

Our Young Folks.

HIS NAMES.

In school, when master calls the roll his name appears as "William Cole;" When at their play, as boys will, They've shortened it till it is "Bill." "Come, Willie," is his sisters way Of asking him to come and play. If grandpa wishes something done, His dear old voice calls out, "My son!" And father never calls him twice; His "Will!" can bring him in a trice. And when he goes to bed at night, He never shuts his blue eyes tight Until the words come sweet and clear In mother's voice, "Good night, my dear."

Presbyterian Journal

A DESERT CARAVAN.

A great caravan in march is a superb spectacle, alas! too infrequent now in northern Africa. At first Arabs alone can detect it, a mere speck lost in a dusty halo, whence it emerges at length, a tawny-coloured mass possessed of a strange motion, the swarming of a thousand lives in one. Here and there silhouettes of straggling camels stand profiled, like hieroglyphics, on the fiery sky, as, insensibly trailing its snake-like curves, the convoy advances. Hours after being sighted, it passes in slow defile, led by a vanguard of blooded camels, whose gait and bearing have an air of arrogance not customary to that race of proletarians, the chieftains seated aloft in their floating burnouses, alert of eye, with gum in hand, statuesque guardians of the convoy-treasure. Behind them the camels of burden, exhausted less by loads than with the fatigues of the journey, their legs and croppers bald and scarred by blows, struggle forward languidly, thrusting out the tongue as they press their huge, spongy feet in the yielding ground. What resignation in their soft, staring eyes! Verily, no philosopher knows better than those poor brutes how mean are the revolts against inexorable fate. Near at hand walk the drivers, their emaciated features savagely illuminated by eyes of fire, and white, gleaming teeth piercing their parched lips. Of all who started with the caravan, how many have fallen by the way, abandoned to agonise alone in the desolation?—From "A Saharan Caravan," by A. F. Jaccaci, in the March Scribner.

THE BROWNS OF HADDINGTON.

We quote the following from an article in the Speaker by Principal Fairbairn, of Mansfield College, Oxford. We heartily commend it to the study of our young readers:—

For four generations their name has been honoured. The founder of the family was a shepherd boy who learned to read his New Testament in the original while herding sheep on the braes of Abernethy. One day he went to St. Andrews to buy a Greek New Testament. In the shop stood a professor who, surprised at the boy's request, offered him one if he could read it. He read and obtained the book, which is still a treasured heirloom in the family. He became burgher minister of Haddington, was "passing rich on forty pounds a year," and reared for the ministry a race of sons, one of whom, Ebenezer, became famous as a preacher. Brougham is said to have praised his eloquence, and the story is told that once in Edinburgh, in the climax of a very dramatic sermon, he stood still, looked down the aisle, and said: "Here comes a man from Tarsus, and he cries, 'make mention of me'"—the immense congregation sprang up, expecting to see the man from Tarsus in bodily presence there. The eldest son, the second John Brown, became minister of a church which stands high up in one of the wildest moorland districts of Scotland, where his name still lingers as a household word. His son, the third John Brown, was the most scholarly theologian and one of the most gracious and picturesque figures in Edinburgh of his day; while his son, the fourth John Brown, of loved memory, quaint, tender, imaginative, was the friend of all good men, and of all dogs, good and otherwise, to whom we owe "Rab and his Friends" and many another page of exquisite grace and charm.

A STREET-CAR CAT.

The street cars in a certain Western city have small stoves in the centre of each car for the additional comfort of passengers in cold weather. The driver on one of these cars had reached the end of his route one cold day last November, and was changing his horses from one end of the car to the other, when a half-grown, half-starved, and bedraggled-looking kitten came mewing across the road and ran into the car. It curled up under the warm stove in great contentment, and the kind-hearted driver, who was also the conductor, allowed it to lie under the stove during the down-town trip. He begged a saucer of milk for the little wail at the other end of the route, and after her lunch, for which she was manifestly grateful, kitty went back to her snug place under the stove, and during the day she and the conductor became such good friends that he left her in the car when he went on duty that night.

He did not put her out the next day nor at any other time, but fed her every day, and before a week she became the pet of the public, and was quite an attractive card to that branch of the road. She was a pretty, playful, gray and white kitty, and made friends with all the passengers. The children played with her, the ladies petted her, and most of the men paid her some attention. One lady tied a pretty scarlet ribbon round kitty's neck, and the next day another lady fastened a tiny silver bell to the ribbon.

As for things to eat, kitty had them in variety and quantity enough to make a dyspeptic of her. During a single trip she had gifts of a choice bit of raw steak offered her by an old Irishman on the car, a big oatmeal cracker and some gumdrops presented by a little girl, a lump of loaf-sugar, a lane, a sandwich, some peanuts, and a link of sausage.

Kitty had been on the car five weeks when I heard from her last, the most happy, contented, and petted little puss imaginable. When the weather is fine she often rides out on the platform with the driver who had been such a true friend to her, and whose conduct is proof of the fact that there is a kindly, generous heart beneath his rough garments.—From Harper's Young People.

