

To a Sparrow.

BY CHARLES H. CHANDALL.

Poor, lonely, little fluffy thing,
A gray wite in the cold and sleet,
With glossy head and folded wing,
Soft cuddling down upon your feet!

You know not if the morrow's sun
May find you frozen on that bough,
And don't you wonder, pretty one,
Where your next meal is waiting now?

Gaily you chirp and dodge the storm,
And turn your head and preen your
wing,
Strange that from such a tiny form
So large a lesson there should spring

I, who, well sheltered, often pine;
I, who sometimes have food to spare,
Am fain to join my fate with thine,
If I might in thy spirit share.

Brave little bird! I thank you now
For the new courage I have found,
As I remembered such as thou
Fall not unnoticed to the ground.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

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OUR SINS, AND HOW TO BE FORGIVEN.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.—1 John 1-9.

I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.—Psalm 32, 5.

There is a danger nowadays of regarding sin as a little thing, as something to be winked at or overlooked. It is not so regarded in the Word of God. It is described as the abominable thing which God hates; that upon which he cannot look with the least degree of allowance; that which rises up between our souls and God; that which separates us from him by an impassable gulf, unless we obtain the forgiveness of our sins.

It will never do for us to try and lessen this evil, or to hide our sins from God or from ourselves. The only way to obtain their forgiveness is to feel how sinful they are, to confess them to God and to man, to seek pardon and forgiveness for them. It is not enough that he that stole shall steal no more. We must be like Zaccheus, who said, "If I have defrauded any man, I will restore unto him fourfold."

We must make the best amends also for the wrong we have done, and, having done this, we may come with boldness and confidence to our loving Father in Heaven, "who is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

To obtain this forgiveness we must forgive those who have injured us—and forgive not merely seven times, but seventy times seven.

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

THE PRINCESS OF WALES AND THE OLD WOMAN.

One day last autumn an old woman, while busily engaged in picking up firewood in the woods adjoining Mar Lodge, became aware of a lady, quite young as she thought, beckoning her to approach. With true Scottish indifference she, however, hesitated to do so, for "I juist thought it wud be the Duchess o' Fife," the old lady explained, "and I was thinking she might as weel come to me as I to her." This, indeed, the young lady—who, as it happened, was not the Duchess, but the Princess of Wales herself—soon did. Her Royal Highness was the first to commence the conversation by the somewhat characteristic inquiry:

"Do you think I look like a grandmother?" "Deed no, I thought ye was her," was the old woman's reply, pointing to the Duchess of Fife, who at that moment joined her mother. The Princess, smiling at this artless tribute to her still wonderfully youthful appearance, after a little further conversation took out her purse and offered a piece of silver to the old woman. This was gladly accepted, for Mrs. McB., although widely known in Braemar as a decent old body, is not abundantly blessed with this world's goods. But, alas, when she essayed to put away the coin the pocket, which proved refractory, as pockets will, had twisted round somehow and, in fact, could not be found.

With a charming courtesy the Princess assisted her humble acquaintance to find it and then lifted the bundle of sticks, which had been placed for a moment on the ground, on to the old woman's shoulders and with a cheery "Good-day," accompanied by a bright nod and smile, left her. Perhaps the best part of this story was the remark of the old lady, who, by the way, was not in the least overcome by the condescension of royalty: "The Princess was real helpful and bonnie like."

FROM "THE OLD WAR HORSE" IN "BLACK BEAUTY."

"But what about the fighting?" said I. "Was not that worse than anything else?"

"Well," said he, "I hardly know; we always liked to hear the trumpet sound, and to be called out, and were impatient to start off, though sometimes we had to stand for hours, waiting for the word of command; I believe so long as we felt our rider firm in the saddle, and his hand steady on the bridle, not one of us gave way to fear, not even when the terrible bombshells whirled through the air and burst into a thousand pieces.

"I, with my noble master, went into many actions together without a wound; and though I saw horses shot down with bullets, pierced through with lances, and gashed with fearful sabre-cuts; though we left them dead on the field, or dying in the agony of their wounds, I don't think I feared for myself. My master's cheery voice, as he encouraged his men, made me feel as if he and I could not be killed. I had such perfect trust in him that whilst he was guiding me I was ready to charge up to the cannon's mouth. I saw many brave men cut down, many fall wounded from their saddles. I have heard the cries and groans of the dying, I have cantered over ground slippery with blood, and frequently had to turn aside to avoid trampling on wounded man or horse, but, until one dreadful day, I had never felt terror; that day I shall never forget."

