OLD ANDY'S MONEY.

BY LETITIA M'CLINTOCK, AUTHOR OF 'ARCHIE MASON.'

CHAP. I.—THE EMIGRANT'S RETURN.

'IVE me the bundle, John. I'm leaving my boxes with you till I get sending for them.'

'Just wait a wee minute, sir, if you please; the car'll be ready in no time.'

'No, thank you, I'd sooner walk than drive; besides, I'm going only as far as Knockbarra.'

'The gentleman says he'll travel it, Mary,' said John, turning with an air of distress to the chambermaid of the 'Eagle,' who came out at that moment upon the ps at the street door, where the departing guest and fellow-servant were standing.

'o 'travel,' in Ulster parlance, always means to go on , and the stranger smiled when John used the word, hough it brought back some pleasant, old memory. s only four miles, so I'll "travel" it, replied he. 'I w every foot of the way—ay, every foot of the way. t will be better than taking out a horse and car on Sabbath day, and keeping you from your place of ship, John.'

With a friendly nod he took up his little bundle a
set out upon the walk, while the servants stood look
after him until he turned the corner of the street.

'What is he, anyway?' asked Mary.

'Andrew Moore' is the name on his boxes—such
boxes, Mary. Do you think he could be——they
there's plenty of dangerous people landing every
from America.'

'No, no,' returned the girl, 'he's a Christianable m
I'm certain. I saw that, when he wouldna tak' the
for fear of keeping you fra' your place of worship.
body hindered me to go to mine,' continued s
thoughtfully; 'but, for all that, it's nigh six wee
since I was inside the church door. I think I'll
to-day.'

The object of their curiosity had left the town behi
him by this time, and was slowly climbing the hilly r
that led to Knockbarra. He was a short man, wit
slight figure, somewhat bent; he looked about si
years of age, and his intelligent face was marked w
many lines, both of thought and care.

His dress had something a little foreign about it, a
so had his accent, but his keen, grey eyes, high ch
bones, and rugged features, sufficiently betrayed
Ulster origin. He sat down by the roadside to rest,
reaching the top of the hill, and gazed at the lov
country, clothed in its May dress of bright, unsull
green. The landscape was beautiful enough to h
charmed a stranger's eyes, but Andy Moore was no
stranger. His eyes, now so dim and wistful, had
looked on it when they were bright with hope and
the fire of youth—on that day, forty years ago, when
poor emigrant lad had turned on the brow of the hill,
take a farewell look at Knockbarra, nestling among
trees by the river side. The horizon was bounded
the blue mountains of Donegal and Tyrone; then ca
swelling hills and fertile valleys, richer looking a
better farmed than of old; the Foyle winding thro

its own rich valley; and yonder lay the village where his father's old cabin stood.

Many a snug farm-house, surrounded by stackyard and offices, standing in the midst of pastures fringed with primroses and violets, testified to the country's prosperity. This was the view that Moore gazed at from the hill: he had not the least idea that it was beautiful—he only knew that he loved it well!

'It was here,' thought he, 'that the convoy left me—all but my brother David and Mary Fleming. I was mounting the hill of life then—now, I am going down to lay my bones beside my people in yon nook near the church wall, after I find out if David 's living yet, or if there's e'er a child or friend belonging to him in the world. But it canna be that he 's living yet! It canna be, or he'd have answered the letters I wrote.'

The old man got up with a sigh and pursued his journey. He had looked forward to that moment for years, as the one pleasure life had yet in store for him; and now that it was come, the pleasure was not so great as he had anticipated. It was a long time since he had received any tidings from Knockbarra, and a fear crept over him that his old friends and neighbours might be dead and gone, and there might be no welcome for him after all.

As he drew near the village the church bell began to ring out the summons which so many generations had heard. Its clang rose above the cawing of the rooks in Mr Morrison's old beech trees, and the poor emigrant could almost have fancied he was a child again, walking by his mother's side to church; he could almost smell the sprig of southernwood folded with her clean handkerchief inside her Bible, and feel the soft texture of her green and scarlet shawl.

He remembered how the clergyman's voice used to soothe him to sleep as he sat upon her knee during the sermon, in their pew close to the open window, and recalled the very cackling of the schoolmaster's hen in the

churchyard, and the humming of bees among the sycamores—the familiar, old world sounds, that had mingled with his dreams.

But the stopping of the bell brought him back to the present, so he followed the congregation into church. He had some difficulty in finding his old seat, for there were now three windows, instead of one, at the side where it used to be, and the high pews, with their narrow doors, were replaced by tasteful modern ones. There was a pretty little chancel where the east window had been; but a conservative at heart was our emigrant, and these changes caused him vexation and disappointment, rather than pleasure.

It was very sweet, however, to hear the old psalms, and to praise God in that dear spot for the mercy vouchsafed him all his life long—'for creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, but, above all, for the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace and the hope of glory.'

And while he thanked God for that unchanging Friend, he forgot to notice the curious, scrutinising glances which were directed towards him by the rustic congregation.

When he did look round him, he found himself alone, so he left the building and made his way to the corner of the churchyard where the Moore's used to bury.

There were the grassy mounds under which he had laid his father, mother, and sister, almost overgrown with giant primroses, pure, sulphur-tinted, and crisp of leaf, all sprung from the little root he had planted between the two graves, and at their feet was another mound, marked by a rude headstone bearing the name of Mary Fleming.

'Mary, dear! Mary, dear!' cried the old man, 'you an' me 'd ha' been very happy together, but it wasna the will of God. His will be done!'

Mary lay very near the old, flat tombstone, with the crack across it, whereon the boys had been wont to play marbles when the schoolmaster's back was turned; and beside it the young men and women of Moore's day

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had waited on Sundays for the bell to stop, spelling out and wondering at its quaint epitaph.

A former rector of the parish had laid the stone upon the grave of his wife, who was said to have composed the inscription on her deathbed. It was not so legible as when Moore saw it last:

CHARLOTTE M'PHERSON,

DIED 20TH MAY 1760, AGED 53 YEARS.

'Farewell! vain world, I've had enough of thee,
And now am careless what thou sayest of me;
Thy smiles I court not, nor thy frowns I fear;
My days are past, my head lies quiet here;
What faults you've seen in me, beware and shun,
For, look at home, enough there's to be done.'

'Curious lines, sir, are they not?' asked Mr Townsend, the clergyman, who had crossed the churchyard unperceived, and stood at Moore's elbow, twirling the vestry-room key in his hand.

'That's what I thought when I read them last, sir,' replied the old man; but I canna say they appear so strange to me now. I was some years younger than you then, and I thought that I could never have enough of this happy, beautiful earth, and that the lady there must surely have had some extraordinary trouble to make her weary of life. Now, I've had no very big trouble in my time, and I'm back to Knockbarra a prosperous man, yet I have had enough of the world, and I'll be quite willing to lie down there when the Lord's good time comes. It's just the differ between the young man and the old. I went away a boy, your reverence, and I come back an old man—a lonely old man, for I'm afeard there's not many that mind me here now.'

'Is it possible?' cried Mr Townsend, eagerly, 'have you but just arrived?'

'I landed last night, sir, and made my way here in time for church; but when I looked about me, there was na one to hold out a hand to me. It's like enough

the most part of my friends and neighbours are there,' and Moore pointed to the churchyard hillocks with one hand, while he dashed away a tear with the other.

'Do not think of them as there,' said Mr Townsend, who was becoming interested in his companion. 'Your old friends are praising God still; they are gone up higher, and form part of a larger congregation, in a nobler temple. But some may be on earth still. Let me help you to find them.'

'Thank you, sir. Maybe you can tell me if there's any one of the name of Moore hereabouts?'

'Moore? Yes, we have a bright little fellow called David Moore in the Sunday school—a clever, promising child, who says his Catechism well, and understands it, too—somewhat of an intellectual feat for eight years old.'

'He might be a grandson of David's—of my brother David's, I mean. Did you come across any of Mary's friends?' and Moore laid his hand upon the grey head-stone.

'Mary Fleming,' read Mr Townsend, stooping so as to decipher the rough letters; 'no, I never heard the name. Who was Mary Fleming?'

'She was to have been my wife if she had lived. She died some months after I left home, before I gathered money to send for her. She was a good girl, far better learned than me, and when we walked by the river on summer evenings, she'd be coming over the things she read in her book. Sometimes she vexed me, warning me not to set my heart on riches, when I'd be telling her of the fine house and the comforts I'd have for her in America. Then she used to make answer, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you." She marked those words in her book, and bid them send it me when she died! Poor Mary! Well, sir, it pleased God that I should learn the lesson Mary wished to teach me. I sought the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and worldly goods were added unto me, more than

I needed——but I am very unmannerly for detaining you so long.'

'Far from it, Mr Moore. I was so interested in your story that I forgot the time. We must have many a talk, should you stay here. Shall I show you where David Moore is to be found? He lives with the Conollys; old James Conolly is his grandfather.'

'James Conolly! Bless my heart, sir, can that be? James and I were great comrades, and Jenny used to be in our house often. Conolly! My heart warms to the very name!'

'Why, Mr Moore, that is good news. I said I should find some friends for you. Come to the Conollys with me; I am on my way home, and generally go by the bank.'

Mr Townsend proposed this route, partly that Moore might avoid the inquisitive looks of the people while so agitated as he then was, and partly because the river bank was a very favourite haunt of his, where he often strolled when employed in composing verses, or sketching skeleton sermons. The bank was covered with trees, some of them very old; there was a thick canopy of leaves overhead, and under foot a wilderness of wild violets, primroses, and speedwell, with great tufts of fern hanging like umbrellas over the mossy stones, and between the stems of beech and sycamore you caught glimpses of the shining river, and the fields bordered with weeping willows on its further side.

Very few villages have such a pleasure-ground within reach, and the Knockbarra people had always valued their privilege. On Sunday evenings the young people were to be met, wandering there in twos and threes. Just then they were all at dinner, and Mr Townsend and Moore had the bank almost to themselves—not quite to themselves, though, for some shouts of childish laughter ascended from the river to where they were standing.

They had got as far as the giant beech, which was covered with letters rudely cut in the smooth bark, and

emigrant vessels, and other specimens of rustic art. Some of the initials were very fresh; so fresh, indeed, that Mr Townsend suspected some naughty youth had been at work on them during church time that morning; others were much older, and others, again, so ancient, as to be no longer legible.

'Look there, sir,' exclaimed Andy Moore, pointing with his stick to certain letters, 'there's David's name. I mind weel it was the evening before I sailed that we carved them. He cut my letters on the tree, and then he reached me his knife, and I put his letters underneath, and we made Mary's, side by side wi' them. There, sir, canna you see them?'

But the letters seemed only like shapeless excrescences in the bark to Mr Townsend. He, having no memories connected with the tree, grew tired at last of watching the old man walk round and round it, with his dim, wistful eyes, that looked far, far into the past, fastened on the gnarled stem; so, on again hearing the children's voices, he went to an opening in the branches where he could look down upon them.

A group of little ones were standing at the water's edge. They were dressed in their poor Sunday's best, and had received strict charges to keep the well-cherished garments quite clean.

Boys and girls were gazing at the inviting, wet mud, wherein small frogs and minnows were disporting, and all were longing to have on their everyday rags, and play at fishing and hunting the prey from under the stones.

Little Sarah Conner was perched upon a great flat stone that rocked backwards and forwards like a see-saw, when another child, out of pure mischief, gave it a push with his foot, and the black mud was jerked up over Sarah's face and neck and clean pinafore. The poor child gave a loud, angry roar, while the others stood round her laughing at her hapless plight, all but David Moore.

'Dinna be crying, Sarah,' said he, lifting her off the

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stone and placing her on the grass, and he took the corner of his linen overall to wipe her face.

'Oh, my Sunday frock! Mammy said she'd beat me if I dirtied my Sunday frock,' sobbed poor little Sarah, between cries that were louder than ever.

'Whisht, whisht, Sarah! I'll kill Jamie Gallagher. See if I dinna! Your frock's no a hair the worse.'

By this time Davy had taken off the pinafore, and was washing it in the burn. The other children made off on hearing his valiant threat. The pinafore was not very much improved by his amateur washing, but Sarah thought it was, and, greatly comforted, went home with it hanging over one chubby arm, while with the other she rubbed her tear-stained face.

Davy next set to work to wash the front of his own overall, and, that operation accomplished, stood balancing himself cautiously upon the dangerous stone, gazing at the water with apparently meditative eyes.

He had stood thus perfectly quiet for several minutes, when Mr Townsend came up to him.

'What are you thinking about, Davy?' asked he.

The child was well accustomed to answer Mr Townsend's questions, so he replied, without hesitation, raising his wonderful dark eyes, and blushing a little—

'I was thinking I'd come here wi' my rod after school to-morrow, sir.'

'That's a straightforward boy! Do you remember the lesson you learned this morning? What kind of work may we do upon Sunday, Davy?'

'Works of necessity and works of charity, sir,' replied he, very glibly.

'Was washing little Sarah's pinafore a work of necessity, or one of charity, do you think?'

This question seemed to puzzle David. He let his eyes fall till their heavy, dark fringes lay upon his round cheeks, but made no answer.

'Well, Davy,' said Mr Townsend, laughing, 'I think it was a work of charity. Mr Moore' (to the old man.

who was watching the child eagerly), 'this is David Moore.'

'I thought as much, sir. I'd ha' known him!' cried Andy. He resembles our David very much! There are his black eyes, and his ain bonnie smile!' and Moore caught the boy in his arms, and kissed him passionately.

Davy, who was much astonished, and rather frightened at this sudden embrace, struggled to free himself.

'Speak to me, Davy; I'm your ain old uncle come from America. Oh! your reverence, he's just such another as our David was fifty year ago—ay, fifty year ago!'

Moore raised himself to look at Mr Townsend as he spoke, and the child seized the opportunity to slip away, and when they turned to see where he had disappeared to, he was already far up the lane that led from the bank into the main street.

'He is a fine, intelligent fellow,' observed Mr Townsend, 'but somewhat shy, as are most children of his age; he will make great friends with you by and by, I am sure.'

'Ay, sir. It wad be folly of me to expect him to take to me all at once.'

Expressing a cordial wish that they might often meet, the clergyman took leave of his new acquaintance, and pursued his way towards the glebe, while Andy Moore, with slower steps, ascended the slight rising ground that led up to James Conolly's door.

(*To be continued.*)

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THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

AN ADDRESS.

BY THE REV. THOMAS COCHRANE, EDINBURGH.

PERHAPS not a few of my young readers can call to mind many happy hours spent by the sea-shore. What banks of sand that were built only to be levelled by the returning tide! On many a tiny sea, of their own forming, hemmed in by mounds of their own raising, they have floated wondrous vessels of their own building, and have sailed far hence, away to lands of their own simple, happy imaginations! Happy were those youthful days—happy as long! Glad and gay, as the bright sunbeams that seemed to gambol with the waves of ocean, and shed as if more than earthly glory and beauty o'er the scene.

My dear young friends, such is a picture of life. Time is like the great ocean, but viewless, unseen! Its tide

we can neither stem nor stay. It flows by night, by day, continually. On this ocean each of us has launched his little barque—o'er it we are voyaging to the eternal shore.

I. THE LAUNCH.

In yon dockyard many men for many weeks have been busily engaged. Like a beehive, that place of industry is all stir and bustle with daily, ceaseless toil. There you have men employed with all the varied tools of ship-building. You hear the sound of saw and plane, axe and adze, while square and rule are fitting and adjusting, and the hammer drives hard and firm the nail in a sure place. Daily the work advances, gradually it grows until the noble ship is completed, and awaits the day and hour of being launched upon the tide.

The hour, the auspicious hour has come! Slowly, wedge after wedge is driven home, gently and cautiously the vessel is raised on her cradle, gradually and surely the waters swell up to the shore, until, the last wedge driven, and the last tie loosened, away 'to walk the waters like a thing of life,' glides the proud and stately ship, amid the cheers and hurrahs of gathered multitudes around.

What precise interest may attach to the birth of every little voyager on earth it is not easy to tell. One thing is clear, every birth is the launch of *a young immortal* on the ocean of time! Weal or woe shall be the issue of such a voyage—and weal or woe for ever! Shall there not, then, be many eyes turned to such a birth—angel-eyes above, mortal-eyes below?

II. THE VOYAGE.

Some voyages are long, some short; some are dangerous, some safe; some are made beneath a bright, blue sky, without a cloud; some amid the pealing of heaven's thunders, and the playing of its lightnings,

while tempests whizz, and hiss, with awful force and fury. Again, some *seasons* are dangerous, fierce winds betide them. Some *vessels* are dangerous, they are not sea-worthy. Some *seas* are dangerous; pirates scour them.

What dangers await the youthful voyager for eternity! *Temptations*, because of sin within him, leading him to drift away unthinkingly o'er the mystic tide. The *bewitching influences* of a world lying in wickedness—the glare and glitter, the short-lived joys of earth, like *false lights* to the mariner, attracting and alluring only to destroy. The *wiles of the wicked one*, who, like a wrecker on the deep, seeks to spoil and devour the never-dying soul.

With such temptations awaiting us—such wiles of the wicked one so craftily prepared for us, and sin so deeply rooted, with such a power within us—surely we need a Helmsman, a Pilot to guide and steer!

III. THE PILOT.

Skilled in navigation, thoroughly skilled—intimately acquainted with every coast by which the vessel is to steer her course—the pilot assumes the entire responsibility, and safely guides, and guards her over the whelming wave.

Such a pilot we need on life's stormy ocean, and such a pilot CHRIST JESUS is to every needy soul that trusts in Him. It is His to render sea-worthy, and fit for the voyage, every believing one. As of old He came to the disciples, walking on the deep, amid the swell of wind and wave, so still He comes offering Himself to you, and me, to be our Saviour—our Guide—our Pilot over the ocean of time to the haven of eternal glory!

He died for us. He has wrought out for us a complete and perfect righteousness. By His Spirit He makes us truly holy, and meet for the glory to be revealed. All that we are—all our sins—He fully knows. All that we

require He can and will supply—all in time, all in eternity, all through grace, until grace shall be perfected in eternal glory!

IV. THE HAVEN OF GLORY.

We are all on the ocean of time—we are voyaging to eternity—we are all nearing it—we shall soon reach it. Are we prepared for it?

If we have got the skilful Pilot—if we confide in JESUS, we have nothing to fear. As surely as we voyage *onward*, shall we voyage *upward* too—*onward* to eternity, *upward* to glory! Going home! Sweet thought! Lo! the port is breaking on our view! The shore is thronged with waiting, expecting groups of friends to welcome loved ones from the distant land. The anchor is cast; the vessel is safely moored; and, as friend after friend sets foot on the much-loved, much-longed-for shore, what tears of joy are shed, what shouts of joy are heard!

May the earthly not illustrate the heavenly? As another and another of time's voyagers are landed on the shores of eternal glory, shall not saints rejoice and angels sing? Shall not the choirs and companies of heaven join exultingly in heaven's own doxology, 'Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.' *Come, then, to Jesus, now!*

'ONWARD AND UPWARD.'

SWIFT! Oh! how swiftly the passing years glide—
Aye onward bound—onward bound!
Who'll stem the torrent of Time's viewless tide?
Aye onward bound—onward bound!

Launch'd out at birth on the deep surging wave,
Far, far from shore, where the wild tempests rave,
Who'll be *the Pilot* our frail bark to save?
Aye onward bound—onward bound!

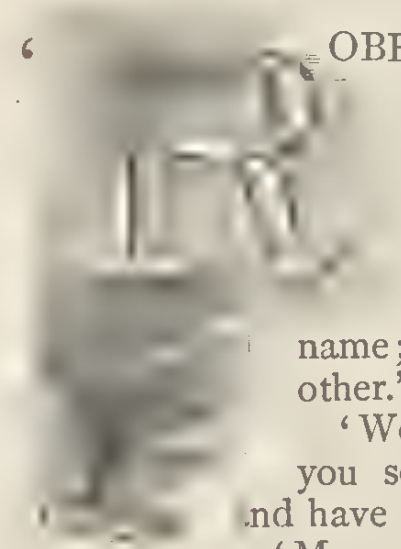
Lo! 'tis THE SAVIOUR! He walks on the sea—
Aye onward bound—onward bound!
Hark! that still voice that is wafted to thee,
Aye onward bound—onward bound!
'Be not afraid tho' the fierce billows roar,
Only believe Me, I'll guide evermore,
Where stormy ocean shall rage nevermore,
If onward bound—upward bound!'

Then, come what may, we'll in JESUS confide—
Aye onward bound—upward bound!
Safely our bark shall each tempest outride,
Aye onward bound—upward bound!
Hope casting anchor within yonder vail,
Love there, bright beaming, shall never more fail,
Faith here upholding while trials assail
Us, onward bound—upward bound!

Since all our years hence away swiftly glide—
Aye onward bound—onward bound!
Oh! may we feel we're on Time's rapid tide,
Aye onward bound—onward bound!
That, when our course shall have come to a close,
We may, above, share unending repose,
Safe o'er the ocean, for ever with those
Here onward bound—upward bound!

WILD FLOWERS FOR CHILDREN.

NO. VII.—CHRYSANTHEMUM SEGETUM.



'ROBERT, would you, please, gather a few of those tall yellow flowers, as you pass through the corn-field. I want to ask mamma what they are called.'

'They are only gowans, Grace.'

'Yes; I know that is the common name; but I am sure there must be some other.'

'Well, here is a fine bunch; and as you seem tired, we may as well go in and have a talk about them.'

'Mamma, we have brought you some large yellow daisies. Can you tell us what they are called?'

'There are so many names for this flower, Grace, that you will find it difficult to remember them all. The long one is Chrysanthemum segetum.'

'Stop, mamma, what is the meaning of that?'

'It is taken from two Greek words, Chrysos, gold, and Anthos, a flower.'

'I thought Chrysanthemums only grew in gardens,' said Robert.

'Chinese Chrysanthemums are very ornamental to our pleasure-grounds in autumn and winter, and are much esteemed in their native country, where they are largely cultivated. We have only one other wild species. I mean the Ox-eye, or Moon Daisy (Chrysanthemum Cucanthemum) a flower common to every pasture, and which in the months of May and June gives a white tint to our meadows.'

'Well, mamma, and what else is the yellow gowan called?"

'Gowan is the name the plant is chiefly known by in

Scotland, and is merely a corruption of the word goolds, or gouls (meaning Sun-Flower) by which our early English poets allude to the closing of its blossoms at sunset. They also mention it as "Mary-budde," or "Marigold." Our usual names for it are, "Yellow Ox-Eye," "Golden Corn-Flower," and "Yellow Corn."'

'Certainly, it has a great number of names,' remarked Grace; 'now, mamma, please tell us if it is of any use?'

'The Marigold affords a yellow dye; when steeped in vinegar it is considered a prevention to infection, and the blossoms alone remove the pain caused by the sting of a bee. Although a handsome plant in our eyes, it is an extremely troublesome weed to farmers; and in some districts, has been known to destroy whole fields of corn.'

'Does it grow in other countries?'

'Yes; in many parts of Europe, especially in France and Germany, where it is even more abundant than here.'

'Will you tell us something about the flower itself, mamma,' said Robert, 'I observe the outside is differently formed from the centre.'

'The daisy tribe all belong to a difficult order called Compositæ, so named, because the blossoms are compounded of numerous small florets, all enclosed in one head.'

'I have just been examining this curious scaly part round the flower; it is not like a common calyx.'

'You are right, Grace; it is not a true calyx, but a collection of bracts or floral leaves placed one over the other like the tiles of a house, and therefore termed imbricated (from the word, "imbrex," meaning a house). This calyx-like assemblage of bracts is called an involucre. The central florets are tube-shaped, having five divisions or clefts, five stamens, and one pistil in each separate corolla. These minute parts may be distinctly seen through a microscope, and we can observe by the aid of this instrument, how exactly and beautifully each organ

is adapted to its own particular use. Of the stamens and pistil I shall tell you many interesting things at some other time; it would occupy too long at present.'

'Mamma, what are those flat yellow petals which are round the edge?'

'Florets also, though of a different form. They are termed strap-shaped. There are three subdivisions of compound flowers. The first is altogether composed of these flat, narrow florets, such as blue succory and dandelion; the second, entirely of tubular florets, as thistles; the third, or daisy tribe, combines both, and is called Radiatæ, on account of the strap-shaped outer circle or ray which surrounds the inner or tubular group, thus producing a beautiful variety of form. In this tribe the centre or disc is usually yellow, the ray either of the same colour, as in our corn marigold, or white, as in the Ox-eye. Of course, there are some exceptions, for the beautiful Dahlia belongs to this tribe, as well as the modest little daisy, or day's-eye, which peeps through the grass on sunny days in the early spring.'

'I wish I knew all that well, mamma; let me try to tell you. The gowan is a compound flower, because it has a number of perfect florets in one calyx. No; that is not the right word—involucre. Yes; that means scaly kind of leaves, which form something like a calyx. Well, there are three divisions of compound flowers—one having all the florets strap-shaped, another having them tubular, and the third, composed of both, like the daisy, the inner circle being called the disc, and the outer the ray.'

'Quite right, Robert. I am glad you have understood me so well. But you have not asked about the green leaves yet; they clasp the stem, which is usually from one to two feet high, and are widely serrate (or saw-shaped) above, and toothed (or notched) at the base; both leaves and stem are remarkably smooth and bare. The latter is angular.'

'When does the gowan blossom, mamma?'

'It commences in June.'

'How very late in the season to see it flowering still!'

'No; for it blows a second time in autumn, quite as luxuriantly as at first, and continues to adorn the fields until checked by winter frosts.'

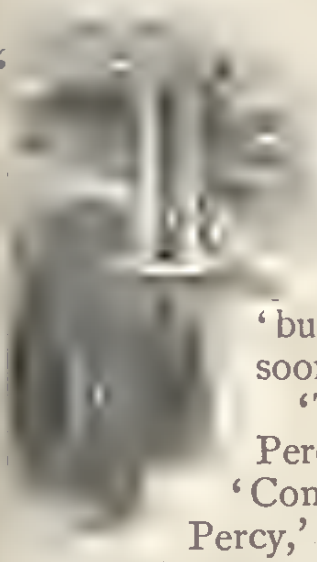
'Mamma,' said Grace, 'is it really a Sun-Flower?'