APRON-STRINGS.

"I promised my mother I would be home at six o'clock."

"But what harm will an hour more do?"

"It will make my mother worry, and I shall break my word."

"Before I'd be tied to a woman's apron-strings—"

"My mother doesn't wear aprons," said the first speaker, with a laugh, "except in the kitchen sometimes, and I don't know as I ever noticed any strings."

"You know what I mean. Can't you stay and see the game finished?"

"I could stay, but I will not. I made a promise to my mother, and I am going to keep it."

"Good boy!" said a hoarse voice just back of the two boys.

They turned to see an old man, poorly clad and very feeble.

"Abraham Lincoln once told a young man," the stranger resumed, "to cut the acquaintance of every person who talked slightly of his mother's apron-strings, and it is a very safe thing to do, as I know from experience. It was just such talk that brought me to ruin and disgrace, for I was ashamed not to do as other boys did, and when they made fun of mother I laughed too—God forgive me! There came a time when it was too late"—and now there were tears in the old eyes—"when I would gladly have been made a prisoner, tied by these same apron-strings, in a dark room with bread and water for my fare. Always keep your engagements with your mother. Never disappoint her if you can possibly help it, and when advised to cut loose from her apron-strings, cut the adviser, and take a tighter clutch of the apron-strings. This will bring joy and long life to your mother, the best friend you have in the world, and will insure you a noble future, for it is impossible for a good son to be a bad man."

It was an excellent sign that both boys listened attentively, and both said "Thank you" at the conclusion of the stranger's lecture, and they left the ball grounds together, silent and thoughtful. At last the apron-string critic remarked, with a deep-drawn sigh:

"That old man has made me goose-flesh all over."

"Oh, Dick," said his companion, "just think what lovely mothers we have both got!"

"Yes; and if anything were to happen to them, and we hadn't done right! You'll never hear apron-strings out of my mouth again."

Teacher and Scholar.

April 9th, 1893. AFFLICTIONS SANCTIFIED. {Job 5: 17; 27: 17; 27: 17; 27: 17}

GOLDEN TEXT.—For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. Heb. 12: 6.

Months of Job's trial seem to have elapsed (7: 3.) when three of his friends hearing of his great affliction, make an appointment together and come to condole with him. They found him so disfigured with suffering as not to be recognizable. Mourning with him they sat over against him in speechless sympathy. Job's grief was so intensified, at seeing his sufferings reflected in their sorrow, that he lost all control of himself and burst into a bitter cry for death. He is then addressed by Eliphaz, the Temanite, the most dignified and considerate of the three friends, a man of seemingly patriarchal age, (15: 10.) and almost prophetic character (4: 12, 13). The general purport of his address is that God inflicts sufferings because of man's sinfulness, so, if he will submit himself to this chastening the results will be blessed. Expressing surprise that Job, a comforter of others, should himself despair when he is touched, he bids him remember that only the wicked perish at the blast of God. The afflictions of the righteous are disciplinary, and are due to the imperfection which he shares with all creatures. This imperfection had been previously revealed to him in a vision. Without mentioning Job's individual case, he implies with great delicacy that it is an example of general sinfulness. Man is born to trouble. It is his nature so to act, that by evil deeds he brings trouble on himself. Therefore, he counsels Job to commit his course to God, all whose ways are marked by one purpose to do good, ending in the words of the lesson by pointing out the happy issue that will then be his.

1. God's purpose in correcting. Eliphaz means it to be understood that God's universal course of goodness shows itself in chastisement. The words used to describe suffering as coming from God "correcting and chastening," indicate that the man who endures it, should be regarded as happier than if it had not befallen him. It is intended to correct that which is wrong, to chasten what has become impure. Without adopting Eliphaz's theory that all suffering is sent because of special sin, it may be recognized as true that suffering so sent is really a blessed thing. It is designed for good, and if the sufferer will allow, is beneficial in its results. The same stroke that wounds is fitted to make whole. God smites the putrefaction of the sore in order that it might be cleansed and bound up for healing. The chastening is then a mark that there has been a moral wound, and being a way of restoration is not to be despised, but welcomed. Job should consider himself happy in being afflicted, for God afflicts in order that he may the more richly bless. Ps. 94, 12; Prov. 3, 11; Heb. 12, 5.

11. God's protection amid trial. Assuming that God's visitations will have due effect on Job, Eliphaz goes on to speak of the protection that God will afford him in the midst of trial itself. In general he will have such deliverance that in all troubles evil will not touch so as to harm him. Six or seven are round numbers meaning "many" or "all" Prov. 6, 16; Amos 1, 3; Mich. 5, 5. More specially he will have immunity in such evils as famine, war, the scourge of tongues (Ps. 31, 20), destruction (perhaps pestilence), dearth, wild beasts. The evils mentioned are for the most part those which God elsewhere proclaims that he brings upon men and peoples for a judgment. Ezek. 5, 17; 14, 21.

