

The Orphans' Friend.

VOL. III.

OXFORD, N. C., WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1877.

NO. 40.

MY MOTHER.

Oh! many lips are saying this
Mid falling tears to-day,
And many hearts are aching sore—
Our mother's passed away.
We watched her fading year by year,
As they went slowly by,
But cast far from us e'en the fear
That she could ever die.

She seemed so good, so pure, so true
To our admiring eyes;
We never dreamed this glorious fruit
Was ripening for the skies;
And when at last the death-stroke came,
So swift, so sure, so true,
The hearts that held her here so fast
Were almost broken, too.

We robed her in a pure white dress;
We smoothed the gray hair down;
Gave one last kiss, then laid her 'mid
The autumn leaves so brown.
Then each took up the broken thread
Of life and all its cares;
How sad the heart 'mid daily tasks!
We miss our mother's prayers.

We ne'er shall know from what dark
paths
They may have kept our feet;
Yet holy will our influence be
While each fond heart shall beat;
And as we tread the thorny way
Which her dear feet have trod,
Ever shall feel our mother's prayers
Leading us up to God.

And when the storms of sorrow come
To each bereaved heart,
Let faith glance upward to the home
Where we shall never part—
Where one awaits with loving eyes
To see her children come,
As one by one we cross the flood
And reach our heavenly home.
—Earnest Worker.

BRIGHT LESSONS.

Those who desire to be successful friends and helpers to the young, who are not merely content with seeing the children in their places, but wish to make them in every way the better for coming under their influences, know that they must not be prosy and uninteresting themselves. And during the long days, there are plenty of happy suggestions all around him who has eyes to see them. It needs but a glance over green hills, or golden meadows, waving corn-fields, or sparkling waters, to see something which shall awaken the mind, and fill it with new and pleasant ideas. Even the streets, dusty as they are, are made more picturesque by the slanting sunbeams; and the worn and weary faces of the passers-by are softened into something like beauty by the influences of the light. But away from the streets, out into the lanes, or the forests, where thousands of flowers lift up their heads, and the birds are singing their songs of joy, teachers may get by heart such lessons as shall very materially help them.

There are many things which go to make up bright lessons. The teacher should always have his note book in his pocket; and put down in it everything which strikes him, at the time when it occurs; and then he will have no difficulty, for when he needs an anecdote, he is sure to have one that will fit in. He must tell it in the most effective way when once he has it. There are some people who pride themselves on never preparing lessons, and who take no trouble to plan and arrange as to matter or manner. They would scorn to try any arts. If an illustration has to be given, they give it in a plain, matter-of-fact way, without caring much whether it is telling or not. They

have their own ideas, and they carry them out in their own dogged manner. And they have their reward.

But we think that it is lawful to use every kind of aid in our work. If we do not know how to make uninteresting lessons interesting we should learn. If we cannot so tell a tale that the children listen open-mouthed to it, thrilled by the incidents which are simple in themselves, and feeling the most intense solicitude with regard to the ending of it, then we must practice until we can do it. By rapid transitions, by the eager and persuasive manner, by the lighting up of the face, by the change of tone, and by various other means which the watchful speaker will soon detect, we can stimulate inquiry, and lead the children to become thoughtful and responsive. And when this has been accomplished, we shall gain inspiration from the very listeners themselves, and shall be able to see how the truth reaches them.

And perhaps a word may be said here respecting the great desirability of giving the children right views of the character of Christianity. We do an immense wrong when by our gloomy or narrow ideas we allow them to imagine that religion also is gloomy and narrow. The gospel of joy is the gospel for us to teach, and it is the only pure one. Did not the angels announce the birth of it, sounded with glad tidings of great joy? And are not his disciples deserving of blame when they cause the little children who would otherwise embrace it almost naturally, to suppose that religion makes us ill-tempered, peevish, and irritable? It ought not to be.

