries do, through the most fertile and populous parts of the United States, its waters are literally covered with steamers, and the traffic enormous.

Those who have closely examined the nature of the country have come to the conclusion that formerly the Mississippi river was shorter by near a thousand miles than it now is, that it was much wider, and that it entered the

sea a little below the present mouth of the Ohio; that is, that the whole country south of that point, about a thousand miles was an arm of the sea. Altogether the Mississippi river with its amazing tributaries, is perhaps the most wonderful river in the world. Its waters wash a thousand shores; its tributaries stretch out into almost unknown lands; its distant banks are traversed only by the elk, the buffalo, the bear and the deer, and the savage Indians that pursue them. Now they pass through wild rice lakes and dismal swamps where naught can ever live but the coiling serpent and the dangerous alligator; now through craggy hills, deep forests, or beautiful prairies, shewing almost a perfect level, and in summer covered with beautiful grass and the sweetest flowers.

There is another river I must say a few words about, without doubt the most noted one of the old world, as the Mississippi is of the new. The Nile is far inferior in length and volume of water. In all respects the two are totally different. The Nile flows on in solitary grandeur for 1,500 miles. Not a single stream enters it for all that distance, a circumstance not to be found in a single river in the whole world besides. Another most marked contrast is that its long course passes through a desert, dry, barren, hideous country, which without the Nile would be the most desolate land in the world. But you have all heard of the annual overflow of the Nile. By this inundation the whole country is fertilized. Wherever it reaches a rich soil is deposited by which it becomes the most productive part of the earth. From earliest history Egypt has been the general storhouse for grain for nearly all mankind. It was here that Joseph, the beloved, and the faithful son of Jacob, but the rejected of his brethren, found a home. It was here in the extremity of famine those same brethren came for corn to preserve themselves and their cattle alive. It was here that occurred the seven years of plenty, and then the seven years of famine. And it was here that for four hundred years the children of

promise were kept in bondage till the cry of their sufferings reached the ear of God; and it was here that with an outstretched arm He wrought that wonderful deliverance by redemption and power that became the foundation of Israel's history, and of those wonderful types of Christ and the church so full of interest and instruction in old Testament Scriptures.

The prosperity of all Egypt depends on the flooding of the Nile. If the rise does not reach a certain point, there is scarcity and even famine; if it rises a few feet too high, the people and their villages are swept away. It is said that a rise of 38 feet is needed fully to meet the wants of the country.

There are two other great rivers in the eastern or old world; well worthy of your notice, the Tigris and the Euphrates. These with the Nile may well be called the oldest in the world. Their history is connected with all the traditions and destinies of man. The great plains of the Tigris and Euphrates were the abodes of the founders of the first empires after the flood. It was on their banks the two greatest cities of the ancient world, Ninevah and Babylon, reared their proud palaces. It was there that the finger of God traced the doom of the latter city on the walls of the magnificent palace of its trembling monarch, when the man of God, an exiled Jew, in the majesty of inspiration, gave the interpretation of the mystic writing. There, too, rose and fell the splendid empires of the Medes and Persians. Indeed in every part of the world rivers have been closely bound up with the great events of all human history.

There is yet another feature connected with rivers, falls and cataracts, which I would like to tell you something about. Falls are formed by the descent of a river over a precipice and depend for their sublimity upon the height of the fall and the volume of the water. Rapids are produced by a steeply inclined plane over which the flood rushes with great force. None of our great English rivers, if we may call them great, the Thames, the Trent, and Severn, have on them either fall or rapid. The Shan-

non, just above Limerick, where the river is forty feet deep and three hundred yards wide, presents, perhaps, the finest rapids in our Islands. For half a mile it dashes over and through a succession of rocks, and is quite unnavigable. There are some smaller but beautiful falls in Wales and Scotland, and especially in Switzerland. The river Adige in the Tyrol, near Meran, rushes with resistless force and deafening noise, down a descent nearly a mile in length between green, quiet, pastoral banks presenting one of the most magnificent spectacles to be met with in Europe. On the Nile there is a succession of amazing rapids most striking, and extending over a length of one hundred miles. Stanley in his late most perilous passage through the heart of Africa discovered some of the greatest rapids in the world, to get round which cost him immense labour, and the loss of not a few of his party.

But it is in America that the most sublime and imposing rapids and falls are to be found. The chief rapids are on the St. Lawrence at its junction with the Ottawa river. The far-famed Niagara is universally acknowledged to be the greatest and most sublime waterfall in the world. This sea-like flood carries off the water of four of the largest lakes in America. The Niagara river is thirty three miles long and joins lake Erie to lake Ontario, and is about three quarters of a mile in width at the falls. From lake Erie the river flows quietly on, giving no indication of the mighty wonder so near at hand. About a mile off the water begins to ripple and is broken into a series of dashing and foaming rapids when again it becomes tranquil, but rolls along with tremendous force till it reaches the precipice. But when you are miles distant a deep awful sound, gradually growing louder, breaks upon the ear—the roar of the distant cataract. When I first gazed on this wonderful sight it was the depth of an American winter. There had been a great thaw and heavy rain, followed by one of those sharp, sudden spills of frost which freezes as hard as iron every drop of water.

The banks of the falls were like an unbroken sheet of glass and made it most dangerous to approach them. The sun shone gloriously. There was not a cloud in the whole heavens. The trees around sparkled with myriads of purest gems, the everlasting spray frozen as it fell. Below the falls there was a wonderful sight; the rain and melting snow had poured over the banks, and frozen as it fell, forming an immense number of huge icicles over 150 feet in length, which looked like magnificent marble columns. My first view was from the American side, and immediately above the falls. I was alone, and undisturbed, gazed on the foaming rushing waters as they dashed onwards to their tremendous leap. I must confess my first feelings were tinged with disappointment. I had expected I knew not what; but surely to take in at a glance the whole grandeur of the scene; soon I found it was too vast, too sublime; it was beyond human capability. I have since learned it takes not hours or even days, but weeks and months before any mind can fully take in this, perhaps, greatest of earthly scenes.

Shall I try and describe the falls for you? They are divided into two unequal portions by a small island, called Goat Island, about 1,000 feet in breadth. The largest one is on the British side, and is called the Horse Shoe Fall. It is over 2,000ft broad and 150ft high; the other, on the American side, is about 1,140 feet wide but 164 feet high. The former is by far the grandest scene. Such is the enormous leap of the water that it does not strike the stream below within fifty feet of the rock; and it is said that four coaches might be driven abreast through this awful chasm. Two things are ever present, clouds of misty spray and an awful, everlasting roar. I believe neither the one nor the other can be described, They must be seen and heard to be known. The former I saw to its utmost possible advantage. The thermometer was not far from zero, and a cloudless sun was shining with a brilliancy we know nothing of in England. The atmosphere was filled with the most resplendent rainbows,



FALLS OF NIAGARA, VIEW FROM CANADIAN SIDE.

varying in beauty every moment. As to the sound, it has been described as "grand, commanding, and majestic, filling the vault of heaven when heard with fulness—a deep round roar, an alternation of muffled and open sounds." Another says, "It is not like the sea, nor like thunder; nor like anything I ever heard. There is no roar, no rattle; nothing sharp or angry in its tones; it is deep, awful, One." When I tell you that sometimes it can be heard at Toronto, a distance of forty-six miles across Lake Ontario, you will cease to wonder at these exciting descriptions.

Having gazed alone for near an hour I was joined by a young man, when together we ventured to descend a covered staircase, close to the falls, and reaching to the very bottom. In the centre of the steps is a tramway, by which in summer visitors are let down and drawn up by machinery. We soon found our descent most perilous, for the snow having beaten through crevices, had in many places completely filled up the treads, and our only means of descent was to slide down the hand rail. Once at the bottom, how indescribable was the magnificent sight! The first object that strikes the eye was an immense collection of enormous rocks that had been hurled over the falls, and piled one above another, till they seemed to reach halfway to the top. Then the majestic torrent above, literally the sea, pouring out its mighty waters!

"The thoughts are strange that crowd into my brain,  
While I look upward to thee. It would seem  
As if God poured thee from His hollow hand,  
And hung His bow upon thine awful front;  
And spoke in that loud voice which seemed to him  
Who dwelt in Patmos for his Saviour's sake,  
The sound of many waters. \* \* \*  
And yet, Bold Babler, what art thou to Him,  
Who drown'd a world, and heaped the waters far  
Above the loftiest mountains?—A light wave  
That breaks and whispers of its Maker's might."

Having with great labour and no little risk, regained the top of the stairs, we found a small party who, like ourselves, had come hundreds of miles to gaze on this stupendous scene. We started down the river to cross by a ricketty wire bridge to the Canadian side, stopping

every five steps to get a fresh view of the falls.

Let me here stop for a moment to tell you of a wonderful sight at this bridge. The river greatly narrows at this point, and the surging waters seem to begin a tremendous conflict. It is as if mighty powers were struggling for mastery. The foam and fury; the boiling and surging; the roar and rage with which the mass of water is forced under to rise some miles distant, present a boiling chaldron words cannot describe. It is returning from this bridge on the Canadian side, we found the most striking views of the falls. Every step presents some new feature; and yet, what was my surprise to see one of our company, who had travelled perhaps a thousand miles to see this great sight, with real disappointment turn back, stating he had seen enough of the falls! But such disappointment, I was told, is often felt. It was not long before I was again left alone, and now began my real enjoyment of the scene. At that time immediately below the falls was a celebrated rock, called the Table Rock, which hung many yards over the bank. From the edge of this you look right into the abyss. Strange to say there was not the least protection along this dangerous edge, and as the ground was covered with one sheet of ice to approach it was most dangerous. Curiosity and excitement soon got over the difficulty, spreading my travelling rug on the ground, and stretching myself full length on it, I gradually drew near the dangerous precipice. The first look into the abyss below was overwhelming and instantly I had to withdraw my outstretched head. It was sometime before I could calmly gaze on the tremendous rush of waters; after this, the scene was most fascinating, and long did I enjoy the sight.

After this I returned to the American side; curiosity and excitement had made me insensible to danger, and I felt determined to plant my foot on every available spot.

Having visited Goat Island, and many other points of interest, there remained one spot apparently quite inaccessible. In our engraving of the falls you will see a small tower built

## PEEPS INTO FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

## THE DISCOVERY OF POMPEII.

**I**HAVE already told you of the fall of Pompeii. In August 79, just 1800 years ago, when all was fair and bright, and the rich and the pleasure loving Romans were in the midst of their enjoyments,—the theatres full, the gladitorial games going on, men slaying each other, or fighting with wild beasts in the presence of thousands of excited people, was the city stricken down in a moment as by the hand of God. It is awful to think of, the bodies of those gladiators slain 1800 years ago were found in the amphitheatre just where they fell! But now I am to tell you about its discovery. For near 1700 years Pompeii seems to have been forgotten, and yet from the day of its destruction the spot on which it stood has been called Civita, or the City. This is the more singular, as fully a hundred years before it was discovered an eminent architect had cut an underground canal to convey water under its very site to a neighbouring city, and came across many relics, yet no curiosity was aroused.

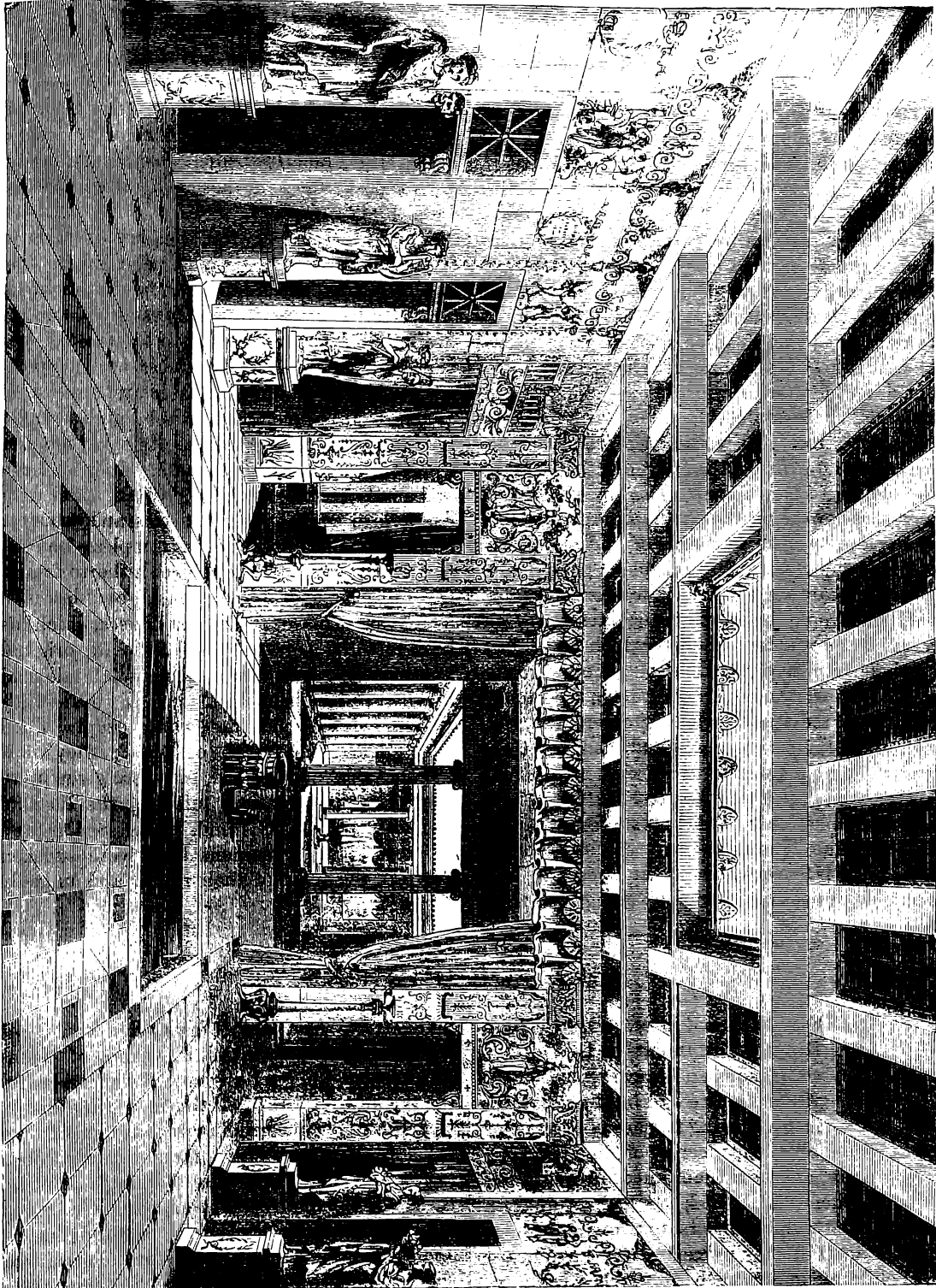
It was in 1748, in the reign of Charles III. the first Bourbon king of Naples, a Spanish leader of engineers in repairing this canal was roused by what he had heard of former discoveries, energetically to examine the matter. It was some time, however, before it was ascertained that the buried city was the long lost Pompeii. The excavations went on slowly for a long time, chiefly by condemned felons and Mohammedan slaves. All the paintings, gold and silver, objects, statues, etc., were deposited in a museum, and an account kept of every article. But as yet none thought of laying bare the whole city, and as far as possible restoring it to its original condition. It was not till the late Victor Emanuel came to be king of Italy, that this great scheme was commenced, since which it has been carried on with much energy and success.

The material with which Pompeii was buried was from 20 to 24 feet deep, and so light as to be most easily removed. Two facts were soon discovered that besides the eruption which had buried the city, there had also been an earthquake, either immediately before, or during the eruption, by which many buildings had been greatly shaken. Skeletons were found buried under fallen walls, and the bones of one was found in the forum crushed by a marble column. The other fact was that the city had before been extensively searched. It would seem that shortly after the catastrophe and for a long time after, Pompeii had been made a sort of quarry from which to draw a great quantity of marbles, columns, and beautiful statues. No doubt there would be vast sums of money, and great treasure buried up which would be eagerly sought after.

It would fill a large volume to tell you of all the wonderful things that have been brought to light in this buried city. Whole streets, great and magnificent temples, theatres, palaces of the nobles, all kinds of workshops, tradesmen's stores, splendid public baths, bakehouses, meat and bread shops, with everything in them, the very loaves in the oven, exactly as they were left when the people fled, have been brought to light.

About one third of the whole city has been excavated. The streets, the houses, the court yards, the gardens, the great public temples, the baths, the theatres, and especially the forum and great amphitheatre where the games were carried on; the palaces also of many of the nobles and leading men of the day, poets, painters, statesmen, and generals whose names are well known in history,—these have had all the light ashes removed from them, and in many cases restored to their original condition as far as they possibly could be. An immense amount of labour has been and is still being spent on this wonderful work. The names of

THE INTERIOR OF A RESTORED ROMAN VILLA.



a great number of the streets, temples, and of many of the houses have been found out. The names of the tradesmen are still over their doors, together with a description of the merchandise or wares they sold. More than this, the many public notices and advertisements rudely painted on the wall, were found in a remarkable state of preservation. There are even electioneering appeals to the people from such as wished to be elected to the public offices, in which they are not slow to tell, as in our day, the many services the candidates had rendered to the state.

In one street the workmen were evidently engaged in repairing the pavement. Part of the old was taken up and piled up in heaps; new stones were on the spot; some of the tools were close by; the very ruts of the old worn-out pavement were still visible. Indeed the whole appearance of the city was exactly as it was left when the inhabitants, stricken with terror at the sudden calamity which had fallen on their city, gave up whatever they were engaged in—workmen throwing down their tools, tradesmen reckless of their merchandise, the rich of all their treasures,—and fled for their lives. Some, however, took shelter in their inner rooms, or in temples, trusting for safety, and there perished. Others were found in the act of fleeing, having stopped till their houses were nearly overwhelmed and escape had become impossible. Some clung to their

wealth, for their skeletons were found buried in the streets still clinging to their treasures. A faithful Roman sentinel was found clinging to his post where he perished rather than be unfaithful to his duty.

The amazing wealth of the better class of people, as seen in the grandeur of their houses, is perhaps the most striking fact brought to light. The walls in nearly every room in every house were covered with the most exquisite paintings. The costliness and magnificence of their dwelling houses are beyond all comparison. And as to their great public buildings, it is thought that nothing in modern times at all approaches them. Indeed large and costly books have been written, filled with engravings which give interesting and accurate descriptions of the streets, temples, houses, baths and every striking object hitherto found. Our full page engraving gives a good idea of a court-yard of one of their great houses, which has been restored as far as possible to its original appearance. But the one sorrowful tale told by all that has been discovered, is this:—they were a wicked pleasure-loving people, filled with idleness and fulness of bread; they knew not God, nor His gospel, but were given up to every vain imagination, fulfilling the lusts of the flesh and of the mind. Like Sodom and Gomorrah, in a moment they were stricken down in the midst of their revels and ungodly career.

## BEL, OR BELUS.



NE of the most interesting stories in the Old Testament, is that of the three pious and brave young men, who submitted to be thrown alive into a burning furnace of fire, rather than obey the decree of an idolatrous King, and bow their knees in adoration to a heathen idol, which he had set up, and commanded all his subjects to worship, under pain of death if they refused. You have heard dear children, of Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego,

and Daniel, the faithful Jews who would not eat the dainties, nor drink the wines of Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. It was not lawful for the Jews to eat of all the meats and dishes that their Gentile neighbours partook of; because God had forbidden them certain things as unclean; and in refusing the king's dainties, these young men were honouring God; and also keeping themselves from self-indulgence, and excess. The king's chief steward permitted them to choose their own food, for they were



favourites of his; which also makes their obedience to the commands of God more precious, as often when persons are high in earthly favour, they are tempted to forget the simplicity of life, which is proper in those who fear and love God. At the time when these young men lived in Babylon, they were in a state of captivity; it was not their own home, so it was more difficult to follow the laws of Jehovah. The religion of the Chaldees was a strange one. They believed in *One Great Spirit as supreme filling all space, and possessing no form which could be depicted by an image* (and in this they were not far astray from the truth) they considered the sun to be the only visible manifestation of Him, but still not quite what he was at best. They built a magnificent temple for him; an ancient historian has written an account of it. It was composed of eight high towers, which were used by the Chaldean Astronomers for studying the stars. In one of the upper towers, they had an apartment, in which they placed a bed of gold and ivory, with a table of similar kind; they supposed the Great Spirit entered and reposed in this room whenever he pleased; or in other words, whenever the sun's rays penetrated it, they believed their God was there. They imagined he had a friend whom he loved very much, an Assyrian hero, named Bel, or Belus, who founded the empire of Babylon, and that this Bel, acted the part of counsellor, and inferior partner in power to the Great Spirit. There was a room in the temple exactly under the one where the *Sun entered and reposed on his beautiful bed*, and in this lower chamber they placed a statue of Bel. It was very tall, quite a giant, and was covered with pure gold; it had also a golden throne. This image gleamed brightly when the sun shone on it; and they worshipped it, and asked it to intercede with the Great Spirit for them. They supposed the invisible Being ruled in heaven, and that his friend Bel took care of the affairs of earth. There were also large serpents made of silver in the temple, which were regarded as objects of worship.

King Nebuchadnezzar was a worshipper of

Bel, and the Bible tells us he set up a great image in the plains of Dura, the height of which was sixty cubits, or much more than sixty feet. It must have been colossal, and although scripture does not tell us the name of this idol, yet, from its great height, and also being made of gold, we may, suppose it was a statue of Bel. I have heard some persons and even preachers say, that this great image which Nebuchadnezzar set up, was a likeness of himself, but I scarcely think it was; of course as I cannot read the Hebrew language in which the bible was written, I do not know the exact words used to tell about it; but anyone who has read about the Chaldea idolatry, will see at once that it was most probably an image of Bel. We find the name of Bel mentioned in Isaiah, and Jeremiah as one of the heathen idols; he was supposed to consume an immense quantity of costly food daily, we get an intimation of this even in the prophecy of Jeremiah. (Chap. li.-44.) Of course it was eaten by the wicked priests, who made the foolish Babylonians believe their god had a great appetite. Nebuchadnezzar ordered all his subjects to fall down and do homage to the great image he set up, when they heard the strains of music which were played in honour of it. There must have been quite a concert, or band of various instruments surrounding it; I suppose playing anthems in honour of the hero, and his victories. The three Jews Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, would not join with the worshippers and when the king heard of it, he was very angry and commanded them to be bound in their clothes, just as they were, and thrown into the fiery furnace. This cruel order was obeyed and the men who went to the mouth of the furnace to cast them in, were so scorched by the fire, that we are told it "*slew them.*" After a few minutes, the king, who must have been looking on, saw *four figures walking unhurt* in the midst of the fire; but the form of the *fourth* was different from the others, I do not know in what way; but the wicked king rose up much astonished, and asked, had not "*three men bound*" been cast into the fire? His

servants answered, "True oh king!" Then he exclaimed, "Lo, I see *four* men *loose* walking in the midst of the fire, and they have *no hurt*, and the form of the *fourth* is like the *Son of God*." (Dan. iii. 25.) Then the king went near to the furnace, and called aloud to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, "Ye servants of the Most High God come forth!" And wonderful to say, the three young Jews stepped forth out of the fire, without even a hair of their heads being singed, or a smell of scorch on their clothes. But we hear no more of the *fourth*, who had walked with them; except that the idolatrous king praised the God of the Hebrews, saying, "There is none other God that can deliver after this sort!" and he made a decree that no one should dare to speak ill of Him any more. Nebuchadnezzar also promoted the three faithful Hebrews to great honour in Babylon. We do not hear where Daniel was at this time, or how he escaped the fiery furnace, for I am sure he did not bow down to the golden image. One thing which makes it likely this image was a representation of Bel is, that when the king gave Daniel a new name, in honour of the favour he held him in, he pre-

fixed the name of his god Bel, to it, for he called him Bel-teshazzar, because of his wonderful knowledge in interpreting dreams, etc. We are told this in Daniel iv. 8. Therefore, I think, dear children, we have some good reason to suppose this famous "image of gold," set up in Dura, was no other than a statue of the conqueror Bel or Belus, whom his son King Tiglath-peliser made all his subjects worship as a god, under the name of Bel. Human sacrifices were sometimes offered to him and very likely the three Jews, when they were cast into the furnace, were sacrificed to appease his anger, because they would not worship him; perhaps the furnace was prepared for sacrifice and the king sought for the human victims amongst his disobedient subjects. The wicked son (or grandson), of Nebuchadnezzar, who prepared the holy vessels of the temple, was also called after this idol, for his name was *Bel-shazzar*. Many think that "*Bel*" was but another form of the word "*Baal*," which signified in the ancient languages, "*lord*," or great one, and was the name given to a variety of different idols, by various heathen nations.

K. B. K.

## THE VOICE OF JESUS.

Hark! it is the voice of Jesus,  
Sounding at the close of day;  
Calling little children to Him,  
Bidding them make no delay.  
Yes, the day of grace is drawing  
Drawing quickly to a close;  
Happy they who find in Jesus  
Everlasting sweet repose.

