

Youth's Corner.

THE KNITTING-NEEDLES.

A GERMAN FAIRY-TALE.

A poor widow-woman in Germany was living with her two little girls, Margaret and Barbara, in a solitary cottage which, with the furniture in it, was all she had in the world, except a goat which supplied her with milk, and her good health and industry by which she was enabled to work and earn her daily bread.

One cold evening, the mother went out into the forest to bring home a bundle of wood. On her return she found a poor, wretched looking white kitten, lying under a bush and crying piteously; she took it up in her apron and brought it home, where the little girls took charge of it very tenderly.

As soon as the mother herself had recovered from her fright, she told the children there was no occasion to fear; the kitten must have been a fairy who tried them, whether they had compassion upon the wretched; and she was now friendly and would do them good.

The mother was soon able to purchase a better house, and to keep cows, and to have her wood brought to her door, because plenty of poor people were glad to work for her, since she could pay wages out of the sales which they made of knitting-work done by the fairy-needles.

It came to pass, then, one cold evening, that a poor, wretched looking little girl came shivering to their door and begged for something to eat, or clothes to cover herself with. The servant had let her get to the kitchen fire, and went to tell her mistresses about it: but they came out into the kitchen in a great passion, scolding the servant for letting the girl in at all, and ordering her out of the house directly.

The poor begging-girl was the fairy; she disappeared after speaking these words, and the knitting-needles disappeared with her.

The young readers of the Berean no doubt know that there are no fairies really; and this German tale is only meant to teach them some good lesson. Now if they take it for their lesson this time, that they are to be industrious, contented, and kind-hearted, and when God gives them wealth, they are not to become indolent, dissipated, and pitiless, they understand this fairy-tale aright: and if their industry, contentment, and tenderness of heart spring from love towards the Saviour, who for their sakes became poor, was unwearied in doing good, and remembers his disciples now as a compassionate High Priest, then they will hereafter find that the kindness they do to their poor fellow-creature, he owns as a service done even to himself, which shall not lose its recompense.

THE BOY AND THE MAN.

A few years ago, there was, in the city of Boston, a portrait painter, whose name was Copley. He did not succeed very well in his business, and concluded to go to England, to try his fortune there.

John was a studious boy, and made such rapid progress in his studies, that his father sent him to college. There he applied himself so closely to his books, and became so distinguished a scholar, that his instructors predicted that he would be a very eminent man.

After he had graduated, he studied law. And when he entered upon the practice of his profession, his mind was so richly stored with information, and so highly disciplined by his previous diligence, that he almost immediately obtained celebrity.

One or two cases of very great importance being entrusted to him, he managed them with so much wisdom and skill, as to attract the admiration of the whole British nation. The king and his cabinet, seeing what a learned man he was, and how much influence he had acquired, felt it to be important to secure his services for the Government. They therefore raised him from one post of honour to another, till he was created Lord High Chancellor of England—the very highest post of honour which any subject can attain, so that John Singleton Copley is now Lord Lynnhurst, Lord High Chancellor of England.

But he studied in school, when other boys were idle; and in college, when other young men were wasting their time, he ever adopted for his motto, "Ultra pergere" (Press onward)—and how rich has been his reward.—Rev. J. S. C. Abbott.

[Yes, for this life—but the author says nothing about his prospects for the life to come. We are quite willing to believe that the Chancellor has a possession in heaven, for we know nothing to the contrary; but let it not be forgotten that a man may have worked himself up from deep poverty to the foremost rank in society, and have no inheritance in the kingdom above.—Ed.]

MARTIN LUTHER.