'Linnæus, the great Swedish botanist, says that it opens at nine in the morning, and closes at three in the afternoon, which, I believe, is the only reason for giving it this name. All plants derive vitality from the rays of the sun, and in that sense may be termed Sun-Flowers; but some blossoms are said to follow his course through the heavens in a peculiar manner, by turning towards the east at his rising, and the west at his setting. Whether this be really the case or not, let us try in like manner to follow Him who is the source of our being, our life and light, our Sun of righteousness. Let us turn to Him in every action, looking continually upward for guidance and direction from the morning to the evening of life, feeling that when our eyes close in the night of death, they shall re-open in that glorious place, "where there shall be no need of the sun, for the Lamb shall be the light thereof."'

S. T. A. R.

PAPA'S NEWSPAPER.

BY 'AUNT EMILY.'



'I WISH the bell would ring for us, to go down to mamma,' said little Stanley Mayo. 'How long we have been waiting!'

'Dinner was later this evening, Master Stanley,' answered his nurse; 'but I think you will hear the bell very soon now.'

'There it is,' exclaimed Stanley. 'Now, Percy, are you ready?'

'Come to me first for one moment, Master Percy,' said nurse; 'I must just smooth your curls before you go.'

While nurse is so employed, my little readers will perhaps like to hear how old these children were, and a few particulars of their history. Stanley was six years old, and Percy four; they were the only children of Mr and Mrs Mayo, and consequently very much beloved and taken great care of. The brothers were very unlike in appearance; Stanley was a very nice boy, tall and very upright, with bright dark eyes, and a very intelligent face. Unfortunately, he had been accustomed from the time he was quite a baby to hear himself admired very frequently, and this might have had the effect of making him vain and conceited, if his parents had not striven to guard against it, by pointing out his faults, and early teaching him how much more important it is to be good than handsome. Percy was very fair, his eyes very blue, and his hair, which fell in natural curls over his shoulders, very light; though generally pretty well in health, he was much smaller and slighter

than his brother; but he was very loving and gentle in his disposition, and a great favourite with nurse, and, indeed, with all the household.

A lady came every morning, for an hour or two, to teach them. Percy did not yet learn much; but Stanley had begun geography and history, besides reading and writing, and on his fifth birthday he had his first music lesson. Miss Davis was a very fine, pleasant teacher, and often told her little pupils pretty stories when their lessons were over, if they had been good and attentive, so they did not at all dislike their school hours. They had also a very kind nurse, who had lived with their mamma many years in her old home, before she was married, and of her they were very fond; so, altogether, they were very happy little fellows.

Now they ran joyfully down stairs, and bounded into the drawing-room, but the faces of both were a little clouded when they saw that their papa was there alone, sitting in his arm chair near the fire, with his newspaper in his hand.

'Where is mamma?' they asked in one breath.

'Mamma is spending the evening with grandmamma,' answered Mr Mayo, holding his paper on one side, and looking with loving eyes at his little sons. 'I suppose you have found the day rather long, as the rain has prevented you going out? How have you been amusing yourselves?'

'Oh, nurse has been helping us to build houses, and we have had a game of horses, for exercise, you know,' replied Stanley.

'But mamma never said good-bye to us,' said little Percy, opening his blue eyes very wide.

'She *always* does come and kiss us when she is not coming home to dinner,' added Stanley. 'I wonder why she did not to-day.'

'I think I can explain that mystery to you,' answered papa, smiling. 'Mamma did not intend to stay out all the evening when she left home; she went to call upon

grandmamma, and found she was not so well as usual; and Aunt Fanny had promised to take tea with some friends, so mamma thought she would stay and keep grandmamma company in her absence. She did not forget you, however; here is a little note she sent to ask me not to expect her home to dinner, and she says in it, "Kiss my darlings, and wish them good-night for me."'

'All right,' exclaimed Stanley. 'And now, papa, as mamma is not here to talk to us, will *you* tell us a story?'

'Why are you so fond of the newspaper, papa?' asked Percy. 'Are there pretty stories in it?'

'Pretty stories! No, of course not,' answered Stanley. 'Papa does not care for pretty stories.'

'I think I may say there are stories of all kinds in it, my boy,' said Mr Mayo. 'Sad stories, and wonderful stories, and dreadful stories, and interesting stories, and stories of all sorts.'

'Do you mean that really, papa?' asked Stanley; 'and will you tell us one of them?' and taking possession of the said paper, which he did not intend papa to read again just then, he carried it away to a table at some distance, and settled himself on a stool at his papa's feet; while little Percy climbed up on to his knee, and looked inquiringly into his face.

'I must consider a little what is likely to interest you; let me see! To-day there is a story of some poor destitute children, almost starved for want of food; another of a sad quarrel between two brothers, which ended in the death of one of them; and a very interesting story of the eclipse of the moon, which happened the other night. Which do you think sounds the prettiest?'

'I should like to hear them all,' answered Stanley; 'but we can't to-night, because nurse will be coming to take us to bed soon, so please tell us the first, papa, about the little children. Perhaps you will tell us the rest to-morrow evening; then mamma would hear them too.'

'Well, then, this story about the poor children is contained in a letter from a clergyman, who lives in the east of London. Brompton, where we live, you know, is on the west side, so there is the large city between us; still it is not so very far away from us that these poor children live. Yesterday morning a woman called upon this clergyman, and asked him to go with her and see some poor children, who were in such a dreadful state that the neighbours did not know what to do for them.'

'And did he go, papa,' asked Stanley.

'Yes, my dear; and what do you think he saw when he entered the room? Five poor children, all huddled up together in one corner, trying to keep themselves warm by being close together, for they had no fire, no food, and scarcely any clothes to cover them this cold winter weather. There was no bed in the room, only a heap of rags in one corner, and scarcely any furniture. One little girl was so weak and ill she could not get up, but had been obliged to lie on that miserable heap for two or three days.'

'But why did not their mother give them some clothes?' asked Stanley, looking very much puzzled.

'They have no mother, my dear,' answered Mr Mayo; 'she has long been dead: and their father was very poor, and could not earn much money, because he had bad health. The woman who went to fetch the clergyman told him that their father had been away for several days, and no one knew where he had gone, so it is supposed he has left his children altogether; and they must have died for want of food if some kind neighbours had not taken them in some scraps of bread and some warm tea. In the afternoon the poor little things were taken away from their wretched home to the workhouse, and there they will have proper food and clothing; but the little girl who was ill was so weak, that it is feared she cannot recover.'

'And will she die, and go to heaven?' asked Percy.

'I think most likely she will, dear,' answered Mr

Mayo. 'Now, can you tell me what my little boys can learn from this sad story?'

'Not to grumble or murmur,' answered Stanley. 'Nurse often tells me I should never do either, if I knew how many nice things I have that other children want.'

'Nurse is quite right. And there is another thing,' continued Mr Mayo, 'we should try and be more thankful for the many comforts we enjoy. We have every day as much food as is good for us, nice warm clothes to keep out the cold, and bright cheerful fires to make our rooms look pleasant in this dismal weather. Should we not then thank God in our hearts for all His kindness to us?'

'I always say my grace,' said Percy.

'Yes, my love, you have been taught to do so; and you would not think of leaving your seat after meals without it: but you must try to *think* about what you say, and not only repeat the words with your lips.'

'Mamma has taught us that hymn:'

> "God does not care for what I say,
> Unless I feel it too,"

said Stanley, 'because we said our prayers too fast.'

'And your grace, too, I fear, sometimes,' said Mr Mayo. 'Last evening I passed the nursery on my way down to dinner, just as you finished tea, and I heard the words, "Thank God for my good tea," repeated in anything but a reverent or thoughtful tone.'

'I wanted to get down, papa,' answered Percy, who at once took the reproof to himself.'

'No doubt you did, my dear,' answered his papa. 'But it would not have taken you more than a minute longer to have said your grace slowly and properly. You must try and remember that God will not have His name taken in vain, as it is when you hurry over words addressed to Him in a careless manner.'

'Is that all you have to tell us about the poor children, papa?' asked Stanley.

'The little girl who was ill was the eldest of the family,' resumed Mr Mayo. 'She was ten years old. When asked how long she had been ill, she said she did not know. She had "felt bad ever since mother died," and lately she had been so hungry! The youngest child, a little boy, three years old, was stouter, and looked better than the rest. The clergyman heard from the neighbours that this good little girl had often starved herself that she might obey her mother's last words, which were, "be sure and take care of Johnnie."'

'She was not a selfish little girl, papa,' said Stanley.

'No, indeed, my dear, very far from it. We may all learn a lesson of unselfish kindness from her. When Jesus was here on earth, He told His disciples that whosoever should give another a cup of cold water, in His name—that is, because they love Him, and wish to please Him—shall be rewarded for it by and by; we may be sure that little girl will be well repaid for her great goodness to her little brother.'

'Now, will you tell us about the moon, papa?' asked Percy.

'That is rather too long a story to begin to-night," answered Mr Mayo. 'But, perhaps, I can tell you about the two brothers, whose sad quarrel ended in the death of one. Twenty years ago two little boys were born on one day—so they were twins—in a little village in Somersetshire. They were so much alike that, if you had seen them, you could not have told one from the other. The name of one was William, the other Robert. Their father was a small farmer, and pretty well off; so the little boys had all their wants supplied, and when they were old enough they were sent to school, and taught to read and write. But though William and Robert were so much like in appearance, they were very unlike in their tempers and dispositions. William was a good, obedient boy, diligent at school, and a favourite

with his master; whilst Robert was disobedient, wilful, and careless, giving his mother much anxiety, and his master trouble. As they grew older, the difference between them increased. William, when he left school, became very useful to his father, helping him to plough his land, and milk his cows, and look after his sheep; while Robert, who never liked work, spent his time with idle companions, and from them learned many bad and naughty ways.

At last his father told him he should no longer keep him in idleness, or supply him with food and clothing, unless he earned some money to pay for them. Robert would not promise to mend his ways and be more industrious, but was very rude and unjust, saying many things which were not true. He accused his parents of loving William more than they did him, and said that he had never been as kindly treated as his brother. This distressed them very much, particularly his poor mother, who had always loved both her boys equally well, and had taken great pains to bring them up as steady, good men.

This conversation took place one night. The next morning, when the farmer and his wife came to their breakfast, and William came in from the fields, where he had been tending the cattle, no Robert appeared. He was often late in bed in the morning, so for some little time they did not feel uneasy at his absence, but at last his mother went up to his room, and opened the door, and what was her surprise to see that the bed had not been used, and Robert was not there!'

'Where was he, then, papa?'

'You shall hear, my dear. Robert had run away from his kind father and mother and brother, who loved him so much, and enlisted to be a soldier. It was some time before his family knew where he was; but they grieved very much over him, and feared he would not come to any good, for they had found that when he left home he had taken away with him several things belonging

to his father and his brother, which he had no right to do—it was, in fact, stealing, as much as if he had taken the things from strangers, though you may be sure they did not punish him for it; but prayed to God to change his heart, and bring him safely back to them.

Well, after some years, Robert suddenly came home again. He had not written to say he was coming, and surprised his family very much by walking in one summer evening, just as they were sitting down to their supper.'

'Were they *glad* he had come back safe,' asked Percy.

'At first they were very glad, my dear, for they loved him still, I dare say as much as I love my little sons, and you can fancy how glad mamma and I should be to see you again, if you had been away from us a long time. But, alas! they soon found he had not grown better. He had come home because his regiment had been stationed near, and he had leave of absence granted him; but he soon began to quarrel again, and was more disagreeable than before. Now he was envious of William, who, during his absence, had been getting on well, and had now some land of his own to farm. Wicked Robert accused his brother of getting rich with money which he ought to have had, and said many things which it was hard for William to bear.

At last, one night he came home very late. His father and mother were in bed, and only William waiting up for him. He had been spending the evening with some bad companions, and had taken more to drink than he ought to have done, which had made him more quarrelsome and ill-tempered than ever. Angry words passed between them, and William was just trying to persuade his brother to go to bed, when he took up his gun, which was in a corner of the room, and shot poor William dead upon the spot.'

'Oh, papa, how dreadful!' exclaimed Stanley.

'How dreadful!' echoed Percy.

'It is, indeed, very sad,' replied Mr Mayo. 'Now poor unhappy Robert is in prison, awaiting his trial.'

'What will be done to him, papa?'

'I cannot be sure, my dear; perhaps, as he had been drinking, that may be considered some excuse for his not quite knowing what he was doing; he may be imprisoned for life instead of being put to death; but if so, we can but pity him very much, when we remember how great his sorrow and remorse must be for the dreadful deed he has done. Can you tell me, Stanley, who was the first murderer?'

'Cain, papa.'

'And what led to that murder?'

'Cain was envious of Abel, because God loved him best. I suppose that was why he killed him,' answered Stanley.

'Just so,' replied Mr Mayo. 'You see the same evil feelings were in Cain's heart that we have seen led to the death of poor William, for Robert was envious of him, and, I fear, *hated* him, though he *was* his only brother. If he would have prayed to God to take away that evil spirit from his heart when he was young, and had attended to the advice of his father and mother, they might now have been a happy family together, instead of most miserable and desolate.'

'Hark! there is nurse's tap at the door, and I see my little man is getting sleepy; so good night, my dears, and another kiss for mamma, who will be glad to hear you have been good boys.'

STORIES ABOUT QUADRUPEDS.

'Ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee.'—JOB XII. 7.

NO. XII.

THE BEAVER.

THE quadrupeds we are now going to tell you about are known as the Rodents, or Gnawing Animals, and amongst the most interesting and useful of them is the Beaver. Had we lived many hundred years ago, we might have found these wonderfully clever builders in England, Wales, or Scotland; but now, we must cross the Atlantic and visit some of the streams in the Canadian forests, to observe the wise little architects at work.

Here, shaded by reeds, in some parts over-canopied by the large branches of the primeval forest, we come on a running stream, where we find a colony of beavers

hard at work. There are about 200 of them, and already they have constructed a dam across the stream, as they wished to deepen the waters at that place. How cleverly they set about it! With the sharp teeth, with which God has supplied them, they have succeeded in gnawing down many tender saplings; and having floated them down the stream to the spot where they purpose to erect the dam, they use them to lay the foundation of it. Sometimes the barrier is two or three hundred yards in length, and is strengthened by quantities of stones, and thickly plastered by mud.

Behind this, in the deep water, they begin to make their huts, the entrance to which is always under water. See how busy they are! There are about twenty huts being constructed in the streams where we are observing them. These lodges or huts are built principally of branches, moss, and mud, and, generally speaking, are of a circular form, with very thick walls inside, about seven feet in diameter. In height they rise about six feet above the water, and look somewhat like a beehive. The roofs are plastered over with mud, laid on very smooth, and this covering is renewed every year. In some of those huts five or six beavers can live together. They are wonderfully snug abodes, as we shall find out if we take a peep at the interior of one of them. 'Come in,' says the mistress of the house, 'and I will show you through our lodge.'

The door we enter by is under water, and then we find ourselves in a circular cavity, the walls of which are all nicely plastered, and the owner tells us with some degree of pride and satisfaction, that the roof is so thick, and the plastering on it so hard, that much as their great enemy, the wolverine, may desire to obtain admittance, it will not be able to do so, through the covering. Against the walls we noticed several neatly placed beds; and these we are told are beds where the beavers sleep during the winter months.

Then our hostess asks us if we would like to inspect

the store-house, where the food for the winter is kept. Of course we do. It is not every day we can visit a beaver's store-room. The place is in the part of the dwelling which is under water, and there, says the beaver, pointing to a heap of small logs, is our winter food. What strange food, you say? Do you eat these logs? The beaver smiles rather a disdainful smile at your ignorance. 'No, my dear, we don't eat the logs, but we strip off the bark and eat *that;* and as we have no further use for the log after we have done that, we either put it into the stream and let it float away, or, if our dam requires repairing, we make use of it for that purpose. But though bark is our chief food in winter, we vary it in summer by berries and roots. We can get plenty of these, for you know that then we do not live in these huts, but in holes in the banks of rivers.'

We listened attentively to all this, glad to gain instruction as regards the customs of the little builders; and, wishing good-bye to our friend, we return to the river banks.

Did you observe what thick, round heads and small eyes the beavers have? and, also, how large and broad their tails are, and how useful they are to them, as they act when swimming as a rudder? The beaver, as you know, is much sought after for the sake of its fur, of which it has two kinds—one long and coarse, the other soft and silky. The people who hunt these are called trappers. The names that the beavers went by in Wales and Scotland, where they once were found, were, the 'broad-tailed otter.'

Certainly the beaver is a most wonderful creature—gifted by God with an extraordinary degree of animal wisdom, and teaching us many a lesson worth learning, of industry, and perseverance, and foresight. And it is believed that man's first ideas of earthworks, and perhaps even of the art of engineering, were learnt from the beaver.

And as the wise king advises the sluggard to go to

the ant and consider her ways, so may we point any of our young readers, who are inclined to be idle, to the busy beavers in the Canadian forest streams, and say, imitate these.

'Work while the daylight lasteth,
Ere the shades of night come on,
Ere the Lord of the vineyard cometh,
And the labourer's work is done.'

M. H.

LIFE AMONG THE FLOWERS.

BY MONA B. BICKERSTAFFE,

AUTHOR OF 'DOWN AMONG THE WATERWEEDS,' 'THE SUNBEAM'S STORY,' ETC.

'Who made the spider parallels design,
Sure as Demoivre, without rule or line.'

POPE.

THE summer sun had shone with unusually vivid strength, and the garden flowers, like their brethren of the wild woods, unable to resist its scorching influence, unaided, too, by any refreshing showers, had burst into premature beauty, and as quickly withered away. The roses especially, had one by one bowed their lovely heads, and dying, wafted fragrant sighs that fell heavily upon the sultry air. And now the old rose-tree upon the garden wall, bereft of all her beauteous daughters, tried to console herself with the reflection that, though there was now nothing about her to attract admiration,

her leafy branches might at least afford hospitable shelter to many living creatures.

There flocks of sapsucking Aphidæ spread themselves over every unwithered leaf, working so busily with their beak-like trunks,* that very soon the verdant surface, deprived of its fertilising sap, was converted into an arid waste. But woe to these thriving 'green-leaf grazers,' when a scarlet-coated Ladybird alights among them! for that pretty little creature, dainty as she appears to be, when tempted by the game most pleasant to her taste, becomes a voracious gourmand.

See now a stranger draws near, hovering over the green flocks. A tiny elegantly-formed creature she appears to be, but we recognise in her one of the treacherous Ichneumon family,† so, of course, like all of her tribe, we suspect her of mischievous intentions. See now she has seized upon an unsuspecting Aphis, not to devour him, but to lay one of her own eggs in his plump little body. Alas, poor victim! Directly he feels the wound he resigns himself to his inevitable fate,‡ forsakes the sweets of society, shuns the company of his friends and retires to the under side of the leaf. There he lingers for a while in melancholy seclusion, until his final doom

* The trunk, or sucking-pipe, of the aphis answers the double purpose of piercing the leaf and sucking its juices. The pipe of the rose aphis is small in comparison to that of the aphis which infests the oak, still it is capable of much mischief to the plant.

† The Ichneumon family is very extensive. Gravenhorst mentions nearly 1650 species found in Europe alone, and as the Ichneumonidæ exist in all parts of the world, some idea may be conceived of their numbers. The creature here alluded to is a small black fly (*Pimpla Ovivora*). It in like manner lays its eggs in the eggs of spiders and other insects.

‡ Kirby tells us that 'the body of the Aphis so pricked, swells and becomes smooth. Though still full of life, the creature separates from its companions and takes its station on the under side of the leaf.' After the Ichneumon has come out, the Aphis dies, becomes white, and resembles a brilliant bead or pearl.—*See* Kirby and Spence. Any rose-bush may afford an illustration of this curious and interesting fact.

is sealed by the young Ichneumon, which, hatched from its enclosed egg, will pierce its way through the living body, and doing so leaves death behind.

But look again at the rose-tree, and you will see hanging from leaf to leaf gossamer lines—suspension bridges long and strong, now glittering in the evening sunlight, or sparkling in the early morn with countless dewdrop gems. These are all the work of a busy little creature, spinner by trade, architect too, and aeronaut; ingenious constructor of a wheel-like home, which, filling an aërial space between the branches, displays the most exact and delicate geometric proportions. Long and patiently has she laboured to form that silken dwelling, having no rules nor compasses, save her own many-jointed limbs, no guide save her own unerring instinct, no teacher save Him who deigns to instruct the tiniest of His creatures. Watch her as she works, spinning without hands, drawing the silken tissue from the glittering reservoirs of her own small body,* then shooting that body through the air,† and thus, though wingless, flying from bough to bough, on each bough resting, and thereon fastening a silken cord,‡ and then, wondrous little crea-

* The Spider spins minute fibres from small papillæ or nipples placed upon the hinder part of its body, and from these it forms or moulds a viscuous liquor, which, after being drawn through them, dries on exposure to the air, and becomes silk. The reservoirs which supply the nipples have the appearance of drops of glass.—*See* Cuvier.

† Paley says that 'this little animal, with no wings or muscles enabling it to dart, has a path laid for it by its Creator in the atmosphere.' When a spider wishes to shoot through the air, it climbs upon some object, raises its abdomen to a position nearly perpendicular, at the same time letting out a portion of the glutinous substance which forms its web. This being acted on by the current of air, is drawn out into fine lines, and then the spider, quitting its hold of the object upon which it has been standing, is carried aloft on a journey through the atmosphere. Dr Lister, from the top of York Minster, observed these floating lines, some of them at such a height that they seemed as if falling from heaven.

‡ M. Bon discovered from fifteen to twenty fibres in a single

ture, she pauses to review her work, to test its soundness, and—

> 'With touch how exquisitely fine,
> Feels at each thread, and lives along the line!'

When all is complete, when each spoke of the wheel-like dwelling, when each rope-ladder is in its place, our clever little spinner thinks she may rest; and, retiring to the centre of her net-work, she coils more silk round for her own comfort, and there remains apparently lost in meditation, or unconscious slumber. But who ever caught Mrs Spider napping? Even in the dusky twilight her bright eyes shine like those of a cat,* while every other faculty is equally alive and ready to detect the first tread of a stranger upon her silken meshes.

While Mrs Spider is thus waiting for visitors, a humming sound is borne upon the evening breeze, and very soon the garden is invaded by a host of aërial dancers,† which, having winged their way from the green pond in the meadow, are now about to enjoy their brief space of life to the uttermost. Giddy lively creatures are these dancers—tiny sylph-like beings, floating on gossamer wing, rising and falling and making circles in the air, to the cheerful tune of their own humming melody. Very soon they attract the attention of our silk-spinning friend, who, feeling the greatest contempt for such very light society, turns up her mandibles (in default of a nose), at the sight of so many plumed heads.

'Ah!' she exclaims, 'there you go! the giddiest creatures in existence, humming, and dancing, and amusing yourselves; while I, having finished my work, and having worked to some purpose too, promise myself

thread, while Reaumar relates that, by the help of a microscope, he was able to count seventy or eighty—though that was far within the limit of the real number.

* Dufour remarks that the eyes of a spider 'shine in the dark like those of a cat; and in effect the Arachmidæ can see both by day and by night.'

† Dancers in the air.

a well-replenished larder at your expense. I suppose it was to show how little sense you had in your heads that you put all those fine feathers outside them. However,

the more foolish you are, the better for me;' and Mrs Spider chuckled to herself, while her eyes sparkled, and she quite trembled with excitement, as she saw several of the dancers approaching the rose-tree, and, as if tired

of the giddy whirl of their aërial exercise, sink down to rest upon its leaves.

'Good evening, my dears!' said she to a few of these nearest to her lines. 'I have been listening for some time to your cheerful hum, and have been watching your graceful movements in the dance with such pleasure that I feel quite glad to have a chance of a closer acquaintance with you. How elegantly you do dress, to be sure! Such variety, too! Some in black, some in grey, some in gold,* and as to your head adornments, I think I never saw such lovely feathers. Pray, fair Madam, what milliner do you employ? for if ever I go to court (which I fear is scarcely likely) I shall certainly put my head into her hands. Pray come a little nearer: I want to have some conversation—to know your names, where you come from, and all about you. Leading such a sedentary life as I do here, it is quite a treat to me to enjoy a little gossip with a stranger, especially one so lively and agreeable as you appear to be. But first, perhaps, I had better introduce myself by telling you that my name is Epeira Diadema,† or Mrs

* These beautiful creatures are not true Gnats, but are known as the *Chironomidæ* or *Midges*. A few days ago, we found a Midge which had what appeared to be a bright scarlet head; but on looking closer, we felt doubts on the subject, and taking a very fine needle, we touched the scarlet spot, and, removing it from the head, found that it was a tiny specimen of Acarus, otherwise a small species of spider, or mite parasite upon the Midge.

† *Epeira Diadema* belongs to that section of the sedentary rectigrade Spiders called *Aranea*. They are called 'sedentary,' because they remain stationary in their webs, awaiting their prey, and 'rectigrade,' because they always walk straight forward. The Epeira have two eyes on each side, close together, and four middle ones forming a square. This admirable arrangement enables them to see all around them without moving their position. M. Walckenaer mentions sixty-four species of Epeira remarkable for the variety of their colours, forms, and habits.—*See* Cuvier's 'Animal Kingdom.' Arthur Adams says: 'The bodies of the Epeira seen in the Tropics are often splendidly ornamented,—I might say illuminated,—for many of them remind you of the ancient missal painting. You have white streaks on a red ground; red, yellow, and black in

Garden Spider. I am also known as the "Geometric Spider," which latter name I prefer, it sounds so very scientific.

alternate streaks; orange, marbled with brown; light green with white ocelli; ash-colour or chestnut bodies marked with horse-shoes, crescents, Chinese characters, and grotesque hieroglyphics of every description. In the forests about Calderos in Mindanas, I collected some splendid species of gold-and-silver marked spiders.'—See *Naturalists' Magazine.*

(*To be continued.*)

'SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN.'

CRADLED in his mother's arms
  Baby lay the whole day long,
Smiling at each loving face,
  Cooing forth his little song.
Little feet tramp'd to and fro,
  Gazing at him as he lay:
'Can't he sit upright, mamma?
  What ails Baby Boy to-day?'