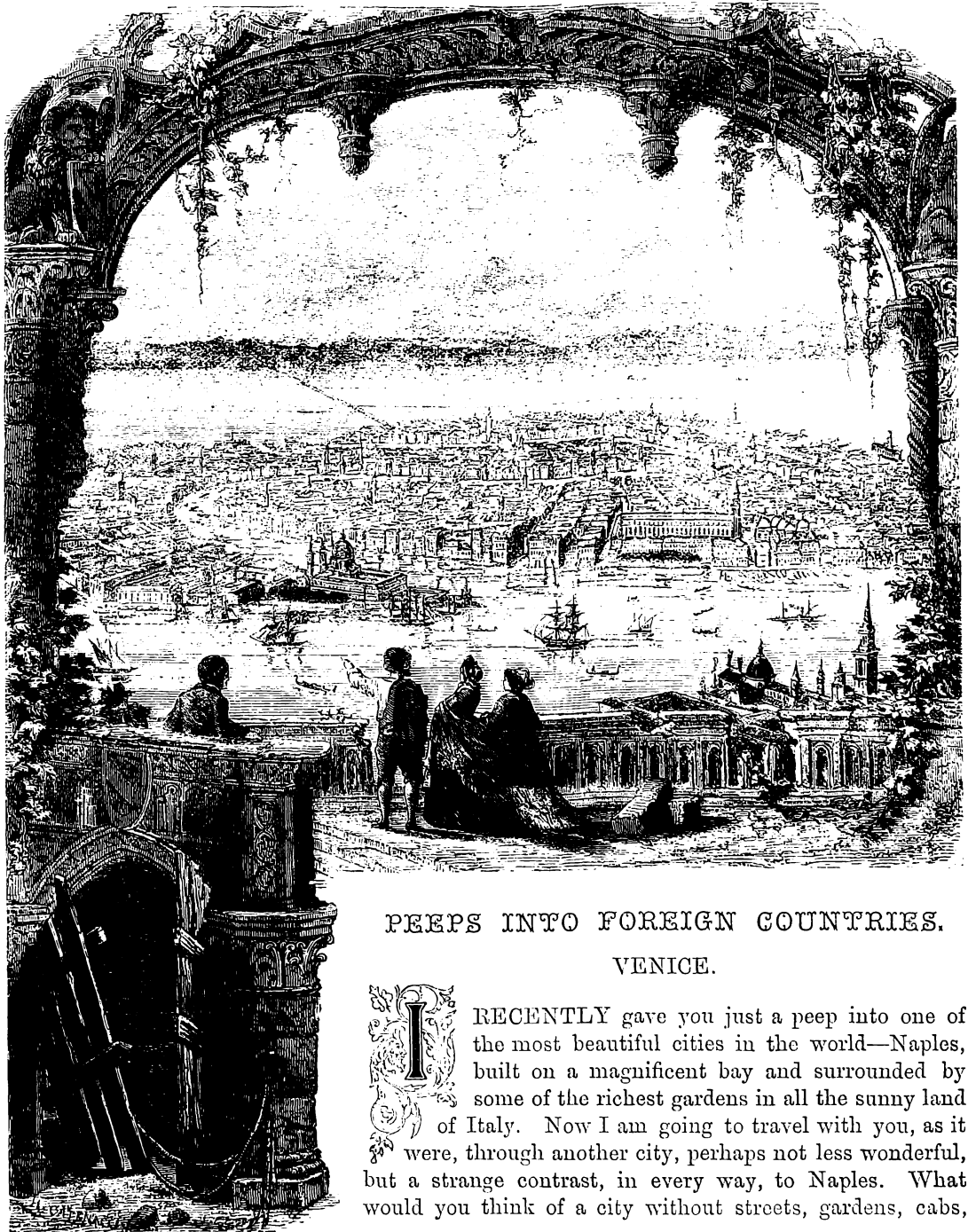
Years have sped their swift course onward,  
Since He died upon the tree,  
Myriad souls have gone to Jesus,  
Since He died for you and me.  
Wide He flung the door of mercy,  
Never has it stood ajar;  
Still you may press in, in thousands  
Rich and poor from near and far.

Children! Has the voice of Jesus  
Any special charm for you,  
While it tells of free salvation,  
Tells of nothing left to do?

Just the One who cried "'Tis finished,"  
All those many years ago,  
Calls you now in tenderest accents,  
Would His arms around you throw.  
Haste, oh! haste the wise decision,  
All your heart to Jesus bow;  
He is waiting, He is willing,  
Only come in earnest now.  
Soon that open door of mercy,  
Will invite the last one through,  
Soon will God swift move to judgment,  
And for ever shut it to.

Haste! then haste! while yet a Saviour  
Lives for you in heaven above;  
Trust Him now and He will give you  
All the riches of His love.  
Then should death, or His blest coming,  
Summon you from earth away;  
'Twill be, but to dwell for ever,  
With Himself in endless day.

W. J. W.



## PEEPS INTO FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

## VENICE.

**I** RECENTLY gave you just a peep into one of the most beautiful cities in the world—Naples, built on a magnificent bay and surrounded by some of the richest gardens in all the sunny land of Italy. Now I am going to travel with you, as it were, through another city, perhaps not less wonderful, but a strange contrast, in every way, to Naples. What would you think of a city without streets, gardens, cabs,

busses, or horses? Do you say how can that be? Look at our engravings. Here you have a city where the rattle of a carriage is never heard. Here are no beautiful woods with their warbling songsters; no flowers, no rural lanes with hedges of hawthorn and fields of corn, and laughing merry bounding children. Instead of paved streets there are canals; instead of cabs and busses or the modern trams, there are curious and beautifully decorated boats, called gondolas, in every part of the city, and indeed at every man's door. These gondolas are worked by gaily dressed men who are really the cabmen of our cities.

This city is Venice, and it stands in the midst of the sea. It is an exceedingly old city, and as for earth's grandeur one of the grandest in the world. But you wonder how it came to pass that such a grand city should be built in the sea. I will tell you.

Hundreds and hundreds of years ago, when the hoards of the rough barbarians overran Europe, and broke up the Roman Empire, there was a man named Attila, a fierce warlike man; and with his followers he ravaged and destroyed the northern part of Italy. Whole cities were desolated: in one called Aquilla not one stone was left standing on another. The great mass of the people were panic stricken and they fled before the murderous invaders searching for some place of security. In the northern angle of the Adriatic sea is a gulf called Lagune, and in this gulf had formed a large number of small desert islands which were close together. They were surrounded by a great expanse of shallow water, and they became a safe asylum for these fleeing fugitives. Here they began to build their simple and miserable huts. These islands they joined together by driving piles on which they built additional huts. The very wretchedness of their homes was their only security. Left thus unmolested they were soon joined by many others and greatly multiplied in numbers. Their privations made them hardy and thrifty. Soon all the islands were joined together. Houses, churches, and in time as

the people became numerous and rich, immense stately palaces sprang up in all directions and in the end, one of the most gorgeous cities the world ever beheld.

"A few in fear  
Flying away from him whose boast it was  
That the grass grew not where his horse had trod,  
Gave birth to Venice. Like the water-fowl,  
They built their nests among the ocean waves;  
And where the sands were shifting, as the winds blew  
From the North or South—where they that came  
Had to make sure the ground they stood upon,  
Rose, like an exhalation from the deep,  
A vast metropolis, with glistening spires,  
With theatres, basilicas adorned;  
A scene of light and glory, a dominion,  
That had endured the longest among men."

In this way did Venice lay its foundations—in trouble, distress, and desolation. None molested them. Nothing had they worth coveting, and the wild wandering barbarians who were sacking the rich cities of Europe, despising their poverty and wretched sea-girt-huts, left them in peace and quietness.

Their history is a striking example of the old saying that adversity is a better school than prosperity. It may be that some of my young readers are tempted to find fault with their circumstances. Your parents are poor, and have to struggle hard for the bare needfuls of life. They can provide you but few books or youthful pleasures; or, your father may have been taken away, you may be the only son of a widowed mother, and you see nothing before you but poverty and a hard struggle in life. Others around you have money, comforts, friends, all they could desire; and many a time, perhaps, have you longed for their privileges. Well, let me tell you, even for this world your start in life may be far better than theirs. I have often watched both classes. As a rule, the well-to-do young people grow up careless, dependent on others, extravagant and wasteful in their habits, and little disposed really to master any trade or profession to which they put their hands. Not so with the apparently less favoured class. They find a rough hard world before them. For them there are no silver slippers, no props to rest on, their very



BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

necessities call forth their energies; they are compelled to be careful and frugal. Take an example; a rich man's son takes his place at sixteen or eighteen in the counting house or sales-room of a large business establishment: but he is easy-going; finds it difficult to be punctual; learns slowly, his mind is too full of his evening pleasures to be wholly taken up with his business; he attracts but little attention and of course makes no headway in the house. At the self-same time a poor lad seeks admission as, it may be, errand boy in the same house. After a trembling suspense he is accepted. It seems to him the one great event of his life. Next morning, with the prayers and blessing of a widowed mother, he starts long before the appointed time; with much tremor he begins his duties; toils on for months it may be unnoticed, but gradually his carefulness, his promptness, his civility, draw the attention of an observing partner; he is

promoted a trifle; he becomes a junior hand in the sales room; on he works, mastering the price and quality of every article, till the head of the department finds him his right hand man. In short at the end of twenty years the errand boy has become a junior partner, and in forty years the head of the firm.

Well, from their poor beginning the Venetians became a truly great people; mighty in war and conquest, and they have built a city in the midst of the waters that has long been one of the wonders of the world. Their buildings are the most magnificent; their sculpture the richest; their paintings the most costly; their bridges, of which there are over 300, the most beautiful the world has produced. The Bridge of Sighs, of which we give a picture, is so called because across it prisoners condemned to death were led to the palace to hear their condemnation. It gives you a good idea how the canals form the streets of the city.

## DUKE ERIE'S RECOMPENSE.

**A**T Worms, when Luther had returned, forsaken and dispirited, to his hotel and flung himself down on the crimson settee of the huge window seat, as weary and tired a young monk as you would find in the three kingdoms, the door was softly opened, and a servant entered bearing a silver vase filled with a refreshing beverage, the offering of the old yet generous Duke Erie of Brunswick—a powerful lord belonging to the Pope's party. As the reformer was deeply touched by the latter's kindness, he drank the grateful draught with glad delight, for he felt he could say with the psalmist, "Thou spreadest me a table in the midst of my enemies—my cup runneth over." And he said to the servant, "As on this day Duke Erie has remembered me, may our Lord remember him in the hour of his last struggle!"

The servant bowed and took back the message and goblet to his master. The aged duke called to mind those few earnest words at the moment of his death, and addressing a young knight who stood by his bedside, he said, "Take the Bible and read to me."

As the noble youth read the words of Christ the soul of the dying man took comfort—"Whosoever shall give you a cup of cold water, in my name, because ye believe on me, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward."

The old man lifted up his eyes to heaven and smiled peacefully upon the youth as he passed away, for he felt the promise of Christ was sure, and that his thirst would now be quenched in the river of the water of life, and his recompense remain throughout eternity.

## "REMEMBER ME."



HERE are few phrases more affecting than this—"Remember me." We find it, in many connections, in eleven different books of the Bible.

But before we just hastily look at them, let me tell you, dear children, of a dear young princess who once lay dying, and how she used it. Her father, a king of England, was very fond of her, and he used to visit her every afternoon to speak to her of Christ, and to comfort her with the word of God—for this alone can comfort on a dying bed. As one once beautifully wrote—

"Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are;  
While on His breast I lean my head,  
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

Well, the dear princess had a beautiful ring made, containing a lock of her hair; and she had this motto engraved upon it. "Remember me." When her dear father came to see her, she put it on his finger with one of her sweetest smiles. But oh, the effect of this was, that it so overcome the king, that his reason left him. And he died soon after, with confused utterances about his darling daughter on his tongue.

And now let us look at its use in the Scriptures.

Joseph, in the dungeon, used it, when he asked the chief butler whose happy lot he had fortold, "Remember me when it shall be well with thee." But, alas, we read "Yet did not the chief butler, remember Joseph, but forgot him." Gen. xl. 14.

Sampson used it, when having been taken by the Philistines, his head was shaved and his eyes were put out, and he stood an object of sport to them. "Remember me, O God that I may be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." And God did remember him, and gave him his desire, "and the slain," it is recorded "at his death were more than they which he slew in his life." Judges xvi. 30.

Hannah used it in the vow she vowed,

"Remember me and do not forget thine handmaid," her *heart* prayed, when she wept before the Lord. But only her lips moved, which called for the retort of Eli,—How long wilt thou be "drunken?" "But she was not drunken. She was sorrowful. And the Lord did remember her, and gave her Samuel. Samuel i. 11.

Nehemiah used it often when he returned to Jerusalem and recorded the services of the priests and Levites. "Remember me, O my God, for good," he said. And the Lord did remember him. Neh. xiii. 31.

Job used it when in bitterness of soul. "O that thou would hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and remember me." Job xiv. 13. And how God did remember him we find in the last chapter of the book, "So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job, more than his beginning."

David used it "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people." Sweet prayer! No less a remembrance would meet the heart of David. And God did so remember him. Psalm cvi. 4.

Jeremiah used it when suffering under the persecutions of his enemies. "O Lord, thou knowest: remember me." And how his prayer was answered let the next verse tell us. "Thy words were found, and I did eat there, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts." Jer. xv. xvi.

God used it, by the mouth, of His prophet Ezekiel, when fortelling the dispersion of His people for their abominations. "And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives." True of old, and shall be yet more blessedly true when He puts His hand a second time to restore His people. Ezekiel vi. 9.

Again does the Lord use the words by the mouth of Zechariah. "And they shall remem-

ber me in far countries." Never will the Lord give His people up. Though they are unfaithful—He abideth faithful. Zec. x. 9.

But now we turn to the utterance, which, more than either of the others, you all know. I refer to the use of these words by the dying thief. "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Luke xxiii. 42. What a moment for such a prayer to be uttered! His life passing away. His end near. Did Jesus, also suffering, disregard the cry? O No! "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." The kingdom is distant still; but eighteen hundred years ago, the thief entered paradise with Jesus, his "Lord."

Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, is the last to use this phrase. "I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things." 1 Cor. xi. 2. They had good cause to remem-

ber him, and sweetly they did it, to his refreshment and their own.

And now I have quoted from all the books which contain the words. But I know you will expect me to refer to the words of Jesus Himself. Well, they are not exactly the words "remember me" but they are very like it. "This do in remembrance of me." Luke xxii. 19. Do what? Sit at His table, and eat and drink in remembrance of Him. How simple, yet how blessed! And many dear children have so remembered Him, and are doing so now. May all of you, dear readers, be amongst the happy number.

"There, in the broken bread, and wine,

We hear Him say "Remember me!"

"I gave My life to ransom thine,

"I bore thy cross to set thee free."

A. M.

## LIGHT IN DARKNESS.

**I** don't know at all, Kate, what I'm to do."

The above words were spoken in a tone evidently of deep distress by a poor old blind and nearly deaf man, in a small town on the coast of Ireland, as he entered the cottage of a neighbour of his, who but a few weeks previous had found peace through believing in Jesus.

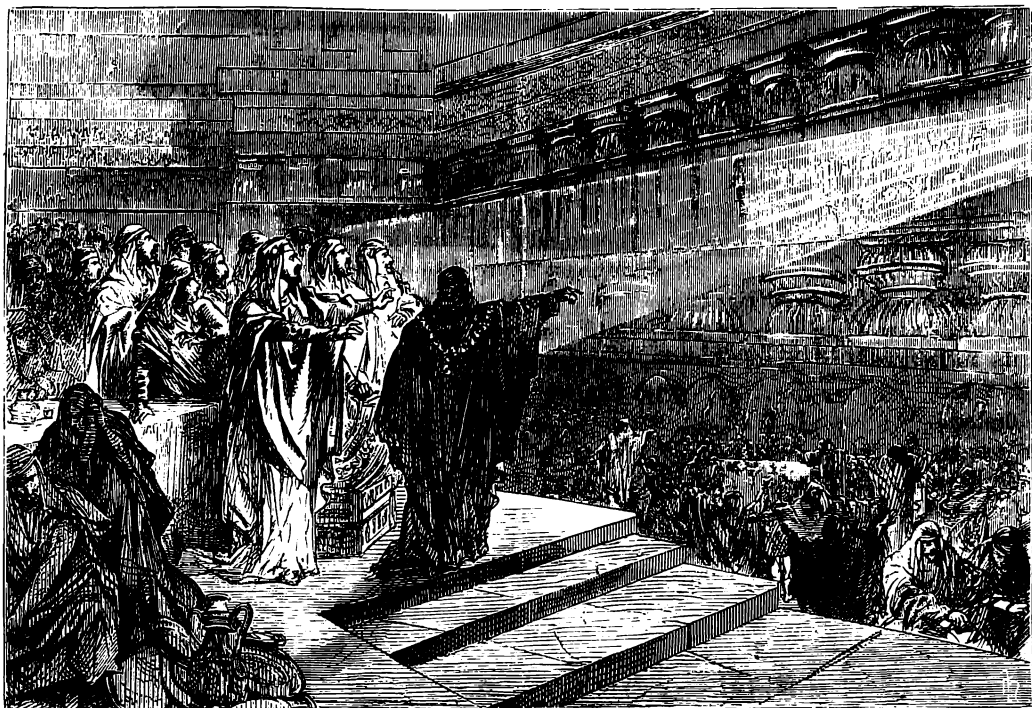
It was so ordered of the Lord that Miss —, the one who had been used to Kate's conversion, had just then come in to pay her a farewell visit, as she was about to leave A—, where she had been spending the summer months. Kate was telling her about the blind man, who for days had been in great trouble of mind about his sins, when he entered and seated himself on a bench near the fire, uttering the above quoted words.

Miss — asked him what was the matter, but soon found that it was almost impossible to speak to him, for he was nearly deaf. However, he told her that it was the burden of his

sins that was troubling him so much. She made another attempt to talk to him, but it seemed almost hopeless work to think of getting him to hear her. At length she stood up, and bending over him, putting her face very close to his ear, and speaking as loudly as she could, tried to tell him the Gospel, and to show him how the death of Christ met all God's righteous demands against the sinner. He listened attentively for some minutes without saying a word, then suddenly he interrupted her, exclaiming with the greatest earnestness, as he struck his stick upon the ground, "Here it is; I believe that the death of Christ satisfies God for *my sins*! I believe that the death of Christ satisfies God for *my sins*! Instead of the burdened troubled soul that entered that cottage there went out a bright and happy man, for he now knew that Christ had "made peace through the blood of his cross" (Col. i. 20), and since then he has gone on his way rejoicing.

E. G.





## THE HAND-WRITING ON THE WALL.

**D**O you know the story that this picture tells? It is found in the fifth chapter of Daniel. There you will find that Belshazzar, king of Babylon, made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousands.

While he tasted the wine, he commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which had been taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, that they might all drink out of them.

It was adding the deepest insult to God after all that He was enduring, by having His people and His vessels in the hands of the Gentiles; for though most of the Jews did not feel the sin that had brought them into this condition of bondage, and the real degradation of it, He felt it deeply.

But this was a real open defiance—a purposed insult, aimed at Him. It was saying, “We have made these people worship our idol, and now we will lead them into contempt for all the things of God.” And for what? Just to gratify his tastes—his drunken desires. This was the worst of all.

And now see how God met it. They had not invited Him to the feast. They had all the days occupied and planned out without thought of Him, except to despise His things, and they would gladly have shut Him out.

But He could enter for all that, and at such a time as they little thought. He did not go there to take part with the feast, as they did. He was the quietest One of all there, and was there only for a moment to give His judgment of the whole affair.

“In the same hour came forth fingers of a

man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace." It made no noise, but it caused at once the greatest fear; the king's knees smote one against another. It was telling what God thought of the whole matter.

Although the words were familiar and were in the language of that land, yet none of the wise men could understand them. How could they tell what God thought of their feast? Is He not telling us every day, on every page of His Word, what He thinks of this world and all its movements, in very simple sentences too? And yet who thinks, who cares, who understands? He tells us that the devil is the prince of this world, and of course he would keep men blinded.

How solemn! Things were all going on so finely, too. They were having such a grand feast! Ah, but they forgot God, and all these

things were against Him. So He tells us that everything that man is doing, and man himself, in under judgment; that directly Christ will come to destroy all, and take the kingdom from them. Men are not getting everything ready, by making things better, but boasting and enjoying that which pleases them.

These things are written to warn us. Soon all that is here will be over. Are you Christ's or are you the world's children? Christ is a real Deliverer from all the judgment that is to come here. He that believes on Him is safe for ever. Do take Him now for your Saviour and Lord, believing on Him simply as a sinner.

"God now commands all men everywhere to repent; because He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that MAN whom He hath ordained" (Acts xvii. 30, 31).

## THE WONDERS OF WATER.

### LAKES.

**I**N former numbers we have seen that the ocean, by the process of evaporation and rain, supplies alike the little rills skipping down the mountain side, and the mighty rivers rolling their great torrents back again into its bosom. We have traced the tiny stream and the swelling flood, and in our last number we gazed together on rapids, and tarried long over that greatest of all watery wonders, the mighty falls of Niagara.

Before we come to the ocean itself, we must say a little about those small or large collections of water which we call lakes. These may be said to take a similar place on the land that islands take on the ocean. You know an island is land completely surrounded by water. Now a lake is water surrounded by land. You must mark the difference between lakes, lagoons, and pools. Lagoons are the overflowings of rivers,

or occasional encroachments of the sea; pools are mere collections of rainwater and generally dry up in summer; whereas true lakes are constantly supplied by streams flowing into them, or by springs gushing up from their bed. Some are very small covering not more than five square miles, while others are so large as to be called inland seas; of these the Caspian sea is the most remarkable and covers 160,000 square miles. Then again some are very ancient, indeed they are supposed to be as old as, and once to have been part of the ocean itself, which originally covered the surface of the whole earth. Others are more modern, and have been formed by various causes. Many by the action of great volcanic fires, earthquakes upheaving some parts, and causing vast tracts in other places to fall into immense cavities, caused by internal fires. These great cavities would soon fill up with water draining from

the surrounding country, and become lakes. Sometimes there will be a great land avalanche, or land slip, as it is sometimes called, across a stream. Should there be high hills on each side, the water will accumulate till it either sweeps away the obstruction or rises above it, in which case a lake will be the result.

Lakes may be divided into four classes: 1st—Those which have no apparent inlets or outlets, streams running into or out of them. These are fed chiefly by underground springs, which, as I told you in a former number, may come from a great distance and from much higher ground, but which have never before been able to find an outlet. Some of these are very salt. There is one in Asia called Tuzla. It is narrow but fifty miles in length, and its waters are so salt that no fish or animal can live in it. Even wild fowls are afraid to venture upon its waters, for if they do their wings soon become stiff by a coating of salt forming on them.

2nd—Another class have streams running out of them but none running in so as to supply them with water. These are generally much above the level of the sea, and derive all their supply from underground springs. There is one on Mount Rotonda, in the island of Corsica, which is 9,000 feet above the level of the sea. The source of the great river Volga may be traced to a lake of this kind.

3rd—A third class have streams or rivers running into them but have no outlets. These lakes are most peculiar of all but they are very rare. There is one in Italy of a remarkable kind. It is now called Celano, but its ancient name was Fucinus. It covers over 100 square miles, and has no natural outlets for its waters through the hills by which it is surrounded. During the time of the Roman Empire it often rose so high as to destroy an immense tract of fertile country, and the Roman Senate was petitioned to drain it through one of its surrounding hills. The Emperor Claudius at length undertook this tremendous work. For eleven years no fewer than thirty thousand men were engaged in cutting a large tunnel through one

of the hills. Pliny, the great Roman historian, tells a sad tale of the cruelty and barbarity of the Roman people, so much extolled for their refinement and intelligence. When everything was ready for letting off the water, a grand naval spectacle was exhibited on it, something like one of our grand naval reviews, only a great number of condemned criminals were ranged in separate fleets, and obliged to engage in earnest combat and to destroy each other, instead of a sham fight, for the entertainment of the court and an immense number of spectators, who covered the neighbouring hills. A line of well-armed vessels and rafts loaded with soldiers, surrounded the scene of action to prevent any of the poor doomed victims from escaping. When, however, the savage diversion was ended and the operations for the opening of the tunnel commenced, the emperor was very near being swept away and drowned, by the sudden rush of the waters towards the vent. The tunnel proved a failure as it speedily choked up, and the lake rose so much as to cover 10,000 acres of fertile soil, when it was again reopened and means adopted to keep the waters to a low level. There is a great lake called Uramea on the Persian frontier, three hundred miles in circumference and completely land-locked by most beautiful mountains. Though constantly fed by numerous currents, it has no outlet, yet there is no increase of its waters, but a gradual decrease, the waste by evaporation being greater than the supply. This lake is intensely salt. There is a remarkable lake of this kind, the Lake Van of Armenia, which is much celebrated for its beauty by eastern writers, both in prose and verse. It occupies the bottom of an immense volcanic amphitheatre, is upwards of 240 miles in circumference, and receives the waters of eight rivers, without having a single stream to carry off any of its waters.

But by far the most remarkable of this kind are the Caspian, the sea of Aral, and the well known Dead Sea. The majestic Volga, 1,900 miles long, pours its vast volumes of water into the Caspian, together with the Kur, the Ural,

and the Aras, yet with all these vast and constant supplies, there is not a single stream that leaves its shores. So great, however, is the power of evaporation that this has now ceased to be a wonder.