III. Joyous issue. Eliphaz goes on to describe still more positively the blessed after condition of Job's turning unto God. God being at peace, all God's works, inanimate nature and every living creature are in a league of peace. Rom. 8, 28. All about his homestead will be in such safety and security, that he will feel perfect confidence with regard to them. When he looked upon his cattle and other possessions (R. V. fold) he shall find them actually correspond to what he expected, he shall miss nothing (R. V.). Though now his family is cut off he shall feel that God has given him the much desired joy of a numerous offspring. To crown all his life will be spared. Like a shock of corn, fully ripe, he will come to the grave full of years. The dimmer light of the Old Testament respecting future life, enhanced the greatness of this blessing. Exod. 20, 12; Ps. 91, 16; 102, 24; Is. 38, 10.

As Eliphaz errs in assuming that in every case special suffering involves special guilt, so he also errs in asserting that this representation of well-being as the result of well-doing is true of every individual in an outward sense. But his words express a true general principle and in the very highest sense will never fail.

TO THE POINT.

Mr. John L. Blaikie made an excellent and pointed speech at the annual meeting of the North American Life Assurance Company, held recently.

Amongst other things he said: "When a shrewd business man makes up his mind to insure his life, and proceeds to consider the claims and relative merits of rival companies, to what ought he have principal regard? Surely the problem such an one has to solve is, 'Which company can do best for its policy-holders?'"

"Now, it by no means follows that the largest, or the oldest company, or one with many more millions of assets than another, can do the best for its policy-holders."

"I have before me a statement showing the percentage of surplus earned to mean assets for the year ending 31st December, 1891, based upon the last Government returns. It is extremely interesting."

"Take first four of the United States companies doing business in Canada. Then take four prominent Canadian companies."

"Thus you see that the percentage of surplus earned to mean assets for 1891, out of which alone all returns and dividend to policy-holders must come, is in the case of the North American Life more than double that of any of the four United States companies, and very much greater than that of the Canadian companies named."

"Nothing can be clearer than that the company making and accumulating the largest percentage of surplus is the one that will give the largest returns and best investment results to its policy-holders. Tried by this test, I am proud to say the North American Life stands in the very front rank."

"A wise and provident investment of the funds of a life insurance company is a most important factor in adding to the surplus, and in this respect our Company has been remarkably fortunate, the average rate of interest upon its investments being as high as any, and considerably higher than that of most companies, as will be readily seen by figures, compiled by the Insurance and Finance Chronicle, of Montreal, from the last Government returns."

"The Company, as you know, offer various kinds of attractive policies, suited to the different circumstances of all classes, which should make it an easy one for which to secure new business. To the agents, I venture to say that in the North American Life you represent a company that the report before you proves conclusively can do better for its policy-holders than most companies, that pays its losses promptly, and that deals honorably and liberally with all."

The Presbytery of Brandon met in Knox Church, Portage la Prairie, on Tuesday, 15th inst. Present Dr. Robertson, Messrs. Wright, MacLean, Campbell, Ross, Fraser, Beattie, MacTavish, Lockhart, McCullough, Shearer, ministers; and Messrs. Ferguson and Grant, elders. Mr. Shearer's term as Moderator having expired, Rev. R. Wright was appointed Moderator for the ensuing six months. A call from Fort William congregation to the Rev. A. W. Fraser, of Treherne was laid on the table. It was found that the call was unanimous, had been signed by 64 members and concurred in by 65 adherents, and was accompanied by a guarantee of stipend of \$1,200 and house rent. Messrs. Robertson and Forbes were heard on behalf of the Treherne congregation. Mr. Fraser requested the advice of members of Presbytery in the matter and afterwards stated that he could not see his way clear to accept the call, whereupon it was agreed that the translated be not granted, and that the Clerk notify the Presbytery of Winnipeg to that effect. Rev. T. Sedgwick, of Tatamagouche, N. S., was nominated Moderator of the next General Assembly. Presbytery then proceeded to the choice of representatives to the General Assembly. Dr. Robertson, Messrs. Urquhart, Wright, Fraser, Campbell and Shearer, ministers; and Messrs. W. R. Ross, W. Logan, H. M. Campbell, J. Penman, J. Elder and A. Ballantyne, elders, were chosen representatives of Presbytery to the Assembly. Mr. MacTavish presented the report on Systematic Benevolence. Mr. Shearer, the report on State of Religion and the Statistical and Financial Report, Mr. Wright, the Home Mission report. The Home Mission Committee's report showed that the mission fields of the Presbytery have been well supplied with ordinances during the winter months. It was agreed to invite Rev. Mr. Meikle to conduct special services within the bounds of the Presbytery during the coming summer. The next meeting of Presbytery will be held in Brandon on Tuesday, May 2nd, at 8.30 p.m. —T. R. SHEARER, Clerk.