Let us therefore be happy.—Let us rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. Let us hope in his mercy, and be casting all our care upon him who careth for us. And for the rest, let us keep our faces to the sun. Let us take the flowers and songs as they come into our very hearts; and having done so, be sure that they will make us joyous through all the days. And joy that is real and true cannot be hidden; but must show itself in the face, and be heard in the voice, and find expression in the words. Let ours be constantly manifested; and then the children will be attracted to us, and will listen gladly to anything that we may have to say. They will see that to be a Christian is to be happy. They will understand that the peace of God dwelling in the heart is above all else to be desired; and becoming earnest seekers themselves, they, too, will find him, and swell the numbers of those who out of every land are calling the Redeemer blessed.

Happy shall we be who have contributed to such a result! For us the blue skies, and painted flowers, the rapturous bird-songs, and peaceful tree-whispers will have but one meaning; they will be tokens of love from the Father who cares for us; and we shall thus receive them from Him, from whom all good has come. We shall understand more and more of His great tenderness; and the

more deeply we know Him, the more cause will there be for our songs of thankful praise. "Happy is that people that is in such a cause, yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord." "The earth shall yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear him."—*London Sunday School Times.*

WILD BEASTS AND SNAKES IN INDIA.

"Returns have reached us from India," says an English contemporary, "showing the numbers killed in the year 1875 by wild beasts and snake bites. It seems that between the 31st of December, 1874, and the 1st of January, 1876, in our Indian Empire no fewer than 21,391 persons and 48,234 head of cattle perished from these causes. Such was the war of savage nature against man. On the other hand, there were destroyed 22,357 wild animals of all kinds, and 270,185 snakes, at a cost to the Government of 120,015 rupees, or, without taking into account the depreciation in the value of silver, something like £12,000. We are further told that the losses have been to a great extent tabulated, and that, from the returns that have been sent in, it has been found that elephants have killed 61 human beings and six cattle; tigers respectively 828 and 12,423; leopards, 187 and 16,157; bears, 84 and 529; wolves, 1,060 and 9,407; hyenas, 68 and 2,116; while to 'other animals,' the buffalo, the wild goat, the boar, etc., are ascribed the totals of 1,446 and 4,401.

"But the most terrible life-destroyer in India, is the snake. It is a significant fact that the number of deaths due to snake bite exceeds that from all other causes. It amounts to no fewer than 17,070, or in other words, something like 50 people perish every day in India from snake bite alone. The great majority of the victims are of course natives, who go about barefooted. The Hindoo woman is making her way to the well or to the river with her pitcher on her head; the groom is cutting fresh grass; the gardener is plucking flowers with which to decorate the rooms; or the messenger is running by a short cut across the field with a note. Any of these may at any moment tread upon a cobra; and although the cobra is not aggressive, it will turn when attacked, or imagines that it is threatened, with the rapidity of lightning. A sharp, short sting is felt, and the sufferer sees the loathsome reptile clinging to his foot or ankle, for the fangs of the cobra strike so deeply that it is often unable to disengage itself. The brute is shaken off, but the nearest doctor is probably ten, twelve, or even twenty miles away. No remedies are at hand; there is no knife for excision, no caustic or hot iron for cautery, and before a few hours have elapsed death has set in.

"The only way to prevent this terrible mortality is by killing the cobras wholesale, and this again can only be done by offer-

ing a small reward per head for their destruction. Unhappily the heathen Hindoo, from superstitious fear, and even veneration, will not put even the most venomous 'nag' to death, and others who have no such scruples are clever at devices whereby to defraud the Government. The customary reward has consequently been withdrawn, and the result as we are told, and can easily believe, is that the mortality from snake bites has increased to a very alarming extent. It is to be hoped that the reward system, with necessary precautions against imposition, will be adopted again. The remedy may be expensive, but a local rate would meet it, and India might soon be clear of snakes as England once was of wolves."—*Frank Leslie's Sunday Magazine.*

KINDNESS TO ANIMALS—THE GRATEFUL SPARROWS.

