

YOUTH'S CORNER.

THE OLD OAK-TREE.

Picking up an acorn from the ground, Aunt Phebe bade each of the children examine it. "Such an acorn," said she, "was once this tree, which now reaches almost to the clouds, and spreads its refreshing shade around. Such, dear children, is sin in your hearts. If it is suffered to remain, it will grow and grow till nothing can take it away; now the Saviour is willing to destroy its power, and he only can do it; but if you do not desire it, and do not pray to him to take away your sinful heart, and make it clean, he does not promise to do it. You know the time will come when it will be too late, for there is no repentance in the grave, and thither we are all hastening."

"One day William, a lad of fourteen, was directed to a spot in the forest where, the day previous, the man had been cutting wood. 'Remember, William,' said his father, 'to return as soon as you have collected it together in a heap.' William followed the path, and though alone in the mighty forest, felt no alarm, for he was accustomed to spend many hours there. He diligently pursued his work, till becoming weary, he sat down to rest. A beautiful butterfly fluttered above his head, of a very uncommon kind—I'll have you,' thought he, and cautiously approaching, tried to catch it with his hat; but the insect eluded the attempt, and soaring above his head, flew away: still William pursued it, forgetful of everything but the securing of his prize. He made his way with difficulty through the tangled underwood of the forest, till at length, heated and completely out of breath, he was compelled to desist. 'You have led me a pretty chase,' said he, taking off his hat to wipe the perspiration from his head, 'and after all, I must go back to my work without you.'

"William returned, as he supposed, in the direction he had come; but after wandering till he was weary, he was obliged to sit down to rest. Then it was that he began to reflect on the danger of his situation. He had often in his own snug little bed, listened to the howling wolves, and the cries of the panther, which he well knew came forth in the dark to seek their prey, and roamed up and down the forest. He might have wandered several miles from home, or he might be a very short distance; he was completely lost in the forest, and in all probability, he might have to pass the night there, and perhaps, if not devoured by the wild beasts, perish from hunger. William was a boy of courage, and, moreover, had learned to put his trust in God. This is the secret of true courage; if we love God, and feel that he so loved us as to give his only Son for us, we will never be afraid, for we will believe He is both able and willing to take care of us. Dreadful as was the thought to William of meeting such a death, he comforted himself with this reflection, and kneeling down, prayed God to take care of him in his distress. When he thought of his parents he wept, for he said 'they have no son but me.' But committing them and himself to God, he endeavoured to consider what he could do towards extricating himself from the wood.

"It occurred to him if he fastened his handkerchief to one of the highest limbs of a tree, it might be a signal to his friends who he knew would come in search of him. As he climbed the tree to effect his purpose, what was his astonishment to find an Indian baby, fastened, as is their custom, to a board, and fixed securely in the tree. 'Poor little thing,' thought he, 'you are lost too,' and he carefully took it down. The child soon began to cry, and as it was now getting dark in the forest, William's distress increased. Again he knelt in prayer, and was comforted, and indeed the poor child needed consolation. He had some bread and meat in his pocket, a part of which only he ate, though very hungry, reserving some for the next day, in case he was still in the forest. Just as he finished his meal, he heard the distant barking of a dog; exerting his voice to the utmost, he hallooed with all his might. The barking came nearer, he was sure it was his own Rover; and then it became more distant, and poor William burst into tears as the sound died away, but again he heard it, then it ceased; there was a long pause, he was sure he heard a foot-fall on the dry leaves, and in another moment, with a look of joy, Rover sprang to his master's feet. Overcome with fatigue and delight, poor William sank upon the ground. Rover did every thing but say 'follow me,' to induce him to get up and go with him, but finding him unable, bounded from his side, and in the course of half an hour returned with his father and the men who were in quest of him.

