

Family Reading.

IGNORANCE IN AFRICA.

One of the latest arrivals at the Infant Boys' School belonging to the S. P. G., at Zanzibar, is a baby boy of one year old.

He is not an orphan. His parents love their child, and yet the only way to preserve the little creature from a cruel death has been to receive it into this Christian school.

How has this tiny babe transgressed the law of the land, or rather fallen under the ban of native superstition?

You who believe in a Christian country will hardly believe the reason given for requiring its death.

It cut its upper teeth before its lower ones; and as this was sure to bring evil on the village, it must die!

The father, however, was under Christian teaching, and he refused to let the babe suffer. But as months went by, and two chiefs died in the neighbourhood, besides other people, the tribe grew clamorous for the death of the poor babe. It 'exercised a baleful influence' on the neighbourhood, it was declared. Do what the parents might to guard it, one day it would be missing, and its little dead body possibly found in the jungle.

The only way to save it would be to give it to the white Christians. So that was done, and the innocent little criminal was at once sent to the coast, and shipped for Zanzibar, as the only way of saving its life.

The Infant Boys' School, at Zanzibar, where it was received, is intended for released slave children, but such a case as this could not be refused.

Oh that more white teachers could go out to the dark continent, to help to break down the fence of grievous superstition which surrounds the wretched African!

Could anything be more savage or ignorant than this senseless condemnation of a helpless babe?

A TOUCHING INCIDENT.

There are often wells of thought and feeling in childhood, of whose depths parents little dream. We are so accustomed to think of our children's tastes, desires and will as being reflections of our own that we too often forget to study their natures, recognize their individuality and treat them as sentient beings. With such reflection I listened to the relation of the following touching incident:

A little girl of this city, about ten years of age, was visiting her aunt in the country. They were discussing a certain book, and the aunt remarked: "Your birthday is near; perhaps your mamma will buy it for you for a birthday present."

A tinge of sadness rested on the sweet young face as she quickly answered:

"She could give me something else I would rather have, something I would rather have than anything else in the world!"

"Well, I am sure," said her aunt, "your mamma will get it for you, if it does not cost too much."

"It will will not cost money," replied the child, "it will not cost anything."

But she could not then be persuaded to tell what it was. After a long time the shrinking little spirit said:

"Auntie, I will tell you part; it is something she gave me before little brother came. It is just now to do something for that one day; now don't you know."

The discerning auntie drew the little one to her and asked:

"Is it that mamma should not scold you on your birthday?"

A trembling "Yes," and long the dear head rested on the bosom of that loving, patient aunt.

When I heard this little incident related by that aunt herself, my heart wept, and I quickly asked myself, "Am I not that mother? Have not the cares of a growing family caused me to be often

less patient with my first born, my darling Edith? Have not I, in the multiplicity of duties, been unresponsive to the heart longing for a mother's tender caress and loving recognition of little services rendered?"

O may the reading of these little paragraphs do other mothers good as the writing of them has done me good. That mother is a precious woman. I know she loves her little daughter as tenderly as I do mine. She just didn't think how each impatient word was wearing a sore in that sensitive little heart. She didn't think she was robbing her child's future of the sweet memories of a beautiful childhood. She didn't think how she was cramping the powers of a lovely spirit that needed a continual sunshine for their development. Mothers, pause and reflect.—*Herald and Press.*

BRIEF NOTES.

Something will always be wanting to a Church service in which every worshipper does not join reverently and heartily in praising and blessing God. Cast off, my friends, all false reserve. Do not fear to make the holy walls ring out with the sounds of your gladness. Dare to sing forth the praises of your God. Let there be heard one grand accord of old men and children—of young men and maidens—one great swelling Alleluia and Hosanna, rising up before the throne of our God, with the songs of cherubim and seraphim, and of all the company of heaven. Do not let anyone defraud you of this, your honor; every voice is sweet in the ears of God and of the angels that is the outpouring of a full and grateful heart.

"Let not thankless silence seal your lips;
Waken into sound divine
The very pavement of His Shrine.
Till we, like heaven's star-sprinkled floor,
Faintly give back what we adore.
Child-like though the voices be,
And untunable the parts,
He will own the minstrelsy,
If it flows from child-like hearts."

"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." No wonder Christ's ends have been defeated, considering the cowardice of many who have followed His banner. Where are the men doing for God what men will do for the Sultan of Turkey, or the chief of almost any savage tribe in the backwoods of America, or the distant islands of the Pacific? Where are the men who will lay their lives, and their abilities, and their fortune, at the feet of Jesus, and say: Here we are, with all we have; use us for Thy glory!

