

YOUTH'S CORNER.

FABLE OF THE VIOLET.

On a sunny bank, covered with many kinds of grass and wild flowers, grew a tuft of purple violets. There were several blossoms on this tuft, and one was finer than the rest. They had a very snug place to blow in; the bank was sheltered from the cold wind by the hedgerow above it, and the long thick grass around cast a pleasant shade over them, even in the brightest part of the day.

April had nearly passed away, and the weather was warm and fine: very happy might these violets have been in their peaceful home; and so indeed they all were, excepting the one which was the most beautiful. She often felt discontented with her lot, and would peep out from amidst the waving grass, as much as she could, into the sunshine; by so doing she became a little faded, and lost some of her sweetness; but she did not know that.

"How dull it is to be shut up here!" she would say. "No one ever comes this way; how should they? There is no path by this stupid bank for them to walk on. I wish I had been placed any where else; perhaps some one would have noticed me then, and gathered me for a nosegay. I should have liked that of all things."

Her wish was soon granted. May-day came; and the children of the next village were busy, early in the morning, making up their garlands, or finishing those they had begun the day before. Some tied up the flowers, and some went into the lanes and hedgerows to gather more. One little girl came at length, with a large nosegay she had picked, to the bank where our violet grew, and seeing how handsome she was, gathered her also. At first the violet felt proud and happy at leaving her quiet home, and pleased herself with thinking how much she should be admired; but her happiness did not last long. When the little girl got back to the cottage where her companions were at work, she sat down on the kitchen floor, threw the flowers she had brought on the ground beside her, and began to tie them together as fast as she could. It was time the garland should be finished, and every one was in a great hurry.

Nobody noticed the violet; she was pushed about here and there, and no one seemed to think her worth having. She began to feel very angry and uncomfortable, but that did no good. At last, she was fastened to the garland with some other small flowers, and the children set off to carry it round the village.

Poor violet! She had her wish, and yet she was not happy. On the contrary, every moment made her more miserable. She was a good deal hurt and bruised, and felt very faint. What would she not have given now to be once again on the pleasant bank with her brothers and sisters; to feel once again the soft south wind amongst their leaves! Alas! her repentance came too late. Her slender stalk was soon broken by the rough handling of the children, and she dropped upon the road, where she was trodden under foot, and crushed to pieces by the next person who passed that way.

We should learn from this story of the violet to be contented, whatever our lot may be. We do not know what is really best for us; and should try to be thankful for the blessings we have, instead of wasting our time in wishing for those we have not. If discontented people had the very things they desire, they would still find something to complain of, and, if they spoke the truth, would confess that they were not really happier than they had been before.—*Children's Magazine.*

DYING WORDS OF A CHILD.

There was a little girl, about nine years old; connected with a school similar to my own, who had been brought up from the age of three or four years, learning the Bible, and nothing else, as an instrument of religious instruction. She awoke one night at midnight, and called to her father who was sleeping in an adjoining bed, "Father, will you get up and read to me?" He arose and said, "What shall I read, my dear?" "Oh read me the 10th chapter of St. John, that sweet chapter that tells about Jesus being a Shepherd and loving his sheep." He read it to her. She then said, "My father, will you pray for me?" He knelt down, and prayed for her. He thought there was some impression upon her mind, but hardly knew what it was. He had scarcely lain down to rest again, before the same sweet voice cried, "Father, won't you get up and read for me again?" "What shall I read you, my dear?" "Oh, read me the 26th and 27th chapters of Matthew." "Why shall I read them, my child?" asked the father. "Oh, because they tell me of the sufferings of my dear Saviour; I want to hear about them." "When he had read them, she said, "My father, will you pray for me again?" The father told her (for it was he who gave me the account) "I began to be afraid lest she should be resting upon me, rather than on the arm of Christ; and I said, 'My child, I am afraid you are trusting to your father to be your Saviour.' "Oh, father, how can I? It is not written 'All we, like sheep, have

gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.'" That was the last sound the little girl uttered. She was immediately seized with cramp, and in a few hours her spirit was in another world.—*Rev. Dr. Tynng of Philadelphia.*

TABLE TALK.

