

which the Cabinet adopted and which brought a friendly explanation from Washington. The whole atmosphere was heavy with sorrow, and all hearts ached as never before, when the Queen's Consort died from fever. This has been, amid all her sorrows, her ever-fresh life sorrow. Prayers innumerable, wet with genuine tears, went up for the Prince, but in vain. He died at forty-two, and she was a widow at the same age. His last words were "Good little wife," he kissed her and with a sigh laid his head on her shoulder. The Queen whispered into the dying ear: "It is your little wife."

ENGLAND'S ADVANCE.

When Victoria was born, high treason was in men's mouths, sedition often broke into flame, and ruined manufacturers and starving mechanics were leading bread riots. It seemed to be the days of the Commonwealth back again. Forgery and sheep-stealing were punishable by death. Little children were uncared for by the law when Victoria came to the throne. "There was no mother-love in our Acts of Parliament." Parents could literally work to the death their little slave-children. There was scarce a school worthy the name. The heartless parent was not compelled to have his child learn to read. Millions had never gone to school and could neither read nor write. There were no lucifer matches. There was no penny paper or penny post or post-card. Paper, tea and sugar were luxuries for the few. The poor people could not travel beyond their circumscribed neighbourhood. The Queen's reign has been the age of the railway, the telegraph, the telephone—the age of steam and electricity; of free education and religion; of liberty; of free museum, free park, free drinking fountain, improved sanitation. A housewife now deserves the tread-mill who lets her bairns go dirty, and a man merits censure who lives unlettered. Hospitals have undergone a warm domestic transformation, and helping-clubs are legion. Freedom and justice, and womanhood and childhood, and citizenship and home have received a new and nobler meaning during the Queen's reign.

THE GROWTH OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

The populations of these "sea-walled garden isles" of Britain have more than doubled, and their "necessities" now were "luxuries" then. Great empires, of all kindreds and tongues and creeds, have been added to the Crown, and the last two years have witnessed the splendid miracle of all history, namely, the virtual federation of the Queen's world-wide dominions! Never in all Great Britain's history were her people so much one as now, in loyal devotion to the throne and to one another. Never was Britain so truly strong as now—physically on land and sea, and morally in love of righteousness.

He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

GOD IS NEAR.

In the dark and silent night,  
Little child, you need not fear;  
Just as much as in the light  
God is near you—God is near!

Though the room be dark and lone,  
Though no moon be shining clear,  
You may say in gentle tone,  
"God is near me—God is near!"

If you feel afraid, or start  
At some sudden sound you hear,  
Keep this thought within your heart,  
"God is near me—God is near!"

He will guard you with his arm,  
He is your own Father dear;  
He will keep you safe from harm,  
God is near you—God is near!

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Sunbeam.

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 23, 1901.

HOW TO READ.

Charles Dudley Warner has some very interesting things to say about reading: "Take hold somewhere, and so begin to use the art of reading to find out about things as you use your eyes and ears. I knew a boy, a scrap of a lad, who almost needed a high chair to bring him up to the general level of the dinner table, who liked to read the encyclopaedia. He was always hunting round in books about his own size for what he wanted to know. He dug as another boy would dig in the woods for sassafras root. He asked questions of these books exactly as he would ask a living authority, and kept at it until he got answers. He knew how to read.

"Soon that boy was an authority on earthquakes. He liked to have the conversation at the table turn on earthquakes,

for then he seemed to be the tallest person at the table. I suppose there was no earthquake anywhere of any importance but that he could tell where it occurred, and what damage it did, how many houses it buried, how many people it killed, and in what shape it left the country it had shaken.

"From that he went on to try to discover what caused these disturbances, and this led him into other investigations, and at last into electricity, practical as well as theoretical. He examined machines, and invented machines, and kept on reading, and presently he was an expert in electricity. He knew how to put in the wires and signals and bells, and to do a number of practical and useful things, and almost before he was able to enter high school he had a great deal to do in the city and three or four men under him.

SMALL SEXTONS.

People often wonder what becomes of the dead mice and dead birds; for, though birds and mice are constantly dying in large numbers, hardly one is ever to be seen. The fact is that they are buried by beetles; and this is done in the following manner, described by Buchner:

"Several of them unite together to bury under the ground, as food and shelter for their young, some dead animal, such as a mouse, a toad, a mole, a bird, etc. The burial is performed because the corpse, if left above ground, would either dry up or decay or be eaten by other animals. In all these cases the young would perish, whereas the dead body lying in the earth and withdrawn from the outer air, last very well.

"The burying beetles go to work in a very well-considered fashion, for they scrape away the earth lying under the body, so that it sinks of itself deeper and deeper. When it is deep enough down, it is covered over from above. If the situation is stony, the beetles with united forces and great efforts drag the corpse to some place more suitable for burying.

"They work so diligently that a mouse for instance, is buried within three hours. But they very often work on for days, so as to bury the body as deeply as possible. From large carcasses, such as those of horses, sheep, etc., they bury only pieces as large as they can manage."

"LAID UP IN MY HEAD."

Daniel Webster once told a good story in a speech, and was asked where he got it. "I had it laid up in my head for fourteen years, and never got a chance to use it until to-day," said he.

Some little boy or girl wants to know what good it will do to learn the "rule of three," or to commit a verse of the Bible. The answer is this: "Some time you will need that very thing. Perhaps it may be twenty years before you can make it use in just the right place, but it will be in place some time; then if you don't have it, you will be like the hunter who had a ball in his rifle when the bear met him."

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