

Family Circle.

THE BEGINNING OF SIN.

"Come, children, mamma is ready to give us our story now," said Willy Panton, as his mother laying aside the book she was reading, took her seat in the arm-chair, around which were clustered the chairs, footstools, and ottomans of a group of little folks, and which were soon filled by an attentive group, while little Emma sprang into her usual seat in Mrs P.'s lap, and asked, Mamma, will the story be true?"

"Yes, love, it is about something that happened to me when I was seventeen years old." "You know both of my parents died when I was ten years old, and I was left to the care of a friend, of my father, and sometimes resided with him. The circumstance I am about to narrate occurred while staying with my guardian, Mr Willsgrove."

"I went to his office one day, and asked him if he would give me some money to buy some shoes. "How much do you want Julia?" said he.

"Why, guardian I have five shilings, but my slippers will cost seven and six." "Well, dear, you may take £1 5s., and then you will require no more for at least a week. And now, where are you going this afternoon, for I see there is some needlework in your reticule?"

"I am going to Mrs. Denny's, sir; but will be home quite early, so as not to disturb Mrs. Willsgrove, as I did last night." "And I drank tea at Mrs. Denny's, enjoying myself, as I always did, with dear Marry Denny, the gentlest, purest, and most cheerful of human beings, whose devoted kindness to her sick father secured the warm affection of all who knew her, and the approving smile of her heavenly Father."

"Edward Denny, a boy of thirteen, had that afternoon to tea with him his cousin, Charles Bastolle, and I amused myself by inventing plays for the boys in the dining room, before I joined the party in the parlor. As I had promised to return early, I did so, and the next morning proceeded to the shoe store and made my purchase, but on opening my purse, found the note gone, and the five shilling alone remaining. Puzzled beyond measure, I went immediately to Mr Willsgrove's office, and asked him if he had seen me put it in my purse? Yes, he distinctly recollected the circumstance, and had noticed the delicacy of the pearl ring as it slid over the purse."

"Mrs. Willsgrove was the daughter of Mr Denny, and to the house of the latter we repaired."

"They had not seen the note. I said the bag had not been out of my sight since I received the money but at last I remembered that it was left on a chair in the dining-room through the evening."

"I do not think Eddy would take it," said Mrs. Denny.

"My dear mamma, I never dreamed of such a thing," I replied.

"I shall inquire," said she, quietly.

"The matter rested there, and I heard no more for three or four days, when my guardian entered the parlor, and placed in my hand a bank-note of the same amount as the lost one: 'Where did you find it guardy?' I exclaimed: but on seeing his solemn face I stopped."

"Charles Battelle took it and spent it on fire-crackers, &c.: his mother begged me to give this to you.' How sad we all grew when Mr W. detailed to us the course of evil which the boy had begun! Mrs. Battelle being in very delicate health and her husband being from home, the whole affair was left with Mr Willsgrove, who dealt with the offender as the case required—severely. He stated to us that on asking Charley what was his first step in stealing, he said, 'A penny from mamma's work basket, and nobody found me out; so the next time I took two, and then I stole a silver three-pence.'"

"Mamma, was Charley, sorry?" said Emma.

"He professed to be so dear; but I do not know whether his reformation was permanent or not, for I soon after left my kind friends in P., and have never heard again of Charles.—But now, can you infer any moral from this story?"

"Not to leave bags on chairs," said Emma.

"Yes, my child: you may be warned against carelessness with regard to money—a carelessness wrong, not only because it is the means of loss to ourselves, but because it places temptation in the ways of others. Many a servant has been trained to dishonesty by the negligence of the family she serves; and I doubt not, had Charles Battelle been called to account for the missing penny, he would never have proceeded so far in evil; but Willy, can you learn no lesson here?"

"I think, mamma, we may learn not to steal any thing little, for fear we shall grow up thieves."

"Precisely so, my son. Beware of the beginnings of evil. This I wish distinctly to impress upon your minds. It is dangerous to trifle with sin. Can you tell me any text, Sarah, to illustrate this?"

"Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."

"Be very careful, then, continued Mrs Panton, "how you allow yourself to do wrong in one single instance. It is opening the gate to sin, and she walks in and takes possession."