In the evening of a warm day in the latter part of October, 1518, the farmer who occupied the solitary house, surrounded by fields and meadows, in a certain small valley watered by the Altmühl, on the road between Augsburg and Nuremberg, was leaning against his door-post, while his wife sat on the bench close by, mending the children's clothes, and their two boys and one girl were chasing each other round the trees, giving each of them a good shake, so as to make the ripe plums fall and then to try which could pick them up quickest. But the pastime of the children, the woman's work, and the farmer's quiet look on the appearance of a monk in his black frock, riding a horse which a man led by the bridle, or rather dragged after him; for it seemed to be almost knocked up with a long day's journey. The farmhouse stood somewhat off from the main road, and was not the most likely place to be chosen by travellers for a night's rest. The practice, certainly, was common in those days, for the mendicant monks to go about collecting alms for their monasteries; and they found their way into the most retired corners of the neighbourhood, lest any should escape from giving; but the appearance of the guests this time was of quite a different kind: they carried no bag, and had evidently been urging on their way with a view to put as great a space as possible before night between themselves and the place they came from. The rider was not one of the sleek, well-fed kind of mendicants, but looked thin and care-worn, and fully as much fatigued as his beast. The worthy couple under whose roof the party sought rest and shelter, were eager to afford all the comfort and refreshment which they could provide. First of all they sought the blessing of the religious man, which the monk imparted with solemnity and feeling. He was then conducted to the large bed opposite the entrance to their best room: it was well fitted with cool straw-mattresses and bolsters, and their guest showed himself ready enough to stretch out his weary limbs upon it. But before he had untied his sandals, the little girl was at hand with a pail of water for him to bathe his feet in, which took off the dust, drew out the heat, and ensured the guest's repose and recovery of strength.

In the mean time, the good woman of the house had also made the logs in the large hearth to blaze up, her pan was hung on to one of the iron hooks, and soon most inviting music was heard from the butter, as it melted and bubbled over the fire; presently that tune was almost outdone by the odour of slices of bacon frying for the guests' supper. While these preparations in the dwellinghouse proved the hospitable intentions of the kind-hearted couple, the horse in the stable had no reason to complain. It neighed like a trumpet at the smell of the hay and the sound of the oats which the farmer put before it, though it evidently was no stranger to good fare neither; a charger fit to carry a knight of the sixteenth century in full armour. The good man of the house could not help wondering, and putting questions to the monk's guide; but he got no light upon the wherewithal—whither—and what—about of his unexpected visitor. Perhaps he would have become cross at the man's reserve, but the boys came to say that supper was ready, and the whole family, that is, the farmer and his wife and children, monk, guide, and farm-servants came in to sit round the strong oaken table in the middle of the best room. The bacon was set before the strangers, in order that there might be a difference, and a mark of hearty welcome; the family had their own substantial meal of bread-soup; and of brown bread there was an abundant supply for guests and family.

Now before they sat down to supper, they all looked for the monk in a great hurry to mumble grace in Latin, as the custom in those days was for priests to do: but they saw their guest step up to the table as light as a lark, first looking them all in the face with his great, piercing eyes; then as he folded his hands, he looked up towards heaven and asked a blessing upon the meat before them and those who were to partake of it, with great fervency in German. He sat down with them, and began to talk with wonderful grace and life, turning to profit every thing that passed at table or about the room, and telling many a striking story, so that the very children seemed to cling to him, and all the family were loath to rise from the table.

