

ful toys, that would have seemed to the children of thirty or forty years ago like the things of fairy tales; and you have a thousand little playthings and useful helps, that cost much care and time to make, close at your hand, and within the reach of your own pocket-money. Now here is an instance—this india-rubber. You have bought a big square for a penny, and, oh, you unreasonable boy, you have twisted the corners of it into knobs and jags, and just because you find it tough, you like, in idle moments, to see the marks of your teeth in it. Listen while I tell you how precious it was long ago.

Its use for rubbing out marks was not known in this country till the end of the last century, and then it was first called india-rubber. About a hundred years ago, in the year 1770, when George III. was reigning, a certain Dr. Priestley was writing a book on drawing, and he told his readers that he had seen "a substance"—there was no name for it then, you see—"excellently adapted to the purpose of wiping from paper the marks of a blacklead pencil." Then he named one shopkeeper in London from whom it might be bought, adding that he sold a square piece of it, about half an inch in size, for three shillings, and warranted it to last for several years.

Elastic is made of the same substance as india-rubber. In its manufacture it is cut into long thin threads; and in making flat or braid elastic, these threads are woven together with a covering of silk or cotton. The same substance is used in making surgical instruments with tubes that can be bent at pleasure; and bands of it put round the joinings make the glass tubes used by chemists air-tight. Pipes and garden-hose, springs of railway carriages and buffers (especially in America), shoes or goloshes to protect the feet from wet, water-proof coats, varnish, and a kind of glue that is immensely strong—here are some useful things

made of india-rubber, and named at random. India-rubber bags filled with air form the air-beds and cushions which give such ease to the sick who have been long suffering, and need a very soft and yielding resting place.

There is a very useful form of india-rubber, in the manufacture of which sulphur and other chemicals are used, and it is said to be *vulcanized*. This kind is made in two forms, hard and soft. The soft kind is used in numberless ways; for instance, it forms those strong bands for machinery which you will often see in a factory rushing round and round over two wheels, with a whirring noise. A pavement has been made of it, which is strong and even, as well as noiseless, and which is in use on one of the carriage-drives at Windsor Castle. Hard vulcanized india-rubber is called *vulcanite*, or sometimes, *ebonite*. It is not elastic—you cannot



THE INDIA-RUBBER PLANT.

stretch or bend it like the other india-rubber—but it takes a beautiful polish, and can be cut into any shape. Knife-handles and combs are made of it, and sometimes curious-looking but handsome furniture. All those little articles of ornament

which are made of jet can also be formed of this sort of india-rubber, and thus chains, bracelets, and earrings which, if they were of jet, would be expensive, can be sold for a shilling or two, and it is almost impossible to detect that they are only made of black vulcanite. Looking at one of those bracelets, with its hard polished surface, or at the black shuttle that girls use in their tatting, or the ball that a boy's hand keeps bounding from the floor, it is very hard to realize that the jet-like ornament, the shuttle, and the ball, were once that creamy, yellowish juice shut up in a grand tall tree, amid the balmy odors and the tropical heat of the forest.—*Little Folks*.

THE ANGRY FATHER.

Theon was one day reading in the Holy Scriptures, when he suddenly closed the book, and

looked thoughtful and gloomy.

Hillel perceived this, and said to the youth, "What aileth thee? Why is thy countenance troubled?"

Theon answered, "In some places the Scriptures speak of the wrath of God, and in others he is called Love. This appears to me strange and inconsistent."

The teacher calmly replied, "Should they not speak to man in human language? Is it not equally strange they should attribute a human form to the Most High?"

"By no means," answered the youth, "that is figurative—but wrath"—

Hillel interrupted him, and said:

"Listen to my story. There lived in Alexandria two fathers, wealthy merchants, who had two sons of the same age, and they sent them to Ephesus, on business connected with their traffic. Both these young men had been thoroughly instructed in the religion of their fathers.

"When they had sojourned for some time at Ephesus, they were dazzled by the splendor and the treasures of the city, and yielding to the allurements which beset them, they forsook the path of their fathers, and turned aside to idolatry and worshipped in the temple of Diana.

"A friend at Ephesus wrote of this to Cleon, one of the two fathers at Alexandria. When Cleon had read the letter, he was troubled in his heart, and he was wroth with the youths. Thereupon he went to the other father, and told him of the apostasy of their sons, and of his grief thereat.

"But the other father laughed, and said, 'If business do but prosper with my son, I shall give myself little concern about his religion.'

"Then Cleon turned from him, and was still more wroth.

"Now which of these two father's," said Hillel to the youth, "dost thou consider as the wiser and the better?"

"He who was wroth," answered Theon.

"And which," asked the preceptor, "was the kinder father?"

"He who was wroth," again answered the youth.

"Was Cleon wroth with his son?" asked Hillel.

And Theon replied, "Not with his son, but with his backsliding and apostasy."

"And what," asked Hillel, "thinkest thou is the cause of such displeasure against evil?"

"The sacred love of truth," answered his disciple.

"Behold then, my son," said the old man, "if thou canst now think divinely of that which is divine, the human expression will no longer offend thee."—*From the German*.

THE RIGHTS OF CHILDHOOD.

BY E. L. WATTS.

Childhood has its rights. Little Mary has a right to pleasant conversation at table instead of sour discussion of the day's work. She has a right to a warm kiss and loving chat at bedtime, and when the gentle twilight steals on she has a right to a talk about the Elder Brother who said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." She has a claim to our sympathy as broad as the ocean. But does she receive her rights? Many are the mothers and fathers, too, who shine in society, who have kind hearts for strangers and even for strange little folks, and may even deny themselves for them, but exhaust all their sympathy abroad and keep none for the home. The boy who, with a mechanical talent and the few tools he can command, tries to build a boat or saw out some article of ornament for the home, is sneered at until his enthusiasm is killed, and he drifts through life a mere float, good for nothing and bearing no freight. Or if he be fond of reading, with a passion to devour everything he can lay his hands on, he is not supplied with books that will furnish him knowledge, but ridiculed or perhaps chided as a time-waster for each moment spent in the search for knowledge.

Perhaps when God's ledger is opened and the fireside account examined, many who now pass for models of piety will stand charged with words of discouragement, ill-temper, or neglect towards those whom they best loved.

Probably the agency that oftenest deprives childhood of its rights is hastiness of temper. That miserable commodity is bottled-up to be discharged upon the heads of the little ones at home. Children are scolded out of bed in the morning and in again in the evening, and by parents who at heart love them. But father has no time to lend an ear to Harry's woes, or to teach Jennie how to forgive the schoolmate who makes faces at her.—*Ill. Chris. Weekly*.