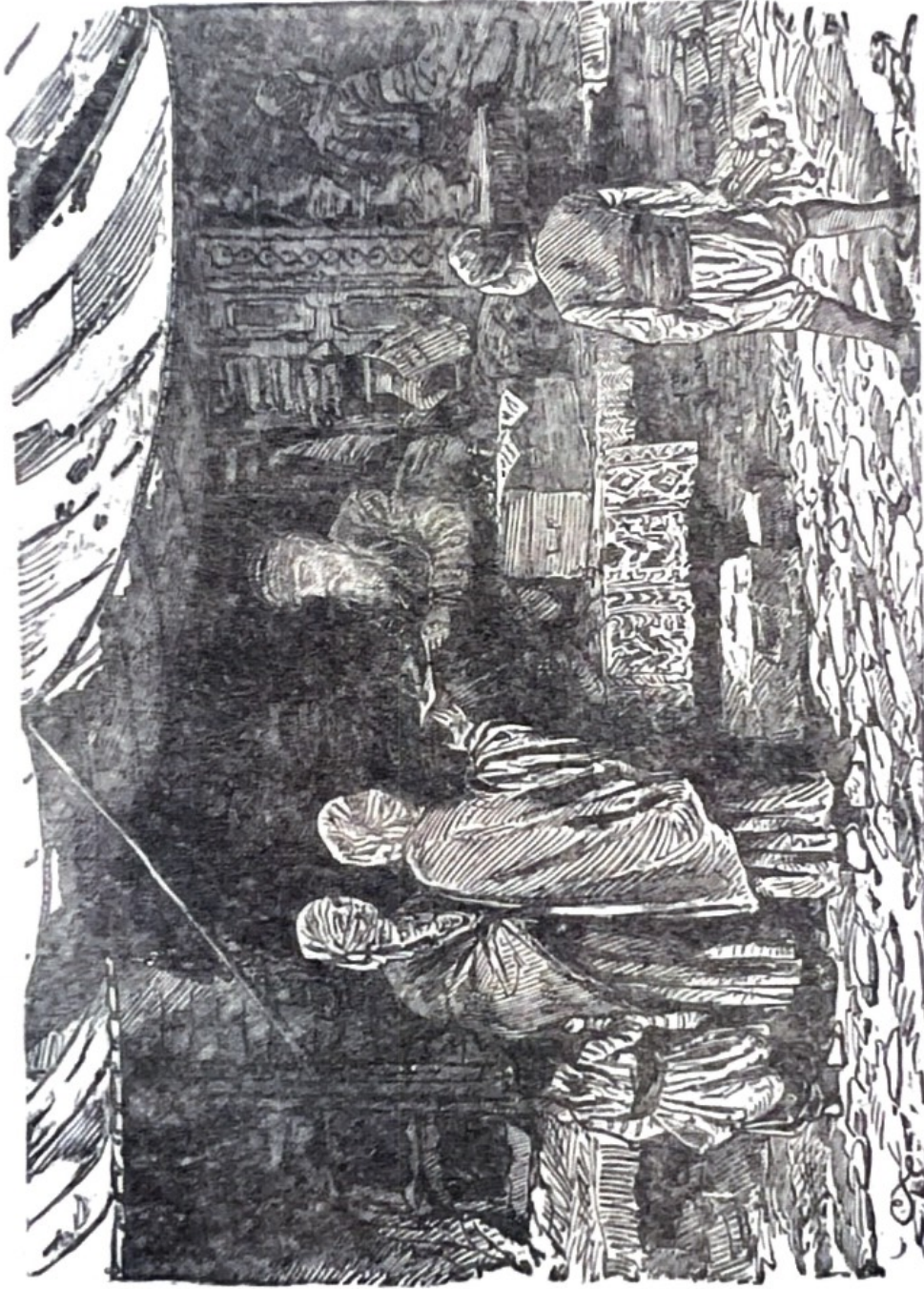


CHILDREN OF MANY LANDS



By C. J. L.

Children of Many Hands.



A SHOP IN CAIRO. P. 95.

CHILDREN
OF
MANY LANDS.

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THE LONDON GOSPEL TRACT DEPOT,
20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

**MADE AND
PRINTED IN ENGLAND.**

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Children of Many Hands.



CHAPTER I.

JEWISH CHILDREN.

THE blinds were drawn ; a cheerful fire burnt in the well-polished grate ; a shaded lamp placed on the centre table threw its light over the small but bright and pleasant sitting-room to which I want to introduce my young friends.

Two persons only were in the room, Archie Moss and his sister Elsie. Archie, a pale, delicate boy, about eleven years of age, lay on a couch, not far from the writing table where Elsie sat busily engaged in arranging some papers.

Archie had never been strong, though

when quite a small boy he had been able to run about and play like other children. As he grew older, traces of what the Doctor called spinal weakness began to shew themselves, and for more than two years before the time at which my story opens, most of his days had been passed on the couch, only on what he called his best days feeling strong enough to sit up for an hour or two. Very often pain and weakness obliged him to lie quite still on his back, so that you will not be surprised when I tell you the days often seemed to pass very slowly to the helpless little boy. Archie's mother had died when he was too young to remember much about her; and as his father, Captain Moss, was very often away from home on long voyages, Archie would have been a very lonely child but for the love and care of his sister Elsie, who was ten years older than her brother, and who never seemed tired of trying to interest and amuse him; and it was from her lips Archie had learnt the sweet Bible stories and Gospel hymns the little fellow loved so well.

Elsie looked up from her pile of papers, and seeing a very tired look on Archie's

face, said brightly, "Please, Archie dear, don't think me unkind, I have been so busy I had almost forgotten how tired you must be. But my work is finished now. I have all these papers ready for Uncle Howard, so I am quite free now and at your service. Shall I read aloud or sing for you?"

"Not now, Elsie; I want you to talk to me. But first let me tell you what I have been thinking about. You were singing as you went about your work this morning. I don't know all the words; only four lines seem to be saying themselves over and over again to me:—

" 'Dark people from the islands
Far scattered o'er the sea,
Pale men from icy regions
Too cold for flower or tree.' "

"As you sang, I thought I should like to know some boys and girls from the far-off lands about which I learn in my geography books. I wish I could have some of them come to see me; but as that can't be, I wish you would tell me all you can remember about children all over the world. I should like to know how they look; what kind of games they play at;

and please don't forget to tell me if they have any day or Sunday schools to go to. But as I know you can't tell me everything at once, I think I should like to hear about Jewish children to-day. But I am not sure that I know where the Jews live now. I do not think there can be room enough in Jerusalem for all the Jews to live there."

"You are quite right, Archie, in thinking that all the Jews do not live in Jerusalem, though the number of Jewish families who reside there is larger than it was twenty or even ten years ago. Still only a small part of the great Jewish nation is to be found in their own loved city, or even living in the countries where the Bible was written.

"You want to know where the Jews live? I think I must answer your question by telling you that there is hardly a country in the world, and very few cities or large towns, in which there are not some Jews; though in a few places laws have been passed by which they are forbidden to settle. I heard not long ago of a town in Russia in which no Jew is allowed to have a shop or house; and even when one is obliged to pass through

the town on any business he must do so barefoot."

"How strange, Elsie! But perhaps the people of that town are not Christians; for it was only last week, when we were talking about the Jews, you called them 'The scattered nation,' and said that all Christians should love the Jews, and pray that the time may soon come when they shall know that the Saviour, for whom many of them are still looking, has really come: the Lord Jesus, you know."

"The Jews in Russia have often had a very hard and sorrowful time of it; for though most of the people of that great country call themselves Christians, I am afraid many of them have never heard the good news of salvation through faith in the finished work of Christ.

"But as you want to hear about the children, I think I must not talk any more now about the grown-up people, but tell you a true story of a little Polish girl, in which I was much interested.

"More than fifty years ago, two of the Lord's servants travelled through the Holy Land in the hope of finding places where schools for Jewish children could be opened, in which they might hear from christian

teachers 'The sweet story of old,' returning to their home in Scotland through the different countries of Europe.

"Among other visits, one was made to a family of Polish Jews. Father, mother, two sons, and a little girl about ten years of age, were all much pleased at hearing that their visitors had really seen Jerusalem and asked a great many questions.

" 'Tell us,' said the father, 'all you have seen in Jerusalem.'

" 'Did you,' asked the mother, 'visit the Place of Wailing, and see our poor brethren who go to weep and pray there on the eve of the Sabbath?'

"The boys had learnt a little Hebrew, and were quite willing to answer questions on Jewish history. Then one of the strangers, who was fond of children, finding that the little girl could speak German, drew her to his side, and asked her if she would tell him her name?

" 'My name,' the child replied, 'is Esther.'

"Mr. B. then asked her if she had heard of a Jewish queen whose name like hers was Esther?

"Little Esther thought for a moment, then said, 'No, I have never heard about

Queen Esther. Is her story in the Bible?
My mother teaches me out of the Bible.'

" 'Will you tell me what you have learnt out of the Bible?'

" 'I know the stories of Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph. I think I like the story of Joseph best.'

" 'Have you learnt anything about God?'

" 'Oh yes, my mother often talks to me about God. I know that He is very great, and He is very good too. If I were ill, my father and mother, who love me so much, could not make me well; but if I prayed to God, he would help me.'

" 'Where is God, little one?'

" Esther pointed with her finger to the bright blue sky, and said, almost in a whisper, 'God is there.' Then pointing round the room, added, 'God is in every place.'

" 'Do you know that you are a sinner?'

" At the last question a dark frown gathered on the little girl's face, and she said, 'No, I am not a sinner; I am a daughter of Abraham. He was a good man, and the friend of God. How can I be a sinner if I am his child?'

"Though this was very sad, Mr. B. knew it was only what Esther, like many others of her nation, had been taught to believe. So he told her, in very simple words, that 'All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' (Rom. iii. 23.) He spoke too of the love of God in giving His Son to be a Saviour. (John iii. 16.)

"Esther listened very attentively, and was much pleased when at parting with her new friend, he gave her as a keepsake a shell he had found near the Sea of Galilee.

"But I see by your face, Archie, I have talked quite enough for one evening. Perhaps to-morrow I may tell you something about Jewish boys and their schools."