Here old Captain paused for a while and drew a long breath; I waited, and he went on.

"It was one autumn morning, and, as usual an hour before daybreak our cavalry had turned out, ready caparisoned for the day's work, whether it might be fighting or waiting. The men stood by their horses waiting, ready for orders. As the light increased, there seemed to be some excitement among the officers; and before the day was well begun we heard the firing of the enemy's guns.

"Then one of the officers rode up and gave the word for the men to mount, and in a second every man was in his saddle, and every horse stood expecting the touch of the rein, or the pressure of his rider's heels, all animated, all eager; but still we had been trained so well that, except for the clamping of our bits, and the restive tossing of our heads from time to time, it could not be said that we stirred.

"My dear master and I were at the head of the line, and as all sat motionless and watchful, he took a little stray lock of my mane which had turned over on the wrong side, laid it over on the right, and smoothed it down with his hand; then patting my neck, he said,

"We shall have a day of it to-day, Bayard, my beauty; but we'll do our duty as we have done." He stroked my neck that morning more, I think, than he had ever done before, quietly on and on, as if he were thinking of something else. I loved to feel his hand on my neck, and arched my crest proudly and happily, but I stood very still, for I knew all his moods, and when he liked me to be quiet, and when gay.

"I cannot tell all that happened on that day, but I will tell of the last charge that we made together, it was across a valley right in front of the enemy's cannon. By this time we were well used to the roar of heavy guns, the rattle of musket fire, and the flying of shot near us; but never had I been under such a fire as we rode through on that day. From the right, from the left, and from the front, shot and shell poured in upon us. Many a brave man went down, many a horse fell, flinging his rider to the earth; many a horse without a rider ran wildly out of the ranks; then, terrified at being alone, with no hand to guide him, came pressing in amongst his old companions, to gallop with them to the charge.

"Fearful as it was, no one stopped, no one turned back. Every moment the ranks were thinned, but as our comrades fell, we closed in to keep them together; and instead of being shaken or staggered in our pace, our gallop became faster and faster as we neared the cannon, all clouded in white smoke, while the red fire flashed through it.

"My master, my dear master, was cheering on his comrades with his right arm raised on high, when one of the balls whizzing close to my head, struck him. I felt him stagger with the shock, though he uttered no cry; I tried to check my speed, but the sword dropped from his right hand, the rein fell loose from the left, and, sinking backward from the saddle, he fell to the earth; the other riders swept past us, and by the force of their charge I was driven from the spot where he fell.

"I wanted to keep my place by his side, and not leave him under that rush of horses' feet, but it was in vain; and now without a master or a friend, I was alone on that great slaughter ground; then fear took hold on me, and I trembled as I had never trembled before; and I, too, as I had seen other horses do, tried to join in the ranks and gallop with them; but I was beaten off by the swords of the soldiers. Just then, a soldier whose horse had been killed under him, caught at my bridle and mounted me; and with this new master I was again going forward; but our gallant company was cruelly overpowered, and those who remained alive after the fierce fight for the guns, came galloping back over the same ground. Some of the horses had been so badly wounded that they could scarcely move from the loss of blood; other noble creatures were trying on three legs to drag themselves along, and others were struggling to rise on their fore feet, when their hind legs had been shattered by shot. Their groans were pitious to hear, and the beseeching look in their eyes as those who escaped passed by, and left them to their fate, I shall never forget. After the battle the wounded men were brought in, and the dead were buried.

"Do you know what they fought about?" said I.

"No," he said, "that is more than a horse can understand, but the enemy must have been awfully wicked people, if it was right to go all that way over the sea on purpose to kill them."

PRINCESS VICTORIA.

THE SIMPLE LIFE OF ENGLAND'S QUEEN IN HER CHILDHOOD DAYS.