For instance, when he found the little girl so well behaved that she took nothing from her mother without saying "Thank you, good mother!" he said, "that is well done, little daughter; that you get yourself used to give thanks for what you receive; it is the way with us in the cloisters that we teach the young monks to say 'Blessed be God for all his gifts, how little soever the thing may be that is

given them. Now let it never be said of you, children, as the proverb hath it: 'One father will feed six children sooner than six children will nourish one father.' I will tell you how that saying became true in one sad case that I have heard of. There was a father who thought he might safely trust his children that they would nourish him, and so he divided among them every thing he had, house, lands, stuff, and money, staying with the oldest of his sons who would not take it kindly, he thought, if he were to remove from him. Well, one morning his son told him, 'Father, I have had a little son born to me last night, and I think wife will want the cradle to be put where your big arm-chair is now standing: my brother has a larger room than I, couldn't you go to live with him?' So the father went to live with his second son for a while, till that one told him, 'Father, you like to have a good, warm room to live in, and that heat gives me the head-ache; my brother, the baker's, would be just the place for you: hadn't you better go to live with him?' He went to stay with the baker, and it was not long before he was told, 'Father, it really grieves me to see you here, where customers are constantly going in and out, so that you can never have a good nap in the middle of the day: I wish you would try sister Kate's, adjoining the town-wall; hers is such a quiet place.' The old man began to be grieved at this usage from his sons, and he said to himself, 'Well, I must look to my daughters; woman's heart is soft and tender; they will be glad to nourish me.' When he had been a while with his daughter Kate, she began to complain that her anxiety for her poor father would wear her out, because the house was high, and the stairs were steep; if he should have a fall and hurt himself, she would have to reproach herself all her life-time: would it not be safer for him to live with Lisbet, whose dwelling was on the ground-floor? Of course, he must relieve her of her anxiety, and so he goes to stay with his fifth child, where he has no steps to go either up or down; but after she has had him for some time, she begins to be afraid that he is going to have a very bad rheumatism, living in such a damp place as hers, and she is sure there is not a drier house in town than her sister Lena's, the sexton's wife. With a heavy heart, he went to live with his youngest daughter; and now he kept only just to himself and the little children, lest some trouble spring up there also: but it was a few days only before his little grandson whispered to him that mother had been talking to aunt Lisbet, and telling her, the only good place for grandfather was such as he could have to himself quite alone, and as her husband was in the habit of digging. The child's whispering went like daggers to the poor old man's heart, so that he sank back in his arm-chair, and died: he had brought up six children, and the whole of them would not nourish their father."

To be continued.

CHRISTIAN CONSISTENCY.

The following singular fact proves how careful Christians should be to walk in wisdom towards them that are without (Col. iv. 5.) and how keenly alive the world, even the heathen, are to the inconsistencies of Christians.

At the city of Bejapoor, the missionary received a Hindoostance tract, written by a Mussulman, against the Christian religion, exhibiting a considerable acquaintance with the Scriptures, and with European Society; and founding, on the inconsistencies of Christians, an argument against the supreme claims of the Gospel. The missionary observes,— "The work contains strictures on balls, masquerades, and other fashionable amusements. Little, perhaps, do many professing Christians think that their conduct is so narrowly watched and keenly observed by many of the heathen, and that their inconsistencies form such a formidable obstacle to the spread of our holy religion.—*Friendly Visitor.*

FOUND AFTER MANY DAYS.

ECCLES. XI. 1.

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand." Were this more upon our mind and evidenced more in our daily walk, we should have doubtless much more reason to rejoice in conversions. We are so apt to think there is little use in instructing our servants or sending them to hear the Gospel. Kolhoff in the case we now refer to could little have foreseen how great a blessing would result from the conversion of the old woman mentioned in the following anecdote. It was related by the Bishop of Bombay coming to India on board the steamer from Gibraltar to Malta.

"Some year or two since (says the Bishop) he went with the Bishop of Calcutta on a tour of visitation through a part of his large diocese. On their way, they touched at Aurungabad, a city under Mahomedan rule, being a part of the Nizam's dominions, whose Imperial Court is stationed at Hyderabad. It so happened that the Nizam or a portion of his army were at this very time at Aurungabad. One morning while they were at breakfast, a man, who was a native of Hindostan, called, and begged that the