"Thank you, Elsie. I have thought already of several things I want to know about the Jews, so hope you will be able to answer quite a long list of questions."





CHAPTER II.

MORE ABOUT THE JEWS.

“**A**RE you ready for another talk about the Jews, Elsie?” Archie asked, soon after the tea-things had been removed, on the evening following the one on which Archie had expressed a wish to hear about Jewish children.

By way of answer Elsie shook up the sofa-pillows, arranged her brother's couch just in the way she knew he liked to have it, and gave a very loving kiss to the questioner.

“Yes, you are ready and willing too, I can read it in your face,” Archie continued with a smile; “only I hope you won't get tired before I get to the end of all the questions I am going to ask.”

“Ask me just one at a time, Archie dear, and I will answer you as well as I

can ; but please not to be very disappointed if I am not able to tell you quite all you wish to know."

"I should like to hear about the feast of the Passover. I think I understand why God told the Jews to keep it, because He wanted them always to remember the night when they left Egypt. Mr. C. told us all about it the last time he preached the gospel here. I forget some of the things he said, but I know he explained how the angel sent by God to destroy the first born of the Egyptians, passed over the houses of the Jews, not because they were good people, but because on the door-posts and over the door a bright red mark told how, in every house, a lamb had been slain and the blood sprinkled, so the people who had obeyed God were safe, quite safe, for God had said, 'When I see the blood I will pass over you.' (Ex. xii. 13.)

"But I should like to know if the Jews keep the passover in quite the same way in which it was kept so long ago."

"Many of the Jews, both in England and in other countries, still celebrate the passover, though not quite in the same way in which it was once observed. A



A JEWISH CHILD.

lamb is no longer the offering, and we—who, through grace, know the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God, of whose precious blood that of the lamb slain in Egypt was only a type or shadow, became on the cross, more than eighteen hundred years ago, the Sin-bearer, for in 1 Peter ii. 24, we read of Him as the One ‘Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree’—cannot help seeing the hand of God even in this.

“Fowls are offered instead of a lamb by many of the Jews, and in some places each Jew, as he gives his fowl to the person appointed by the Rabbi, or Jewish teacher, to kill the offering, places his hand for a few moments on the head of the offering, and repeats a form of Hebrew words, of which the meaning is, ‘This is my offering, my exchange, my substitute; this goes to death, and I unto a blessed life.’

“But as this is only one of the customs, I must tell you of others. I think you have seen and tasted what are called Passover cakes. Do you remember what they were like?”

“Oh yes, Elsie; I think I never saw cakes rolled out so very thin. But if all the bread eaten by the Jews was like them,

it is easy to understand why we always read in the Bible about breaking bread instead of cutting it as we do. I wonder if bread is often made in the same way now?"

"I think most, if not all, the bread used in the Bible lands, is still baked in the form of flat, thin cakes, or made into small rolls. Customs do not change quickly in those hot countries, and a very interesting account of how bread is often made is given by a missionary, who, not many years ago, travelled through Palestine and Syria. He says, 'The corn is ground by women in a handmill made of two large stones. Two women seat themselves on the ground, one on each side of the mill, a handful of corn is then put into a round hole in the centre of the upper stone, and ground by the stone being pushed backwards and forwards from one to the other.

" 'The flour is then made into a paste by being mixed with water, a woman then takes a small ball of this paste between her hands and flattens it into a cake, which is baked among the cinders or before the fire.'

"But we have got away from our subject of the Passover.

“Passover cakes are placed on the table, and cups filled with what is called Passover wine. The week before the Passover had been a busy time, as the house and even the cups, plates, and spoons had to be thoroughly cleansed.

“When the father returns from the synagogue, the children gather round him to receive his blessing. Laying his hand on the head of his sons, beginning with the firstborn, he says to each, ‘The Lord Jehovah bless thee, my son, and make thee like the sons of Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasseh,’ while to the girls the form of blessing used is, ‘The Lord bless thee, my daughter, and make thee like Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah.’

“The mistress of the house, or the eldest daughter, pours water over the hands of all present, the youngest child goes to the door, and, holding it open, invites the prophet Elijah to enter, and the Passover feast begins.

“The Jews use a great number of lights at their feasts. I once asked a young Jewess to tell me why forty-seven candles, one for each guest, should be lighted at a wedding-breakfast, as it was broad daylight, and the sun shining brightly? She

answered, ' We always say, The more light, the more joy ; I do not know of any other reason.' "

" Thank you, Elsie ; but I do not think I quite understand what you said about the prophet Elijah being invited to the feast. Please explain it."

" Very many of the Jews are still expecting the coming of their Messiah. They think that His coming will be like that of a prince or great general, who will lead them to their own long-promised land, and again make them a rich and powerful nation ; and they believe that just before His coming the prophet Elijah will appear and make all things ready for Him."

" Now I should like to hear about Jewish schools. I suppose all the boys, at least, learn Hebrew. I think they must often find the strange-looking black characters very difficult to learn and remember ? "

" I think in most Jewish schools some instruction in Hebrew is given to the boys who attend ; but in many places they are only taught to read, not to understand or think about the meaning of what is read. I am afraid they are not really much wiser."

" Are Jewish children ever allowed to attend christian schools, Elsie ? "

“ Not when their parents are strict Jews, Archie ; but I am very glad to be able to tell you that during the last thirty years, God in His grace has been leading many Jews to a saving knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and at the present time nearly a hundred children, many of them the sons and daughters of converts from Judaism, are assembled every day but Saturday in very cheerful school-rooms, where they not only receive a good education, but are taught from the New Testament the story of a Saviour’s love. Many of them can say of the Lord Jesus, ‘ He loved me, and gave himself for me ; ’ and very sweet it is to hear their glad young voices joining in hymns of praise to that Saviour to whom Jewish children sang, ‘ Hosanna ! blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.’ (Matt. xxi. 9.)

“ Perhaps some day I may have an opportunity of taking you to visit the schools of which I have told you : they are in a thickly peopled part of London called Palestine Place. There are also other schools in which Jewish children may hear of Jesus and His love.

“ Some time ago I was much interested in looking at a picture of a Jewish school

in Cairo, where about thirty boys, and almost as many girls, are taught to read the scriptures in Hebrew and Arabic.

"On entering the room in which school is kept, the boys who are rich enough to be the owners of shoes or sandals, always, as a mark of respect to the teacher, leave them outside the door. But for the same reason they do not take off their caps or turbans.

"Have we come to the end of your questions yet, Archie? as I see it is almost eight o'clock, and I have a letter to write."

"Not quite, Elsie. Please don't open your writing desk for another five minutes. There is just one thing more I want to ask you about.

"When you were talking to that old man from B., who came to mend our broken window last week, I heard him tell you he was a Jew, and that he never did any work on Saturday because it was his Sabbath. I thought it very strange, but I did not understand why he should say so?"

"If you turn to the opening chapters of Genesis, the very first book in the Bible, you will find the wonderful story of how, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.' (Gen. i. 1.)

“The work occupied six days, and as the story unfolds we read, ‘And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work which he created and made.’ (Gen. ii. 3.) But sin, the sin of Adam and Eve, soon broke the rest of God.

“Now we must pass over a very long time, more than two thousand years, when God had brought His people Israel out of the land of Egypt. The law, or ten commandments, was given to them by God through His servant Moses. The Hebrew word Sabbath means rest, and the seventh day was intended by God to be a time of holy and blessed rest for His people. The Jews were not allowed to do any kind of work on the Sabbath, not even to light a fire.

“Very soon that holy law was broken, and the Lord Jesus, after His death on the cross, lay in the grave all through the hours of the Jewish Sabbath, rising from the tomb early on the first day of the week.

“On that day Christians meet to remember, with thankful hearts, His death. It is not the Sabbath, though many dear children of God still call it so. The

Lord's Day always seems to remind us, by its very name, that

“‘Christ's grave is empty now,
Left for the throne above.’

And we remember too, His own promise, ‘I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.’ (John xiv. 3.)

“Have I helped you at all to understand, by what has been said, the difference between the Jewish Sabbath and the Lord's Day?”

“Yes, thank you, Elsie, and I do not think I shall forget. But now I must set you free, or you will be writing long after I am in bed.”





CHAPTER III.

CHILD-LIFE IN JAPAN.

“**D**O you know what I have been thinking about, Archie? There now, you shake your head and don’t even try to guess, so I shall have to tell you.

“Not more than thirty years ago, all, or almost all, that was known about Japan was, that it was a large country very thickly peopled. During the past few years many travellers have visited it, and some who love children have taken great notice of them and their amusements. We now know many interesting things about child-life in Japan.

“I think Japanese children have a great many toys. Very large fairs are often held in Japan, and I have no doubt that the boys and girls, who accompany their parents, think the toy-stalls the most in-

teresting part of all ; and even those who have been left at home know they will not be forgotten, but receive, on the return of father and mother, some pretty or useful present, and often try to make the waiting time pass more quickly by telling each other what plaything they would choose if allowed so to do.

“ But among so many toys, choice must be rather difficult. Kites of light, thin paper, and often made so cleverly as to look, when flying, almost like real birds, are to be had in plenty. The boys, when playing with kites, often sing,

‘ Blow wind, blow,
That my kite may go.’

But the girls, who are very fond of playing at shuttlecock, sing a song wishing it may be calm.

“ Kite-flying and shuttlecock-playing are winter pastimes, the summer in Japan is so hot that even the children are glad to keep as cool as possible. The boys often play a game something like draughts, called ‘go.’ It is played with small pieces of black and white wood or bone, but as three hundred and sixty of these are used in the game I think it must be rather a long one. Fish-

ing, too, takes up a great deal of time, and even small boys are often seen with hook and line, sitting by the side of a stream, and waiting patiently for hours at a time in the hope of catching a trout or young carp.

“There are many curious and beautiful insects in Japan, and the children think it great fun to catch, and I am sorry to add, to tease and often to kill them. ‘Cruel,’ you say, Archie? Yes, it is, but we must remember that the children of Japan have never been taught that it is wrong to give needless pain to any of God’s creatures, and great numbers of them have never even heard how the Lord Jesus said, ‘Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.’ (Matt. v. 7.)

