

WOULD YOU ?

WHAT would you do, my darling,
If the Saviour went and came
In and out of our homes to-day,
As he did in Jerusalem ?
Would you hasten out with gladness
To the blessed Lord to meet—
Would you fling the door wide open, love,
At the sound of his coming feet ?

Would you listen to the teachings
He only could unfold,
Would you nestle in his loving arms
As little ones did of old ?
What do I hear you answer—
You wish that it could be so,
For he seems so far away
When we seek his love to know ?

Ah, don't you know, my darling,
The Saviour comes to-day—
Comes pleading for an entrance, now,
Into your heart to stay ?
Oh set the door wide open,
Then bid him welcome here,
And in the New Jerusalem
You shall see him surely there.

"WHERE THERE'S A WILL
THERE'S A WAY."

How frequently the truth of this old maxim has been illustrated, not only by our own experiences, but by the brilliant successes of those who have triumphed over the most adverse circumstances ! Every day furnishes us with proof of the fact that men are what they make themselves, and that genius is not a gift, but a habit of the mind.

If we desire anything very greatly, we generally manage to obtain it, overcoming all obstacles, and daily applying ourselves with renewed energy to our task. But the boys and girls who have manifested no love of books, no desire for knowledge or skill in any pursuit, cannot expect a very high standing as men and women. Youth is a great absorbent. At every pore it is taking in that which will expand the heart and the intellect; filling the brain-cells with thoughts that shall take root and ripen and bring forth flower and fruit sometime hereafter; receiving, through the eye-gate, pictures that will be as tapestry upon the walls of memory; and, through the ear-gate, music that will linger long after all other melodies have been forgotten. Our whole future depends on the manner in which we have spent our youth; and every step in our lives is but a preparation for the fortune or misfortune that crowns our riper years.

When Lincoln was taking advantage of every leisure moment to study the books that came in his way, he had no idea that he would be President of the United States. Nor did Grant or Garfield, when they were following the humble path of duty and having a tough fight with adversity, anticipate the honours they would receive from an admiring nation. The finest scholars are graduated from the school of difficulty; and the greatest heroes become so through unconscious preparation.

Benjamin West made his first paint-brushes out of a cat's tail. Franklin first robbed the thunder-cloud of its lightning by means of a kite made with two cross sticks and a silk handkerchief. Sir Walter Scott found in every pursuit opportunities for self-improvement, and turned even accidents to account; for it was owing to a kick of a horse, which confined him to the house, that he discovered his talent as an author. He was a sworn enemy to idleness, and forthwith set his mind to work. In three days he

had composed the first canto of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," which he shortly afterward finished—his first great original work. It was not by luck or accident that any of these achieved distinction, but by hard work and industry; and those who are in the habit of complaining that their career has been spoiled by adverse circumstances need only to study the lives of distinguished men to learn what perseverance can accomplish. In spiritual as in temporal affairs, the crown is "to him that overcometh."

Improve the odd moments for study. A place of study can be found if eagerly sought for. It may be a barn, or a haymow, or by the kitchen fire. The new year is a good time to begin a course of reading and of study which shall improve the mind and make the soul better. Above all other things give a portion of each day to a careful reading of the Holy Scriptures, which make wise unto salvation.

A BOY WHO BECAME FAMOUS.

A BOY, only six years old, was sailing with his father down the Danube. All day long they had been sailing past crumbling ruins, frowning castles, cloisters hid away among the crags, towering cliffs, quiet villages nestled in sunny valleys, and here and there a deep gorge that opened back from the gliding river, its hollow distance blue with fathomless shadow, and its loneliness and stillness stirring the boy's heart like some dim and vast cathedral. They stopped at night at a cloister, and the father took little Wolfgang into the chapel to see the organ. It was the first large organ he had ever seen; and his face lit up with delight, and every motion and attitude of his figure expressed a wondering reverence.

"Father," said the boy, "let me play!" Well pleased, the father complied. Then Wolfgang pushed aside the stool and, when his father had filled the great bellows, the elfin organist stood upon the pedals. How the deep tones woke the sombre stillness of the old church! The organ seemed some great uncouth creature, roaring for very joy at the caresses of the marvellous child.

The monks, eating their supper in the refectory, heard it, and dropped knife and fork in astonishment. The organist of the brotherhood was among them, but never had he played with such power. They listened: some crossed themselves, till the prior rose up and hastened into the chapel. The others followed; but when they looked up into the organ-loft, lo! there was no organist to be seen, though the deep tones still massed themselves in new harmonies, and made the stone arches thrill with their power. "It is the devil," cried one of the monks, drawing closer to his companions, and giving a scared look over his shoulder at the darkness of the aisle.

"It is a miracle," said another. But when the boldest of them mounted the stairs to the organ-loft, he stood as if petrified with amazement. There was the tiny figure treading from pedal to pedal, and at the same time clutching at the keys above with his little hands, gathering handfuls of those wonderful chords as if they were violets, and flinging them out into the solemn gloom behind him. He heard nothing, saw nothing besides; his eyes beamed, and his whole face lighted up with impassioned joy. Louder and

taller rose the harmonies, streaming forth in swelling billows, till at last they seemed to reach a sunny shore, on which they broke, and then a whispering ripple of faintest melody lingered a moment in the air, like the last murmur of a windharp, and all was still.