It has been said of the great German reformer, that his words were half battles; but he went through the lowest despondency, before he was prevailed upon to preach and to write. The Superior of the order of Augustinians, to which he belonged, called upon him to preach. "Oh, Dr. Staupitz, Dr. Staupitz, said the monk, "I cannot do it. I shall die in three months. Indeed I cannot do it." The Superior had discovered the hidden energies of that great mind, and he deserves the credit of having been greatly instrumental in bringing them into action. He replied: "Well, brother Martin, if you must die, you must; but preach first, man, preach—then live or die, as may happen." He preached and lived; and his words, preached and written, went like a whirlwind through Germany, blowing away the dust of centuries, and giving men the sight of God's holy book of revelation.

Martin Luther's friend, Kranach, has painted him in his robe with large sleeves, open at the breast, and showing a black vest, with a little collar of white linen at the throat. This was his usual garb. The

Electer, previously to his assuming it—sent him a piece of Prussian cloth, with a note to this effect,—"To make yourself a preacher's robe, a monk's dress, or a Spanish cloak." His lodgings in his convent consisted of three rooms—a bedroom, a room for study, which served him as a room for receiving visitors, and a dining room. In these he received the envoy of King Ferdinand, who came to Wittemberg to ascertain the truth of the report that Luther had a numerous guard of armed men with him. The walls of his bedchamber were written over with sentences in charcoal extracted from the Scriptures, as, "Verbum Domini manet in aeternum" (the word of God abideth for ever), which he had embroidered on the sleeves of his domestic dresses; or lines from the profane poets, Homer especially: as "He who watches over the destinies of a people or a country ought no longer to sleep all night." His closet for work, plastered with stucco of milky whiteness, was ornamented with portraits in oil of his dearly beloved colleague Melancthon, and of the Elector Frederick, by the hand of Lucas Kranach, and with some caricatures against the Pope, the subjects of which he had himself furnished in the course of his table-talk to some wandering artist who had afterwards carried them to Nuremberg, the manufactory whence issued vast numbers of engravings on wood.

From the frames of these caricatures hung pasteboard slips with acetic sentences in German. Lastly, the eye was filled with a clumsy shelving of wood, on which stood or lay a few volumes, forming what he called his library. The Bible, like the Divine word in his mind, occupied the place of honour—the Bible, in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew;—the Psalms by Melancthon—the New Testament by Erasmus; and, side by side with these, the writings of Eck; and the Theses on Indulgences, the bulls of Leo X.; the Epistola Obscurorum Virorum; various works of John Huss, Virgil, Columella, and some ascetical books printed at Mayence, of which presents had been made him. Coloured glass, soldered together with lead, let in the light of all shades on his table, which has been carefully preserved, and resembles a sort of desk, in the middle of which a crucifix, the work of some Nuremberg artist, has an admirable expression. His dog usually lay at his feet whilst writing or composing, and of which he used to say, when laughing at the theologians who boasted of having seen many books, "My dog has also seen many books, more, perhaps, than Faber, who is all Fathers, Fathers, Fathers,—councils, councils, councils."—Near the door of his house was a turning machine, which he had got from Nuremberg, in order to gain a livelihood by his hand if ever the word of God failed to support him.

There is a great deal of loose morality in the practice of borrowing books. It is so much easier to borrow a book than it is to return it, that it is not strange that so many borrowed books never find their way back to the library of their owner. The conscience of many persons need mending on this subject. If a voice loud enough to reach the ears and consciences of those who have long retained borrowed books, of which the owners can give no account, should be proclaimed through the land and induce these stray volumes to set out on their return home, what a movement would there be in literature, both ancient and modern! Of persons who borrowed books, but did not return them, Lord Eldon said, "though backward in accounting, they seemed practised in book-keeping."

THE TRIFLER.

