

The Children's Friend.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 1875.

Rock the Cradle.

A little orphan girl came to the Asylum in Oxford. She was very scrawny, and very bony. As soon as she had taken a seat, she looked around and said: "Any babies here?" She was told that there were none. Again she inquired, "Any cradles here?" This question was also answered in the negative. "I am so glad," was her next exclamation. When some one asked her to tell the cause of her joy, she said, "Where I staid, they had two babies and two cradles and I had to rock all the time."

We recently conversed with a father who was sorely annoyed by a troublesome baby. When we inquired if the baby had a cradle, he answered that when he was a boy, he saw so much trouble over the cradle, that he determined never to own one. This man was first afflicted by a cradle and then by the want of one. Now let us offer a few suggestions on the cradle question: 1. Let every family keep a good cradle. Let the cradle bed be clean, and soft and have a plenty of cover. Either buy a suspension cradle, or suspend it from the ceiling. Then fasten one end of a string to the wall and put the other in the hand of the baby, and he will soon learn to rock himself. Give the baby his toys in the cradle. Don't expect a child not able to speak nor to understand any language to entertain itself all day by gazing at white plastering or painted planks. You could hardly do that yourself.

2: It is generally best to have a nurse, not to rock the cradle so much as to give the baby fresh air and let it see the flowers, the trees, the houses and all the world. The nurse must learn the baby's signs. When a baby jumps, it generally means "carry me about." Most babies call their parents by moving a hand in some particular way. When a baby cries there is always some cause which a good nurse can readily discover. Generally when one cries in church, he wants the preacher to hush.

3. The best nurse in the world, next to the mother, is a mother-in-law. This was the opinion of Boaz, the noble old gentleman who employed Naomi to nurse the infant Obed, and thus secured experience, skill and affection, three important requisites in a nurse. A heedless and untrained boy or girl, who never loved any one, will not make near so good a nurse as the wolf was for Romulus and Remus. If genteel old ladies out of employment would take the care of the children, good wages could be afforded, and the demand for their services would constantly increase. Now remember, an ugly baby will soon wear a pleasant face, if you will only furnish a good cradle and a kind and careful nurse. Every baby worth raising, is worth raising well.

What in the name of Heaven does the following mean, which we find in the CHILDREN'S FRIEND of North Carolina: "We respectfully ask our Legislature to pass a bill to the following effect:

1. That negroes shall not seize white orphans, when their parents die, and hold them as slaves during their entire minority.

2. That poor and degraded white women shall not hire out to negroes their girls under eighteen, nor their boys under twenty-one years of age.

3. That white boys and girls shall not be bound by law to negroes."

Is it possible that such things as these are allowed to happen in a State which Conservatives have governed for the last two years? We are at a loss to realize the meaning of the CHILDREN'S FRIEND or the nature of the enormities of which it makes complaint! If such outrages on the children are either actual or possible in the State, we desire to enlist also as one of the "children's friends" and to enter the services for the whole war, until the little ones are freed and saved.

—Index and Appeal, of Petersburg.

We are mortified to confess that we mean exactly what we say. Visit the Orphan Asylum at Oxford, and you will see a number of children who have been rescued from bondage to degraded negroes. Go with the Superintendent and he will show you others whom he has not yet been able to relieve, and for whose benefit he now makes a just and reasonable appeal to the Legislature. That these things are possible and actual can not be denied, because the sad and shameful proof is ever before us. But why have our Legislatures been so indifferent to the interests of the Orphans? Alas, we cannot tell. The members are of age; let them answer for themselves. Why, we ask also, are our State papers so silent on the subject? We have personally requested many editors to call public attention to these outrages on helpless children. Let them rise before the people and explain for what reasons our requests have been disregarded. We welcome our manly neighbor of Virginia among the children's friends. Let us fight those modern Herods who for one political purpose are willing to crush out thousands of poor and helpless children.

THE TALMUD.

Are you going to tell the children about the Talmud, a book which great scholars keep just to show their learning? Yes, we can say a few things about the Talmud and make them plain to the children: The Talmud is composed of the Mishna, the text, and the Gemara, its commentary. David Levi claims that the text came down by word of mouth from Moses. The Gemara consists of the opinions and interpretations of learned Jews. The whole is a book of morals, sayings and stories.

It teaches that if a wife burns her husband's soup, he will be on that account entitled to a divorce. It teaches that David once pursued the Devil who had assumed the shape of a roe, and followed him into the land of the Philistines where the royal hunter was recognized by Ishbi, the brother of Goliath whom David had slain. Ishbi tied him and put him under a wine press to mash him to death. But by a miracle the ground became soft and David could not be hurt. Meanwhile the Jews were informed by a dove whose wings were

covered with silver that their king was in distress, and Alishai went and rescued him.

It also teaches that the Queen of Sheba stood before King Solomon holding in one hand a bouquet of natural flowers, and in the other a similar one of artificial flowers, and inquired of the king which were natural. Solomon was for a while in doubt, but at last he saw some bees near the window and ordered a servant to open it. The bees immediately flew to the natural flowers, and the answer was easy to all.

So the Talmud is an easy and entertaining book, containing a little wheat and a vast quantity of chaff. Those who have the skill to sift as they go, and separate the one from the other, may read the Talmud with profit. Those who (like young birds) swallow all that is offered them, ought not to read it at all. The same rule should also be applied to many other books. Read the best chapters and skip the rest.

THE RIGHT TO GROW.