Cradled in the Saviour's arms
  Little Baby safely lies;
From his mother's fond embrace
  He has flown unto the skies.
Little faces have grown sad,
  Little voices hush'd and low:
Baby—whom they love so well,
  Baby—be the first to go?

But the mother 'mid her tears
  Knows her baby is at rest,
Would not wish him now away
  From that loving, shelt'ring breast.
So she thinks of angel harps
  Sounding in the Saviour's praise:
Hark! that is a baby's note—
  And a smile breaks o'er her face.

NITA.

THE WALL OF DEFENCE.

URING the last war in Germany the inmates of a house which stood in a very lonely situation, were at one time placed in the greatest terror.

It was winter, and the weather was very cold and stormy. The trembling family feared not only to be plundered, but now, in this inclement season, to be mercilessly driven from the shelter of their home. The pious, aged grandmother alone showed the composure of one who had learned to place her confidence in God. She read to her assembled household from an old German book of devotion a prayer, in which occurred the words—'God will build up a strong wall to defend this dwelling from the enemy.' One of her grandchildren said that the building up of a strong wall was too much to desire from God; anything so impossible they ought not to pray for. But the grandmother answered: 'These words are not taken too literally. But if it pleased God to build us up a wall for our defence, do you think that with God anything is impossible?' In watching and prayer the night wore on, and not one soldier from the hostile army approached the house. This occasioned surprise to all the inmates. But when they ventured to open the door in the morning, they found that during the night a quantity of snow had been heaped up by the wind into a high wall against that side of the house by which the enemy had passed, and they had thus been effectually screened from all danger from their foes.

They all returned thanks to God for this great deliverance. The aged Christian said, 'God has truly built us up a strong wall to defend us from the enemy.'

'Who trusts in God's unchanging love,
Builds on the Rock which naught can move.'

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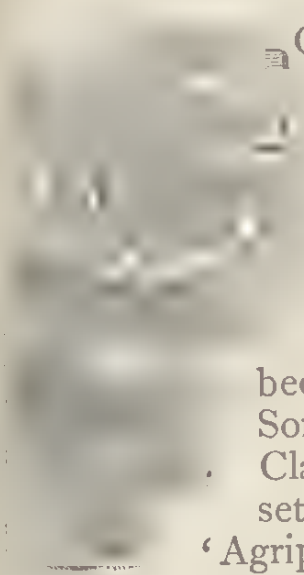
THE CATHEDRAL OF COLOGNE.

BY THE REV. H. T. HOWAT, LIVERPOOL.



COLOGNE, situated on the River Rhine, the capital of Rhenish Prussia, and a great centre both for travel and traffic, is one of the oldest cities in Germany. As early as thirty-seven years before the birth of Christ it appears in Roman history, under the name of 'the city of the Ubii,' because founded by that particular tribe. Some seventy years after, the Emperor Claudius formally recognised it as a Roman settlement, and gave it the title of the 'Agrippina *Colonia*,' or colony, in honour of his empress; and in the present name of the city—Köln or Cologne—its Roman origin is still preserved.

Cologne is famous for a great many different things. In the days of the old German empire, it was the home of a hundred politicians and warriors, whose protracted contests live in their country's annals. As one of the Rhine fortresses, it occupies a first rank, and is one of those sadly-disputed points between Prussia and France, the latter of which countries has long had a hankering after the provinces and fortifications bordering on the course of the noble river I have named. All the world, again, is familiar with *Eau de Cologne*, of which there are not fewer than sixty distinct producers in the city, each, as it is said, asserting himself or herself, as the case may be, the only real and lineal descendant of the original producer, 'Farina.' Their agreeable perfume has not been sufficient to sweeten their rivalry, any more than their city, than which no city in Europe requires it more.

Our artist has given an excellent picture of one of the most striking parts of Cologne. In the foreground is

the termination of the splendid railway bridge over the Rhine, with the foot-bridge for passengers; on the left hand side is the spacious *Hotel du Nord*, the entire front of which is shown; and on the right hand side are the houses of the *Trank Gasse*, behind which is seen the roof of the Great Central Railway Station of Cologne, from which travellers are hourly leaving for all parts of the Continent. The prominent object in the picture is the Cathedral, to which I propose to devote the present short paper.

It would scarcely be correct to say of this building what some one has said of Lord Macaulay's 'History of England,' viz., that it is a colossal fragment; but while it is certainly no mere fragment, it is nevertheless the fact, that the Cathedral of Cologne was begun to be built in the year 1248, and is still unfinished in 1869. Six hundred and twenty years, therefore, is a tolerably long time for the erection of a church; and to give my young readers a still clearer idea of the interval that has elapsed, since the first stone of Cologne Cathedral was laid, I may just mention that at that period Henry III. was King of England, Wallace and Bruce had never been heard of in Scotland, while the art of printing and the great continent of America were both unknown. As to whether the cathedral will ever be finished no one can tell; but Germany is full of superstitious legends, and if one of the best known, while, at the same time, one of the most absurd of these legends is to be credited, the building will remain incompleted for ever. If my young friends won't be very much frightened, I will tell them the story.

An architect of Cologne, during the middle ages, entered into a compact with the Evil One, with the view of producing a plan for a cathedral, which, when finished, would be the wonder of the world. A heavy price was demanded for the secret, no less than the architect selling himself, soul and body, to the prince of darkness, to do his bidding for evermore. At length the bargain

was made. The architect and the great enemy were to meet on the banks of the Rhine, at the hour of midnight, that hour when the veil between the visible and the invisible seems so narrow and thin. The agreement was to be signed in letters of blood. The architect took alarm. He went to his priest and told him all. With the never-failing shrewdness and acuteness of his class, the father-confessor gave this advice: 'Obtain the plan of the cathedral by every means, but for your defence, here, take this splinter of wood, a relic of the holy cross.' The hour of meeting came. The Evil One and the architect were there on the banks of the Rhine. 'Wait,' said the great enemy, 'till I pick a sharp stone to draw your blood, that we may sign the bargain together.' He stoops to pick up the stone. The architect snatches the plan from the unwary deceiver, the only time I should think he was ever found off his guard. The splinter of wood is brandished in his face. He is powerless; he is routed. But, as he spreads his wings and disappears, he swears by his dark domains, first, that the world shall never know the architect's name; and, secondly, that the cathedral itself shall never be finished, no matter what money may be spent or exertions used.

I have given the German legend just as it stands. Of course, I don't believe a word of it, nor expect any of my young friends to believe it either. I simply mention it in connection with the incomplete character of the cathedral, and as a specimen of the traditions of the Rhine, and especially of the ridiculous follies of Roman Catholic superstition. We cannot be too thankful for the simplicity and rational character of our pure Protestant faith, or for that open Bible which furnishes the best means of discovering all 'cunningly-devised fables.' The legend alluded to is, no doubt, founded on the fact that the name of the architect of Cologne Cathedral is really shrouded in mystery, and, on the other fact, that during so many hundred years successively, it was found absolutely impossible to finish the structure. Like too

many other things in the world, therefore, the story was made to suit the facts.

Looking now at the cathedral, not as a place of worship but a work of art, a few of its dimensions may have their interest. In length it is 511 feet (I here refer to the body of the building); in breadth 231 feet; the height to the ridge of the roof is 250 feet; and the height of the two towers, when finished, will be 500 feet above the level of the square from which they are to rise. It is utterly impossible to describe the interior, with its lofty arches, and marble pillars, and magnificent windows, and carved stalls, together with fresco-paintings, statuary, gilding, etc. etc., the last-named, however, far too gaudy for quiet tastes. And speaking of it simply from an artistic point of view, this is a notorious blemish in most continental Roman Catholic churches and decorations, and nowhere more than in Antwerp, the city of Rubens. Another thought often strikes me in this connection, viz., the lavish amount of expenditure on behalf of their churches, to say nothing of other parts of their religion, which has characterised the followers of the Papal faith in all ages, and which, after all we do, furnishes at once an example and a rebuke to many of us Protestants. The completion of the Cathedral of Cologne, for example, is estimated at £750,000. Why should idolatry have its full and overflowing treasury, and 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' and in Him alone, without any other intervention, languish through the unwillingness of Christian men and women to support, even, I will say, to make sacrifices for it? Among all your other graces, therefore, dear children, learn the grace of liberality to God. 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive . . . riches.'

The Cathedral of Cologne is full of relics, not so full certainly as that of Aix-la-Chapelle, where Charlemagne is buried; but still it possesses a good share, and their character may readily be guessed when I mention two: first, a dark phial said to contain some of the darkness

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that overspread the land of Egypt; and, secondly, the world-renowned relic of 'The three kings of Cologne,' said to be (of course it is quite a delusion, for there is no real or satisfactory evidence on the point) the three wise men who came from the east to worship the infant Jesus.

I shall confine myself to the latter of these, the history of which is as follows: The Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, and the founder of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, is reported to have discovered the remains of the Magi, or wise men in the east, but where, nobody knows, about the close of the third century. First brought to Constantinople, they were next transferred to Milan, whence, in 1162, Frederick the Red-Bearded stole them away, and gave them as a present to the city of Cologne. No spot in the city was reckoned too good for remains so precious, and, accordingly, when the cathedral was built, a great marble mausoleum was constructed for them, at the back of the choir, and beneath the great window, where, for the last six centuries, St Gaspar, St Melchior, and St Balthazar—the names of the alleged Magi—have found a resting-place.

My young friends would like to know, of course, of what the relics consist. Three black skulls, with a quantity of bones preserved in a silver coffin beneath. Each ghastly forehead wears a golden crown. Each crown is studded with sparkling gems. Thousands of Roman Catholic pilgrims, from all countries, have been foolish enough to lay costly offerings before the shrine, thinking thereby to ward off danger or disease, and gain the favour of God;—and those of my young friends who desire an illustration of such a pilgrimage, have only to turn to the pages of 'Quentin Durward,' by Sir Walter Scott, where they will find the two Countesses of Croye pretending to escape thither, under the guidance of the hero of the tale, and out of the reach of William de la Marck. The value of the relics is said to be six millions of francs, or £240,000, on which the only observation I desire to make is this, that the superstition

which could surround three black skulls with such a money value, and from age to age present them with the gifts of kings and princes, is surely an exhibition of a most melancholy character, and very different indeed from the spirit of the scene, which gives these supposed relics any significance they possess, when, as the Gospel of St Matthew informs us, 'the wise men from the east were come into the house, and saw the young child with Mary his mother, they fell down and worshipped *Him* (not Mary): and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto *Him* (not Mary, again) gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.'

Relic worship, such as this, will give my young friends some little idea of Popish delusion, and help to explain why Popery is being rapidly laughed out of every country on the continent of Europe, and why, indeed, as has well been said, Popery only succeeds, the farther it is away from Rome. God grant that Great Britain may not in turn become the laughing-stock of the continent of Europe, by nursing delusions from which even Roman Catholic countries are fast shaking themselves free, and forgetting where her civil liberty has come from, and where her true safety consists—the Protestant faith, the Protestant worship, the Protestant Bible of an enlightened, intelligent, and Protestant people.

The Children's Hour, November 1, 1869.]

OLD ANDY'S MONEY.

BY LETITIA M'CLINTOCK, AUTHOR OF 'ARCHIE MASON.'

CHAP. II.—OLD FRIENDS.

MOORE did not enter James Conolly's house immediately. He stood for some time with his hand upon the bolt of the half-door, looking over it into the kitchen. Old James occupied the only chair of which the house could boast. He was in Sunday attire, and wore the red waistcoat that had been handed down to him by his father, who was a soldier in his youth.

Moore remembered having seen old Frank Conolly wear it on fine Sundays long ago; and the sight of the venerable garment filled his brain with a crowd of reminiscences too fleeting almost to grasp. He thought his friend James had grown wonderfully like the old man: he had a sunny, placid face, the index of his childlike character; and his seventy years spent in ploughing and reaping the same fields in the same little corner of the globe, had not traced many lines upon it.

One arm was thrown round David Moore, who, looking as composed as though he had been standing there for hours, instead of having returned so lately from his scamper by the river side, was spelling over his lesson from the open Bible on his grandfather's knee: the two were learning it together. But all the time he held his overall gathered up in some ingenious manner, so as to hide the wet front from his grandmother and uncles. It did not signify if Jamie saw it: 'Grand-da' always took his part!

Jenny was seated at the opposite side of the fire with

a wooden bowl on her lap, and was busily engaged in peeling potatoes into it. James, her second son, was feeding his goldfinches at the window, and Joseph, the scholar of the family, was, as usual, completely engrossed with a book.

Such was the group that Moore stood gazing at over the half door. The whole party turned as he entered, and James got up and handed him his chair, bidding him be seated in his friendly Knockbarra fashion. He saw plainly that he was not recognised; and forgetting the more polished speech he had been accustomed to use since he became a rich man, he exclaimed, in the familiar northern tongue: 'James Conolly, man, do ye no mind Andy Moore?'

'Him that went to America?' asked the old man. 'Ay, to be sure, I mind him weel! It's no possible that *you* are Andy Moore?' continued he eagerly.

Moore replied by asking another question. 'Do ye mind the day we went after Mr Morrison's rabbits wi' yer father's gun, Jamie?'

'Jenny, do ye hear!' cried Jamie. 'This is Andy Moore come home again!'

The old woman looked at him with a puzzled face, trying very hard to recall his features.

'Him that was my comrade boy on Mr Morrison's farm, and Mary Fleming's sweetheart, Jenny.'

'I know, I know, Jamie! Sure enough I mind him weel now. You're welcome home, Andy. It's a good thing we ha' the bit bacon an' cabbage for dinner the day."

The said bacon and cabbage was quite a sumptuous banquet, the ordinary village fare being very frugal indeed. Moore thought it excellent, and had not so far forgotten his early training as to be disgusted at Jenny's rough manner of serving and portioning out the meal.

So he sat down among his own people once more. He had received a kindly, if not a rapturous greeting: perhaps the age for very keen emotion was over with him as well as with them.

The names that were mentioned, and the stories that were told during the next half hour would take up too much of this history to recount. It took up some time to tell little David's history. Jane Conolly had married the only son of Andy Moore's brother, David: both parents were dead, and the child had lived with the Conollys for the last three years, the plaything and darling of grandparents and uncles.

'And this brave little man is our David's grandchild,' said Andy; 'I didna so much as know that he had a son. I had not the scrape of a pen from him since five year after I left home; but I canna be reflecting on him, poor fellow. He was not much of a scholar, my brother David. Tell me how long is it since he died?'

'Better than twenty year,' replied Jamie. 'I was with him night and day, and attended him constantly.'

Tears were in Andy's eyes as he wrung his friend's hand. 'You'll tell me all about him by and by, Jamie. I've just one thing to ask you now—Did he die happy? was he satisfied like in his mind?'

'Ay, that he was! He kept telling the wife an' me not to grieve, for he was going to the Lord, and he'd be looking for us in heaven.'

'Thank God! Then I shall find him in the Kingdom. It's a bonnier place to meet in than Knockbarra, and no disappointment there. Mary's there, and many an old friend and neighbour—a great company—'

'Ay, poor Mary!' interrupted Jenny. 'She didna live till you had the wee spot ready for her. Well, well, maybe she's better where she is!'

'Mother, don't you know she's better?' exclaimed a faint voice from a bed in the corner of the room. 'Oh, they are well off in heaven—well off there!'

Andy Moore had been seated with his back to the bed, the curtains of which were closely drawn, and had no idea it contained an occupant. He started, and looked round in time to see a thin white hand draw aside the curtain, and a wan face, with large blue eyes and features

pinched with suffering, raise itself slowly from the pillow and gaze at the group near the fire.

'That's my son Francie,' said James, 'he got a hurt on his leg the beginning of last harvest, an' he's been lying on that bed ever since. We're afeared whiles he'll never get up again. Francie, dear, this is Andy Moore that you've heard tell of many's the time. You didna guess who was here?'

'No, father, but I heard him through my sleep, asking after one and another, and your answer was still the same, "dead an' gone, all dead an' gone." The most part of them were names that I never heard before, so I knew you had a stranger wi' you; but when I listened a wee bit to his discourse, I knew he was not a stranger, but a fellow citizen of ours—of the household of faith!'

'A stranger and a pilgrim upon earth,' put in Moore, grasping the thin hand that Francis stretched out to him.

'While bound for the "city that hath foundations,"' returned the invalid, 'we may well confess that we are strangers and pilgrims upon earth.'

'It was hard, sure, to learn that so young.'

'Hard! Ay, man; but it was well to learn it at any price!'

A year ago Francis Conolly had been the strongest and handsomest of the village lads; the winner at every ploughing match in the country, the gayest at their humble merry-makings, the favourite with the whole neighbourhood. But there was little chance of his ever appearing in the streets again. He would nevermore join the little group in the ball court on summer evenings, nor lead the choir in church, nor form one of the company in those pleasant saunters along the bank of the Foyle when the day's work was done.

Everybody was sorry for him. Francis had always found time to visit a sick neighbour, and many an ounce of tobacco or a sixpence had the old people received from his kindly hand. He was reaping the benefit of

this, now that he was himself weak and suffering, and young and old were unwearied in their attentions. It was touching to see the poor creatures, who had so very little to spare after supplying their own pressing wants, bringing their presents,—a couple of candles, if he happened to be so ill that Jenny must sit up with him; a cup of sweet milk, a tiny packet of tea and sugar, or an orange. These were the 'little kindnesses' the people were fondest of offering. They frequently left the house richer than they entered it, such lessons of patience and cheerful submission to God's will did Francis teach them, by a practical demonstration that was more persuasive than a hundred sermons.

Francie's bed was placed near the window, so that he could see out into the garden. It was a cheerful corner. James's bird-cage hung there, and Joseph's books were piled up on the window seat; and some cheap prints, uncouth in drawing, and very glaring in colour, which Willy, the third son, had accumulated, were pasted on the wall.

While the old people still talked of their dead friends and early days, James cleaned out the cage, refilled the seed trough, and hung sprigs of groundsel and dandelion buds within reach of the hen goldfinch's nest; Davy looking on and fancying he was helping. Many and many a heavy hour did his prattle lighten for his uncle Francis.

'We have been very kind to her the day, James' said he. 'It will be a good wee while before she eats all those greens. Shut the cage door fast—there! the cock's flown out. Shall I catch him?'

'No, no; let him play himself through the house: he'll not fly far; he likes the cage too well for that.'

'Will he come back, James? Were there any goldies in the ark wi' Noah?'

'You'll have to ask Francie, dear: he knows all those things.'

'Were there, Francie?'

'I dare say there were seven goldfinches, Davy.'

'Would the goldie have come back again if Noah had sent him out to see how far the water was gone down?'

'I dinna know that.'

'The corbie* was a bad messenger, Francie, wasn't he? You mind the night my grandmother sent me an errand to the shop; when I set the saucer, wi' the quarter of butter and the tea, on the top of the wall, and stopped to play marbles wi' Joe Aiken; she said I was "the corbie messenger?"'

'You must read the story of the good ravens that fed Elijah. They were God's messengers. Elijah heard the flap of their wings over his head morning an' evening, and down they came and left the bread and flesh on the rock beside him. How good he must have thought that food!'

'It would be quare an' nice if we could fly up to the clouds, Francie.'

'The happy angels fly past the clouds, up to the gate of heaven. We'll be like them some day, if we love God.'

'Are the angels very happy?' asked Davy, looking rather puzzled. 'Jane Boyd says you are an angel, and she cries when she says it.'

In his eagerness the little boy had drawn closer to the bed, and was now stretched partly over Francie, with his cheek resting on the same pillow.

'Come away this minute, child,' said James, rather sharply: 'you are shaking Francie's leg.'

'No, no, dinna vex him! Let him stay if he likes,' and the wasted arm stole fondly round Davy's neck, although the invalid's face flushed a little each time that the bed was shaken.

Their plaything stood a fair chance of being spoiled among them.

Andy Moore had won away his heart from all the uncles, however, before that day week. This seemingly difficult feat he accomplished in the following insidious manner.

* Raven.

'Davy,' he began, 'I have an American top in my box painted red and yellow. When you come to see me you shall ha'e it to play wi'; if you were living wi' me, it wad be yer ain.'

'Would you lend me the loan of it, to show James?'

'Ay, surely, dear; an' James might come to see you an' me. You'll ha'e a garden to dig in and sow seeds, an' you'll feed my pig, and help me to attend to our ducks and hens. Will you come?'

'I couldna leave James,' replied he sturdily. 'What would he do without me?'

'Why, what do you do for him?'

'I carry his hatchet when he goes butchering, and I help him to feed the birds, and——and'——(he paused, quite at a loss to particularise his usefulness)—'and he washes and dresses me, and I sleep with him,' concluded he, in a well satisfied tone.

'But that last,' said Andy, laughing, 'is what he does for you, not what you do for him.'

'Well, I canna leave him, nor Francie, nor my granda,' persisted the child.

There the matter rested for that day, but on another occasion Andy arrived at the Conollys carrying a small wooden cart half filled with square, brown cakes of delicious maple sugar, and somehow Davy's heart was so far softened by the sight that he was got to say he thought James might do very well without him.

Moore's first task was to find a house for himself in or near Knockbarra. He held many conferences with Mr Morrison, the landlord of the greater part of the village, relative to a house of his in the front street which was vacant, but much in want of repair; and the result was that Dan Byrne, the mason, was set to work at once, and Andy was able to move into it the second week in June. There was nothing magnificent about it when it was completed. It differed from the other houses only in being cleaner and rather better furnished. The room contained the bed, the large boxes that had excited so

much admiration on his first arrival, his little library, and some attempt at decoration in the shape of American picture papers pasted over the walls.

Andy was by this time on intimate terms with half the village, and was consequently at no loss for visitors.

The women found his snug fireside a pleasant resort, and one or more of them were to be seen there at any hour of the day you might chance to look in.

With Moore's return to his early home and simple mode of life, all his early tastes had come back also, and he liked nothing better than to have his door always standing open to admit a constant succession of visitors.

In the north of Ireland, if you have your door very much shut, it is understood that you wish to 'keep yourself to yourself,' but if open, that you are a sociable person, and wish to be on friendly terms with your neighbours. So Moore's door was kept open, and the women went in and out while he swept up the house, cooked his dinner, or taught Davy, who was now regularly established as his companion. They had advice to offer upon all these matters, and made many a joke at his expense, generally winding up by recommending him to look out for a wife to take care of him.

He held an assembly every evening when the men came from their work.

'It's for all the world like a wake,' said one to another; 'there's aye a plate of the very best tobacco on the table, an' he makes you free to help yourself as often as you like.'

The conversation at these re-unions was lively and unconstrained, but at the same time innocent; for the good old man almost unconsciously was letting his light shine, and surely though silently influencing his neighbours for good.

He had taken the whole village to his heart, but the innermost sanctuary was reserved for the Conollys.

James and he had worked together in their happy spring-time: the former was in mind just where Andy had left him; while intercourse with the world, and change

of position had raised Moore far above him. Jenny was rough and coarse at times, but she had been Mary Fleming's friend.

Young James, however, with his gentle ways, and love for simple pleasures; quiet Joseph, with his studious habits; lighthearted, heedless Willy; and Francis, whom suffering had refined and raised to a loftier region,—were loved by Andy for their own sakes.

(*To be continued.*)

'APPLES OF GOLD.'

'A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.' —PROV. XXV. 11.

AN 'apple of gold' I've found,
An apple of gold to-day;
It is not bright, or yellow, or round,
It makes no grand display.

But, hark ye! 'Redeem the time,'
This is the apple I've found;
Only three words of a little line,
Pick'd from the Gospel ground.

Yes, 'fitly spoken' they are,
And all who prize them will find
They are more potent and precious far
Than gold in silver enshrined.

Then come, let us hang them high
Up in our memories, where
They will catch the first glance of our waking eye,
And arouse our souls to prayer.

'Redeem the time' we may,
'Redeem the time' we will;
O Father! strengthen us day by day
Thy counsel to fulfil.

A WORD ABOUT COMPANIONS.

AN ADDRESS.

BY THE REV. R. SCOTT, BERWICK.

WE have not been made for solitude but for society. Our character and comfort depend, in a large measure, upon others. The various relations of social life, and the numberless employments by which men seek to obtain a livelihood, all tend to promote our personal good, and induce us to take an interest in the welfare of our fellow men.

'Nature intends mankind should share
The duties of the public care.
Who's born to sloth? To some we find
The ploughshare's annual toil assigned;
Some at the sounding anvil glow;
Some the swift sliding shuttle throw

Some studious of the wind and tide
From pole to pole our commerce guide;
While some with genius more refined
With head and tongue assist mankind;
Thus aiming at one common end,
Each proves to all a needful friend.'

In conducting the affairs of life we are frequently obliged to associate with those whose character and conduct are not what we could wish them to be. The boy at school must prosecute his studies with those who are in the same class with him, though their manners are in many respects disagreeable to him. The apprentice has often fellow-workers whose habits are anything but what he has been taught to esteem; and the man in business is often obliged to have dealings with those whose opinions and conduct he cannot but condemn. We are all constrained in many ways to have intercourse with persons of ungodly or profane character, and our duty, in the circumstances, is to be on our guard, lest they should do us harm by their evil example, and at the same time earnestly to seek to do them good as we may have opportunity.

In the business of life our associates are frequently made for us by circumstances over which we have no control. It is different with the *companionships* of life. Here we have the power of selection. We do not need to make every one with whom we become acquainted a bosom friend. It is of the greatest importance that all, but especially the young, should be careful of the friendships they form; for their companions will decide in no small degree what they will be in after years. The principle of imitation is strong in all, but especially in the young. By it we become insensibly assimilated in our likings and dislikings, in the language we use, and in the very tones of the voice, to those with whom we associate, and whom we come to admire and esteem.

To the young, then, we would say, be careful in the choice of your companions, for they will exert a great influence upon you, either for good or for evil. For one

thing, they will have a great influence upon your *manners.* The language in common use, in speaking of manners, shows the power of companionship in their formation. Thus we often hear it said of a person who has done a rude thing, that he has never known any better; and of a person whose manners are pleasing, that he has seen good society.