To most of my young readers the Dead Sea, in the south of Palestine, will be the most interesting of all lakes. It is emphatically the lake of the Bible. The river Jordan, which has a history so thrilling, so truly wonderful, so mixed up with many of the most important events in Scripture, flows into this lake. Crossing the Jordan was Israel's last days march, after forty year's wandering in the wilderness. What a solemn sight that must have been! When Jordan was at its highest,—its banks overflowing—there stood the ark of God, in the midst of the river, surrounded by the priests, the waters reared up into a great heap, far above them, while the whole people passed dry shod over! As you know the Dead Sea is very small—not more than about nine miles wide, and thirty-nine long. During the rainy season when Jordan “overflows her banks” the lake rises from ten to fifteen feet, and the length of it increases at least two miles. The lake lies in a deep cauldron surrounded by lofty cliffs of naked limestone rocks, the western portion of which rises 1,500 feet above the water, and the eastern portion 2,500 feet. As you all know the consumed cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are supposed to be covered by its waters. It is exceedingly salt; so much so, that no life can exist in it, and it is impossible for people to sink in its waters. Sterility and deathlike silence prevail upon its shores. In some places it is 1800 feet deep, but varies very much in different parts; and it is said that large hewn stones can be clearly distinguished at its bottom, the remains of the destroyed cities.

The aspect of the Dead Sea, the deep mountain ravine in which it rolls, the wilderness

—the silence, solitude, and universal barrenness, together with the remembrance of the ancient and terrible disaster, make a deep impression on the mind of the visitor.

The most remarkable of all the features of the Dead Sea is its bed being so much below the level of the Mediterranean Sea, which has now been ascertained to be over 1,300 feet.

4th—The last class of lakes are such as have streams flowing both into and out of them; and these are by far the most numerous. In all probability the largest of these were formerly connected with the main ocean, as some of the large lakes in Russia, and the well known and important North American lakes. Lakes Superior, Huron, Erie, and Ontario are all connected by channels and their surplus waters are carried off by Niagara river over the falls, and into the St. Lawrence. All these magnificent inland seas are composed of beautiful fresh water, and an enormous traffic is carried on over their vast expanse.

Floating islands are amongst the wonders of water. Some are to be found in the lakes of Scotland, Ireland, Sweden, Germany and Italy. These have been formed by the gradual accumulation of vegetable matter, reeds, roots of trees and the like; and some have required ages for their growth. There is an immense one at the mouth of the Mississippi river formed by the large quantity of trees &c. floated down the river. In 1816 it was no less than ten miles in length and 250 yards wide.

Lakes differ much in their clearness, colour and depth. In lake Superior, fish, and the rocks are distinctly visible to an enormous depth. Some of the small Welsh lakes are perfectly black.

There are many other instructive and interesting peculiarities connected with lakes, but here we must stop; and in our next number, if the Lord will, we shall take up some of the wonders of the mighty ocean itself.



## THE TWO APPROACHES TO THE KING.



THE book of Esther is, in more ways than one, most remarkable. No other book shows so clearly the hand of God, and, strange to say, He whose hand it is is never once mentioned! As all my young readers know, it is the book of the deliverance of God's people, the Jews, from utter extermination.

But there are two circumstances in the book which I desire to bring before you, as illustrating, on the one hand, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; and, on the other hand, the enmity of the devil, in the two approaches made to the presence of the king—the approach for life, and the approach for death.

In the fifth chapter we read of Esther, after three days and nights of fasting, going in unbidden, and at the peril of her life, to the presence of King Ahasuerus, to plead for her people. Life was the hidden secret of her heart. Life, which, at the fit moment, she pleaded for and gained.

In the next chapter, the sixth, we have another approach to the king. But now it

is Haman, and the dreadful burden of his heart is death; not now the death of the Jews, in which he fondly thought he had succeeded, but now the request was to be for the death of an individual Jew. Thus the purport of his approach ran, "to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him."

Now, do not these two incidents remind you of the Lord Jesus and the wicked devil. The one the friend and the other the enemy of man. The one thirsting for his salvation—life; the other longing for his destruction—death?

And what is Christ, and what is the devil doing even now? The one in the presence of God for us; the other "seeking whom he may devour." And can it be, dear reader, that you will refuse Jesus and listen to Satan? And you do listen to Satan all the while you believe not in Jesus. He is seeking your confidence, your love, and, as the result of this, your salvation. What a blessed thing to be saved! God grant that it may be true of each of you.

A. M.

## GOOD NEWS.

Dear children, let me tell you why  
The Saviour left His home on high—  
Left His bright home of glory there  
To live a life of suffering here :—  
In Eden's garden, fair and bright,  
The paradise of God's delight,  
God put the man He made, as head,  
To dress, and keep it, as He said ;  
And told him he might freely eat  
Of every tree He gave for meat ;  
But one amidst the garden fair  
To taste was death,—the curse to bear.  
But soon he disobeyed the Lord,  
He listened to the tempter's word,  
Partook of the forbidden tree,  
And hence came sin and misery.  
His conscience, as a voice within,

Spoke loudly of his guilt and sin.  
Then to conceal his shame from view,  
A fig leaf apron round him drew ;  
Not satisfied, he thought to hide  
Behind the trees, and there abide ;  
But God his hiding-place well knew,  
And brought him forth his sin to view,  
And make him feel how sad a thing,  
How awful, terrible is sin !  
He then provided him a dress  
Which shadow'd forth His righteousness.  
He uttered words of mercy still  
With hope, lost man's sad heart to fill.  
Spoke of the woman's future Seed,  
The coming One, to meet his need.  
And not his need alone, but all  
His children's, ruined by his fall.

For we in Adam fell, our head ;  
 In him, by nature, we are dead.  
 Nothing that's good from us can come,  
 For we are worthless, vile, undone.

In types and shadows God, of old,  
 Of His own spotless Lamb foretold ;  
 Who dwelt with Him in glory bright,  
 Before all worlds, His one delight.  
 In Abel's offering Christ is seen,  
 And in each one that since has been,  
 We read the same sweet, simple tale—  
 That nought but blood can e'er avail.

At last God's time was fully come,  
 He sent His own beloved Son,  
 With man, on earth, awhile to dwell,  
 Of His eternal love to tell.

He saw us all defiled by sin,  
 In words, and ways, without, within,  
 Helpless, and needy, lost, astray,  
 Poor wanderers, far from God away.

But He had come to save the lost  
 At every sacrifice and cost—  
 Had come with deep compassion here,  
 To raise us to His glory there.

'Twas wondrous love, so pure and free!

'Twas love for sinners, such as we!

Love that no tongue on earth could tell,

'Twas love divine, unsearchable!

His precious blood, and that alone  
 Could for our crimson sins atone ;

And, as a Lamb to slaughter led,

He suffered in the sinners' stead.

Yes, on the cross His life's blood flowed,

In death His blessed head was bowed,

Nailed, as accursed, to the tree,

To set the guilty sinner free.

Then in the grave awhile He slept,

While those who loved Him mourned and  
 wept,

Grieved that their Lord should there re-  
 main,

Nor thought to see His face again.

But soon He burst the tomb—arose

Triumphant o'er all His foes—

Assured the loving hearts which bled,

That He was risen from the dead,

Giving their souls from fear release,  
 And breathing on them sweetest "peace."  
 His work then finished, all complete,  
 In heaven above He took His seat.

Soon from that seat, on Pentecost,  
 He sent the blessed Holy Ghost,  
 Love's banner o'er the earth to wave,  
 And tell "He lives, and lives to save!"  
 He lives, salvation to impart,  
 He lives, to heal the broken heart,  
 He lives, to give the weary rest,  
 To cheer and comfort the oppressed.

"Come," is the word He loves to say,  
 And oh! dear child, His call obey.  
 To Jesus look at once, be wise,  
 Nor longer His sweet love despise.  
 At God's right hand He waits to give  
 Eternal life that you might live ;  
 For all who in His name believe  
 Are righteous made, and peace receive.

But soon He'll rise from off that throne,  
 Where now a Saviour He is known ;

Yes, He into the air will come,

To call His waiting people home ;

For heaven, the Father's house above,

Awaits the objects of His love ;

But those who then behind are left,

Of every hope will be bereft.

No Saviour then to whom to flee,

For Judah's Lion He will be

To all who would not to Him bow,

Too late, alas! 'tis too late now.

Too late then to His arms to fly

Too late for mercy then to cry ;

Judgment will fall on every hand,

None then shall His fierce wrath with-  
 stand.

But yet He waits a moment still,

His words are "Come whoever will"

Still, through His blood, can life be won,

O hear it, "I will cast out none."—

"I living water freely give

To those who thirst—drink now and live."

A. M.



## THE ROSE GARDEN.

AN ALLEGORY.

**T**HERE lay a fair spot between a winding stream and a sloping hill of green turf and sunny aspect. It had always been a garden, but of late the gardener had paid more attention than usual to it. There were beds of violets in the shade, white and blue; and golden yellow from Cashmere; also lovely primroses of every hue; daffodils and early lilies. But the season for all these was past, and the roses were budding and opening their fair petals to the sun; when one bright morning the gardener entered, and after some hours spent in pruning, tying, and nailing up his choicest plants, he paused at noon and exclaimed, "That will do! when the master comes, he will see what progress his flowers have made during his absence; *the time is at hand*, he will soon be here!" Then, gathering up his tools, he retired to rest and await the arrival. An hour rolled on, and still the master of the garden did not appear. A murmur of restlessness ran through the flowers; and at last, the voice of a little, creeping blue plant was heard: "Ah me! what a corner I grow in; no one notices me! yet my blossoms are bluer than the summer sky! but my figure is so diminutive, and my stalk will never grow upright, but creeps along the ground, so that persons do not seem to see me, or remember my existence; if I could have *one wish*, it would be, to become a favourite and win some popularity, be it ever so little."



A handsome blush-rose tree, which covered an adjacent wall, and had lately been nailed up by the gardener, hearing these murmurs, insolently accosted the simple flower. "Contemptuous thing! but a few months ago you were a weed growing in yonder stream, and our gardener has given you a place in the parterre. Contrast *your* puny flower with my beautiful clusters, and yet how hard *my* fate; but yesterday my boughs played lightly in the breezes, and to-day I am cramped, and crippled, and nailed in stiff torture to this wall; how I wish that the nails which confine me but grew on my branches, and I would wound and lacerate the hands of the cruel man who has thus made my beauty a captive; but when the master comes he will own my superiority to all here." On the slope of the river's bank grew a homely cabbage-rose bush, bearing full sweet-scented flowers. It heard its handsome sister's words, and replied: "How highly honoured and elevated you are! and still you speak ungratefully of the one who has lifted you up above us all. If your wild freedom and self-will are crippled, see what an honourable position you hold notwithstanding; for your boughs overtop us all, and you are the most stately object in the garden. As for me, when I look down on the cool water and soft moss which lines its bank, I often long to lay my blossoms to rest on it; and instead of barbs and nails on my boughs, I would wish for the soft moss to grow over my buds and stems, and render me soft and gentle to the touch, and winsome to the eye. I know I am but a homely rose bush, but I feel contented with my position, for my petals are preserved even after death for their perfume."

In a quiet corner grew a deep crimson flowered rose, such as we see in old-fashioned gardens, and often pass by as not full or perfect in its flower, for the petals are loose and irregular in form; it spoke next. "Well, I am but a very old-fashioned creature, and have been long overlooked, as I am more showy than beautiful, perhaps considered a little vulgar too; but if I had *my* wish, it would be

to possess some medicinal virtue, which would render me useful, and heal and soothe pain and sickness, for I know the world is full of both, and we flowers might do a little good in our day, instead of living only for appearance and perfume."

"*Moss and medicine!*" exclaimed the blush beauty on the wall, "what a weak-minded pair! but no wonder, you are both so commonplace in complexion and style, that of course you could never aspire to any thing elegant or gain pre-eminence."

In the centre of the grass plot grew a fair standard rose. It had been a recent graft, and was only just attaining strength and size enough to bear flowers; one beautiful snow-white blossom had already opened its cup, and some young buds gave further promise. It spoke last, and, looking at the blush rose, said gently, "Sister, your flowers are the fairest in our garden, and your form is stately; as a queen you spread forth your luxuriant branches, crowned with clusters of sweet flowers, and perfume the air from your lofty wall-throne; but you are a captive, because from your natural growth and disposition, the wild breezes would soon destroy and shatter you, if you were floating loose and unbound; for that care, thank the good gardener, and the master's restraining love. As for me, if I could have my wish, it has been—ever since the morning I opened my pale flower, and saw the glowing sun beaming down his radiance—that my cold breast might be tinged with his amber warmth, and bear even ever so faint a reflection of his beautiful golden light. I would desire to be a rose embued with heavenly sunlight."

During the time the flowers were conversing, they had failed to perceive that, standing at the door of the summer-house, close by the garden gate, was a majestic and benignant countenanced man; *he was the master*, and had arrived in the early dawn of the morning; but desiring to see how all was going on, before his presence became known even to the gardener, he had secreted himself in



the shady summer-house until afternoon, and had been a silent witness to the conversation of his flowers. He came forward and gazed with serene mien all over the garden, until his eye rested on the stately wall-rose. He sighed and said, "Has the pruning knife and binder not been sufficient to subdue thy wild will? I ordered it in love; but thou hast desired a curse and not a blessing; if it must be so, have thy wish, for it will be chastisement indeed!"

"And thou, silly one," he said, bending his gaze on the blue brook-lime, "mayest be a favourite and have a name, to satisfy thee, but no more—neither perfume nor pre-eminence. I pardon thy vanity, as thou art but a child of yesterday, but thou wouldest have been happier in the shade of the stream; for that popularity which thou hast desired shall cause many to gather thy blossoms, and cast them to die neglected in the scorching sunshine; yet I permit that the poetry of thy name and beauty may be a solace to some weary hearts."

"My humble rose of the mossy bank may share her friend's delicate and tender attractions, and wear a mossy dress to cover the roughness of her stems, and still be fragrant and beloved even in death."

"My unvalued friend with crimson petals shall no more be deemed worthless or unprofitable, for she shall possess qualities which will render her precious to the physician."

"And thou, my young standard tree, mayest reflect from thy sweet bosom the amber sunlight which illumines the sky above thee; but in resigning the white dress of infancy, see thou keep unsullied the *golden garb of faith*, and grow in *grace* as well as in beauty."

The master retired, and the flowers fell asleep as the twilight wore on; but on the morrow, each awoke to find her wish realised, and experience what happiness would result from its fulfilment.

The little brook-lime found herself the favourite and celebrated "Forget-me-not," and has since been usually depicted or worn in company with the rose; but though fair and winsome in her way, her bloom is but short-lived, as she is only a bi-annual, or creature of two year's duration of life.

The haughty wall-rose bore the barbs, or thorns of rancour, which she had desired to wound and keep away all who attempted to approach her, otherwise than to admire; and instead of producing happiness, her temper became so spiteful and peevish that, notwithstanding her beauty, she was avoided by all.

The homely bush on the slope became the choice and favourite moss-rose, and preserves her sweet scent after death.

The unvalued crimson flower found her gaudy petals transformed into leaves of healing value, and has since been named the apothecaries' rose; while the white graft bore from that hour the amber tint which fell on her bosom from the great orb of light and life, and she is now the beautiful yellow rose, so highly prized alike by master and gardener.

My little friends! I leave you to find a moral to my tale of the rose-garden; but to me it portrays, *Love of approbation, Pride, Amiability, Sympathy, and Piety*. You will be able to discern which flower represents each character.

K. B. K.

## HEDGEROW FLOWERS.

TINY flowerets, sweet and meek,  
Growing in the hedge,  
As if playing hide-and-peek  
' Neath some nook or ledge;

Mingling with the dewy grass,  
Humble in their birth,  
Telling all who onward pass,  
Pride is vain for worth.

Thus simplicity we see  
 Is the germ of truth,  
 As the tender petal free  
 Buddeth fresh in youth ;  
 Casting round sweet fragrance, fair  
 Childhood to adorn,  
 Peeping like a glistening star  
 Through the haze of morn.

Where the mist hangs on the hill,  
 And the bird doth rest,  
 By the side of gushing rill,  
 Flowerets spring the best ;—  
 Ever breathing to their God  
 Fragrant thanks, which flow  
 To the One who laid the sod,  
 Where with life they grow.

J. S. E.\*

\* A young seaman on board H.M.S. Adelaide.

## THE REJOICING OF THE JEWS.



HERE is a picture of joy. It is part of the history of the Jews when in captivity. God had borne with them to the utmost. He then gave them up to the king of Babylon to be carried away captive. After that, everything was broken up in the city of Jerusalem. The walls were torn down and the temple destroyed, and only a few scattered and poor ones were left in the place where Solomon in all his glory had reigned, and silver had been as stones in that wonderful city. Away off in Babylon, among the enemies of the Lord, and their own enemies, the wretched Jews were taken, and God had gone up into heaven, away from the altar and the temple, and had said of them, "not my people." Was not that sad? To be in an enemy's power, and not to know of God as their helper. Do you know, dear children, which book it is in the Bible that has not the name of God in it once? It is the book of Esther, and what a sure mark of it having been written by God, for it is about His people, who had chosen idolatry, and had been sent into the land where God was not, that is, was not known nor acknowledged. Now, if you have read, or have been told, the story of Esther and Mordecai, you will easily understand the meaning of the rejoicing of these Jews.

If you do not remember, would it not be well to read the book of Esther over again, or get your mother to tell you, or read it to you?

Everything is told so wisely, and with such rich instruction in the word of God, that if we can lead you to read it, and love it the more, we shall be very happy, and thank God for it.

The kingdom of Babylon had passed away, and the kingdom of the Medes and Persians had followed; and yet these poor despised Jews were still in bondage in all the provinces, and were feeling the low condition into which they had come. They could not sing the old songs of the Lord's house in a strange land, and, among many of them, there was a sighing and crying to the Lord for deliverance, and a looking at their conduct in His sight, and confessing that they were wrong and He was right. So, in the time of their deepest sorrow, the Lord was thinking about them, and though He does not bring His name into the account, there is no book that more truly has God in what is done than this. It is all God. It was God who caused Vashti to be put away from being queen, and Esther to be raised up to the place, giving her favour in the eyes of King Ahasuerus to such a great degree, that everything she asked he granted. It was God that caused the despised Mordecai to be sitting at the king's gate, and kept him from bowing to Haman, a descendant of Amalek, with whom the Lord had said the Israelites should have war for ever. It was God that kept back from the notice of the king the good act of Mordecai until the right time, and then would not let him sleep, so that he should hear about it, and

determine to honour Mordecai for it. And then it was God who turned things so that Haman, the highest in the kingdom, should be brought lowest, and be hung with his ten sons, and Mordecai, who had been one of the lowest, should be raised up into his place.

But only see how God, who never fails to do a thing in the right time, ordered it; that when a command had gone out to destroy all the Jews, in all the provinces, on a certain day,

and this could not be changed or taken back, because the laws of the Medes and Persians changed not, yet they were not destroyed. And how was it? Why, the king did not withdraw that first law, but made a new one, that the Jews everywhere on that day should defend themselves, and slay all who attempted to kill them. Here, you see the riders come into the city, and how all the people are flocking round them to hear the good news, and



throwing up their arms, and no doubt shouting and praising. You read the eighth chapter of Esther, and you will see this. Ah, it was an awful time for the poor Jews—shut up in the land, and a word given to destroy every one of them. No wonder they rejoiced, for there had seemed no escape. And it looks as though the men who carried the news were glad too, and anxious to spread it far and wide, and very rapidly. Well, the day came and not a Jew was hurt. Was not that good? They met the

slayers by slaying—death by death. There was the God of Israel, who in the beginning had done the same thing. When they were in Egypt, and He made a decree that death should come in every family in that land, He told them how to meet it by death—the death of a lamb, and the blood sprinkled on the door posts. And when they went out of Egypt, the Red Sea that ought to have brought death, they passed through, and death came to their enemies, the Egyptians.

Now children, there is a very precious lesson from this, that you may rejoice in. Do you know what is the wages of sin? It is death. Well, God has never changed that law, but He has told you how to meet that death by death, so that you may have life—eternal life! It is

Christ's death that meets it all, and he that believeth on Him has eternal life, "is passed from death unto life." Will you not rejoice in this, as the Jews did in their good news, who had "joy and gladness, and a feast, and a good day."

## ASHTAROTH; OR THE MOON.



ASHTAROTH, Ashtar, and Astarté, were names by which the ancient Syrians and Sidonians worshipped that beautiful planet—our moon. This form of false religious adoration was of very remote antiquity. The silvery moon as she rises in calm majesty over a beautiful landscape, or placid river, or broad expanse of rippling ocean, is an object so lovely, that one cannot feel surprised at the ignorant mind of an untaught heathen regarding it as something almost divine; and then the various changes of form through which she passes, are in themselves very striking and attractive. Sometimes we see her in what is called the gibbous phase, that is between a full and a half moon—looking as if a slice had been taken off one side; next she presents a disc completely cut in half; and lastly a beautiful crescent, or sickle form, and this latter phase was what called forth the greatest admiration of the heathen world.

Under this form the Greeks worshipped the moon as Artemis or Diana, from its resemblance to a bent bow, for they esteemed her as the goddess of hunting and the chase. Her temple at Ephesus was considered one of the seven wonders of the world. We read of it in Acts xix., and learn that Demetrius, a silver-smith, made little silver models, called shrines, of this magnificent edifice, to sell to visitors and worshippers, who came from all parts of the world to see it, and be present at the festivals held in honour of the goddess; and how enraged he was because St. Paul preached about the true God and His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ; for he feared if the Ephesians believed Paul's preaching, and left off worshipping Artemis, that he would lose his trade and profits through selling these little silver models, or shrines.

But it is of the "*Ashtaroth*," as mentioned in

the Old Testament, that I now wish to tell you. As far back as the days of Abraham, we read in Genesis xiv. 5, of Ashtaroth Karnaim, or "*Ashtaroth of the horns*," so named from the crescent moon. I suppose the Rephaims, here mentioned as vanquished by Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, had called their dwelling-place after their goddess. The worship of the moon under this name was very prevalent in Palestine, when Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt; and before they took possession of the promised land, God strictly forbade the Hebrews to pay idolatrous worship to the host of heaven: "And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven. For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God" (Deut. iv. 19-24).

In the book of Judges, we read how soon they disobeyed Him, and worshipped Baalim, and Ashtaroth, calling the latter the queen of heaven, and planting thick groves of trees, in which to hold midnight meetings in her honour (Judges ii. 13; x. 6). The Jewish women were particularly fond of this supposed goddess, and made cakes, and poured out drink-offerings and sacrifices to her, as we learn from the prophet Jeremiah (xliv. 15-25); the crescents with which they ornamented their persons were also worn out of compliment to her. King Solomon was so wicked as to join with his Sidonian wives in paying divine honour to Ashtaroth. She was usually represented by an idol in the form of a beautiful woman, clad in a robe sparkling with gold and jewels, and wearing on her head a large crescent moon, which appeared like gold or silver horns; she had half-moons on her breast; the gibbous moon on her robes or drapery;

and her feet rested on a full moon. The Phœnicians called her Astarte, and made her effigy with the figure of a woman and the head of a heifer, having large horns turned upwards like a crescent. She had a large temple at Hieropolis in Syria, which was very famous, and served by 200 priests, who were constantly employed offering sacrifices. Perhaps the ancient nations worshipped as many different Ashtaroths and Astartes as they did Baals and Baalims, for every country had its own peculiar Baal and Ashtaroth, and they were frequently honoured together, and supposed to mean idol representations of the sun and moon.

When the Romans rebuilt the ancient city of Carthage, which had been destroyed by Publius Scipio in the Punic wars, the Roman Emperor ordered a temple, dedicated to "*Astarte*," to be erected, as he hoped, by thus honouring their favourite goddess, to induce the neighbouring nations to send inhabitants to the new city, and promote its commerce; for Astarte and Molech had been the great idols of the people of *ancient Carthage*, a beautiful and powerful seaport on the Mediterranean coast of Africa. This *former city* has been supposed by some learned men to be the same as the "*Tarshish*" of sacred Scripture. King Solomon traded much with Tarshish, and perhaps brought from thence many idolators to make curious workmanship for him, as also sailors, for the Carthagenians were accounted the best seamen in the world, and have been called by a poet, "*sons of the rudder and the oar*." When the Carthagenian explorer, Dr. Davis, was exhuming the ruins of Roman Carthage, he found the remains of a temple of Astarte, and some beautiful mosaic pavement with pictures on it, and other relics. They are now in the British Museum.

