

## CHILDREN'S CORNER

### THE CHIEFEST DUTY.

One chiefest duty here below  
Is not the seeming great to do,  
That the vain world may pause to see;  
But in steadfast humility  
To walk the common walk, and bear  
The thousand things, the trifling care,  
In love, with wisdom, patiently.  
Thus each one in his narrow groove  
The great world nearer God may move.  
—MATTHEW HUNT.

### BALLAD OF VEGETABLES.

A potato went out on a mash  
And sought an onion bed;  
"That's pie for me!" observed the  
squash,  
And all the beets turned red.  
"Go 'way!" the onions weeping, cried;  
"Your love I cannot be;  
The pumpkin be your lawful bride—  
You cantaloupe with me.

But onward still the tuber came,  
And lay down at her feet;  
"You cauliflower by any name  
And it will smell as wheat;  
And I, too, am an early rose,  
And you I've come to see;  
So don't turnip your lovely nose,  
But spinachat with me."

"I do not carrot all to wed,  
So go, sir, if you please!"  
The modest onion meekly said,  
"And lettuce, pray have peas!  
Go, think that you have never seen  
Myself, or smelled my sigh;  
Too long a maiden I have been  
For favors in your rye!"

"Ah, spare a cuss!" the tuber prayed;  
"My cherryshd bride you'll be;  
You are the only weeping maid  
That's currant now with me!"  
And as the wily tuber spoke  
He caught her by surprise,  
And, giving her an artichoke,  
Devoured her with his eyes.  
—Philadelphia Record.

### REMBRANDT VAN RYN.

On the 15th of July just three hundred years ago Rembrandt was born. The home of his birth was a comfortable house on the ramparts of Leyden in Holland. The father was a miller in prosperous circumstances. Four of this man's sons willingly followed their father's example and became tradesmen. The fifth had no commercial

talent; he was no student either. His weapon was the brush. Contrary to all established rules this father did not insist upon this son following the course desired by the parent, but seeing the bent of the lad's desire showed no opposition to the development of the talent which he possessed. The old man's hope was that his son when he "came of age might serve the city and the republic with his knowledge." He has served the world.

Rembrandt left school while still in his teens and entered the studio of Swaneburch, under whose very ordinary teaching he remained for three years. Then he left home for the first time to take a course of training under the great teacher Lastman in Amsterdam. He remained there but six months and then returned to Leyden ready for work. There was plenty of work too, along the line in which he excelled—portrait painting; for the Dutch of that period were wealthy and home-loving, and the taste of the citizen in painting was for a good portrait of himself, wife or children to hang upon the walls of his home.

Rembrandt practised his art by reproducing his own features as shown in the mirror. His was a striking looking face and many reproductions of it are left to us. Whatever the dress or surroundings it is always the same face, eager, passionate, with intense eyes and contracted brow, yet with a confidence in power to win success.

Soon another face became the subject of his skillful hand. He had loved for many years Saskia van Uylenborch and his heart was in the pleasurable task of transferring to canvas her charming if irregular face with its fair soft coloring. Only twice before their marriage in 1634, but many times during their life together she was his model. Her dearly-loved face looks out from many canvases—"The Jewish Bride," "Bathsheba," "Queen Artemisia;" and some twenty portraits of her yet remain in European galleries.

With his Saskia, his happy home, his successful work, and later his little son, Titus, the cup of Rembrandt's happiness was filled to the brim. The money so abundantly earned was lavished upon wife and child, and many a needy stranger felt the uplift of his generosity. But the sun of his happy life was near its setting. The first grief, and one whose severity kept him from feeling the full force of those which it preceded,



THE BACHELOR.

was the lingering illness and death of Saskia his wife in 1642. The world was left empty for him. Always of a retiring nature, he withdrew now almost entirely from the public eye, but devoted himself more and more to his art. His work improved, but his pupils dropped off and orders came in more slowly. But there was now a tenderness and sympathy in his art that appealed because it was the outgrowth of his own acquaintance with grief. It is seen in the "Supper at Emmaus," the pictures of rabbis and old women, and in the portrait of himself—an old man in a dark cloak, sitting with folded hands, looking and looking and seeing nothing.