The Persians have illustrated the beneficial effects of good companions on manners, by the fable of 'the piece of clay and the rose.' A philosopher was one day astonished by the fragrance emitted by a piece of clay. On asking how it came to have so sweet a perfume, it answered: 'I was once a piece of common clay, but I was placed for some time in the company of a rose, and the sweet quality of my companion was communicated to me; otherwise, I should only be a piece of common clay, as I appear to be.'

Be careful, therefore, in the selection of your companions, for they will mould your *manners*, and your manners in various ways will tell on your comfort and success in life. A gentleman who retired from business with a fortune, while he was still in the prime of life, was once asked the secret of his success, and he replied —civility.

Be careful in the selection of your companions, for they will exercise a powerful influence on your *morals.* The ancient Greeks illustrated this by a story of their famous hero, Hercules. They say that when he had completed his years of boyhood, he retired to a solitary place, there to consider what course in life he would pursue. While meditating on this subject, he came to a place where the road diverged into two opposite paths. As he stood considering which of the paths he would take, two lovely female figures approached. The one, named Pleasure, invited him to enter her flowery path, where he would find every kind of enjoyment. The other, named Virtue, exhorted him to choose her path, which was indeed one that demanded labour and self-denial, but would

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lead him at length to honour and immortality. The suit of Virtue prevailed. He followed her guidance without shrinking; and the Greeks say that to her he was indebted for all the greatness he afterwards attained.

A higher wisdom than that of the Greeks, speaking of the effect of companionship on morals, says:—'he that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed' (Prov. xiii. 20). In our nature there are two forces or tendencies, the one to good, the other to evil. Conscience pleads for God and for virtue. Passion pleads for self-indulgence, even though it can be obtained only by breaking God's law. And it depends much on the companions with whom we associate, which of these forces in our nature shall prevail.

Some time ago a Wesleyan minister was requested to visit a person under sentence of death. On entering the prison he found the unhappy man walking from side to side of his cell, with hasty steps, as if anxious to escape from his own unwelcome thoughts. His appearance indicated that he was no ordinary man, and this was confirmed by his conversation. In giving an account of himself, he said that he was the child of pious parents, who were connected with the Wesleyan body. That at the age of sixteen, through their instrumentality, and under the preaching of the Gospel, he came under religious impressions, and was received into the Church as a member in full communion. These serious impressions were in course of time effaced; but he still continued to read the Bible, to pray, and to attend upon the ordinances of religion. On one occasion he went to an evening lecture to hear a celebrated minister on prophecy. As he returned home he met a companion, and told him where he had been. His companion said that he believed the minister was a great orator, but that religion was not a subject which had any claims on the attention of a rational being. He asked his companion's reasons for saying this. In reply, he was invited to come to his friend's house, and he would hear them. He went at the

time appointed, and found there a number of others who had adopted sceptical opinions. They got him persuaded to become one of their number, and to pledge himself to do what he could to disseminate their opinions. This he was the more easily induced to do, as he had been leading a dissolute life, and was anxious to believe that sin would not be punished as the Bible says it will be. Infidel opinions released him from all moral restraint. His excesses reduced him to great straits. He was guilty of murder with a view to robbery, and now was condemned to suffer the extreme penalty of the law. When he was led forth to execution he had to pass through a room appropriated to the turnkey, and seeing there a lad in a distant part of the room, he said to him, 'Look at me; and learn never to stand in the way of the ungodly, nor to sit in the seat of those who scoff at things sacred."

In the year 1803, a lad, 18 years of age, left Kelso, his native town, to push his fortune in London. He had not been long there when a young townsman, who had been some time in the great metropolis, called upon him one evening, and took him out to see the city. To his dismay, this young man, whom he had known as the son of respectable parents, asked him to go into one of the haunts of vice. He promptly refused, and at once returned to his lodgings. The death of that young man shortly after, from disease brought on by his vices, confirmed him in the good principles he had been taught to cherish at home. By his industry, intelligence, and uprightness, he rose in the world, and long occupied a high position among the philanthropic merchants of the city. That young man was James Nisbet, the well known publisher.

We experience the influence of companionship, not only by personal intercourse with others, but also by perusing their writings. In reading as well as in personal intercourse there is need for discrimination. There are many books which are as injurious to the mind as poison is to the body. We are frequently astonished by hearing of young persons, who have been well brought up, being guilty

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of the strangest conduct, if not of the grossest crimes. When the cause of this is known, it is generally found to be the reading of books, in which the most despicable villains are exhibited as praiseworthy heroes. There are many books of an interesting and instructive character to which any friend would gladly direct the young; but there is one book, which, above all others, they should make their constant companion,—it is the book of books, the Bible. Hear what a great and wise man says of it; one who, from the position of a shepherd boy, rose to be king of a great nation: 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honey comb. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward' (Ps. xix. 7-11).

Our companions exert a great influence on our character and position in life, and also on our future destiny. The wise and loving Author of our being, knowing this, has made provision for giving us access to the companionship of the wise and the good. This is one end for which the Church has been instituted by God. By its ministry, its public assemblies, its fellowship, its Sabbath schools, and Bible classes, it presents the best companionship to those who wish to do well; for to all, whatever be their condition, whether rich or poor, young or old, learned or unlearned, yea, whatever may have been their past character, it gives the invitation, 'Come with us and we will do thee good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel' (Num. x. 29).

Let me, then, exhort you, wherever your lot may be cast, to retain your connection with the Church of Christ, and to seek the society of those who are its mem-

bers. Their example will fortify you against temptation, commend to you all goodness, and they will ever prove your true friends in time of need. While you seek the society of God's people, be sure that you make God himself your friend. When Joseph was carried away from the house of his godly father, and sold as a slave to idolaters, he knew that God was ever near him. He therefore always sought counsel from God and grace to do his will, and we are told that 'the Lord was with him, and he was a prosperous man.' If you make the God of Joseph your God, He will be with you, to bless you while you live, and when you die He will introduce you to the noblest society in the universe; to the general assembly and church of the first-born, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

SHE IS SLEEPING.

DEAR one! she has fallen asleep,
Fast asleep on Jesus' breast!
Father, mother, silence keep;
Sisters, brothers, let her rest!
Ah! it is no time for weeping,
See how calmly she is sleeping!

Let no sounds of woe assail her,
When she wakes in realms above;
Only angel voices hail her—
'Welcome, ransom'd child of love!'
Ah! it is no time for weeping,
See how calmly she is sleeping!

F. W. H.

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LIFE AMONG THE FLOWERS.

BY MONA B. BICKERSTAFFE,

AUTHOR OF 'DOWN AMONG THE WATERWEEDS,' 'THE SUNBEAM'S STORY,' ETC.

CHAPTER IX.

'NOW, my dear,' said Mrs Spider, 'what do they call you? Something very pretty, I am sure!'

'Madam,' said the little plumed dancer, 'you are extremely flattering in your remarks, but you must excuse my apparent rudeness, for I really cannot help laughing at the mistake under which you are labouring. It is usually wounding to the feelings of a gentleman to be mistaken

for a lady; but as ours is rather a peculiar family, and as you appear to know so very little of society, I suppose I must believe that you do not really mean to insult me. My name, if you wish it, is Culex,* but I am most commonly spoken of as the Gnat. The feathery plumes in my head which you are pleased to admire, is a distinctive mark, worn only by the gentlemen of our family. Our ladies do not wear feathers, nor do they generally go out to our balls. It is rather their duty to attend to the future comfort of our family, and they could not do that, if they spent their lives in dancing.'

'Well,' remarked Mrs Spider, 'I call that very selfish. You take all the fun of life for yourselves, and leave its labours for your wives. I think, if you oblige them to stay at home, you might at least stay too, and bear them company.'

'So we do, for a time; but our habits and tastes are so very different, that whenever the ladies of our tribe are with us, they behave in such a way that we are sure to suffer for our indulgence. Here comes one of them now—a quiet, quaker-like little dame she appears to be, dressed in sober grey; but quiet as she looks, you will scarcely believe when I tell you what a cruel, bloodthirsty little being she is. I assure you, her propensities are such that even the human species have cause to fear her, for she and her lady friends will pursue them everywhere, following them into their dwellings, especially in the cool of the evening, and at night when they are

* *Culex Pipiens* (the Common Gnat), belongs to the 12th order of insects, known as *Diptera* by naturalists. Insects of this order have six feet, two membraneous extended wings, having usually beneath them two moveable slender bodies called halters, or balancers. They are each provided with a sucker composed of several scaly pieces, and either enclosed in a canal on the upper side of the proboscis (which is terminated by two flesh-like lobes), or covered by one or two plates which serve it for a shield. Culex belongs to the first family of Diptera, called *Nemocera;* so also do the *Chironomidæ* or *Tipulæ*, by us known as Midges.—*See* Cuvier's 'Animal Kingdom.'

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sleeping, buzzing about them, piercing their skin, and sucking their blood, filling up the wound with a venomous poison that causes great red lumps, which are often a sore pain and grief to many a human beauty.'

'Then it seems to me,' said Mrs Spider, 'that the ladies of your family cannot be called the "gentle sex." But do *you* never join in these sanguinary pursuits?'

'No, Dame Spider, we do not.* We care not for blood. The sweet nectar of the flowers is more to our taste. Indeed, nature seems to have intended that we should be not only the gentler, but the weaker sex, for she has not provided us with such strong mouth-organs as those of our wives.'

'Dear me!' said Mrs Spider, 'your family arrangements strike me as very strange. I should think you are very much afraid of your fierce partners.'

'Afraid!' laughed Mr Gnat. 'Ah no! We have no need to fear them, for they are very dutiful to us, and are so thoughtful and clever—exercising their talents as boatbuilders to such an extent that they are the admiration, not only of the insect, but also of the human tribes.'

'Boatbuilders!' exclaimed our spinster; 'you do not mean to tell me that those delicate creatures have ever ventured upon the water?'

'Of course they have. Are you not aware that water is really our native element? We were born in the water, and have undergone all our changes within its depths, or upon its surface. Indeed, it is not so long

* It is an ascertained fact that we are only attacked by the female Gnats. The males have the mouth-organs fewer in number, and weaker. In proportion as a Gnat thrusts its proboscis into our flesh, it becomes elbowed towards its breast. The pain is caused not by the blood drawn from, but by the poison injected into, the wound. The American Gnats, known as Mosquitos, are much larger than ours, and are a scourge to anyone daring to sleep in the open air, or without a mosquito-curtain. Mosquitos can endure any degree of frost. They abound in Lapland, where the people have to cover their bodies with grease, and keep fires burning to drive them away.

since I and my gay companions, tired of aquatic diversions, and wishing to see the world, left our canoes on the surface of yonder pond, and soaring aloft upon the passing breeze, found ourselves carried away by it into this lovely garden. Yes, it was to one of our family that the human poet* spoke when he said—

> '"Beneath the rushes was thy cradle hung,
> And when at length thy gauzy wings grew strong,
> Abroad to gentle airs their folds were swung,
> Rose in the sky, and bore thee soft along!"

'Perhaps, Mrs Spider, you know the verses. There are a great many more of them, all highly complimentary.'

'No,' said Mrs Spider, contemptuously, 'as a rule I never study poetry. Indeed, the only lines referring to you, which I can think of are these, and are anything but complimentary—

> '"When the sun shines let foolish gnats make sport,
> But creep in crannies when he hides his beams."

'His beams are fading away now, so perhaps you will come into my silken home, and try a little dancing on my tight ropes. No? you dare not venture? Well, I suppose we must get better acquainted first, or perhaps you are going back to your canoe?'

'Ah, no!' and Mr Gnat quite shuddered at the thought. 'We have given up aquatic life altogether, and shall never be sailors any more. The water would not now agree with our constitutions, and if we were to return to its glittering surface, we should either be drowned, or while struggling to escape that fate, we should most probably become the prey of some hungry fish.† Besides, when we left our canoes, they floated

* The American poet Bryant.

† If fishes, birds, and other animals did not prey upon the Gnats and Midges, they would soon become, not only an annoyance, but an actual plague to mankind. In the year 1736, they were seen to rise

away—hard to say where. And even if we were able to find them, we could not possibly get into them again.'

'Wonderful!' exclaimed Mrs Spider. 'Such a changing life as yours has been! When I saw you floating about in the air, you seemed to be quite in your element, whereas, after all, your native element is water! Well, it is fortunate that where your life is one of so much variety, you are at least suitably provided for every change of circumstances. Water would not agree with me, but I have a cousin who quite enjoys it. Perhaps you were acquainted with her—she is known as the Great Water Spider,* and I believe she too has obtained some renown as a boatbuilder.'

'Ah! I know to whom you allude,' said Mr Gnat; 'but I cannot say that I was ever desirous of making her acquaintance. You will excuse my saying so, but she bears the character of being one of the most cruel, treacherous creatures that inhabit the waters; a deadly foe to all our race, as you will learn if you refer to the annals of our tribes, wherein is recorded the untimely end of many a young gnat, who, in his giddy inexperience, allowing his canoe to sail too near to her floating raft,

in vast columns from Salisbury Cathedral, resembling at a distance columns of smoke, so that some people thought the building was on fire. A similar circumstance occurred at Sagen in Silesia in 1812; and at Norwich in the following year the inhabitants were alarmed by the appearance of a column of smoke issuing from an upper window of the Cathedral, which was again proved to be nothing but gnats, while from our own experience, during the month of June of this year, they were seen to rise in such numbers from Ellesmere, that they resembled a dense black cloud which floated across the mere, and settled itself on one of the islands. Gnats have also a place in the annals of history; for we read that 'Sapor, King of Persia, was obliged to raise the siege of Nisimus, his camels and elephants were so fiercely attacked by gnats.'

* In the fen-ditches of Norfolk, a large spider has been found, which forms a raft composed of a ball of moss or weeds about three inches in diameter. Upon this floating island, the creature lies in wait for its prey, and when it sees a drowning fly or other insect, it pounces upon it, seizes and conveys it to its island, where it is devoured at leisure.

was quickly seized and borne away to add to the number of "skulls picked bare," which are the only decorations of which the witch-crone's dwelling can boast. Yes, she makes cruel ravages among our tribes; and I only hope that you, my clever friend, do not resemble her, either in disposition or habits.'

Mrs Garden Spider's eyes glistened suspiciously, but in her very softest tone she replied—

'I? Oh! no. How could you suspect me? Had I been so cruelly inclined, I might have injured you ere this. Pray don't fear me, my charming young friend—I have taken such a fancy for you, and am quite longing to see you on my ropes. Now, do try them! they are spun of the finest silk, and are quite firmly fastened. What! still too timid? Well, I shan't press you, lest I might frighten you away, and so lose my chance of hearing more about your ingenious partners who build the boats, for you idle fellows to sail in, I suppose?'

'Not exactly, Dame Spider. There you judge us harshly. These boats are not built for pleasure, but are formed solely for the protection of our young. The so-called boat or raft is actually composed of about three hundred eggs, glued together side by side, in such a manner that the whole mass in every point resembles a small boat.'

'Three hundred eggs!' exclaimed Mrs Spider; 'and do you mean to say that your tiny partner could launch a mass composed of three hundred eggs?'

'Ah, there lies her genius! and I feel sure that even clever as you are, Mrs Spider, were you to watch the operations of the gnat mother, you would acknowledge her to be a very skilful manager.

'First, you must understand that it is necessary for future existence that the eggs (which are the shape of a human creature's powder-flask) be laid in the water, for, if dropped in suddenly, they would fall to the bottom and be lost. To guard against this, the gnat mother rests her four fore-legs upon a leaf or some such floating

substance. Her body is thus held level with the water, except the last ring of her tail, which is a little raised. Having fixed herself in this position, she crosses her two hind legs, so that they may receive and support the eggs, and so prevent them from falling too suddenly into the water. Each egg when laid is covered with a sticky substance like glue. When the first appears, she holds it in her hind legs until another is placed next it, and fastened to it, then she glues these to another, and so on until she has formed a triangle, which is, as it were, the first framework of the boat. Thus she goes on laying egg to egg, using her hind legs like hands, to put them in their proper places. When the boat is half-finished she no longer crosses her hind legs, but stretches them out in straight lines, with them holding it up as with outstretched arms, and so keeping it on the surface of the water, while she goes on adding to and shaping it, until with her last egg she finishes it off with another point to correspond with that wherewith she commenced. Then away goes the tiny craft, floating with such buoyancy that, though hollowed at the upper side, no agitation in the water or even water falling upon it, will cause it to sink. The mother's work over, she soon dies, leaving the guardianship of her children to Nature and friendly Instinct.

'In a few days, the little larvæ begin to be alive, and quickly breaking through the lower end of their flask-shaped prison, without detaching it from the mass, they find their way into the watery element, and meanwhile the egg-boat, deprived of its living freight, is allowed to float away. Your aquatic cousin would tell you of the millions of these larvæ that are to be seen upon a sunny day, swimming about head downwards in the water.'

'Ah!' said Mrs Spider, 'I find head downwards the most comfortable position sometimes, when I am stationary, or suspended in the air, but I should not like to have to run about in that way!'

'To a stout little body like you it might prove apo-

plectic!' laughed Mr Gnat, 'but with our larvæ the case is different. Their breathing apparatus, which is situated, not in the head, but in the tail, consists of a funnel or tube, provided with a number of hairs so well oiled that they repel the water. These hairs, set as they are in a star-like form, support the creature upon the surface. When he wishes to go to the bottom, he closes them together, and down he goes into the watery depths.'

'He has to stay down then, I suppose?' said Mrs Spider.

'No, indeed; he has managed better than that, for a bubble of air which the oil has enabled him to retain at the end of his funnel gives him the needful buoyancy, so up he comes again, as soon as ever he pleases. When he has entered upon the pupa stage of his existence, he no longer swims with his head down, for a change having taken place in his formation, he now breathes through his head, which is furnished with respirators which look not unlike a pair of asses' ears, and through which he can inhale the vital fluid. In the pupa state the creature remains for about a week, now floating upon the surface of the water, now projecting himself through its depths by means of his fish-like, finny tail. Meanwhile, within the pupa case, hidden away from sight, beautiful organs are daily developing,—eyes, legs, and feathered antennæ, and gauzy wings, that will fit him to become an inhabitant of the air. At last, upon some bright day, when the sunbeams play upon the water, the creature, as if attracted by their smiles, and by them inspired with new hopes and new desires, rises not only to, but above the surface; then inhaling the pure air, he pants to be free, and bursting from his floating prison, he first shakes out his feathery plumes, and his gauzy wings, and using his old pupa case as a canoe, he still adheres to it, and so keeps his drooping pinions from touching the water. Very carefully must he proceed, or he may be wrecked, even at the first start upon his life-voyage; but a kind Power above watches

over the little helpless mariner, giving him strength to keep his slender boat upright; then, as he cautiously expands his gauzy wings, he gently touches the water with his legs, and, leaving his light bark to float away, he stands to enjoy one moment of silent ecstasy; then away he goes upward, upward, and, accompanied by thousands of his kind, the happy band humming in tuneful concert, wend their way through the air, the ladies to persecute poor humanity, and the gentlemen to enjoy idle life among the flowers.'

'Dear me,' said Mrs Spider, her eight eyes sparkling with pleasure, as she moved a little from the centre of her web. 'How your story has interested me! It makes me long for an invitation from my aquatic relative. She must have such fun among you all! especially at the time when your tribes are leaving the water. Really she must live in princely style!'

'Ah! you cunning old thing!' said Mr Gnat, 'now I know you! You'd like me to try rope-dancing, wouldn't you, ma'am? but I beg to say I prefer to dance in the air, so I give you good evening;' and, bowing his head till his feathers touched the leaf, Mr Gnat spread out his wings and flew away.

Not so fortunate were many of his companions, for they, not perceiving the silken cords, which attached the wheel-like dwelling to the leaves, found their slender limbs hopelessly entangled in them. Tug, tug they went, pulling with all their tiny strengh, but terrified and bewildered by their unexpected danger, they only floundered deeper and deeper into the enemy's snares.

'Stop a moment, my little dears!' said Mrs Spider, addressing in her sweetest tones the nearest captives. 'Wait until I come to help you, or you will perhaps break your pretty little legs.'

'Fly away as fast as you can,' said a great black creature that was very slowly dragging his long slimy body up the wall behind the rose tree. 'Fly away, or you are lost! That flattering dame means no kindness

to any of you. Ah me! I feared it would be so—she has caught one, and now another in her fangs. What a savage creature she is, to be sure!' and the poor, harmless Slug drew in his horns with horror at the carnage that reigned around.

Even one less tender-hearted than the good-natured Slug might well have been horrified at Mrs Spider's proceedings, for, darting from one to another of the entangled captives, she pierced their slender bodies with her hooked mandibles, into each one ejecting a subtle poison,* that quickly overpowered and rendered him incapable of further resistance.

* The venom of the spider is exceedingly powerful; and will even (in the larger tropical species) give suffering to man. Dr Livingstone, in his 'Travels in South Africa,' mentions having been bitten by a light-coloured spider, about half-an-inch in length, and for two hours suffered intense pain. He also mentions a black, hairy spider, having forceps at the extremity of its mandibles, which when pressed emitted distinct drops of poison. There is also a beautiful yellow spotted Epeira in South Africa, which Dr Livingstone describes as spinning webs perpendicularly between the branches, so strong that a person when walking gets his face enveloped in them as in a veil. Another spider spoken of by him is gregarious, and forms so great a collection of webs, as completely to hide the hedge or tree upon which they are spun.—*See* Dr Livingstone's 'Travels in South Africa.'

(*To be continued.*)

A VISIT TO THE CHILDREN'S WARD.

I SHOULD like to tell you of a visit I paid to some little sick children in an hospital, where I was going on business. When that was done, I said to the matron, 'Will you allow me to visit the children's ward?'

'Oh! certainly, she said, and at once led the way up stairs.

A ward, perhaps, you may not know. It is a very

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large room, with plenty of beds in it, for the sick people, who have nurses to attend on them day and night; and a doctor comes to see them twice every day, to know whether they are getting better, and to order them the medicines they require.

As I followed the matron into the ward I felt very sad at the number of suffering little faces before me. There was one dear little girl, sitting up in bed, with a gentle, smiling expression; but very pale, and with dark marks under her eyes. She looked pleased as I went up to her; told me her name was 'Annie,' and, in answer to a question, said she did not suffer much pain. Her pale face told a different tale, as did also the matron, who said, in an under voice, that Annie suffered very much at times. She has disease in her hip; and though she is quite a little girl, she has been a *long* time in the hospital, and it was feared she would never be entirely well.

As I turned from Annie's cot, my eyes fell on an infant, only a year old, fast asleep, with his sister watching beside him. His only illness was contraction of the upper lip, which the doctors hoped to cure by a little clever surgery; but as he knew nothing of their hopes or intentions, he was sleeping as sweetly as if no painful experience awaited him.

One glance at the little wasted form on the next bed showed that *he* had already gone through much painful experience. His face was pale, his eyes were hollow, and no childish look of pleasure or interest lighted up the sunken features as I came near. I had not to ask any question to learn what caused his suffering. Bound up between splinters, his left arm lay stretched out over the bed-clothes. The only part of the skin which was visible, was at the elbow, but so swollen, discoloured, and misshapen, that I could scarcely believe it was really part of the child's arm. He answered one or two questions, in a voice so low, that it seemed a trouble to him to speak. Then I turned sadly away from this little sufferer's bed.

There were some other little patients, all in different stages of betterness, and not exciting particular attention; but just as I was leaving the ward, I caught sight of a bright face in a bed behind the door. I stopped to say, 'I suppose *you* do not suffer much?'

'No,' was the prompt answer, given with a cheerful smile.

I was sorry I could not stay longer beside this bright boy; but a kind lady was waiting for me at the door, and I had already kept her long enough; so I presented to the children a very nice toy she had sent up to their ward, which was thankfully received both by the nurse and matron; and, after a hasty glance at a large doll's baby-house in a corner, I went down stairs. There was a second children's ward, but the chaplain was there; and when he is visiting, no one else is allowed to go in.

While I was going down stairs, the matron told me that 'Willie,' the bright boy in the bed near the door, has also disease of the hip, and sometimes suffers very much; but that he is always cheerful, and is a favourite with every one.

So ended my first visit to the children's ward; and the kind lady who had driven me to the hospital, and then, unable to go in herself, had quietly waited while I was visiting the sick-beds, and who is quite as fond of children as I am, formed a plan which made my second visit a pleasure to the little sufferers. Think sometimes of these sick little ones, and when you are praying for all those you love, do not forget to ask God to bless the little sufferers in the children's ward of the great city hospital.

A. J. C.

THE HISTORY OF ROVER AND PUSS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE STORY OF THE MICE.'

CHAPTER I.

THE BROKEN LEG.

SONNY. 'I suppose you've no more to tell about Dormouse?'

'I don't think I have: you know he is married and settled in the kitchen press. We shall not hear of him any more, unless grandmamma puts another trap in the press.'

Sonny. 'Well, some other story will do to-night—something about a dog or a cat.'

'I must have time to think of one, then.'

A pause of about three minutes, and I am aware that two white figures are raising themselves in bed and looking at me, while a small fat hand gently strokes my face.

'You've thought long enough, Tiss,' hints Sonny; 'can't you begin at once?'

'Mind, the dog must not die,' suggests Margaret. 'He must belong to kind people.'

My exacting audience having furnished me with explicit directions, there was nothing for it but to begin forthwith.

ROVER AND PUSS.

Rover was a slender young terrier, with a small head, and a shining black coat. He belonged to a boy called Willy Forrest, who lived in a thatched cottage at the entrance to a pretty village, with his mother, his brother James, and his little sister Mary. Rover often accompanied Mary when she went to herd Mr Henry's cows. He used to sit up and beg for five minutes at a time, when she showed him the pieces of oaten-cake she kept in her pocket. He was not at all a greedy dog, but he liked Mrs Forrest's oat-cake, which was as hard as a board, and felt like a bone between his teeth.

Puss and he lived principally upon stirabout, served to them in their own blue bowl, with the piece broken out of the side, which lay between them at the fireside, near Mrs Forrest's old slippers.

Though Rover enjoyed helping Mary to herd in the field, on the chance of stray morsels, he much preferred a race with James, who took down his gun from the hooks above the chimney, whenever he could spare time, and went to look for rabbits along the ditches.