Bishop would attend the funeral of a deceased child. On learning that the parents of the child were Christians, they felt a strong desire to know how the parents of this child had embraced the Christian faith, as they were natives of India—they found that they were followers of the Nizam's camp. (All who were employed as servants in the families of the officers of this army were called followers of the camp.) The parents of this deceased child, together with some seventeen other persons connected in the same way with the camp, had not only embraced the Christian faith, but were in the habit of meeting regularly on Sundays by themselves for worship. After the funeral the whole company of these Christians met Bishop Wilson, and had a long interview with him. He then learned that they had never enjoyed the instruction of any missionary, or had an opportunity of conversing with any Protestant Christian. Their ancestors lived in a part of India where some of the inhabitants had been led to abandon Pagan idolatry, and embrace the Roman Catholic faith, and they among their number. Educated in this faith, they grew up decided Papists in their views and feelings, not even knowing that there was any other or purer form of Christianity. After having joined the camp, they often felt deep convictions of sin, and were led day after day to prostrate themselves before crucifixes, images, and pictures, in order to sooth a disturbed conscience. There was an old woman attached to the camp, acting in the same capacity with themselves, as a domestic in some officer's family, who had formerly resided at Madras, and had been instructed by Kolhoff, or some of the missionaries connected with that station. She had a copy of the sacred Scriptures which she was constantly reading, and she used to remark to these persons, that there was nothing in the Bible about transubstantiation, or kneeling before images, or perpetually crossing one's-self, and that these things could never bring peace to the troubled mind. To satisfy them of the truth of what she said, she proposed to read the Scriptures to them, which she did from that time. The result was, that they became convinced that they were in error, and resolved to gather their creed from the Bible. They obtained a copy of the New Testament in the Tamul language, and met together regularly to hear it read. After awhile there providentially fell in their way a copy of the Prayer-book in the Tamul tongue, which had been published by Bishop Heber. Having appointed one of their number as a reader, they now had worship regularly, according to the order of the Prayer-book on Sundays.—*Friendly Visitor.*

THE BIBLE IN THE MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOLS.

We cannot conclude this communication, without referring to a subject of vital interest, not only to the prosperity of all our institutions of learning, but to the welfare, also, of all the children in the Commonwealth. We refer to the importance of cultivating, as well the moral and religious, as the intellectual faculties of our children, by the frequent and careful perusal of the sacred Scriptures, in our schools.

It is gratifying to the Board to be able to announce that, so far as there was reason for desiring a change in regard to the use of the Bible in our schools, the change which has taken place within the last few years is a favourable one. In one of the early Reports of the Secretary, after careful inquiry on his part, the fact was communicated to the Board and the public, that the Bible was then used in almost all the schools, either as a devotional or as a reading book. But there were exceptions. From inquiries, however, which have been made by the Secretary during the present year, it now appears, that, of the 308 cities and towns in the Commonwealth, it is used in the schools of 258 towns, as a regular reading book, prescribed by the school committees; and that, in the schools of 38 towns, it is used, either as a reading book, or in the exercises of devotion. From nine of the remaining towns no answers were received,—and, in the schools of three towns only, it is found not to be used at all.

By the direction of the Board, it has been in daily use in all the Normal Schools, from their commencement, and it is believed that it is used, in like manner, in all our Academies.

While we rejoice at the change which has taken place, in this respect, the fact, that there is a single institution of learning, in the peculiar home of the Pilgrims, where the light of the Bible is excluded from the minds of its pupils, is a ground of serious apprehension and regret. While the Christian world is sub-divided into such a variety of religious sects, it is to be expected that their jealousies would be excited, by sectarian instruction, or by the introduction of books of a denominational character. And, indeed, as well in the present state of public opinion, as of the enactments of our Legislature, that teacher would act strangely in "contravention of his duty, who should attempt to disregard such a well-understood, and beneficial provision of the laws. But the Bible has nothing in it of a sectarian character. All Christian sects regard it as the text-book of their faith. Our fathers brought it with them, as their

choicest patrimony, and bequeathed it to us, as our richest inheritance. They imbued their children with its spirit. They founded our Government upon its principles; and, to render that Government permanent, they established the institution of the Common School, as the nursery of piety.—*Report of the Board of Education, December, 1844.*

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