

these four months that I was with him. In 1871, I went to him as prejudiced as the biggest atheist in London. To a reporter and correspondent, such as I, who had only to deal with wars, mass-meetings, and political gatherings, sentimental matters were entirely out of my province. But there came for me a long time for reflection. I was out there, away from a worldly world. I saw this solitary old man there, and asked myself, 'How on earth does he stop here? Is he cracked, or what? What is it that inspires him?' For months after we met I simply found myself listening to him, wondering at the old man carrying out all that was said in the Bible, 'Leave all things, and follow me.' But, little by little, his sympathy for others became contagious—my sympathy was aroused. Seeing his piety, his gentleness, his zeal, his earnestness, and how he went quietly about his business, I was converted by him, although he had not tried to do it. How sad that the good old man should have died so soon! How joyful he would have been if he could have seen what has happened here!"

As is well known, Mr. Stanley is now (November, 1887) in Africa, leading the expedition projected by the British Government to seek for Dr. Emin Bey, who has been governor of the equatorial provinces under appointment of General Gordon. He has not been heard from since July, 1878, when the expedition for his relief was organized. All Christian hearts will follow the heroic Stanley with their prayers, and hope that success may crown his last noble undertaking.—*S. S. Visitor.*

### The Axe and the Wedge.

A BOY sat in a corner of a deserted school-room, apparently poring over a book. Through the open window came cheery shouts of laughter from the play-ground. Presently the master walked into the room—a kind man, loved by all the boys, but also wise and firm.

"Still studying, Will?" he said, as he passed by. The boy started, and looked away quickly, but not before Mr. Owen had noted the mist of tears that effectually blotted out the printed page. Laying his hand gently on the boy's head, he said: "Run out a while, my boy, you will feel better after. You are tired now."

"Oh! it is not that, Mr. Owen; but I am afraid I must give it all up. What Harry says is perfectly true. I have no talent; it is merely by constant grinding that I manage to keep up with him, and yet he never appears to study."

"Notwithstanding your want of 'talent,' as Harry calls it, he may possibly find himself in the back-ground one of these days. I think, Will, that perseverance is worth much more than so-called talent without it. It is simply the old story of the blunt wedge and sharp axe. I must tell it you:

"A wedge and an axe lay side by side in a box of tools. 'Of what use are you, I should like to know!' said the axe sharply, to the wedge. 'A blunt thing like you! Why you could not cut even the smallest branch. The master likes to use me. Just look at my edge. Did you ever see anything so keen and bright? I come down with a crash, and everything is scattered right and left. Ah! I am sharp!' 'I am a poor, dull thing, I know,' said the wedge, humbly. Just then the master opened the box, and ended the conversation. As he took out the axe, it gave a last triumphant gleam at the modest wedge. It was a large block of wood on which the axe came down, and, in spite of its boasting, it made little impression. Much to its disgust, it was thrown aside, and the master took up the despised wedge, inserted it in the slit, brought a few hard blows to bear upon it,

and—crash!—the block was in two. 'Ah, ah!' said the master, 'a blunt wedge will sometimes do what a sharp axe will not.'

"That is the story, Will. Call the blunt wedge perseverance, and go on using it, even though the sharp axe should say a few cutting words."

Will persevered, and time sped along. Harry, with all his "talent" and his laziness, was "plucked." Will passed with honours.

### The Union Jack.

It's only a small bit of bunting,  
It's only an old coloured rag;  
Yet thousands have died for its honour,  
And shed their best blood for the flag.

It's charged with the cross of St. Andrew,  
Which of old Scotland's heroes has led;  
It carries the cross of St. Patrick,  
For which Ireland's bravest have bled.

Joined with these on our own English ensign,  
St. George's red cross on white field;  
'Round which from King Richard to Wolsey  
Britons conquer or die, but ne'er yield.

It flutters triumphant o'er ocean,  
As free as the wind and the wave;  
And bondsman from shackles unloosened  
'Neath its shadows no longer a slave.

It floats over Cyprus and Malta,  
Over Canada, the Indies, Hong Kong;  
And Britons wheres'er the flag's flying,  
Claim the rights which to Britons belong.

We hoist it to show our devotion  
To our Queen, our country and laws;  
It's the outward and visible emblem  
Of advancement and liberty's cause.

