

ly believe in you." Such forced belief would not be faith at all, and a forced belief in God would be valueless too. If He were to speak from heaven, so that no one could doubt, the opportunity for faith would be over. Those who did not "will to do His will," but were anxious to be let alone in their evil ways, could not deny the evidence of their own senses; but that would not make them any better: "The devils also believe and tremble," as St. James reminds us. To do wrong when we know it is wrong can only make our guilt blacker.

If you are not sure of the love of God as revealed in Christ, and if you want to be sure, the road to belief is plain. Make up your mind to bring every thought into line with righteousness—"will to do His will"—and the promise, "ye shall know!" will certainly be fulfilled. It may not be this year or next year, but no one has loyally followed in the steps of the Holy JESUS without finding Him to be the Friend whose friendship is worth more—ininitely more—than everything the world can offer. Real love must be proved by studying His will and doing it. The manifestation of Christ is a gift to the soul that is loyally devoted to Him and actively serving Him. The outside world may be incredulous, perhaps even contemptuous, and yet how forlorn the faithless are. We know how true it is that the Peace of God can be like wings to the soul, lifting it above the jar and strife of earthly troubles. And Peace is the sweet gift of our King to those who love to serve Him as their dearest Friend. Let us claim the full power of His Benediction—the words are fresh and living as ever, after two thousand years—

"Peace I leave with you,
My peace I give unto you:
Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.
Let not your heart be troubled,
Neither let it be afraid."

If you are not sure of Christ yet, follow eagerly after Him and you shall know the peace of God, which passeth all understanding—a priceless possession. Is it possible to have "Peace, perfect peace, our future all unknown?" the world may question. Let us answer triumphantly, "JESUS we know, and He is on the Throne."

DORA FARNCOMB.

The Beaver Circle.

OUR SENIOR BEAVERS.

[For all pupils from Senior Third to Continuation Classes, inclusive.]

A Story of a Turtle.

When the young spotted turtle first broke through the hard shell of his egg and began to scramble up to the air and sunlight through the loose earth which covered him, his upper shell was about the size of a five-cent piece, and almost as round and flat. Fortunately for him, he was not the first to make his way from the earthy nest, several of his brothers and sisters had preceded him and loosened the dirt; also his mother had had the foresight to bury her eggs in a spot not too far from the water, so there was little danger of his sharing the fate of many little turtles who are smothered in the earth before they ever see the light of day, or, if they do succeed in reaching the outer air, perish in the hot rays of the sun before they get near the water.

It did not take the little turtle long to discover where the nearest water lay. After digging his way clear of the soil, he paused a moment, moving his little black and tan head from side to side as though taking his bearings, and then, in as straight a line as though guided by a compass, he crawled to a ditch, fifty feet away, the existence of which instinct revealed to him. This journey took some time, but he accomplished it in safety, and, sliding rather than crawling, down the precipitous banks of the ditch, the infant turtle landed safely in the water. Then, after hastening to conceal himself in the soft mud of the bottom, he began to take note of his new surroundings.

Finding that he remained unmolested,

he presently ventured into clear water; and then for the first time one might have seen what his appearance and markings really were. On leaving the egg he had been damp and sticky as newly-hatched chickens are, and the dirt which he had touched had clung to him until it was washed away. But now his upper shell was black, ornamented with numerous little round, yellow (almost orange) spots, while his head, legs, tail and undershell were black-and-tan. Altogether he was a handsome little fellow, much prettier than he would ever be again, since the older a turtle grows the duller his markings become.

After resting a while and finding that no other creature seemed to notice his presence, while the tiny minnows which had been disturbed by his hasty entrance of the ditch, had resumed their play, the baby turtle began to swim lazily with the current, and his progress, though not rapid, soon brought him to the pond of which the ditch was a tributary.

Hitherto, he had seen none of his kind, the minnows, several species of water-bugs, and a crawfish or two, being the only creatures he had encountered thus far; but he found the pond much more populous than the ditch. Indeed, after entering the larger body of water, and catching sight of a large snapping turtle, his first act was to conceal himself in a patch of duckweed, an instinctive precaution which was far from being unnecessary since turtles like nothing better than a meal composed of the young of their own kind.

After nosing around the duckweed for

warm mud, and slept until spring awakened them.

It was late in March when the little spotted turtle was aroused to consciousness. In spite of the spring sunshine which had warmed the water enough to awaken him, it was a bleak world upon which he looked; the trees were still leafless, and the vegetation on the banks which had not been entirely destroyed by the fierce winter winds, was brown and sere. Still, something told him that this state of affairs would not last long, and, in no way disturbed by his unattractive surroundings, he set about satisfying the ravenous hunger with which his sleep of four or five months had left him. That was no easy task, for worms were few and insects were still more rare. Indeed, had he not come upon the body of an eel which had died during the winter, it would have gone hard with him, for he was weak and thin, and in no condition to withstand either living enemies or the cold of the spring nights.

However, when he had gorged himself to his utmost capacity, he felt so refreshed and invigorated that he made a short tour of the pond. The pond itself looked very natural, but it was not long before the turtle discovered that he himself had undergone some alterations, for he was now more than twice as large as he had been when he was hatched out in the previous summer. In one way, the increase in size was a disadvantage, since it made him more conspicuous to the eyes of an enemy; but on the other hand, he found that many of the crawfish and other creatures, of which he had been in

turtle made a hasty rush, and an instant later his jaws closed upon a dry, tasteless creature, whose gaudy coloring concealed a sharp hook which stuck momentarily deeper and deeper into the roof of his mouth, while, to add to his terror, he found himself being drawn quickly to shore by means of a line which was attached to the insect. Worst of all, a man, a variety of creature which the turtle instinctively shunned, was standing on the shore and winding this line in. In a moment or two at the utmost, the turtle would fall into his power!