"It was under this very oak tree, dear children," said Aunt Phebe, "where the father and son knelt down together to return thanks for this deliverance. With his own hand the gentleman marked the tree, saying, 'My son, whenever you see this oak, let it remind you of the mercy you have this day experienced from the hand of God, and when in future years you or your children shall have turned this forest into a fruitful field, let the axe of the woodman never be lifted against this memorial of God's goodness to us.' The servant was directed to carry the little 'papoose' home—where every care was bestowed upon it. The babe was

baptized, and the Christian name of Ruth was given to it. 'Who knows,' the gentleman used to say to his family, 'but God designs our little Ruth to become a gospel messenger to her poor blinded people. He brings good out of seeming evil, and perhaps he sent William into the forest for this very purpose.' This was this child trained up and instructed in the way of salvation, in the hope that she might be the means of a blessing to the Indians. Ruth became a missionary, and a little Christian church sprang up in the Indian settlements. At the foot of this oak lies buried poor old Rover, and William, as long as he lived, loved to look upon this tree. His descendants value it as highly as he did himself, and I am very certain nothing but the hand of time will ever injure it.

"This, my dear children, is the story of the old oak tree; there are many things you may learn from it: let me see if you have learned them. What do you learn? 'Cornelia!'—'I learn that sin in my heart is like the acorn now, while the Saviour is willing to pardon it; but it will be like the big tree by and by, so strong and mighty, it will destroy my soul.' Aunt Phebe,—'What have you learned, George?' George,—'I learn that if God is my friend I need not be afraid of any thing.'—'And you, Henry?'—'I learn that religion is worth more than the whole world; if William had had no religion, he would have been without any comfort in that dreary forest.'—'And you, George, what do you learn?'—'When I heard about the gentleman taking such pains with the little Indian girl, I thought of the text I learned last Sunday,—'My word shall not return unto me void, but shall prosper in the thing whereunto I send it,' for it did prosper, Aunt Phebe, when she was a missionary, and the little church was formed.'—*Ep. Recorder*, 1842.

FILIAL DUTY OF THE STORK.

The Stork has long been remarkable for its love to its parents, whom it never forsakes, but tenderly feeds and cherishes when they have become old, and unable to provide for themselves. Bechart has collected a variety of passages from the ancients, wherein they testify this curious particular, that the stork is eminent for its performance of what St. Paul enjoins, "children's requiting their parents." Bucherrodde, a Dane, says, "the two parents guard and feed each brood, one always remaining on it, while the other goes for food. They keep the young ones much longer in the nest than any other bird, and after they have led them out of it by day, they bring them back at night; preserving it as their natural and proper home.

"When they first take out the young, they practise them to fly; and they lead them to the marshes and to the hedge-sides, pointing them out the frogs, and serpents, and lizards, which are their proper food; and they seek out toads, which they never eat, and take great pains to make their young distinguish them. In the end of autumn, not being able to bear the winter of Denmark, they gather in a great body about the sea coasts, as we see swallows do, and go off together; the old ones leading the young ones in the centre, and a second body of the old behind. At this time it is not uncommon to see several of the old birds, which are tired and feeble with the long flight, supported at times on the backs of the young; and the Danish peasants speak of it as a certainty, that many of these are, when they return to their home, laid carefully in the old nests, and cherished by the young ones which they reared with so much care the spring before.—*Children's Friend*.

AS POOR, YET MAKING MANY RICH.

The owner of a fine estate, and of a large fortune, one evening took a walk near his mansion. Though surrounded with blessings, and rolling in wealth, he was insensible to the claims of God, and careless about his soul. Upon the border of his estate, there was a miserable hut, in which dwelt a large family, very poor. As he passed by the door, he heard a voice, the sound of which continued for some time. The curiosity of the gentleman was excited, and he drew near to listen. He found that the poor man was at prayer with his wife and children, and he heard him thanking God for his mercy in giving him food to eat, and raiment to put on, and the supplies which their immediate wants required. The conscience of the gentleman was affected. "What," said he, "does this poor man, who has nothing but the meanest fare, and that, too, by the severest labour, give thanks to God for his goodness to himself and his family, and I who enjoy ease and honour, and every thing which makes life desirable, have hardly ever bent my knee, or made any acknowledgement to my Maker or Preserver?" This reflection was the beginning of a new life. He became a penitent before the throne of grace, and he ever after continued to devote the benefits he had received from his Creator, to his glory and honour.—*Children's Friend*.

