

THE WISE CHOICE.

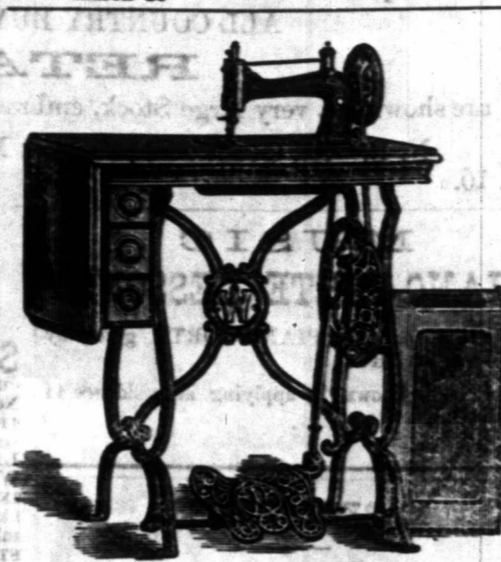
BY JANE BOSWELL MOORE BRISTOL. A great king and warrior had died. His son, a youth of nineteen succeeded him on the throne. His was no mean or insignificant kingdom; faithful historians speak of his subjects "as sand by the sea for multitude," while his father had left for him a vast amount of gold and silver, besides iron, brass, timber, and stone "without weight." So that he was able to build temples and palaces of surpassing magnificence, no fewer than eighty thousand men being employed as hewers of wood in the mountains, while seventy thousand carried burdens. Many cities were built as storehouses of provision, horses, and the king's fourteen hundred chariots. His throne was of ivory overlaid with the best gold, surrounded by figures of twelve lions; seated on it he received tribute and gifts from many foreign princes, a great queen once bringing him from a far country more than a million dollars in gold as a gift, besides stores of spices and precious stones. In his capital "he made silver to be as stones for abundance," while year by year kings, merchants, and seamen poured treasures into the kingdom, large traffic being had with other countries, and curious collections of plants, birds, and trees brought for the king, who delighted in all that could add to his knowledge. He had fine powers as a writer, the sweetness of his songs, the wisdom of his sayings and judgments being well known. Probably no author ever had more universal fame; nor did he lack those kingly qualities—firmness and foresight. No man had better opportunities of enjoying life; he tells us, "Whatever mine eyes desired I kept not from them; I withheld not my heart from any joy." The most noted of his palaces derived its name from a celebrated forest. It was surrounded by pleasure grounds and sheets of water, wandering around which the royal court was entertained by singers and musical instruments. In one of the halls hung five hundred golden bucklers, worth some two millions of dollars. Besides this, all the dishes and vessels used in the palace were of pure gold. The magnificence of the arch or bridge of masonry, over which the king, attended by princes and great men of the realm, on state days, marched in solemn procession, is to this day the wonder of the world. Not only were the walls, doors, and statues of the costly temple in which the monarch worshipped of gold, but the shovels, tongs, candlesticks, snuffers, lamps, bowls, spoons, the hundred basins, even the nails and hinges were of the same metal, the house being emblazoned with all manner of precious gems. To the possessor of all this wealth and grandeur was offered the choice of gifts; he had youth, health, riches, power, kingly station, and rare mental abilities; he might have asked long life, continued health, wider rule, and victory over his enemies; but he remembered that God had made him ruler over a great people, and felt his need of wisdom to govern and judge rightly. Wisdom and knowledge were his choice. It is three thousand years since this decision: the empire of the king has been swept from the earth; his thoughtless extravagance impoverished his people, and years after a neighboring king invaded his capital, carrying away his golden shields; but it mattered little to Solomon. His own hands wrote on all his splendor, vanity and nothingness. His and our real kingdom lie beyond this life, far more glorious, costly, and enduring than that of the Hebrew monarch. But we cannot see it, and our hearts are apt to give little heed to things beyond our sight. There is danger that we, like many others, lose our kingdom. God has so planned that one day in seven the machinery of this busy world stands still. There is a lull in the tumult; bells ring out from church towers where spires are ever pointing upward, and we are admonished of our high possible destiny—our future home. This rest is the Sabbath, and in the Sabbath-school the poorest child in the land may learn to choose that which will raise him to a throne which shall last when all the kingdoms of earth have passed away. A FEW CLEAR THINGS FOR LITTLE READERS.—It is very clear that if I never drink intoxicating liquors I shall never become a drunkard. It is very clear that if I never use intoxicating drinks I shall never be guilty of helping to make others drunkards. It is very clear that if I never go into drinking companies I shall escape many of the temptations and snares that are laid for the young. It is very clear that if I drink intoxicating liquor frequently I may learn to like it, and soon become a drunkard. It is very clear that all drunkards were once moderate drinkers, and only became drunkards by degrees. It is very clear that moderate drinking is the fountain from which all drunkness flows, the school in which all drunkards are trained. It is very clear that if there was no moderate drinking there would be no drunkness. It is very clear that if the drunkard would be reclaimed he must abstain from that which has made and that which keeps him a drunkard.—Temperance Banner.