You may say it's an old bit of bunting,  
You may call it an old coloured rag;  
But freedom has made it majestic,  
And time has ennobled the flag.

### A Sad Story.

A CHINESE mother gave the following sad account of her own history:—

"My family was very poor, and I have always worked very hard. When I was young, I was married to a man I did not know. As is the custom, my husband and I prayed to the gods for a son. My first child came, but, alas! it was a girl. O how I loved it! It was a beautiful child—so large and bright-looking, that my heart was full of love for it. But my husband was very angry because it was not a boy, and said he would not have it. He went out and brought in a tub of water, placed it close to my bed, and then he came to take my little girl away from me to drown her. O how I besought him not to kill her! I held her tight fast in my arms, reasoning with him, and telling him if he would let her live we could sell her for a wife; but he would not heed me, and was very angry. He took her from me, and put her head down into the water. I heard the gurgling sound in her throat. I shut my eyes and stopped my ears—but heard the dreadful sound. He pushed her head down once, twice, thrice—then all was still, and I had no little girl. O how heavy was my grief! I then made larger offerings to the gods, that the next time they might give me a son.

"A second child came, and it was a girl. Again my husband was angry, and again the same thing happened—the drowning of my child.

"My third child came, and this time it was a boy. O how glad I was! How happy I was that I had a child that I might keep! My husband and his friends rejoiced much, and presented thank-offerings to the gods. But when my little boy was so high (measuring with her hand) he died, and I had no child. O sing, sing, wiong—my grief is great."—*Welcome Words.*

### Vic's Country Visit.

BY ELIZABETH P. ALLAN.

INTO a big hospital ward, where there were rows on rows of white beds, filled with sick or hurt children, came the busy, hurried doctor. "And how's this little crocus?" he asked playfully, when he reached the last cot of the row next the windows. The little girl—evidently a pet with both doctor and nurse—smiled a weak little smile but said nothing. The doctor stepped out of her hearing, and spoke to the nurse.

"I don't know what's the matter, I'm sure," answered the nurse; "she has every attention, but she don't eat nor sleep worth talking about."

"I know what's the matter," said the doctor briefly; "she wants a change, and I'll try and see about it."

The next place on the doctor's list was three miles out in the country—a lovely summer residence of some rich patients of Dr. Kemble's. His quick-stepping bays made short work of the three miles, but the day was hot, and he grumbled a little to himself as he went along. "Like as not there's nothing the matter out there. I'm only one of their luxuries."

There was only one child in this big house—a quiet, pale little girl, who was being gradually petted to death. "Please, doctor," cried the anxious, fussy mother, "do something for Anita. She won't eat, she won't play; she cries if I say 'sea-shore' to her; and I can't tell what's the matter."

The doctor's mind travelled back quickly to his little "crocus" in the hospital ward. "Come here, Anita," he said, with a sudden bold plan in his head. And taking the little girl on his knee, he told her of the other child, who would be glad to have her country home.

"Oh, doctor! bring her out to me," cried Anita. And this was what the doctor expected her to say.

The lady-mother was not very well pleased; but Anita had never been refused anything in her life. "What's my little girl's name?" she asked, with a liveliness she had not shown for some time.

"Her name is a good deal bigger than she is," laughed the doctor: "Victoria Merriweather."

"Ah, well, I shall call her Vic," replied the delighted child. "But do bring her out for a whole day, Dr. Kemble. I must get ready for her." And away ran Anita to prepare for her company.

The big, cool play-room was put in order—or what Anita thought was order; the swing lowered, because Victoria's legs were supposed to be short; a little bed was put up in mamma's dressing-room, which Anita insisted upon sheeting herself; and, finally, being pretty tired with all these labours, Anita curled herself up in a big library-chair, to pick out such picture-books as she thought would please the little stranger.

When papa came home to dinner he noticed with pleasure the light in his little girl's eye, and the colour on her cheek; but he was still more delighted when she leaned over and whispered to him at table, "Papa, please peep under your dish-cover, and tell me what's there. I'm so very, very hungry."

Victoria came, and was shy and homesick at first; but at the end of two weeks Dr. Kemble said that if all his patients got well as fast as these two he would starve.

But I think that was the best prescription he ever gave. And where do you suppose it came from? Not out of his doctor-books, but out of the Book of books, which says:

"Charge them that are rich in this world . . . that they do good; that they be rich in good works; ready to distribute, willing to communicate."