“Birds, too, are often caught by boys, who go into the woods carrying long bamboo canes, the ends of which are covered with a kind of wax, so soft and sticky, that the moment the poor little bird touches it, it becomes a prisoner.

“Tiny waggons are often made of coloured paper, to which beetles are fastened in such a way that they cannot move without drawing the waggons after them.

“Young and old alike find pleasure in

listening to story tellers. Men and women go about the streets, sometimes beating on a small drum, and when a number of children have collected, the story teller begins his or her recital.

"The kind of stories Japanese boys and girls like best are those about ghosts, fairies, dwarfs, and giants.

"If they knew the sweet Bible stories English children love so well, I think they would soon like them better than the foolish and untrue tales in which they often seem so much interested.

"When the story is ended, the teller of it receives a few small coins from the children or their friends.

"The children of Japan are, as a rule, treated very kindly by their parents, who, though they do not spoil their little ones, often pet and indulge them a good deal. A Japanese father may often be seen taking his children for a walk, and, unlike the fathers of India and China, will play with and take notice of his little girls.

"Rice dough made into the form of rabbits, birds, and many other shapes, is much liked by the Japanese, and often bought by the children, as it is good to eat as well as pretty to look at.

"But you must not think of boy-life in Japan as one long holiday, without any lessons to learn or work to do. Perhaps you will think schoolboys in Japan have anything but an easy time of it when I tell you that all schools in Japan begin at seven o'clock in the morning and go on till four or five in the afternoon. If we were to peep into a Japanese school, I expect we should think the order anything but good, and wonder why the master allowed so much talking.

"But he would tell us his scholars were not talking, they were only learning their lessons, and it was only when the sound of so many voices grew faint and low he feared they were idle. Lessons in the schools of Japan, like those of China, are learnt by being read over and over again in a very loud voice. When a boy thinks he knows his lesson, he goes to the master, and, turning his back, begins to recite.

"School, too, is held seven days in the week, and there are no Christmas or Midsummer holidays."

"Oh, Elsie, I am glad I am not likely to be sent to school in Japan. But I should like to know something about the houses in which the Japanese live."

"As I have never seen a Japanese house, except in a picture, I am afraid I cannot describe one very well. But as I thought a model of a Japanese room one of the most interesting objects in an exhibition I once visited, I will try to tell you what it was like. Bamboo canes formed a kind of light framework for the walls, on which canvas was stretched, prettily ornamented with paintings of storks, flowers, fish, &c. The windows were made by leaving spaces in the canvas, covered by oiled silk or paper.

"There was very little furniture in the room. Straw mats, some of them bright in colour, covered the floor. A vase of flowers, placed upon a small stand or table made of bamboo, stood in one corner of the room. And I think I counted four or five birdcages. There were no chairs, but in one part of the room the floor was raised slightly, and on this were seated wax figures of a Japanese lady and her baby. The mother wore a long loose robe of Japanese silk with very wide sleeves, made like a dressing-gown; flowers were in the hair, and a string of coral beads round her neck.

"But I want to shew you some things I

think you have quite forgotten, as you did not include them in your list of our Japanese possessions."

And as Elsie spoke, she took two small objects from a cabinet, and placed them on the table near her brother.

"Oh, Elsie, I remember now those are the idols Uncle Howard brought from Japan. How strange it seems, and how sad, too, that people should really pray to and worship idols. I think even children might understand how useless and helpless they are. But what are you looking for in your Bible?"

"I was thinking of some words in the book of Jeremiah, in which we get a remarkable description of idols and their makers. Shall I read them to you?"

"Thus said the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, for the customs of the people are vain. One cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold, they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil,

neither is it in them to do good.' (Jer. x. 2-5.)

"There are a few bright spots amid the darkness of Japan, with its thousands of idol worshippers, for, through the blessing of the Lord on the labours of devoted christian missionaries and school teachers, some Japanese have been truly 'turned from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven.' (1 Thess. i. 9, 10.)

"In the mission schools, a few out of the many little ones of Japan hear, in their own language, of the Lord Jesus and His love to children; and though we may be sure that the servants of the Lord in Japan meet with many trials of faith and patience, we know their labour will not be in vain in the Lord. For He has said of His word, 'It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please; and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.' (Isa. lv. 11.)

"The Japanese are a very industrious people, many kinds of work, for which we employ a horse, such as drawing carriages, carrying goods to market, &c., are performed by the men and boys of Japan. A Japanese porter generally wears a hat

made of palm leaves, quite large enough for an umbrella, and in shape something like one. A long pole rests upon his shoulder, to the ends of which the packages he has to carry are fastened. But we must not talk any more now, and I see you are going to have a visitor. Your young friend, Willie Flowers. is coming up the garden path."





CHAPTER IV.

A SAVOYARD BOY.

“**L**OOK out of the window, Elsie. I am sure that boy who is coming along the road does not look like an English boy. And he is near enough now for me to see that what I thought at first was only a box, is really an organ, and he is leading a very small monkey by a string.

“Now, see, he has stopped just opposite our window, and he is playing a tune and the monkey is dancing.”

Elsie, obeying her brother's summons, looked through the window for a few moments, then said :

“I think our early visitors are a Savoyard boy and his marmot, or marmotte, as I believe those small monkeys are often called. Both look cold and hungry. Shall I tell the boy to come in, and give him and his marmot some breakfast ?”



A SAVOYARD BOY.

Archie clapped his hands with delight. "Yes, Elsie, I should like it so much, and you are a dear, kind sister for thinking of it. Do go and bring them in, then I can give the boy something out of my money-box."

Elsie opened the door and called the boy, who did not need any pressing to enter, and very glad and grateful he looked when Elsie gave him a large cup of hot coffee and a plate of bread and butter, and told him to begin eating. He tried to thank her in broken English, while the monkey seated itself on the shoulder of its young master, quite ready to enjoy its share of good things. Elsie took a plate of nuts from the sideboard and told Archie to offer one to the monkey. The little creature no sooner saw what was going on, than, to Archie's great amusement, it skipped down from its perch and made itself quite at home on his couch, where it remained for some time, cracking nuts and chattering away to its newly-found friend.

When the Savoyard boy had quite finished his meal, Elsie spoke to him in French; but soon found he could not speak or understand that language well. Still, by having a little patience, she was

able to learn that his name was Pierre ; and the little chalet, or cottage, he called home in far-off Savoy, was not far from the shores of a beautiful lake, almost enclosed by high mountains, on the tops of some of which, even in summer, the snow did not melt.

"Why did you leave your home?" Elsie asked.

"Lady, it was because my mother is very poor, my father is an old man, and is not able to do much work ; so I came to England with my organ and Jacko, that I might earn some money and so be able to help my parents."

"Would you like to return to your own country, or to remain in England?"

Tears were in the dark eyes of the Italian boy as he answered :

"You do not know, lady, how I love my home, or you would not ask me. I think there is no place on earth so beautiful as my country. If my father and mother, my brothers, and even my dear little sister Marie, were all dead, I would still go back to Savoy; for the lake and the mountains would still be there."

Elsie opened her French Testament at John iii. 16, and pointed out the words to

Pierre ; but the poor boy shook his head sadly, and said he could not read. But seeing Elsie's grieved look, added, " I pray, lady, I pray to God and to Jesus Christ who is upon the cross. I have seen Him many times in our church."

Archie seemed quite shocked at Pierre's ignorance ; but Elsie, who knew he only repeated what he had been taught, tried to explain as well as his imperfect knowledge of French would allow her, that the Lord Jesus, who once on the cross was the Bearer of sin, is now a living, risen Saviour ; no longer on the cross, but at the right hand of God, who will one day come into the clouds and take His dear people with Him to His Father's house. (John xiv. 3.)

Pierre listened attentively, and said it was very good. And though Elsie could not be quite sure how far he understood her words, she felt encouraged to pray that the teaching of the Holy Spirit might make the poor boy wise unto salvation.

A new shilling, one of Archie's birthday presents, was, at his request, taken out of his money-box, and placed in Pierre's hand, while Elsie added a parcel of food to her brother's gift.

The Savoyard boy parted from his new

friends with many thanks for the kindness he had received. They watched his departure from the window, till a turn in the road hid him from sight. Then Archie asked his sister if she would mind getting his atlas, he said he should like to find the stranger's home on the map.

The atlas was quickly brought, and, with a little help from Elsie, the province of Savoy was found between France and Italy, at the north-west corner of the map of Italy, and only separated from France by the river Rhône.

"I wonder Pierre did not understand French better, as Savoy is so near France," Archie said, with a questioning look at his sister.

Elsie smiled as she answered, "I was not at all surprised, Archie, as the French spoken by the people of Savoy is not pure French, but mixed with so many German and Italian words, that it is often called patois, or country French, though the language is spoken correctly by doctors and schoolmasters, and all who have received a good education. Pierre comes from one of the villages, or hamlets, that lie far away among the mountains."

"Oh, tell me about Pierre's home, please

do, Elsie. I think he said he lived at the foot of a mountain so high that even in summer the snow is still there. I think it must be very cold in the winter."

"Yes, Archie, winter in northern Italy is very cold ; and when I tell you that snow begins to fall in October, and often remains on the ground in such quantities that the roads over the mountains are impassable till May or June, you will understand how short the summer season is. There are many lakes among the mountains. Sometimes a lake or mountain stream becomes frozen so hard that it is changed to a solid mass of ice. These ice rivers are called glaciers, and the sight is said to be so wonderful, that, year after year, during the summer months, numbers of visitors, many of whom are from England and America, spend a short time among the grand and beautiful scenery of the Swiss Alps.

"During the time the visitors remain, many of the men and boys earn a little money by acting as guides to persons who wish to cross or climb the mountains. The paths in some places are so narrow, that there is only room for one person at a time. Snow, too, often falls even

in summer, and the path would soon be covered up and lost altogether were it not for the constant care and watchfulness of the guides."

"Was it not among those mountains and valleys that the Vaudois Christians, whose story you told me not long ago, used to live? I mean the poor people who were willing to suffer so much rather than give up their Bibles."

"The Vaudois were near neighbours to the Savoyards, but, as the people of Savoy were almost all Roman Catholics, we must cross the mountains to Piedmont. Our interest in the Alpine valleys, where for so many years, amid much darkness, the Lord gave strength and courage to many of His lowly ones to confess His name and keep His word, will not soon pass away."