Frightened and alarmed, the unfortunate creature made a frantic dive to the bottom of the pond, but still, slowly, surely, irresistibly, the line drew him toward the shore. Against sticks, stones, and whatever else came in his way during that dreadful progress along the bottom of the pond, the turtle braced himself, digging his claws into everything he could reach; but all seemed in vain, and he was just on the point of resigning himself to his fate when the hook, partly dislodged by some sudden movement on his part, broke through the flesh in which it had caught and left him free, though so frightened, and with such an aching jaw, that he did not at first realize his escape. For some time after that eating was difficult for him, and although his wound soon healed and left him as well as ever, he always after that shunned brightly-colored insects, often going hungry rather than try to capture one.

When he was a few years older, he once, during a week of rain, made an excursion inland which came near being his last. Led onward by a mistaken expectation that the wet weather would continue, he found himself when it cleared, a couple of miles from the pond, and exposed to the ardent rays of a July sun which beat mercilessly upon him as he turned to retrace his steps. Now, water turtles can live out of water for some time, and they often bask for hours on a log in the blazing sunshine. But they can plunge in and take a refreshing bath at any moment, and that is a very different matter from the case of the poor spotted turtle who felt his skin growing more and more parched every moment, but was obliged to toil wearily along, fearing that each step might be his last. Besides the intense heat, he was exposed to attack by other enemies; and once, a great black snake with widely gaping jaws would probably have swallowed him shell and all had not a wandering cow happened along just then and frightened the hungry reptile away from what might have proved a rather indigestible meal.

This peril which he had so barely escaped, moved the turtle to renewed efforts; but his strength soon came to an end and he lay with closed eyes, open mouth and protruding tongue, careless of what might befall him. Fortunately, the evening was by this time close at hand, and there was a heavy dew that night which had the effect of reviving him so that he was able to continue his journey. Some hours later he regained the pond, and plunged into its waters with the utmost joy; but it was some time before he really recovered from the effects of this expedition.

This happened only a year or so ago, and he has never left his native pond again. As for the future, since he has acquired so much experience, it is probable that he will live a long, happy and peaceful life.—Selected.

The Letter Box.

Dear Puck and Beavers,—This is the first time I have had pluck enough to write a letter to the Circle; but I thought I would write and tell the Beavers of a hawk's nest I found last spring. I found it as I was gathering wild-flowers in the bush; it was in a tall beech tree. The nest was about thirty-five feet from the ground. I climbed up to it, and there were two pure white eggs in it about the size of a banty's egg. The nest was made of sticks and twigs, and looked very much like a little heap of sticks. The next Saturday I went up to it, and it had six eggs in it then. I went up to it about every Saturday. The next three Saturdays that I went up, it had the six eggs yet, but the fourth time it had two little hawks, and the next time it had six. I waited till the birds got about big enough to fly, then I put them in a box about two and a half feet wide,



Hard on the Turtle. A Big One.

some time without being able to locate the little creature whose presence had attracted him, the snapping turtle departed in search of easier prey; the spotted turtle finding that all was quiet, ventured forth once more, and, presently coming to the warm shallow water on the south side of the pond, he soon made himself quite at home. Many other little turtles of various kinds had also selected this favored spot, and seldom left it, either because they had not sufficient confidence in their skill as swimmers, or on account of the enemies which lurked in the deeper waters. They lived together in utmost peace and harmony, sharing the food which came their way. The little spotted turtle learned from the example of his comrades, to recognize things that were good to eat, and to use his claws to tear his food, when a fragment proved too large to be swallowed at one gulp. He also learned that the splash made by a frog jumping from the bank into the water was a signal that some danger threatened, and that he and all his little neighbors must hastily conceal themselves in the mud or among the aquatic plants. Thus, happy and contented, eating all he could get, and growing constantly, he passed the first summer of his life, until the approach of cold weather drove him to the middle of the pond where he and the other inhabitants, partially benumbed by the low temperature, burrowed in the

terror the year before, now gave him a wide berth. Altogether, this second summer of his life was much more comfortable than the first had been, since he was now obliged to avoid only the largest of his own kind.

When cold weather drew near once more, the turtle again buried himself safely from the cold, and, in due course of time, awoke from his second long nap. He was, of course, larger, but not so much as the first year; indeed, as he became older, his rate of growth became slower. He noticed, too, by stretching out his long, pliable neck, that his upper shell was changing its shape, and that instead of being almost perfectly round and flat, it was now becoming oval, with a well-defined arch in the middle. His colors, as time went by, grew much dimmer, but the yellow spots on his back, though comparatively dull, always remained his distinguishing feature.

When he was about four or five years old, he had an experience which came near being fatal. He was just rising to the surface of the water to get a breath of fresh air—without which a turtle, when awake, cannot live comfortably for more than an hour or so—when a brightly-colored insect, quite the most beautiful he had ever seen, alighted on the water directly over his head. Fearing lest the prize should be seen and captured by some other inhabitant of the pond, the