THE TELESCOPE AND MICROSCOPE.

While the telescope enables us to see a system in every star, the microscope unfolds to us a world in every atom. The one instructs us that this mighty globe, with the whole butthen of its people and its countries, is but a grain of sand in the vast field of immensity—the other that every atom may harbour the tribes and families of a busy population. The one shows us the insignificance of the world we inhabit—the other redeems it from all insignificance, for it tells us that in the leaves of every forest, in the flowers of every garden, in the waters of every rivulet, there are worlds teeming with life, and numberless as are the stars of the firmament. The one suggests to us that above and beyond all that is visible to man there may be regions of creation which sweep immeasurably along, and carry the impress of the Almighty's hand to the remotest scenes of

the universe—the other, that within and beneath all that minuteness which the aided eye of man is able to explore there may be a world of invisible beings; and that, could we draw aside the mysterious veil which shrouds us from our senses, we might behold a theatre of as many wonders as astronomy can unfold—a universe within the compass of a point so small as to elude all the powers of the microscope, but where the Almighty Ruler of all things finds room for the exercise of his attributes, where he can raise another mechanism of worlds, and fill and animate them all with evidences of his glory.—*Dr. Chalmers*.

THE EMIGRANT'S DANGERS.

In riding through the forest, I often passed deserted log-huts, standing in the middle of what is called "cleared land;" that is to say, the enormous pine trees of the surrounding forest had been chopped down to stumps about a yard high, around which there had rushed up a luxuriant growth of hard brushwood, the height of which denoted that several years must have elapsed since the tenants had retired. There was something which I always felt to be deeply affecting in passing these little monuments of the failure of human expectations—of the blight of human hopes! The courage that had been evinced in settling in the heart of the wilderness, and the amount of labour that had been expended in cutting down so many large trees, had all ended in disappointment, and occasionally in sorrows of the severest description. The arm that had wielded the axe had perhaps become gradually emaciated by ague (which always ungratefully rises out of cleared ground), until death had slowly terminated the existence of the poor emigrant, leaving a broken-hearted woman and a helpless family with nothing to look to for support but the clear bright blue heavens above them. In many of the spots I passed, I ascertained that these dispensations of Providence had been sudden as they were awful. The emigrant had arisen in robust health, surrounded by his numerous and happy family—had partaken of a homely breakfast—had left his log-hut with a firm step, and with manly pride had again resumed his attack upon the wilderness, through which every blow of his axe, like the tick of a clock, recorded the steady progress of the hand that belonged to it. But at the hour of dinner he did not return! The wife waited—bid her rosy-faced children be patient—waited—felt anxious—alarmed—stepped beyond the threshold of her log-hut—listened: the axe was not at work! Excepting that indescribable Eolian murmur which the air makes in passing through the stems and branches of the forest, not a sound was to be heard. Her heart misgives her; she walks—runs toward the spot where she knows her husband to have been at work. She finds him, without his jacket or neckcloth, lying with extended arms, on his back, cold, and crushed to death by the last tree he had felled, which, in falling, jumping from its stump, had knocked him down, and which is now resting with its whole weight upon his bared breast! The widow screams in vain—she endeavours to extricate her husband's corpse, but it is utterly impracticable. She leaves it to satisfy her infant's hunger—to appease her children's cries! The above is but a faint outline of a scene that has so repeatedly occurred in the wilderness of America, that it is usually summed up in the words—'He was killed by the fall of a tree.'—*The Emigrant, by Sir F. B. Head*.

CAVES IN GIBRALTAR ROCK.