"Are many of the Vaudois living there now, Elsie?"

"I believe that while most of the dwellers in these valleys are free from the errors of popery, there is much need for loving, faithful gospel work among them. One of the Lord's servants, who visited Piedmont only a short time ago, was speaking to an old man, whom he found at work in a vineyard, about his

personal need of salvation. To all his appeals the aged vinedresser answered, 'Oh, sir, do not be anxious about me; more than one of my relations was among the martyrs. Why do you fear I shall not be right at last?'

"Some verses from the French Bible his visitor carried were read and simply explained to him, and his face wore a grave, thoughtful look as he listened, for perhaps the first time in his life, to the glad tidings that the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. vi. 23.)





CHAPTER V.

A HINDOO GIRL.

A SCRAP album, bright with scripture cards and many-coloured pictures, was one of Archie's favourite books. But for some minutes his fingers had not turned a single page, and Elsie noticed, with deep interest, the thoughtful way in which his eyes were fixed upon a picture representing a group of dark-faced Hindoo children.

"What a strange picture," he said, handing the book to his sister; "the artist has drawn all the children sitting down, not on chairs, or even stools, but on some kind of mat. I expect they were playing at a game, though their faces are so grave. The girls have something thrown over their heads.

"I think you told me that in India the women and girls always wears veils, but

those in my picture seem only pieces of white cotton cloth. The reading underneath is, Hindoo children. But I don't quite understand why people who live in India should be called Hindoos. I wish you would tell me all you have heard or read about Indian children. I think our subject would be an interesting one. Don't you, Elsie?"

"'All I can tell you about the children of India!' you have asked for a long story, Archie, as the people of India are made up of several races who speak different languages, and differ greatly in their manners and customs. Perhaps I had better begin our talk about the Hindoos by telling you that they take their name from the part of India in which they live, the province of Hindostan. Mountains of great height, the tops of which are always covered with snow, enclose it on three of its sides. But I am not going to tell you much about the country, or you will think our talk about India bears too great a likeness to a geography lesson, and I know you are anxious to hear about the children.

"The Hindoos are divided into five great classes called castes. The members

of one caste will not even give a piece of bread or a drink of water to those of another. A true story will, I think, help you to understand how heavily the fetters of caste press not only on the grown up people, but even on the children of India.

"The bell of the mission school-house had just rung out its warning that the children's play hour was over, and lessons must be resumed; the teacher was crossing the courtyard, or, as it is called in India, compound, which separated the girls' school from the other buildings of the mission station, when a small hand grasped her dress, and a dark-skinned little girl said in a voice broken with sobs, 'Oh, teacher, dear teacher, my new water jar is broken; where shall I drink now? for it is far, very far, to the river.'

"The teacher spoke a few kind words to the weeping child, then asked, 'Who broke your jar, Moanna?'

" 'I broke it, teacher; I was very sorry, but I could not help it. You know my father is a shopkeeper, and Zara, who is an outcast and the daughter of a poor coolie who carries heavy loads, touched it with her hands, so it became unclean. Zara

said she was sorry ; but that made no difference : if I had not broken the jar, one day I might have drunk from it, and you know, teacher, that by so doing I should have lost my caste and become an outcast, and then no one would ever speak to me, and no one could love me. Oh, teacher, it would be very dreadful.' And the child, still sobbing as if her heart would break, clung to her teacher.

" When Moanna grew a little calmer, the teacher said gently, ' Tell me, Did not the same God make the rich and poor, the high and the low ?'

" ' Yes, teacher ; it was the Great God whom the Hindoos call Budda. But I have been told that the outcasts were made of clay taken from his feet, and so may not eat or drink with those who are of higher caste.'

" The teacher sighed ; she knew that only the light of the gospel could drive away the darkness from the minds of her little scholars. She knew, too, that if she forbade them to observe their laws of caste, their parents would be angry and take them away from her school. So she only asked, ' Are you the only girl of high caste in the school, Moanna ?'

“ ‘No, teacher ; I am not of high caste like Siva, whose father is a Brahmin and a priest. Siva sits alone, even in school, upon her own mat ; not one of us, only you, teacher, may touch or even look at her books or slate. My father gets his living by trade, so did my grandfather and my great-grandfather ; my three brothers will be traders like my father when they are old enough.’

“ ‘We have talked long enough now, Moanna. Let us go into the schoolhouse ; I have good words to say to all the scholars.’

“ Very attentive and quiet were all the girls, as in simple earnest words the teacher told them how the Lord Jesus was always kind to everybody ; how He even touched that He might heal the lepers.

“ Then she told them of His death upon the cross ; telling them, too, that though all the water in their great river, the Ganges, would not wash away one sin, ‘the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanseth from all sin.’ (1 John i. 7.)

“ From that day the teacher was often cheered by seeing that both the high caste Siva, and the trader’s daughter, Moanna, were in many ways more gentle and kind

to the outcast girls. And she thanked God and took courage, for she knew that the good seed of His word sown in their young hearts was taking root, and would in His own good time bring forth fruit.

"The Hindoos have no Bibles, but their sacred books, which are kept and read by the priests only, are called Vedas."

"I wonder what the Vedas are like? I expect they teach the poor Hindoos to worship many idols instead of the one true God who made all things."

"I believe the Vedas contain many untrue and foolish stories, but it is a joy and comfort to know that even amid the darkness of India there are many bright gleams of light. In the year 1829 a great part of India came under British rule, and a law was passed forbidding children to be thrown into the river Ganges, as offerings to the false gods worshipped by the Hindoos.

"At first the people, led by their priests, were very angry, and said the idols would send no rain and so the harvest would be quite spoiled; but the blessing of the Lord was with those who thus cared for the little children, and after a time the people grew more contented. Our Bible was

translated into the language of Hindostan, and in most of the large towns and a few of the villages, Mission Schools have been opened, where Hindoo children are taught to read, write, and work.

“Hindoo girls of high caste are very seldom allowed by their parents to attend these schools; for a long time it seemed almost impossible to reach them with the glad tidings of salvation. But during the last few years the God of all grace has opened many doors, and quite a number of the Zenanas, as the private rooms of the women and girls are called, are regularly visited by christian women, who having received their own education in the schools of England or America are qualified to act as teachers of others.

“Very loving are the welcomes many of these kind teachers receive, not only from the young girls, but from their mothers, who will often listen very attentively to the scripture reading, and ask thoughtful questions about God’s way of peace.

“But if we talk any longer now about the Hindoos, our time will be gone, and I shall not have the opportunity of telling you about Indian fire worshippers or

Parsees, as these strange people are often called.

“The first Parsees are said to have lived in Persia, but fled from that country during a time of war followed by a famine. Many took refuge in India, where they were kindly received by a native prince, who told them they were at liberty to settle in his dominions.

“The Parsees do not worship idols; they say they believe that all things were created by a great God. But as they have no Bibles we cannot wonder that they have no true knowledge of God. The sun, they know, gives light and warmth, so they think the sun must be a god, and pray to it. I believe they also worship the moon and stars.

“When a Parsee gets ill, his friends, and often even his wife and children, leave him to die alone and uncared for. After his death they return, dress his body in gaily coloured silks, and carry it some distance into the woods to a place where a high tower, open on all its sides to the sun and air, is built. His body is placed on planks of wood, in or near this tower. After some months the friends return, and gathering up the bones, from which the

flesh has been eaten by vultures and other birds of prey, place them with great care in rooms at the foot of the tower.

“Many of the Parsees are very rich, and even little girls often wear jewels and gold ornaments of great value. Shall not we, who through the grace of God know of treasures better and more lasting, pray for these poor children, that many of them may not only hear but receive and love the truth as it is in Jesus?”

“Yes, Elsie; I am sure I ought, for you do not know how glad and thankful I am to be an English instead of an Indian boy.”





CHAPTER VI.

WITH AMERICAN INDIANS.

“**E**LSIE, Elsie, where are you?”
The voice was that of our young friend Archie, and in a few moments his sister appeared, work-basket in hand.

“Here I am, Archie, quite at your disposal till tea time.”

“I am very glad, Elsie, for I have been thinking of something I want to ask you about. Mark Lamb once lent me a book I found very interesting. I cannot quite remember its title, but it was an account of an Indian boy. I think he was the son of a chief or great warrior, and though he was not more than twelve or thirteen years of age, he was very clever at fishing, hunting, and knew how to ride on horseback without either a saddle or bridle. What part of India do you think he lived in?”

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"The Indian boy, whose story so interested you, was a native of North America. But I am not surprised by your question, as I remember, when a little girl, getting quite into a puzzle when trying to learn the difference between the people of India proper and the Red, or as they are often called, the North American Indians."

"Please tell me all you can about them. But why are they called Red Indians?"

"From the colour of their skins; they are not black like negroes, or pale like those of the people who live in cold countries, but almost the colour of copper. The men are tall, and many of them very fine-looking, though I think we should admire them more without the streaks of red, black, and yellow paint of which they are so fond. The number of Red Indians is not nearly so large as it once was. Soon after the discovery of America a great many Spaniards and traders in fur, skins, etc., from other countries went to live there, and little by little the poor Indians were either killed or driven into the thick woods with which great part of their country is covered. But I must tell you something about the way in which an Indian boy spends his



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time. When he was quite a baby, not old enough to walk, or even stand alone, his mother always took him with her when she went to work in the fields. She did not carry him in her arms, or even on her shoulder, but put him into such a strange-looking kind of cradle, not at all like the soft, dainty-looking bassinets in which you have seen babies laid to sleep. The cradle of the Indian baby, or papoose, as it is called, is only a piece of flat wood with a smaller piece at one end for the baby's feet to rest upon. Small hoops of wood pass round the infant, and so keep it from falling. One of these hoops is just large enough to go round the head of the mother, and in this way day after day she will carry her child. When her work in the field is done, she will put baby, cradle and all, down in the wigwam or hut, in which she lives, in such a way that the little one looks as if it were standing up. Then she will unfasten one of the wooden hoops, and baby is able to get at its playthings, a string of small coins or pretty shells that hang down from the hoop that keeps its head in place. The Indian baby does not cry much, but is generally very contented and happy.