If they returned home with a rabbit, Rover felt as proud as James did, and was quite sure he had a great deal to do with the getting of it. There was a pretty pond, half covered with water-lilies, in the field where the cows grazed. Rover never went nearer to it than he could help, for Willy had thrown him into the water two or three times, simply for his own amusement, and had laughed to see him struggling and panting to land, looking like a poor drowned rat, his hair clinging

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to him, his tail between his legs, shivering and shaking with fright and misery. This was no fun to Rover. He escaped from Willy's clutches as quickly as he could, and ran backwards and forwards between the pond and the clump of fir trees to dry himself; and ever after, he hated cold water in any shape.

He and Puss were very great friends. They had lived together for a whole year without a single quarrel, sharing their stirabout and the crickets on the hearth, of which they were both very fond. They frequently paused in their conversation to snap up a fat cricket, and the children used to hear them crunch it, and then go on barking and mewing as before. They liked a cricket as much as Robin likes a plum or a lump of white sugar.

Puss was a handsome young cat, with long whiskers, and a satiny grey coat with dark stripes.

One fine summer's evening, about half-past seven, James said to his mother, 'I wish you'd keep my bit of supper till I come in again. I'm off to the dyke at the shore field to look for a rabbit. Here, Rover! Here, poor fellow!'

Rover had started up the moment he saw James take down the gun, and was standing on the threshold wagging his tail, and looking back over his shoulder, all impatience to be gone.

James and Rover had a very happy evening. Rover was extremely useful in going in behind the whin bushes and tufts of fern, and driving out the rabbits. But at length he forgot his duty: he grew tired of hunting for the rabbits, and began to play. The consequence was that he ran in the way of James' gun just as he was in the act of firing. Alas! when the smoke cleared away, there was Rover lying where the rabbit should have been, whining piteously, with one of his fore legs broken.

'Dear, dear!' cried James, kneeling down beside him, 'this is a bad business. What will Willy say?'

He lifted the poor dog in his arms, and carried him

gently home, but every step he took shook Rover and hurt his leg.

'There, Willy,' said the contrite James, 'I'm sore afeared I ha' done for Rover.'

'Is he dead? Oh! is he dead?' cried little Willy, sobbing as if his heart were breaking.

Puss got down from her stool, and walked over to Rover, purring her sympathy all the way, while Mary cried loudly in concert with Willy.

'What's to be done?' asked Mrs Forrest and James, looking mournfully at one another. 'Go for Niel Callaghan,' said they at length. This was a bright thought. Niel was very clever at doctoring. He had once cured his cat of a broken leg by skilful bandaging; and if anybody's cow or pig happened to be sick, Niel was consulted about its case as a matter of course. He came immediately, and felt Rover's leg.

'Have you your knife about you, James?' said he. 'Well, cut me some splinters off that board, and give me a long strip of rag, and Mary may hold the candle down here for me.'

Poor Rover lay with his head on Willy's knee, and never said a word while his leg was being set. The only person who made the least disturbance was Puss. She walked round and round the group with her tail erect, mewing very piteously. When the operation was over, a truss of hay was shaken out for Rover to lie on, close to the fire, and a nice supper was got ready for him. James and the two children paid him a great deal of attention at first, stroking his head, and saying, 'Poor fellow! Good old dog!'

He lay there, licking the broken leg. His appetite suffered from the confinement for some days, but it returned by degrees, and he was soon able to enjoy his food as much as ever. You know sick people are often cross and fanciful. He began to fancy that the children neglected him, and told Puss that she ate far more than

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her share of stirabout. She was very good and patient, making every allowance for him.

One day she was having a delightful sleep on her stool, when Rover awoke her by saying, 'I'm very hungry. I wish I had a piece of rabbit, or even a cake to gnaw. Those stupid children are tired of petting me; they never think how dull I must be. No one cares for me; not even you, Puss. It's very hard.'

Puss got up and stretched herself, yawning all the time. 'Don't say *I* forget you, Rover,' said she. 'I'm sure I'm as sorry for you as I can be.'

Willy and Mary were playing in the window. Willy was making a new mast for his boat, and Mary was drawing pictures upon a slate. They heard Rover giving short barks, and Puss mewing gently, as if in reply, but they had no idea what it was all about.

Sonny. 'How did *you* know?'

'Because I am very clever.'

Margaret. 'Tell us the way they spoke.'

Rover said, 'Bow, wow, wow!' and Puss replied this way, 'Miow, miow, miow!'

The applause of my three auditors betrayed me into the indiscretion of barking and mewing too long, but I was promptly recalled to my duty.

Margaret. 'Foolish Tiss!'

Sonny. 'You have barked long enough; go on with the story.'

Robin. 'What did Puss do for poor Rover? Did she catch a mouse?'

(Happy suggestion! I went on very fluently from this point.)

Puss walked over to the heap of potatoes in the corner. She stayed there a good while, and discontented Rover heard a great deal of pouncing and rolling about of potatoes. He was dropping over asleep when she returned with a fat mouse in her mouth, which she settled by a sharp bite, and laid down close to Rover's nose. Now, this was a beautiful instance of self-denial

on her part. In general, she had a good half-hour's play with a mouse before she killed it: she allowed it to run a few steps, and, bounding after it, came down on it with her paw, gave it a little shake, and let it go again, to pounce upon it once more. But she was willing to forego this pleasure now for Rover's sake.

'Here, Rover,' mewed she, 'just try its head and shoulders. You have no idea how sweet that part of a mouse is. A rabbit or a cricket is nothing to it.'

'Ugh, ugh!' snapped Rover, 'I cannot eat mice. Nasty things! You may keep it for yourself.'

Willy and Mary had noticed this scene. 'Look, look,' whispered they, 'did you ever see anything as kind as puss? She has caught a mouse for Rover!'

Poor puss was very sorrowful. She did not say another word, but going back to her stool with quiet dignity, lay down again, leaving the dead mouse lying on the floor.

Robin. 'Did any person ever eat that mouse?'

Nobody. The children told James the whole story when he came in that evening. He was greatly amused, and lifting the mouse by its tail, offered it to Rover and Puss, who both refused it. He tried them with it several times; but as they persisted in turning up their noses at it, he at last opened the door and flung it out.

I am happy to tell you that Rover soon recovered enough to run out with the children as usual. There was, however, one very marked change in him. If he saw James take down the gun, he fled out of his way as fast as his slender black legs could carry him.

(*To be continued.*)

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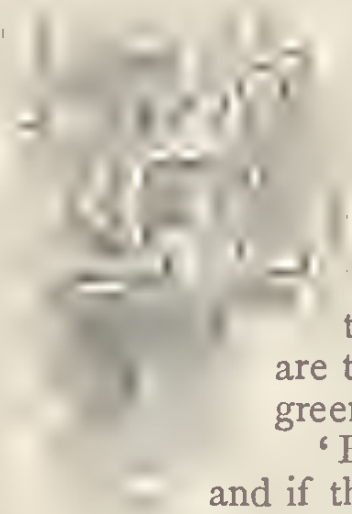
WILD FLOWERS FOR CHILDREN.

NO. VIII.—CALYSTEGIA SEPIUM.



'HOW dreary it is to walk at this season,' exclaimed Grace. 'All the pretty flowers are gone, and even the leaves have fallen from the trees and hedges. Does it not make you sorry, mamma, to think that these dry, withered things we are trampling under foot were fresh and green only a short time ago?'

'Every season has its charm, Grace; and if the leaves did not wither and fall off, we should not have the pleasure of watching the buds expand in Spring. So if things do seem a little dreary, we must not complain, but look forward with hope to the future.'

'I am sorry we have no flower left to talk about.'

'Don't be too sure of that, Robert; for I see something very pretty amongst the brown and shrivelled leaves in the hedge.'

'Yes, I see it too. It is a great white flower, like a marble vase. The stems are twined round the bare branches of the thorn, and the leaves are so large and green! do come over and look at it!'

'I know the plant well, dear. It is the Great Bindweed, very beautiful here, in its proper place, but a most destructive weed in a garden, not only exhausting the soil with its white jointed roots, which penetrate so deep that they are almost impossible to eradicate, but strangling all other plants which grow near.'

'I observe, mamma,' said Robert, 'that the roots are at some distance from the hedge. I wonder how they found their way over?'

'Like other climbing plants, the bindweed has a re-

markable instinct of vegetation, and will stretch out its young shoots fully six inches towards any prop.'

'See,' said Grace, 'I have unwound one of the stems.'

1. *Calystegia sepium.* 2. *Convolvulus arvensis.*

'If you were to twist it the opposite way,' replied her mother, 'it would either resume its old position, or die in the attempt.'

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'Then I suppose it can only twine in one direction,' said Robert.

'I have never seen it in any other, except when there is no prop near. Then two of these plants seem to make an agreement to intertwine, and one of them will alter its usual course in order to wind round the other.'

'I suppose it is called bindweed, because it clings so tightly?'

'Yes; it belongs to the convolvulus tribe; "convolvo" meaning to entwine.'

'Has it any other name?'

'It is called Calystegia, or hooded bindweed, which is a division of the order, because this plant, and the sea-bindweed, are remarkable for having two large bracts (or floral leaves) growing opposite to each other, which completely cover the calyx. They even conceal the young bud, uutil it suddenly expands from this leaf-like screen into a pure white vase-shaped flower. The name is taken from "kalos," beautiful, and "stege," a covering.'

'What are the bracts like, mamma?'

'Examine them for yourself, Grace.'

'I see they are heart-shaped (cordate I think you call it), and have a pretty tinge of brownish red through the green. They are indeed a "beautiful covering" for the pure white flowers.'

'I have torn off this blossom,' said Robert, 'and can see the calyx underneath. It has five sepals, but the corolla seems to be all in one.'

'It is monopetalous (that is, composed of one petal), but has five shallow lobes, and the same number of regular plaits, round the edge of the corolla. Flowers of this formation are termed "campanulate" (or bell-shaped) and are remarkably graceful and elegant.'

'Does the sea-bindweed resemble this kind, mamma?'

'In some respects it does; but the blossom is rose-coloured, with yellow plaits. The leaves are fleshy, and the bracts egg-shaped."

'Do any other varieties grow in this country?'

'Yes, "convolvulus arvensis," or field-bindweed. It is not a calystegia, for the bracts are minute, and far from the flower. The colour is pink, and it is not nearly so large in the bell as our white, but is equally troublesome and mischievous, twining itself round the stalks of wheat or barley, so closely that neither wind nor weather can rend it from its support. It is one of our shortest-lived flowers, and is so sensitive to the influence of the atmosphere, that it closes at the approach of rain, as well as in the evening. The delicate pink blossoms have a sweet perfume, resembling almonds. It flowers during the months of June and July.'

'And does the white calystegia blow in winter?'

'No, Grace; but it is one of our latest summer flowers. I have frequently seen it adorn the leafless hedges with snowy bells and large green foliage in the early part of November.'

'Does it grow in other countries?'

'Yes; in France, Spain, Italy, and Germany, and is everywhere disliked as a troublesome intruder.'

'You have not yet told us the shape of the leaves, mamma?'

'They are saggitate, or arrow-shaped, but differ from those of any other plant on account of the very peculiar, manner in which the lobes are cut abruptly off at the base.'

'Yes; I observe that, mamma. Some are blunt, as if the barb of the arrow had been broken; others quite sharp and pointed.'

'I do not think the flower has any perfume,' said Grace.

'Not the slightest,' replied her mother. 'Nor does it close before rain, or in the evening, like the more fragile rose-coloured species. I have often gone out by moonlight, and seen its large vase-like blossoms filled with the dews of night. It grows best in damp situations, and hardly ever brings its seed to perfection.'

'Indeed, I should suppose seed is very little necessary, when the roots spread so rapidly; if we had more bindweed in this country, it would prove quite a plague to farmers.'

'But remember, Robert, though our British varieties

are certainly more ornamental than useful, yet this order contains an extensive and highly-valuable tribe of plants. In the tropics they are very abundant, and are amongst the most gorgeous and elegant of the forest climbers. As medicines also, they occupy an important place, the roots of some bindweeds growing in the Levant yield valuable juices, and even our small pink convolvulus affords a resinous substance of some medicinal power. The Cissus, of which there is an abundance in Guiana, as well as in parts of the African coast, lately became celebrated for its uses in the manufacture of paper, cordage, and matting. Indeed, a patent has been recently taken out, by the inventor, of bindweed paper. The plant is stripped of its bark (of which an inferior kind is made), then the fibres are pressed quite dry, bleached, and mashed into pulp, in the usual way. The paper thus prepared is remarkably white and good.'

'Well, mamma, I am glad to hear that bindweeds are of some use in other countries, although they do so much mischief here.'

'I think they might also benefit us, if we would take a lesson from them.'

'What do they teach us? Let me see,' said Grace, thoughtfully. 'Is it that the most beautiful things are not always the best?'

'We might draw that lesson also; but to me they seem to show that in the path where God wills us to walk, we should glorify Him by displaying in our conduct the Christian graces and beauties with which He has adorned us; whilst if we try to thrust ourselves into a position that God has not appointed (just as the bindweed creeps uninvited into gardens and cornfields), we can only expect to be considered intruders, and looked upon with contempt and aversion. Let us, then, seek the blessing and guidance of our Heavenly Father, in the situation in life to which he has called us,—striving earnestly to perform our duties in that sphere where by His providence we have been placed.' S. T. A. R.

STORIES ABOUT QUADRUPEDS.

'Ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee.'—JOB XII. .

NO. XIII.

THE SQUIRREL.

WHOEVER is inclined for a brisk walk, let them accompany me on this bright day to the woods, now clothed in their autumnal hues. As the sunbeams light on the different-coloured leaves they flash on the eye: now scarlet, now yellow, mingled with every shade of russet to brown.

It is a famous day for a nutting party, and beech nuts and filberts alike are now to be found in quantities; but don't you suppose, my young friends, that you are alone in your foraging expedition. The woods are full of others, who, like yourselves, are bent on gathering nuts, and, I can tell you, are very expert at the trade.

'Ah!' you say, 'you are certainly correct. Some person must be up that tree above my head; for, right on the crown of my hat, down pops an empty nutshell! and here comes another, and another! Ah! my good fellow, two can play at that game; here goes a return one. Hush! what a scamper!'

Why, foolish boy, 'twas only a squirrel, who, all unconscious of your august presence, was seated high up the tree quietly eating his dinner, never thinking that the empty nutshells he threw away were to fall on your head. See how you have startled him, and with what wonderful agility he springs from branch to branch to get out of your way! Take a good look at him, with his reddish-brown coat, bright little eyes, and bushy tail; for it was to see him that we have brought you to this wood. For we may be quite sure that at this time of year—

> 'Up where the beech trees strung with nuts,
> In the autumn breeze are rasping,
> The squirrels are springing from branch to branch,
> Twining, leaping, and clasping.'

The squirrel belongs to the class of quadrupeds we are now considering — the 'rodents, or gnawing animals,' who are all more or less distinguished by two long cutting teeth, both above and below, shaped a little like a chisel, to enable them to extract the kernels from the nuts on which some of the species feed. There are various kinds of squirrels: the grey and the black ones are found in America, and in Australia the flying squirrel is often seen.

But our attention at present is to be confined to the merry little denizen of our own woods, from whom we may learn many a useful lesson. If it takes plenty of play, swinging from bough to bough in the grand old woods, it does not fail to work as well.

Have any of my readers ever seen a squirrel's nest? It is a sight worth the seeing.

High up a tree, at a place where the branches meet

and make a hollow, you will usually find it. It is beautifully made, and composed of leaves, moss, bark, and twigs. At the top there is an entrance just large enough to allow the squirrel to enter; but over the opening is a kind of canopy which projects beyond the nest, and protects the opening from rain. The nest is so comfortable, that it appears to prove a source of envy to some of the feathered tribe, for several instances are recorded of the martins dislodging the young squirrels, and taking possession of the cosy abode. 'Might against right,' certainly.

Like the ant, the squirrel is very provident, storing up in summer its winter supplies: and as we found that the beavers have their winter store-rooms, so also have our little friends the squirrels. Their store-rooms are generally to be found at the root, or in some hollow of the tree where they have built their nest. And if we take a peep at one of them, we will find a large supply of nuts, berries, and acorns.

The squirrel, when eating, sits on its haunches, and uses its paws like hands. The grey squirrel of America is much larger than our own, and is very destructive in the maize plantations, climbing up the stalk, and, tearing the ears to pieces, eats the sweet kernel. Sometimes hundreds of them go by night, and entering one of these fields, set busily to work; and woe be to the possessor, for, long ere morning, the whole crop is eaten up.

Squirrels have many foes, who lie in wait to destroy them, such as foxes, weasels, owls, and hawks.

Squirrels are easily tamed, and become great favourites with their owners; but I confess to having a great dislike to seeing these lively little creatures in captivity, and feel sure, could they speak, they would, like the gipsy girl, tell you how they pine

'For green woods and the leafy dell.'

In the far North countries these little creatures are said to change the colour of their coat in winter, and to migrate from one place to another; and when they come

to a broad stream, they have been seen to cross it clinging to pieces of bark. It is strange how suddenly, sometimes, they appear at a place where formerly they were unknown. A gentleman in the Lowlands of Scotland had often looked for squirrels in the woods surrounding his country seat, but in vain; they had never been known to come there, nor within several miles of the place.

One day, however, a child came running into the house shouting out—'A squirrel! a squirrel! Come and see!'

'Nonsense!' was the exclamation the news was received with, 'there are no squirrels here; you must have been mistaken.'

Still the child declared—'But it was a squirrel! a real live one, climbing up the large beech tree at the east of the house. I watched it for some minutes. Oh! do come!'

Thus entreated, some of the elders of the party accompanied the little boy to the spot, and, sure enough, there was a squirrel, looking quite at home, leaping from branch to branch—

'Flippant, pert, and full of play.'

Where it had come from no one could tell, but ere very long, squirrels abounded in the woods where in former days they were never seen.

But, see! the sun is sinking; through the graceful arch above our heads, the sunbeams have ceased to penetrate, and our little friends will soon be taking their supper and going to rest. One of the many of God's creatures, for whom He hath made abundant provision, and who wait on Him that He may give them their meat in due season: and of them we may truly say, 'What Thou givest them, they gather: Thou openest Thine hand, and they are filled with good!' M. H.

HISTORY OF THE FOUR PINS.

LOUNGERS in Rue de la Paix, Paris, have recently observed in the windows of one of the most fashionable jewellery establishments there, a very extraordinary bracelet, the oddity and splendour of which have excited universal wonder. It consists of four rusty, broken, bent, and battered pins, inclosed in a kind of framework, arranged to expose them with perfect distinctness, and surrounded by the most brilliant and precious gems. The history attached to this remarkable object is singular.

In the year 1828, M. Mazeres was the affianced suitor of Mademoiselle Mathilde Bruche. The evening appointed for the nuptials arrived. The night was dark and stormy; dark clouds hid the moon from sight, and the rain fell in torrents upon the earth, while the thunder uttered its loudest peals. But nothing on earth could detain M. Mazeres from the wedding. His friends protested against his going, plainly telling him the bride would be willing to wait for him until the storm should abate; but he turned a deaf ear to their pleading, and, refusing the aid of a carriage, he started for Monsieur Bruche's on foot. In the vicinity of the Royal Palace he fell down, and was seriously injured, while treading his way along a portion of the streets undergoing extensive repairs. On letting slip an exclamation against the superintendent of streets, he was arrested and plunged into a dungeon darker than the soul of his persecutor, and condemned to solitary confinement.

Days, weeks, months fled, and he continued condemned, but not judged. Torn from his dearest affections, and buried in darkness and silence, he felt his body weaken, and his mind threatening to lose its power. He was afraid of himself, and determined at all hazards to awaken from the lethargy which he knew would

render him insane. Although searched from head to foot by the officers at the time of his abduction, he discovered that four pins had escaped their notice, and they immediately inspired him with a means of recreation which would at least preserve him from absolute mental decay. How could four pins aid him? will be asked; and of what use to enliven his solitude? The poor prisoner occupied himself during the two years of solitary confinement in throwing the four bits of wire at hazard about his cell, and then in searching for them, to recommence the same feat.

This was his only solace—the sole pastime presented before him through all this weary lapse of time. But it served, simple as it appears, to keep him alive, until one day the revolution of 1830 brought him his liberty. His affectionate Mathilde greeted him on the threshold of his prison, and conducted him to her fireside. He related his touching story, and exhibited his four pins. A daughter's love has now caused them to be embalmed in jewellery, to the value of many thousand francs.

FOR THE CHILDREN.

I KNOW how little children
  Are trying to be good,
And dutiful, and loving,
  But can't be as they would.

And, oh! I want to tell them
  Where they must go to find
Help to resist temptation—
  Help to be meek and kind.

Jesus, the loving Saviour,
  Has said, 'Come unto me
All who are heavy laden;'
  Then, to the Saviour flee.

Go, get you to your closet,
  Jesus will meet you there;
And He will always help you,
  If you ask Him in prayer.

I know He always listens
  When little children pray;
I know that He will bless you,
  And help you every day

To love and serve Him better,
  And to be good and kind;
He can break every fetter
  That Satan tries to bind.

And if you seek him early
  You'll find him, I am sure,
For so the Bible promise is—
  It ever must endure.

Oh! if you find the Saviour,
  You will have found the friend
To whom you can go always—
  Always till life shall end.

And then, when death o'ertakes you,
  Jesus will by you stand,
With rod and staff to help you
  Safe to the 'Happy Land.'

Oh! dear, dear little children,
  Do seek until you find
Jesus, the loving Saviour,
  The Friend of all mankind.

'LITTLE DAVID WAS LEANING AGAINST MOORE'S KNEE.'

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OLD ANDY'S MONEY.

BY LETITIA M'CLINTOCK, AUTHOR OF 'ARCHIE MASON.'

CHAP. III.—LITTLE DAVID'S FORTUNE.

ANDY MOORE no longer complained of loneliness. This simple life filled him with content. He was a rich man compared with the villagers, who had to depend upon their week's wages for everything they might need—their frugal fare, their firing, the little pig that was to be fattened to pay their rent, the sack of seed potatoes, or the decent dress, without which none of them could be induced to attend church, meeting, or chapel.

Moore knew all about these wants, and they were often supplied by him in the most unostentatious manner. It was a good day for Knockbarra when he settled down in Mr Morrison's empty house.

Davy was Andy Moore's chief delight. The pretty child was dressed very carefully, and attended to with the utmost tenderness. He seemed to have stepped into the place in the old man's heart once occupied by his own brother David, and Mary Fleming.

Seated on the bench at the door, he used to watch Davy at play with the other little ones in the street, during that pleasantest part of the summer evening, when the sun was sinking behind Slieveagul mountain, and the rooks returning to their nests in companies high over head, when the woodbine in the garden sent forth its sweetest perfume, and the bees hummed drowsily in the churchyard sycamores close at hand.

Then the labourers on their way home to supper were wont to pause for a chat with Andy. Mr Townsend,

also, was fond of paying his visits at this hour, and greatly preferred sitting on the bench beside the old man, in full view of the boys at their game of marbles, and the people passing and repassing, to going in-doors.

'I think you must have discovered many friends, after all, you seem so contented here,' said he, on one of these visits.

'A few, sir, just a few; but I ha' made new ones. The most part of my friends are the children and grandchildren of the old neighbours. Someway I've so great a liking for them that it surprises myself when I look at it.'

'It does not surprise me, Mr Moore; you are of an affectionate disposition, and attach yourself quickly.'

'Don't call me "Mister," sir; call me "Andy." I was Mr Moore in the stranger's land, but here they all call me Andy. I don't differ from the rest of them except in being richer.'

'And in being better educated. Surely you do not undervalue such an advantage as that?'

'Oh! no, sir. I should be like Jenny Conolly if I did. She says you are teaching the boys too many things, and asks what is the use of history, and geography, and foolish stories; she tells them they ought not to read any book but their Bibles.'

'Oh! yes,' replied Mr Townsend, laughing; 'I have many an argument with her on that subject. It would be a thousand pities if Joseph were not encouraged to study—such an intelligent young fellow as he is! I have several promising pupils in that Wednesday class whom it is a real pleasure to teach. I hope what they learn from me will brighten their existence in some measure. Knowledge is power,' concluded the young man, enthusiastically, 'a grand possession that never becomes burdensome.'

'All right, sir, if ——'

'Well, Andy, why don't you finish what you were going to say?'

'I was only going to remark something that you know far better than I, sir—that this world's learning 's a fine thing when it's joined wi' the knowledge that maketh wise unto salvation, but a poor thing without it.'

'True, Andy, and sooner or later we turn away from all mere human learning to that. Francis Conolly, for instance, was head of our history class a year ago, the most eager of them all, and now he finds no interest in any book but one.'

'His chief pleasures are your visits, sir.'

'Ah! Moore, Francis is now the teacher and I the learner; he is very high up in a school of which I know nothing as yet. Like our Master, he is being made perfect through suffering.'

Little David had come up while they were talking, and was leaning against Moore's knee, with his great, dark eyes fixed upon Mr Townsend's face.

'I'm going a little piece wi' my uncle James: he's off to see Robert Wilson's sick cow, and he sent for me. I was afeard you'd be looking for me, uncle.'

'Well, dear, you are a good boy not to go without telling me. Run away, now.'

Andy looked after the child fondly. 'He's very gaining, sir, an' reminds me more and more of my brother David in his ways. David had the same coaxing way of looking up at you from under his brows. Will you teach him for me, Mr Townsend? You can bring him on well in the two kinds of learning we were talking of just now—the heavenly and the earthly. You see I made some money in Philadelphia, and Davy's to get the good of it; but I wish to lay it out in the wisest and best way for him—maybe there 'd be enough to send him to school and college and make a minister of him.'

'Or a missionary to the heathen? Should you like that?'

'That would be very good indeed, sir; but still, I'd sooner he was telling the glad tidings in his ain country to his ain people. If such a thing could be as that he'd

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ever preach in that church and work among Knockbarra people the way you do, it would make me very happy. But that couldna be, I know—it's only a foolish conceit of mine, I'm afeard.'

'Unlikely things sometimes come to pass, Andy. Yours is a beautiful scheme, at any rate. I promise to take all the pains I can with Davy's education.'