"Ellen did you ever omit to read your Bible for one day?"

"Yes, aunt," replied a thoughtful looking child, "and then the next day I forgot it; and once I did not begin again for a whole week."

"I do not doubt it, my dear; and so too with the particular sin of which poor Charles was guilty. Guard not only against the actual taking of that which does not belong to you but cultivate also a strict regard of justice in every thing. If you borrow anything of your brothers, sisters, companions, be very sure that you return it in precisely the same order as that in which you received it, and in your opinions and practices ask yourself often the question, Am I just? Will this be pleasing to God?"—*Juv. rule Instructor*

"WHAT A FOOL YOU ARE!"

Young lads, capable of much while doing nothing, hearken! "What a fool you are, Paley," said a young man in the university, "to be wasting your time in idleness and dissipation. You have talents which might raise you to eminence. I have none, and it is of no consequence how I act. I am independent of exertion; you are not, and will soon be a ruined man. Unless you alter, I have done with you. I will be no party to your destruction." This speech was made under peculiar circumstances. This young man and Paley had spent the previous night in drinking. Parting, they retired each to his lodgings. Paley was soon asleep, his friend could find no rest for thoughts of Paley's folly. Starting, he proceeded to Paley's lodgings, and awakening him, he stood at his bedside and solemnly addressed him as above, and immediately departed. It was like a voice from eternity. He was amazed, confounded! He lay a-bed most of the day revolving his condition and forming his plans. He arose, and from that hour acted upon it. The world knows the result. Paley took the hint, though roughly made, and rose like a clear light, and shed a lustre on the age and the literature of his nation, and England boasts no son of greater acuteness, perhaps none of wider influence than he. Let any one with the recollections of his own wasted hours, and with any just views of the value of time, look over this or any other city or land, and he cannot do it but with emotions of unutterable sorrow. In all our cities, towns and villages; in even our colleges and schools, there is a talent that is now buried, ruined, wasted—that is now, and that is to be in this world and the next, a blight and a curse: that might adorn the bar, the senate, or the pulpit; that might resist with success the evils of profligacy and infidelity, and that might bear every blessing of science and civilization around the globe. From those lips which now give utterance to horrid blasphemy, the gospel, "in strains as sweet as angels use," might "whisper peace;" and those frames now hastening to the dishonourable grave of the drunkard, might endure the cold of deserts, in diffusing the blessings of civilization and Christianity; and those hands that will soon tremble as if palsied by age, under the influence of intoxicating drinks, might make the wilderness and the solitary place glad, and the desert blossom as the rose. All that we would ask to secure the conversion of this whole world to virtue would be merely the talent that is now preparing to be a blighting and a curse. Soon to that mass of expanding youthful intellect the opportunity of preparing for future usefulness will have passed away, and it will be too late to prepare to accomplish anything for the welfare of mankind. I need not pause here to remark on the painful emotions which visit the bosom in the few cases of those who are reformed after a wasted and dissipated youth. Cases of such reformation sometimes occur. A man after the errors and follies of a dissipated early life—after he has wasted the opportunities which he had to obtain an education—after all the abused care and anxiety of a parent to prepare him for future usefulness and happiness, sometimes is aroused to see the error and the folly of his course. What would he not give to be able to retrace that course, and to live over again that abused and wasted life! But it is too late. The die is cast for this life—whatever may be the case in regard to the life to come. Up, then, up! Lose not another moment! You may still succeed.—*Penny Magazine.*

CIVIL SOCIETY.

If civil society be made for the advantage of man, all the advantages for which it is made become his right. It is an institution of beneficence; and law itself is only beneficence acting by rule. Men have a right to live by that rule; and they have a right to do justice as between their fellows, whether their fellows are in politic function or in ordinary occupation.—They have a right to the fruits of their industry, and to the means of making their industry fruitful. They have a right to the acquisitions of their parents; to the nourishment and improvement of their offspring; to instruction in life, and consolation in death. Whatever each man can separately do, without trespassing upon others, he has a right to do for himself; and he has a right to a fair portion of all which society, with all its combinations of skill and force,

can do in his favor. In this partnership all men have equal rights.—*Coleridge.*

Geographic and Historic.

