

THE WAIF.

Oh! poor, little, bare-footed hollow-checked thing,
How early dost thou with thy destiny meet!
Neither bright bud nor blossom thou comest in Spring,
But a windfall of childhood, struck down at our feet!
How aged and how cold the sad light of those eyes;
And how quenched every tint on that sorrowful face!
Where we find as we seek for thy lips' rosy dyes,
But the trembling, blue lines of dead joy in their peace!
Lonely waif, tossed about in the winds and the rain,
In this terrible struggle for shelter and bread,
Oh! 'tis well that thou hast but one feeling of pain—
That of hunger or cold;—all the others are dead!
But come to my arms, meanly clad as thou art,
Till the anguish that wastes thee, for once is beguiled:
Lay thy head on my breast with thine ear to my heart,
Till it rocks thee to sleep, my poor, barefooted child!

ABOUT CURIOUS TREES.

Useful trees have their place, and so have ornamental trees. But, in addition to these, there is a class which may be called distinctively curious; and of these a few notes may be interesting.

The cow-tree is a native of Venezuela, South America. It is often found growing on the poorest and most rocky soil. Its leaves are dry and leathery in appearance, and several months of the year not a shower fails to moisten its root and branches. Yet, by piercing the bark, it yields a liquid resembling milk, which is sweet and nourishing. At sunrise this fluid seems to be especially abundant, and at this hour the natives go in great numbers to the trees to get their daily supply.

The sorrowful-tree is found near Bombay, India. It is so called from its habit of blooming only at night. While the sun is shining, not an expanded flower is visible; yet in half an hour after the sun is below the horizon, the tree is full of them. There is little beauty in them, though the odor is pleasant. At sunrise the petals close up or drop to the ground. This tree, it would seem, must have some sort of relation to the night-blooming cereus.

The dwarf tree is found upon the high lands near Cape Horn. Its maximum height is two and a half feet, and the spread of its branches about four feet, and a stiff, thorny mat, at that.

The mammoth trees of California are worthy of note here. They are found 300 feet high, and 29 feet in diameter, at five feet from the ground. A hollow section of a trunk was lately exhibited at San Francisco, which presented a large carpeted room, with a piano and seats for 40 persons. On a recent occasion, 140 children were admitted without inconvenience.

The ivory-nut tree is found in South America, and belongs to

the palm tribe. The natives use it in building their huts; and out of its nuts they make buttons and various trinkets. Of late years the nuts have found their way to other countries, where they are worked up into all sorts of fancy articles.

The cannon-ball tree grows only in the tropics. It rises about sixty-feet high, has beautiful crimson flowers, in clusters, and very fragrant. The resemblance of the fruit to cannon-balls has given it its martial name. When fully ripe, the balls burst with a loud report. The shells are worked into cups, and a great variety of other useful and ornamental household utensils.

The bread-fruit tree is something useful, as well as curious. Would that it grew somewhere besides in the islands of the Pacific. The fruit attains the size of the head of a child ten years of age. If wanted for food, it needs to be gathered a little before it is fully ripe, and then baked, like a hockeac, in hot ashes. When properly cooked, it resembles not a little the taste of a good wheat-en loaf. Nor is this the only use of the tree. Its timber is excellent for house-building, for making canoes, and agricultural implements. The sap is a gummy substance, very useful as a pitch for calking the seams of vessels. The fibre of the inner bark is used by the natives for making cloth, which in that climate answers a good purpose. It is the favorite tree of its native region; and well it may be.

The upas-tree—"the deadly upas," of which we have all read and heard from childhood, which was supposed to diffuse a poisonous air, fatal to animals or men who came beneath its branches—has no existence, and never had. The only possible ground for the superstition was this: On a certain island of the East Indies there is a valley in which there is a constant deposition of carbonic acid gas. This gas spreads itself among a few trees of the neighborhood; and of course, if birds, animals, or men inhale much of this gas, it will quite surely be fatal to them. But this is no fault of the trees, which have been found to possess no poisonous qualities.

