

Youths' Department.

SIN.—On a fine autumn day, Richard was keeping his twelfth birthday. He was the son of kind and pious parents, who had given him a large number of presents of different kinds, and allowed him to-day to invite a party of friends.

They were playing together in the garden, in which Richard had a small garden of his own, with flowers and fruit-trees in it. On the garden wall there were growing some young peach-trees, which were bearing fruit for the first time. The fruit was just beginning to ripen, and the red cheeks were showing through the delicate bloom which covered them. They looked so beautiful that the boys began to long for them.

But Richard said, "My father has told me not to touch these peaches; for it is the first fruit which the trees have borne. I have all sorts of fruit in my garden. Let us all go away, or we might be tempted to pick them."

Then the boys said, "Why should we not taste them? To-day you are king of the garden, and no one else. Besides, is not this your twelfth birthday? You are a year older to-day. You don't mean always to be a child in leading-strings, do you? Only come into our garden. No one tells us not to pick things there."

But Richard said, "No, come with me. Father has told me not to touch them."

Then the boys answered, "But your father will not see you, and how is he to find it out? If he asks you, you can say you know nothing about it."

"Fie!" replied Richard, "that would be telling a lie, and my cheeks would turn red and soon betray me."

Then the oldest said, "Richard is right. Just listen; I know another way. Look here, Richard: let us pick them, then you can say you did not do it." Richard and the others agreed to this. So they broke off the fruit and shared it.

As soon as it was getting dusk the boys went home. But Richard was afraid to meet his father: and whenever the house door opened, he was frightened, and began to tremble.

At last his father came, and when Richard heard his footsteps, he ran, as quickly as he could, to the other side of the garden, where his own little garden was. But his father saw how the young trees had been stripped, and called, "Richard, Richard! where are you?" When the lad heard his own name he trembled still more for fear.

And his father came to him and said, "Is this the way you keep your birthday? and are these the thanks I receive, that you rob my trees?"

But Richard replied, "I have not touched the trees, father. Perhaps one of the boys did it."

Then his father took him into the house, and placed him in front of him in the light, and said, "Do you still want to deceive your father?" And the boy turned pale, and trembled, and with tears, confessed the whole. But his father said, "From this time you are never to go into the garden again."

With this his father left him. But Richard could not sleep all night; he felt miserable as he was lying in the dark, he could hear his heart beat: and whenever he was falling asleep, he was frightened by dreams. This was the worst night of his life.

The next day he looked pale and wretched, and his mother began to grieve for the boy. So she said to his father, "Look how Richard is taking it to heart, and how low spirited he is. The locking up of the garden is a sign to him that his father's heart is locked against him too."

And the father said, "That is what I wish. That is the reason that I locked up the garden."

"But, then," said his mother, "it is so bad a beginning to the new year of his life."

"It will for that very reason, be the happier afterwards," was the father's reply.

After a few days, the mother said again to the father, "I am afraid of Richard's despairing of our loving him again."

"There is no fear of that," replied the father, "his own guilty heart will assure him of the contrary. Hitherto he has enjoyed our love, now let him learn how to know and admire it, that he may recover it again."

"But," said the mother, "does not it seem to him now to be somewhat serious and stern?"

"That is true," answered the father; "for it appears as justice and wisdom. But let him learn in this way, through the consciousness of his sin, to fear and honor it. And in due time it will appear to him again in its original shape, and he will again, with-

out timidity, call it love. His present trouble is a proof that he is sure to do this by-and-by."

Some time had again passed by, when Richard came one morning out of his bed-room, with a quiet, but serious face. He had put together, in a basket, all the presents which he had ever had from his parents; and he now brought the basket and put it down before his father and mother.

Then the father said to him, "What does this mean, Richard?" and the boy said, "Father, I don't deserve your kindness, so I have brought back the presents. But my heart tells me that I am beginning to be a new child. So pray forgive me; and take me and everything you have so kindly given me."

Then the father folded his child in his arms, and kissed him, and wept over him. And his mother did the same.

THE LAND BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS.—MY HELEN BRUCE.—The little child was dying. His weary limbs were racked by pain no more. The flesh was fading from his thin cheek, and the fever that for many days had been drying up his blood, was now cooling rapidly, under the touch of the icy hand that was upon him.

There were sounds and tokens of blither, but suppressed grief, in that dim chamber, for the dying little one was very dear to many hearts.

They knew that he was departing, and the thought was hard to bear; but they tried to command their feelings, that they might not disturb the last moments of their darling.

The father, and mother, and the kind physician, stood beside their dear Eddy's bed, and watched his heavy breathing. He had been silent for some time and appeared to sleep. They thought that it might be thus that he would pass away. But suddenly his blue eyes opened wide and clear, and a beautiful smile broke over his features. He looked upward and forward at first, and turning his blue eyes upon his mother's face, said in a sweet voice—

"Mother, what is the name of the beautiful country that I see beyond the mountains—the high mountains?"

"I see nothing, my child," said the mother; "there are no mountains in sight of our home."

"There, dear mother," said the child, pointing upward, "yonder are the mountains. Can you not see it now? in tones of the greatest astonishment, as his mother shook her head. "They are so near me now—so large and high, and behind them the country looks so beautiful, and the people are so happy—there are no sick children there. Papa, can you not see beyond the mountains? Tell me the name of that land?"

