

THE BRAVEST BOY IN TOWN.

He lived in the Cumberland Valley,
And his name was Jamie Brown;
But it changed one day, so the neighbours say,
To the "Bravest Boy in Town."

'Twas the time when the Southern soldiers,
Under Early's mad command,
O'er the border made their dashing raid
From the North of Maryland.

And Chambersburg unransomed,
In smouldering ruin slept,
While up the vale, like a fiery gale
The Rebel raiders swept.

And a squad of gray-lad horsemen
Came thundering o'er the bridge,
Where peaceful cows in the meadows browse,
At the feet of the great Blue Ridge;

And on till they reached the village,
That lay in the valley lay,
Defenceless then, for its loyal men,
At the front, were far away.

"Pillage and spoil and plunder!"
This was the fearful word
That the Widow Brown, in gazing down
From her latticed window, heard.

'Neath the boughs of the sheltering oak tree,
The leader bared his head,
As left and right, until out of sight,
His dusty gray-coats sped.

Then he called: "Halloo! within there!"
A gentle, fair-haired dame
Across the floor to the open door
In gracious answer came.

"Here! stable my horse, you woman!"
The soldier's tones were rude—
"Then bestir yourself and from yonder shelf
Set out your store of food!"

For her gun she spread the table;
She motioned him to his place
With a gesture proud; then the widow bowed,
And gently—asked a grace.

"If thine enemy hunger, feed him!
I obey, dear Christ!" she said;
A creeping blush, with its scarlet flush,
O'er the face of the soldier spread.

He rose: "You have said it, madam!
Standing within your doors
Is the rebel foe; but as forth they go
They shall trouble not you nor yours!"

Alas, for the word of the leader!
Alas, for the soldier's vow!
When the captain's men rode down the glen,
They carried the widow's cow.

It was then the fearless Jamie
Sprang up with flashing eyes,
And in spite of tears and his mother's fears,
On the gray-mare, off he flies.

Like a wild young Tam O'Shanter
He plunged with piercing whoop,
O'er field and brook till he overtook
The straggling rebel troop.

Laden, with spoil and plunder,
And laughing and shouting still,
As with cattle and sheep they lazily creep
Through the dust o'er the winding hill.

"Oh! the coward crowd!" cried Jamie;
"There's Brindle! I'll teach them now!"
And with headlong stride, at the captain's side,
He called for his mother's cow.

"Who are you, and who is your mother?
I promised she should not miss!
Well! upon my word, have I never heard
Of assurance like to this!"

"Is your word the word of a soldier?"—
And the young lad faced his foes,
As a jeering laugh, in anger half
And half in sport, arose.

But the captain drew his sabre,
And spoke, with lowering brow:
"Fall back into line! The joke is mine!
Surrender the widow's cow!"

And a capital joke they thought it,
That a barefoot lad of ten
Should demand his due—and get it too—
In the face of forty men.

And the rollicking Rebel raiders
Forgot themselves somehow,
And three cheers brave for the hero gave,
And three for the brindle cow.

He lived in the Cumberland Valley,
And his name was Jamie Brown;
But it changed one day, so the neighbours say,
To the "Bravest Boy in Town."
—Wide Awake.

MORE ABOUT THE QUEEN.

QUEEN VICTORIA: Her Girlhood and Womanhood, by Grace Greenwood, a well known writer, is published in Canada by Dawson Bros. Of it the writer says: "I aimed to make a pleasant, simple, fireside story of the life and reign of Queen Victoria—and I hope I have not altogether failed. I have done my work, if lightly, with entire respect, though always as an American and a Republican." These words exactly describe the character of the book, which is a delightful collection of incidents from the works of many writers, connected by a thread of history, mingled with respectful comments, and manifesting throughout a genuine admiration for the Queen, Prince Albert and their royal children. We quote one passage out of many that it would be pleasant to lay before our readers. It follows the description of the coronation:—

The Queen was certainly a very valiant little woman, but there would have been something unnatural, almost uncanny, about her had the regal calm and religious seriousness which marked her mien during those imposing rites continued indefinitely, and it is right pleasant to read in the reminiscences of Leslie, how the child in her broke out when all the magnificent but tiresome parade, all the grand stage business with those heavy actors, was over. The painter says: "She is very fond of dogs, and has one favourite little spaniel, who is always on the look-out for her return when she is from home. She had, of course, been separated from him on that day longer than usual, and when the state-coach drove up to the palace steps she heard him barking joyously in the hall, and exclaimed, 'There's Dash,' and was in a hurry to doff her crown and royal robe, and lay down the sceptre and the orb, which she carried in her hands, and go and give Dash his bath."

BRING OUT THE ROPE.

THE Swiss guides are heroic men. Tremendous exploits of strength and courage are the scenes which in old age they review. Mountain climbers are dependent on their skill and experience; but no matter what their knowledge of Alpine safeguards or perils may be, they cannot secure even the hope of safety to those who ask their help, except on one condition, and that is, their willingness to be bound together in difficult passes.