WILD BEASTS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

To gratify a very natural and proper curiosity, of which few of our young readers are altogether unconscious, we here present a few sentences from a long and interesting journal, by the Rev Mr Niven, giving an account of his visit to Natal. The extract refers exclusively to some of the wild beasts known in that part of the world.—"I was not a passive listener to the accounts Mr N gave me of the habits and depredations of the African tiger and alligator, both very troublesome neighbors, and scarcely less so, the unwieldy elephant. An instance was related of the ferocity and daring of the first named animal. A person close by had gone out with some Zulu servants to hunt a tiger that had been infesting his premises. They fell in with the intruder. He opened the conflict by springing on one of the blacks, seized him by the head, and sending his teeth through the skull killed him in an instant, another was in his deadly grasp before Potgiater could get a shot at him that unfortunately missed, and the infuriated animal, dropping the other, pounced upon the unsuccessful marksman, and clutched his head likewise, through a felt hat, which had been cautiously fortified within by transverse sticks, and saved the victim's cranium. The others now closed on the assailant, and dispatched him with their assegays. A wound he had inflicted on the hand of Potgiater was six months in healing. Mr Schroeder, I remember, mentioned to me an instance of considerable daring in another of the same species. It had entered their encampment during the night when Brother Thomason and himself were trying between the Umhlabi and Untongati rivers; and from the inner circle formed around the fire, seized and made off with a dog, whose yell aroused the half-slumbering party, under the apprehension that the victim was one of themselves. Besides elephants and lions, no other large wild animals disturb the security of travel. Lions are rarely seen now, except in the tract lying between the above named rivers, where there is an uninhabited and well wooded space, which is the resort of game, on which the king of beasts, as well as his meaner subjects, make habitual assaults.

Alligators are still numerous in all the rivers which abound in deep and capacious pools, or marshy beds. Mr Schroeder told me he had shot three lately in the Untongati, below his own house, and I was called out to see one basking in the sun on the surface of a pool nearly half a mile off, but on nearer inspection, it was found to be the shadow of a tree on the opposite bank. One which a Dutch neighbor had shot in the pool from which his family were supplied with water, disappeared, as they always do when wounded. A few days ago, its carcass rose to the surface, and the farmer got it hauled to the bank. The natives, when they heard of the indignity done to the remains of the river god, insisted on his restoring the corpse to its native element, which he not only refused, but, with characteristic temerity, it not something worse, applied his waggon whip to the nearest of them. But they returned next day with increased force, and compelled him to throw the putrid monster in again, and drink the infusion if he found no better.

On the lower Ungeini, alligators are only seen when the river is flooded; and the opinion of the natives is, that the largest of these (and they are sometimes killed 12 feet long), have too much respect for a white skin, to attack the favored complexion, not even children. Not long ago, Mrs. N's children had gone during moonlight to bathe in the river, a few yards below the house, and with them, several young Zulus on the farm. One of the former left with his feet, on swimming, one of these unkindly croats. He gave the alarm, and made for the bank with his fellows, when they missed one of the black children, who was never more heard of. Neither cry nor commotion was perceived, as the practice in deep water is instantly to pull down its prey, and despatch it unseen. How striking the resemblance of the ravages of the enemy of all righteousness!"

A GREEK FUNERAL.

I remember when they buried that bright-eyed Greek maiden, snatched suddenly from earth, when her young heart was light as her face was fair. They arrayed her, so rigid and motionless, in the gay dress she had never worn but for some great fete or gala; as though this, more than any, were a day of rejoicing for her; and thus attired, with her long hair spread out over her still bosom, all decked with flowers, they laid her uncoffined in the grave. At her feet they placed a small flask of wine, and a basket of corn, in accordance with an ancient Greek superstition, which supposes that for three days and nights the disembodied spirit lingers mournfully around its tenement of clay, the garments of its mortality, wher, as a pilgrim and a stranger on the earth, it lived and loved, it sinned and suffered. As soon as the first symptoms of decay announce that the course of corruption is at work, they believe that the purer essence departs to purer realms. Before the grave was closed, whilst for the last time the radiance of the sunset cast a glow, like the

mockery of life, over the the marble face of the poor young girl, her friends, as a last precaution, took measures to ascertain that she was actually dead, and not in a swoon. The means they always take in such instances to ascertain a fact which elsewhere would be ensured by a doctor's certificate, are touching in the extreme the person whom, whilst alive, it was known the deceased loved best—the mother, or it may be, the young betrothed, who had hoped to place on her head the gay and bridal crown, instead of the green laurel garland of death—advances and calls her by name, repeating after it the word "ella" (come) several times, in a tone of passionate entreaty. If she is mute to this appeal, if she is deaf to the voice dearest to her on earth, then they no longer doubt that she is dead indeed, they cover up the grave, lift their eyes to the heaven, where they believe her to be, (for the Greeks do not hold to the doctrine of purgatory,) and having made the sign of the cross, they depart in silence to their homes. But a year after, on the anniversary of the death, they return to the grave, and kneeling down, lay their lips to the sod, and whisper to the silent tomb that they love her still, and she is yet remembered and regretted.

THE FUSCHIA.

The Fuschia is indigenous to the forests of New Zealand as well as those of Chili and Patagonia, and the woods through which we travelled were everywhere adorned with an under-growth of beautiful Fuschias, now (October) in full bloom. This shrub, in its uncultivated state, bears two distinct set of flowers, one green and purple, the other purple and red, and the pollen on the anthers of the green blossoms is of the most brilliant cobalt blue color.—*Savage Life and Scenes in New Zealand.*

POETS IN A PUZZLE.

I led the horse to a stable, when a fresh perplexity arose. I removed the harness without difficulty; but, after many strenuous attempts, I could not remove the collar. In despair I called for assistance, when aid soon drew near.—Mr Wordsworth brought his ingenuity into exercise; but after several unsuccessful efforts he relinquished the achievement, as a thing altogether impracticable. Mr Coleridge now tried his hand, but showed no more grooming skill than his predecessors; for after twisting the poor horse's neck almost to strangulation, and the great danger of his eyes, he gave up the useless task, pronouncing that the horse's head must have grown (zoot or dropsy) since the collar was put on; for he said, "it was a downright impossibility for such a huge *os frontis* to pass through so narrow a collar!" Just at this instant a servant girl came near, and, understanding the cause of our consternation, "Ta master," said she, "you don't go about the work in the right way. You should do like this," when, turning the collar completely upside down, she slipped it off in a moment, to our great humiliation and wonderment; each satisfied afresh that there were greater heights of knowledge in the world to which we had not yet attained.—*Coltle's Life of Coleridge*

A LEARNED "SHOT."

Once when Sir T. F. Buxton was staying with Mr Coke at Holkham, a well known Professor was also one of the visitors. The venerable historian had never had a gun in his hand, on this occasion Mr Coke persuaded him to accompany the shooting party; care, however, was taken to place him at the corner of the covert, where it was thought the other sportsmen would be out of his reach. When the rest of the party came up to the spot where he was standing, Mr Coke said to him, "Well, what sport? You have been firing pretty often!" "Hush!" said the Professor, "there it goes again?" and he was just raising his gun to his shoulder when a man walked very quietly from the bushes about seventy yards in front of him. It was one of the beaters who had been set to stop the pheasants, and his leather gaiters, dimly seen through the bushes, had been mistaken for a hare by the Professor, who much surprised by its tenacity of life, had been firing at it whenever he saw it move. "But," said Mr Buxton, "the man had never discovered that the Professor was shooting at him!"—*Memoirs of Thomas F. Buxton.*

Noah's Ark was in length six times its breadth, and in depth one tenth of its length. Most of our large steamers are built of the same proportions; and Mr white asserts (*Treatise on Naval Architecture*) that for stability and security none better could possibly be selected. The ark was twice as long, and twice as wide and deep as one of our West India mail steamers, and consequently it would take eight of them, considered as regular figures, to make a vessel as large as that which was freighted with the wreck of "the world before the flood."

THE DOMESTIC CAT IN INDIA.—Mr Jacob, in his account of Jessor, says, "The European domestic cat, when introduced into this country, seems endowed with the power of destroying snakes as she would have done mice at home, no sooner does one make its appearance in a house or compound than she pounces on it, and after shaking it a while, tosses it about, playing with it, if allowed; the snake becoming so terrified as never to attempt to bite her."