

RETURN OF THE VOLUNTEERS.

**R**ING out O bells, ye cannot drown  
The echoing glad hooray  
From thousand swelling throats that tell,  
Our boys come home to-day.

They come from goary battle-fields,  
Brave lads and gallant they;  
The city's heart is in the cry,  
Our boys come home to-day.

Beneath the flag so bravely borne  
In many a bloody fray,  
Up through the old familiar streets,  
Our boys come home to-day.

And if through sudden tears our eyes  
See not the glad array,  
Each heart-beat tells the joyous tale—  
Our boys come home to-day.

We thought to make a noble show,  
A lordly pageant gay;  
But we only think and feel  
Our boys come home to-day.

No silver-throated orator  
Such stirring words could say  
As those that fall from every lip—  
Our boys come home to-day.

(Not all our honoured gallant dead  
Again have led the way;  
Where rebel bullets sped, their souls  
Went home to God that day.)

A hundred years from now, some yet  
Unborn Macaulay may  
In glowing ardent words tell how  
Our boys come home to-day.

Then ring; ye cannot drown, O bells,  
The echoing wild hooray  
From myr ad swelling throats that tell  
Our boys come home to-day.

HOW GOD TEACHES THE BIRDS.

BY HELEN A. BIRDBALL.

On the Island of Java grows a tree, the leaves of which are said to be deadly poison to all venomous reptiles. The odor of the leaf is so offensive to the whole snake family that if they come near them in their travels they immediately turn about and take an opposite direction.

A traveller on the island noticed one day a peculiar fluttering and a cry of distress from a bird high above his head. Looking up, he saw a mother-bird hovering around a nest of little ones in such a frightened and perplexed manner as caused him to stop and examine into the trouble. Going around to the other side of the tree, he found a large snake climbing up the tree, in the direction of the little nest.

It was beyond his reach, and as he could not help the little feathered songster by dealing a death-blow he sat down to see the result of the attack. Soon the piteous cry of the bird ceased, and he thought, "Can it be possible she has left her young to their fate, and has flown away to seek her own safety?"

No, for again he heard a fluttering of wings, and, looking up, saw her fly into the tree with a large leaf from this tree of poison, and carefully spread it over her little ones. Then, alighting on a branch high above her nest, she quietly watched the approach of her enemy. His ugly, writhing body crept slowly along; nearer and still nearer, until within a foot of the nest he opened his mouth to take in his dainty little breakfast, when down he went to the ground, as suddenly as though a bullet had gone through his head, and hurried off into the jungle beyond.

The little birdies were unharmed; and as the mother-bird flew down and spread her wings over them, the poison leaf (poison only to the snake) fell at

the feet of the traveller, and he felt, as he never did before, the force and sweetness of the beautiful words, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, yet not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father"—for who but he, who made the dear little birds, could have told this one the power there was in this leaf!

Dear children, you may learn from this true story that the only safe place for you is under the loving wing of our heavenly Father, and then, when that Great Serpent, whose name is Sin and Satan, is slyly creeping around, he shall have no power to hurt you.

A SAFE HOUSE TO SLEEP IN.

A LAWYER, of high reputation in the city of Philadelphia, was travelling in one of the Southern States, and, being belated one evening, after a long day's ride, he was compelled to turn into a house on a solitary plantation, and ask for shelter and hospitality for the night. His request was granted. In the course of the evening, he thought he observed something reserved in the master of the house, which awakened his suspicions. He was at length conducted to his chamber, which was adjoining the family room. There he dwelt on the circumstances which had alarmed him, till his excited imagination was filled with thoughts of nightly robbery and assassination. He proceeded to barricade the room as well as he could. He fastened down the windows; against the doors he piled up tables, chairs, everything that was movable in the room. While thus engaged, words uttered in a low voice caught his ear and increased his alarm. He placed his ear at the key-hole. The man of the house was engaged in prayer—in family prayer. Among other objects of intercession, he was praying for "the stranger whom the providence of God had unexpectedly brought to lodge beneath their roof that night." When he got through, our travelling friend arose from his stooping posture. Imagine the change in his feelings. All his fears had vanished. Though no Christian himself, he knew that the prayers of Christians are like guardian angels to the abode in which they are offered up; and went to bed, and slept soundly and sweetly, feeling that the house where God was feared and worshipped was a safe house to sleep in.

THE TWO PURSES.

ONE for the Lord and one for myself. Let every one provide two purses or boxes or banks, made of no matter what, and no matter where. Only be sure to have two places for money, one of which shall be consecrated to the Lord and the other for personal and business purpose.

A young lady said to her father, "I would like to put something into the box as it is passed around on the Sabbath."