Children have an inalienable right to grow. They should enjoy all the freedom consistent with good behavior until ten years of age; then boys should spend seven years at school, and four years learning a trade, some business, or a profession. Thus, at twenty-one, they will be ready for the work of life. The foregoing statement is intended as a general guide to parents and teachers; but circumstances will very often demand variations from the times and ages mentioned. But would you keep boys from school till they are ten years old? Certainly not. If they wish it, and the teachers can make them enjoy recitations, let them go. But do not send them, do not drive them, do not compel them to sit six hours a day on benches without backs, as the manner of some is. If you do this, they will dislike books and they may not lay aside this prejudice till all their opportunities shall glide away. You may lead an unwilling horse to water; but you can not make him drink. So you may send boys to school; but you can not make them learn. But some boys have commenced Latin at ten years of age. So they have; but still the general rule is that boys, who begin at ten, will know more at seventeen than those who are started to school at six or eight. But the orphan boys go to school before they are ten. Yes, a poor orphan must conform to his condition, and do, not what would be best for him if he had money, but what is best for him without money. Those, to whom only one opportunity is ever presented, must seize that as it passes, or spend life in ignorance.

Girls should likewise grow till ten and then be allowed to begin school and continue seven years. They will then have one year for learning domestic duties, and at eighteen they may teach, or preside over tables. Sometimes, when girls are growing rapidly, their

minds are sleepy, and they are worried because they find it impossible to study. In all such cases, parents and teachers must bear with them, and give them short lessons and very few studies until their bodies shall approach maturity, and then the number of studies may be gradually increased.

But under ten boys and girls should wear loose clothes, have large play-grounds and be allowed to grow. While they make wagons and dress dolls, they can also learn to read if they so desire.

NOT A NEWSPAPER.

THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND is not a newspaper. If it should attempt to recount all the accidents on land and sea, all the marriages, all the deaths; if it should give the details of all the scandals and all the villainies, there would be no room to mention those topics which benefit and entertain the children. We think best to cultivate our own field and let other papers attend to outside matters. A horse may run away with a dray; John Jones and Susan Smith may be married; Ben Brown may die; Sam Sinner may violate all the Commandments; but will a knowledge of all these facts make the children any wiser or any better? Let us rather keep wise precepts and good examples constantly before them. Let noble sentiments, just ideas, and correct opinions occupy their minds. Even an old man is apt to grow worse when he finds his chief entertainment in reading over and over the doings of the Devil.

The Spelling Match.

Mr. J. C. Denning, of Norfolk, sent two dozen pictures and a beautiful copy of Pilgrim's Progress to the Orphan Asylum at Oxford, as a reward for good spelling. The spelling match occurred last Monday evening. The pictures were given to the best spellers in the First, Second, Third and Fourth Forms. The Fifth Form spelled for the book, and Margaret Froesland, of Cabarrus county, secured it.

Mr. L. A. Webb, of South Quay, Va., writes to us for "a good North Carolina boy, the son of a dead Confederate soldier, a boy of more than common intelligence, of good appearance and character, with a mechanical turn of mind, of respectable parentage and who would never blush for those to whom he is related." Mr Webb promises to teach such a boy to manage a steam engine and do other mechanical work, and give him a father's care. As we can not fill this bill, any boy who pleases may write to Mr Webb.

Dr. J. F. Harrell, of Whiteville, wishes to know if THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND will contain the International Sunday School Lessons. It will not in any way attempt to do the work of the denominational papers. It will try to help every good work without entering any field already occupied.

Declined.

The Superintendent has destroyed some communications sent to THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND, because they complimented him more highly than he deserved. He is simply serving the benevolent people, and doing good to needy orphans with means furnished by others. He is constantly mortified and distressed over suffering orphans for whose relief he has not yet been able to open the way.

For the Children's Friend.

Dear Little Readers:—Nearly all of you have loving parents or kind friends to provide for you, and pleasant homes in which to live. Your rooms are nice and clean, you have enough to eat and drink, your clothes are new and nice and you have books and papers to read. Do you not sometimes forget that your enjoyments are much greater than those of some other boys and girls?

There is scarcely a town or village in all our State in which there are not children living in poor, miserable houses; the doors almost off their hinges, the window panes broken and stuffed with rags. No wood or coal to make a fire; only a few broken chairs, a little heap of rags or straw in a corner for a bed, and a little cold bread and meat which they have begged, and perhaps father and mother dead!

This is not pleasant, but some children have no other home and some have no home at all. They must sleep in boxes and alleys, in barns or wherever they can coil up for the night. Some of these children have been taken to the Orphan Asylums to be cared for till they are old enough to earn their living.

Should you not feel thankful to your kind friends and to God, who has made your lives pleasant? How anxiously you should strive to make those who are good to you happy, by being kind, obedient, truthful and loving and by shunning whatever is bad. Do all you can for the friendless and fatherless; even little children can do noble deeds to bless their fellows, and cause God and the angels to smile upon them. J.

The philosopher, being asked in his old age why he did not give over his practice and take his ease, answered: "When a man is to run a race forty furlongs, would you have him sit down at the nine and thirtieth, and lose the prize? We do not keep a good fire all day and let it go out in the evening, when it is coldest; but then rather say more fuel, that we may get to bed warm. He that slakes the heat of his zeal in his old age goes coldly to bed, and in a worse case to his grave." Tough the beginning be more than half, yet the end is more than all.

To no kind of begging of people so averse as to begging pardon; that is, when there is any serious ground for doing so. When there is none, this phrase is as soon taken in vain, momentous words are upon light occasions.