“ Sometimes an Indian woman may be seen carrying about a cradle with no baby in it, only a quantity of black feathers. If you understood her language and could ask her why she acted so strangely, she would tell you that her dear little red-skinned baby had died before he was old enough to leave his cradle. She will carry it about for a long time, often for a whole year, and will talk to the cradle just as if the baby were in it ; for the medicine man has told her that the spirit or soul of her child is very near, and when it gets tired it can rest upon the soft feathers.

“ Perhaps the poor Indian mother has never heard of the Lord Jesus Christ and His love to little children. Some years ago, christian teachers from England and America went to live among the Red Indians ; schools were opened, and many young people were taught in them.

“ One very devoted servant of the Lord, whose name was John Elliott, set about a very hard but important work. He wanted to give the Red Indians the precious word of God in their own language. But at first he could not see how this was to be done, for the poor people had no books, and not even the chief, who was much looked up to

and thought quite a rich man, had ever written or received a letter.

“But Mr. Elliott felt quite sure that the God whom he served was able to give him all the wisdom and patience he needed. ‘Prayer and praise through Christ Jesus can do all things,’ were words often on his lips, and evening after evening, and often far into the night, the missionary might have been seen sitting at his desk writing down every word he could remember having heard the Indians use during the day. It must sometimes have seemed very slow work, but in time he was able to write out a dictionary and grammar, and with their help he set to work to translate first the Gospels and afterwards the whole Bible. It must have taken a long time, and when at last all was ready, as he knew the Indians would need more Bibles than he could write out for them, even if he lived to be a very old man, he was obliged to send his precious sheets to England in order to have them printed.”

“Oh, Elsie, I am glad the Red Indians have the Bible in their own language. But please tell me more about the small boy. How long is he carried about in this strange cradle?”

"Only till he is a few months old. Then his mother takes him out of it and lets him play and roll about on the grass or on the floor of the wigwam."

"What is a wigwam like, Elsie?"

"A wigwam is a large hut or tent made by driving poles into the ground and then stretching tanned hides or skins of the buffalo in such a way as to form walls. Sometimes the wigwam is very large, so that quite a number of Indians are able to live in it. Now and then a solitary wigwam is reared by a hunter near some spot where he knows there are sure to be plenty of the kind of game he wants to kill. But generally several wigwams are built in a circle, and a clear space something like a playground is left in the centre. The men are very fond of playing at ball, and often enjoy a game, the boys being only allowed to look on.

"When an Indian boy is old enough he will have, instead of shells or beads, a small bow and some arrows, in the use of which he soon becomes quite expert. He will also learn to swim and to catch fish.

"Indians spend much of their time on horseback, and as his father knows he will not become a good horseman if he does

not begin young, he will often take his son to ride with him. Mothers in England would, I think, be quite alarmed if they could see the way in which an Indian boy keeps his seat on the back of a horse going at full speed, the rider often having to lay hold of the mane or ears of the animal to save himself from falling.

"Sometimes the boy will listen with great interest to the tales of the old men. He likes to hear them talk about the battles they have fought, and count up the number of enemies they have killed. How he wishes he was only old enough to take his place among the warriors or fighting-men of his tribe!"

"Will he have to wait very long?"

"Till he is fifteen years of age; but the time comes at last, and he goes to the grown-up men and tells them how much he wishes to take his place among them. But the warriors are in no hurry to receive him as one of themselves.

"They shake their heads, and say with grave looks, 'We are brave men, we are strong and able to fight; but you are only a boy.'

"But as the youth is very anxious to become a warrior, he will tell them that

he can ride, fish, and hunt well. Perhaps he knows how to throw the lasso.

"A lasso is a long strap made of very soft leather, with a loop or noose at one end. The Red Indians are very clever in the use of the lasso. A hunter riding at full speed will often throw his lasso round the neck of a wild horse, in such a way as to entangle without killing it; he is then able to lead it away, and when he has tamed it, it becomes of very great use to him.

"At last the old men seem to be satisfied, and tell the boy he may go and ask the Great Spirit to shew him where he will find his medicine bag.

"Although the Red Indians have a Bible in their own language, I am sorry to have to tell you that many of them are not Christians. Some of them live so far from any school or christian teacher, that they know very little indeed about the Lord Jesus and the sweet story of His love.

"Then the Indian boy goes away from all his friends to some lonely cave among the woods. He means to stay there a long time—three or perhaps even four days—but he does not take anything to

eat with him, for during all that time he must not taste any food, or even have a drink of water all the time he is in the cave. He knows he will get very hungry and thirsty, but has made up his mind to bear hunger and thirst bravely. The poor boy thinks his long fast will please the Great Spirit. As the time passes slowly away, the youth does not feel so very hungry as he did on the first day: he is getting too weak and faint to care much about food. Sometimes he sleeps for a little time, and when at last he dreams of a horse, a buffalo, or some other animal, then he is very glad, for he thinks the Great Spirit has spoken to him, and, sick and faint as he must be, he leaves the cave and returns to his wigwam. His friends are very glad to see him, and his mother has plenty of food ready for him, so he makes a hearty meal, and when he has rested for a little while, he goes to hunt for the kind of animal he saw in his dream. When he has found and killed it, he will make part of its skin into a small bag, of which he will take very great care, and always bear on his person. He thinks it will keep away evil spirits and

prevent any one from killing or wounding him. A Red Indian will not sell his medicine bag, as it is called. Only one thing can, I believe, make him willing to part with it—the love of Christ. When an Indian becomes a Christian, he will often give his medicine bag to the mission teacher, saying, ‘I do not want it any longer, for the Lord Jesus, in whom I trust, is able to take care of me.’

“But as I see by the clock our time is quite gone, some other things I think you would like to hear about, such as life in a wigwam among the Red Indians, must stand over till our next talk.”





CHAPTER VII.

THE MEDICINE MAN.

ARCHIE, who had been much interested in his sister's account of an Indian boy, did not forget to remind her of her promise to tell him more about wigwams and their inhabitants.

As usual he was ready with a question. "If an Indian boy gets sick, would his father have to go a very long way to fetch the doctor."

"Yes, Archie, the journey might be a very long one. Perhaps he would have to cross dark forests or ford deep streams before he reached the hut or wigwam of the medicine man."

"Is the medicine man an Indian doctor, Elsie?"

"The only doctor the Red Indians ever think of consulting. All his medicines are

made from the juices of plants or the roots of trees, and, as he is sometimes really a clever man, and knows a great deal about the way in which different flowers and herbs can be used in making nice cooling drinks for sick people, his patients sometimes get better.

"The Red Indians pay great respect to the medicine man, and when he tells them it is the will of the Great Spirit that the brother or son should die, the poor people, who know nothing of the sweet promises and blessed hope of the gospel, listen to his words and try to be contented.

"But I think you would like to hear something about the dress of the medicine man. His headdress is a very curious one, as it is made of feathers, some of them being very bright in colour. He also wears a necklace of shell or pieces of bone. His face is painted black, red, and yellow. He only wears his robes on feast days. His robe is made of deer or buffalo skin, worked almost all over with figures, and ornamented with porcupines' quills. Sometimes a deep fringe hangs down from the front of the robe.

"We read in the Bible that 'The dark places of the earth are full of the habita-

tions of cruelty.' And that fringe, of which the Red Indian is often very proud, tells its own sad tale of bloodshed ; for it is made of human hair, and was taken from victims who have been killed and scalped by the warrior who displays it. His stockings are not unlike the leggings boys often wear : as they are made of skin and cloth sewn on to his legs. Instead of shoes, a piece of soft leather, called a mocassin, is wrapped round each foot.

" When the medicine man enters the wigwam of a sick person, we should be quite surprised if we could look in and see how strangely he acts. Dancing, shouting, and howling at the top of his voice, we should feel like saying, ' Please do not make such a noise, it is enough to give any one the headache.'

" But the Indians who stand or sit upon the floor of the tent, and seem much pleased with all that is being done, would tell us, ' The noise was intended to drive away an evil spirit who, by tormenting the sick person, had caused his illness.'

" Among those who some years ago listened to the faithful preaching of a missionary to the Red Indians, was a man who was known by many titles as a great

medicine man. When he heard of a great and good God by whom all things were created, he listened with great attention and said, 'It is very wonderful.' But when he visited the missionary again, he heard, '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.) His heart was won, and he said with deep feeling, 'The Son of God has found the poor Red man, and now Red man will serve Him—follow Him.'

"After an absence of a few days he again visited the mission station and begged to be allowed to confess his faith in Christ by receiving baptism as a Christian.

"Placing quite a large parcel in the hands of his teacher, he told him it contained all the charms, &c., he had been in the habit of using, and explained he wished them to be burnt, as he had made up his mind never again to use them, as he had done during more than twenty years to deceive his poor countrymen, among whom he longed to make known the way of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

"It must have been an affecting sight

when, in the presence of a number of Indians, the converted medicine man with his own hands threw his packet of charms, &c., into the flames."

"Oh, Elsie, your account of the burning of charms reminds me of something that happened at one of the places where Paul preached. I read about it not very long ago in the Acts of the Apostles, but I do not remember exactly where it was."

"You are thinking, Archie, of a scene of deep interest that took place at or near Ephesus, a city of Asia, more than eighteen hundred years since. An account of it is given in Acts xix. 18, 19. Shall I read them to you?"

"'And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.'

"Do you remember when we were staying at Dover last year, how much we admired some very tall flowering grass we noticed in the Castle Park?"

"Yes, Elsie, and I think you told me the seed came from South America, and it

was called Pampas grass. I wonder it grows so well in England."

"It requires great care, I believe, and in winter the roots are covered up to protect them from the frost. But travellers who have crossed the prairies tell us that at times large tracts of land are covered with pampas grass ; its silvery tops waving in the breeze have a very singular appearance, and, when a little way off, it is quite easy to mistake the prairie for the sea.

"A fire in the prairie is very terrible. During the dry season, every leaf and blade of grass seems to be almost burnt up. Sometimes a man riding on horseback will let fall a spark when lighting his pipe, or a party of Indians will kindle a fire to cook the fish or game they have caught in hunting, and when they have finished their meal, lie down to sleep, or go away without taking any great care to see that no redhot ashes are left to smoulder on the ground.