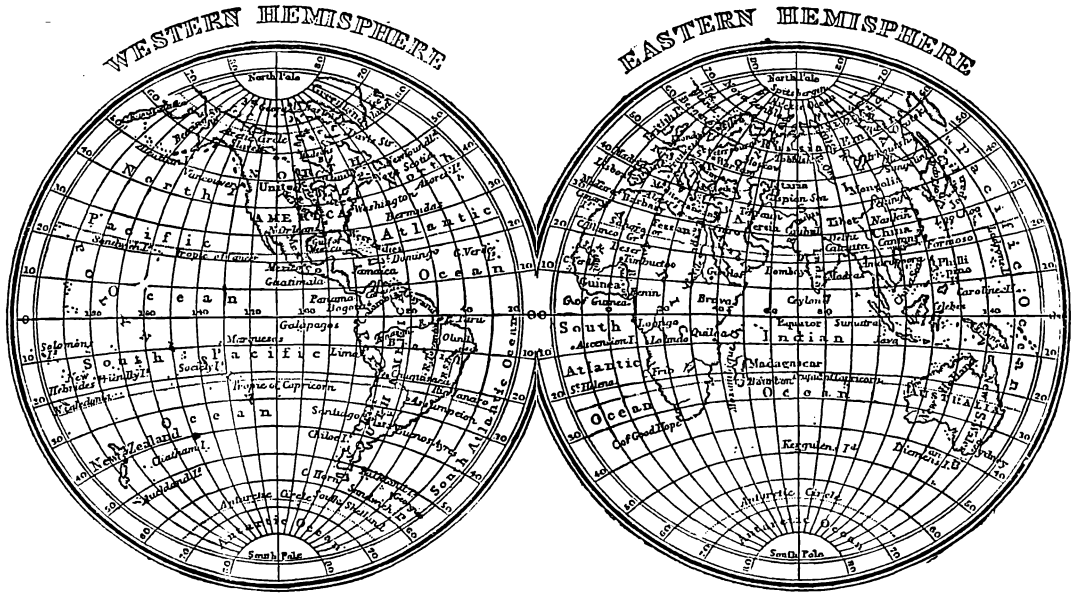
In ancient times eclipses of the moon were regarded with much superstition, and supposed to portend some great event or misfortune; but we, who know better, can regard these occurrences of nature with interest and admiration. I witnessed a beautiful eclipse of the moon in August 1877, and I dare say some of my young readers, did also. I was in Scotland; and at about 9 p.m., the full moon was shining like a great round shield of orange-gold, flooding the river Clyde with amber light rippling over its tide. I stood to admire, and thought, "well for once the poets are astray about *silver moonlight*," for I had never seen

richer golden sheen. An hour later, and a strange phenomenon began to appear; a shadow stole slowly sideways, over our planet, but the round of the moon was *not hid*. It appeared faintly visible, of a deep olive-greenish hue, *under the shadow*, which perceptibly increased until half the moon was in similar shade, and the other half, deep gold. So the eclipse stole on, until a crescent alone appeared in clear cut brightness, and then all was overshadowed; and finally the shade rolled on, leaving the same phenomenon visible on the other half of the Moon's disc which had not been at first eclipsed.

The following year I witnessed another eclipse quite different in its character; it was also in the month of August; it began at about a quarter to eleven, but the night was cloudy and overcast, and the moon was frequently hidden by clouds; but now and then these moved off, and a round orb of *pale Silver* was visible.

After the eclipse commenced, the hue of the moon was *whitey-silver*, and instead of the shadow passing *sideways* over the planet, it began at the *lower edge* of the moon and gradually rose upwards, leaving the part covered in total darkness. I watched it as the clouds broke away fitfully, just giving occasional glimpses; and although I had only a moderately good opera glass to assist me (for it was high in the heavens), it was a beautiful sight; it seemed like a *midnight peep* into the celestial world, and I could hardly leave it, although the air of the night was very cold to have one's head and shoulders outside an open window; when the eclipse was half in passage, the moon appeared like a half sphere of molten silver, and the markings on her surface were quite visible; clouds as black as ink surrounded her, and she seemed to hang like a globe in its frame. As I lay down, I could not help pitying the poor worshippers of Ashtaroth and Astarte, and thanking a merciful God and Father that He had given me the knowledge "of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus." I fell asleep with the sweet words of the Psalmist in my mind: "*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.*" (Ps. xix. 1, 2, 3.)

K. B. K.



## THE WORLD OF WATERS.

### THE OCEAN.

**W**E come now to the great ocean itself. We have looked at the tiny stream, the big rolling river, the dashing rapids, the ponderous waterfalls, the great inland lakes; but how shall I describe to you this mighty world of waters? Well, first, it is one undivided mass; great continents and islands are scattered, as it were, up and down, and show themselves above the water; but water stretches itself from pole to pole, from east to west, all round the world. Water is the rule, dry land the exception. It embraces the whole world with one unbroken wave.

If the earth were cut in two equal parts, from north to south, and you could look at it as a flat surface, it would appear like the western and eastern hemispheres which are here given. On the western, you see the great American continent, the north and the south joined by a long narrow strip of land, which, you know, is called an isthmus. Here you see an immense body of water and but little land. On the eastern, it is the very opposite.

The great continents of Europe, Africa, and Asia, are larger in extent than the water. Then how much more water than land we see at the south than the north!

The land and the water have been measured, and the water covers nearly two-thirds of the earth's surface. It is divided into five great oceans, though all are joined together; the Arctic, the Atlantic, Indian, Pacific, and Antarctic oceans. The Arctic extends from the North Pole to the Arctic Circle. Its waters wash and freeze on the northern shores of three continents—Europe, Asia, and America. The Atlantic separates the Old and New Worlds. The Indian is enclosed by Asia on the north, by Africa on the west, and on the east by Malacca, the East Indian Islands, and Australia. The Pacific is the great ocean; except the Antarctic, it claims all the rest of the waters of the world.

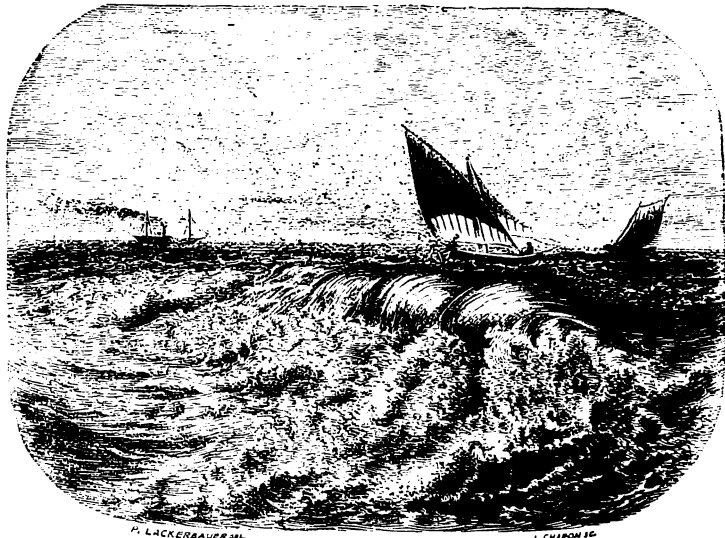
The water covers about 145,500,000 square miles: the land, not more than 51,500,000. How deep is this great ocean? It varies very greatly. The dry land will perhaps give you the best idea

of this. There are low long valleys, also high table-land stretching far away, and then there are tremendous mountains rising near 30,000 feet above the level of the sea. Just so the ocean. There are valleys so deep, that if the highest mountain on land could be thrown into them, it would be completely covered by the water. As the ocean at the south is the largest, so is it the deepest.

How is it that the ocean is so salt? No one has yet been able to answer this question. There are immense deposits of salt on dry land, both in Cheshire in our own country, and in Poland. So large bodies may have been found in the bed of the

ocean; and it is possible that enormous masses may have been melted and swept into the ocean when God first divided the land from the water. So great is the proportion of salt, that if it were dried and spread on the surface of North America, it would cover that vast continent with a layer half a mile thick; or if spread over the whole earth, it would form a layer thirty feet thick! Some might think that salt preserves the water from corruption, but such is not the case, for salt water soon becomes offensive; and after a long calm in hot seas, the water will positively rot!

Then, what gives the ocean its beautiful blue and green colour? Here again, it is difficult to give



P. LACKERBAUER DEL.

L. CHAPIN SC.

a satisfactory answer. Sometimes it presents a fine azure blue; then when the air is pure and the water calm, the colour blends with the blue of the heavens. When agitated, it takes a brownish hue. In some places, the bed of the ocean—white or yellow sand, or black rock—will of course influence the colours of the surface.

If you have ever crossed the ocean, you must have been amazed at the appearance of light or flame everywhere present. This is called "the phosphorescence of the sea." It is a magnificent and imposing sight. The ship, in plunging through the waves, seems to advance through a sea of red and blue flame. As the prow throws up the water, it is as if an infinite number of sparks were being

scattered in all directions. Myriads of creatures float and play upon the surface of the waves, dividing, multiplying, and re-uniting, so as to form one vast field of fire. In stormy weather, the luminous waves roll and break in silvery foam. On some occasions it is much more brilliant than others. A ship will seem to enter one vast sheet of fire, ever casting a strange reflection on every part of the ship. This light is chiefly caused by myriads of little living creatures, which seem to shine by their own light.

Another wonder of the deep is its great ocean currents. These indeed are mighty rivers, to which the great Mississippi, the Amazon, and the Nile are but as insignificant streams, and which flow on for

many thousands of miles. I cannot now stop to explain how these currents are formed, but they are so regular, they can be traced all over the world. That which is perhaps best known to us is called the Gulph Stream, which, after travelling thousands of miles, enters the Gulph of Mexico, whence it makes its escape by the Florida Channel. Of this marvel of the deep it has been said, "It is a river in the bosom of the ocean; in the severest draught, it never fails; and in the mightiest floods, it never overflows; its banks and its bottom are of cold water, while its current is of warm. It takes its rise in the Gulph of Mexico, and empties itself into the Arctic Sea. This mighty river is the Gulph Stream. In no other part of the world is there such a majestic flow of water; its current is more rapid than the Amazon, more impetuous than the Mississippi, and its volume more than a thousand times greater." This wonderful stream is 34 miles wide, 2200 feet deep, and moves at the rate of four and a half miles per hour. Its warm temperature has a marked influence on every land it comes near and has much to do with the climate of our own islands.

The next wonder of the deep I shall name is the tides. No doubt you have all seen these. The ocean is never still; on every shore throughout the world, the waters are ever on the move, either receding or advancing. As to the cause of this, all I can now tell you about it is, that the sun and the moon exert a drawing power upon the whole earth, and the result on water, which is moveable, is that the ocean is kept in a constant and regular swelling motion. The power of the moon is three times that of the sun, because, though it is a much smaller body, it is so much nearer to the earth.

The height of the tides vary greatly in different parts of the world. The greatest occurs in the Bay of Fundy near Nova Scotia where it will rise forty, fifty, and even sixty feet high! On one occasion, a ship in the night time was cast upon a rock so high, that, at daybreak, the crew found themselves and their ship suspended in mid-air far above the water! All my readers, who live at, or have visited a sea-port, will have seen how the ebb and flow of the tide empties or fills the rivers, and how its current carries barges and ships up and down the rivers. The rapidity with which the tides travel from the Southern Ocean, where the great waves originate, towards the north, is said to be over 500

miles an hour. In the North Sea it travels 180 miles. The tidal wave which proceeds round the coast of Scotland, traverses the German Ocean and meets in St. George's Channel, between England and Ireland, when the conflict between the two opposing waves produce most astonishing, and often disastrous effects.

Then we have all heard of waves that run mountains high. In a great storm, nothing can be more grand than these foaming mountains, rolling, bounding, and breaking one against another. "In one moment," says an eloquent writer, "the waves seem to carry sea-goddesses on their breast, which seem to revel amidst plays and dances; in the next instant, a tempest rising out of them, seems to be animated by its fury. They seem to swell with passion, and we think we see in them marine monsters which are prepared for war."

The highest waves are those which prevail in the offing off the Cape of Good Hope, at the period of high tide, under the influence of a strong north-west wind. The billows there lift themselves up in long ridges, with deep hollows between them. They run high and fast, tossing their white caps aloft in the air, looking like the green hills of a rolling prairie capped with snow and chasing each other in sport. Their march is stately, and their roll majestic. The only other wonder I can now speak of are the terrible whirlpools, which the tides, the currents and the tempests will often occasion. The well known Charylids and Scylla, in the straits of Messina, were the terror of all ancient mariners. The most famous and dangerous whirlpool of modern days is one called the Maelstrom, which at times is so strong that even large ships are drawn to it, and engulfed to their utter destruction.

There are many other great wonders in the ocean, but here we must stop for the present. We have said nothing of the shipping, of the many and terrible wrecks, of the fearful loss of life and property, of the immense treasure swallowed up, of the dead men's skulls, great anchors, heaps of pearls, which lie scattered in the bottom of the sea, nor have I touched on the wonders of the Arctic and Antarctic Oceans, those frozen regions, those mountains of thick-ribbed ice where darkness, desolation, and death, seem to dwell. These we must hold over, if the Lord will, to some future time.





## PEEPS INTO FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

### PERSIA.

**I** HAVE told you a little about Naples, Pompeii, and Venice, all more or less ancient, but Persia's history dates much further back than any of these. Who has not read of Cyrus and Darius—of those famous Medes and Persians, whose laws were unchangeable, and who figured so largely in ancient Israel's history? In those days it was indeed a mighty nation, the second great empire foretold to Nebuchadnezzar by Daniel the Jewish captive, holding almost universal sway. Very different is the Persia of our day.

The present Persians are no more descended from the famous Medes and Persians, who conquered nearly all the known world, than Englishmen are the descendants of the wild Britons, who at first met and repulsed Julius Cæsar, on the Kentish shore; or than Queen Victoria is the direct descendant of Caractacus and Boadicea. Persia, like ancient Britain, has been so often invaded, and so many nations have contributed to the empire, that it is now difficult, or impossible, to trace the original elements which went to make up the whole.

About the year A.D. 600, a Turkish horde

overran the country; and since then nation after nation has conquered the people, in some cases driving the whole population into foreign parts. On this account it is not easy to describe the whole people; they are made up of so many diverse elements. As a whole, the people are said to be witty, cheerful, frivolous, idle, vicious, luxurious, and fond of dress and display. The monarch, or Shah, as he is called, is a perfect despot; and every favourite in the court, or officer in the government, owes his elevation to his favour or caprice. The same haughty capricious spirit marks every official, from the highest to the lowest, who rides rough-shod over all his inferiors. Those who have written about the courtiers give them a very bad character; "deceitful, treacherous, venal, arrogant, dishonest, and overbearing; yet able to conceal their own character under a polished manner, and are lively, courteous, and mild of countenance. As a rule, the whole of the common people, as might be expected, are greatly oppressed, and greatly dislike their rulers."

All their ways and habits are very different from ours. Their cities, houses, furniture, everything, is in strange contrast to what you see in England. The poorer people spend most of their time on the flat roofs of their houses; the "house-tops," so often referred to in the Scriptures. Here they cultivate pretty flowers, of which all Persians are fond.

The rich people live in houses that, to look at, you would call very poor, low, built of mud, apparently without windows, but when you get inside, they are very beautiful, dazzlingly white, or all over gilt. But the only furniture is their grand, thick, comfortable Turkey carpet. There are no chairs, no tables, no other furniture; nor, indeed, do they need any. The prince and peasant are alike in this. Their carpets or mats serve for bed, chair, and table, and in their superstitious devotions, they turn their faces to heaven and repeat their prayers.

Our picture gives a good view of a rich man's dinner party. You see they have all their heads covered. They squat on the floor, not cross-legged like Turks, but their heels under them. There are no knives and forks, no spoons, or plates. Many dishes, prepared in their own way, are placed amongst the guests, two or three in a group. How puzzled you would be to know how to begin, but when the host has repeated his prayer, every hand is at once dipped into the dishes, and from that moment, not a word is spoken, nothing thought of, but eating and drinking, till the feast is over. And, I assure you, very expert they are with their fingers picking up rice, tearing their meat into shreds, and pitching it unerringly into their mouths. After dinner comes pipes and coffee, without which they seem unable to live.

## THE PILGRIM'S REFUGE.

Jesus when my heart is weary,  
Midst this world of toil and care,  
And my every step seems dreary,  
Oh! I'll think of Thee up there.

Though the way may sore distress me,  
And my every joy be gone,  
Blessed Jesus, still I'll praise Thee,—  
I can sing the conqueror's song.

When by friends and foes forsaken,  
Jesus Lord, I'll think of Thee

Thee, whose love can ne'er be shaken,  
E'en to all eternity.

Oh, then keep me, blessed Jesus,  
Guide me step by step down here,  
Help me wait with patience, Jesus,  
Till I'm with Thyself, up there.

Then with all my sorrow ended,  
Jesus Lord, I'll sing of Thee,  
And with all Thy saints attended  
Prove how vast Thy love to me.



The Sponge attached to its rocky bed.

## THE WONDERS OF WATER.

### THE SPONGE.

**H**AVING looked a little at the great rolling ocean as a whole, suppose we venture, of course only in imagination, into its dark, deep waters. As you have stood on the ocean's shore, or sailed over its vast surface, you will often have wondered what there was, living or not living, in that

vast deep; and how the living did live; and what that was like that had no life. Of course, in the deepest part *there is* a bottom. What is that bottom? You say rocks, stones, or sand, and they are dead enough. But if dead, let me tell you they are the bones, as it were, or at least the remains, of myriads of once-living creatures; and that the very rocks,

and even mountains, that are covered up in the ocean have been built up by these myriads of insects.

In October's number of last year's *Child's Bible Companion*, you had an account of the coral island, the work of those wonderful ocean builders called the polypi, and the amazing part they have played in the construction of the whole surface of the earth. They are the smallest of God's creatures, and yet used by Him to build up the crust of the world. Only the microscope brought them to light. The coral is hard as rock; but down at the ocean's bottom we find another substance, beautifully soft, as little like an insect as the polypi, but as surely one. This is the sponge, which we have used from our infancy.

The sponge, like the polypi, is always attached to some other substance, from which it never separates, and is found at the bottom of the sea. How do they live and grow?

They receive their nourishment from the wave which washes past them; they draw in and cast out the bitter water all their lives. They cannot possibly go after their food, but God takes care that their food is brought to them. Other animals move from place to place; fishes swim in the water, animals and insects move on the land, and birds fly in the air. Not so the sponge. The seed or egg is cast off by the parent plant, floats about in search of a home, fixes itself to some rock or even shell, grows to a great size, propagates other sponges, and then dies.

Each of my readers has used a sponge hundreds of times; how little have you thought of its wonderful history. Once it was such a tiny seed or egg, that you could not possibly have seen it without a powerful magnifying-glass. If you could have watched it, you would have seen it driven about by the waves till it touched some substance, and it fixed itself there, never to move again till it died, or was fished up by some sponge hunter.

I need not tell you what a sponge is like. While there is a great variety, some 300 different kinds, they are all alike in this—they hold

plenty of water, they are full of very small holes, and there are some holes very much larger than others. As to the construction of these finer and larger holes, and their relation one to another, their wonderful mechanism, their almost infinite variety, a big volume might be written about them. All I can now tell you is, that their one object is constantly to suck in, and then throw out currents of water. It is by these currents of water that the little living creatures, for one sponge is made up of a whole colony, receive their nourishment, grow up, and then propagate their kind.



The above engraving shows you this operation. The immense number of small holes draws in the water, which passes through every part of the substance. From these currents its food, and that which is needful to its growth, is taken up, and having obtained all it needs from the water, it is all accumulated, and then cast out by these large cells.

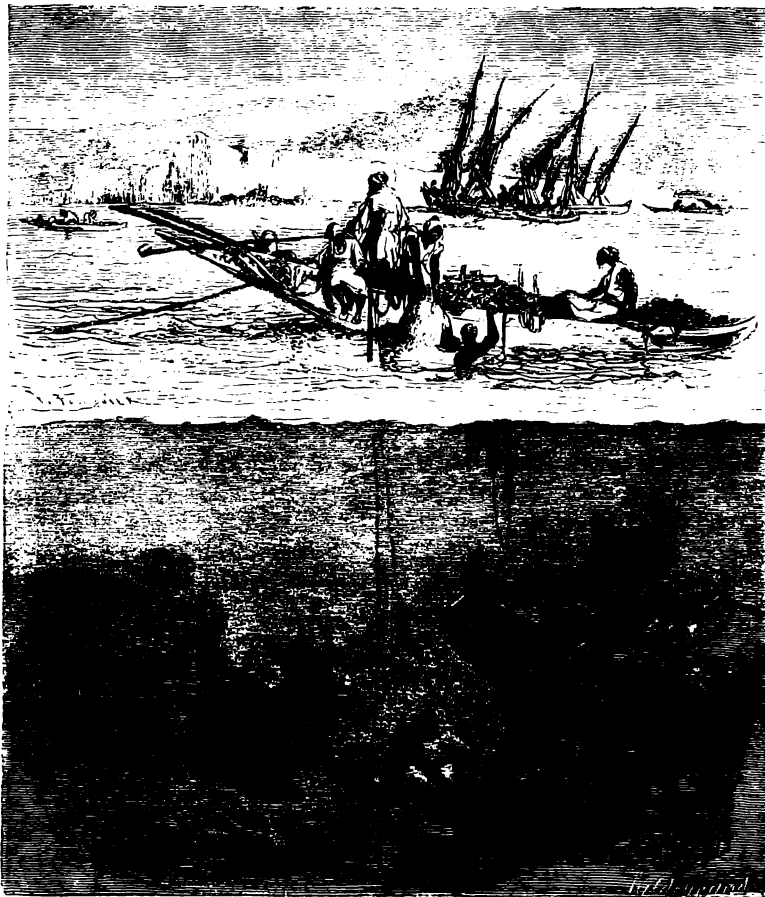
Fishes live partly in the same way. Water constantly passes through their mouth and out at their gills, from which much of their nourishment is drawn.

I have told you that the sponge is really an animal, but its kind of life is wonderfully simple when compared with higher animals. There is no blood, no intricate mechanism of heart or arteries; no brain, no nerves, nothing of this kind. There is, as we have seen, circulation, by which nutriment is secured. There is no skin, no apparent provision for perspira-

tion, as in other animals ; no stomach, and yet digestion goes on, food is taken up, and refuse or waste matter is cast out.

I must say one word about the way in which sponges are reproduced. It is much after the manner of plants, which, you know, is by cuttings, grafting, and by seeds. There is a kind

of sponge which, if a piece is torn off, it will maintain its independent existence, and flourish as a separate sponge. This is much like plants increased by "cuttings." Again, if two sponges growing apart approach each other, they will become united, and in a short time, form but one sponge, and in such a manner



Fishing for Sponges.

that no trace of their union could be found. This, to a certain extent, represents the operation of "grafting," as practised by gardeners. There is still another process, which represents production by seeds or bulbs. The sponge throws off these in autumn. They remain inactive during the winter, but as spring

approaches the seed-like bodies show signs of life, settle down, and become separate sponges.

In other cases positive eggs are hatched within the sponge. They much resemble a hen's egg, for although destitute of a shell, yet they have a substance which resembles a yolk, another substance which is like the white, and

a delicate membrane which takes the place of a shell. Not only so, but those who have narrowly watched the process, say that the growth of the sponge-egg is very similar to that of the chick in the egg.

How wonderful are all the works of God! and the least of His creatures seem even more marvellous than the greatest.

When even the youngest of my readers next plays with his big bath sponge he will not forget what a strange history it has had, and that once it was a living creature—one of the wonders of the deep.

I must now tell you a little about the way in which sponges are obtained.

At the present time sponge-fishing takes place principally in the Grecian Archipelago and the Syrian seas. The Greeks and Syrians sell the product of their fishing to the western nations, and the trade has been immensely extended in recent times, the sponge having become an almost necessary adjunct of the toilet as well as of the stable.

Fishing usually commences towards the beginning of June on the coast of Syria, and finishes at the end of October. But the months of July or August are peculiarly favourable to the sponge interest, if we may use the term. Latakia furnishes about ten boats to the fishery, Batroun twenty, Tripoli twenty-five to thirty, Kalki fifty, Simi about 170 to 180, and Kalminos more than 200.

The operations of one of these boats fishing for sponges on the Syrian coast is represented in our engraving. The boat's crew consists of four or five men, who scatter themselves along the coast for two or three miles in search of

sponges under the cliffs and ledges of rock. Sponges of inferior quality are gathered in shallow waters. The finer kinds are found only at a depth of from twenty to thirty fathoms. The first are fished for with three-toothed harpoons, by the aid of which they are torn from their native rock; but not without deteriorating them more or less. The finer kinds of sponges, on the other hand, are collected by divers; aided by a knife, they are carefully detached. Thus, the price of a sponge brought up by diving is much more considerable than that of a harpooned sponge. Among divers, those of Kalminos and of Psara are particularly renowned. They will descend to the depth of twenty-five fathoms, remain down a shorter time than the Syrian divers, and yet bring up a more abundant harvest. The fishing of the Archipelago furnishes few fine sponges to commerce, but a great quantity of very common ones. The Syrian fisheries furnish many of the finer kinds, which find a ready market in France; they are of medium size. On the other hand, those which are furnished from the Barbary coast are of great dimensions, of a very fine tissue, and much sought for in England.

Sponge-fishing is carried on at various other stations in the Mediterranean, but without any intelligent direction, and in consequence it is effected without any preserving foresight. At the same time, however, the trade in this product goes on yearly increasing. But it is only a question of time when the trade shall cease, the demand which every year clears the submarine fields of these sponges causing such destruction that their reproduction will soon cease to be adequate.

## THE RANSOM.

(1 TIM. ii. 5-6.)

*An incident of the second day of the late Afghan war.*

QUICKLY the fort of Ali Musjid fell,  
And quickly fled by night the Afghan race,  
Leaving for British troops at break of day  
To enter unopposed the empty place.

Guns, ammunition, military stores,  
Our gallant men were all prepared to find;  
But what that heap of rags, in corner piled,  
Might hold, engaged a Sepoy's searching mind.

He gently touched the trembling mound, when lo !  
 Three tiny children there surprised his sight,  
 Poor babes ! how destitute and scared they looked ;  
 Left by their kin in hurry of the flight !

The eldest must have heard of war's alarms :  
 He shook with terror at the stranger there ;  
 Bethought him then one treasure he possessed  
 Might win the man three little lives to spare.

And so the ransom with an outstretched arm,  
 And gestures more than words could speak, he gave  
 A cage of string, two partridges within,  
 Not doubting that a price so great could save.

