

St. Martin and the Beggar.

In the freezing cold and the blinding snow
Of a wintry eve in the long ago,
Folding his cloak o'er clanking mail,
A soldier is fighting the angry gale
Inch by inch to the camp-fire's light,
Star of his longing this wintry night.

All in a moment his path is barred ;
He draws his sword as he stands on guard.
But who is this with a white, wan face,
And piteous hands upheld for grace ?
Tenderly bending, the soldier bold
Raises a beggar faint and cold.

Famished he seems, and almost spent ;
The rags that cover him worn and rent.
Crust nor coin can the soldier find ;
Never his wallet with gold is lined ;
But his soul is sad at the sight of pain ;
The sufferer's pleading is not in vain.

His mantle of fur is broad and warm,
Armour of proof against the storm ;
He snatches it off without a word ;
One downward pass of the gleaming sword,
And cleft in twain at his feet it lies,
And the storm-wind howls 'neath the frown-
ing skies.

"Half for thee"—and with tender art
He gathers the cloak round the beggar's
heart—

"And half for me ;" and with jocund song
In the teeth of the tempest he strides along.
During the worst of the sleet and snow,
That brave young spirit so long ago.

Lo ! as he slept at midnight's prime,
His tent had the glory of summer-time ;
Shining out of a wondrous light,
The Lord Christ beamed on his dazzled sight.
"I was the beggar," the Lord Christ said,
As he stood by the soldier's lowly bed ;
"Half of thy garment thou gavest me ;
With the blessing of heaven I dower thee."
And Martin rose from the hallowed tryst,
Soldier and servant and knight of Christ.

—Harper's Young People.

Rescued.

THE dog is a very fond and faithful animal. Though lower in the scale of being than we, yet he seems to have loves and hates much like our own. We have heard of his braving the perils of the mountain snows in search of storm-bound travellers, and of his plunging into deep and dangerous waters, as represented in our picture on the first page, to rescue his drowning master or more intelligent companions ; but among all the touching incidents of the kind that have reached us we have heard of none more humane than that related by the *Courier Journal* :—

"A most pathetic and remarkable incident in connection with the death of Samuel J. Medill, late managing editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, has been related. Mr. Medill had owned a pet dog of which he was extremely fond, but the care of which had been so great a burden to him in his condition of health that he had given it to a friend near Quincy. The animal had seemed at times restless, but ordinarily well contented in his new home. Of late it had apparently been especially well domiciled and happy. Early in the morning of the day of Mr. Medill's death the dog suddenly disappeared from its home. At about six o'clock the dog appeared at the residence of Mr. John B. Carson, where Mr. Medill

was already dying. It howled most piteously about the place until admitted, and instantly, with some unexplainable and marvellous instinct, dashed to Mr. Medill's room, bounded upon the bed, and covered its dying master with its loyal caresses. It is stated that Mr. Medill, although already almost unconscious, gave recognition of the occurrence and seemed to realize its surprising impressiveness."

Dear children, be kind to the feelings of your dog, and learn to prize all the creatures God has made. Each has its place, and when made the subject of meditation displays wonderful wisdom in the Creator.

The True Missionary Spirit.

BY M. D. R. BOYD.

"Oh, yes, indeed, Aunt Helen," said Milly, laying down *The Sunrise Kingdom*, which she had been reading aloud ; "I take a great interest in missionary work. We have two mission bands in our church, and I belong to both. Besides, I keep a box to collect money for the two societies, and what with the dimes and quarters that papa and mamma and Uncle Charlie drop in, it amounts to a large sum at the end of the year. We are supporting a little girl in India and another in China. But why do you ask, auntie ?"

Aunt Helen was a widowed sister of Milly's father, and after a short sojourn with her relatives at the East, she had brought her young niece back with her to pass the winter on the wide prairies of her Western home. She looked up from her task of arranging little illustrated papers and Scripture cards into small packages that almost covered the long table before her, and, with a grave face, answered Milly's question :

"Because I thought, from your rude behaviour to the little Indian girl who came to the house yesterday when you were sitting on the porch waiting for your friend Kate, that you felt no interest in the conversion of the heathen."

Milly coloured with shame : "But, Aunt Helen, she was such an odd-looking girl, and wore such uncouth and ill-fitting dress and shoes. Kate says she belongs to some Indians who are encamped on the plains. She said, too, she wouldn't wonder if they got their living by begging or stealing. Besides, Aunt Helen, I only told her, when she was marching right up to the front door, that we always expected beggars to go round to the kitchen."