"If the wind is blowing toward the prairie, a few sparks are often enough to set many miles on fire. The flames rush on, destroying everything before them, while numbers of wild animals rush madly about for a time and then perish in the fire.

“Many years ago, a party of Red Indians had a very narrow escape from one of these prairie fires. They were moving with their tents and other property to a fresh hunting-ground, when they heard a rustling sound, and, looking behind them, saw, by the red glow in the sky, that the prairie was on fire.

“Swiftly and surely the flames were gaining upon them, and their only hope of escape, they knew, lay in being able to keep in advance of the great sheet of fire that came sweeping on. Throwing down everything that would hinder them in running, they made as much haste as possible. But swift runners as the Red men were, they found the path so overgrown with brushwood, climbing plants, &c., that they could not get on very quickly. The heat became greater every moment, and they were almost blinded by clouds of smoke.

“At last the chief man of the party, weary and footsore, threw himself upon the heated ground. In a few moments he springs to his feet, crying to his friends, ‘Come, for there is a place of rest on the other side.’ His ear had caught the sound of running water at no great distance, and following where it led, they gained the

banks of a river, and, after swimming across, soon stood in perfect safety, where the flames could not follow, '*on the other side.*'

"I once heard this story told by a preacher of the gospel, and he begged those who listened to his words to remember 'that every unsaved soul, every one who has not accepted salvation through the precious blood of Christ, was in a place of terrible danger, in a world on which the judgment of God will one day be poured out. But those who see their danger and trust only in the Lord Jesus Christ, are put in a new place before God, accepted in the Beloved. (Eph. i. 6.) They are safe—quite safe—and resting in simple faith on what God has said in His word about the finished work of His dear Son, are able to sing with thankful hearts,

" 'Death and judgment are behind us,
Grace and glory are before.' "





CHAPTER VIII.

TOYS AND TOY MAKERS.

FLSIE Moss had been spending the day in London, not from choice, for she seldom left her brother.

But a letter from a friend in the country had given her an errand to a large toy warehouse in the city, and though at first Archie had felt a little disappointed at not being able to accompany his sister, he was comforted by her promise of telling him all she had seen.

“The ground floor of the warehouse is a shop, with plate-glass windows and folding doors. Glass cases were ranged round the walls. The windows and cases were filled with curious and expensive toys. Rocking horses almost as large as Shetland ponies, with manes and tails of real hair took up one side. Mechanical toys were there too in great number. Windmills that turned their sails by means of clockwork. Fish

that would follow a magnet round a basin of water. Lively dolls of French manufacture, with eyes that would open and shut, and some could even walk on being *wound up*. Models of steam engines and railway cars were among the things I saw.

"As I knew from the letter of my friend just what to ask for, my purchases were quickly made. But when I asked to be shewn some dolls' tea-sets, I was taken up some more stairs into another large room, where shelves and show cases displayed dolls' tea and dinner services, varying in size and at prices ranging from a few pence to many shillings.

"If we want to see the little toy-makers busy at their work, we must take a peep at the old German town of Nuremberg."

"O Elsie, I think that must be the place where those curious old watches called Nuremberg eggs were made. Am I right?"

"Quite right, Archie. If our time would permit, we might learn some interesting facts about watches by lingering near the town and paying a visit to one of its many watch factories. The very old ones you were speaking of just now were often enclosed in an egg-shell.



TOY-MAKERS.

"But Nuremberg is noted for other things besides its watches. Perhaps few toys have found greater favour with children than those called Noah's arks. A wooden box shaped something like a ship, and varying in size according to its price, and filled with carved figures of animals, birds, &c., while eight small wooden dolls are supposed to represent Noah and his family.

"I knew a little girl who received one of these toys as a birthday present. At first she was much pleased with it. But after playing with it for a time she sat quite still, and seemed by her quiet, thoughtful manner to be occupied with something of greater interest even than her play.

"Then she looked up into her mother's face and said, 'Mamma, I don't think my Noah's ark is made quite right.'

"'Why not, Amy?' her mother asked in some surprise.

"'Look, mamma,' the child replied, 'my ark has windows painted all round it, but Noah had only *one* window, and that was in the roof of the ark (Gen. vi. 16) because God wanted Him to look *up*, not *out*.'

"Amy was right. It was not on the

dark waste of waters around, telling as they did of judgment, but on the bright blue sky above, that the eyes of Noah were to rest; and surely his heart would remember the grace of the One who had not only provided that wondrous place of safety, but shut him and his family in. (See Gen. vii. 16.)

"But we must return to the toy arks. Nuremberg is said to have been the town where more than a hundred years ago they were first made, and the story connected with them is so interesting that I must try to tell it to you, though I am not sure that I can remember all its details.

"A little girl who lived in one of the quaint gable-roofed old houses of Nuremberg, and whom, as I forget her real name, we will call Greta, had been ill for a very long time. Unable to join in the games of stronger children, much of her time was spent alone, and all the neighbours spoke of Greta as a child grave and thoughtful beyond her years.

"Her brother Hans, who was older than herself, had left school, and was apprenticed to a neighbouring wood carver. They were orphans, and though Hans loved his little sister dearly, and was seldom

better pleased than when he could take a new toy, or even a few flowers home to brighten the long days for Greta ; yet all his small earnings were needed to buy food, and though he often wished he could afford to buy a large doll or box of toys for her, he had never been able to do so.

“ Hans and Greta loved their Bible, and often as they sat together in the deepening twilight, the little girl would ask her brother to tell her the story of Martin Luther, by whom that precious book had been translated into the language of the German people. And very attentively she listened to the account of how the great reformer, whose name thousands, not only in Germany, but all over the world, still hold in loving remembrance, had when a youth been so poor as to be obliged to earn money by singing in the streets to support himself while studying at one of the public schools for which Germany is so famous.

“ One day, as Hans watched her at her play, a bright thought entered his mind. He would ask his master to give him some of the odds and ends of wood that were always lying in plenty about the shop, and from them he would carve birds, animals, &c., enough to fill a wooden box shaped

something like the ark, about which he had so often read in the Bible.

“Patiently and well for many weeks, Hans gave up almost the whole of his spare time to toy-carving. When the ark was finished, it was shewn to an old friend of his father, who was much pleased with it, and told Hans that if he wished to sell it, he would take it to one of the large yearly fairs, so common in Germany, where he thought it would fetch a good price.

‘Hans thanked him warmly, but said as he had made the ark on purpose for his sister he would rather give it to her. He would, he said, begin another, for which he should be thankful if a customer could be found.

“By the year following, Hans and Greta, who now took a great interest in her brother’s work, and helped him by painting the animals, &c., had two or three arks ready. These found a quick sale, and Hans received so many orders, that in a short time he and Greta were able to rent a shop in the market place, where quite a prosperous trade in arks and other toys was carried on. Let us take a peep into the home of a German toy-maker. It is quite a busy scene. Father, mother, and

even children of five and six years old are all busy at work. Perhaps an order for dolls from the warehouse has just been received, the wooden bodies being cut out, and shaped by the father, are carried by the youngest child to the mother, who gives some part of the work of finishing the dolls to each of her little band of helpers. One paints the faces, another the hair, a third the hands and feet, while a fourth packs, and ties up the finished work. Each child seems happy and glad to be of some use to its parents, while the mother moves about, taking great care that all the work is well and neatly done, or stopping for a moment to bend over her baby as it sleeps in its wooden cradle.

"A German baby is rather a strange-looking object. Its head is always covered with a small round cap made of some dark stuff. As soon as it is able to stand most of its waking hours are spent in a kind of frame something like the go-carts once used in England, and which are still to be seen in old pictures. The infant is so fixed that it cannot fall, and soon learns to amuse itself, and is very happy and contented.

“ Before we say good-bye to the children of Germany, I may tell you that as every German boy knows that most likely he will one day be called upon to leave his work and serve in the army, a great deal of time is spent in teaching him the drills of a soldier.

“ The present Emperor of Germany, William II., has five little sons, who are all being educated for the army. An old soldier, who served under their great grandfather, William I., spends several hours each day with the young princes in teaching them how to attack and defend a small fort built in the grounds of their pleasant summer palace, and even the youngest, though hardly able to run alone, always gives his father a military salute when the Emperor pays a visit to the royal nurseries.”





CHAPTER IX.

CHINESE CHILDREN.

ARCHIE, who had become greatly interested in the accounts given by his sister of child-life in many lands, began the conversation by saying :

“ I think I should like to hear about the children of China this evening, Elsie. I remember a little, though I am afraid it is only a little, about Chinese schoolboys. I read some account of a boys' school in China in the book Uncle Frank sent me last year. I wish you would tell me something about the girls. Do they have to go to school too ? ”

Elsie was silent for a few moments, such a far-away look seemed to be in her eyes that Archie could not be quite sure that she had heard his question. But just as he was going to repeat it, she roused herself and said :

"Ah, Archie, you have asked me to tell you a very sad story. The lot of girls and women in that far-off land is often a dark and sorrowful one. Perhaps the best way to explain what I mean will be to suppose that we have travelled all the way to China, and are going to pay a visit to a Chinese baby in its home.

"But first I should like you to tell me if you remember how many people are said to be living in China?"

"No, Elsie, I cannot say that I know the exact number ; but I think it must be a great many, for I have read that China is fifteen times as large as England and thickly peopled in almost every part."

"Yes, Archie, you are right in calling it 'a great many.' The population of that vast empire is said to be about four hundred millions. But we find it very difficult to understand how many those words or figures really mean.

"Now we must pay our visit.

"The people of China are very poor. The father, being a coolie, or labourer of the lowest class, day after day, for there is no Sunday rest in China, he has to work hard, either in the rice fields or in carrying heavy loads ; all he receives as wages

being about fourpence a day. The house he lives in is built by sticking a few bamboo poles into the soft, damp earth, the walls and roof being of mud and rushes. When the house is finished it looks something like a large basket turned upside down. There are no windows, but an opening is left for a door. This space admits light and air during the day, at night it is always covered with a mat. There is not much furniture inside, only a few mats, one or two stools, a few earthen jars and basins, and a large iron pot used for cooking rice.

“Thousands of the poorer class of Chinamen and their families live in just such dwellings as I have been trying to describe to you.