No savage he, who babes and birds then bore  
 Into the presence of his chief, whose word  
 At once for all immediate need sufficed ;  
 Their past and future ordered of the Lord !

*That* Lord, whom barb'rous Afghan tribes ignore,  
*That* Lord had surely set those infants where  
 Some Christian should unfold the Saviour's love,  
 Until believing they the same declare.

Oh, English child ! the sense of ransom due  
 For life in danger, our young Afghan knew,  
 Recalls that better ransom known to you,—  
 The outpoured life-blood of the Saviour true !

Oh, child of England ! rest not, till *in truth*  
 You know the Father, who His Son bestowed,  
 The Son who is the ransom for the lost,  
 The Spirit who doth show the things of God !

M. M.

## THE SKIDDAW HERMIT.

**T**HE "Skiddaw Hermit" was known to all in the Lake District, from the old men of eighty years of age down to the children of four or five years old. His form, his walk, his voice, his dress, were all familiar to us. To one who did not know him, he was at first sight terrible to look upon. He wore only two articles of dress—a pair of trousers, rolled up to the knees, and a wincey shirt of a dark grey colour, or, more properly described, of no colour in particular. His feet and legs to his knees were bare, and his head was hatless always, but covered with a profusion of dark bushy hair which was a stranger to brush or comb. His beard was of the same description and nearly covered his face. He was tall—about six feet high, or within a trifle of that—well built, but neither stout nor lean. A stiff knee was all the disqualification of body which he had ; but for this, an army doctor would have "passed" him as a splendid fellow for a soldier. In speech, he was rapid and eloquent, with a rich Scotch accent. When in conversation, he had a most lively expression of counten-

ance and a pleasant voice. His eyes reminded you of "doves' eyes," they were so gentle, so soft, and yet so bright. His forehead was good and betokened considerable intelligence. He was fond of a rough staff about his own height, and this he generally grasped a little above the centre. This is the portrait of the subject of my story, as he was in his "wild and savage state," as he termed his unconverted life. After his great and wondrous change from darkness to light, what an altered man he became !

He was a self-educated artist, and in his own original style produced life-sized portraits in an incredibly short time, and remarkably correct. He was also very fond of phrenology and physiognomy, and it was startling to hear his deductions of the character of persons he had only spoken to for a few moments. I have heard him delineating characters with as much minuteness and truthfulness as though he had known them all their lives. He never made money, however, by his phrenological learning—he merely had a passionate liking for it. He was also a profound lover of nature, and was

ever desiring, as he expressed it, to "know more of her hidden sources than the mind of man had ever yet grasped." "Perpetual motion," and some other things, seemed to rack his brain, which were all as futile as "beating the air," or the "altar to the unknown God."

Though in appearance as rugged as the rocky and beclouded mountain of Skiddaw itself, he was nevertheless most scrupulously clean in person, and gentlemanly in conversation and manners, proving that he had been trained and educated above even the middle class of society. Like many more around us, his besetting sin was the thirst for intoxicating liquors. Such was this recluse, who lived for nearly four years in a small cave on the side of Skiddaw, near Keswick. When he was intoxicated, he was, when teased by the mischievous and unfeeling ones, like an infuriated madman, and therefore was often punished by being sent to prison as a drunk and disorderly person. Tourists who have visited his cave on Skiddaw have told me of the heap of empty bottles that he had left behind him.

When he left Skiddaw, he came to reside on the banks of Windermere Lake, and pitched his tent near to Beech Hill, between three and four miles south of Bowness. The tent was a very small affair, and only just sufficient to cover him. His bed was made of the small brogs or boughs of the spruce fir—this was all the material used. He had only one shirt, and this he used to wash in the running brook, and, after wringing it well, put it on his back. He remarked to one of my family, who manifested surprise at his statement, that it was "a varra poor back that cud'na dry its ain shirt."

I shall never forget my first interview with this remarkable man. It was a few weeks after his arrival near Bowness, when he came into the room where I was. He was all smiles, and shook hands most warmly. He rambled and talked most strangely and mysteriously, as I thought, with here and there a touch of poetry or eloquence. I remember he said, "I'll tell you what I am. I am a worshipper of Nature. But, ah! she is a fickle goddess. I never

know where I have her. Sometimes I lay down on a mossy bank, and she is so lovely I drop asleep while she bathes my face with sunshine, and fans my locks with soft breezes. And, lo! when I awake up again an hour or two later, she is frowning upon me coldly, and clattering the hailstones against my teeth." I ventured to ask him if he knew anything of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as revealed to us in the Scriptures. He at once replied, "Well, that is a divinity question, and that has not been included in my studies and education." This, of course, led on much further, but he *held nothing* in the way of Bible truth, and, worse than that, nothing of the kind would *hold him*. Like thousands more who talk, it was only talk. Revelation was nothing to him. It need never have been written, so far as he was concerned. After his first visit he came again and again, and our conversation was ever on these topics. He came by night and by day, sitting for hours reading the Scriptures, and talking about them. Often he was trying in the extreme, staying sometimes till midnight, never appearing to be any nearer what he most evidently desired. So time went on; but gradually a great change seemed to come over him. He grew silent and very thoughtful, and appeared just as slow and backward in giving expression to his opinions and thoughts as formerly he was ready and forward to express himself about things he evidently did not comprehend. He grew wiser and more thoughtful—one might say mysteriously thoughtful.

Just at this time Captain S. V. H—, of Seacombe, near Liverpool, visited Bowness, and preached the Gospel several times on the beach of Bowness Bay. He was asked to go there one evening to hear him. Next morning he appeared, asking for Captain H—, but he had that same morning left Bowness. He seemed sorry, and said, "I heard him preach 'Peace, peace, peace,' last night at the lake side, and I am at rest now. I have got the words, and their meaning, too, and I wanted



to see him, that I might tell him I have eternal life—of that I am certain." Well, as much as this was fully expected, yet still it was a surprise when this declaration was made. He then said he wanted to buy a Bible, and some were at once put before him. He selected one immediately, and paid for it. He laid it down flat upon its side, and took up a knife and cut half the back off it. In a moment he turned it the other side up, and cut that side off too, amid the protestations of those who were watching him. Taking up the book, and holding it in his hand, he said, "This is to show you that henceforth this Word of God must be an open book to me; it has been a closed book long enough." The surprise caused may be imagined, but scarcely described. Till then no one even knew that he had heard the preaching by the lake side. He was told that somebody looked for him, but never saw him. "No," he replied, "but God saw me—that was enough. I was standing behind some boards. I did not want to be seen; I wanted to hear." And this was the turning-point from darkness to light. Now a new life lay before him, and the old one behind him. Farewell for ever to all old connections, old habits, and old sins. What about strong drink—this "sin that so easily beset" him? Never once did he lift the glass containing it to his lips. The bands were cut, and he was free to "run the race set before" him, "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of" his "faith." From this day, never was there a clearer epistle seen and read of all men. It was clear to everyone that knew him at Bowness and elsewhere, that "old things had passed away, and all things" (to and for him) "had become new." It was no hole-and-corner work. He told it out to everybody he met with, going even into the bar-parlours to tell there what God had done for his soul, and what He could do for them too.

When next I saw the Hermit I did not know him. He appeared in a nice suit of clothes and a wide-a-wake hat. I never saw clothing make such a change in anyone. He said many

had passed him without knowing him, while some who did know him had "shook hands with his suit of clothes." This meant a great deal from him, for I had learned by this time that he was a man of figurative language, and seldom spoke in any other way. This caused him to be misunderstood, or not understood at all. I have heard him say some excellent things, while others thought them the ramblings of a disordered mind, simply because he was known to be mentally affected. For several weeks after this, I never heard him complain of the boys and young men teasing him in his tent, where he still lived till the end of 1872. "No," he replied, "when I used to recite Bobby Burns, Byron, and Shakespeare, I could always have a congregation of men as foolish as I was myself; but now, when I have got Christ, I am forsaken. The world does not want Him. Boards are put up down yonder to keep trespassers out of the nut woods, and the conclusion of every board threatens men with law. If they would allow me to tell of the love of Christ, I could keep all the nut woods empty. The world that cast Christ out and crucified Him is no better to-day than it was then." Some one dissented a little. Turning sharply round upon them, he replied, "It is very plain you have never spoken of Him in the world. Go out and do so for six hours to everybody you meet, and you will come out of your work with changed thoughts. I have spoken to church and chapel-goers this week, and when I spoke of Him they called it cant. And, mind you, I spoke only of Him. Yes, yes, the world crucified Christ, God's beloved Son; and if you mention it, and its why and wherefore, they call it cant. Oh! the world can't do with Christ. It won't have Him. He is still 'despised and rejected of men.'"

Towards the end of this same season, he was in a shop making some little purchase, when he scattered some money out of a bit of paper. The owner of the shop said, "I will give you a purse, Mr. Smith. It is one that has been used, but it will answer your purpose." "No,

no, thank you," he replied. "No money-bags for me. 'Provide for yourselves bags which wax not old' is the word for me. You never hear a good thing said about money bags. Even Judas, connected with the Lord outwardly, was really connected with the bag, and the bag was his ruin. No, no, keep off bags. The Lord carried no bag about Him." A gentleman who was in the shop became interested in what he was saying, and said, "Well, now, Hermit, you surprise me, but I rather think there is truth in what you say. The Lord, when upon earth, was very poor, and never had much in His pockets." "Pockets, pockets!" replied the Hermit. "You have first to prove that He had pockets at all. His coat was without seam from the top to the bottom. The tax-gatherer had to wait till that fish was produced which had the money in its mouth. Ah! yes, God's treasures are where we least expect them to come from—the beak of a 'raven,' or the mouth of a 'fish,' may be opened to supply His children's need, or the mouth of a 'lion' may be shut up at His bidding. Men look to purses and armies for safety, but 'they that trust in the Lord shall not want any good thing.' 'He is their defence and their shield.'" The gentleman was now joined by a friend, and both of them became intensely occupied with what he said.

One of them said, "Ah! it is all true what you say. Hermit, and very nice if we could carry it out as you put it." "Nice if we could carry it out! There are many nice things in the world that are useless—nice-looking people that are not nice in their ways; nice-bound books that are not nice when they are read. Mr.— over there might have a nice-looking fountain in his grounds, and yet it might not be a fountain at all. It would not be one unless it was connected with a reservoir on some mountain a great deal higher than itself. If it was so connected, and all was in order, it would throw forth the crystal water in all its beauty. Then it could 'carry out' all the *true* and the *nice* things. Ah! yes, sirs, you can carry out every truth in the Bible if it is 'He

that worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure.' Have you the unction from the Holy One? Gentlemen, let me ask you both, are you connected with Christ where He now is? 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ.' That is the link. Are you united to Him there—if there, then above?" This was the first discourse I ever heard from him, though the closing part was much more urgent and personal than I have given it.

One cold morning in December, 1870, I believe it was, while hailing and raining both together, he came in to see his friend at Bowness without his coat. This friend of his was greatly distressed to see him again without his coat, and he saw it at once. Coming up to him, he put his hand gently on his shoulder, and said "'Why art thou cast down? Hope thou in God.' You are pained because I have come without my coat—is that it?" Yes, that was it. "Well, now, I shall be obliged for your sake to tell how it happened. It was done under these circumstances: Well, as I came over Alice Howe this morning, I met a poor man, evidently in the last stage of consumption. I went up to him and spoke to him, telling him of the love of Christ and the opened heavens for him. He had been to the doctors, and had some medicine in a bottle; and cold though it was and wet, he had only a thin alpaca coat on. I told him it was too thin. It was all he had, I found, so I took mine off and gave it to him. You know I have been used to going without a coat. I can get another in a few hours." This was a noble self-denying act, and the sorrow of his friend was turned into joy as he thought of another who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through His poverty, might be made rich.

I need not say much about his dislike to all sectarianism. He could not endure it in *any form*. If he was averse to the habits of society in the past time of his life, much more was he averse to the formula and rules of the various churches and chapels. Nothing but the "one

thing"—the Word of God, without rule, law, or system added—would he have to do with. Once he was persuaded to go into a chapel at Windermere, but he came out with the pro-

testation, "Ye worship ye know not what." This was, I think, the last attempt made to get him inside a chapel.

*To be continued.*

## LITTLE KATIE.

**I** WANT to go to Kilburn Hall to-night, mother; mayn't I go? do let me go, dearest mother," said little Kattie, one Sunday afternoon in the autumn of 1870. "But," said the mother, "if Edie sees you going, you know she'll cry." "Oh let me go *this once*, mother, and I'll take good care Edie doesn't see me; for I'll go out by the back way." "Well, Katie, if you want to go so very much, we'll go together.

The mother and her child sat side by side, and the little one listened most attentively to all that I said. Walking home she asked, "Mother, what was the text about the Lamb of God, and the beautiful hymn about the fountain? I like it so much—I'll ask father to go next time.

She was told that the text was, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;" and the hymn she thought so beautiful began—

"There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,  
And sinners plunged beneath that flood  
Loose all their guilty stains."

"That's about Jesus, too, is it not, mother?"  
"Yes, Katie."

That night little Katie became restless in her sleep, and at two o'clock on Monday morning her mother knew she was quite ill. The doctor came, and all through Monday she lingered. In the afternoon she raised herself in bed and called, "Father, father, I want." "What is it that you want, Katie, darling?" "Do you love Jesus, father." She then spoke of what she had heard, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." She asked

her father to go to the hall. The father brushed away a tear that started to his eye. "Oh! my child," said the mother, "I think you'll soon get better, and then you can go yourself with father to the hall."

On Tuesday morning little Katie seemed so much better that the doctor thought she would recover; and when he called about three o'clock in the day, he told the father that some medicine he would give him would make her all right. The father and doctor had scarcely proceeded as far as the garden-gate, when a violent attack of sickness came on, and the King of kings sent for Katie, and she took her place in the home of God—the Father's house on high.

When the father came in and saw the long flaxen hair of his child strewed upon the pillow, and a happy peaceful smile on her face, and knew that she was gone, no wonder that he should with tears pray that his own soul might be blessed with a knowledge of the precious Lamb of God.

What a short race was that of this one of seven summers! On Sunday she heard of the Lamb of God; Monday His hand was beckoning her to come to Him above; and Tuesday she went to be with Him for ever—there in that heavenly kingdom to sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive glory and dominion for ever and ever."

Jesus said, "Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter therein" (Mark x. 15).

"Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come."

## THE SWAN AND THE FOX.

**A** FRIEND of mine bought two lovely swans, which he put on a lake near his house. Not very far from this lake, is a beautiful river, and the swans knowing this, got quite discontented with their little lake, and flew off to the river. Here they lived

very happily for some time. At last the female swan laid four eggs in a little nest they had made on a small island near the river's bank; but I am sorry to say, one day some boys found out where the nest was, and took three of the eggs away. The one that was left was a bad one, but the poor swan did not know this, and continued sitting patiently on it day after day, waiting for the little cygnet to come out. My friend and his wife used often to see the swan sitting on her nest, and they thought they had better not disturb her, as after a certain number of

days she would get up of her own accord. One night they went down to see her, with some friends who had come down the river in a boat, and there she was, poor thing, sitting so quietly and patiently on her nest, expecting every day to hear a little "tweet-tweet" underneath her, and to find a little yellow

ball of feathers, with two black beads of eyes come out of the egg; but the poor mother would never hear this, for the egg she had been taking such care of, and that she thought such a treasure, was quite bad, it had no living bird inside at all. So after they had all looked at her, and bid her good night, they returned home,

and were very soon fast asleep in their comfortable beds.

But what do you think became of the poor, patient swan? That night she was so tired with sitting so long, that she fell fast asleep; and while she was fast asleep on the little island, in the dark night, a pair of great fiery eyes were seen looking at her. Do you know what animal those eyes belonged to? In the country where this swan lived there are many wild animals. There are some cats quite wild that live in the woods, and eat wild rabbits. There are great weasels that are very fond of eating birds' eggs, and



even young birds and rabbits; and in the river sometimes there is a dreadful animal, called an otter, which has a great head and teeth like a dog, but lives and swims about in the water. It is very fierce, and will eat anything that is near the river that it is strong enough to kill. But these eyes that were looking at the poor

tired swan fast asleep, were not the eyes of a wild cat, or a weasel, or an otter. There is another animal that is very cruel and sly, and very fond of killing poor birds in the night, when they are fast asleep; and this animal is a fox. Yes, it was the eyes of a cruel fox that was looking at the poor bird. He had found out where her nest was, and had hidden in the day, where no one could find him, and when it was quite dark he crept very softly and quietly out of his hole, down to the edge of the river. He then swam across to the little island without making the least noise, and crept up through the bushes till he got to the swan. And there he stood looking at her, and in another moment he seized her by the neck with his sharp and cruel teeth.

Next morning a kind man who was fond of the swan, peeped in to look how she was, and was dreadfully shocked to see blood and feathers lying all about. He went and fetched the gentleman down from his house, and they both went to the nest. There lay the poor swan's head and neck, and there lay all her lovely white feathers, scattered all about, and there were the marks of the fox's feet in the ground. But of course he was nowhere to be seen, for after eating her up, you may be pretty sure, he would scamper off to a very safe hole.

And why do you think I have told you this

dreadful story? It is because you are often like the poor swan. If she had only watched, instead of falling asleep that night, the fox would not have dared to touch her, for she could defend herself with her strong beak.

And do you know the Word of God tells little children to *watch*, because there is some one that is not a fox, but a *lion*, that is going about seeking to find children asleep that he may devour them. When do I mean that little children are asleep? Not when they are lying in their beds; but when they forget God who loves them, Jesus who died for them, what their fathers and mothers have told them, when they forget to pray or read God's Word; then a *little child is asleep*. And then Satan comes along and gets that poor little child into his power, and tries to make him as bad as himself. So that whenever he sees a child getting naughty, unkind, and selfish, or telling lies and becoming deceitful, we know that child has been asleep, and has not been watching against Satan, that he has forgotten God, and neglected prayer. Oh! dear children, let this sad story of the poor swan remind you never to neglect to watch against Satan, and whenever he comes slyly along to tempt you to do what is wrong, you show you are wide awake, and say, "Get thee behind me, Satan, I will not do what you wish." "*Watch and pray.*"

A. T. S.

## THE PRAIRIE FIRE.

**W**HEN I was crossing the prairies which stretch for hundreds of miles west of the Mississippi, I saw far away upon the horizon a long black wall of smoke; as night came on this became a line of fire for many miles stretching over the undulating country. It was the unmistakable prairie fire.

When travellers in their waggon, or the Indians see the prairie fire in the distance rapidly approaching, they at once make a fire themselves, setting light to the tall, waving

grass around them, which burns away till nothing is left but a bare, blackened space, covered with the charred remains of the roots. Upon this cleared ground they take their stand, and boldly defy the storm.

The prairie fire now closes on them, rushing madly on, sweeping down all in its course. The prairie dogs, who have been barking, turn tail and run into their holes; whilst owls and rattlesnakes vainly screech and hiss. All is wild confusion around, as the tempest drives the leaping flames on in their devastating

work; but the Indians, or the travellers are safe. The place where they stand being already cleared by fire, there is nothing left to burn, so that when the flames come, finding no fuel, they merely encircle it and pass on. Any other place outside is in imminent danger, near or far it matters little, for to be without the circle is certain destruction, whilst within is perfect security.

A worse than prairie fire is hurrying on at a fearful, overwhelming pace: it looms already in the distance; many a traveller for eternity sees it not, for his eyes are blinded, or he flatters himself that it is not coming *his* way, it will not overtake *him*. Yet on sweeps the devouring flame, in spite of all his vain delusions. It is the awful fire of God's fierce wrath against that which is most hateful to His holiness—God's anger against *sin*. All man's science and art will not turn away this raging, fiery storm; he may add device to device, and cover himself up with his own righteousness as with a cloak, but his accumulated mass of good works and human performances will only add to the great burning of that terrible day, when all things shall be tried by the fire of the holy, consuming wrath of the living God.

I know many of my readers are very young, and may not be able to fully enter into all this terrible danger. Yet let me assure you

the danger is real. The word of God says "all have sinned," and if you are able to understand this little paper, however young you may be, you are in very deed exposed to the judgment of God; the fire of which will surely overtake you, if you are not found in a place of safety.

But here is the glad tidings of a refuge from the coming wrath. When the thick judgment-cloud that had gathered for the poor doomed sinner burst in all its relentless fury upon the sinner's Substitute, then, then the thunderbolts of God's wrath fell upon Christ. Oh! the greatness of judgment,—oh! the greatness of the love! The one can only be measured by the other! And now, "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Oh! flee to Him; and know with peace-giving confidence that upon the cross He bore the condemnation for thee. Was not the intense burning He endured enough when He cried, "I thirst," "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" God has proved He is satisfied by the resurrection of His Son, and there, poor sinner, thou mayest rest, where the judgment has already fallen, *this is the only safe place*—sheltering in a wounded and smitten Christ, when all around is given up to the flames.

Linger not, but believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

## A CHILD'S EVENING PRAYER.

LORD Jesus on my bended knee,  
An humble child I pray,  
To plead forgiveness, Lord from Thee,  
For all my sins this day.

I thank Thee now for what Thou hast  
Bestowed on me to-day;—  
Through devious ways, from first to last,  
My childhood's footsteps stray.

My daily wants in season due,  
Thy mercies Lord bestow,  
Through life—(a priceless gift from You,)  
Let me in wisdom grow.

My tender age, through every care,  
My parents' love would guide,  
Oh teach me, Lord, to know e'en there,  
'Tis Thou art at my side!

In calm repose my soul would rest,  
And meet a morrow's sun;  
I love to live in simple trust  
While life's brief course I run.

This grant me, Lord—Thy Spirit's rest,  
That I may early prize,—  
And feel each day through life more blest  
By Thy great SACRIFICE. J. S. E.



Dredging for Oysters.

## THE WONDERS OF WATER.

**W**ATER, in which you or I would speedily die, is the element in which life most abounds: and what is perhaps most remarkable, is the fact that that life is animal rather than vegetable life.

Last month I told you of the sponge, very like a vegetable, but really a living animal. One of its chief peculiarities is, that once fixed, it is ever after immovable. I have now to tell you of a vast mass of living creatures in the deep sea, that, unlike the sponge, have no resting place—floating about on the waves, wherever the winds or the currents may drift them.

All my young friends, who have played on

the sea shore, have seen specimens of these wonderful creatures. You may have passed them by, even avoided them as nasty looking things; and left on the dry beach, so they are. Floating in the ocean, they are amongst its rarest beauties. Out of water they look like slimy dirty jelly, suspended in it, they are like a piece of gauze, or an azure bell, terminating in delicate silvery garlands. They are small, about the size of the hand, but singularly pretty, of soft light shades. They float like a bell, an umbrella, or better still, a mushroom, the stalk of which has been divided into shreds, long thread-like fantastic appendages, which hang down like the drooping branches of the weeping willow.

These beautiful things are called *Medusae*, and our engraving will help you to understand their appearance far better than any description I can give. They are found in every part of the ocean; in the icy waters of Greenland and Iceland; they multiply under the hot suns of the Equator; and they flourish in the frozen waters of the South. Their variety is endless. They have of all animals the least solid substance, their bodies being little else than water—a sea water jelly. Yet they supply a large portion of the food of the whales which haunt around the Hebrides, being transported there in innumerable swarms from the coasts of the Atlantic.

The *Medusae* are furnished with a mouth, which is in constant occupation; they are very voracious, and snap up their prey in a moment. If its prey be too strong for a conflict, the *Medusae* holds fast, remains motionless, waits till fatigue has killed its victim, when it swallows it in all security.

From this watery little creature floating about in all its delicate beauty, I will now turn to another great family of the deep, wonderfully different in all respects, but with which you are much more familiar. I mean the tribe of the common eating oysters. First, however, a word as to that wonderful shell-fish, the pearl oyster, which you know supplies not only all the rich pearls, but that beautiful pearly substance which lines our ornamental cabinets, and which is commonly called mother-of-pearl. That substance is also called *nacre*, and, in fact, is the same material as the pearl itself; only *nacre* lines the whole of the shell, while the pearl is found in the shell, or on the body of the fish inside. The origin of the pearl is deeply interesting. Some little substance gets inside the shell, an egg of a fish, or a grain of sand, which, if left, would prove a constant annoyance to the fish, perhaps its death. To prevent this mischief, the fish throws out around this foreign substance layers of this precious matter which in time forms a costly pearl.

Can any of my young friends find a lesson

in this remarkable action of the pearl oyster? Have you got anything about you that is disagreeable; any bad temper, or sinful tendency, that is constantly working mischief? Yes, I know that is so with every one. Let me ask you, have you ever found out any plan by which that can not only be made harmless, but the sense of having such an evil thing about you can become a real blessing both to you and others? Ah, if you are saved, and will learn of the Lord Jesus, He will teach you how this wonderful change can be brought about. His grace can so work, that these evil things shall not only be hidden, but in their place shall spring up beautiful graces—pearls far more precious than any ever yet found in the oyster.

To fish for these pearl oysters, gives employment to great numbers of people. They are found nearly all over the world, but chiefly in the Bay of Bengal, Ceylon, and other parts of the Indian Ocean. The divers descend from fifty to seventy feet, and they will remain under water from thirty to eighty seconds, but seldom more than thirty. Each boat's crew consists of twenty men and a negro. Ten of them are divers, who go down five at a time. When about to descend, the diver fixes a heavy stone to his foot, weighing over fifty pounds. Having reached the bottom, he throws himself on his face and begins to gather all the shells within his reach, and places them in a net. When wishing to ascend, he pulls a signal cord, and is drawn up with all possible speed. A good diver will repeat this operation as many as fifteen and twenty times. The labour is extremely severe, and sometimes on reaching the boat, water, mingled with blood, will be discharged from the mouth, nose, and ears. In some seas divers are exposed to great danger from ravenous sharks, which lie in wait, and frequently devour them.