The largest, called St. Michael's Cave, is situated about the middle of the rock, and nearly eleven hundred feet above the level of the sea; perhaps there are few caves in similar formations equal to this in picturesque effect, though there are many of larger dimensions. The interior is shown to the public when the rock is visited by some distinguished personage, or a particular friend of the Colonels of Artillery or Engineers; it is then seen to the best advantage; a host of people is assembled near the entrance of the cave at the hour appointed. Martial music sounds. The gates are opened and the cavern is entered with the utmost degree of caution, the ladies of course assisted by the gentlemen, the descent being very slippery from the accumulated moisture. Wax tapers burning at distant intervals, cast a dim light all around; as you proceed, a little stream is passed, and you enter a beautiful grotto sixty-feet high, adorned with many sparry petrifications, and supported by colossal stalactite pillars resembling the most elaborated architecture; the splendid roof looks as if it were chiselled by the hand of the finest sculptor, the whole illumined by coloured lights. Within the last few years this cavern has been explored by several enterprising gentlemen; and I gathered from one of them that the party penetrated the cavern to more than three hundred feet below the level of the grotto just described, and that in their progress they went from one cavern into another, passing thus a series of caverns of various dimensions till they arrived at one, in the centre of which was a small pool of water. Aided by candle-light, they saw stalactite formations very far surpassing in beauty those of the grotto above; the specimens they brought up were almost pure white, the action of the atmosphere darkening the shades of those found in the upper cave. The tortuous narrow passages through which the explorers had to pass, rendered the adventure rather dangerous; ropes and ladders were in requisition, with the help of which, and stout hearts, they accomplished what few would like to try.—*Dr. Kelaart's Contributions to the Botany and Topography of Gibraltar and its Neighbourhood*.

MASSACRE OF NESTORIAN CHRISTIANS.

CONSTANTINOPLE, Nov. 11.—The tidings I sent you in my last of the massacre of the Nes-

torians by Beder Han Bey have been fully confirmed. Cruelties much greater than can be conceived have been perpetrated by that barbarian. The inhabitants of thirty-six villages have been slain and put to death by every form of torture. The number murdered amounts at least to 3,000, whilst throughout the whole mountain district there are flocks of famished fugitives flying across the frontier into Persia, hotly pursued by the Kurds, who are hunting them as if they were game or wild beasts. One large body of emigrants, have, however, accomplished their passage victoriously to Orroumah, on the Persian side of the frontier. But they did not do this without fighting an obstinate battle.

Several numerous bands, under the command of Beder Han Bey, fell upon them towards sunset, after a long day's weary march. They, nevertheless, not only repulsed their assailants, but slaughtered so many of them, that they were afterwards allowed unmolested to pursue their route. All their property they have left behind them, and will arrive at their new destination quite destitute. Their Patriarch, who had joined them from Moussoul, and who had counselled this emigration, has fallen into the hands of the Turks, and will probably be brought prisoner to this capital. Beder Han Bey, before he set out on the expedition, swore on the Koran, before two Imams, that he would exterminate the Nestorian race, and this oath he will surely fulfil on all of that persecuted people who cannot effect their escape into Persia. As to the Porte, this chief seems thoroughly to despise it. To show his contempt for its power and authority, he sent 200 of the heads of the Nestorians—the results of a massacre in a village named Bass—to Tayer Pasha, of Moussoul, with a most insulting defiance. It is reported that, subsequent to this horrid present, he has fought a battle with the Pasha at a place called Al Kiosk, and defeated him. The truth of this report is strongly denied at the Porte, but the fact is the Turks say as little as possible about the events which are happening in Kurdistan, and wish to keep them from the knowledge of the public.

How far is the Ottoman Cabinet to blame with reference to this dreadful massacre? To a great extent, according to present appearances; for it is certain that intrigues to dispose Beder Han Bey were encouraged at the Porte, which intrigues were principally conducted by the patriarch of the Nestorians. It was, however, not only bad policy to attempt to wrench power from one so powerful, without being fully prepared to act with the utmost promptitude; but it was cruel in the extreme to leave the Nestorians without any protection, exposed to the fury of the barbarian, who, it must have been foreseen, would make them his first victims.—*Eng. Paper*.

PROTESTANTS IN POLAND.

I learn that there are upwards of 200,000 Protestants in what is called Poland; of whom about one third part are Poles, and speak the Polish language. They are the remains of those many hundreds of thousands of Polish Protestants, who lived in this land in the latter part of the XVth century. The other Protestants are Germans or of German descent, and speak German mainly.

