

Who Bids for the Children.

BY L. A. OBBAR.

Not children of colour; in slave-days,  
These grouped by the auctioneer's  
stand,  
But children of every nation,—  
Children of every land,  
"Who bids? who bids for the children?  
The world will soon be their own,  
From the labourer who digs in the  
ditches,  
To the monarch who sits on the throne,  
None but will give place to the children,  
As he lays by his shovel or crown."

Then a man in his Maker's image,  
Rose up with a brimming bowl,  
And cried, "I bid for the children—  
Bid for them body and soul;  
In behalf of Jatan's kingdom,  
With its stains, and guilt, and crime,  
I will lead them into the darkness,  
Through lanes of sin and slime."

Then up rose temperance workers:  
A man with a kingly air;  
And—each bearing a glass of water—  
A woman sweet and fair.  
"We bid! we bid for the children!  
In behalf of the kingdom of Light,  
From the siren snare of the tempter  
We will lead them out from the night."

"By paths full of life's sweetness,  
By rivers deep and broad,  
They shall walk in ways of honour,  
By the arch-fiend never trod.  
And when we rest from labour,  
And the world becomes their own,  
They who fought as temperance children,  
Shall cast down Bacchus' throne."

A Methodist Soldier

BY

ALLAN-A-DALE.

CHAPTER VIII.

I ENLIST.

Strange and interesting to my raw country senses were the first hours in Winchester. The sight of so many people and so much bustle and confusion was almost bewildering. The following day a great fair opened, and the country folk, anticipating a lively week-end on account of the presence of so many soldiers in the city, had been pouring in all day from ten and twenty miles round. We were fortunate indeed in finding lodgings under the roof of Mr. Ullathorne's friends, for every inn in the place was full.

As Farmer Dunn drove his market-cart slowly down the High Street I had leisure to notice the young people of the city, decked out in their best and making a brave show in my eyes, though the smartest of these were quite eclipsed by the gay colours of the soldiery, of whom there were then more than two thousand quartered in the barracks. While the city people were full of the fair, the soldiers had their own reason for excitement. For weeks past it had been rumoured that British troops were to be sent to the Continent to share in a new campaign against Napoleon. Every day battalions had been marching into Winchester from other depots, making up the strength of regiments which expected to be sent shortly on foreign service, and incessant had been the drilling and small-arms practice of the men at the parade ground.

While we were making our way down the crowded High Street a company of three hundred men came swinging along, dusty and travel-stained, but with drum and fife playing a merry tune and waking the echoes of the old city. The crowds parted readily enough, though the sight was too common for them to pay further attention. It was a far different matter for me. For the first time I saw a disciplined body of soldiers fully equipped. The spark of martial enthusiasm which had been steadily growing brighter in me all that day now kindled to a big flame. How I envied the officers riding at the head of the company, and even the men, stained as they were after their long day's march. Well, it was not long before I made one of such a marching company, and, heigh-ho! many's the time I wished my feet were on the soft turf of Hampshire downs, instead of keeping step on the hard roads of Spain.

Soundly enough we slept that night, waking next morning to the music of bugle calls from the barracks. Breakfast over, we wasted no time in despatching our business, for Mr. Ullathorne was anxious to preach that afternoon to the crowds on the fair ground, and wished

to see me first through the ordeal of enlistment.

So, together, three of us went up to the great barracks, and ascending by the broad path from the gate, came at length to the main building. Here we were asked our business, and directed to an old hall, standing apart on the west side. Later I learned that this ancient building, in which I took my oath to serve his Majesty, was once the chapel of the castle which Oliver Cromwell leveled to the ground, to make way later for the grand mansion of Charles II., and then for the barracks themselves. In this old chapel the assize court of late years had been held, and here also we were told we should find the magistrate ready to swear in recruits.

It was all over sooner than I had expected. The magistrate sat at a table on a raised platform at one end of the room with an officer beside him. Above their heads hung a wooden canopy, once, so legend said, the round table at which sat King Arthur and his knights. Several officers were lounging about the hall, and in one corner stood a group of countrymen under the charge of two or three sergeants. Like myself, they were waiting to be sworn in; but from the sulky appearance of some, I judged that not all had come there as willingly, or truth to say, as soberly as myself. Later I found that not a few of them had "taken the shilling" overnight, little knowing what they were doing, and now regretted their position.