"Esther is not a beggar," said Aunt Helen, quietly ; "she is a dear little Christian girl, and has done a great deal of good among her own people. You look surprised, Milly. Let me tell you her story :

"One stormy night, several years ago, a poor little Indian child, half naked, hungry, and almost perishing

with the bitter cold, was found crying on the prairie. We took her in and cared for her until she was old enough to be placed in one of our mission schools. Here little Esther (as we had named her) proved so bright and eager to learn that she was soon able to read for herself about the wonderful love of Jesus in coming to save those who were lost. The Holy Spirit applied these truths to her heart, and she became a true Christian. Like the first disciples, as soon as she gave herself to Christ she wanted to tell others what a dear Saviour she had found. Through a series of providential events she was a short time after restored to her kindred, and has ever since been doing the work of a missionary among them. Whenever her people, on their hunting or trading expeditions, pass a night or two in this vicinity, Esther comes to me for a supply of little text-cards to carry home with her. I am going this afternoon to take these packages to the camp. And see, Milly, what she has brought me."

Here Aunt Helen showed her niece a pretty Indian basket, beautifully woven, and dyed in bright colours. It contained bead pin-cushions, braided toilet mats, and needle-books.

"Esther wishes these to be sold for the benefit of the mission-schools," said Aunt Helen. "They are all her own work, and the materials were bought, no doubt, by the sacrifice of many needful comforts, from the money she earned by selling nuts, berries, and baskets in the settlements." The tears came into Milly's eyes. "Dear Aunt Helen," she said, "do let me buy some of these with the money papa gave me to spend as I choose. I have never really denied myself or given anything that would cause me self-denial in the way of my own pleasures, although I thought I was doing so much for Christ. And I will go with you to the camp—may I not?—and learn from Esther what it is to have a true missionary spirit."

Grandpa's Queer Cane.

It was a cold winter night, seventy years ago. Little Polly had made a "breath-hole" on the frosty window pane, so she could peep out and watch Jonas watering the cattle at the brook, and see the red sunset clouds ; and there was grandpa coming home from the woods with an axe on his shoulder and a cane in his other hand.

He came into the large warm kitchen where she was, a few minutes later.

"Here, Polly," he said, "come and see my new cane."

Polly ran to examine it. It was slender and tapering, the head looked just like a snake's head, and it was striped and spotted like a snake.

"It looks just like a snake," said Polly, "only it is so straight and stiff. Where did you get it, grandpa ?"

"I found it in a hollow log I was chopping to-day. I thought it would

make me a nice cane, so I walked home with it to-night ; and it did very well. It's slender, to be sure ; but it seems stout, and I don't believe it would break very easy."

"It's nice and smooth," said Polly ; "and it's pretty, too, if it didn't look so much like a snake. I don't like snakes very well."

"Don't you ? Well, set it up in the corner now, and put the chairs about the table. I see Jonas coming in, and I want my supper."

Polly set the cane in the corner near the great fire-place ; and just then grandma came in from the back but-tery, with a bowl of apple sauce. Jonas came in with a pail of milk, and soon they all sat down to supper in the pleasant firelight.

They had just finished eating, when there was a little noise in the corner. They all looked around, but no cane stood there. Instead, a snake was squirming and twisting on the floor.

"For the land sakes !" cried grandma. "How on earth did that snake get into the house ?"

"I found him frozen up stiff in a log," said grandpa, "and walked home with him for a cane. He made a very good one ; out, now he has thawed out, Jonas, I guess you had better take him out and chop off his head." Which Jonas was very willing to do.

Driver Ants.

THERE are certain ants that show wonderful intelligence, and the "driver ants" not only build boats, but launch them, too ; only, these boats are formed of their own bodies. They are called "drivers" because of their ferocity. Nothing can stand before the attacks of these little creatures. Large pythons have been killed by them in a single night, while chickens, lizards, and other animals in western Africa flee from them in terror. To protect themselves from the heat, they erect arches under which numerous armies of them pass in safety. Sometimes the arch is made of grass and earth gummed together by some secretion, and again it is formed by the bodies of the larger ants, which hold themselves together by their strong nippers, while the workers pass under them. At certain times of the year, freshets overflow the country inhabited by the "drivers," and it is then that these ants go to sea. The rain comes suddenly, and the walls of their houses are broken in by the flood ; but instead of coming to the surface in scattered hundreds and being swept off to destruction, out of the ruins rises a black ball that rides safely on the water and drifts away. At the first warning of danger, the little creatures rush together and form a solid ball of ants, the weaker in the centre ; often this ball is larger than a common base-ball, and in this way they float about until they lodge against some tree, upon the branches of which they are soon safe and sound.—*St. Nicholas*.