In Japan a new magazine has lately come out, called the "Two-Religion Magazine." The two religions are those of the country—Buddhism and Shintoism—both teaching the worship of false gods. The design of the magazine is to enable the two to join together to put down Christianity.

This new religion, it says, is increasing rapidly in the land; and it entreats the Japanese—Buddhists and Shintoists—to lay aside all quarrels of their own, and fight the Christian faith.

A great meeting of their priests has been held, presided over by a native prince, to consider the matter. They are terrified at the success of the "amen-amen," as they call the Christians.

One man writes in the magazine that it would be better for Government not to join itself to any religion, not even to Buddhism or Shintoism; on which a priest remarks: "Government and religion are like two wheels of a cart, or the two wings of a bird—one is of no use without the other."

All this talk on the subject is good; it will bring it into notice. The lamp is being set on a stand, not under the bushel, and this opposing magazine is pointing it out to people who might not have already noticed it.

In those wild, mountainous regions of Austria known as the Tyrol, religion and common life are still associated in a way that we, in the busy world below, have almost forgotten. Thus, many of the houses bear inscriptions on their front, or show some religious emblem. One prays for "a blessing on this house and family;" another bears a petition for preservation in the great storms which

resound so often from hill to hill; while a stable door carries a prayer on its lintel for "our dear cattle that they may be kept from harm."

At the first sign of a thunder storm, the sexton's duty is to ring the church bell—the "weather peal," as it is called—which serves two purposes, it is a notice both to call in the cattle, and to put up a prayer to the Almighty during the tempest.

For three nights running, the storm bells were ringing during one week of last year, in the valley of the Piester Thal, each clang bringing peasants to their knees.

Surely this simple recognition of God in our busy, daily life is good; it must raise our souls somewhat. These simple people may well teach us this lesson.

We, who have lived all our lives with the Gospel light always shining on our path, can hardly imagine the effect it produces when suddenly displayed in some heathen land.

It shames our coldness—our carelessness in religion, to read the account given by a missionary, of his and a fellow-labourer's visit to a remote hill district in India.

"Whole villages," he says, "gather to hear one preach. . . . The other night I was a little behind Lateward as we left a very romantic village among the hills. The patel, or village mayor's son, who had been listening to Lateward's teaching in the village square, was with him, showing us the way. It was a bright moonlight night, and I saw him suddenly stop, and heard him ask Lateward, 'Where is God?' May I not speak to Him? May I not do so now?' and then he pulled off his shoes (a sign of respect in that country) and put his hands together, and asked Lateward to tell him what he might say. One sees hundreds of men thus ready to be taught. If thousands of teachers could be sent out to this country they would find work ready to their hands."

That God may bless you, and help forward the good work which you are engaged in for His glory, and the good of His people, is the sincere prayer of your faithful brother in Christ.

A. S. WINSOR.

COMFORTING NEWS.—What a comfort and how very convenient to be able to have a Closet indoors, it being neither offensive nor unhealthy, 'Heap's Patent' Dry Earth or Ashes Closets are perfectly inodorous. The commodes with urine separators, can be kept in a bedroom, and are invaluable in any house during the winter season, or in case of sickness; they are a well finished piece of furniture. Factory, Owen Sound Ont.

Childrens' Department

SELF-CULTURE.

Make the best of yourself. Watch, and plant, and sow. Cultivate! Cultivate! Falter not, faint not! Press onward! Persevere! Perhaps you cannot bear such lordly fruit, nor yet such rare, rich flowers as others; but what of that? Bear the best you can. 'Tis all God asks.

Your flowers may only be the daisies and buttercups of life—the little words and smiles and handshakes and helpful looks; but we love these flowers full well. We may stop to look at a tulip's gorgeous colors, and admire the creamy whiteness of a noble arum lily; but it is to the little flowers we turn with tenderest thought. We watch for snowdrops with longing eyes, and scent the fragrance of the violet with a keen delight. So let your life grow, sweet-scented with all pleasant thought and gentle words and kindly deeds.—*Selected.*

"I AM SURE."

"I am sure somebody has been out this morning," said little Redward the other day, "because I see some footprints."

Redward was a little boy about six years old. The first snowstorm of this winter had begun the night before, after he had gone to bed, and now