We this instant imagined a man, retaining all his consciousness, transformed into a swallow, a creature abundantly busy, up in the early morning, forever on the wing, as graceful and sprightly in his flight, as tasteful in his haunts which he selects. Look at him, zigzagging over the clover field, skimming the limpid lake, whisking round the steeple, or dancing in the sky. Behold him in high spirits, shrieking out his ecstasy as he has bolted a dragon fly, or darting through the arrow-slits of the old turret, or performing some other feat of hirundine agility. And notice how he pays his morning visits, alighting elegantly on some house top, and twittering politely by turns to the swallow on either side of him, and after five minutes conversation, off and away to call for his friend at the castle. And now he is gone upon his travels, gone to spend the winter at Rome or Naples, to visit Egypt or the Holy Land, or perform some more recherché pilgrimage to Spain or the coast of Barbary. And when he comes home next April, sure enough he has been abroad; charming climate; highly delighted with cicades in Italy, and the bees on Hymettus; locusts in Africa rather scarce this season; but upon the whole, much pleased with his trip, and returned in high health and spirits. Now, dear friends, this is a very proper life for a swallow, but is it a life for you? To flit about from house to house; to pay futile visits, where, if the talk were written down, it would amount to little more than the chattering of a swallow; to bestow all your thoughts on graceful attitudes, and nimble movements, and polished attire; to roam from land to land with so little information in your head, or so little taste for the sublime or beautiful in your soul, that, could a swallow publish his travels, and did you

publish yours, we should probably find the one a counterpart of the other: the winged traveller enlarging on the discomforts of his nest, and the wingless one on the miseries of his hotel or chateau; you describing the places of amusement, or enlarging on the vastness of the country, and the abundance of the game; and your rival eloquent on the self-same things. Oh! it is a thought not ridiculous, but appalling.

Though the trifle does not chronicle his own vain words and wasted hours, they chronicle themselves. They are noted in the memory of God. And when once this life of wondrous opportunities and awful advantages is over; when the 20 or 30 years are fled away; when mortal existence, with its facilities for personal improvement and serviceableness to others, is gone beyond recall: when the trifle looks back to the long pilgrimage, with all the doors of usefulness, past which he skipped in his frisky forgetfulness: what anguish will it move to think that he has gambled through such a world without salvation to himself, without any real benefit to his brethren, a busy trifle, a vivacious idler, a clever fool!—Life in Earnest.

HUME AND HIS MOTHER.

It seems that Hume received a religious education from his mother, and early in life was the subject of strong and hopeful religious impressions; but as he approached to manhood, they were effaced, and confirmed infidelity succeeded. Maternal partiality, however alarmed at first, came to look with less and less pain upon this declination, and filial love and reverence seem to have been absorbed in the pride of philosophical skepticism; for Hume now applied himself with unwearied, and unhappily, with successful efforts, to sap the foundation of his mother's faith. Having succeeded in this dreadful work, he went abroad into foreign countries; and as he was returning, an express met him in London, with a letter from his mother, informing him that she was in a deep decline and could not long survive; she said she found herself without any support in her distress; that he had taken away that source of comfort upon which in all cases of affliction she used to rely, and that now she found her mind sinking into despair: she did not doubt that her son would afford her some substitute for her religion; and she conjured him to hasten home, or at least to send her a letter, containing such consolations as philosophy can afford to a dying mortal.—Hume was overwhelmed with anguish on receiving this letter, and hastened to Scotland, travelling day and night; but before he arrived his mother expired.

BOOK-KEEPING.

There is a great deal of loose morality in the practice of borrowing books. It is so much easier to borrow a book than it is to return it, that it is not strange that so many borrowed books never find their way back to the library of their owner. The conscience of many persons need mending on this subject. If a voice loud enough to reach the ears and consciences of those who have long retained borrowed books, of which the owners can give no account, should be proclaimed through the land and induce these stray volumes to set out on their return home, what a movement would there be in literature, both ancient and modern! Of persons who borrowed books, but did not return them, Lord Eldon said, "though backward in accounting, they seemed practised in book-keeping."

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NOTICE. THE undersigned has been duly appointed Assignee to the Estate of the late Mr. W. B. JEFFERYS, Plumber and Painter. All persons having claims against the late Mr. Jefferys, are requested to send them in duly attested, without delay. CHRISTIAN WURTELE, St. Paul's Street. Quebec, 26th June, 1845.

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