“One day the father returned from his work to find a little daughter, only a few hours old, lying on a mat by the side of her mother. He was not at all pleased, and said, ‘We did not want a girl, we are very poor ; if it had been a son he would have helped to support us when we are too old to work. But we have no rice to spare for a girl. Give the baby to me, and I will drown her.’

“Hundreds of female infants are

destroyed in China every year, often by their fathers.

"But the mother pleaded, 'No, do not drown her. Look at her; do not you see she is pretty? Her eyes are small and quite black, and her ears are like sweet cakes. Some rich man will buy her, when she is old enough, for a wife for one of his sons. She shall have small feet, and we will make a lady of her.'

"And so the unwelcome little stranger was allowed to live. Her feet were not bandaged till after she was old enough to run about and play with other children. Then a message was sent to her parents to ask if they would like to sell her. They were much pleased, and the price was agreed upon. About sixteen shillings in English money was to be paid to her father. But she must have small feet, and so the work of torture began. Her feet were first rubbed with some kind of oil, then all the toes were pressed under the foot and so tightly bandaged as to cause great pain. The poor little girl cried very much, and begged that the bandage might be taken off, but in vain. Her mother told her she would one day be a lady, and never have to go to work in the fields, and she must

learn to make the tiny white satin shoes she would be expected to wear on her wedding day. So the slippers were made, worked with gold and silver thread, when finished they are sent to the shoemaker to have small, but very high, heels made of wood fastened on.

"When the time comes for the girl to go to her new home she is placed under the care of her future mother-in-law, who often treats her very unkindly.

"The house is sometimes quite a large one, containing several rooms, the inner always being those of the women. But it needs love to make a happy home, and many women, and even young girls, in China find their lives so sorrowful and unhappy that they try to escape from them by taking large doses of a poison called opium.

"Little more than a year ago, two lady missionaries in China were asked to go and see a girl, only fourteen years of age, who had, they were told, taken a large quantity of opium. When they reached the house where she lived, they found it quite filled with people, laughing and making a good deal of noise. The poor girl, though very ill, seemed much excited, and said she

would not take the medicine brought for her.

"They felt so sorry for the young girl, for they knew she had never even heard of the Lord Jesus and His love. But it was a joy to their hearts to remember, even in that strange scene, that their Saviour had 'all power.'

"Kneeling in the midst of that wondering crowd of Chinese women, they spoke to Him in prayer, asking very simply that He would make the girl more quiet and willing to take the medicine, and even while they prayed the answer of peace was given.

"The patient became as gentle and submissive as she had been noisy and excited before, and when the medicine was again offered to her she took it without any objection.

"In a little while she threw up the poison she had taken, and, though very weak and exhausted, seemed much better; so leaving her to rest, the missionaries turned from her to the women who still filled the room, and finding that many of them had not even heard the Saviour's name, they read from a Chinese translation of the Gospels the account of how the

Lord Jesus awoke the ruler's young daughter from the sleep of death (Matt. ix. 18-27); and so were able to say a little about His power and willingness to save all who come unto God by Him.

"But I think I have talked almost long enough for one evening, so we will now leave the subject till to-morrow."





CHAPTER X.

ARAB AND EGYPTIAN BOYS.

ARCHIE MOSS closed his pocket Bible, and lay back on his couch with a very thoughtful look in his large brown eyes.

"When Elsie comes," he said, half-aloud, "I will ask her to tell me all she can remember about Egyptian boys. I wonder if they learn the same lessons, or play at the same kind of games as they used to do when Moses lived among them. But here she is, work-basket in hand, so I know she is ready for a talk."

Elsie was soon seated near her brother, and answered his questions about life and manners in Egypt by saying :

"It is a very long time, Archie, more than three thousand years, since the infant Moses, hidden in a tiny ark of bulrushes, was laid by the banks of the river Nile. Many changes have taken place in the

land of Egypt. It is not nearly so thickly peopled now as then ; and some places known to have been once the site of proud cities—where marble palaces and stately domes made the scene a grand and imposing one—are at the present time only heaps of ruins, with here and there a few mud huts, among which Arab children, whose only clothing is a small piece of coarse cloth, are at play ; yet I think we shall find much that will interest us in a talk about Arab and Egyptian boys.

“Shall we begin by supposing ourselves in one of the principal streets of Cairo. What a busy scene it is. Most of the houses are high, many of them being used as shops. But there are no plate glass windows, the front being left quite open. But as the street is too narrow to admit of much light, when our eyes have got used to the darkness, we notice the shopkeeper, who is sitting cross-legged on a mat inside his shop or store. He wears a large red or blue turban, and in a very loud voice invites us to walk in and buy some of his goods.

“ But the noise outside is so great that we cannot quite understand what he is saying, so we return to the street and look

around us. But standing still is not to be thought of, as there is no paved side-walk for foot passengers, it needs constant care and attention to avoid being run over. Here comes a string of mules on their way to market, laden with dates or melons. Donkeys, gay with tassels and ornamented with small bells, and donkey boys each wearing a scarlet cap (called a fez) and a kind of loose shirt, made of blue and white striped cotton, are to be seen in numbers. Donkey boys as a class are rather numerous in Cairo, but I shall have more to tell you about them by-and-by.

“ But the noise seems to grow louder and louder, till it becomes almost deafening. What can it all be about? A great man or officer of State is taking the air in his palanquin, carried by bearers, who shout at the highest pitch of their voices ordering everybody to get out of the way, while several servants, armed with sticks, run before, and so keep a few feet in advance clear for their master.

“ Now we look with interest at a party of Copts, who are carrying goat skins filled with water (the leather bottles of which we read so often in the Bible). The Copts we are told are the true Egyptians,

and the descendants of the people among whom Moses was brought up.

“Very few women are to be seen, and the few who are on their way to market are of the poorest class, and have their faces covered with veils of blue or white cotton.

“But I must not forget my promise to tell you about the donkey boys. What a merry, merry set they are. Singing, shouting, racing their donkeys through the crowded streets. Like most Arab boys they are very poor, and often dirty. But their dark eyes are full of fun, and most of them are good-tempered.

“A christian lady, who for some years taught quite a number of girls in a mission school at Cairo, took great interest in these poor uncared-for boys, and often wished something could be done to teach them the way of salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. But when she asked a few of them if they would like to see some pictures, and listen to Bible stories, telling them at the same time she would be glad to see them at her house on Sunday afternoons, the boys laughed and said, ‘it was very good,’ but they must go out with their donkeys, and so could not attend.

"Most of the boys added that they were Moslems (or followers of the false prophet Mahomet), and did not wish to hear the books or learn the ways of Christians. One boy, Abdul Welby (servant of the prophet), told his companions that he had once attended a Moslem School, but having been severely beaten by the master had run away.

"All this was anything but encouraging. But after looking to the Lord in prayer, Miss W. made up her mind to try, try again. Perhaps she thought if the older boys were unwilling to attend she might begin with a class of younger ones.

"Before closing her school that day she asked all the girls who had young brothers to hold up one hand. Quite a number of little brown hands were held up. Miss W. then told her scholars of her desire to have a Sunday class for the boys, and asked them to help her by inviting their brothers. The girls were greatly pleased, and promised to invite their brothers and do all in their power to make them become regular scholars.

"Did they succeed? Oh, yes; for on the afternoon of the following Lord's Day, Miss W. was encouraged by seeing several

of the girls, each leading one or, in some cases, two small boys. An amusing scene took place at the door of the school-room, the new comers stopped, peeped timidly in, and then tried to run away. But a little coaxing on the part of their sisters induced them to enter.

“At first, they were very shy ; but after a little patience, Miss W. got them to look at some coloured pictures, and soon they were listening with great attention to the story of Moses. An easy text having been repeated several times over, they were told they might go to their homes. The little fellows were much pleased, and asked if they might come again.

“And from this small beginning, two classes, one for donkey-boys another for their younger brothers, was formed, and in this simple way many Arab and Egyptian boys heard the sweet story of a Saviour's love, heard His loving call, ‘Come unto me and I will give you rest.’ (Matt. xi. 28.) And we are sure, quite sure, that any who simply trusted His finished work, found rest and peace.



CHAPER XI.

CHILDREN OF AFRICA.

“**T**HIS evening, as you want to hear about negro children, Archie, I think our talk may as well begin by my telling you something about the country in which so many of them live.

“ I remember looking, when I was quite a little girl, at a map of Africa in which the whole or almost the whole of that great continent was painted black, with only a few light spots marking places quite near the sea.

“ I was much interested, and wished to have the map explained. I was then told it was ‘a missionary map of Africa,’ and by far the greater part of it had been left black to shew that the people living there

some of the dangers to which African children are exposed.

"I think it is about ten years since a missionary, writing from Africa to his young friends in Scotland, gave an account of a crocodile hunt at which he had been present.

"Going one day to pay a visit to an African chief who lived at some distance from his mission station, he found the village in a state of excitement: crowds of people were running along the banks of the river. Very soon he learnt what all the confusion was about.

"A boy, a bright, merry little fellow, not more than nine or ten years old, while amusing himself by wading in the shallow pools near the river's brink, had been seized and dragged into deep water by a very large crocodile.

"Mr. R. went at once to the place, and found a party of men armed with clubs and long spears doing all in their power to make the crocodile give up his prey.

"At last the enormous creature was wounded and let the boy go. Two men quickly jumped into the stream, and laid the body gently on the bank. The flesh on one shoulder, though bearing marks of

crocodile teeth, was not torn, and at first the kind missionary, who was somewhat of a doctor as well, hoped the poor boy was not really dead, but had only fainted from fright and being too long in the water, and so did all in his power to restore him by rubbing and other ways.

"After half an hour spent thus Mr. R. found all his efforts in vain, the boy was dead. His mother seemed almost broken-hearted, and had to be held back by several people from throwing herself into the water in pursuit of the crocodile. Towards evening the monster was caught and killed. It was very large, being quite fourteen feet in length, and so heavy that ten or twelve men were needed to drag it, by means of ropes, through the village to the tent of the chief.