The party sets out in union, with kindly intentions to be helpful to each other. They have a book-knowledge of the way, but every step is new to their feet, and they must trust to their guide. For awhile a common bond of personal welfare is enough. But see, the guide has halted and waits for the company to listen. They hear his voice in that clear Alpine air, ringing in stirring tones, "Courage, gentlemen, there is danger near; we must tie the rope around each man, and protect each other!" It is a deceitful snow-bridge over an abyssal cleft in the blue ice! If one man ventures to cross

alone, he may drop between those frozen walls. Bring out the rope and bind these adventurers so firmly that if a man falls, the strength and steadiness of his fellow may hold him securely. Woe betide the man who goes over the horrible glacier regions of Switzerland alone.

The experienced guides, who know the dangers of this life journey, tell us that union is strength, that ties of mutual faith and common interest are not all we need, and they bid us bring out the rope of true-hearted association, to double the force of each man's weight. We have done it in faith, trusting in the Lord—because we know there are dangerous passes in the narrow way to the heavenly heights.—*Nashville Christian Advocate.*

A NEW KIND OF HAPPINESS.

MANY boys have tender consciences and a great reverence for religion, but shrink from becoming Christians lest the change make them sober and sedate like men, and take away their boyish cheerfulness and love of sports. They forget that if a great joy fills the heart from peace with God and the forgiveness of sins, this joy will make all life pleasanter to them in study and work and play. Dr. Nehemiah Adams, long settled as pastor in Boston, gives an account of a boy who became a Christian without quite knowing what the change meant, or why he felt so happy. Dr. Adams says: "A lad was on his way from school, with other lads in playful conversation. When he entered his home, he laid down his books in the entry, went to his chamber, locked the door, kneeled down, and heedless whether anyone was in the room adjoining, prayed in childlike language nearly as follows: 'O God, my heavenly Father, I have come to pray to thee. I don't want anything in particular; but I love Thee. I have come just to say that I do not know what has made me feel as I have felt this forenoon, but I haven't been able to think of much beside God. I never loved anything so. Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth I desire beside Thee. Yes, there is one thing I do desire, and that is, that all scholars may feel so toward Thee.' After a few words more, he joined his brothers and sisters in their play."

This boy was happier than ever before in his life. He didn't know the reason, but it was because he had come to love God, and that made him love parents and brothers and sisters and schoolmates better, and all beautiful things in nature better. He was much happier than his schoolmates who did not love God, and this new joy entered into his talk and play, and attracted their notice. Religion helps children to better study and more faithful work. A little girl of twelve was telling, in a simple way, the evidence that she was a Christian: "I did not like to study, but to play. I was idle at school, and often missed my lessons. Now I try to learn every lesson well to please God. I was mischievous at school when the teachers were not looking at me; making fun for the scholars to laugh at. Now I wish to please God by behaving well and keeping the school laws. I was selfish at home; didn't like to run errands, and was sulky when mother called me from

play to help her in work. Now it is a real joy for me to help mother in any way, and to show that I love her." Such a religion is essential to the best interests and moral growth of youth, and will make life sunny and cheerful.

SAFETY OF RAILWAY TRAVEL

WHEN we think of the vast railroad system of this country, and that this moment, and every moment, on all the tracks north, south, east and west the long trains are rolling and rushing and thundering on, it is a marvel that every morning and every evening newspaper does not present us a long roll of the dead. Let the reprehension of the faithless always be accompanied with applaudits for that multitude of men who on small wages keep the railroading of this country and Great Britain moving in such perfection that an accident is exceptional.* One can go from New York to Toronto or Chicago with no more exposure to danger than he meets in crossing our slippery streets on cold nights. The least dangerous mode of travel is the rail-train. More dangerous is it to go in carriage, and in some conditions of street most perilous to go afoot. While we are again and again called to denounce the sacrifice of human life, we ought to take every opportunity to praise the fidelity of those who get no recognition of brave work conscientiously performed. There are in our time no grander instances of vicarious suffering than that shown by railroad engineers. I often ride with them on their locomotives, and I am always impressed with their intelligence, their gentlemanliness and their heroism. You get but little idea of them as you see the train coming in, and with faces and hands and garments smutched of the coal-dust and soiled with the oil of machinery, they lean out of the window of the hissing engine looking for a telegram from the superintendent giving orders about the next run. How much of the life, the wealth and the happiness of the world depends upon their promptness, and how few betray the trust.—*Dr. Talmage.*

THE WORK OF A MOMENT.

ID you never write a letter, and just as you were finishing it let your pen fall on it or a drop of ink blot the fair page? It was the work of a moment, but the evil could not be entirely effaced. Did you never cut yourself, unexpectedly and quickly? It took days or weeks to heal the wound, and even then a scar remained. It is related of Lord Brougham, that one day he occupied a conspicuous place in a group to have his daguerreotype taken. But at an unfortunate moment he moved. The picture was taken, but his face was blurred.

Do you ask what application we would make of these facts? Just this: "It takes a lifetime to build a character; it only takes one moment to destroy it." "Watch and pray," therefore, "that ye enter not into temptation." "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

* Dr. Smiles, in his life of Geo. Stephenson, says the average man is much more likely to be killed by lightning or to be hanged, than to be killed by a railway accident.—*Ev.*