The tallow-tree is a veritable fact. It lives in China, and yields an oily substance resembling tallow, and which answers well as a substitute for it. The tree is only of medium size at maturity.

The varnish-tree is Japanese, though found also sparingly in China. This is the tree which produces the black Japan varnish, so useful an article of commerce. It resembles, in general appearance, the white-ash tree. It does not furnish its peculiar liquid in large quantities until nine or ten years old.—*Sunday Magazine.*

The slang expression for death, 'kicking the bucket,' had its origin from one Bolsover, who, in England, committed suicide by standing on a bucket, and when he had adjusted a rope to a beam above him, and to his neck, he kicked the bucket from under him.

THE BISHOP AND THE BEES.

We find the following good story in a foreign journal: "A French Bishop, being about to make his annual visitation, sent word to a certain curate, whose ecclesiastical benefice was extremely trifling, that he meant to dine with him, at the same time requesting that he would not put himself to any extraordinary expense. The curate promised to attend to the Bishop's suggestion; but he did not keep his word, for he provided a most sumptuous entertainment. His lordship was much surprised, and could not help censuring the conduct of the curate; observing that it was highly ridiculous in a man whose circumstances were so narrow to launch out in such expense; nay, almost to dissipate his annual income in a single day. "Do not be uneasy on that score, my lord," replied the curate, "for I can assure you that what you now see is not the produce of my curacy, which I bestow exclusively upon the poor." "Then you have a patrimony, sir?" said the Bishop. "No, my lord." "You speak in riddles," rejoined his lordship; "how do you contrive to live in this manner?" "My lord, I have a convent of young damsels here, who do not let me want anything." "How! you have a convent? I did not know there was one in this neighborhood. This is all very strange, very unaccountable, Mr. Curate." "You are jocular, my lord." But come, sir, I entreat that you would solve the enigma; I would fain see the convent." "So you shall, my lord, after dinner; and I promise that your lordship will be satisfied with my conduct." Accordingly, when dinner was over, the curate conducted the prelate to a large inclosure, entirely occupied by bee-hives, and pointing to the latter, observed, "This my lord, is the convent which gave us a dinner; it brings me in about eighteen hundred livres a year, upon which I live very comfortable, and with which I contrive to entertain my guests genteelly." The surprise and satisfaction of the Bishop may be imagined.

"A SQUARE MEAL."

Last Sabbath Dr. Burkhead, as he is required to do once a year, read the "General Rules" to his people, and instead of preaching a sermon, he commented at length, upon the duties of Christians, basing his remarks upon the Rules of the Church as laid down in the Discipline.

Speaking of visiting the sick and administering to the wants of the needy he urged his members to visit the poor—and not only to visit but to help them. Praying with and for the poor he said, was all right; but many times a good square meal would do man more good than praying for them.

The Doctor was correct. When a man is hungry prayers do not meet the case; but if the good Samaritan carries a loaf of bread and a beef steak to appease hunger then spiritual food will next be in order. Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, warm the chilly, and, then, sing and pray.

We know this much from experience, that \$2 will cheer an editor's soul more than a string of resolutions a mile long.—*Friend of Temperance.*

JEWS PRAYING AT THE WALL OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

Though Israel, as a nation, has been long scattered to the winds, and her children constrained to find a home on every shore, still her love of country and the pride of her ancient glory and lineage remain with her. True to Jerusalem, as the north star to the pole, the Hebrew heart turns toward the holy city in the hour of tribulation, of sickness or death; and the desire to rest even for a brief space within its ruined walls, goes forth with an earnestness the most sincere.

It is not surprising, then, that ever since the destruction of the city of Titus, and the total disruption of the Jewish people, the generations have been marked by frequent pilgrimages to this mighty shrine, and that, even now in this, our own day, when the ends of the earth are so drawn together, and the brotherhood of man begins to bear sweet fruit, the deep yearning for one hour of prayer, before it, is felt by all the children of its bosom.

