

Japan a number of officers started on a gunning-excursion; no sooner did the people observe the cruel slaughtering of their favourites than a number waited upon the commodore and remonstrated against the conduct of the officers. There was no more bird-shooting in Japan by American officers after that; and when the treaty between the two countries was concluded, one express condition of it was that the birds should always be protected. What a commentary upon the practices of our shooting-gentry, who are as eager in the pursuit of a tomtit as of an eagle, and shoot everything in the form of a bird which has the misfortune to come within the reach of their murderous weapons!

On the top of the tombstones in Japan a small cavity or trough is chiselled, which the priests every morning fill with fresh water for the use of the birds. Enlightened America should imitate these customs of the barbarous Japanese, if not by providing fresh water for the feathered warblers, at least by protecting them from the thoughtless people who so ruthlessly destroy them. Unless something is done, and that speedily, our insect-eating birds will be exterminated, and then farewell to fruit-growing! A thousand plans have been suggested for the destruction of the curculio, all of which have proved worthless; we have one which we know to be infallible: "Protect the birds."

The Easter Guest.

I KNEW thou wert coming, O Lord divine,
I felt in the sunlight a softened shine,
And a murmur of welcome I thought I heard,
In the ripple of brooks and the chirp of bird;
And the bursting buds and the springing grass
Seemed to be waiting to see Thee pass;
And the sky, and the sea, and the throbbing sod
Pulsed and thrilled to the touch of God.

I knew Thou wert coming, O Love divine,
To gather the world's heart up to thine;
I knew the bonds of the rock-hewn grave
Were riven, that, living, Thy life might save.
But, blind and wayward, I could not see
Thou wert coming to dwell with me, e'en me;
And my heart, o'erburdened with care and sin,
Had no fair chambers to take Thee in.

Not one clean spot for Thy foot to tread,
Not one pure pillow to rest Thy head;
There was nothing to offer—no bread, no wine,

No oil of joy in this heart of mine;
And yet the light of Thy-kingly face
Illumed for Thyself a small dark place,
And I crept to the spot by Thy smile made sweet,
And the tears came ready to wash Thy feet.

Now let me come nearer, O Lord divine,
Make in my soul for Thyself a shrine;
Cleanse, till the desolate place shall be
Fit for a dwelling, dear Lord, for Thee.
Rear, if Thou wilt, a throne in my breast,
Reign, I will worship and serve my guest,
While Thou art in me—and in Thee I abide—
No end can come to the Easter-tide.

—Mrs. M. L. Dickinson.

Little Becky.

"WHAT do you want, Becky?" asked Joe Wilkins, the proprietor of "The Retreat," as he came to the door of his saloon to take a breath of fresh air. The atmosphere of the house somehow stifled him to-day. His mind had been wandering back to childhood's hours, and such tender remembrances had come over him that the child before him was not met, as usual, with a bitter curse. "My shoes don't look very nice, do they?" said Becky, as she seated herself in such a position that he was not only obliged to see the ragged covering

of her feet, but that little Becky's garments were very shabby indeed.

"Look rather bad, little girl; but you haven't told me what you want. Is—is it your father?" glancing hesitatingly at a figure lying in a drunken heap in a corner.

"I've come to see you, Mr. Joe. You know I've been going to Sunday-school."

"Sunday-school!" he exclaimed, glancing involuntarily at the little one's tattered clothes.

"Oh, I have some other things at home. Mrs. Chilson gave them to me, but I save them for fear they won't look nice on Sundays. We have such a good time there, singing and praying."

"Praying!"

"Yes, and the last time I was there, Mrs. Chilson told me something that has done me so much good. She said that when we prayed, we must believe God would give us what we asked for. What do you think I have been doing all morning?"

"I don't know, I'm sure."

"Well, I have been out there in the woods, praying that you'd shut up this saloon and be better, and let other men be better. Then I thought I'd come over and see when you intended to do it."

The man started, as though he had been stung, and then a suspicious moisture began to creep over his eyes.

"Come here, little girl," he said huskily.

Taking the child in his arms, he went to the prostrate figure in the corner, and a few vigorous shakes brought Becky's father to his feet.

"Men!" called Joe's ringing voice; and some dropped the cards they were shuffling, while others set down the glasses they were about to raise to their lips, and listened. "Take off your hats, every one of you. Now, I'd rather see you all get down on your knees, but, being as we are all so wicked, maybe we'd better stand. Now, Becky, say that prayer you said in the woods."

Without a moment's hesitation, the child knelt in the midst of them. Many a man felt his eyes grow dim and a big lump rise in his throat, especially when the child asked with such sweet truthfulness, that each there might see that he was doing very wrong to drink so much and let those at home suffer.

"I want every one of you to go home now, and mind, you needn't come back, for Joe Wilkins has sold his last glass of liquor. I wish I could return you what you have lost here—not only your money, but your lost manhood."

The men fled out with downcast heads, but Joe Wilkins, from his station at the window, saw that each one shook hands with Becky's father and bestowed some token upon the child ere they parted.

"And a child shall lead them," said a watcher, as he turned away.

Sunday morning dawned clear and bright, and Becky, who had persuaded her father to go to church with her, stopped as they were passing "The Retreat."

"I'll be back in a moment, papa," she said; and Joe Wilkins was surprised in his gloomy meditations upon his mispent life by feeling a little hand steal within his own.

"Papa is going to church," said a childish voice, "and I want you to come, too."