"But crocodiles are not the only foes African children have to fear. Numbers of them are every year stolen from their homes and sold as slaves. Sometimes a party of slave dealers will carry off children who have wandered too far from the hut of their parents; at others they will surround a village, set it on fire, make prisoners of the negroes as they try to escape from their burning homes, and,

after loading them with chains, drive them to the coast, where they are sold to Portuguese or Arab masters.

“ Much has been done of late years by England and America to put a stop to this cruel trade, but it is still carried on, though not so openly as it once was.

“ Great numbers of boys and men are employed in the diamond mines recently opened up in Africa. Some very large and valuable diamonds have been found in these mines. One called the De Beers Diamond, from the name of the place where it was picked up, is said to be the largest diamond in the world.

“ Another, the great Pam Diamond, though not quite so large, is brighter and more beautiful, and said to be worth more than twenty thousand pounds.

“ Does it not surprise you to hear of any one being willing to pay so much money for a single stone? Diamond mining is very dangerous work. Sometimes a miner will lose his footing, and fall from a great height down the steep slippery sides of the mine ; such a fall being nearly always fatal, or a quantity of earth will fall in and bury a whole party of workers under it.

“ Can we think of the dangers these poor

Africans are willing to brave in the hope of getting a little pay, and not remember with thankful hearts the love of the Lord Jesus, who came from heaven to seek and to save the lost?

“ And if in any little measure we know at what a cost we have been redeemed we shall long for the time when the dark places of the earth shall rejoice in the light of the Lord.

“ But I must not forget to tell you about an African boy I really knew. He was the son of a Zulu chief, who, having himself been turned from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for His Son from heaven (1 Thess. i. 9, 10), was quite willing that his son Joseph should be educated in a christian school. The little fellow got on so well with his lessons, and showed such quickness and willingness to learn, that when he was about twelve years of age it was decided, with the consent of his parents, to send him for a few years to England, where he would have an opportunity of learning many things he could not be taught in his native land.

“ Joseph had a good memory and could repeat quite a number of psalms and chapters from the Bible. But it was only a few

weeks before the time fixed for his leaving Africa that the light of the gospel shone into the boy's soul. He felt and owned himself to be a sinner. His Sunday school teacher, who had long prayed for his conversion, told him he must simply trust himself to the Lord Jesus, and take salvation as a free gift.

"Before long the black boy was able to sing with a happy heart :

" 'I do believe, I can believe,
That Jesus died for me.'

"When parting with his friends he said, 'England is very far from Africa, but Joseph knows the One who will never leave him, and if he never returns to Africa, do not be sorry, for if his body dies in England his soul will be safe with his Saviour.'

"What are you saying, Archie? Will I tell you a story about lions? It must be a short one. For a long journey lies before us from the sunny land of Africa, with its thick forests and dark-skinned people, far over the ice-fields, to visit the boys and girls who live in the cold countries near the North Pole.

"You know, I think, that Asia and Africa

are the only countries where the lion is really to be seen 'at home.' The African lion is larger and stronger than his Asiatic brother, though both are distantly related to our household pet, the cat. I see you are smiling at the idea of pussy having such grand relations.

"The African youth, of whose escape from a lion I am going to tell you, lived in a village not far from the banks of a river, from which all the water needed for drinking and cooking purposes had to be fetched daily. I do not know if he had been at work in the field or how it was, but on entering his hut he found there was no water, so taking up his jar he set out at once for the river. It was getting late, almost sunset, and as there is no pleasant twilight time in countries very near the equator, he knew it would soon be quite dark.

"He had filled his jar, and was about to turn his steps homewards, when his ear caught a low rustling sound among the tall grass and rushes on the river's bank. Could it be the wind? No, the evening was so calm and still that not even a leaf moved.

"He heard the sound again, and looking

through the gathering darkness saw on the opposite bank the glittering eyes of a lion just ready to spring upon him. In his excitement and fear the poor boy fell down, and the lion, missing his footing, rolled into the water. The proud monarch of the forest is not by any means good at swimming, and it took him some time to scramble out again. This gave the boy an opportunity (whose name I believe was Hugo), of running some distance. But soon he heard the lion in full pursuit, gaining upon him every moment, and knew it was no use to think of seeking safety in flight. What was to be done? Seeing a tall tree at no great distance, Hugo made an effort to reach it. He did so, and had just climbed into its topmost branches, when the lion with a loud roar reached its foot.

“But Hugo knew that his great danger was over. The lion cannot climb a tree, and though he would most likely remain near all night, thus keeping Hugo a guarded prisoner in its branches, when the sun rose he would return to his lair.

“I don’t think Hugo will ever forget the night he passed in the tree. But this story may remind us of a verse in the

first epistle of Peter : ' Be sober, be vigilant : because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.' (1 Peter v. 8.)

" The lion is mentioned 120 times in the Old and New Testaments. But we must not stop to look at any of the references now, or we shall not have time to talk about ' Greenland's icy mountains.' "





CHAPTER XII.

SNOWLAND.

“**T**HE countries near the north pole are said to be in what is called the Arctic or frigid zone. They are very cold, and their winter lasts nearly all the year round. Except for a few weeks in the summer, the ground is covered with snow, and the sea so blocked with floating ice that ships cannot sail over it, and are sometimes crushed between the icebergs.

“ Before we get into the frozen zone let us stop for a little while at an island. Its present name is Iceland, but more than a thousand years ago the pirates, or sea robbers, who first landed on its shores, called it Snowland.

“ It is said that one of their ships was caught in a great storm, and driven before the gale till at last it ran ashore on a rocky

island, where everything seemed covered with snow. When the weather became calm, the pirates were able to return to their own country, which was, I am almost sure, Norway, where a cruel and powerful king at that time reigned. The pirates talked a great deal about the strange land they had visited, and before long some of the nobles thought it would be a good thing if they could get away from Norway, and find new homes for themselves and their families on the island of which they had so often heard.

“But Snowland, as the pirates had named it, was a long way from Norway. The mariner’s compass, the great use of which is to guide the sailor across the sea, had not been invented, and no one seemed to know how to steer a vessel to its shores.

“At last one of their own countrymen, whose name was Flovo, said he would go and look for Snowland. He took three ravens with him, and after sailing north for a few days, he let one of the ravens fly. It turned in the direction the ship had come, and was soon out of sight. Then Flovo knew that he was nearer to the coast of Norway than to the island he was seeking. So he sailed on for two or three

days, and let the second bird loose. It flew about overhead for a few moments and settled down in the rigging.

"Still on and on the ship went, till at last Flovo thought it must be time to set the last raven free. It flew right away to land, and we may be sure that those on board ship were very glad to follow its flight.

"It was in the year A.D. 874 that Iceland was first inhabited, and a busy time the first settlers must have had, cutting down trees, building huts, and doing many other things. They found part of the island covered with rocks, and a quantity of substance called lava. I once saw a piece of lava, so can tell you what it is like. It is quite black like coal, only much harder. But where does the lava come from?

"From burning mountains called volcanoes. It looked something like melted pitch when it was thrown out from a deep hole, called a crater, in the top of the mountain, long, long ago. There must have been quite a number of volcanoes in Iceland. But now there is only one, mount Hecla, and it has not thrown out stones and melted lava for some years.

The fire has not gone out, and is always at work, though often out of sight. Sometimes it meets with water, and the water gets hot, so very hot that at last it boils, and when it finds an opening rushes out, and rises into the air like a fountain. These boiling springs are called geysers. In some of the streams and brooks in Iceland the water is always so hot that people who live near are able to do their washing and cooking in the open air.

“I have no doubt that the children quite enjoy eating a dinner cooked or eggs boiled out of doors, and I hope they do not forget to ask the blessing of the Lord on their food. Though the people who first went to live in Iceland were heathen, and offered human beings, sometimes even little children, upon the altars of the idols they served, yet the gospel was carried to them by christian teachers who settled there, and after sowing-time came harvest, and the missionaries had the joy of seeing many Icelanders turn from idols to the true God and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ; and since then the inhabitants have had Bibles and day and Sunday schools.

“But we must not talk any more about

Iceland, as I want us to travel still further north, to 'Greenland's icy mountains.' All along the coast we shall find a strange race of people, 'the Eskimo.' Some writers say the name means 'eaters of raw flesh.' And though we cannot really cross the ice-fields and see them for ourselves, we may learn many things about them from the writings of those who have sailed over Polar seas.

"Captain John Ross, who was more than once obliged to spend a winter in the Arctic regions, tells us that a large party of Eskimo, armed with knives and spears, came very near the ship.

"He felt it would be best to treat them with kindness and confidence. So he and some of his officers went on shore to meet them; when they were near enough to speak they laid down their guns and advanced unarmed.

"The Eskimo, seeing what they had done, were much pleased, and threw away their knives, shouting, 'Aja Tuma,' a cry of welcome. They soon became very friendly, bringing seals, furs, and many other things which they were much pleased to sell or exchange for beads, knives, pieces of hoop iron, &c.

“During their long winters, many of the Eskimo live in huts, built of snow. A little light finds its way into the hut through a window of ice, but as we must remember that night in Greenland lasts for many weeks, an oil lamp with a wick of dried moss is kept always burning. These lamps not only give light, but serve as cooking stoves.

“Those who have been inside these huts tell us they are very warm and comfortable, though we should think a bank of snow, covered by seal-skin, rather a strange sleeping place, I have no doubt. Men, women, and even little children wear coats or dresses made of fur. When an Eskimo wishes to cross the ice he harnesses reindeer or dogs to his sledge. The sledge has runners of bone and is covered with skins.

“The dogs are not unlike wolves, but are easily tamed, and soon learn to obey the voice or hand of their master.

“Much time is spent by the Eskimo in the capture of seals, and even boys of ten or twelve years of age often take part in a seal hunt. As seals are said to be very quick of hearing, the hunter must approach their feeding ground very quietly. Some-

times he will hide himself behind a wall of snow and wait for hours before throwing his harpoon.

"The native boats or canoes are very curious, being only large enough to hold one person, and so snugly covered with skins, that not a drop of water can find its way in.

"And now we must say good-bye to the 'Children of Many Lands,' but as we lay down the book and run off to our lessons or our play, I should like to ask one question of each dear young reader, 'Dost *thou* believe on the Son of God?' (John ix. 35), or in other words, Do you know the Lord Jesus as your very own Saviour?"

THE END.



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