The parents glanced at each other, and with united voice, replied, "The land you see is Heaven, is it not, my child?"

"Yes, it is Heaven. I thought that must be its name. Oh, let me go—but how shall I cross these mountains? Father, will you not carry me? Oh, take me in your arms and carry me, for they call me from the other side, and I must go."

There was not a dry eye in the chamber, and upon every heart there fell a solemn awe, as if they stood upon the very verge of eternity—as if the curtain which concealed its mysteries were about to be withdrawn.

"My boy," said the father, "will you not stay with us a little longer? You shall cross the mountains soon, but in stronger arms than mine. Wait—stay with your mother a little while longer; see how she weeps at the thought of losing you."

"O mother, O father, do not cry, but come with me, and cross the mountains—oh come!" and thus he entreated, with a strength and earnestness that astonished all.

The chamber was filled by wondering and awe-stricken friends. At length he turned towards his mother, with a face beaming with rapturous delight, and stretched out his little arms to her for one last embrace, he cried, "Good bye, mother, I am going; but don't you be afraid—the strong man has come to carry me over the mountains!"

These were his parting words; upon his mother's breast he breathed his last, and they laid the fair little body down upon the pillows, and closed the lids over the beautiful blue eyes, over which the mist of death had gathered heavily, and bowing by the bedside, prayed with submissive, though bleeding hearts, and said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord."

TEACHING BY EXAMPLE.—Whatever you would have your children become, strive to exhibit in your own lives and conversation.

Selections.

THE CAVALRY.—SIR ARTHUR SWINBURNE.—Captain Nalau, in his work upon the "Cavalry"—its history and tactics—speaks of the effect produced by the sword:—

"When I was in India an engagement between a party of the Nizam's irregular horse and a numerous body of insurgents took place, in which the horsemen though greatly inferior in numbers, defeated the Robillas with great slaughter. My attention was drawn particularly to the sight by the doctor's report of the killed and wounded, most of whom had suffered by the sword, and in the column of remarks such as 'Arm cut off from the shoulder'; 'both hands cut off (apparently at one blow) above the wrist, in holding up the arm to protect the head'; 'leg cut off above the knee' &c. I was astounded. Were these men giants to lop limbs thus wholesale? Or was this result to be attributed (as I was told) to the sharp edge of the native blade and the peculiar way of drawing it?"

became anxious to see these horsemen of the Nizam examine their wonderful blades, and learn the knack of lopping off men's limbs. Opportunity soon offered for the Commander-in-Chief went to Hyderabad on a tour of inspection, on which I accompanied him. After passing the Kistna river a squadron of these very horsemen joined the camp as part of the escort. And now fancy my astonishment!

"The sword-blades they had were chiefly old dragon blades cast from our service. The men had mounted them after their own fashion—the hilt and handle, both of metal, small in the grip, rather flat, not round like ours, where the edge seldom falls true; they all had an edge like a razor from heel to point; were worn in wooden scabbards; a single ring held them to the wrist-belt, from which a strap passed through the hilt to a button in front, to keep the sword steady and prevent it flying out of the scabbard. The swords are never drawn except in action.

"Thinking the wooden scabbards might be objected to as not suitable for campaigning, I got a reference from one of those regiments and found the average of broken scabbards below that of the regulars who have steel ones. The steel is snapped by a kick or a fall—the wood, being elastic, bends. They are not in the man's way, when dismounted they do not get between his legs and trip him up; they make no noise—a soldier on sentry of a dark night might move about without betraying his position to an enemy by the clanking of the rings against the scabbard. All that noise in column which announces its approach when miles off, and makes it so difficult to hear a word of command in the ranks, is thus got rid of, as well as the necessity of wrapping straw or hay round the scabbards, as now customary when engaged in any service in which an attempt is to be made to surprise an enemy.

"An old trooper of the Nizam told me the old British English blades were in great favour with them when mounted and kept as above described. But, as we wore them, they were good for nothing in their hands. I said, 'How do you strike with your swords to cut off men's limbs?' 'Strike hard, sir,' said the old trooper. 'Yes, of course; but how do you teach the men to use their swords in that particular way, (drawing it)?' 'We never teach them any way, sir; a sharp sword will cut in any man's hand.'

WHAT IS COAL.—No one would imagine below hand that there could be any difficulty in telling what is coal. When one comes, however, to try to give a scientific or legal definition, he finds it is not so easy to tell what coal is. There was, not long ago, a keen litigation in Canada, turning entirely on the question, 'What is coal?' and there has lately been a similar case in Scotland, where many lawyers and men of science were engaged, and several thousand pounds of expense incurred. In the latter instance a company had leased a track of ground for coal, ironstone, iron, limestone, and fireclay, but not copper or other minerals. They contemplated making something tolerable out of a certain stratum of what called gas-coal, which was believed to be there, because it abounded in the neighboring grounds. They did find this mineral in large quantity, and for some time they worked it at a good profit; but now the proprietor comes in and says, 'This mineral is not coal, and therefore not included in the lease. It will be the subject of a separate bargain. In a jerry-bid on the question, which lasted for a week, a cohort of geologists, and chemists gave conflicting testimony on the point. That the stuff was a bituminous clay,