There are 52 Protestant ministers (exclusive of some nine or ten missionaries labouring among the Jews, who minister to many scattered flocks; some of them having charge of three or four thousand people, who meet in five or six congregations from time to time, at great distances from each other. There are two Protestant churches in Warsaw, one of which is Lutheran, the other Reformed. Something like 15 or 20 of the 52 Protestant pastors are sound and faithful men. All the Protestant churches in Poland are embraced in what is called "The Evangelical Church."

The consistory of this "Evangelical Church," composed for the most part of men who reside in Warsaw, and who are almost without exception Neologists, or worldly men, have great influence with the government, and is the most formidable enemy which the gospel has to encounter in Poland! Alas, go where we may in the Old World, we find that a hierarchy of some sort or other, is the worst opponent which the truth has to encounter. It was just so in the days of the Saviour himself!

There are five missionaries, supported by the London Jewish Missionary Society, labouring in Warsaw, two in Lublin, and two in Kalish. These excellent men are doing much good, not only among the Jews, but also among the Protestants. Whatever of evangelical religion may exist in Poland, it greatly owes its existence to these beloved brethren, some of whom are Englishmen, and some Germans.

The entire population of Poland exceeds 4,800,000 souls, of whom more than 600,000 are Jews. The Protestants, as I have said, are 200,000 and more—perhaps 220,000. The members of the Greek Church may be 100,000. The remaining part of the population—not short of 4,000,000—are Roman Catholics.—*Rev. Dr. Baird*.

SCHOOLS—GREAT SUFFERERS.

Our schools have suffered also from a want of unity of sentiment and action between parents and teachers. In regard to this subject, there are two extremes to be avoided. The one is exemplified in the conduct of those parents who would be ever interfering with the internal management of the school-room, and dictate in regard to the studies and discipline of their children; always complaining of and modes, and forms, and yet professing to know nothing of these things. It is well, indeed, for parents to be interested in school matters; but let it be an interest manifested in some other way than in complaining of teachers and regulations, and in efforts to interfere with school operations. Let them be willing to allow that teachers and committees know, at least, as much about what should be done and

studied in school as those who profess, with much truth, to know nothing at all. The other extreme is, the course taken by those, who, having furnished their children with books, and sent them to school, think there is nothing more for them to do. The teacher must do the rest; he must take care that the children learn. This is not only a great mistake, but a great wrong. Domestic and school education should go hand in hand. Parents can do much, very much, to aid teachers and scholars. What if they do not understand Latin, or algebra, or grammar, or any of the modern modes of teaching? They can make inquiries, give a word of encouragement, visit the school, and shield their children from street influence, which is often a great hindrance both to study and to morals. They can do all this,—and it is a great deal, and what nobody but parents can do. It is just the aid every teacher needs.—*Boston Com. School Journal*.

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THE BEREAN,

EDITED BY A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Is published every THURSDAY Morning, By G. G. & F. J. FLETCHER, Printer, Bookseller and Stationer, 4, AIN-STREET.

TERMS:—Fifteen Shillings a Year, or Twelve Shillings and Six Pence if paid in advance. The Rev. MARK WILCOX, (Montreal), "CHARLES BASCOMPT, (Christieville), BENJ. BURTON, Esq., St. John's, G. F. BOWEN, Esq., Sherbrooke, JOHN DUNSTON, Esq., Toronto, The Rev. R. V. ROGERS, Kingston, SAMUEL MCKENZIE, Esq., do. J. P. BARRISTER, Esq., Auster, C. W., ALEX. DAVISON, Esq., P. M., Niagara, C. W., The Rev. S. B. ANDAGUI, Barrie, C. W., The Rev. Wm. COGSWELL, Halifax, N. S., COMMANDER ORLEMAN, R. N., Charlotta-Town, Prince Edward Island, The Rev. G. H. WILLIAMSON, New York, are so kind as to act for the Berean. Terms in Great Britain:—Ten Shillings Sterling in advance. Subscriptions will be received by Mr. JOHN HENRY JACKSON, Bookseller, Islington Green, Islington, London.

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