James Cassidy has written for the July St. Nicholas an article on the "Girlhood Days of England's Queen," in the course of which he says:

There was an occupation in which the wee woman of seven years, wearing a simple white gown and large straw hat, was frequently seen engaged. It was watering the garden plants. One of those who saw her said that as he sometimes watched her intently at work, he wondered which would get the most water, the plants or her own little feet!

The Princess was an early riser, getting up at seven, frequently earlier in the summer, and breakfasting at eight o'clock. Her breakfast was just such as any well-cared-for little girl, who was not a princess, might be expected to enjoy; bread-and-milk and fruit, placed on a small table by her mother's side.

When breakfast was finished the little Princess went for a walk or a drive, while her half-sister, Feodore, her almost constant companion, studied with her governess. From ten to twelve the

Duchess instructed 'Drina, after which she was at liberty to wander at will through the rooms, or to play with her many costly toys.

Two o'clock was the dinner-hour of the Princess, though the luncheon-hour of the Duchess. Plain food, nicely cooked, was placed before the little girl; and she did it justice, for she was healthy and strong, and enjoyed her meals. After dinner she received assistance in her studies till four o'clock, when she was taken by her mother to visit a friend, or perhaps to walk or drive, or she was permitted to ride a donkey in the gardens.

At the dinner-hour of the Duchess her little girl supped, seated next to her mother. Then came a romp with her nurse, Mrs. Brock. By the time the romp was finished the house-party would be at their dessert, and then the Princess would be called in to join them.

Nine o'clock was bedtime, and she never prolonged her day beyond that hour. No matter whether she was at home or at the house of a friend, "nine o'clock bedtime was rigidly enforced." Her little bed was placed beside her mother's larger bed, so that by day and night mother and daughter were never far apart.

Regular study, regular exercise, simple food, and plenty of time out of doors, plenty of play and plenty of sleep, distinguished the up-bringing of England's future Queen.

THE "DOLLS' HOSPITAL."

A sign hanging from a second-story window in New York city reads that way, and the physician in charge is a cheery little German woman, wife of a man who made dolls in Saxony. "Putting a finger on," and "waxing a face over," are the two most difficult operations in doll surgery. She treats fractures and wounds of every description, and importers who send dolls, damaged in transportation, are very particular that dolly's new head, hand, or hair shall match the rest of her; but children are her most numerous and also her most exacting patrons—especially in the matter of heads. "The children know their little dolls," says the doll-mender, "and love them very dearly. When they grow old, and scratched, and broken, the little one can't forget that they were once rosy, and whole, and beautiful. Oh, no! It isn't that my heads are not pretty. They are not compared with the old head, but with the old head as it was when the doll was found in the Christmas stocking. That is the dolly they want again. The sign is a great help to me in my business. It brings work from the children. It makes playing with the dolls more real, you see, to have a 'hospital' to take them to. Very fine fun it is for the children, as you would know if you could see them come here, playing all the while that the doll is in a dangerous state, and needs most careful attention. I play at the same thing with them, sometimes; it's good for business, and then it is fun for me, too." Touching incidents occur when little mothers bring children so hopelessly maimed that restoration is impossible, and yet so tenderly loved that it is hard to advise burial in the waste-can.

JAPANESE CHILDREN.

"A Joyous heart is always pure," say the Japanese, and they encourage and take part in the amusements of their little ones with a zest that shows their belief. The Japanese are naturally a gentle and childlike race, fond of gaiety, while brave and chivalrous in action and earnest in study. The boys and girls while at play romp, laugh, and shout, and have a "royal good time," but travellers say they do not see among them quarrels nor angry words and gestures. Score this to the credit of our dark-eyed little cousins in the land of the "sun's source."

They have the advantage of being loosely and warmly dressed, and of being out a great deal in the open air. In their homes there is but little furniture to tumble over, and there are few useless ornaments which they are told "not to touch."—From "The Little Japanese at Home," by Ida Tigner Hodnett, in the April St. Nicholas.

Francis W. Bird, the "Sage of Galpole," once went to see Dr. S. G. Howe, and found him with his feet swathed in flannels and extended on a chair. "Howe, what is the matter?" "I have the gout," said Howe. "You have the gout—such a temperance man as you?" "Yes, Bird, my ancestors drank wine, and I have to foot the bill!"