CHILDREN'S CORNER.

A WEEK-DAY "SUNDAY SICKNESS." BY C. S. One day Willie was attacked by a most curious kind of head-ache, which seemed worse just before school-time, and decreased rapidly towards noon, and appeared again about two o'clock. He had been much subject to like attacks before, and his mother desired to prevent them in the future, as they were growing upon him, and were quite a hindrance to his education. He was sitting in the big arm-chair, looking very disconsolate, when his mother entered the room. "Come, Willie," said she, "you'll be very late to school if you don't hurry." "Oh, mother, I've got an awful head-ache, and feel almost sick." "Indeed! I'm sorry; I'll go right up and get my castor-oil, and then put you to bed." "O, I guess I ain't sick enough to take medicine or go to bed," said Willie, looking a little brighter, but not entirely recovered. "Well, then, I'll wrap you up in my big shawl, and let you sit by the fire. You can study your lesson and recite it to me." "Don't you think it would do me good to run up and see Johnny a little while, mother? I need the fresh air." He looked longingly out through the open door, where the old dog was dozing in the warm sunshine; over the green fields, where the cows and the little glossy colt were moving about. The birds were singing, and everything seemed happy. But these were not for him. He was an invalid, confined to a warm kitchen, and wrapped in a heavy shawl. How he did wish he had gone to school. He had not thought his mother would take his plea of sickness in such a serious manner. "I can't study," he said, at last, looking up; "all my books are at school; I didn't know I was going to be at home." "You needn't worry, if that's all," said the mother, "I remember seeing an old speller in the attic a few days ago." "I'm afraid it'll be too old. Just as likely as not half the words will be spelt wrong, and I shall have to learn them all over again." "I don't believe it's very different from the one you use; I'll go up and look for it." "Can't I go?" cried Willie, eagerly, forgetting his headache. "No, my dear, you might catch cold. Sit still, and I will get it for you." So he settled back in his big chair, where he was ensconced, looking very much indeed like an invalid, enveloped in the great shawl, and with a pillow at his back. While he was alone, he could hear the voices of the children at play in their recess, coming faintly from the distance. Everything seemed to show that summer was at hand. How he longed to be out in the fields at play. When his mother came back with the speller his headache returned; so he passed his morning twisting about in his chair, and wishing for dinner-time to come. At noon one of his little friends came to see why he had been absent. "It's real nice to be a little sick, I wish I was," said the child, gazing wistfully at him, reclining at ease. "No. It's perfectly horrid. I will never, never be sick again." "But when are you coming back to school?" "This afternoon," cried Willie, decidedly. "I mean to go to school all my life, till I get to be an old man." "I should be very unwilling to have you go to school this afternoon. You will have to wait till you are perfectly well," said his mother, determined to make a sure cure. "O, mother, can't I please go? I don't feel sick at all now." The little friend, not understanding the situation, looked on in amazement, at seeing Willie openly avowing good health, and pleading for permission to go to school, denied that privilege. He wished that his mother would act in the same way. Willie had but a dreary afternoon of it, and was glad when night came. In the morning he was up bright and early, and as soon as his mother appeared he cried out,— "I can go to school to-day, can't I, mother?" "I'm afraid not," began his mother, when Willie broke in,— "Now, mother, I just must. I should go crazy to stay at home another day." Well, then, you must wear your thick overcoat, and remember to keep it buttoned up close, and don't run any, but walk quietly; you mustn't get sick again." Whenever, afterwards, Willie showed the slightest desire to stay away from school, his mother would say, "Willie, don't you feel well? You can stay at home with me to-day and rest, if you like;" but the invitation has never yet been accepted. So far, Willie has carried out his intention of "always going to school."—Watchman.

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