It is said that the fisheries of the Bay of Bengal, those on the Chinese coast, of Japan, and of the Indian Archipelago, realise near a million of money per annum. Some of these pearls, in ancient and modern times, have been sold for almost fabulous sums of money. It is



said the Shah of Persia once purchased one for £180,000.

But the common eating oyster is one of the great wonders of the ocean. Its construction, mode of life, reproduction, and the enormous traffic to which it gives rise, are all most interesting subjects. As you all know the oyster is composed of two valves, united by a hinge, a muscle which hermetically closes the shell upon the animal. The oyster has no power of locomotion, but is always found attached to some hard substance. When opened, the oyster seems a flattened, shapeless creature, but a little examination shows that its organisation is delicate and wonderful. This, however, I will pass over, and come at once to its history, beginning with its mode of reproduction.

The eggs, or ova, are yellowish in colour, and exist in prodigious numbers. Oysters are not male and female like most animals, but it is said that each oyster is capable of producing two millions of eggs. In spite of this most ample provision, we hear that oysters are getting scarcer each year, and of late the price to the consumers has greatly increased. The spawning season is usually from the month of June to the end of September. The eggs are not cast off like the spawn of most fish, but remain a certain time in the folds of the parent, till the young are able to take care of themselves. This casting off their young is said to be a most curious sight. A living mass is seen to exhale from the oyster bed. The microscope reveals each one of these millions of oysters to have

a perfect shell, and in every way able to do without maternal protection. The waves soon scatter them far and wide.

The first aim of the young oyster is to find some substance to which it can attach itself. Its dangers at once begin. Currents may drive it out to sea, or it may at once be smothered in a mud bank. It has innumerable enemies, who find rich and delicate food in this vast mass of living substance, and who are always

on the watch as soon as the appointed time arrives, and by whom a very large proportion of the young fish are immediately destroyed.

Once attached, the oyster grows rapidly. At first a strong microscope is needed to discover it. In one month it is as large as a pea; in one year it is near two inches long, but it is some years before it is fit for the table.

But you must not suppose that all the oysters are simply fished out of the sea and brought to the market. There is great labour and expense in what is called *breeding* oysters, and you will find much

pleasure in obtaining a suitable book and reading about the whole process. Along all the coasts of Europe an immense number of artificial beds, or parks as they are called, have been formed for this purpose. And this is no new thing, for history tells us of a man named Sergius Orata, who lived five hundred years before the Christian era, who cultivated the production of oysters in this way. The plan is to provide a quiet place; cover the bottom with stones, or shells, or drive down piles, and interlace them with brush-wood, any



THE MEDUSA.

thing that will prevent the young fish from being driven away by the tides, or destroyed by their natural enemies, and to provide a substance to which they can adhere the moment they are sent forth from the parent oyster. Large quantities of young oysters, fished from the natural beds, are then placed in these parks, where they will breed and fatten rapidly, and where great care and attention are bestowed upon them.

Our engraving will give you a good idea of the way in which dredging for oysters is performed. This is carried on in the estuary of the Thames, by the Whitstable and Colne boats, and in many other places on all our coasts. Each boat is provided with four or five dredges, resembling in shape a common clasp purse. They are formed of net work, with a strong iron frame. When the boat is over the oyster bed, the dredges are let down and drawn along, the heavy iron frame scraping in the oysters from the bottom. By far the larger proportion of market oysters are now procured from the many parks, and are artificially reared. Their flavour is much superior, and they are much more valuable than those produced in a natural way.

The poor oyster, however, has a hard time of it from beginning to end. It is first dragged violently from its own element; then placed in water filled with horrid green matter to colour it. The poor creature is a second time fished up, piled in heaps with scarce water enough to keep it alive. Shut up in an obscure narrow basket, it is heaped up on the pavement as inert lifeless merchandise. By a long railway ride its existence, or what little is left, is almost shaken out of it. It is then thrown into the street at the door of some oyster shop. Now comes the moment of its sad fate. It has scarcely been pitched into a tub, when it is seized by the pitiless dealer, ruthlessly opened by a large knife, severed from its shell, tearing mercilessly its fine membranes, sent off to the table of a devouring customer, powdered with pungent pepper, its still bleeding wounds saturated with strong vinegar, and last of all, seized by a three-pronged fork, it is thrown into his mouth, and while still living and palpitating, it is cut, crushed, and ground to an inanimate mass.

Such is the history of the poor oyster, though it be one of the wonders of the deep.

## THE SKIOWAW HERMIT.

(Continued.)

**I**N 1873 he left Windermere, and went home to his friends in Scotland, but with the full intention of returning to his friends at Windermere, amid the scenes he loved so well, but it was otherwise ordered. The separation grew from days and weeks to months. His friends in Scotland, fearing that he might wander away again from them and die neglected and alone, placed him under the care of Mr. D. M. C., of the B. Asylum. There he was a free man, going out with his sketching materials when he liked. He was under rule, of course, to meals and proper hours; but in

spite of all the good food, and kind treatment of the doctor, his strength seemed to decline. The following letter recieved from him is dated July 8th, 1873:—

“MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER IN CHRIST, —I am very glad to hear that you are well, and, more especially, that your soul is in health. We have the Word on which Christ Himself fed. We may enjoy spiritual health in our eternal life. I am only at large here on sufferance for six months. If they can find a flaw they will likely do it [referring, no doubt, to strict confinement]. . . . This mad-house is beyond anything I could have conceived, and

who but Christ can we now trust for help. There is such a famine! We may be glad there is such a Joseph in Egypt, ready now to make Himself known to His poor brethren as having authority over the whole land. He is exalted above all principality and power, to save, to judge, and rule till all His enemies are subdued. I will at another time give you some account, I hope, of how I have been constantly blessed, during my imprisonment, with visions, and revelations, and sensible proofs of God's presence, and even outward miracles and signs—it is, as it were, crossing the Jordan dry shod."

To this his friend at Bowness replied by return of post, as he feared he was becoming rapidly worse. He as quickly answered, saying:—

"You are evidently anxious about my visions and revelations. If you will begin at Genesis, 1st chapter and 1st verse, and read to Revelations, 22nd chapter, and to the end of the 21st verse, you will get the whole of the revelations I alluded to."

At the close of all his letters, he yearns to be back with his old friends at Windermere. He was removed to the Aberdeen Asylum. This and its strict discipline he never liked. From the Aberdeen Asylum he writes sorrowfully of the sad scenes around him:—

"Who is to say to these dead bodies, live? Who but He, who is the resurrection and the life? But here, just think again. Death to be faced—death of all that makes a man—death of the brain, and that, of course, is death of the soul for this world, yet not for ever, for I suppose there might be many a hopeless dead carcass here, for whom the eternal life is in store. Broken and shattered are all affairs now . . . . Think of the promises for the latter day in your solitude. They are many and precious."

Again, he says:—

"I have to meet death of the mind and body at every corner; but His name is wonderful. I would like much to see you all again. I will not try to describe what I have seen here (thy right hand shall teach thee terrible

things). My mind is already the worse of such wear and tear as this. It is terrible to face some sixty or seventy men in such a state. . . . I am not yet altogether got into an idiotic state of mind, but I can feel the power of evil grasping me with no doubtful hand. The enemy cries out loudly, and without ceasing, for my life."

He says the Aberdeen bells annoy him, and adds, "I am asking the Lord to stop their ugly noise."

In his next letter, he says, "'Oh,' say the Aberdeen bells, 'where has our beloved king Satan gone?'" The noise of the bells had evidently distressed him, for so susceptible was he to disturbance that if the kettle began to sing, he would get up from his seat and lift it off the fire when he was here.

A most remarkable fact happened in a few weeks after the date of this letter containing the latter words. These magnificent bells were burned down. Some one will say, "You think that was in answer to the prayer of the Skiddaw Hermit, do you?" I do not presume to say anything—I merely state the facts. Anybody can deny the petition being heard, if they presume to do so. The facts are before the world.

Our friend was sent back from Aberdeen to B. Asylum to his kind friend Mr. D. M. C. but it was not for long, for shortly after he was seized with a violent attack of inflammation of the brain, which terminated his sufferings here. The testimony of the medical man was, "I believe he has now realised what he long hoped for. Although of weak mind, I believe he was a true Christian. He was fond of his Bible to the last."

Several friends called upon him while he was in the Aberdeen Asylum, and they always found him very true and sincere, and wonderfully bright in the truths of Scripture. To one he spoke strangely about a large covey of some hundreds of black crows which had held a large "conference meeting" in some trees near the asylum. After a prolonged meeting of many days, and fighting and debating throughout, it

was unanimously decided that the world was in such a bad state, and the end of all things was so near, that no fresh rookeries should be built, and all nest-building was condemned. After which all the crows disappeared to the four winds. There was his fine figurative language as usual. Now learn a lesson from the crows. He had learned the utter ruin of all things down here, that the end was nigh at hand; the lesson was, "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Not so rambling as *reason* would conclude after all. There was happy method in his madness.

I dare say no one thought the Hermit very wise or very prudent, but "the wisdom that cometh down from above" is far higher than "the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness with God." "Christ the *wisdom* of God and the power of God"; still clearer, and fuller, and brighter, if possible, "Jesus Christ, who of God is made unto us *wisdom*, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." This is the *wisdom* of God. "He that getteth this wisdom

loveth his own soul;" "It is better to get this wisdom than to get gold." He is considered wise who can get that; but poor is the man of gold and bank notes who is not rich towards God. Poverty-stricken is that soul who goes Christless into eternity. The wise in heart shall be called prudent, and with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. Christ, God's Son, is the "righteousness of God" for all that believe in Him. "He that believeth on Him *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." The Hermit believed this much with all his heart. Was he wise or foolish? Is it wisdom to believe God? Is it prudent to believe God? Yes, yes, a thousand times yes. Is it wise to disbelieve God? Is it prudent to disbelieve God? It is worse than madness. It is worse than the insanity of the demoniac of the tombs, or the inmates of the Aberdeen Asylum. May everyone who reads this account of the happy Hermit of Skiddaw be as wise, as happy, and as prudent as he was. "Who is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord." T. R.

## THE SAILOR AND THE ALLIGATOR.

A STORY FROM LIFE.

**I**DARESAY some of you, dear little ones, would like to hear a true story of an alligator, and how a poor foolish sailor, who disobeyed his officer in command, was very nearly eaten up by this dreadful *dragon*, for the crocodile and alligator are indeed the dragons of the present day; although, if we were to believe fairy tales and legends, they tell us of very wonderful creatures called *dragons*, which were supposed to have existed in former days. The die on our new gold sovereigns represents St. George, the patron hero of England, slaying a dragon; it is a pretty emblem of truth and virtue overcoming evil; and trampling wrong under foot. I dare say you will be surprised to hear that the

curious little reptile called a chameleon is of the same species as the alligator, and is a miniature dragon. I have heard that this creature changes its colour very often, but although we had two in the house for some time as pets, I never saw them any shade but a dirty white, and we were obliged to send them away because they were very delicate and refused to eat; but now for my story.

A great many years ago, before the slave trade was abolished, an English frigate, named the "Diana," was lying at Cape Coast Castle, West Africa, to protect the trade of that station; the Commodore sent a *sloop* (which is a small ship with one mast,) several hundred miles up the river Congo, to carry slaves, ivory, and gums, down to the Cape of Good Hope.

This vessel was manned by a crew of nine negroes and two white men, with an officer in charge. One of the seamen named Johnson was mate. After sailing fifty leagues up the country, one morning the breeze died away suddenly; and as a strong under current was running against the ship, they were obliged to drop anchor within a quarter of a mile from the shore, and in this situation the sloop remained for three days; during which time a very strange affair occurred. A dead calm prevailed, and the bosom of the water was like a sheet of glass, the heat was overpowering, and made all in the ship very languid.

A general wish to bathe arose amongst the sailors, and as evening shed its calm influence over the Congo river, the officer in charge and Johnson the mate could hardly restrain the sailors from going overboard; as the former knew it would be very dangerous, for they had observed large sharks during the course of their voyage. At length one of the white seamen named Campbell, who had been drinking a little more than was good for him, regardless of all entreaties and control, jumped into the water, and after swimming about for a while to a distance from the ship, what was the horror of those on board when they perceived an alligator making towards him from behind a rock which was close to the shore. Poor fellow! his death seemed close at hand, and all means of escape impossible; the officer and mate could render little assistance, and Johnson seized a carbine to shoot him, believing it better than to allow him to fall into the power of the monster; but the officer prevented him, and ordered a boat to be lowered, at the same time firing two shots at the fast approaching alligator, but without any effect, for the bullets glided over his scaly surface like hailstones, and the progress of the creature was by no means impeded. The noise of the gun, and the cries of the negroes in the sloop, made Campbell acquainted with his danger; he turned and saw the huge *dragon* gaining on him, and with all the strength he possessed, he made for the shore. And now a wonderful

scene took place, as he approached a spot where some canes and shrubs grew down from the bank. While closely pursued by the alligator, a ferocious tiger sprang from the shrubs and stood awaiting him, while the jaws of the other reptile were also extended to devour him. At this awful moment Campbell was saved! The eager tiger gave one wild bound, and *over-leaped him*, falling into the grip of the amphibious monster; a terrible conflict ensued between them, and the water was dyed with the blood of the tiger; in vain did the land animal try to tear the scaly covering of the water dragon, and as the alligator had the advantage of keeping his prey under water, victory was thus obtained, and it sunk to the bottom, dragging the dying tiger with it, and no more was seen of the alligator, who quietly retired to his watery den to eat the tiger instead of Campbell. He, poor fellow, was taken into the boat, and brought on board the sloop; but while in the boat he was unable to speak a word, although his danger had perfectly sobered him, but as soon as he leaped on deck he fell on his knees, and returned thanks to God for his wonderful preservation.

What is better, he was never seen to be intoxicated, or heard to utter a single oath from that day, but became a perfectly reformed man. The officer who related this anecdote mentioned, that although the sailor deserved punishment for disobedience to orders and over drinking, yet he was so glad to see him safely delivered from the jaws of the alligator, and the paws and teeth of the tiger, that he forgave him, as he thought Campbell's disobedience had met with a severe lesson in the dreadful ordeal he had gone through.

Children, *we* have a far more dangerous enemy than a *river dragon*; I mean Satan, who is called in the New Testament, "*the Great Dragon*" (Rev. xii.), and we are told he is always going about seeking whom he may devour. Ask the Lord to keep you from this crafty, dreadful foe; and make you an obedient and holy child in heart and life.

## ABOUT GOATS.

FROM "LITTLE ELSIE'S BOOK OF BIBLE ANIMALS."



WONDER which you like best, the wild, hairy goat, or the timid, woolly sheep. Certainly goats are much cleverer and stronger than sheep; they will climb to steep rocky places

where sheep would never dare to go, and they are so fearless that they will even sleep on points of rock where there is scarcely room for their four feet to stand.

Yet, wild as they are, goats may be tamed and petted. When I was a child we had a black and white goat called Nanny, and I can tell you, she *was* a pet. She was kept on the lawn, and baby had some of her milk every day. Many a game of play Nanny and the children had together, chasing each other round and round the lawn, the goat pretending to butt with her horns, but never really hurting any one.

What pains we took to find nice things for poor Nan to eat! But I believe we might have saved ourselves the trouble, for if she was like other goats (and I suppose she *was*, though we thought her such a wonderful creature), she was not at all dainty; goats will eat almost every green thing that grows.

Another pet goat I once knew, lived among the hills in Ireland, and you would have thought her quite wild, if you had met her on the mountain-side, leaping among the rocks. But she was tame enough to know her name, and when we called "Cassy, Cassy!" she would come as quickly as a deer, bounding over the blooming heather to take her bit of bread from our hands, and rub her nose against our sleeves, by way of showing how glad she was to see her friends again. Yes, goats *can* be tamed, but they are wild things after all.

In Syria, the same shepherd often has both sheep and goats in his flock, but the goats do not walk quietly along the green valley after their shepherd; they are never happy unless

they are climbing among the rocky slopes on each side of the valley, for there they find rough dry grass which just suits them. They are very fond, too, of the young shoots of trees which grow upon the mountain-side. The master-goat generally has a bell round his neck, just as the master-sheep has. When the flock comes to a well, the goats are ranged on one side and the sheep on the other, for the sheep are always divided from the goats, and at night, though they are all gathered into one fold, they are still kept separate.

Though these Syrian goats are so wild, they can be taught many clever tricks. Miss Rogers, an English lady who lived for some time in the Holy Land, and has been so good as to tell us what she saw there, once noticed a crowd of men and children. What can all those people be looking at? she thought, and then ran off to see for herself. A man in a funny dress was showing off a goat, just as those Italians showed their dancing bear the other day. A band was playing merry tunes, and people had come from all sides to see this goat perform. So Miss Rogers looked on too, and she noticed that the poor performing goat seemed perfectly to understand all its master said to it, and obeyed him instantly. Sometimes it was made to stand with its four feet close together on the top of a very high pole, while its master walked round and round with the pole in his hands. Then it was carried round on *four* sticks instead of *one*, the music playing all the time.

So you see these Syrian goats, if well trained, can be taught to balance themselves in a wonderful way.

If you notice carefully, you will find that goats are very often spoken of in the Bible, though not nearly so often as sheep are. The flesh of the young kids is very good and tender, and when a stranger comes to an Arab's tent hungry and tired, he is asked to rest under a

shady tree, while a kid taken from the flock is killed and dressed; and his dinner is brought out to him to be eaten in the shade, just as, so long ago, Gideon made ready his kid for the angel to eat, and brought it out to him as he sat under the tree.

now that people are wise enough to be content with their own hair, goats' hair is used for other purposes, and is often left on the skins, which make nice warm mats and rugs. The hair of the Cashmere goat is very much finer and more silky than that of our goats,



Boy and Goats.

But the flesh of the goat is not its only valuable part. Many years ago it was the fashion for grand ladies and gentlemen to wear very long wigs curling over their shoulders, and then the hair of our English goats was thought very precious, for it was of the finest goats' hair that these curly wigs were made. But

and, it is supposed that of such fine soft hair the covering and curtains of the Tabernacle were woven.

Look at your kid glove, and feel how soft it is. Should you fancy that it was made from the skin of a goat? Yes; that is a bit of the skin of a French or English goat, carefully

prepared. An Arab would be as much surprised to see your goat-skin glove as *you* would be to see *his* goat-skin bottle. Can bottles really be made out of skin? Indeed they can; the "bottles of wine" which the Gibeonites took with them, the "bottle of milk" which Jael opened to give Sisera drink, the "bottle of water" which Abraham laid on Hagar's shoulder when he sent her away; all these were most likely goat-skins, for leather bottles are still used in all Eastern countries; they keep water beautifully cool, and are also very conveniently carried on the backs of mules and asses.

For a large bottle a goat is killed, and the skin is carefully drawn off and cleaned, Then the holes where the four legs and the tail were are sewn up, and the bottle is tied at the neck. When full it still keeps something of the animal's shape, and new bottles are hairy; you may know an old bottle by its smoothness and by the little patches here and there, showing where it has been torn and mended.

You remember how, when Joseph's brethren went to Egypt to buy corn, they carried sacks upon the asses' backs. These sacks were just goat-skins, and it is thought that the "kneading troughs," which the Hebrew women tied up with their clothes when they left Egypt in such haste, were only round pieces of goat-skin, not wooden trays such as a cook uses when making her bread with us.

Were goats ever sacrificed as sheep were?

I think you can answer that question for yourself, if you remember what papa was

reading last night about the sacrifices on the great day of atonement, the only day in all the year on which the high priest was allowed to go inside the beautiful veil of the Tabernacle and enter the Holy of Holies.

After Aaron had dressed himself in his white linen garments, he brought two young goats to the door of the Tabernacle, and cast lots that he might know which goat was for Jehovah and which for Azazel, which means "the goat which went away." Both these goats were pictures of the Lord Jesus Christ offering Himself a sacrifice to God, and bearing our sins away for ever, no more to be remembered.

When Aaron had killed the goat which belonged to Jehovah, he sprinkled its blood seven times upon the golden mercy-seat which covered the ark, and then he laid both his hands on the head of the scape-goat and confessed over it all the sins of the people for that year. That goat was not killed, but was led away, with the burden of sins upon its head, into the wilderness, to a land where no one lived, so that the sins could never be found again.

This is just what you have to believe. The Lord's goat has been killed, and offered for a sin offering, to make atonement for the people, and the living one has been led away into the wilderness never to be seen any more. Both set forth the death of Christ.

Does not this make you think of that beautiful verse you learnt from your text-book on your birth-day: "Their sins and their iniquities I will *remember no more.*"

## "THE BLOOD BLOTTED THEM ALL OUT,"



AS I was travelling by train a short time ago, I was struck by the very cordial "Thank you!" of one of my fellow-travellers, to whom I offered a little book about Christ.

"You know what peace with God is, I should judge?" I said.

"Yes; thank God! I do," she replied. "I

am rejoicing in the finished work of Christ, whose precious blood cleanseth us from all sin."

"Then you are quite sure that you are saved, and that there is no judgment for you?"

"Quite sure, sir."

Reader, have you present peace with God, through the finished work of the Lord Jesus



Christ, who by "one offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified"? If not, read on, and may the Lord in His tender mercy make His way of peace plain to your soul.

In conversation, my acquaintance said, "There was a time when I could not say I was saved. Nay, more, I was most miserable, You may remember the great revival in Scotland some years since. At that time I was living there. I was stricken in conscience, and convicted that I was a sinner, ay, and a lost one, too; and I was most wretched and unhappy. I felt if I died as I was, I should surely be lost and go to hell, and that I richly deserved it. I tried to get peace, but all in vain. I found that instead of getting better, I was getting worse, for I looked inside instead of outside. Several years went on, and gradually my poor body was worn out with exhaustion. I had to take to my bed, and there I lay, never expecting to recover. One

day I felt as if my end was drawing near, when I seemed to loose all consciousness of present things, and found myself in a large room, and, standing out before my eyes was a large book with my name on it, and in distinct characters, all my sins in the terrible reality were before me. I gazed, terror-stricken, till I saw a hand covered with blood pass over every leaf. My terror gave place to joy and peace, as I looked upon the hand. I at once knew that it was that of my blessed Saviour; and gazing again at the book, found that the blood had blotted them all out.

"From that time to this, I have had the calm sense in my soul that the precious blood has washed all my sins away, and I have been able to rejoice in my Saviour. My poor body speedily recovered when the weight of care was gone."

Dear reader, has the blood, "the precious blood of Christ," blotted out all your sins?

## SIN AND GRACE.

**H**AVE you, dear child, ever been in the dust before God, with the sense in your soul, that you are in His sight lost—ruined—utterly undone? No excuse pleaded, no desire to conceal the grand truth of your state? An utterly ruined sinner, over whose head hangs the wrath of a justly offended God, against sin? No hope to be better lurking in the mind, but the heart and conscious fully alive to the truth of the condition you are in, and the sense in the soul, that it deserves nothing but the impending blow of judgment?

Mark the full display of God's provisions of grace. Christ comes in and charges Himself with the whole case. Behold Him in the last moments on His way to the cross, as we read of them in John xviii. 4-11. "Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth and said unto them, whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas

also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? and they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he; if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way."

Here we find the blessed Lord Jesus standing in the breach, and presenting Himself as the victim, to answer for the guilty; and in the full intelligence of what He would have to bear for them before God—and what God required so as to establish His righteousness—"Knowing all things that would come upon Him."

What a wonderful scene! The sweet savour of the sacrifice of Christ ascending to God from the cross. A sin-hating God hiding His face from His Son when made sin. The whole earth darkened for three solemn hours. The righteousness of God against sin, His love to the sinner, and His truth vindicated.

How righteously, trembling, believing one, has He not commanded the sword of judgment which hung over your head to be sheathed? Because His judgment against your sin has been borne by Jesus. Is your face in the dust now before Him, then He has nothing but the riches of His grace for you? Turn then your eye away from yourself, and behold the sword of impending judgment which hung over your head sheathed at the righteous command of Him whose satisfaction is without limit in

Christ! If God is thus satisfied, so should you be; and the *full assurance* of faith is that only which does honour to the sacrifice of Christ. Your satisfaction rests in the satisfaction of God. In ordinary things, the person who has been offended and outraged is the one to be satisfied—not the person who offends. How much more then shall you be satisfied, seeing it is God who was outraged and offended by your sin, who has declared His full satisfaction in Christ for all you are, and all you have done.

### FIVE GOLDEN MICE.



OH, how pretty! Whoever made such things, and what did they make them for? Were they for toys? No, they were not toys; they were for a trespass-offering unto Jehovah, God of Israel. Absurd as the idea may seem to us, five golden mice was the trespass-offering the priests of Dagon advised the lords of the Philistines to return with the ark of the Lord that they had taken captive (1 Sam. vi.). What utter ignorance of what was due to God, and of their own sinful condition it showed, to suppose that they could propitiate the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, by a gift of five golden mice. And note that they were given as a "trespass-offering." How very light indeed they must have thought their trespasses to have been, to suppose that so trifling a gift could atone for them.