It has been well observed, that there are places and circumstances which seem to extend an invisible hand and draw aside the veil between man and heaven, so that his prayer pierces the sky. Jerusalem is to the Jew that place of all others. Here we perceive two Jews, pilgrims no doubt, standing at the wall of the temple of Solomon, in deep prayer and meditation. They have put their shoes from off their feet, believing, as they do, that they tread on holy ground. The idea is most impressive, as every idea should be, pertaining to man, whether Jew or Gentile, in audience with his God.—*Sunday Magazine.*

HOW A HINDOO THIEF SECURED A PARDON FROM THE KING.

There is a fable among the Hindoos that a thief, having been detected and condemned to die, happily hit upon an expedient which gave him hope for life. He sent for his jailer and told him that he had a secret of great importance which he desired to impart to the King, and when it had been done he would be prepared to die. Upon receiving this piece of intelligence the King at once ordered the culprit to be conducted to his presence. The thief replied that he knew the secret of causing trees to grow which would bear fruit of pure gold. The experiment might be easily tried, and His Majesty would not lose the opportunity; so, accompanied by his Prime Minister, his courtiers and his chief priest, he went with the thief to a spot selected near the city wall, where the latter performed a series of solemn incantations. This was done the condemned man produced a piece of gold and declared that if it should be planted it would produce a tree, every branch of which would bear pure gold.

"But," he added, "this must be put into the ground by a hand that has never been stained by a dishonest act. My hand is not clean therefore I pass it to Your Majesty."

The King took the piece of gold, but hesitated. Finally he said: "I remember in my younger days that I have filched money from my father's treasury which was not mine. I have repented of the sin, but yet I hardly say my hand is clean. I pass it, therefore, to my Prime Minister."

The latter after a brief consultation, answered: "It were a pity to break the charm through a possible blunder. I receive taxes from the people, and as I am exposed to many temptations, how can I be sure that I have been perfectly honest? I must give it to the Governor of our citadel."

"No, no," cried the Governor, drawing back. "Remember that I have the serving out of pay and provision to the soldiers. Let the High Priest plant it."

And the High Priest said: "You forget; I have the collecting of titles and the disbursements of sacrifice."

At length the thief exclaimed: "Your Majesty, I think it would be better for society that all five of us should be hanged, since it appears that not an honest man can be found among us."

In spite of the lamentable exposure the King laughed; and so pleased was he with the thief's cunning expedient, that he granted him pardon.—*Sunday Magazine.*

NOT A CHICKEN.—At precisely two o'clock by the bells the other morning a policeman who was walking up Beaubien street caught sight of a negro who was skulking along a fence, and he called upon him to stop.

"Ize in a big hurry to ketch de mawning train for Toledo?" called back the African.

The officer threatened to shoot if he did not stop, and the skulker halted.

"Does you imagine that I hez dun got a chicken heah?" he asked, as the officer approached.

"Yes, sir that's exactly what I imagine."

And if I hezen't got a chicken I kin go right down to de depot kin I?"

"I guess you can."

"Well, sah, den gaze on dis yere an' tell me if de name is chicken!" said the man, as he pulled a big goose around in front of him.

The officer went back on his word, and took the negro under arrest, and the victim was explaining:

"Whar's de use ob tryin' to get along wid dem p'licemen? De best way is to drop de goose an' make fur de woods."

"My son," said a doting mother to her eight-year-old, "What pleasure do you feel like giving up during lenton season?" "Well, ma, I guess I'll stay away from school," was the reply.

An honest blacksmith, when urged to start a libel suit answered, I can hammer out a better reputation on my anvil than all the lawyers in Christendom can give me."

"Papa, ought the teacher to flog a fellow for what he didn't do?" "Certainly not, my boy." "Well, then, he flogged me to-day when I didn't do my sum."