One of these recruits, a big and powerful man, whose head was tied up in a coloured handkerchief, was apparently in the custody of two soldiers, and was less willing to enlist than his comrades, for he made a great disturbance when his turn came to be examined, and swore he had been knocked on the head and pressed against his will. It was doubtless true, but his Majesty was too much in need of men for his officers to be particular how they got them, and so the man's protest was of no avail, and under threat of imprisonment he took the oath with the rest of us. When my turn came the officer was pleased to say that I was a likely sort of a lad, and, being in good humour at finding one genuine volunteer at least in the batch, gave me my liberty for twenty-four hours, with strict injunctions not to get drunk on the bounty money—as most of them unfortunately did.

"'Twas not so terrible, Jim," said my father, as we came away. "Thou bore thyself like a man. I'm glad my son went willingly and not like that poor fellow with the cloths about his head."

"I would we were rid of such methods of enlisting men for his Majesty's service," said the minister. "With what an ill-grace he took the oath. It is a constant marvel to me how loyal our men are, and how well they fight, seeing the manner in which so many are recruited. But I assure you that is nothing to the sights one can see in our seaport towns when the press-gang is at work. If a man have even the look of a sailor, no matter what his occupation, they would impress him into the service, tearing often the husband from his wife, and the father from his family. Truly the horrors of war are not confined to the battle-field."

At the market-square we parted company, Mr. Ullathorne went in one direction to visit the scattered members of his flock, while my father and I wandered in another, looking with unaccustomed eyes on the sights of the city.

(To be continued.)

THE FOOLISH ROSE.

While I was walking in the garden one bright morning a breeze came through and set all the flowers and leaves a-flutter. Now that is the way flowers talk, so I pricked up my ears and listened.

Presently an elder tree said, "Flowers, shake off your caterpillars."

"Why?" said a dozen, all together, for they were like some children who always say "Why?" when they are told to do anything.

The elder said, "If you don't, they'll gobble you up!"

So the flowers set themselves a-shaking till the caterpillars were shaken off.

In one of the middle beds there was a beautiful rose who shook off all but one, and she said to herself: "Oh, that's a beauty. I'll keep that one."

The elder overheard her and called "One caterpillar is enough to spoil you."

"But," said the rose, look at his brown and crimson fur, and his beautiful black eyes, and scores of little feet. I want to keep him. Surely one won't hurt me."

A few mornings after I passed the rose again. There was not a whole leaf on her; her beauty was gone; she was all but

killed and had only life enough to weep over her folly, while the tears stood like dewdrops on the tattered leaves.

"Alas! I didn't think one caterpillar would ruin me."

One sin indulged has ruined many a boy and girl. This is an old story, but a true lesson.

ROMAN AQUEDUCTS.

In all the ages the greatest achievements of civil engineering have been in the construction of aqueducts. Ruins of herculean works are found all over the world; but the Romans outdid all other nations in the art of bringing pure water from the distant mountains.

At one time there were twenty-four aqueducts, some of them with several channels placed one above another on the massive arches, bringing from the hills, and daily emptying into the city, fifty million cubic feet of water.

They twisted about through the mountains, gradually dropping down. Sometimes the water ran through tunnels bored through the mountains; sometimes it was carried in channels lifted high in the air, upon great arches. One of the channels, for more than six miles, was supported by arches a hundred feet high. In another, sixty-three miles in length, there were seven thousand arches.

There were openings for ventilation all the way, and frequent catch basins, into which all the sediment sank, so that when it reached the city the water was even purer than when it left the hills.

There are only three aqueducts at present in use in Rome, but the ruins of ancient aqueducts fill the valley about the city, and there is nothing, even in history, that gives one a better idea of the colossal proportions of the Imperial City in those days when to be a Roman was greater than to be a king.

ICE-HARVESTING.

BY CONSTANCE CONRAD.

Scattered at frequent intervals along the river bank are the great ice houses of the Hudson—square, frame structures of mammoth size—for the most part painted white, with their fields of ice marked out, for convenience, as near them as possible. Some of these ice fields are bordered by beautiful rows of small evergreens, giving an artistic appearance to the river landscape. Others are marked about with leafless branches of trees, or still more prosaic pine railings. But within each field, be it lined with evergreens, bare twigs, or pine boards, is a busy scene. As far as eye can reach the ice is dotted with the black figures of men and horses.

A nearer view gives the first work done toward an ice harvest. Walking slowly up and down a field of ice, the ice man is an ice plough, long and straight, and furnished with sharp teeth, that slowly and steadily saw the ice as they go. Up and down he tramps, his saw sinking deeper each time. Working in the same field, on different lines, are other ice ploughs, so that soon a wide field is marked off, as perfectly as a checker board, into even squares, averaging "thirty-two by twenty-two," as the ice men say, and as thick as zero weather and no thaws can freeze it—nine, twelve, or fifteen inches.