"Me go to church!" cried the man, raising a despondent face, as he spoke.

"Yes, indeed! Mrs. Chilson said to get you to come if I possibly could."

"Then I'll go," was the answer; and as he joined her father outside, he was thankful that there were true Christians in the world—those who would extend a helping hand toward the two who had so long been outcasts from society.—*Church and Home.*

Easter.

WHEN the snow was deep we said:
'Tis a coverlet, gently spread—
Spread and folded tenderly
Where the sleeping lilies be;
Fold on fold of fleecy white,
Cold to touch and pure to sight,
Wrapped about the deep repose
Of the violet and the rose.
Softly speak and lightly tread,
Death is guarding Life, we said.

When the spring was late, we said,
While the storm-wind blew o'erhead,
God's dear springtime doth but wait;
Come it soon or come it late,
Come it slow or come it fast,
It shall surely come at last.
Frosts may blight and buds may rue;
Still the promise standeth true.
Though the earth seem sore bestead,
God does not forget, we said.

When our souls were dark, we said:
Courage, soul, be comforted!
Every life some hardness knows,
Winter time and heavy snows;
Every heart must learn to wait,
Though the spring be cold and late;
Prayers in time shall change to praise,
Easter crown the Lenten days;
Christ is risen from the dead;
Christ shall raise us, too, we said.

—Susan Coolidge, in *Independent*.

Nobody's Business.

"It's nobody's business but mine; I hurt no one but myself," said Alfred Dana, a young man, when reproved for intemperate habits.

Was it nobody's business? What of the lad of fourteen, employed in the same store, who began to smoke cigars just because "Alf Dana did!" or a few months later drank his first glass of liquor at the request of this same friend? Was it nobody's business when this lad continued to accept the proffered drinks until an insatiable thirst fastened upon him and bound him in the destroyer's grasp? Alfred had been strong; he was weak. Was it nobody's business that at twenty-five this same young man died a horrible and sad death, with drink the cause of it; and his mother, an accomplished and lovely woman, was bending in awful agony of soul above the pale, dead face? Was no one hurt but Alfred Dana?

It is true of liquor-drinking that it loves company. Therein consists its greatest snare. Hence the danger of the saloon, with all its appointments for sociability.

There is not a drinker, moderate or immoderate, but has an influence in leading some other soul toward destruction. He cannot say in truth, "It is nobody's business."—*Royal Road.*

What the Scott Act Does.

It is impossible to enter a Scott Act county without seeing everywhere that it is effecting a moral temperance reform. It has effectually and forever killed the treating system, perhaps the greatest ban connected with the liquor traffic. No longer is it customary in the commercial world to bind a bargain over the publican's bar—no longer is the traveller or the farmer as he puts up at an hotel compelled, by public usage, to take a drink; nor do we see our young men, the hope of our country, aping at manliness by treating in

the saloon or hotel. Men who spent their evenings before in the bar rooms are now found in some other place of entertainment or at home. It has removed the cloak of respectability thrown around the liquor interest by the license system. It has also taken away the interest of the municipalities in the revenue derived from the traffic, and has taught them that they are not necessarily bankrupt because this source of revenue is dried up. And, above all, it is aiding in forming a healthy public opinion as to the enormity of the evils connected with drink, and the necessity of some effective action in decreasing them.—*Rev. W. J. Armitage, in the Evangelical Churchman*

A Talk with the Boys.

"DISTANCE lends enchantment," and the city looks well from the farm. Perhaps you do not see the thorns and thistles, but they grow in the city. Home discipline may be hard to bear, but in it are the germs for all success. Parents are midway in the temple of life, and certainly must know more than those standing upon the threshold. It is always safe to listen to the voices of wisdom and affection. You may not be permitted to control all things at home, but please remember before seeking the large liberty of the city that you can control nothing here. You may wear store clothes, but you must be the servant of all. Liberty and ease are the fruits of toil.

The boy who knows more than his parents and teachers goes to the wall in the city. Success depends upon industry, obedience, economy, and purity. Brown hands, clean tongues and hearts are in great demand in the city. A country loafer becomes a city loafer, and neither country nor city crowns loafers. The earthquake never breaks the ground so as to heave the gold at their feet. Boys whose noble and manly lives are the guiding impulse of the pastor's hand when writing letters of commendation, receive the most cordial welcome from merchants here.

There is a famine of boys who feel that God is watching them, and who are true to their employers because of loyalty to their heavenly Master. The demand for such is always greater than the supply. In the city you must begin way down, but smilingly submit to the inevitable, and make each day tell how much, and not how little, good work you can do, and you will be in the line of promotion. Never desire to coin a dollar except around the golden rule. You may not accumulate as rapidly and love your neighbour as yourself, but the smile of God is upon every dollar.—*Selected.*

The Rev. Sam Jones rakes the boys terribly sometimes about their gambling and drinking frolics. "O! I've been all along there, boys. I know all about it, and I used to go to balls, and dance, too, boys. But when I wanted to get married, when I wanted to settle down with a good wife, I quit drinking and gambling; and I didn't go to a ball-room to get my wife, but I went to a prayer-meeting, and I got a good one." He told this in Texas, and when he returned to his boarding house his landlady, who had heard his remarks, said:—"I don't blame you, Brother Jones; but, poor Sister Jones, where did she go to get her husband?" They say this is the only time he has been floored since he quit drinking.