'Thank you kindly, sir. If that were to be the case, my money would be bringing in good interest, and Davy, and the neighbours too, would be the richer for old Andy Moore, wi' the true riches that are much better than gold and silver.'

It was not long before Knockbarra knew that little David was being 'teached for a minister.' Old James Conolly was much pleased with the idea. 'Just to think that our Jane's bairn might one day be a gentleman like Mr Townsend,' he used to say to Moore, when the two old men met to discuss the cherished plan over their pipes. He and Davy still spelt over the child's lesson on Sunday evenings as they had been in the habit of doing, but he could not help feeling a new-born respect for his little fellow-scholar. For Davy went every day to the glebe to learn his Latin grammar with Mr Townsend, and being very intelligent, he made rapid progress. Mr Townsend had a perfect mania for teaching. The old people had not known what to make of him when he first came to the parish fresh from college, and full of schemes for educating the whole community. His zeal about the Sunday school they thought quite legitimate, but as to history, geography, and writing, what use would they ever be of to them? So, after one or two signal failures, he gave up all hopes of improving the parents' education, and confined his efforts to the young people. Of these a few like James and Joseph Conolly and Alick Boyd, were grateful for his instructions, and bid fair to do him credit.

Jenny did not like the new state of affairs, and sometimes complained of it to Andy.

'Where are they all this evening?' inquired the latter, as he and Davy arrived on a visit to Francis, and found old James at his supper alone.

'All off to the glebe,' replied Jenny, discontentedly. They hardly took a taste of their suppers, an' them working the whole day. They hadna as much as time to fetch me a "go" of water. The father'll ha' to do it himsel, an' him not too fit for it.'

'Nonsense, Jenny,' replied Jamie, with his quiet smile. 'It's a pleasure for me to fetch you anything, woman dear. I'll get you twenty cans o' water if you like; an' the boys are well employed at the glebe.'

'I dinna know that, Jamie: sure there's nothing done in this house but writing copies and reading them library books—idle stories, the whole of them! Joseph fleeched me to read one that his reverence recommended, an' I couldna sleep for long after I lay down, wi' thinking on the battles and murders, when I should ha' been meditating on other divinity. We should be busy with our Bibles: if we read them enough we'd ha' no time for other books. Stories is just a device of the Enemy for keeping us off our knees. Don't you mind the verse of a hymn that says,

> 'When I attempt to soar above,
> To view the heights of Jesus' love,
> The monster seems to mount the skies,
> And veil the Saviour from my eyes,'

Her eyes filled with tears as she spoke: she was evidently sincere in her distrust of any secular learning whatever.

'What do you think about it, Jamie?' asked Moore.

'Well, Andy, there wasna much talk of book-learning when you an' I were young; but there was plenty of idle talking and drinking in the public houses, wi' maybe a fight before we got home. I like the writing and history books that Jenny complains of far better than that. The young ones maun ha' their little amusement; but I'll no

deny that the good Book fits old folk like Jenny an' me the best.'

This was an unusually long speech for Jamie, who was in the habit of listening smilingly to his wife and sons, and saying very little. He went off to repair the boys' neglect, by fetching Jenny her water, accompanied by his grandson, while Andy went over to Francie's bedside.

The invalid's thoughtful blue eyes were intently fixed on the rose-coloured and purple clouds which floated over the golden plains where the sun had just set above Slieveagul.

The window at the foot of his bed stood open (unwonted sight for Knockbarra!) and admitted delicious scents from the cabbage roses in the garden, and from the clover field outside the hedge, where ghostmoths and cockchafers disported themselves every genial summer evening. James's goldfinches were hung to an apple tree in sight of the window: their happy twitter mingled with the liquid notes of a blackbird from Mrs Boyd's garden which adjoined the Conollys'.

Other pleasant sounds came in at the open window—the laughter of the village lads from the ball-court, and the distant plash of oars from the boats on the salmon fishery.

Francis turned to welcome Andy Moore with a faint, satisfied smile, and begged him to bring a chair close to his bed. He felt instinctively that he could talk to him with more chance of being understood, than he could do to any one except Mr Townsend.

'You'd almost fancy that yon was the glory of our Father's house shining through,' said he, pointing to the lovely colours of the sunset. 'While my mother was speaking against the history class, I was thinking of a story Mr Townsend told us the last night I was there, about a Spaniard, who went to discover new countries in South America, and came home telling his countrymen that he had found a region called El Dorado, where the houses were roofed wi' gold. Well, they

were very keen to find the place, and they went searching for it year after year, but always returned disappointed; so Mr Townsend said the name El Dorado became a sort of proverb, and was given to any prize men sought ardently for, without being able to obtain; and I mind well how he said that our earthly hopes are very apt to turn out El Dorados. So you see, Andy, the Spaniards never found that country where the houses were roofed wi' gold, but Christ's people will inherit a city whose streets are golden, and whose gates are pearl. I can picture it to mysel' quite well when I lie here looking at the sunset.'

'It will no be very long till you get there now, Francie, dear.'

'Oh! Andy, do you think that? The time seems so long to me in wearing round, an' I'm not good at waiting wi' patience; but I wish from my heart I could say, "God's will be done."'

'You look very bad to day.'

'Ay! the bones are cutting the skin at last, an' I canna turn on my side ever so little, but just as James lifts and lays me. I'm all one pain, Andy. I dinna say that before my mother or the boys, for fear of vexing them.'

Then, with a smile that was almost sadder than tears, he continued, 'How can I thank you enough for having that window put in. You've done many a kindness for Knockbarra folk, but that's the best of all. I keep it open all night, and the pleasant air blows upon my face. I make them fix the pillows under my head so that I can look out. The river is beautiful these summer nights from sunset to sunrise; an' I can make out the fishing boats sometimes, an' I keep wondering which of them Joe Scott is in. This is the first summer he has ever been on the fishing without me.'

'I believe you an' he were great comrades.'

'Ay, that we were: first at school, then at the mill for better than two years, and always in the one boat at the fishing. I like Joe nearly as well as any brother I have.'

'Sure you dinna watch all night, Francie?'

'I hardly know mysel' sleeping. I keep as quiet as I can, for my father and the boys are tired out working all day, and canna want their rest. The rest of the labouring man is sweet, as I used to know well. James leaves a drink for me on the little table here close to my hand, before he lies down beside me, and I try to keep quiet, for he is very feeling, poor fellow! He takes on too much about me as it is.'

'Uncle Francie,' said a silver-toned, pleasant voice, 'are you ony better?' and Davy, who had returned from the well with his grandfather, and had been listening unperceived to their conversation for the last five minutes, pushed his head in between Andy's elbow and the bed; and he held a cabbage leaf filled with black currants in both hands, but according to the common habit of his years, was grasping it so tightly with his little hot fingers, that the fruit had a squeezed, uninviting appearance, and the juice was slowly dropping down upon his tunic. He had been to their neighbour's garden on his return from the well. Jane Boyd, with whom he was a great favourite, was lifting her washing off the hedge at the moment he and Jamie passed, so she summoned him into the garden, and after plying him with such small gooseberries and currants as grew there, made him help to gather the best of her black currants for Francie.

While thus engaged, she stole many a sorrowful, pained glance towards the window, at which Andy's head was indistinctly seen. She and Francie had taken such pleasant walks together at this hour last summer! She had no heart to wander by the river alone, so she worked harder than ever, in the vain attempt to banish sad thoughts and regrets. What would she not give to ease his pain a little? The neighbours remarked that she had become very dull, and staid moping at home, when her brother Alick went to the country merry-makings. They guessed the reason for her pale cheeks and sorrowful looks. It was thought that Francis had once had a liking for Jane, and

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that she might have returned it. People even said they were beginning to 'keep company,' when Francis took ill.

Of course, their hopes (supposing they had ever cherished any) had long been at an end; but they were great friends still, and Jane spent a good while at the Conollys' every evening, doing all she could to amuse the poor invalid, and help him to forget his suffering for a time.

'Jane sent you these, Francie, and she bid me say she'd come in by-an'-by, when she's done her washing.'

'Take some to yoursel', dear.'

'Oh! I'd plenty o' them in the garden: won't you taste them, Francie.'

'I hear you are a fine scholar, Davy. Do you mind the hymn I learned you? I hope you love the dear Lord Jesus, for you'll ha' to preach Him to the people when you're a man. Do you love Him, dear?'

'A little, Francie. Is He making you better?'

'I shall be better soon; He is doing the best for me.'

'My grandfather says you'll be rightly in a wee while.'

'So I will, dear; though not in the way you think. Oh! Andy, I hope the release will come soon. How shall I be able to bear this pain if it gets worse? I'm afeared I shall murmur, and dishonour my Lord.'

Andy was almost dumb in the presence of this great affliction. He produced Mary Fleming's well-worn Bible, and tried to comfort Francis in better words than his own.

(To be continued.)

THE BIRD'S RELEASE.

Sir Robin, from his prison high
Looks out o'er hill and dale;
'How fair,' he cries, 'the summer sky,
How sweet the summer gale.'

He hears the birds with cheerful song,
The green boughs rustling through;
He sees the light clouds sail along
Their upward ocean blue.

'Would that such liberty were mine!'
The imprison'd warbler sings:
'Dear birds, I hear your songs divine,
I mark your radiant wings.

'What care I that my gilded bower
Is deck'd with proud display?
I may not brush the field-born flower,
I may not tilt the spray.

'To cheer me, oft my gentle mate
Will pause my prison near;
But while she mounts on wings elate,
I lonely linger here.

'The water's in a gilded cup,
That laves my captive feet,
And daily am I smother'd up
With fruits and flow'rets sweet.

'But freely, freshly flow'd the rill
Where I was wont to drink;
And fruits and flowers more luscious still,
Grow wildly at its brink.'

Sir Robin droops his plumed crest;
He stints his song of sorrow;
He will betake him to his nest,
And moan again to-morrow.

* * * * *

On yonder crimson cushion sits
A child-like form of love,
Such as an angel soul befits
To float the earth above.

And as she drinks, with ear intent,
And rosy lips apart,
The pathos of that sad lament,
Compassion stirs her heart.

A warmer glow is on her cheek,
Tears on her lids are lurking,
As, struggling through her bosom meek,
A purpose deep is working.

And now a light is in her eye,
And on her lips a smile;
She riseth up, half doubtfully
She standeth still a while.

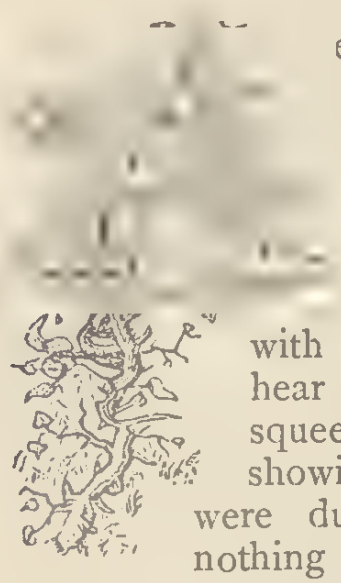
Step after step she onward goes;
Upon the gilded wire
Softly her trembling fingers close;
She cannot now retire.

Her cheek is tingling more and more,
Her heart is throbbing fast;
She lifts the latch, she opes the door—
Sir Robin's free at last!

She follows with a straining eye,
And a gush of wild delight,
Far up into the blue-arch'd sky,
The bird's exulting flight! A. M. W.

THE THREE LITTLE GIRLS IN RED.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.



evening concert was a great event in the days of our youth. It might be third-rate, fourth-rate, fifth-rate; very likely, in our little country town, it was sixth-rate;—what did that matter to my sisters, Nina, and Lottie, and myself? We embraced our mother with joy when she offered to take us to hear the singing, and when there, we squeezed her hand—our ordinary mode of showing *silent* delight—till all the rings were dug into her thin small fingers, and nothing but dear mother's goodness and tenderness towards us prevented her crying out from the pain!

In the reserved seats, which we never thought of approaching—though at our entrance, the conductor, struck by my father's quiet and modest address, did wave us into them, as if he thought they were our proper place—sat a lady in an ermine tippet, with a handsome man, her husband, and three little girls in bright scarlet Cashmere frocks.

We did not see much of our neighbours' children, and in general had no companions but each other; so, little girls had a great attraction for us, and these looked nearly about our ages; they were bright, pretty, and beautifully dressed, while we had got very tired of our mourning, which we had worn for a long, long time—about three-quarters of a year, or thereabouts—and gay colours were a relief to our eyes. Therefore it was, that the three little girls in red appeared to us the most interesting objects in the concert-room; even more interesting than the lady in pink silk and black lace who sang so much, or than the bearded gentleman who looked so fierce, and accompanied her so softly on the pianoforte!

THE THREE LITTLE GIRLS IN RED.

Their mother rose first, when the concert was ended, and she wrapped her ermine more closely around her, and stood up to go, with an indifferent air. The gentleman stooped, and in a tender, fatherly manner assisted the elder girl to muffle the little ones in two silky white shawls, and to tuck their small hands into miniver muffs. Just as they were going out, the three turned suddenly round, as if they would like to give a last look at the gay and lighted room. Their eyes fell upon us, and they smiled a smile which gratified us extremely, for it plainly said:

'We should like to know you, and to hear who you are in mourning for, you three little girls in black.'

There was a tall, old-fashioned house very nearly opposite ours, which belonged to our Squire; it was railed off from the road, and enclosed in a formal strip of garden planted with geraniums, calceolarias, heliotrope, and china roses. There was a beautiful orchard behind, and meadows and woods sloping down to the river; also at the side, a kitchen garden full of fruit and vegetables, and great cabbage roses, where once a year we were invited to come and eat gooseberries, in a large arbour with a table and six rustic chairs, all carved, the Squire's wife told us, by a lame boy about the place, who was being taught to earn his livelihood by making garden seats.

One dreary November afternoon, a few days after the concert, we were looking out of our nursery window in the intervals of playing at being the Squire's wife and daughters, which was a very favourite game with us, when we saw three little girls in scarlet cloaks and miniver muffs, with a single large daisy lying flat against their white silk bonnets and long fair hair, descending the steps of the Squire's house with their governess. They were going for a walk through the town, that was plain; moreover, from the way in which the eldest handled a red morocco purse, now taking it out of her pocket, and now putting it back again, we guessed that the walk might end in a shopping expedition.

We watched for their return, and would, if we had dared, have resisted the nurse's call to tea, since that meal took us from our position at the window; but we did not dare; and the children must have glided back in the half-dark, unobserved by our eyes.

After this, we often noticed our little neighbours coming from or going to the large house, and were noticed by them too, to judge by the quick, half-pleased glances they threw at us from under their dark eyelashes. We learned that their surname was North, that their father was a captain in the navy, and was a very good man, and had done something wonderfully brave in the wars, for which the Queen had given him a blue ribbon with a little bronze Maltese cross hanging to it; that his wife, Lady Gertrude, had been considered a great beauty, and was very much prouder of that than she was of her husband's honours; and that they had an elder daughter, who wore her hair braided over her forehead, and moved slowly, and considered herself grown up. She always spoke of her younger sisters as 'the rest,' and held herself at a great distance from them.

Captain North was a younger brother of the Squire's, and had come to pay him a long visit before going to join his ship in the Mediterranean Sea. All we could hear about our young neighbours interested us extremely; and when our mother went to pay her yearly visit to the Squire's wife, either of us would have given any amount of toys, if we had them, to have been chosen to accompany her. However, we were old-fashioned children, and quite unaccustomed to ask for favours, so we refrained from hinting our desires to her.

She came back looking sad and anxious, and I remember she took us quite into her confidence about the three little girls in red.

'Thank God, my darlings,' she said, 'you are all so healthy and strong, that I have never had a day's anxiety about any of you! Things are very different with Captain North and his three dear little girls.'

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'Why, mother, what can be the matter with them? We thought they must have everything they wanted.'

Then our mother took me on her knee. 'Everything except health, and—' her voice sank; she could not bear to say anything unkind of any one, and yet the truth must come out—'health, and a good mother.'

'O dear, isn't Lady Gertrude good?' we asked, eagerly.

'Well, she may be a good woman—I can't tell; but she's a sadly indifferent mother. There are those three little dears looking as delicate as possible, and scarcely able to eat a morsel, and she is talking of going to Rome for the winter with those gay friends of hers, and can't see that she ought to stay at home and nurse her children!'

'But are they so delicate, dear mother?'

'Yes, ever since the third of November, when they staid out late in the raw mist, they have never been well, and your father says they are consumptive, and that the greatest care ought to be taken of them.'

Our father was the town apothecary, and people were apt to respect his opinions, since he never gave one that had not been well considered.

'Poor little girls!' we said.

'Poor little girls, indeed! Lady Gertrude has not an idea how to take care of them, and looks vexed when your father speaks to her about them. Captain North is over-anxious, and waits upon them all day long, much to his wife's amusement. Ah! it's a strange world!'

We had not learned the way, so common in children now-a-days, who ask, without a blush or hesitation, for whatever they want, but were very diffident and shy of questioning our elders; so we never asked our father about his little patients, only whenever he happened to let fall anything about them, we hailed his information with delight.

One day it was, 'Miss Charlotte is a little better;' then, 'Miss Cora is a trifle worse;' or, 'It's very odd, Lady Gertrude never seems anxious.' Then he said,

'Captain North looks very sad; no wonder! He is going away.'

One morning the carriage was ordered early, and we saw it drive away, with Lady Gertrude leaning back sleepily on the cushions, and Captain North by her side indeed, but straining half out of the window to catch a last glimpse of the house which was to contain his darlings for some time to come. A request from his wife, that he would have the goodness not to make such a draught, caused him to shut the window in a hurry; and we saw no more of either of them.

All this was against my father's express wish. He wanted Lady Gertrude to take the sick children to Nice. But she had set her heart on wintering at Rome without them; so, she got Mrs North to promise to take charge of her four girls; for Miss Alice North had now come to join the others. Perhaps Lady Gertrude did not know any better; she agreed however, at last, that if she heard the little girls were worse, she would send for them.

Christmas was coming, and they began to improve, and my father talked less of Lady Gertrude's cold-heartedness, and more of the three children's pretty ways and speech, and of their perfect obedience to their elder sister; and seeing our interest, he half promised to take us to see them one day, only he was busy, and never seemed able to make time for it. Then the children had a relapse, and Miss Charlotte's cough grew very bad indeed. My father said to my mother that he thought she was bound for another country; and Nina, Lottie, and I, who had just finished 'Robinson Crusoe' for the second time, connected this remark with ideas of palm-trees, and dark-hued natives, and softly-shining waves murmuring musically over smooth, yellow pebbles, seen through water that was bluer than anything could be in England.

But our father was thinking of the 'light that hath no evening,' the health that 'hath no sore,'—of 'the sweet and blessed country,' even heaven.

So strange it was! We rejoiced when we fancied the three little girls transplanted to a strange land, where crosses and trials would doubtless have awaited them; but when our father explained his speech to mean heaven, and angels, and fadeless flowers, and a road without crosses, and a glorious little childhood that was never to pass into anything that was old or sad—we wept!

Two days before Christmas, my father said to my mother:

'Miss Charlotte is better, and now that my lady has written and promised that the children shall be sent for after all, and that she will take them into Italy with her, I don't feel them so much on my mind; so what do you say to running up to London with me, and spending Christmas-day with my old mother, as we used to do before we had these children to keep us at home?'

So we understood that our father and mother intended to spend Christmas-day, to which we had so looked forward all the year, away. Our grandmother was too feeble to bear us with her. If they went to her, we knew we could not go, too; and we did think it sad, very sad, to feel that there would be no one but nurse to lead us to church, and bid us to join in the Christmas hymn. We were sure to find three presents on our three plates on Christmas morning whether our parents were at home or no; but these could not make up for their presence, and we made a point of bursting each into a separate flood of tears as we watched them set off for the station on Christmas Eve.

We had noticed that for several nights the light in the high nursery window at the Squire's had ceased to burn; so we hoped Miss Charlotte was getting better, and would be able to enjoy the Christmas feast—that feast which to us would be so dreary. However, we had one great consolation which was denied to the three little girls in red—we were able to go to Church, and to join

in the hymn; and O, how pretty we thought the star over the altar, which was softly shaded with yew!

We had scarcely reached our own house after the service, when the groom from the Sycamores came up, and to our surprise, though not, it appeared, to nurse's, put a note into Nina's hand, addressed in very large letters to 'The Misses West.'

He said, in a most respectful manner, considering what a very tall man he was, and what very small children we were, that he would wait, if we pleased, and take back our answer at once. Nina, confused and blushing, began:

'The Three Little Girls in Red would be so glad if you would come and dine with us at one o'clock, and spend the evening.'

'Night Nursery,

'Christmas Day.

'*P.S.*—Alice will show us the Noah's ark.

'CHARLOTTE NORTH.'

Another 'P.S.' in very bad handwriting:

'Papa has sent us silver bracelets from the Morea, and you shall try them on. 'CORDELIA NORTH.'

Another 'P.S.' in a scarcely distinguishable scrawl; very badly spelt besides:

'There is too bee a plom-pudding widout anny ploms.

'CATHERINE NORTH.'

We were some time in comprehending the meaning of this very charming note; but the groom waited, looking perfectly certain what our answer would be, yet anxious to hear it from our own lips.

'O nurse,' began Nina, 'may we?'

'To be sure, my dears; that is what your father and mother meant all along, only they told you nothing about it, for fear Miss Charlotte should get worse. The three little girls in red, as you call them, asked your father to let you come a week ago; they said they wanted to see you.'

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Nina then rose to the occasion, and assuming at once the dignity of elder sister, she, with a little bend of her head which I never ceased admiring, said:

'Will you tell your mistresses—Miss Charlotte, Miss Cordelia, and Miss Catherine North—that we shall be very happy to come.'

The man grinned a little at her pompous manner, and then disappeared, and as it was now a quarter to one, and we already had our best black silk frocks on, we prepared to follow him. The old house was full of odd nooks and corners, and we always liked going to it. We heard afterwards that the Squire and Mrs North were entertaining a great many visitors; but these did not interfere with us, nor with their little nieces.

We went up the great oak staircase, and then the butler put us under the care of a kind-looking, middle-aged woman, who beckoned us up a private stair, with a great many corkscrew windings in it, and showed us at last into the long narrow room, with its deep embayed windows looking different ways, that had been called the day nursery ever since the house was built.

At one end, a cheerful fire was blazing, and around it, on three red cushions, were seated the three little girls in their Cashmere frocks embroidered all over with the most beautiful silk braid; their fair hair brushed smoothly back, and tied with a ribbon of red velvet. The two youngest sprang to meet us, and took us by the hand and kissed us, as glad, it seemed, to see us, as we were to see them; but Miss Charlotte only looked up from her cushion with a bright, sweet smile, and said something about its being 'so nice of us to come; and she would have got up to meet us, only she had just had a fit of coughing, and she was so tired.'

Poor, pretty face! How it drooped the moment the smile faded, the colour changing constantly, and the lips showing as red and bright as the frock, which we observed hung so loosely on the little frame.

We all came up to her and kissed her with one con-

sent, and then Lady Gertrude's nurse came forward and welcomed ours, and produced six snowy-white pinafores trimmed with lace, which she tied on us all without distinction; while the nice servant we had seen at first brought up the mutton and chicken which our father was accustomed to prescribe for his patients, and Miss Alice appeared for a moment to shake hands with us, and say very patronisingly:

'So you have come to dine with the rest. I hope they know how to make you comfortable.'

Then she said grace for us, and glided away, followed by glances of distant admiration from her three sisters.

What a merry dinner that was! The nurse seemed so fond of her charges, and so gentle with them, and they so obedient. Then they and we were allowed to talk as much as we pleased, and by the time the 'plum-pudding without any plums,' was set on the table, we had told each other all sorts of stories of nursery life. It appeared from their remarks that they had been accustomed to watch us with quite as much interest as we had felt for them, and hearing from our father, whom they used to question about us, the name we had given them, they talked of us amongst themselves as the three little girls in black.

After dinner the nurses left us to ourselves for a time, and we sat by the fire, each little girl sharing her cushion with one of us, ate our dessert of baked apples and sugar-candy, and talked gentle quiet talk for Miss Charlotte's sake, as she was not equal to noisy games.

She and Nina were sitting together, and she was telling Nina, in slow, gentle tones, about the beginning of her illness.

'It was the third of November,' she said, 'that misty, disagreeable day, and we did not know it would hurt us, and we persuaded Miss Bryant to let us go to the shops, and'—she hesitated.

'Yes,' said Nina, 'you had a little red purse with you. We saw you.

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'But you didn't see where we went, did you?' asked Miss Charlotte, in a tone of alarm. 'I don't know why I should mind telling you, though,' she added confidentially. 'We wanted to buy a suit of clothes for poor Will, the lame boy, to go to church in on Christmas-day; and it was such fun choosing it ourselves; and then we asked the tailor to be so kind as to make it, and there it was, ready to be put on, ever so long beforehand.'

'Was Will glad to get it?' asked Nina, impressed by the great delight she thought it must be to clothe any one; but Miss Charlotte seemed inclined to hurry over this part of the business.

'Patty says he wore it at church to-day,' said she. 'Do you know, I was lying awake last night, and I heard twelve strike, and the Christmas bells ring out. Did you ever hear the Christmas bells in the night?'

Happy Nina was able to answer that she had never lain awake so long.

'Was it very bad to miss your sleep?' asked she.

'Oh! no,' said Miss Charlotte, eagerly. 'I was thinking of the dear beautiful angels coming to tell the shepherds that Christ was born, and I quite enjoyed myself.'

I heard no more of their conversation; for, at this moment, the two little ones took Lottie and me to see the dolls' house, and all the other toy-marvels with which the nursery abounded. I never saw such a generous child as Miss Cathy. She wanted to give Lottie and me everything we happened to admire; always saying, in answer to our repeated refusals, 'Why not? why not? I have so many things.'

By and by Miss Alice came in with the Noah's ark, and a space on the table was cleared, for the exhibition of elephants and camels, men and women. Miss Alice sat down in the midst of us, and pulled out the animals one by one; but her sole care was limited to making them stand upright, and she had not a notion of forming the grand procession, all round the table, of beasts and birds, winding up with the spider, to which we had been

accustomed. One or two startling novelties she introduced, such as putting the butterflies to ride on the camels' humps, etc.; and then there was a call of 'Alice, Alice!' from down-stairs, and rather glad, I thought, to be rid of the trouble, and to return to the gay party she had left, Miss Alice put the things back again, and went away.