The perfect accuracy in the size and shape of each square seems impossible to even a well-trained eye, but the man with the plough stops long enough to say that all the fields are first marked with a square, and then blocked off by a marker with a guide attached, just thirty-two inches away. The man with the plough follows his mark till he has sawed half through the lines, and then he, in turn is followed by another worker with a large handsaw, with which he saws entirely around and through a small field of ice, often six by ten blocks. As soon as this field is detached it is floated into a canal slightly wider than itself, and begins its journey to the ice house.

These canals are long, open stretches of water, growing steadily narrower, till at the ice house they only accommodate the width of one cake. The length of the canals is governed by the distance necessary to float the ice. When a broad canal is long, it is very necessary that it should be kept open. All day long the constant motion of its surface, produced by the floating cakes, accomplishes the desired end, but on the coldest nights, when the thermometer drops below zero, the canal would become solid ice again, did not a man walk up and down its icy banks all night long, stirring the water with his pole.

To the dwellers on the river bank, the solitary walker, with only the moon and stars or his twinkling lights on a dark

night for company, and the vast frozen world about him, seems an eerie personage as he passes in and out of the shadow of the shore. A sudden thankfulness for warmth and light, and a very human pity for the people who carry the hard ends of life to insure us our comforts, follow the retreating figure of the man who troubles the waters while we sleep.

Visitors to the ice fields often enter a sail on a large floating cake, which the harvesters move with their long poles close to the firm ice, that the voyager may step on without wetting his feet. Quite as safe as a summer steamboat or yacht, with no engine or sail or rudder, the ice cake floats steadily on its way, with only an occasional push from the men with the hooks along its course, till it reaches and passes under a narrow wooden footbridge built over the canal.

On this stand three men, each equipped with a chisel or ring bar. This last is a long, heavy iron bar, named for either end, the large round ring used as a handle, or the broad, sharp chisel-like working end. With their backs to the approaching ice, in even line, they watch for the first row of ice cakes to emerge from the bridge under their feet. When the line is close in sight, down come the three chisel bars simultaneously, and almost as certainly the line of six ice blocks part from the large cake, while another line follows in quick succession.

A short distance further on the canal divides itself into two narrow branches leading to the different runs of the ice house. Into these narrow canals the single lines of cakes are guided by men who snap them apart, while others push them forward with their long hooks. And now the ice cakes have almost reached their destination. At the ends of the smaller canals are the runs from the ice house, long revolving chains and frames, stretching in a steep inclined plane from the open doors of the ice house to the river below, carrying cake after cake up, up, up, till it disappears within the great building, where it is packed away for summer use. As one long line of cakes ascends, an empty frame returns and is reloaded, forming an unending stream of crystal cakes, borne to their destination by the power of the great engine in the room below.

AFRAID OF HER MOTHER.

Little Jessie, only four and a half years old, had been three months at the Children's Home when her mother came to her; but instead of running to meet her, the poor child clung to the deaconess, trembling, and crying, "I ain't going with her! I ain't going with her!" It was only with much coaxing and the promise that she should not be taken away that the mother won her child to come near her.

Another day Jessie was greatly excited with the promise of a trip to the city with a friend. As the deaconess was putting on a clean dress for the journey she said jokingly, "You will come back to us, won't you?" It was enough. The bare suggestion seemed to fill the childish heart with terror, and she declared with tears that she would not go at all. She was finally comforted with the knowledge that Miss J— was "only joking," and that she should "surely, surely come back," and confidence was restored. But how cruel must have been the experiences that taught that sensitive baby heart to forget the instincts of childhood and regard its own mother as an enemy, to be shunned and feared.

The Snow Flakes.

Floating, whirling, drifting,  
Strange little specks come down—  
Dainty, fairy crystals,  
From a distant wonder town,  
Out of the dim cloud spaces  
That seem so soft and gray;  
Are they dust from diamond blossoms  
That grow where storm winds play?

I learned a pretty lesson  
From the little flying flakes;  
One, added to another,  
At last a worldful makes,  
They are like the little minutes,  
Easy to waste, indeed,  
But thousands put together  
Will give us all we need.

A little girl who is just learning to read short words, takes great interest in the big letters she sees in the newspapers. The other evening, after she had kept her mamma busy reading the advertisements in the newspaper to her, she knelt down to say her prayers. "Lord," she lisped, "make me pure!" Then she hesitated, and went on with added fervour a moment later, "Make me absolutely pure like bakin' powder!"