But what if we say that every week and every day such-like gifts are offered to God for exactly the same object, in this land and at this very time? Not only in countries where idolatry still prevails, but here, where God and His grace have been proclaimed for many years, even here the thought is current, that Jehovah can be bought over, as it were, by gold, to wink at their trespasses. Shall I give an instance?

A poor, giddy woman of the world, who attended Church for the same reason she attended balls—because it was fashionable—

gave twelve dollars to a missionary cause that a popular preacher had pleaded for. In conversation she frankly owned her conviction, that her gift would have great influence in securing her acquittal before the bar of God. Oh! delusion of Satan, to suppose that twelve dollars coaxed out of the pocket of a woman, whirling on in the false life of fashion, can wipe out that which cost the death of Christ on Calvary's cross. It is a very common thought indeed, that God keeps a debtor and creditor account for each man, and that while their evil deeds get them into God's debt, their good deeds get Him into theirs; and they hope, if they live long enough, to wipe out all the former by the latter. That God keeps a book is indeed true (Rev. xx. 12); but while the debtor side is easily filled from the records of a single day, the creditor side must remain forever blank, if only our good deeds can fill it; because we have none to be entered there (Rom. iii. 12). Only one thing can God place to our credit that will cancel all the debts, and that is the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son.

God has set Him forth, a "propitiation through faith in His blood," so that He can be "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." "*Through faith in His blood.*" Yes, dear reader, and there is no other way; No gift of ours, whether of gold, or deeds, or prayers, can ever cancel one sin. SIN can only be put away by BLOOD. C.H.B.



THE SONG OF MIRIAM.

## THE SONG OF MIRIAM.



HE deliverance of Israel from Egypt was indeed wonderful. For hundreds of years had they been reduced to slavery of the most cruel kind. But God was all the time looking on. "I have seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, by reason of their task-masters; for I know their sorrows. And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians." And you all know with what terrible plagues God afflicted the land, ending with the death of the first-born of every family and of all their cattle. And how the Egyptians became urgent to send them out of the land in haste; for they said, "We be all dead men." And how, too, Pharaoh was vexed he had let them go; and gathered up his mighty army of war, chariots and horsemen, and hotly pursued and determined to retake the trembling multitude. And how by the power of God a strong east wind arose, and the sea was driven back and became as bulwarks around them, and dry shod they passed through the waters of death. And how the Egyptians presumptuously daring to follow, the mighty waters returned in their strength and covered the chariots and horsemen and all the host of Pharaoh, so that not one escaped to tell the tale of their overthrow. And how that, when morning light dawned, they saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore.

"Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and the rider hath he thrown into the sea." Surely every one of you has often read that glorious song of triumph, wherein they celebrate the mighty conflict between Jehovah and their enemies, and how completely they were overthrown. For once, and alas! the only time till the end of their long wilderness journey, they rose up to a true sense of what it was to have God for

them, and how surely He would triumph over every foe till He planted them safely in the wonderful land of promise.

It was at the end of this triumphant song that the beautiful scene our picture sets forth comes in. And "Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

Try, dear children, and think of this wonderful scene. Between two and three millions of people, amazed at their miraculous deliverance, stand on those shores; and overwhelmed with wonder and thankfulness, they gaze on their enemies dead at their feet. All the men led by Moses burst forth in this grand God-given song. The women listen with rapt attention to the end of the song, then stepping forth with Miriam at their head, timbrels in hand, also burst forth in a sort of chorus, their soft, sweet voices in beautiful contrast to the deep-toned strains of the men, chanting that wonderful word, "Sing ye to the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.

Never does Israel forget this scene of wonder. Throughout all their after history, in all their trials and sorrows, they never forget to turn back to this marvellous deliverance. And when all Israel and Judah shall be gathered into their land, with Messiah reigning gloriously in their midst, then shall their song be of this great event; "What ailed thee, oh thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?"

If such was His mighty work at the beginning, what may not be looked for hereafter, when God shall gather them from every part of the world, and Jerusalem shall become the praise of the whole earth.

## FANNY AND THE GOAT.



ANY years ago, when I was a very little girl, I had one favourite play-fellow, whose mamma and papa were friends of my parents.

Fanny H—— was an only child, and very much indulged; her mamma was delicate, and had lost another little daughter who died in infancy; and this had been a great grief to Mrs. H——. She had a large wax doll, very beautifully made with real hair and eyelashes, just like a little child, and this doll was dressed, in little dead Adelaide's pretty clothes, and kept in a drawer by poor Mrs. H——, because she thought it resembled her lost baby: You may guess Fanny was a great pet after Addie was taken away, and she did almost as she liked, even when her parents desired her to do something particular, or to avoid some mischief; they were not very angry if they found Fanny had quite disobeyed them. She was a pretty little girl, with white skin, flaxen hair, and large blue eyes! Strangers generally praised Fanny's appearance, and admired her much; and as she was always tastefully dressed poor Fanny ran a fair chance of becoming vain; but she was naturally a very lively child, indeed at times rather hoydenish; her favourite amusement was to imagine herself a *piebald pony* and play at performing tricks, as she had seen one do at some show.

I frequently spent a day with Fan and her mamma, and between cantering, neighing, and leaping over cushions, we kept up a pretty din; playing at horses in the dark winter afternoons when we could not go out to walk, and Mrs. H—— must have been a most patient mother to bear it all.

But I am now going to tell you of a summer's evening which I spent with Fanny. Her parents were staying at a pretty sea-side place, and I went to spend a day with her; all went on smoothly until after our early tea, we then went out to play in some fields close by; I suppose we became tired playing at our usual

game of horses; and seeing a large foreign goat tethered in a field near, Fan proposed that we should cross the boundary line and look at it. We soon accomplished this, in steeple-chase style, and commenced pulling boughs of trees and branches of shrubs to throw to him, which he nibbled quietly at first, as goats are fond of shrubs. He was a large handsome animal, with a *piebald* coat, large horns, and a long beard. We soon felt curious to go closer and inspect him, and I was incautious enough to offer him some flowers which I had been gathering. At first I threw a few near him, and then ventured closer, and was about to hand them to him to be nibbled, when he suddenly stood up on his hind legs and tossed his head; we both laughed at this, and Fanny cheered, and told me to offer him my bouquet again; but before I knew what he meant to do, Mr. Billy reared up and charged me full with his large horns, diving and butting his head as angry or wicked goats do when they attack persons. It was too late to run, and the goat caught the skirt of my white muslin dress just in front. Fortunately, the fabric being very light, it tore to pieces, leaving me on the ground; the angry animal flung the shreds up in the air on its horns, and I had nerve enough to get up and run away as fast as I could, followed by Fanny, whose courage had quite gone and who screamed with terror. The goat in his excitement tore up his tethering iron, and so became loose and was pursuing us, when a labouring man appeared with a working implement and drove him back. Fan's papa next appeared on the scene, as poor Mrs. H—— had seen it all from the sitting-room window, and we were safely conducted back to the house, where Fanny's sobs, and mine also, were soothed by some nice strawberries and cream which were ready for supper. I must tell you Fanny had been forbidden to go near the field where this goat was, as it belonged to a gentleman residing near, who had

brought it from abroad and valued it much ; but she had not told me this, for she knew I would have been afraid to disobey Mrs. H— as I was only a visitor. I got a great fright that evening, and always have felt rather nervous of horned cattle since. I was but a little lassie at the time, yet it seems as fresh in my memory as if it had only occurred a year or two ago. My nice dress was much torn, and Mrs. H— was greatly grieved about the whole affair. I felt a very bad conscience about the accident, although I had not actually disobeyed orders. Had I known better then, I should have thanked God for sparing my life, for the large horns of the animal might have entered my chest and gored me to death, or he might have trampled on me and injured me very much. Fanny's papa brought me home that evening, and begged my parents not to be angry with me, as I did not know I was going into a forbidden place, so I was not punished. I think it wise to warn all my young friends about horned cattle and animals, as they are very dangerous things to go too close to, or to tamper with ; for if my dress had been a strong

material and clung to the goat's horns, I might have met a frightful fate, before the kind labourer came to my rescue. It was the frail muslin tearing and setting me free which saved me from a dreadful butting and trampling. Of course I know it was the love of God which allowed me to escape, for He was watching over me ; but then we know He often allows *little things to be the means of saving the lives* of those, whom He wishes to protect.

Dear young friends, disobedience and disrespect to kind and indulgent parents often leads to sad results, and although poor Fanny was not hurt herself, it would have made her her always feel very unhappy had her giddiness been the cause of my death or personal injury.

We know that in Scripture the goat is generally used as a type of a wicked person ; and the sheep of a child of God ; in this way we may consider our little anecdote as a lesson to avoid evil persons, who will often receive our friendship and kindness ungratefully, and seek our ruin, as the wild wicked goat repaid my offer of sweet flowers to eat, by trying to kill me.

K. B. K.

## PEEPS INTO FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

### CHICAGO.

**O**F this wonderful city every child has heard ; the rapid growth, and the disasters of which have been greater than perhaps any other modern city in the world. As I lived here for near ten years, I could tell you many interesting stories about its early history, and how, like a bed of mushrooms, it seemed to spring up in a night. If you look on the map at the south western extremity of Lake Michigan there you will find this " Queen City of the Lakes." North and east of it is the chain of great lakes, one of which, Lake Superior, covers 32,000 square miles— vast

inland seas, through which, and hundreds of miles of large canals, there is direct water communications with the Atlantic Ocean. Then, westward, a ship canal connects the city with the Illinois river, through which and the Mississippi there is a direct communication with the Gulph of Mexico. Thus a steamer might start from the Mexican Gulph and pass right through the continent of North America by means of rivers, canals, and lakes, to the Atlantic Ocean, at the mouth of the St. Lawrence river.

If you look north, south, and west, you will see that Chicago is the centre of an immense

district of country, as rich as any in the world. The land around those magnificent lakes is capable of supporting an enormous population, and at eligible points there will soon be a great number of thriving cities. Then, no city in the world has such railway facilities as Chicago. They stretch out north, south, east, and west, for thousands of miles.

Now look at its rapid growth. An intimate friend of mine, not by any means an old man, was amongst the first to settle there, about the year 1830. It was then an Indian trading post, and wild Indians hunted the buffalo west of that point. It has now a population of more than half a million people! A solitary Government vessel would occasionally enter its small river, now some fifteen thousand ships yearly arrive at and clear its ports!

The site of the city is on each side of the Chicago river. A short, wide stream, running about half a mile inland, when it divides at right angles and runs north and south. The ground is very low, only a few feet above the lake: as the city grew this was found to be a great drawback, as it was impossible to get good drainage. In wet weather their streets were often in a deplorable state, many times I have seen warning boards in parts of their best streets—"No bottom here;" and it was woe to the reckless driver who dared to venture there; in all probability his horses would have to be dragged out by their necks. But the Yankees are a clever, energetic people, so while I was there they set to work to raise the whole city some six or eight feet. Most perplexing, but really amusing, was the process. The first thing was to raise the streets. About forty miles off was a small mountain of gravel. Rails were laid, and heavy train-loads of this brought and shot down the main streets. The result was that all the stores, warehouses, hotels, and side walks were six or eight feet below the new level of the streets. A Yankee could not stand this; he set to work to raise his building bodily from the basement story. This was done by cutting the walls of the blocks of houses near the foundation, and placing under-

neath a large number of screw jacks with a man at the lever of each. By this means an immense hotel or a whole row of buildings were raised. I knew buildings that had as many as 2000 jacks under them, and at a given signal every jack would be turned so many rounds. This raised the building say two feet, when the foundation walls were raised to the same extent. This was repeated till the whole pile of buildings was raised to the desired height. All this was done without the least interruption to business. The people bought and sold, ate and slept as usual. Then the side walks, which to that time were nearly all wood, were raised to the street level; but as all the houses in a street were not raised at the same time, there was endless annoyance; some were on the new, some on the old level, so you had to ascend and descend six or eight feet perhaps fifty times in the length of a street. All this, however, soon was made right.

Another curious sight was to see the frame houses, sometimes several together, being removed from one part of the city to another. This was very simple. All wooden buildings were constructed on heavy timbers, and stood on posts; being raised by the screwjack they were placed on rollers; a windlass with strong chains was fixed in the street, a hundred yards in advance, worked by horses, by which means the buildings were quietly and slowly drawn over planks from step to step till their new destination was reached.

Chicago, like all American cities, is laid out in the most systematic manner. The streets are all straight, wide, and cross each other at right angles. The river divides the city into three parts, the main branch running from the lake divides it into the "North" and "South sides"; all beyond where the river divides at right angles is called the "West side." The river necessitates many bridges, perhaps the most scientific and beautiful in the world. All these have to be opened for the passage of large ocean vessels. They are built on a centre pier, and swing round with great ease and rapidity, the ships or steamers passing in

by one side, and out by the other. These bridges, however, have always been a great inconvenience to traffic. I have often seen a train of carriages a mile long at a stand still on this account. I have lately heard, however, that on the west side at least, they are cutting tunnels under the river, by which this will be avoided.

During the whole time I was there, the wildest excitement was caused by the rapid increase in the value of property. "Corner lots," especially, rose every day, and "speculators" were the scourge of the place. Many an immense fortune was made in a few years. I knew two companions, English wood-sawyers, who when they went out were drunken, dissipated men; but God converted them, they became industrious and careful; they bought a hundred and forty acres of land on the lake shore at a dollar an acre, not for speculation but for a home. In a few years I saw them sell part of that land for three hundred and fifty dollars an acre! But the city had its "downs" as well as its "ups," a sudden panic would come, and wealth would be as suddenly swept away.

The growth of the city was rapid in the extreme; streets seemed to spring up in a day. When I first entered, there was about half a dozen brick buildings in the city; when I left, there were immense numbers of the finest streets in the world.

Their greatest calamity was the terrible fire in 1871. The summer had been exceedingly dry. Prairie fires had been numerous and destructive; in the city itself there had been many conflagrations. It broke out on Sunday, October the 8th. The firemen were exhausted with previous labours. On it raged all that night and all next day. It crossed the main branch of the river. Persons who deemed themselves safe were thus involved in the fiery deluge, almost before they were aware of the approach of danger. Immense granite blocks of warehouses, banks, hotels, and dwelling-houses, were seen suddenly to collapse as the flames burst out from the interior, being

set on fire, not by contact with the flames, but by currents of hot scorching winds which passed through them. I have conversed with those who passed through the terrible calamity, and heart-rending were their tales of sorrow, suffering, and unutterable distress. It seemed as if the fire could only be stopped when it had consumed every building in the city.

Four square miles were laid in ashes. Seventeen thousand four hundred and fifty buildings were destroyed, nearly a hundred thousand persons were rendered homeless, and two hundred and fifty perished in the flames. Two hundred million dollars worth of property was destroyed. Multitudes lost everything. Those who had rolled in riches had to be fed on Government rations.

But such was the energy of the people all was soon repaired. A new Chicago rose on the ruins of the old, grander, more magnificent, and more extensive. From the fifteenth of April 1872, when the frost was out of the ground, to the first of December, when it again returned, within the space of the burnt part of the city there was a brick, stone, or iron building, built and finished for every working hour in that time!

Chicago has been reckoned one of the wickedest cities in the world. All kinds of bad people have flocked from every part of the earth. But there are many earnest Christians there. Sunday schools are numerous; Bibles and tracts are freely distributed. When the Lord shall suddenly call for His own, many shall ascend to meet Him in the air from those busy streets of Chicago.

The commerce of this city is immense. It is the great gathering point for the corn and provisions from all the Western States. Here are the largest grain warehouses in the world; and here, too, are more cattle slaughtered and packed for every part of the globe than in any other city in America. There are great slaughter houses, where 5000 hogs, and over 1000 oxen are killed and packed in a day. In very deed, Chicago is one of the modern wonders of the world.

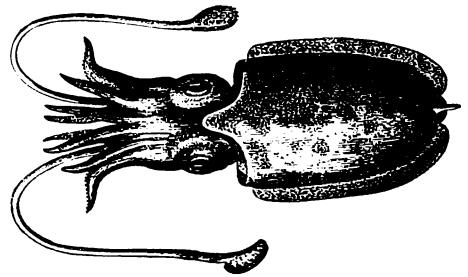
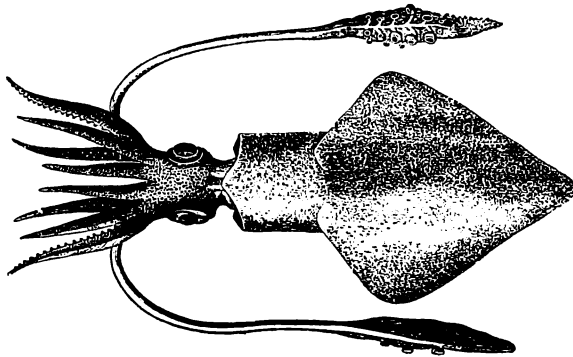


## THE WONDERS OF WATER.

**H**OW little of this vast subject, my young friends, can I bring before you. The length, breadth, and wonderful depth of the ocean, I have measured for you. Its tides, currents, calms, and tremendous storms, I have said a little about; but when we come to its living creatures, their apparently infinite variety, and the inconceivable mass of life in each variety, how can I tell you of all this? This life is divided into great families, in each of which are many members,

pearl oyster, with its rich and much coveted treasures, and then the common eating oyster, which is cultivated so extensively, but which itself has such a hard life.

Oysters are called bivalves, and, as we saw, have no power of motion. But the next great family of shell-fish are able to move from place to place. Of these there is an immense variety. Their shape is almost endless, and they are amongst the most beautiful objects of the sea. These shells are used, as you know, for ornaments in our rooms. Some shells are



all more or less alike. All I can aim at is, to take up one of the most interesting in some of these great families, and tell you of their habits, instincts, and homes; the work God has given them to do, and how they supply you and me with food, clothing, ornaments, and useful articles.

We have glanced at the polypi and their magnificent works, the coral reefs; then the sponge, and its wonderful mode of life, and how useful it is in every family; after that, those beautiful floating medusae, the flowers and ornaments of the deep ocean; all these, and their varieties are endless, none would think were living creatures, so much are they like vegetables, had it not been for the wonderful power of the microscope. Another great family is the shell-fish; and we have glanced at the

all of one colour, and so brilliant that the painter tries in vain to reproduce them. Some are striped, mottled, or traced with various designs. The construction of these shells and of the mollusks, as the living fish inside is called, is wonderful in every respect. Some live on herbs, some on flesh. The common periwinkles, one branch of this family, live upon infinitesimal plants.

I now pass on to the next great family of the sea, which is as wonderful as any of its companions. It can scarcely be called a fish, so curious is its construction. Try and picture a long cylindrical body, flat and flabby, terminating in a great head, with two enormous eyes, one on each side, its summit containing a mouth, or rather a beak, a horny substance, sharply bent like the bill of a parrot, around

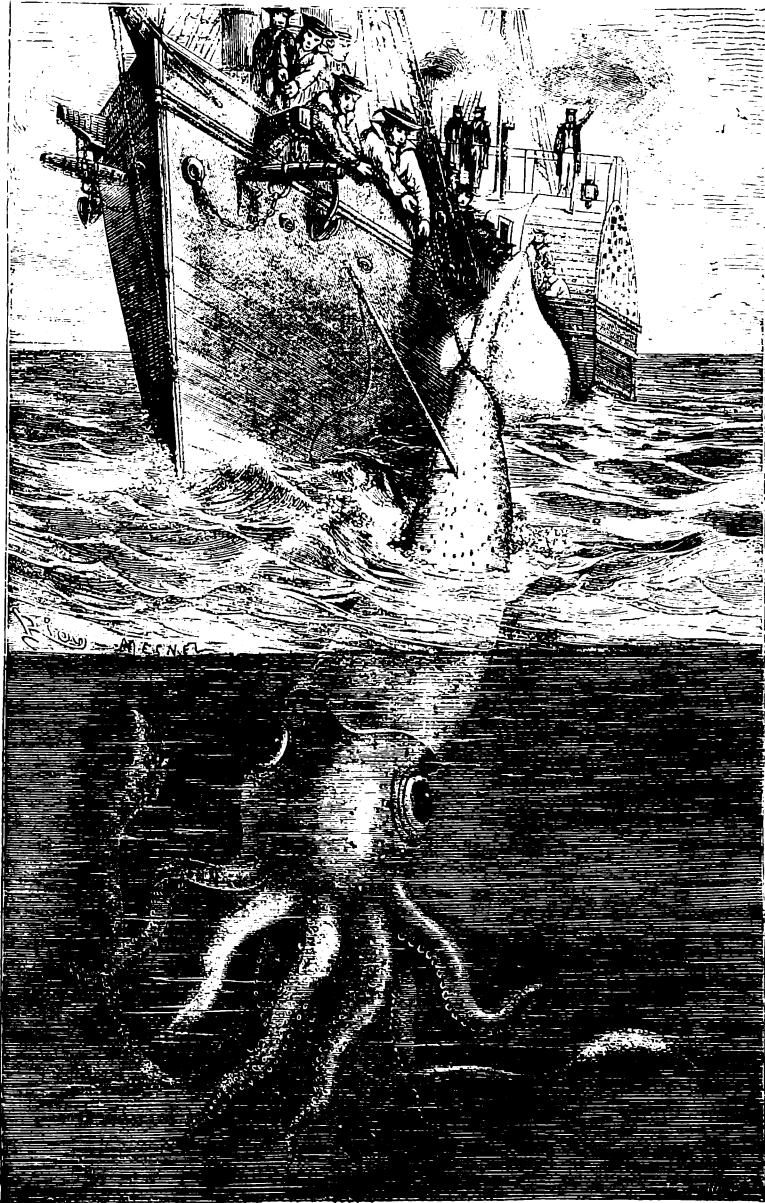
which branch out eight or ten arms, two much longer than the rest. These strange creatures are called *Cephalopods*, because their feet branch out of their heads. They have all kinds of shapes, two of which we give. As in every family there is a great variety, it would take a volume to describe them all. The common name of the whole tribe is that of cuttle-fish.

They swarm in every ocean; some are found on the coasts, others inhabit the deep waters. They are ruthless despots, for their love of taking life is only bounded by their power. Not being able to pursue their prey, for their motion is slow, they have resort to craft; and like hunters of wily game, they lie in ambush awaiting its approach. Fixing themselves in a hole, their long arms are always ready for action. Their great eyes, always widely opened, patiently watch for their prey, and instantly a victim is within arm's reach, it is seized. The cluster of arms encloses it, and draws it to the beak, where it is devoured without pity. It is the tiger of the sea, for it destroys for the simple pleasure of killing. An observer tells of having seen a small cuttle fish deserted by the ebbing tide, and left with a shoal of little fish in a pool upon the beach. He seemed to be whiling away his hours, or perhaps venting his rage, by killing all his fellow-prisoners. He had satisfied his hunger, and most probably had ceased only because he could eat no longer, and now was wantonly killing for amusement. Yet are they strong examples of retributive justice. As they savagely kill, so are they ruthlessly devoured. Their enemies, the dolphins, deal death and mutilation to thousands of their kind; and often the shores of the Bay of Biscay may be seen covered with cuttles, with their arms torn off, and other parts of their bodies bitten by the dolphins, who hunt them in sport.

In ancient times there were strange stories told and believed about these strange creatures. One weighed 700 lbs., had arms thirty feet long, and it destroyed all the fish and fishing grounds near Castria in Spain. Another was

said to inhabit the northern seas—a perfect monster, not less than a mile in length, and a terror to all sailors. Nay, so far did imagination work, that it was said one of these monsters actually blocked up the Straits of Gibraltar!

Though no one now believes these stories, yet modern naturalists tell us of some really gigantic cephalopods that have been caught, and some of them preserved. On the 30th of November 1861, the French steam corvette *Alecton*, when near Maderia, encountered one of these monsters floating on the surface of the water. It was sixteen or eighteen feet long without its long arms. Its eyes were of an enormous size. Its mouth or beak opened ten inches. It was supposed to weigh over 4000 pounds. As the corvette approached, the creature showed signs of intelligence, and endeavoured to move out of the way. The commander, anxious to secure the creature, loaded the guns and made ready harpoons with rope nooses. At the first shot the monster plunged beneath the water, and appeared again on the other side of the boat. Again the guns were discharged; and each time the creature was either wounded by the harpoons or the shot, it dived beneath the surface, but always came up again after a few minutes. It was found impossible to secure the monster, as the harpoons could not bite on the flabby flesh, and came out as they went in, and the shot seemed to do it no harm. At last one ball struck a vital part, for the creature vomited blood and froth with glutinous matter, which sent out a strong smell of musk. At last they were able to cast a noose over it; the rope slipped down its body till arrested by the fins at its tail, and when they endeavoured to hoist it on board, the rope cut into the flesh and separated the body into two parts; the head with its long arms dropped heavily into the sea, and made off; and the hinder parts were drawn on deck. It was thought that the monster was sick, or exhausted by some recent combat with a monster of the deep.



A Monster Cephalopod caught by the French Corvette *Alecton*.

Enormous as are some kinds of the cuttle fish met with, every child has seen small specimens of the same family on the sea shore, after the tide has gone down. Like the medusae they seem to be masses of thick jelly; but the moment

they are placed in water, their true character with their spreading arms, is plainly seen.

In our next number, if the Lord will, we shall take up some of the well-known fishes of the ocean.

## THE LITTLE EMIGRANT.



It was a hot day in July, when I was seated in a long car, travelling for thirty miles through the north-west of Ireland.