The little sisters seemed very fond of her, and evidently missed her when she was gone. She reminded us very much of Lady Gertrude, and we were rather afraid of her, for her manner was not hearty. Even Miss Charlotte remarked to Nina:

'I don't like her to call us *the rest*, it sounds so as if we were nothing to her; but when I said this to papa, he told me it was the prettiest name for us in the world, and that he should always call us so, for that we were truly *his rest* when he came back from sea. So now we don't mean to mind it any more, and really Alice is so very superior.'

We had drunk our tea, and eaten our sponge-cake, and we stood up ready to go. It was a last parting with our interesting neighbours, for they had been already sent for abroad, and were only waiting until Miss Charlotte should be pronounced equal to travelling. Who could say whether, or where we should meet again?'

So we were sad; for we had grown to like each other, by dint of constantly watching each other's movements, and we had spent a pleasant Christmas day together. Will it, therefore, be wondered at, if one or two quiet tears fell as we said good-bye, on that Christmas evening, to

THE THREE LITTLE GIRLS IN RED!

E. E. G. B.

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STORIES ABOUT QUADRUPEDS.

'Ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee.'—JOB XII. 7.

NO. XIV.

THE JERBOA.

WE might traverse the whole of Great Britain through in search of the quadruped we are going to tell you about; but we would not find it there. We must prepare for a long journey, and find ourselves on Egyptian ground, ere we begin our search with any hope of success. Passing through the streets of the city of Alexandria, and reaching the numerous plains that surround it, we may look attentively around us, as hereabouts we have heard the Jerboa is to be found.

Look there! in the dusk, do you see a curious little creature bounding along?—and there goes another and

another! Let us watch them more nearly. What? You think they are only rats. No; rats don't leap along in that fashion. See! here is one we can get a good peep at, only let us be careful to hide ourselves, for, on hearing the slightest noise, it will bound off and disappear into its burrow, which, depend upon it, is near at hand.

What a curious little creature it is—not unlike a tiny kangaroo—at least in having very long hind-legs and very short fore ones, which, like the kangaroo, it uses as hands to hold its food. Look! what a long tail it has, with which it balances itself, as it leaps along. Its head has some resemblance to a rabbit, and its eyes are very bright and full. Don't you admire its soft, sleek, pale yellowish fur; and that curious tuft of black fur at the end of its tail? What numbers of them there are about—see, the place seems alive with them!

They live, like the rabbits, in burrows, which they dig with their nails and teeth. These burrows are very long and winding, and if we explored them we would find at the far-off end from the opening a large space, where they make their nests, and store their food. From the shortness of their fore-feet, it was at one time supposed that the jerboa had only two feet, and so they were called *dipodoi*, or two-footed. The Egyptians eat these little creatures, and it is considered quite a luxury to dine off a jerboa. They are hunted by greyhounds, and sometimes nets are thrown over their burrows, and in trying to make their escape they are caught.

Jerboas abound in Syria, and the general idea is, that they are the creatures alluded to in the Scriptures as mice. And if this is the case, then, small and harmless as they look, they were most destructive, probably by destroying the springing crops. We read in 1 Sam. vi., that when judgment fell upon the Philistines for retaining the ark of the Lord amongst them, that the priests and diviners advised the lords of the Philistines not to send the ark away empty, but to return it to the God of Israel along with some trespass offering—one of which was the

The Children's Hour, December 1, 1869.]

five golden images of the mice (or jerboas) which mar the land,—it being supposed by idolatrous nations, that if the image of any creature that was causing evil in the land were laid on the altar of their deity he would be appeased, and the evil cease.

Do you observe that, just as the jerboa is preparing to leap forward, its tail takes the exact form of the letter S, reversed thus, ꙅ. We have read that a cruel experiment was once tried in order to find out whether the extent of the jerboa's leap was in proportion to the length of its tail. A number of these little creatures were caught, and their tails cut to different lengths, and it was found that those which were cut the shortest could only take very short leaps, whilst one whose tail had been cut off, fell backwards as soon as it tried to raise itself on its hind legs, preparatory to taking a leap.

But as the dusk is turning into darkness, we must leave our little friends the jerboas and seek our homes, having at least learned the lesson, that even with such apparently harmless and insignificant creatures the Lord can, when He pleases, bring down judgment on those who forget Him, and despise His holy name.

M. H.

LONDON DAISIES.

THEY were seated on the pavement,
Two poor, ragged, hungry boys,
Heeding not the burning sunshine,
Heeding not the dust and noise;
In their hands a few white daisies,
  Gems to them of beauty rare,
Mingling with some stolen grasses,
  They arranged with jealous care.

Nought they knew of nature's beauty,
Field, and wood, and shady trees—
Theirs had been a life of hardships,
Far from such delights as these—
Theirs had been a crowded city,
  Scanty love, and light, and air,
Yet they seem'd as glad as princes,
  Seated on the pavement there.

First a daisy, then a grass blade,
Then a daisy came between,
Till they brought the prettiest posey
Ever yet in London seen.
And I thought the joy that brighten'd
  Each poor haggard face divine,
As he raised his task, completed,
  Shouting gladly, 'Look at mine!'

Often has this recollection
Come to me in sadder hours,
And I never see a daisy
But I thank God for the flowers—
Thank Him for His mercies given,
  Thank Him for His gifts denied,
Asking grace to prize the daisies
  Blooming on life's rough wayside.

Sunday at Home.

'GENTLEMAN JACK.'

BY MRS RUSSELL GRAY.

CHAPTER I.

'NOW, Tiny, and May, and Johnnie, put away your books; the clock has struck four.'

'But, mamma,' said May, 'we can't go out; it's raining fast.'

'Very true, May; but still you have done enough lessons for this afternoon; now you must have some play.'

'Hurrah!' cried Johnnie, jumping upon the table, and flourishing a ruler in his hand, 'Come on, brave soldiers, and fight for your king!' and then with a bound he sprung to the floor and began to help May to put their books in the cupboard. Tiny had already placed

her small spelling-book and slate in their proper corners, and was playing with her doll, walking about the room, then stopping to show her waxen baby how the rain was beating against the window panes.

'Oh! Dolly,' she said, 'I am so glad that you are not out in this storm, for your pretty red cheeks would be quite spoilt, and your new boots wet through and through.'

Here a loud laugh made Tiny look round to see what was the matter, and then she herself began, first to laugh, then to skip about the room, holding her doll high above her head, that she might see the fun. Johnnie and May had been very busy dressing up their papa's favourite terrier—a sensible looking, brown, short-legged dog, always ready to join in the children's play.

Now he was quietly letting Johnnie put on him a little red cloak of Tiny's, and a hat with a white feather in it; whilst in his right paw he obediently held a sceptre in the shape of May's paper knife. Johnnie had managed to make him stand quietly on the top of a desk, his fore paw raised, as if commanding attention, and seeming to enjoy being the subject of admiration.

'Oh! you good doggie,' said Tiny, 'how I love you.'

'Poor fellow! how long is he to stay like that, Johnnie?' asked May.

'Till I tell him to move, to be sure,' replied Johnnie.

'Good doggie—poor doggie,' repeated Tiny; he will soon let you go. Yes; very soon.'

The intelligent creature blinked his eyes at Tiny, and then watched to see what Johnnie would have him do next.

'One, two, three!' said Johnnie, and clapped his hands together, at which well-known signal, Boz dropped his sceptre, shook off his hat, and put himself on the nearest chair to be undressed.

'Here, Boz! now you may go and lie down on the rug,' said Tiny, which he lost no time in doing, but kept his bright eyes fixed on every movement of the three children as they went flying past him.

One game succeeded another, until at last they were quite out of breath, and each declared he or she could play no longer.

'Oh! what can we do till tea-time?' said May; 'how I wish mamma were here!'

'So do I,' said Tiny.

'So do I,' echoed Johnnie, patting Boz; 'don't you, old Boz?'

Boz blinked, and looked ready to agree with his young master, then gave a sudden start, for at that moment the schoolroom door opened, and the mamma came in.

'Oh! mamma,' the children all exclaimed, 'do please to come and sit round the fire with us;' and they all caught hold of her dress to prevent her from going away.

'Do, mamma, tell us a story,' said May.

'Yes; that would be jolly,' said Johnnie; 'a real story, you know, mamma.'

'If I tell you a story,' replied their mamma, 'it must be about something that has happened to myself. I mean, something true, and that I have seen and know myself; those are the only kind of stories I am clever enough to tell.'

'Oh!' said May, seating herself close to her mother, 'a real story is so much nicer than a story out of a book.'

'To be sure it is—hurrah!' shouted Johnnie, arranging himself on the rug close to Boz, patting the dog's head, and declaring that Boz—dear old Boz—would like the story as much as they would.

'Tiny shall sit on my lap,' said her mother; 'and now I am ready to begin.'

'Once upon a time—'

'That's just what I like,' said Johnnie. 'I do love a a story that begins with "once upon a time;" don't you, May?'

'Yes, Johnnie, I do; but let mamma go on. Now, then, please, mamma.'

'Well—once upon a time, when I was a little girl, we lived in a house at Gravesend that had a large garden

and a good sized yard, in which we kept a number of cocks and hens. You would never have been tired of looking at them and feeding them, if you had been there. First, there was Jack, a fine high-spirited English cock, a majestic-looking fellow, with a superb scarlet crown on his head, purple and red feathers that hung gracefully down on his wings, and a tail of brilliant colours. Then the hens, they were pretty creatures; some were quite black, with a red crest; some were speckled with different hues, so that when the sun shone upon them, it was impossible to say whether their feathers were mostly purple, or brown, or gold. And then, oh! Tiny, which you would have liked best of all, were the pretty white hens—one especially, that they called Snowball, was the very prettiest and whitest hen you ever saw.'

'What a little darling thing!' exclaimed Tiny, clasping her hands; 'was that pretty white hen yours, mamma?'

'Yes, Tiny; it belonged to me and my brother, Arthur—your own uncle, you know, Tiny. Arthur named it Snowball, because there was not one single coloured feather in its graceful body. This hen and little Redcap, a speckled fowl with a tuft of red feathers on its head, were the beauties of the yard.'

'But, mamma,' interrupted Johnnie, 'do tell us something about that fine old Jack.'

'Yes, Johnnie, I am coming to him—all in good time. I remember the day he was born. It was a bitterly cold, bleak morning; and as he had been hatched in the oven, we were obliged to keep him in the kitchen, or he would have died.'

'How funny!' said May. 'What do you mean, mamma, by "hatched in the oven?" 'I thought hens always hatched their own little ones.'

'So they do, May; but Jack's mother had died, so we were obliged to take her eggs and put them into an oven that was kept always in one particular state of heat, so as to be as much as possible like the warmth of the hen's body.'

'And were the eggs put in a dish?' asked May.

'No, indeed, May, they were laid in a snug little box lined with soft wool. So when Jack was born, we had a comfortable basket brought near the fire, and we let him stay there if he would. Arthur and I fed him several times a day; first, with sopped bread; and then we boiled an egg quite hard, and chopped it up into very small bits; and Jack could very soon take care of himself. At the end of a week we let him out upon the lawn when the sun shone, and he would run about so fast that we very often lost sight of him; for he would creep among the rose bushes, and it was very difficult to keep one's eyes upon him.

'Once we had such a fright! Arthur was called away, just as it was his turn to look after Jack; and when I came into the garden, he was nowhere to be found. We had a fine hunt for him; and, after an hour's search, discovered him quietly pecking away under the gooseberry trees in the kitchen-garden. After this we resolved that he should not be allowed to go where he liked; so Arthur contrived to inclose a little plot of grass, where he might run about, but not be able to get away again. This did very well until Jack was grown bigger, and then we found that we must give him more space, if we wished him to be a fine, healthy bird; so it was then that your grandpapa had a nice large yard separated from the garden, in which the cocks and hens might do as they liked; for it was very bad for them to be shut up in a hen-house always.

CHAPTER II.

'And did you put Jack into the yard with the other cocks and hens, mamma?' asked Johnnie.

'Yes, we did, when he was big enough to manage well for himself. We soon saw that he promised to become an uncommonly handsome fellow; but, with all

his beauty, he was a most quarrelsome creature, always wanting to fight, ever ready to fly at anything that came in his way. If Arthur only put the top of his boot to his nose, he would peck at it fiercely; or if one of the servants just held the end of a broom to his foot, he would make a dash at it, and try to pull out the twigs, growing quite angry if he was not allowed to get at it.

'This was amusing, and only made everybody the more anxious to provoke him, and see what further mischief he would try to do.

'You see, from his having been brought up in the kitchen, he was a favourite with us all, and, in spite of his proud, passionate temper, became the pet of the family. Certainly, he amused us very much with his droll tricks.

'One fine summer afternoon, when the hens were all quiet in their house, thinking of the new chickens that were coming, and the servants had put away the dinner things and gone upstairs, Mr Jack marched boldly across the yard, up the three steps that led into the kitchen, and went straight to an open cupboard, in which he had often seen the cook put away nice things, when he was a young chicken. It happened that day that there had been a currant pie for dinner, and a part of it that was left had been put into the lowest shelf of this cupboard. Jack spied it out, and began to eat, eat, eat, till his crop was so swelled out that he could eat no more; then, having got all that he wanted, he was just walking off, when Arthur came in and caught him. He could see what Mr Jack had been about, for his bill was red with currant juice, and he had made a fine mess and splutter on the floor, close by the cupboard.

'Arthur let him go off without punishing him; indeed, I don't see how he could have been punished, for he knew no better, and we had all encouraged him in his tricks.

'When grandpapa heard of Jack having helped him-

self to the currant pie, he laughed heartily, and said, "I am glad of it; I am glad of it! He has had a capital dinner."'

'What fun!' said Johnnie.

'But it was very naughty,' said May.

'And greedy, too,' added Tiny, looking up at her mamma.

'Yes, so it was, Tiny,' replied the mother; 'but then, you know, Jack knew no better. However, you will soon see that he was not always to have his own way.

'Grandpapa was a very early riser. He was in the garden long before the servants were up; and the first thing he did was to open the hen-house, and let out the hens and Jack, and then he gave them a good breakfast of barley-meal and corn. It was one of his greatest pleasures to see how eagerly they ate it all up, and then would follow him about, expecting more.

'One morning we missed grandpapa from the breakfast table, where he was generally to be found waiting for us. He was not in his arm-chair in his accustomed corner. Arthur ran about the house looking for him; but he was not in his dressing-room, nor in the school-room, nor in the kitchen. But presently, we heard his voice calling "Arthur, Arthur! May, May!"—that was *my* name, you know, dears. Still, we could not see him, but thought that the sound came from the bottom of the yard. So down we both ran, Arthur and I, as fast as we could, to the hen-house, and there was grandpapa standing near one of the perches, holding Jack tight by his neck and legs.

'"Oh! what is the matter?" I said.

'"What has Jack been doing, papa?" asked Arthur, quite out of breath.

'"Take him away," replied grandpapa, "and I will tell you all about it when I have rested, for I am very tired."

'We saw that something terrible had happened, for

there was blood on Mr Jack's handsome head; some of his feathers were hanging loose, as if they had been plucked at by something or somebody. Altogether, he looked in a miserable plight.

'Arthur put him into a basket and shut him up in the back kitchen. Then we ran to breakfast, eager to hear what had happened.

'We did not like to ask any questions, seeing that grandpapa looked vexed. So we waited, and as soon as he had finished part of his breakfast, he began:

'"When I went into the yard this morning, I found Thomas (our gardener) talking with a stranger, who was carrying a basket covered over, so that at first I could not see what was in it; but he slipped off the cover, and then I perceived well enough a fine Cochin-China cock and hen, which the man wanted to sell. I thought you, May and Arthur, might like to have another variety among your poultry, so I paid the man the price and sent him away. Then I opened the basket and let the two prisoners run out; and very glad they were to stretch their long legs, and flap their cramped wings. I gave them a good breakfast, and thought they were all going to be very happy together, and went off for my walk round the kitchen garden.

'"I was stepping across the lawn on my return, intending to go into the house by the glass door of the parlour, when I fancied I heard an unusual noise in the yard. I went to see what it was about, and to my dismay found our Jack fighting with all his strength at the tall Cochin-China cock, first pecking at his breast-feathers, and then trying to dig his bill into his eyes. It was a dreadful sight to behold Jack's rage and cruel spite. So eager, so furious was he, that he paid not the least attention to my call; so after several pulls at his tail, to get him away from the poor beaten, strange cock, I was obliged at last to seize him boldly by the head and legs, and there hold him tight until somebody came to help me."

'"But," said Arthur, "I did not see any strange cock and hen when I found you holding Jack."

'"No," replied grandpapa, "because they had both run away to hide themselves, poor things! They are somewhere about—I dare say under the rose bushes."

"Oh dear! not in my new flower-beds, I hope!" cried Arthur, jumping up. "My seeds are fast coming up. I must go and see." And away went Arthur in the midst of our breakfast, not stopping to hear the sad end of the story.'

Here both Johnnie and May caught hold of their mamma's hand, exclaiming, 'Oh! what is it, mamma? Were the two Cochin-Chinas lost?'

'No, May, not lost—something worse.'

'Worse!' cried both the children. 'Do, mamma, go on.'

'For a few minutes,' continued the mamma, after Arthur had left the room, nobody spoke a word. I felt ashamed and sorry for Jack's behaviour. I knew that he was now grown a strong, powerful bird, but I never imagined he would show such a passionate temper as to try to kill one of his own companions.

'"I tell you what," grandpapa said, finishing his last cup of coffee, and pushing back the plates on the table, "if Mr Jack means to give himself these vicious airs, I shall have him sold."

'"Oh! papa, papa!" I exclaimed, running to your grandpapa, and throwing my arms round his neck, "please don't. I am sure Jack will never do so any more. It was only because this great, tall Cochin was quite strange and new to him. Please, papa, oh, don't sell poor, poor, dear Jack! Perhaps, if you did, they might kill him!"—and I began to cry.'

Here Tiny gently wiped away a tear from her eyes with the corner of her pinafore, and pressed herself closer to her mamma.

'Poor mamma!' she said, 'how sorry you must have been—and to cry, too.'

'I didn't know mamma ever cried,' said Johnnie; 'that's just like Tiny, or even May, sometimes.'

'But, Johnnie, you know mamma was not so old as she is now; she was only a very little girl. Weren't you, mamma, dear?'

'Not so very little, May, for I was ten years old.'

'But you were sorry,' said Tiny, 'and so you cried for that. Mamma was not naughty when she cried;' and Tiny turned to Johnnie, as if that question were quite settled.

'To be sure not,' said May. 'And now, mamma, what did grandpapa say when you cried and begged that Jack might not be sold?'

'Well, May, grandpapa was very kind, and promised me that Jack should have a fair trial, but said that for a few days at least, if not a week, he must live by himself in the back kitchen, until his wounds were healed; for the Cochin-China cock had given Jack as many hard blows as Jack had given him.

'Just when grandpapa had said this, Arthur came running back out of breath. He had found the new cock and hen, and had taken them into the hen-house and shut the door.

'"He is a fine bird, this new fighting-cock," said he; "but his wife is not to be compared with Snowball, nor yet with Redcap. Do come and see them, May."

'So we went together to the yard, and there sat the two new-comers in a corner of the hen-house by themselves, looking sad and dull. We did not go very near them, for fear of frightening them, but we scattered some barley-meal before them, and they soon began to move about and to eat; and then I could see for the first time how different they were to any fowls we had ever had before. We agreed to call the cock Lobster, because he was of a kind of red all over; and his wife we called Daisy, because she had yellow and white spots on her back, which reminded us of the flower of the daisy. They were not pretty; their legs were so very long, and

their tails so short and dumpy—such a contrast to our pretty Snowball and Redcap. But they were gentle and inoffensive, and Arthur and I resolved to like them, and take care of them with the rest.

(*To be continued.*)

WHAT THE MINUTES SAY.

We are but minutes—little things—
Each one furnished with sixty wings,
With which we fly on our unseen track,
And not a minute ever comes back.

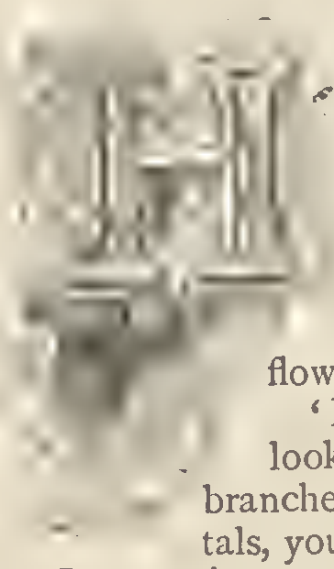
We are but minutes; each one bears
A little burden of joys and cares;
Take patiently the minutes of pain,
The worst of minutes cannot remain.

We are but minutes; when we bring
A few of the drops from pleasure's spring,
Taste their sweetness while yet you may,
It takes but a minute to fly away.

We are but minutes—use us well,
For how we are used we must one day tell;
Who uses minutes has hours to use,
Who *loses* minutes whole years must lose.

WILD FLOWERS FOR CHILDREN.

NO. IX.—HELLEBORUS NIGER.



'HOW cold it is to-day, Robert; I don't think I shall venture out.'

'Oh! do, Grace, it is really very pleasant weather, and everything looks so bright and glistening.'

'No, I don't like a white world; give me green leaves and pretty flowers.'

'But, Grace, I assure you, the trees look better now than in summer, for the branches are laden with such dazzling crystals, you might fancy yourself in fairy-land.'

'I am going to the garden, Grace,' said her mother, 'and, if you will accompany me, I think we might still find a flower there.'

'Oh! mamma, you are surely not in earnest;—a flower at Christmas-time, when the ground is almost covered with snow!'

'Well, come and see.'

Grace prepared to brave the elements, and was soon in the garden with her mother and brother; and there, in a sheltered corner, their eyes were attracted by a cluster of dark shining leaves, in the centre of which nestled a large white flower, surrounded by several buds.

'Oh! mamma,' exclaimed Grace, 'I am so glad we have got a flower to talk about. I had no idea any plant could blow in December.'

'I thought every one knew the Christmas rose,' said Robert. 'I suppose it is because Grace is so much afraid of the cold that she never saw it before. Has it any other name, mamma?'

'Yes, botanists call it "Helleborus niger."'

'What does that mean?'

CHRISTMAS ROSE. *Helleborus niger.*

'It is taken from the Greek *helein*, to injure, and *bora*, food; because Hellebores are all very poisonous plants. This species is remarkable for the blackness of its roots, and is therefore distinguished by the word niger, or black.'

'Have we other kinds in this country, mamma?'

'Yes, two wild varieties, Helleborus viridus (or green Hellebore), which bears a dull green flower; and Helleborus fœtidus (or stinking Hellebore), with larger blossoms, and tinged with a purple hue. Both varieties bloom in the month of February, in woods and waste places, and are dingy and uninteresting in appearance.'

'How unlike the pretty Christmas rose; but is it not a garden flower?'

'Yes; at least I have never seen it grow wild like the other Hellebores; and although a very handsome species, it belongs to the same family, and resembles them in many particulars. All are extremely poisonous, and are remarkable for their large leathery leaves, which are numerous and often divided; the stems are also thick and short.'

'You would not suppose so pretty a flower could be poisonous.'

'No; and it has been always held in much esteem, both on account of its beauty and the peculiarity of its blossoming season. In former times it was the custom to scatter the pure white petals over the floors at Christmas, in order to hallow the house. Indeed, so great was the superstitious veneration with which the ancients regarded these flowers, that they were supposed to be a protection against the power of evil spirits.'

'What a silly idea, mamma. How could people be so foolish?'

'Because they were ignorant. We should be thankful that we live in times when the light of knowledge is so much clearer; and, above all, that we have been taught to confide in the care and protection of our heavenly Father, instead of invoking the aid of charms and spells.'

'Is the Christmas rose really of any use?'

'I do not think it is considered so at present. There is a kind of Hellebore, mentioned by ancient writers, which was used as a specific for madness, and many botanists have supposed that it was this variety; but, of course, we cannot be sure.'

'I have examined this blossom, mamma, but I cannot find the calyx.'

'It has none, Grace. Some flowers are devoid of a corolla, some of a calyx, and are, as in this case, termed incomplete. The one-coloured envelope representing both is called a perianth.'

'Mamma,' said Robert, 'what is this upright bunch in the centre, looking like small twisted leaves, and surrounded by a number of tiny thread-like stalks, with something resembling a seed at the top of each?'

'Those are the pistils and stamens.'

'You promised to tell us about them. What are they for?'

'They are the essential parts, without which no flower is perfect, and they are necessary to the formation of the seed.'

'What is a pistil?'

'It is the organ occupying the very centre. You can see there are several in the Christmas rose. A pistil is composed of three divisions, called the germen, the style, and the stigma. The germen is the lowest part, and is the chamber in which the young seed is formed; the pieces, or leaves of which it is composed, are called carpels. The style is a small stalk placed over the germen, which varies in length and form, and is sometimes altogether absent, as in this case. The stigma is the top of the style, which is usually enlarged, and often divided, or lobed. In the Christmas rose the stigma lies on the carpels, because the style is wanting. Now, try to remember the three parts of a pistil.'

'I know them, mamma,' said Robert. 'The germen is the lower place where the seed is formed, and the

style a kind of stalk for the stigma, which is at the top of all.'

'Exactly, Robert; and now you have to learn about the stamens, of which you may observe a large number surrounding the pistils. They are also composed of three divisions, namely, the filament, the anther, and the pollen. The filament is long and thin, a kind of thread-like stalk, which forms a support for the second division, or anther.'

'And what is that?'

'It is the most curious part of all, and resembles a little box, sometimes having two or more cells, in which is contained the pollen.'

'That is the third part of the stamen, mamma. I suppose it must be very precious, to be so carefully packed up in a box.'