Her father willingly gave her part of his donation, and thus she added the influence of her example to the custom, but nothing to the increase of the collection. This did not satisfy her, for she wanted to give something of her own. She had positively of her own only about six or eight dollars yearly of interest money on a small invested capital. This she had been accustomed to use for Christmas and birthday gifts among her friends.

She resolved to have two purses and put into one, for the Lord, at least one-tenth of her income. Although it made but a small sum, she had more satisfaction in giving than ever before. But the delightful part came when from one cause and another, wholly unexpected, she received the next year a far greater sum for her own disposal than she had ever had before, and a good portion of it went into the Lord's purse.

"I never think of touching what is in the Lord's purse for any but religious purposes," said she, "and never borrow from it for my own use. It is sacred to the Lord. It is in his purse, and I never enjoyed my money before as I do now."

Another young lady who was listening said,

"I also keep two purses, and conscientiously put one-tenth of all I receive into the Lord's purse. It is not much, but I am glad to do it, and in consequence always have a little money ready for every good cause."

Ah! it is a good way—it is a right way. If you have not tried it, begin now, and learn its blessedness by your own experience.—*Christian Giver.*

THE ARMOR-CLAD KNIGHT.

THE knight of the olden time, armed *cap a pie* from head to foot, and holding aloft his battle-ax as he rushed into the thick of the fight, was a being to be feared and dreaded. How could a tender heart beat under that coat of mail! How could the hand that held the battle-ax be a loving hand to caress and comfort!

We must not forget that life was very different in those far back days from what it is now. Then war was the great business. To be a brave knight was almost to be a perfect man, and to spend one's life in fighting foes was grand and noble indeed!

All that is changed now, but only in the outer sense. It remains true that life is a battle-field and we are soldiers, but if we know the Lord of battles we find our most real foes within, and the armor that we need and wear is not an armor of brass or iron. We are fast learning that "he that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city," and the conquests over men and armies are coming to look small in comparison with the more difficult conquest of self. When the day comes that the lesson is fully learned, then will the day of peace have really dawned upon our troubled earth.

It is not a small thing to be a true knight. It takes courage to fight against wrongs that are so popular as to have lost their true character in the eyes of the world. The young man who holds himself aloof from the temptations of the day needs strength and will. The young woman who will keep herself unspotted from the world must wear an armor of purity and of purpose as well.

The knight of old knew that danger lay fore him, and therefore clothed himself in mail. He would shelter every part, for he must meet a foe both strong and cunning, and what the battle-axe could not do the sharp-pointed spear might accomplish. Ah! the brave knight teaches us a lesson to-day. We may not leave open one little crevice here and another there to this or that indulgence. We must wear the armor of the Christian soldier throughout, if we would conquer.

Paul tells us what it is and where we may go to get it, and he tells us too, in ringing words, how safe and strong and every way blessed we shall be if we put it on and wear it.

THE FIRST FRUIT.

A LITTLE girl was once made the owner of the grapes upon a large vine in her father's yard. Very anxious was she that they should ripen and be fit to eat. The time came.

"Now for a feast," said her brother to her one morning, as he pulled some beautiful ones for her to eat.

"Yes," said she, "but they are the first ripe fruit."

"Well, what of that?"

"Dear father told me that he used to give God the first out of all the money he made, and that then he always felt happier in spending the rest; and I wish to give the first of my grapes to God, too."

"Ah, but," said her brother, "how can you give your grapes to God? And even if you were able to do such a thing he would not care for them."

"Oh, I have found out the way," she said. "Jesus said, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me;' and I mean to go with them to Mrs. Martin's sick child, who never sees grapes, because her mother is too poor to buy them."

And away ran this little girl with a large basket of the "first fruit" of the vine, and other good things, all beautifully arranged, to the couch of the sick child.

"I have brought Mary some ripe fruit," she said to Mrs. Martin.

"Dearest child, may God bless you a thousandfold for your loving gift! Here, Mary, see what a basket of good things has been brought you!"

The sick one was almost overcome with emotion as she clasped the hand of her young benefactress and expressed her sincere thanks.

WHY NOT I!

A FIRE once broke out at Trinity College, Cambridge, while a lecture was being delivered by one of the professors. The pupils rushed out and formed a line between the building and the river near by, passing buckets of water from one to another. The professor who followed them, found a delicate-looking lad at the end of the line, standing up to his waist in the water. "What!" he cried. "You in the water, Sterling! You are certain to take cold!"

"Somebody must be in it," replied the youth. "Why not I as well as another?"

This is a perfect illustration of the unselfish spirit which does not stop to ask if somebody else cannot do a hard thing that needs to be done, but goes at once and does it. It takes a generous and noble spirit to look past difficulty and danger to one's self, and, seeing the necessity which calls for immediate action, spring at once to the work.

It is a spirit worth striving for, and one which may be found in its perfection only in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Be careful of the books you read as of the company you keep; for your habits and character will be as much influenced by the former as the latter.