On looking round, I saw a boy on the opposite side of the car. A big tear stood in his eye as he pulled out his little bundle, containing a tin-plate, a knife and fork and mug, together with such other necessaries as emigrants generally carry. These were neatly tied up in a clean, white cloth, cut of which he took two slices of bread; one slice he handed me, the other he began eating himself.

"Ah! I know who put that up for you," said I.

"Yes, sir; mother thought I'd want it on the way; she said, 'May-be Tom, you'll feel hungry on the journey.'"

I asked if he were going far.

"Yes, sir; I'm going to New York."

"Are you leaving behind any that you love?" I enquired.

"Yes, sir; I'm leaving my poor mother and three sisters in Mullaughmore. And mother's a widow, sir; I'm her only son; and she does take it to heart so, my going away. Still she says, 'Tom it will be for the best by and by.'"

One tear after another ran down the little emigrant's cheek; and, putting my arm around his neck, I told him how I had come from America a few weeks before, and wondered he, so young, should go all alone to that strange country.

"Oh, but sir, I've got two sisters across there, who wrote for me to go; and sent six pounds for my passage-money; and in their

letter they said they'd meet me at the landing stage."

"And are you *sure* that they will meet you?"

"Yes, sir; and why would'nt they, when they said they would? Sure you don't think they'd break their promise?"

"Now, tell me, my boy, why don't you think they would deceive you?"

"Oh, cause I know that they love me, they really want to have me with them; and in order that I might go they paid my journey in the *Europa*, that sails from Londonderry to-morrow."

"That is the very same reason why we trust God," said I, "because He loves so much that He paid the passage-money to take us to heaven. What your sisters in New York paid was only six pounds, but God gave His own Son to die for us. You will not have to pay a second time, because your sisters have paid fully; and we do not, nor can we, pay what Christ has paid to take us to heaven. And God really wants to have such sinners as we are with Him, to be happy for ever. You cannot see your sisters—they live more than three thousand miles away—but you got a letter from them, and so you act upon it. That is faith.

"But, you see, Tom, it is possible your sisters would not be *able* to keep their promise; but our Great Friend, who said, 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out' (John vi. 37), certainly will keep His; because besides His love being boundless, His power is almighty. If we trust Him now, as you trust your sisters, then we shall have a Friend to

welcome us across in the other world, where all things are made new by the glory of His presence."

It is strange how we doubt God! Let me ask you, dear reader, have you so learned to trust God? Have you started a journey, a pilgrimage, to a heavenly city? I do not mean the natural journey, of life, that you started when you were born: you could not help it, but have you had a new start? Have you found yourself in a city doomed to destruc-

tion, yourself a poor condemned sinner; and have you so learned that the Lord Jesus has gone to heaven to prepare a place for you that, like one of old, you have turned your back on the doomed city—the world—and are now on your way to heaven? If you have, you will be able to trust God for the journey. For such a young pilgrim how precious is such a word as this, "I give unto my sheep eternal life and why shall men perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

## THE SUN AND THE GOD BAAL.



HE worship of the sun under the name of "*Baal*" was of as remote antiquity, as that of "*Ashtaroth*" or the moon. I told you, my dear children, in a former account of "*Bel*," that Baal meant "Lord, or Master," and it also meant "*husband*," so I suppose Baal and Ashtaroth were regarded as husband and wife, but it was chiefly used as a term for the idols who were supposed to represent the sun; sometimes it was applied to other false gods, thus "*Baal-Zebub*" was the god of Ekron (2 Kings i. 2). where he had a temple of some size and fame; his name meant "Lord of flies," because his votaries believed he protected his city and worshippers from the invasion of those swarms of *gnats* so prevalent in Eastern climes. The Shechemites called him "*Baal Berith*," or "Lord of the Covenant," and also had a temple in his honour (Judges viii. 33; ix. 4).

In ancient Egypt there was a city dedicated to the sun as far back as the days of Joseph the Hebrew ruler, and priests of the highest rank officiated in it (Gen. xli. 45). This city called in Scripture "*On*," was the same as the "*Heliopolis*" of ancient history, and was a place of note in the days of Jeremiah; it was famous for its *obelisks*, which were erected in honour of the luminary of day; one of these

obelisks is still entire, and has become an English prize, I mean the celebrated "*Cleopatra's Needle*," now on the Thames embankment—it is a "*Monolith*,"—or single stone of finely cut red granite. Many others existed, which are now broken and defaced, their origin was "*pillars of the sun*," but in after years they were dedicated to *heroes* or *heroines*. In 2 Chronicles xxxiv. 4, 7, we read of Josiah casting down images of Baal. Some of these consisted probably of obelisks, which in those ancient days were erected on his altars, pointing upward, and down the shaft of which the sun's beams played. "*Baal-Gad*," mentioned in Joshua xi. 7, is supposed to have been "*a city of the sun*," as its name indicates. The Phenicians worshipped that great light as "*Baal-Samen*," the *lord of heaven*, and his image was a beardless youth, his right hand was uplifted like a charioteer holding a whip, his left grasped a thunderbolt; this idolatrous effigy was covered with pure gold.

Manasseh and Amon, the evil predecessors of King Josiah, placed a chariot, dedicated to the sun, before the gate of the temple at Jerusalem, which was burned by order of King Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 11). These chariots are described by an old writer as being white in colour, wreathed with garlands of flowers, and having four white horses to draw them, the

pole of the chariot, to which the horses were attached, was covered with gold; and they drove through the cities at stated times in grand procession.

In Ireland, at the present day, many curious ruins of old towers exist, they are very narrow and high, and quite round in form, these are generally supposed by learned men, to be of great antiquity and built by *sun-worshippers* of a by-gone age.

In sacred Scripture we read of many other heathen idols, but the worship of these is now forgotten, and few records remain to tell of it; one of these is "*Rimmon*" mentioned in 1 Kings v. 18. He was an Assyrian deity, his name is considered to mean "God of pomegranates." I suppose he was honoured, as presiding over the fruits of the earth and vineyards, perhaps also god of wine, as the juice of pomegranates was used as a kind of sweet wine by these nations; King Solomon speaks of this as "spiced wine," in Solomon's Song viii. 2.

Chiun and Remphan were the same as the Saturn of the Greeks, the prophet Amos calls this god both a "*star*" and a "*king*," because in fact Saturn was both a *planet* and a *false deity*. Have you ever seen this beautiful planet through a telescope? It is surrounded by a ring, and is quite different in this respect from the other planets. The prophet Ezekiel gives us a sad account of the idolatrous state of Israel, in chapter viii., where he had a vision of this great sin. "And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, the *hand* of the Lord God there fell upon me. Then said he unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now the way of the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and at the gate of the altar this *image of jealousy* in the entry. He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that *I should go far off from my sanctuary?* But turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater

abominations. And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall; and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door, and he said to me, Go in and behold the wicked abominations that they do there. So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and *all the idols of the house of Israel pourtrayed upon the wall round about*. And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel,—every man his censor in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up. Then he said unto me, Son of man hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel *do in the dark*, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, *The Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth*. Then he brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house, and behold at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their *backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east*." With this, from God's own word, we will now close our account of the idols of the ancient nations, and the great sin of Israel in following their worship. You have seen, my little friends, how sad, and often terrible, were the results of such false forms of *religion* for these unhappy idolators meant it as religious adoration. When we glance at the false worship of Baal, Ashtaroth, Anubis, Molech, Nisroch, Dagon. Chemosh, Bel, and others, we must feel grateful for our blessed Gospel, and the *light* which has arisen to lighten the gentiles. Even the memory of the Druids and their cruel deity, "*Teutates*," so often spoken of as romantic and picturesque, because surrounded with mistletoe, and weird old "*Stonehenge*," shows out in dark colours, when we look into its horrid details, of hapless human victims. May God grant us all grace to worship Him in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.



## PASSING AWAY.

**A** COUNTRY churchyard always presents a solemn scene. There is the old crumbling block-like building, with its thick walls and square, solid tower. For hundreds of years the winds have moaned through those open windows in that solitary belfry.

Many generations of little children have been born and grown up in the village around that churchyard. In the bright sunny days they have picked up the daisies, and played amongst

those straggling tombstones; but in cold bleak winter, and especially as the shades of evening have come creeping over the solemn scene, with what trembling steps have they hurried through that place of the dead, afraid of every moving leaf, terrified if a sudden sound should strike the ear. And how many loved little ones, even before they became prattling boys and girls, have been suddenly stricken down with sickness or fever, whose little bones lie crumbling beneath that churchyard grass. Many a time has the laughing merry youngster,

when frolicking through the hay-field, or gleaning after harvest, like the boy in the fifth chapter of the second book of Kings, been heard to cry out—"My head, my head." Like him he has been carried home to his mother, like him, too, in a few hours, he has passed away, and his prattling voice has been heard no more. A sorrowing father and mother, and all the children in the village, have gathered around that little grave, and together they have wept as the little coffin was lowered and covered up for ever from their sight.

Some of those villagers have lived a long time. A few of those old grave stones are nearly crumbled away, the names and dates can scarcely be made out; but they tell us of one here and there who has lived to near a hundred years of age! Yet have they had to die. And so generation after generation, young and old, rich and poor, all, all have come and gone, and the place knows them no more. Our picture tells us it is winter. There are the old elm trees, but their leaves are gone; the sky seems cold and leaden. It may be the wind whistles through those trees. It seems to have a voice as it finds its way through some crevice in the roof, or some broken pane in that old church window. Ah! how often are children

afraid of that sound! It seems to tell them of death, and oh how many are afraid of that! Yes, the winds have a voice; those old stones in that crumbling old church have a voice; the old elms, with their leafless branches, but more especially those shattered delapidated old tombstones *have* a voice. And what do they say to us? "PASSING AWAY, PASSING AWAY!" These are the sounds that seem to fill the air. From all sides they come, "*Passing away, passing away.*" How solemn, and yet how true.

And, dear children, has not the fact that you are reading the last number of another year's "Companion" a similar voice? Not the graveyard alone, but all around tell us that death is the portion of all. "The sting of death is sin." That is why children, and old people too, are afraid of death. Are you afraid to die? Then you are unable to say with one of old, "But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." The lesson I wish you to learn is this, there is One who can deliver you from the fear of death, *One* who has destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil; One who has said, "Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest."

## UNDER THE FLAGS.



**A** STORY of thrilling interest was lately recorded in an American weekly illustrated paper.

The Spanish authorities in Cuba had arrested a man who, though born in England, was a naturalised United States citizen. He was charged with conspiracy against the Government, and ordered to be shot. But the consuls of both England and America believed the man to be innocent, and used all the persuasion and entreaty in their power for his release. But the proud Spaniards haughtily disregarded their petition.

The hour of execution had now arrived, and a company of soldiers were drawn up in line. The condemned English-American marched out before them, calmly awaiting his fate. He stood at the foot of the grave, already dug, his coat off, and his hands pinioned behind him. The officer ordered his men to load, and at the word "present," they brought their rifles to their shoulders, awaiting the word of command to fire.

In the awful suspense, suddenly there sprang forward from the bystanders the two consuls; the one drawing from his breast the Stars and Stripes, wrapped it right round the prisoner,



whilst the other threw over him the Union Jack. The consuls now stood on either side, defying the Spaniards, who dare not fire on the flags of two of the mightiest nations under heaven, and the man was released, and proved his innocence to the satisfaction of the authorities.

Well may the Christian exclaim, "Oh! the security and the blessedness of being enveloped in the blood-stained banner of the cross!" or, in the triumphant words of Paul in Romans viii., "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

Let every enemy and every accuser be summoned—one and all are silenced in view of the blood of Christ, shed for sinners, whereby God can be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, even of the ungodly. For—

"Who aught to my charge shall lay,  
Since Jesus died for me?"

"Who, then," says the Apostle, "is he that

condemneth?" Let him speak; let him judge. Where is he to be found? since Christ has died, yea, rather is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. The answer comes back, "Christ has Himself borne the condemnation in our stead." So now, there is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Him.

And if no charge can be brought against those for whom Christ has answered, of course no condemnation; and if no condemnation, there will be no separation from His love. Oh! may you know the glorious shelter of that flag that never, never shall be struck; for "if God be for us, who can be against us?"

"Blessèd be God, our God!  
Who gave for us His well beloved Son,  
The gift of gifts, all other gifts in one,  
Blessèd be God, our God!

Who shall condemn us now?  
Since Christ has died, and risen, and gone above,  
For us to plead at the right hand of love,  
Who shall condemn us now?"

## THE WONDERS OF WATER.

### THE WHALE

**T**HE year 1879 rapidly draws to its close. The last of its months is upon us, and with it we finish our papers on "The Wonders of Water." We have wandered together by the tiny rippling stream; watched its increase till it became a mighty river; gazed on the thundering cataract; sailed over the great lakes or inland seas; at length found ourselves in the deep and boundless ocean itself. Having gazed upon specimens of its teeming life, beginning at its simplest forms, we shall now close our pleasant talks by a short account of its largest inhabitants—the whale. Whales are not only "the great leviathan of the deep," but are the greatest of all living animals. Where else could this gigantic beast live, but in the water? What legs could support it on the land? In the air what wings could have borne

its weight? What an ungainly monster the whale would have been on the land! Strictly speaking it is not a fish, but an animal; yet God has placed the whale in the water, with the form of a fish, where it moves with the greatest ease and swiftness. What a suitable element for such a monster is the mighty unbounded ocean. There are many kinds of these monsters of the deep. They all agree in this, that, unlike fish, they have lungs and must come to the surface to breathe. They are all alike in general appearance. The body of the whale is a colossal and irregular cylinder; they have been known to measure 130 feet in length, and to weigh as much as 250 tons; the diameter of the smallest part is about one third that of the greatest. It has neither hair nor scales, but is covered with a smooth black leather, hard and thick,

under which there is a layer of fat one foot thick. The head is joined to the trunk by a neck so short that it seems to grow out of the body; the trunk terminates in a thick fleshy tail, which is horizontally flattened, so that unlike fishes it strikes the water, not right and left, but up and down. The head in some kinds is so enormous as to form one third of the total weight of the animal. The mouth is prodigious; so huge that a man is able to stand inside without stooping. Some have teeth which supply us with inferior ivory; all have immense jaws, from twelve to fifteen feet in length, from which we get all our whalebone.

The tongue is monstrous, sometimes twenty feet long and twelve wide. It is, however, unmovable, consisting of a solid mass of fat, fastened down the whole length of the mouth. The oil expressed from it will fill five or six hogsheds.

In some whales the lower jaw is several feet shorter than the upper, which, as you will see by the engraving, looks very much out of proportion.

On the head there is a hole which communicates with the mouth. Through this the whale ejects the air which it has inhaled, and with which it carries a large quantity of water, thus throwing high into the air a great fountain. Sailors call this "blowing." When they journey, the largest and strongest animal takes the lead, and in danger gives the alarm or signal for attack. They are said not to be insensible to affection; the male always accompanies the female. In 1723, a pair were met travelling through the ocean; perhaps, says the narrator, it was their honeymoon. They were attacked and wounded; one being killed, the other threw himself upon his companion, uttering frightful moans. The male always follows his wounded partner, and remains with her so long as she lives.

Unlike all fish, the whale suckles her young. This is a strange sight; for the mother has to rear herself upright sufficiently out of the water to enable its young to feed and breathe at the same time; and with its fore fins posi-

tively hugs its young to its breast during the operation. What an immense supply such a little monster must require at each meal! The mother exhibits very ardent and courageous attachment. When her little one has been harpooned, she at once comes to its help, remaining close to its side when it comes to the surface to breathe, and exciting it by all means to flee. She rarely abandons her wounded young while it lives. At such a time the mother whale may easily be wounded, forgetting entirely her own safety. In her maternal agony she swims to and fro, beats the sea violently; and the wildness of her movements is a certain sign of the greatness of her grief.

Some whales feed on vegetation, others on medusa, mollusks, and other small animals. The monster swims on the surface of the sea, with his enormous mouth open; he has only to close his large jaws, and he imprisons a whole population. In nature large animals feed on small ones; and it is a strange sight to see this huge leviathan pursue pitiful little creatures scarcely visible, more like jelly than fish, without shape or consistency.

Whale fishing for hundreds of years has been carried on most extensively. They furnish an enormous quantity of oil, whalebone, ivory, spermaceti, and ambergris. You all know how useful sperm oil is; our fine candles are made of spermaceti, and ambergris is much used in making perfumery. So extensive and energetic has been the destruction of whales, that they have been altogether banished from many seas were once they were most numerous, and it is thought the time may come when the whole tribe will be completely exterminated. Hundreds of ships, however, go out every year, each having thirty or forty men, to carry on this profitable, but often dangerous operation. On reaching the fishing grounds, two men are kept at the mast-head on the look out, and four boats, pointed at each end, are always ready for instant action. The moment an unfortunate whale is perceived, the canoes are let down; each is manned with four strong rowers,



The Whale—the Great Leviathan of the Deep.

C. G. AMERICAN ART CO.  
NEW YORK

NEW YORK

an officer who steers, and an experienced harpooner, who must have great presence of mind, a keen eye and a strong arm. Now begins a most exciting and often dangerous scene. As soon as a boat comes within reach, the man hurls his harpoon. The giant of the waves, on feeling himself wounded, gives a violent blow with his tail and plunges into the depths. There is a line attached to the harpoon, which runs out with tremendous rapidity and drags the boat with frightful swiftness. Should the rope get entangled, the boat is immediately upset and all plunged into the water. All the boats keep away from the tail of the monster; for when the whale plunges he erects his tail, which vibrates for a moment in the air, and falls flat upon the water with a crash, which would dash a boat in pieces in a moment. After ten or fifteen minutes the whale is forced to come to the surface in order to breathe, and this is a critical moment. If the whale should rise up immediately under a boat, he has been known to hurl it ten or fifteen feet clean out of the water; but if all goes well, the moment he appears at the surface he is again struck with another harpoon, and again instantly dives. This is repeated till the poor

creature becoming exhausted falls an easy prey to his pursuers.

Occasionally, however, the whale sells his life very dearly. In 1820, an American whaler having let down its boats in the midst of a shoal of whales, they immediately gave chase, the ship following after; suddenly the largest of the whales left the rest, and disdainingly the small boats rushed straight at the ship, rightly suspecting that to be its principal enemy. At the first shock, a portion of the keel was broken, the animal then endeavoured to seize the ship with its gigantic jaws, but not being able to manage this, he retreated about six hundred feet, and dashed with all his strength against the prow of the vessel, driving it with immense velocity. This caused an enormous wave to rise, and the waters pouring into the windows, filled the cabin; and in spite of all the efforts of the crew, she speedily sunk to the bottom.

When the whale has been killed, he is dragged to the ship, made fast; and then begins the work of cutting up and melting the fat; and having secured all that is valuable about the great monster, the remainder is speedily devoured by the birds and sharks.

## THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

AUGUSTUS Cæsar governed  
 The senate and the camp,  
 His name was on the current coin;  
 It bore his features' stamp;  
 He levied heavy taxes  
 Throughout his vast estates,  
 And each man sought his native town,  
 And paid within the gates.

In the Gentile town of Nazareth,  
 By the Galilean Lake,  
 Dwelt an humble, holy family,  
*Working* for the bread they brake;  
 Working, as since the fall of man,  
 God commanded men to work  
 Winning hard-earned bread by toil,  
 From morning bright till evening murk.

At his bench all day the husband  
 Plied his busy saw and rule,  
 Deftly shaping rough-hewn timber  
 With the carpenter's skilled tool;  
 And the gentle Jewish Mary  
 Wove the distaff's thread and woof,  
 Pondering o'er a holy secret,  
 'Neath her humble, peaceful roof.

And yet both in life thus lonely  
 Were of David's royal line,  
 And must need seek Bethlehem's city,  
 To pay the Cæsar's fine.  
 Toiled, and travel stained, they reach'd it,  
 But the inn affords *no room!*  
 In a *stable* they found shelter  
 From the night's descending gloom.

King Herod ruled in Jewry,  
 When in the Eastern sky,  
 A lustrous *star* fore-warned the Seers  
 Some great event was nigh :  
 With costly gifts, the Magi sought  
 The bourne where it would lead,  
 And in Judea's distant land  
 Found the long-promised Seed !

But why, oh Eastern sages, why  
 Did ye pour forth your gold  
 And costly gems ? And shepherds, why  
 Neglect your midnight fold ?  
 What meant that glory in the East ?  
 Those herald seraphs' song ?  
 That radiant star, whose guiding light  
 The Magi led along ?

What voice prophetic told those Seers,  
 That *star* proclaimed the birth  
 Of Judah's King ? and why their gifts  
 Those Gentiles of the earth ?  
 'Twas that the promise, long foretold,  
 Accomplishment had won ;  
 And God to Jews and Gentiles gave  
 That wondrous gift, His Son !

When lowly herdsmen watch'd their sheep,  
 Roused by a vision blest,  
 Angelic hands and voices showed  
 To man God's high bequest !  
 One feeble infant wail which rung  
 On Bethlehem's midnight air,  
 Proclaim'd the Incarnate Word had come,  
 His people's griefs to share.

His virgin mother wrapp'd her babe  
 In swaddling garb of earth,  
 While Bethlehem gave but *manger bed*,  
 'To greet its Prince's birth.  
 No room for Jesus in the Inn ;  
 The world He came to save,  
 Could only give the Lord of Life  
 A manger, cross, and grave !

From childhood up to man's estate,  
 The fair young Jesus grew,  
 The promised " Light of Gentiles,"  
 The " Messiah " of the Jew.  
 But blindness, oh how deep, how sad !  
 Has fallen on God's race ;  
 They " Judah's Lion " set at nought,  
 And scorned their day of grace.

K. B. K.

## THE PASSING YEAR.

**T**HE dark chill month of December has again come round; bleak and cold out of doors, but warm and cheery within, in the houses of the rich, and those to whom God has given means to procure home comforts. But, ah! look into many poor cottages, and even homes of struggling, though respectable persons, and how many shivering ones you will see, with blue lips and scantily clothed forms, and perhaps but a poor fire of dying embers, or no fire at all. Winter is a hard time for the poor, and they are much to be pitied! Dear children, do you ever think of those poor little beings of your own age, who have none, or few, of the good things which

God has given you? If so, try and spend some of the money your kind friends give you (*during the holidays*), for the benefit of those in distress.

We are now at the close of another year, and how many friends and young playmates have passed away from the face of the earth since this time last year! In many homes there is a sad blank; a loved father or mother, or perhaps little brother or sister, may have slept in death, during the past year, and their place knows them no more. What a sad year of war and bloodshed, and also fearful accidents this has been. In the beginning of it, there was a terrible accident on board a large ship named H.M.S. "Thunderer," and several poor

souls were suddenly sent into eternity by the bursting of a gun. I know some who were in that ship, and heard of others who were killed, leaving poor little orphan children and desolate wives to mourn for them. Next happened that terrible battle in South Africa, where a whole regiment of British officers and soldiers were killed by the wild savages who came so unexpectedly upon them. What a fearful slaughter it was! How many little boys and girls lost dear fathers, uncles, and brothers on that sad day. Many little black clad figures move about sorrowfully at the close of *this* year, when they remember that a dear papa, or other relative, was alive last December, and sending home letters of love to their firesides, but who *now* lie in foreign graves, either in distant Africa or eastern India.

I need not recount all the sad events of the past year. One above others rises to memory, *the death of poor young Prince Louis Napoleon*, the only child of his lonely widowed mother, living for many years amongst us, and being by education almost an Englishman. He was a child of great desire and promise in his early years, and one whose destiny was at one time believed to be a bright one; but it pleased God, when he was still a boy, to allow his parents to be deprived of their royal state, and come to England to dwell almost as private individuals in a peaceful spot in Kent. Poor Prince Louis lost his father at an early age, and like many high spirited youths grew tired of the quiet of home life, and longed to see foreign lands and be a soldier; so he left his mother's gentle restraint, and the calm seclusion of his English home, and went to join the war in Zulu land. I suppose you all know about his sad death; he was making sketches of a deserted kraal or village, and seems to have forgotten time and danger; and after being twice reminded that it

was time to mount his horse and return to the camp, he was just about to do so when some cruel black men armed with guns and dreadful weapons named assegais, suddenly rushed from amongst the long grass and stalks, where they had been hiding, and uttering wild yells attacked the prince and his party, frightening the horses and killing two poor soldiers and a friendly black guide, and alas! also Prince Louis, who could not mount his restive horse in time to escape. We have all, as a people, mourned for him and his sad early death, and must deeply pity the poor heartbroken lady, who has lost her only son. How sorrowful to reflect that he left home almost *against* her wishes; for it is natural to suppose no mother would wish to expose her darling to the murderous weapons and hands of these savages. God is wiser than man, and *we* cannot read His purposes, so we must only hope that Prince Louis was "*taken away from the evil to come.*" Perhaps, if he had lived to be Emperor, a great deal of bloodshed and civil war might have broken out in France, but of this he is *now* guiltless.

Dear ones! there is another Prince who was barbarously murdered, not by uncivilised savages, but by His own people, to whom He came in love, and in a form of humanity; I mean *Jesus, the Prince of Peace*, who laid down His life for us, that he might bring and reconcile us to God, and make peace by the *blood of His cross*. He will come again—"*this same Jesus*"—we know not how soon; and then for those who are trusting in Him, "*Time shall be no longer,*" for they shall enter into eternal light and glory. Are you watching for Him? for it is the *watcher* who sees the "*Morning Star,*" and Jesus says Himself, He is "*the bright and Morning Star.*"

K. B. K.