'Just so, Grace; for it is that which gives life to the seed. Pollen is a small dust, usually of a yellow colour, and when sufficiently ripe, the anther in which it is contained bursts open, scattering it in all directions. Some of the grains adhere to the stigma (or summit of the pistil), which is always more or less damp, and, passing down through the style by means of a tube which each grain of pollen throws out, reaches the germ, causing vitality to the seed, which immediately commences to enlarge, until it arrives at perfection, whilst the rest of the flower withers and declines, being of no further use.'

'That is all very interesting, mamma, and I think I can remember the three parts of the stamens also: the filament, a thin, thread-like stalk; the anther, which is like a little box; and the pollen, the small dust contained in the box.'

'Yes, Robert; and there are many flowers which have such strange and ingenious modes of scattering the pollen so as to reach the differently-situated stigmas, that if you could examine them, you would be surprised at the wonderful skill displayed in the preparation and adaptation of each to fulfil the purpose for which it was

formed. When we read that God created "every herb bearing seed after his kind," how little can we realise the full exhibition of His power and wisdom until we hav examined the structure of these herbs in all their minute parts! Then, indeed, must we exclaim with reverence and awe, "In wisdom hast Thou made them all!"

'How much more should we bless and thank Him when we consider that He has sown the seed of t' Gospel over the world, and, by the life-giving power of His Holy Spirit, has caused it to take root and spring up within the hearts of His own people. Surely we should "praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men."'

S. T. A. R.

THE PILGRIM.

Oh! Pilgrim, weary with the road,
And burden'd with thy heavy load;
A place of rest and safety see,
'Knock, and it shall be open'd thee.'

But will they let a wanderer in,
Who bears a load of shame and sin?
Yes, fear not, guilty tho' thou be,
'Knock, and it shall be open'd thee.'

This is the home where Christ abides,
Where He for all a home provides;
All may for refuge hither flee,
'Knock, and it shall be open'd thee.'

Oh! may a little child draw near,
And find a friend and welcome here?
Will Jesus look on one like me?
'Knock, and it shall be open'd thee.'

J. D. Burns.

THE HISTORY OF ROVER AND PUSS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE STORY OF THE MICE.'

CHAPTER II.

MRS TORTOISE-SHELL'S DELINQUENCY.

JOE and Ellen White and the baby, a dear little creature of three months old, were the Forrests' neighbours on their left hand. Baby was a great favourite with Mary. She stole out regularly every evening, when her mother did not want her, to nurse the little thing; while Ellen prepared Joe's supper. This business over, baby was undressed and laid in her cradle, which Mary rocked with one foot, chattering to Ellen the while; and Rover, who always accompanied her on these visits, lay near her making faces at the Tortoise-shell cat, whom he greatly disliked. Rover had his reasons for disliking her.

First of all she had a very bad temper, and would show her claws on the least provocation; and secondly, he had once seen her steal to the cupboard, and take the little piece of bacon that was being kept for her master's dinner. While he lay quietly licking his paws, he saw a great deal out of his half-closed eyes.

'I'm glad you are not like Mrs Tortoise-shell, dear Puss,' he used to say, as he and his own cat settled down for the night on their heap of straw in the corner.

'Why, Rover? What's wrong with her?' asked Puss. 'I'm sure she's a very handsome cat.' But she never got any satisfactory answer to her question, for Rover was wont to give a short, impatient bark, and turn round and go to sleep.

It happened one day that Rover went to pay Ellen and baby a visit, without his little mistress. The door stood open, and in he walked, but not a creature could he see. No Ellen, no baby, no Tortoise-shell!

As he stood near the door, wondering very much where they all were, a little, faint wail burst upon his ear. It was baby's voice, certainly; but not at all like her usual lusty tones. This cry was weak and feeble, as though she were choking. Rover ran towards the cradle. There lay the huge, heavy cat upon the baby's chest and face, and the poor little thing was not strong enough to move her, or do more than make the faint sound that Rover had heard. The cat lay in an attitude of luxurious repose, purring her enjoyment, for she did not care that she was suffocating baby. She only thought the cradle was a fine soft bed; and that now Ellen was out, was her time to try it.

There was Ellen's knitting lying on a chair—a sign that she had not long gone out. Rover started back when he saw Tortoise-shell in the cradle, showing all his teeth in his surprise and anger; but he did not pause for more than a second. He took the tip of the cat's tail, which was hanging over the edge of the cradle, in his mouth, and gave it a hard bite.

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She awoke with a fearful yell, and she and Rover were presently rolling over one another on the floor. Ellen entering the house, with her can of water, at this very instant, saw the whole affair.

Baby was now crying loudly with fright, and Ellen's first act was to rush over to take her up and soothe her.

Tortoise-shell and Rover were fighting very fiercely. At length the former succeeded in shaking Rover off; and, making a dart out at the door, managed to scramble upon the roof of the house where Rover could not follow her; so, after he had stood barking at her for some time, he went slowly home. He found his own fireside so occupied, that he could not get into his usual place. Mrs Forrest was peeling potatoes, with a wooden bowl at her feet, and Niel Callaghan was smoking at the other side of the hearth, taking his pipe from his lips every few minutes, to tell a story, or make some joke, while Mary was sitting on Puss's creepie just in front of the fire, employed in mending her frock.

So our brave warrior lay down on the straw in the corner, and began to lick his wounds. Tortoise-shell had dug her sharp claws into his breast and sides, and tiny drops of blood were standing here and there upon his black coat. He was showing Puss these honourable scars, and telling her how he got them, when Ellen came in with baby in her arms.

'Mary,' said she, 'did Rover come in?'

'Yes, there he is lying in the corner.'

'That's a brave dog, Mary; do you know I think he has saved baby's life. Our cat got on the top of her in the cradle just now, when I was out for water, an' she'd ha' been killed if it hadna' been for Rover. He was pulling the cat off, when I came in at the door. I'm afeared he's badly hurt, for Tortoise-shell's very fierce and strong.'

'Rover, Rover!' called Mary, throwing down her work. 'Come here, good dog! Fine old fellow!'

Rover came over holding his head up, and his short ears well back, with a modest air of self approval. Mary

gathered him into her arms nearly crying over him, and Mrs Forrest and Niel petted and praised him, and examined his scratches, till he forgot how very badly they were smarting.

Ellen held baby down, and made her stroke him with her tiny soft hand, telling her she had a good right to love Rover. He crept back to bed at length, feeling quite convinced that he was a fine dog, who had done a very clever thing.

Mrs Forrest got up, and took a plate of rabbit's bones out of her press.

'I was going to ha' made a wee drop of kitchen wi' these for James's dinner,' she informed the company; 'but Rover's deserving of them, an' he shall have them.'

So Puss and he shared the bones—a magnificent repast for them.

'There never was such a dog as I am,' repeated Rover between each mouthful. 'Mary said so. Did you hear her, Puss?' Crunch! crunch! 'The best old dog in the world.' Another crunch! 'Do *you* think so, Puss?'

Puss dropped the rabbit's foot she was eating, to say in a tone of humble, grateful admiration, 'Oh! Rover, you know well what I think of you.'

It was the very next morning that Puss came in, and sat down on her stool opposite Rover, in a great state of excitement. Her heart was beating fast, and her eyes were very bright and large. She sat quiet, staring straight before her. Rover did not know what to make of her. It was some minutes before he said, 'What is the matter with you, Puss?'

Puss turned her eyes towards him, and he could see that her long whiskers were shaking with agitation. 'You know,' said she, 'I went into our garden to watch those linnets upon the apple tree. They were very shy, tiresome little things! and did not let me get even a chance snap at one of them. I was creeping home along the hedge, watching the sparrows, in hopes that they might be tamer than the linnets, when I saw Joe White going

towards the river, with a sack across his arm. I was wondering what he had in the sack, when I heard a very pitiful mew, and I knew Mrs Tortoise-shell was inside. Oh! Rover, do you think he was going to drown her in the river? I wish you would find out all about it.'

Rover tried to soothe her nervousness, and promised he would bring her the earliest news of Tortoise-shell's fate. Accordingly, he kept his ears open when he went with Mary to pay her visit, and soon heard a satisfactory explanation of what Puss had seen. Almost the first thing Ellen said was, 'Well, we've got rid of Tortoise-shell. Joe's mother wanted a good mouser, and as there are no children in her house, we thought there'd be no harm in sending the cat to her. Joe set out with her this morning. It's fully six miles to Ballywilligan and back. I don't expect him home to-night. If we had kept Tortoise-shell, I should never have had another moment's peace of mind. Here, Rover, come to me, you good old dog. You saved little Mary Ann!'

So the usual work had to be gone through. Baby had to be held down to pet Rover, and Mary was told to look in the press for a crust of bread to give him. He liked his daily visit to Ellen better than ever.

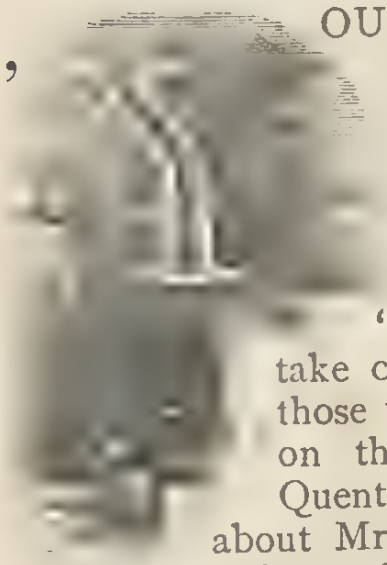
(*To be continued.*)

LIFE AMONG THE FLOWERS.

BY MONA B. BICKERSTAFFE,

AUTHOR OF 'DOWN AMONG THE WATERWEEDS,' 'THE SUNBEAM'S STORY,' ETC.

CHAPTER X.



'YOU are glad, I suppose, that the gay little knight of the nodding plumes, who gave us the foregoing sketch of his family, was fortunate enough to escape?'

'I am!' 'And I am!' exclaimed the children one after another.

'And,' said Alfy, 'now I shall always take care never to allow any one to kill those pretty little gnats that have feathers on their heads. But, please, Uncle Quentin, go on; we want to hear more about Mrs Spider.

'Ah! yes, do, uncle!' said Willy. 'But first just look at this creature. It has legs as long as a "Harry Long-legs," and only the smallest scrap of a body. It surely must be some sort of spider?'

'Yes, Willy, you are quite correct. That long-legged fellow is a species of spider. His tribe are known among the naturalists as the Phalangita,* or, as they are commonly called, the "harvest men." They live upon the ground, in the grass and moss, but sometimes find their way into houses.'

* The *Phalangita* or *Phalangium* or Harvest Spider belongs to the Trachean family of *Arachnidæ*. They differ from the Araneidæ both in the nature of their breathing and circulating organs, and in the position and number of their eyes. The latter, though fewer in number (being only two) are placed at the top of the head, the most convenient position for the eyes of a creature living chiefly among grass and stubble. They have always eight legs, which, if detached from the body, exhibit signs of irritability for some moments.—*See* Cuvier's 'Animal Kingdom.'

'Yes,' said Fred, 'the tool-house is full of them. They do not spin such pretty webs as those of the geometric spiders.'

'No, Willy. Indeed, I am not sure that they spin any webs. They seem to be always running about, instead of lying in wait for their prey.'

'But, uncle,' said Fred, 'I thought all spiders spin webs.'

'No, Fred. The wandering or vagabond spiders, which include some of the great Tarantula families, some of which are a foot long, do not spin webs, but seize their prey by springing upon it; hence some of them are called wolf-spiders. Many of them live in holes in the ground, which they line with silk. When the female goes out to hunt her prey, she takes her egg-case * with her, attached to her body by silken threads. Indeed, all spiders are good mothers, carefully tending their young until they are able to provide for themselves.

'There is the greatest variety in the form and substance of spiders' webs. Those of our own country are of the finest silk, while some exotic species make webs the threads of which are strong enough to catch birds, and even to annoy man† when he happens to come in contact with them. The mason-spiders, described by Dr Livingstone, are ingenious little architects. Some of these construct subterranean galleries, often two feet deep, having at the entrance a moveable lid of silk and

* The silk used to form the case for the protection of the eggs is much stronger than that in the webs. The egg-case of spiders differs very much in form. That of the Epeira is generally globular, that of Mygale Avicularia is of the size and shape of a large nut, while that of another species is of an oval figure, truncated at one end, or resembling a very short cone. The cocoon of Epeira Fasciata is about an inch long, and resembles a small balloon of a grey colour, with black ribs. One of the extremities is truncated, and closed with a flat silken lid. The interior exhibits fine down, which envelopes the eggs. This species is found at the edges of running water, It is described and figured in the *Naturalists' Magazine*, vol. ii., p. 57.

† *See* Note to p. 76.

earth, fixed by a hinge, which, by its size and height exactly fits the opening, so that it is impossible to distinguish it from the surrounding soil. The inner side of the lid is lined with silk, which enables the animal to hold it down, and prevent its being pulled open.

'It used to be believed that the great Mygale and Tarantula spiders were in the habit of attacking and killing birds and other small vertebrate animals,* while their bite might prove fatal even to man; but Cuvier tells us that "without believing all the fables of Boglivi and others as to the power of the Tarantula, we may dread the bite of the larger spiders, especially inhabiting warm climates." That all spiders cannot be venomous may be proved by the fact related by La Perouse† that the natives of New Holland and some of the South Sea Islands, when in want of food, devour a species of Epeira.'

'Oh, uncle! how very nasty! Fancy eating a spider!'

'Well, after all, a crab is not so unlike a spider.‡ There

* Vertebrate animals are those which have a many-jointed vertebræ or backbone.

† *See* 'Voyage à la Recherche de La Perouse,' p. 239, quoted by Cuvier.

‡ The habits of some species of spider are very similar to those of certain species of crab. Take, for instance, one of the genus Attus described by Arthur Adams: 'This creature, which is a native of the Maiacoshima Islands, takes possession of empty shells (*Truncatellæ*), and lining them carefully with silken tapestry, therein takes up his abode. Our spider, however, is unable to move about in the manner of the pirate crab, but remains sedentary in his den, and ventures forth at intervals on his hunting excursions. In appearance, the hard-bodied spiders known by naturalists as *Acrosma*, very much resemble the hairy and spinous species of crabs. They have large angular spines projecting from their bodies, intended, no doubt, as defence from soft-billed birds, which would otherwise make dainty meals of these Arachnidans, exposed as they are, temptingly suspended in mid-air, on their transparent webs in the forest glades. Some are protected by these spines to such a degree, that their bodies resemble a minute *chevaux de frise*, and could not be swallowed by a bird without a painful sensation in his throat. One remarkable species (*Gasteracantha arcuala*), has the spines several times longer than its body.'—*See* Arthur Adams on the 'Habits of Exotic Spiders.'

are spider crabs and crab spiders, while spiders resemble crabs in one respect, viz., they possess the power of renewing lost limbs ; so, when two spiders quarrel, as they often do, and tear off each others' legs, the limbs so lost will after a while grow again. But now, if we are to finish our story, we had better go on with it at once.'

> Gloomily retired
> The villain spider lives, cunning and fierce.
> Mixture abhorr'd ! amid a mangled heap
> Of carcasses.

So it was with Epeira Diadema, after she had lured so many of the 'foolish gnats' to their destruction. But not very long did she allow herself to remain surrounded by 'mingled heaps of carcasses,' for the day dawn found her as busy as possible marching up and down her lines on cleanly thoughts intent. 'Well, well,' said she, 'one cannot enjoy pleasure without paying for it. What a feast we had last night. It was well for Mr Spider that he happened to call, for he thoroughly enjoyed his supper. But, as I said before, I have had to pay for my pleasure, and I am really quite tired of all I have had to do. Now not a leg or wing remains to tell tales to any new comers, but I see two lines so hopelessly soiled that I fear there is nothing for it but to break them off and throw them away ;* and when that is done I shall retire to rest for the day.'

* Rennie tell us that he was coming down the Maine, by steamboat from Frankfort, in the year 1829, when he observed the net of a geometric spider to be covered with flakes of soot from the engine. 'This net,' he says, 'to be useful must be clean.' There was a spider at work upon it, not making a new web, but cleaning up the old one. 'Some of the lines she dexterously stripped of the flakes of soot adhering to them, but in the greater number, finding she could not get them sufficiently clean, she broke them quite off, rolled them up, and tossed them over. We counted five of these packets of rubbish which she threw away, though there must have been many more, as it was some time before we discovered the manœuvre, the packets being so small as not to be readily perceived, except where placed between the eye and the light. When she had cleaned away all the sooted leaves she began to replace them in the usual way.'

So Mrs Spider having finished her work, went as usual to the centre of her wheel, where she remained stationary in an inverted position, head downwards, apparently enjoying repose. By and by the sun arose in all his splendour, and the gossamer lines, illuminated by his rays, appeared to be studded with countless dewdrop gems. But our spinning friend is no admirer of the beauties of nature. The sparkling gems pass unheeded by her, for prone as she is to take a practical view of everything, with *her* dewdrops *are* dewdrops, and nothing more; and though she condescends to slake her thirst by a tiny sip at one of them, she is not at all sorry when they fall to the ground, or are stolen away by the sunbeams. Now, too, while apparently idle, she is in fact making her toilet, combing her long jointed legs with her many-toothed mandibles, then rolling up the fluffy matter so collected, and tossing it away. While so employed she is startled by a loud buzzing noise, and at the same time she perceives a violent pulling at the lines of her wheel. 'What can it be?' she exclaims; and in a great fuss she rushes out to see what violent creature is pulling her net to pieces.

Then, what a sight she beholds! All her newly-swept lines and ladders are covered with a stuff like white sawdust, while entangled in the silken meshes is a creature gorgeously arrayed in yellow and black satin, but evidently in a great passion, as she kicks and struggles in frantic efforts to be free.

'Ho, ho! my lady,' said Mrs Spider, 'so *you've* put your foot in it at last. The idea of my having a visit from *you*, dressed so grand as you are, with your waist squeezed up so that one can scarcely see it. Come, there's no use in putting yourself in a passion. You're caught now, that is very plain.'

'I *won't* be caught,' replied the stranger in sharp, waspish accents. 'I won't. I'll pull your house down before I allow you to catch me. Vulgar creature, you don't suppose that I came here willingly. I was in that

old tree overhead, sawing some decayed wood for our paper city, when a gust of wind blew me off, and before I could recover I found myself in your hateful snares.'

'Ah!' said Mrs Spider, 'that is how all this rubbish came here, just, too, after having cleaned up my lines. But you had better speak civilly now; you are my prisoner. There, let me set you free from those lines.'

'Set me free!' exclaimed Miss Vespa. 'If you come near me, it will be at your peril. Look here,' said she, pointing to the extreme end of the body, from whence appeared a terrible looking instrument. Just dare to come near enough, and you shall feel that in your fat little body.'

Mrs Spider retired in terror.

'What shall I do?' muttered she. There is nothing more delicious than a wasp. One, too, that has most likely gorged herself with honey.'

'Mrs Spider,' said friendly Instinct, 'there is no use in your trying a claw-to-claw combat with that stranger. So well armed as she is you will be sure to suffer. All you can do is, to retire to some distance and leave Vespa* (the wasp) to herself. Her temper is so violent that she will soon exhaust herself. When she is quite tired out, you must steal cautiously nearer, and spin a few strong lines over and around her; and when she is thus tightly bound, go to her head, dexterously seize it, or the upper part of her body, and if you are sharp enough to pierce her with your mandibles,† the subtle poison ejected from them will soon overcome your victim. Of course it will require great patience and

* Vespa belongs to the Hymenoptera, or ninth order of insects. Wasps for the most part live in societies, consisting of males, females, and neuters. The two latter are armed with a formidable sting.

† The frontal claws, or mandibles, of spiders are terminated by a moveable hook, which folds downwards, having on its under side, near its pointed extremity, a small slit for the emission of a venomous fluid secreted in a gland of the preceding joint.—*See* Cuvier.

cunning on your part, for if her sting touches you, you are lost.'

In accordance with Instinct's teaching,* Mrs Spider, pretending to be afraid of the gaily dressed stranger, retired to her central post of observation, and from thence watched while her prisoner struggled and plunged, while all the time her

'Fluttering wing
And shriller sound proclaim extreme distress.'

And at last poor weary Vespa, exhausted by her passionate efforts, appears to resign herself to despair. Now is the time. Mrs Spider, stealing gently nearer, is about to bind her victim in fresh toils, when 'Twit —twit' is heard among the branches; and before our spinning friend has had time to accomplish her object, she is seized in the sharp beak of a spider-loving wren, and by him carried off in triumph. It was very fortunate for the prisoner that the dapper young songster so quickly seized upon her foe, for the latter, in her desire to save herself, fastened her claws in her web, which was consequently broken in pieces, and

* No creature exhibits greater powers of instinct than does the spider, whether we consider the manner in which it chooses its habitat according to the hue of its own form, or whether we notice with respect to the many stratagems to which it resorts for the protection of its young. All the brilliantly-coloured species (many of which resemble the calceolarias in our gardens) have their homes among the flowers, and by their gorgeous hues often attract unwary insects to their destruction. Some brown and black species dwell coiled-up in decayed leaves, which they line with soft tissue, closing the aperture with a strong woven felt door. These when in search of prey can scarcely be distinguished from the leaves upon which they run; while still more curious is the fact that the dense thickets of the 'Abrus precatorius' are haunted by a species of the Saltici, or leaping spider, whose bodies are black, marked on each side with dull scarlet, so exactly resembling the seeds of the 'Abrus,' known among children as 'blackamoor beauties.' As mothers, it is most amusing to see the many devices to which spiders resort for the protection of the little white cocoons which contain their eggs, allowing themselves to be taken rather than part with them.—*See* Arthur Adams on the Habits of Exotic Spiders. *Naturalists' Magazine.*

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out tumbled Vespa upon the bank below. Very glad was she to find herself once more at liberty; and having freed her limbs from the cords which still hung about them, she began to think what she must do next.

'I have had no time to get any honey this morning,' said she. 'I have lost all the stuff I meant for paper, and I do not like to return empty to our city. Stop—I see something that will just suit my purpose, and if I can only catch him, nothing will be more acceptable to our people at home. Ah! I perceive I shall have no trouble. He looks as stupid as possible.'

You will wonder what prey Vespa the wasp had in view, so I must tell you that it was a fine fat blue bottle fly.* He had been sipping sweets from a Michael-

* Musca Vomitaria, the common blue bottle or meat fly, belongs to the Diptera order of insects. It has a remarkable power of smelling, and makes a loud buzzing noise when it enters our houses in order to deposit its eggs in our meat. The young larvae are like soft white worms, destitute of feet. On one side of their body are two forks with which they gnaw their food. They undergo a change in a very few days in the summer. When about to assume the pupa state they descend into the earth, or else undergo this change in some dry and secluded situation. In ancient times Aristotle and other learned philosophers believed that the little white worms found in meat were produced by the meat turning to corruption. Redi, an Italian physician, was the first who refuted this error, which he did by a very simple experiment. He procured several small trays or boxes, and in each one he placed a piece of meat, not only of beef, mutton, lamb, etc., but of lion, tiger, and other wild animals, with which he was supplied from the Duke of Tuscany's menagerie. He also put pieces of various fowls, wild birds, fish, and even reptiles. These he exposed to the air uncovered, and soon perceived that several flies, drawn by the scent, came and laid their eggs on them, each choosing the meat she liked best. The eggs so laid produced small white worms, from which he reared four different kinds of flies; the blue-bottle (Musca Vomitaria), a species of black fly (known as Musca Vivipora or Carnaria, a fly resembling the common house fly (Musca Domestica), and flies of a golden green colour (Lucilia Cæsar). To make more sure he again exposed similar pieces of meat, but covered each little tray with net. The flies attracted by the scent again came, and he watched them anxiously trying to introduce the extreme end of their bodies through the net. One (the Musca Vivipora) did succeed in laying two of her

mas daisy, but had somehow managed to get himself so wet, that

'His two pretty pinions of blue dusky gauze,'

were 'glued to his sides;' and Vespa, seeing him so helpless, soon pounced upon him, paralysed him by one stroke of her sting, and then proceeded to carry him off. This was no such easy matter to accomplish. First, she deliberately cut off his head and abdomen, and then taking up the trunk she prepared to fly away. But I suppose Vespa's morning adventure had rather bewildered her brains, for having left the fly's wings still attached to the body, as soon as she was up in the air, being caught by a passing breeze, they whirled her round and round, so not desirous of turning herself into a whirligig, she again alighted, first sawed off one wing, and then another, and finally went on her way rejoicing.

eggs on a piece of meat. That piece produced two little worms, but though the other pieces all decayed slowly away, no worms were found in any of them. So Redi proved, for the comfort of many, that a dead body, if carefully protected from the touch of flies, before it is buried, will indeed decay and turn to dust, but will never become the prey of worms.—*See* Girard's 'Metamorphoses des Insectes.'

(*To be continued.*)

AWAKE, arise, good Christians,
Let nothing you dismay;
Remember Christ our Saviour
Was born upon this day.

The self-same moon was shining
That now is in the sky,
When a holy band of angels
Came down from God on high,—

Came down on clouds of glory,
Array'd in shining light,
Unto the shepherd-people,
Who watch'd their flocks by night.

And through the midnight silence
The heavenly host began:
'Glory to God the highest,
On earth good will to man!

'Fear not; we bring good tidings;
For on this happy morn
The promised one, the Saviour,
In Bethl'hem-town is born!'

Uprose the simple shepherds,
All with a joyful mind;
'And let us go with speed,' said they,
'This holy Child to find!'

Not in a kingly palace
The Son of God they found,
But in a lowly manger
Where oxen fed around.

The glorious King of Heaven,
The Lord of all the earth,
In mercy condescended
To be of humble birth.

There worshipp'd Him the wise men,
As prophets had foretold;
And laid their gifts before Him,
Frankincense, myrrh, and gold.

Long look'd the simple shepherds,
With holy wonder stirr'd;
Then praised God for all the things
Which they had seen and heard.

And homeward went rejoicing
Upon that Christmas morn,
Declaring unto every one
That Jesus Christ was born!—

That He was born,—the Saviour,
The promised one of old;
That they had seen the Son of God
To every one they told.

And like unto the shepherds
We wander far and near,
And bid you wake, good Christians,
The joyful news to hear.

Awake, arise! good Christians!
Let nothing you dismay;
Remember Christ your Saviour
Was born upon this day.