The "New-Haven Courier" relates the following interesting incident, which occurred a few years ago in one of the villages of Connecticut:

"A young lady, confined to the house by protracted indisposition, was in the habit of feeding a sparrow, which had a nest on a tree near the door, with crumbs of bread. The little creature had a warm heart under her homely dress, and soon learning to love her patron, became exceedingly tame, and would hop about the table while the family were at meals. This was repeated whenever the door was opened, till at last her mate was induced to accompany her, and both would pick up the crumbs which their fair entertainer, as she lay upon the sofa, scattered near her on the carpet. In the fall, one of them flew against the window, and tried to get in, but the lady was too feeble to expose herself in the air, and so could not admit her little visitor to a farewell interview. Next spring they both came again, as docile as ever. In the course of a few weeks, as the lady lay upon a sofa, on a Sunday morning, being too unwell to go to church, the house being perfectly still, and the door open, she heard a great twittering and chirping on the steps. Looking about for the cause, she espied her tame sparrow entering the apartment, followed by several of her progeny, and the partner of her toils bringing up the rear. They all remained with her half an hour, perfectly fearless and at home, till having satisfied their appetites with the morsels which were strewn for them, and expressed their obligations with sweet wild music, they retired to the shrubbery."

—A little boy one day at table asked for meat; his father said that it was not polite to ask for any, and that he should wait until some was given to him. The poor boy, seeing every one eat, and that nothing was given to him, said to his father: "My dear father, give me a little salt, if you please." "What will you do with it?" asked the father. "I wish to eat it with the meat which you will give me," replied the child.

THE NOBLE REVENGE.

The coffin was a plain one—a poor, miserable pine coffin. No flowers on its top, no lining of rose-white satin for the pale brow; no smooth ribbons about the coarse shroud. The brown hair was laid decently back, but there was no crimped cap; with its neat tie beneath the chin. The sufferer from cruel poverty smiled in her sleep.

"I want to see my mother," sobbed a poor child, as the city undertaker screwed down the top. "You can't—get out of the way, boy! why don't somebody take the brat?"

"Only let me see her one minute," cried the hapless, homeless orphan, clutching the side of the charity box, and as he gazed into that rough face, anguish tears streamed rapidly down the cheek on which no childish bloom ever lingered. Oh, it was pitiful to hear him cry, "Only once, let me see my mother only once!"

Quickly and brutally the hard-hearted monster struck the boy away, so that he reeled with the blow. For a moment the boy stood panting with grief and rage; his blue eyes distended, his lips sprang apart, a fire glittering through his tears, as he raised his puny arm, and with a most unchildish accent screamed, "when I'm a man, I'll kill you for that!" There was a coffin and a heap of earth between the mother and the poor, forsaken child, and a monument stronger than granite built in the boy's heart to the memory of a heartless deed.

The Court-House was crowded to suffocation.

"Does any one appear as this man's counsel?" asked the judge.

There was a silence when he finished, until with his lips tightly pressed together, a look of strange intelligence, blended with haughty reserve upon his handsome features, a young man stepped forward with a firm tread and kindling eye, to plead for the erring and the friendless. He was a stranger, but from his first sentence there was silence.

The splendor of his genius entranced and convinced. The man who could not find a friend was acquitted.

"May God bless you, sir, I cannot."

"I want no thanks," replied the stranger, with icy coldness.

"I—I believe you are unknown to me."

"Man! I will refresh your memory. Twenty years ago you struck a broken-hearted boy away from his mother's poor coffin. I was that poor, miserable boy."

The man turned livid.

"Have you rescued me, then, to take my life?"

"No, I have a sweeter revenge; I have saved the life of a man whose brutal deed has rankled in my breast for twenty years. Go! and remember the tears of a friendless child."

The man bowed his head in shame, and went out from the presence of a magnanimity as grand to him as incomprehensible, and the noble young lawyer felt God's smile in his soul.

—"If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked."