

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

BY THE REV. GEO. W. SHINN, D.D.

Your boy has become very disagreeable. Somehow or other he has developed traits which astonish you. Once he was a dear little fellow, so affectionate, so docile, so charming. Now he is, to say the least, rather disappointing. Sometimes he is surly, sometimes intractable, and now and then he is disposed to be insolent. He does not care to be with you as he once did. He prefers the company of rough fellows on the ball-field. He has grown careless of his garments, and shows considerable facility in using them up. A while ago, you could dress him neatly and rejoice for a time in the freshness and daintiness of his attire. There is but little chance for rejoicing now, as he comes in bespattered with mud, with dishevelled hair, and some rents in his trousers. He does not seem even to notice how untidy his appearance is, much less does he care about it. His feet and his hands have grown big, and his voice, which once had such a clear ring to it, is now an odd combination of ups and downs on the scale. The low notes always astonish you, for they suggest the growling of some animal in hiding back of some door. Your little boy and the dainty chap of a while ago has gone, and this big, hulking fellow has come in his place. You have not become acquainted with the new comer yet. You find it hard to realize that he is your boy, the same boy you once found so charming. This one is not charming now. In fact, he is disagreeable, very disagreeable. What will you do with him? Of course you must keep him. You cannot turn him adrift, and you cannot shut him up. He is to stay with you, so you will have to be patient and wait for the time when a change will come. A change does come, thank God, or many parents might grow distracted. One lady, who had had an experience with boys, wished there was some way of boxing them up for a time until the change came. If they could only be safely out of sight for a time! But, if so, the change would not come. Your patience and your continued kindness are essential to his passing safely through this period of "hobble-de-hoydom" to young manhood. By and by he will tell you in a blundering way that he isn't going to be a "kid" any longer. He will try to be a man. When he tells you that the change is coming. He will gradually grow more and more ashamed of the coarse, rude conduct which has troubled you, and he will have streaks of gentleness and refinement. Sometimes, indeed, he will grow oppressive in his efforts at reform, and you will see him exercising a severity towards himself that numbers him for a little while among the most rigid of the ascetics. Perhaps you grow alarmed about him now, lest he should play too little and work too hard; lest he should grow morbid and take too gloomy a view of life. If you do have such an alarm, keep it to yourself, and be patient towards this mood of his also. Ah, he is a kaleidoscopic creature, this boy of yours! Do not be surprised at the variety of boy he presents, for after giving you quite an exhibition of possibilities he will probably settle down into a steady-going, affectionate big fellow, far more attractive, far more interesting than the dear little chap whom you once had. You will feel repaid for all your patience, for all your tenderness and consideration, when you realize that this young giant beside you has a great loving heart and a strong arm, and that both are for you. The wonder is that parents generally do not know

that many a boy is likely to have his disagreeable period. Some boys manage to slip along without it, and develop steadily into sterling manhood. But not all, not many. A great many, when they cease to be nice little fellows, become for a time very disagreeable nondescripts, not vicious, but ugly and uninteresting. This period may last for several years. Judicious treatment may shorten it. Injudicious treatment may make it chronic. Sometimes the boy is conscious that he is disagreeable, but ordinarily he plunges along with supreme indifference. If ever a parent has need of patience and gentleness, if ever there was a time for prayer, it is while the boy is passing through this transition. Then, too, is the time for a firm hand. It must be gentle, not rough, not harsh, but as firm as trust in the great Lord can make it, as firm as your determination to make a man of him. Hold the boy up to duty. Let him see that your religion is real. Let him feel it in the very genuineness of your interest in him and of your appeals to the Lord above to train him to be Christ-like. You will gain him at last. Do not fear. The Lord will give you a reward for your fidelity. Do not turn away in disgust, for there are better days coming. Your boy will not always distress and mortify you. There is coming the time when you will be proud of him. Yes, perhaps the days come when you will lean upon him and bless God for giving him to you.

THE MISSIONARY FIELD.

At Mahanoro, Madagascar, where the Rev. F. J. Fuller had succeeded the Rev. G. H. Smith, the outbreak of the coast tribes seems to have been extremely virulent in character. All the catechists at the out-stations were obliged to take refuge in Mahanoro itself. One poor catechist is believed to have been murdered at a place called Anosiario. It is clear that the rising was not anti-Christian so much as a retaliation on the Hova for the oppression and injustice of years.

EAST AFRICA.—*Central Africa* for September gives the following extract from a letter written on St. Peter's Day by the Bishop of Zanzibar:—"A year ago I was consecrated bishop, and I ask you to thank God with me that I have accomplished my first visitation of the diocese, and to pray Him to take care of me in my second, which I begin this week. I have made six readers and ordained five deacons and three priests. Three of the deacons and one of the priests increase the number of native missionaries to nine, but what are they among the well-nigh countless villages of heathen? I have administered confirmation seventeen times, the numbers varying from one to seventy-one, the total being 180 men and boys and 115 women and girls. I have consecrated one church."

"Had I twenty lives to live, Africa should have them all," said Charles F. Mackenzie, of the Universities' Mission. An address by Bishop Selwyn led him to consecrate himself to missionary work. The natives remember him as "a man of a sweet heart."

Chaibasa is an important station in the Diocese of Chota Nagpur. The Rev. Logsdail is the only European missionary; but he has nine hundred Christians in the ten villages of the mission. During last year thirty-five adult converts from heathenism were baptized, and sixty-eight other candidates for baptism were under instruction.

When a friend at home wrote to Mary Moffat, asking what could be sent her that would be of use, the answer was, "Send a communion service; it will be wanted." At that time there were no converts and no "glimmer of day." Three years later a hundred and twenty were present at the table of the Lord, the first among the Bechwanas; and the day previous there ar-

rived a box containing the communion vessels which the faith of Mrs. Moffat had led her to ask for before there was a single inquirer.

The Fanadie tribe, in Madras, India, are said to be as low down as mortals ever sink. They live in wretched huts, eat rats, snakes or anything else that is available. Some thought it folly to try to reach them with the Gospel. Now it is reported that a young man from this tribe, in the theological seminary at Ramapatam, is one of the very few whose scholarship entitled them to one hundred in every examination.

The Rev. J. Addison Ingle, of the mission in Hankow, China, writes: "As there was no news from Han-Ch'uan of any candidates awaiting confirmation, the bishop did not go up at his last visitation. The day after he left, however, came a letter, which had been long delayed en route, saying that thirty-two were ready for confirmation and over forty for baptism. The bishop expects to go there on his next visitation up the river, in the fall.

Miss Mann, who has been stationed at the city of Aomori, Japan, during Miss Suthon's absence, writes: "There is a great field here. What has been done is as a drop to the ocean—about sixty Christians to a town of 25,000! I wish some of my home friends who think of Japan as a Christian country could have witnessed a funeral service which I saw here recently, and could have seen the poor deluded creatures prostrating themselves before their idols of wood and brass. It made me sick at heart to see it. Pray to God for me, that I may have grace given to me to be to these people all that He would have me to be. When I go around among them, I can only regret that I did not dedicate my life to them years ago."

Archdeacon Thompson, of Shanghai, at a recent conference of our China Mission, said that he considered medical itinerant work was most important. As to the question of breaking down prejudice, he could speak from personal experience. Our entrance into the city of Ta-tsang had been bitterly resisted, but one of our native catechists, who was something of a medical man, opened a dispensary outside the city and commenced work; the people gradually came to him; he was able to preach and distribute tracts, and finally last year several were baptized. We have this year been able to rent a house within the city, which was largely through the agency of this medical work. Mr. Woo had opened the station at Kading by means of his medical work.

THE PETERBORO LAKES.

One of the difficulties—mental it is true—of the person passing through a region in which he has not hitherto travelled, is the fear that many objects interesting to him, and which he may think worthy of "brief mention," may not be thought meet of being read or even glanced at. The great feature of this region is rock, rock, eternal rock, rock quartz, rock limestone, rock granite, beds of rock trending towards all the points of the compass. It would seem that mother earth, in the distant past, was afflicted with some kind of eruptive fever; the pustules came out, and have remained out to this day—Nature, as she always does, in her own good time and in her own kindly way, robing in her matchless drapery of tree and flower and shrub and lichen those once nude portuberances that broke out on the surface of the mother of us all. I wonder will the old dame ever be done working, ever be quiet, ever take a holiday. It seems not. Having produced these rocky islets, almost countless in number, she, with the great agencies at her command, still is moulding, altering and changing, it may be, into something more nearly approaching her ideal of the beautiful, those lovely things which to man's imperfect vision appear already so fair. You would imagine as you look on the smooth impervious surface of these rocks anchored in eternity, that no change could be made in them, no effect produced on them, even by the bolts that Vulcan used to fashion for Jupiter in the caverns of Etna; but the drop of water trickles into the little crevice, the terrific frost of the Canadian winter congeals and swells it, and, with roar louder than the voice of artillery, mass is severed from mass, often by cuts as sharp and as clean as if divided by the keenest razor. How grand, in the still silence of our