The money was gone, and debts were only paid by a sale of his house furnishings and a portfolio of valuable prints. He, with his son and their faithful companion, Hendrickje Stoffels, moved into a small house where he lived for almost ten years, during which time the companion slipped away, the son was taken by death in 1668, and the wearied old painter laid down his brush and followed them in 1669, leaving none behind to mourn the death of a genius whose gift was to depict the human of humanity as no other has been able to do.

### A TRAGEDY.

In the spreading branches of a maple tree which stands on one of our streets, a robin built her nest this year, and hatched her eggs. The four young robins were hungry little things from the first; almost before they were out of their shell, they demanded something to eat, and the mother had a busy time of it keeping them supplied with worms. Up and down the street she flew every day picking many a green worm from the trees just in time to prevent it from falling on the people passing below. Then back to the nest she would fly and poke it into the open mouths that always asked for more. Sometimes she flew around to the gardens, for there are always grubs on the young cabbage plants as every bird knows, and when the little birds saw her coming with a worm for them, they always got so excited and rose up so high in the nest, that they nearly fell out.

One day when she was flying across the road on her way to a garden she saw a big cut-worm making for the cabbage patch. She lit down beside it and was about to seize it when something happened!

A boy came down the street. The boy was feeling very good indeed. His parents had given him an air-rifle to shoot gophers with, and he had already shot four and wounded a great many. The red breast of the robin shone bright against the dark road, and as she turned to seize the cut-worm the boy fired. Her little wings fluttered and fluttered and when the boy picked her up by the feet crimson drops fell on the road. He tossed her into a back lane and went on his way flushed and happy. There she lay all the afternoon, fluttering and twitching in her death agony, while the cut-worms unmolested ate the cabbages.

All day long the four hungry little birds in the nest cheeped and cheeped and craned their long necks higher and higher; all day long, with mouths wide open, they watched and called for the mother who never came. Then the night came and the wind blew cold on the little featherless things who huddled together shivering in the bottom of the nest, cheeping still, but faintly now for the little sparks of life had almost gone out. When the morning sun shone warm into the nest two little birds were still cheeping. Then the sun rose higher and higher and blazed into the defenceless nest with blazing heat, and one little voice grew faint and dwindled away into silence. The last little bird the strongest of the four, tried again and again to raise his head for one more look for the mother who would never come, but the hot sun blinded him and each time he fell back with the others now silent in the bottom of the nest.

A bird flew in among the branches and the little one in the nest rose up with new strength and a great new hope as he felt the rush of her wings but she darted out again and up into the air singing as she went, and the little one fell back into the nest to rise no more. All through the long, hot afternoon he lay, on his back struggling and gasping, and it was not until the air grew chill with the approach of evening, that his struggles ceased, and his brave little heart grew still.

The boy's aim had been sure. The air-rifle had done its work. Five little bird-voices were silenced forever, and all earth was the poorer for it.

### COQUELIN'S SLEEP.

M. Coquelin, who is shortly returning to England, had an amusing experience on the occasion of his last visit to London. He was due to appear on a certain Monday night. To fulfill his engagement he had to travel from Vienna and only arrived in London a few hours before the performance commenced. Thoroughly exhausted, so tired, in fact, that in the second act of the play in question, in which he is supposed to go to sleep he went to sleep in earnest, and had to be aroused by vigorous prods from the back.

He was, as may be imagined, greatly annoyed at the time, but what consoled him, he says, was one of the notices in the paper next morning in which the writer, a young hyper-carping critic, complained that his slumber scene was obviously over-acted.

"How many lives," exclaims Dr. G. Adam Smith, "have lost their fertility for the want of a little silence and a little shadow!" Some righteous people have a terribly northeastern exposure; children do not play about their doors, nor the prodigal stop there. And, again, as there are a number of men and women who fall in struggling for virtue simply because they never see it successful in others, and the spectacle of one pure, heroic character would be their salvation, here is another way in which each servant of God may be a rock. Of the late Clerk Maxwell it was said: "He made faith in goodness easy to other men." "A man shall be as streams of water in a desert place."



IN SPITE OF THE WARNING.