The boy was John Wolfgang Mozart.

"THE WELCOME STRANGER"

IN an Australian mining camp at one of the tents sat four men—June 10, 1858—talking earnestly of their future and bemoaning the past. For several months these four men had worked together in the same claim, sometimes getting barely sufficient for daily wants, sometimes not even that. For several weeks, indeed, they had laboured without any result. After a long discussion they decided to abandon the claim. Down in the mine the three looked gloomily around, with a kind of sulky regret at having to leave the scene of so much useless toil. "Good-bye," said one, "I'll give you a farewell blow;" and raising his pick, he struck the quartz, making splinters fly in all directions. His practised eye caught a glittering speck on one of the bits at his feet. He examined it and the place he had struck, when, with a loud exclamation, he knelt and satisfied himself that it was gold. He then commenced picking vigorously. His mates caught the meaning, and followed his example. In dead silence they worked on—they had discovered a monster nugget. Then a wild, glad shout sounded in the ears of the man at the windlass, who had sunk in a half-dose, feeling, probably, the want of his breakfast. To his inquiry, "What is going on?" the cry came, "Wind up," and as he did there arose to the surface a huge mass of virgin gold. When fully exposed to view the men were almost insane with joy. After watching it through the day and livelong night, they had it conveyed in safety to the bank. It was named "The Welcome Stranger," and yielded the discoverers of it £6,000. Close to the site of that spot the forest and scrub have disappeared, and their place is occupied by the finest city on the celebrated goldfield of Victoria.

PREACHING TO THE DOGS.

THE following story is told of the famous African missionary, Robert Moffat:

One evening he halted at a farm which showed signs of belonging to a man of wealth and importance, who had many slaves. The old patriarch, hearing that he was a missionary, gave him a hearty welcome, and proposed that in the evening he should give them a service. No proposal could have been more acceptable, and he sat down to the plain but plentiful meal with a light heart. The sons and daughters came in. Supper ended, a clearance was made, the big Bible and the psalm-books were brought out, and the family was seated.

"But where are the servants?" asked Moffat.

"Servants? What do you mean?"

"I mean the Hottentots, of whom I see so many on your farm."

"Hottentots! Do you mean that, then? Let me go to the mountains and call the baboons, if you want a congregation of that sort. Or, stop; I have it. My sons, call the dogs that lie in front of the door—they will do."

The missionary quietly dropped an attempt which threatened a wrathful ending, and commenced the service. The psalm was sung, prayer was offered, and the preacher read the story of the Syre Phœnician woman, and selected more especially the words, "Truth, Lord, but even the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the master's table." He had not spoken many minutes when the voice of the old man was again heard: "Will Myhaber sit down and wait a little? He shall have the Hottentots!"

The summons was given, the motley crowd trooped in, many who probably had never been within the door of their master's house before, and many more who never before had heard the voice of a preacher.

When service was over, and the astonished Hottentots had dispersed, the farmer turned to his guest and said, "My friend, you took a hard hammer, and you have broken a hard head."

WINTER SLEEPERS.

THERE are some kinds of animals that hide away in the winter, that are not wholly asleep all the time. The blood moves a little, and once in a while they take a breath. If the weather is at all mild, they wake up enough to eat. Now, isn't it curious that they know all this beforehand? Such animals always lay up something to eat, just by their side, when they go into their winter sleeping places. But those that do not wake up never lay up any food; for it would not be used if they did.

The little field-mouse lays up nuts and grain. It eats some when it is partly awake on a warm day.

The bat does not need to do this, for the same warmth that wakes him wakes all the insects on which he feeds. He catches some, and then eats. When he is going to sleep again, he hangs himself up by his hind claws.

The woodchuck, a kind of marmot, does not wake, yet he lays up dried grass near his hole. What is it for, do you think? On purpose to have it ready the first moment he wakes in the spring. Then he can eat and be strong before he comes out of his hole.

How many things are sleeping in the winter! Plants, too, as well as animals. What a busy time they must have in waking up, and how little we think about it!

STRENGTH OF THE TIGER.

THE strength of the tiger is prodigious. By a single cuff of his great fore-paw he will break the skull of an ox as easily as one could smash a gooseberry; and then taking his prey by the neck, will straighten his muscles and march off at a half-trot, with only the hoofs and tail of the *defunct* animal trailing on the ground. An eminent traveller relates that a buffalo belonging to a peasant in India, having got helplessly stuck in the swamp, its owner went to seek assistance of his neighbours to drag it out. While he was gone, however, a tiger visited the spot, and unceremoniously slow and drew the buffalo out of the mire, and had just got it comfortably over his shoulders preparatory to trotting home, when the herdsman and his friends approached. The buffalo, which weighed more than a thousand pounds, had its skull fractured and its body nearly emptied of blood.