

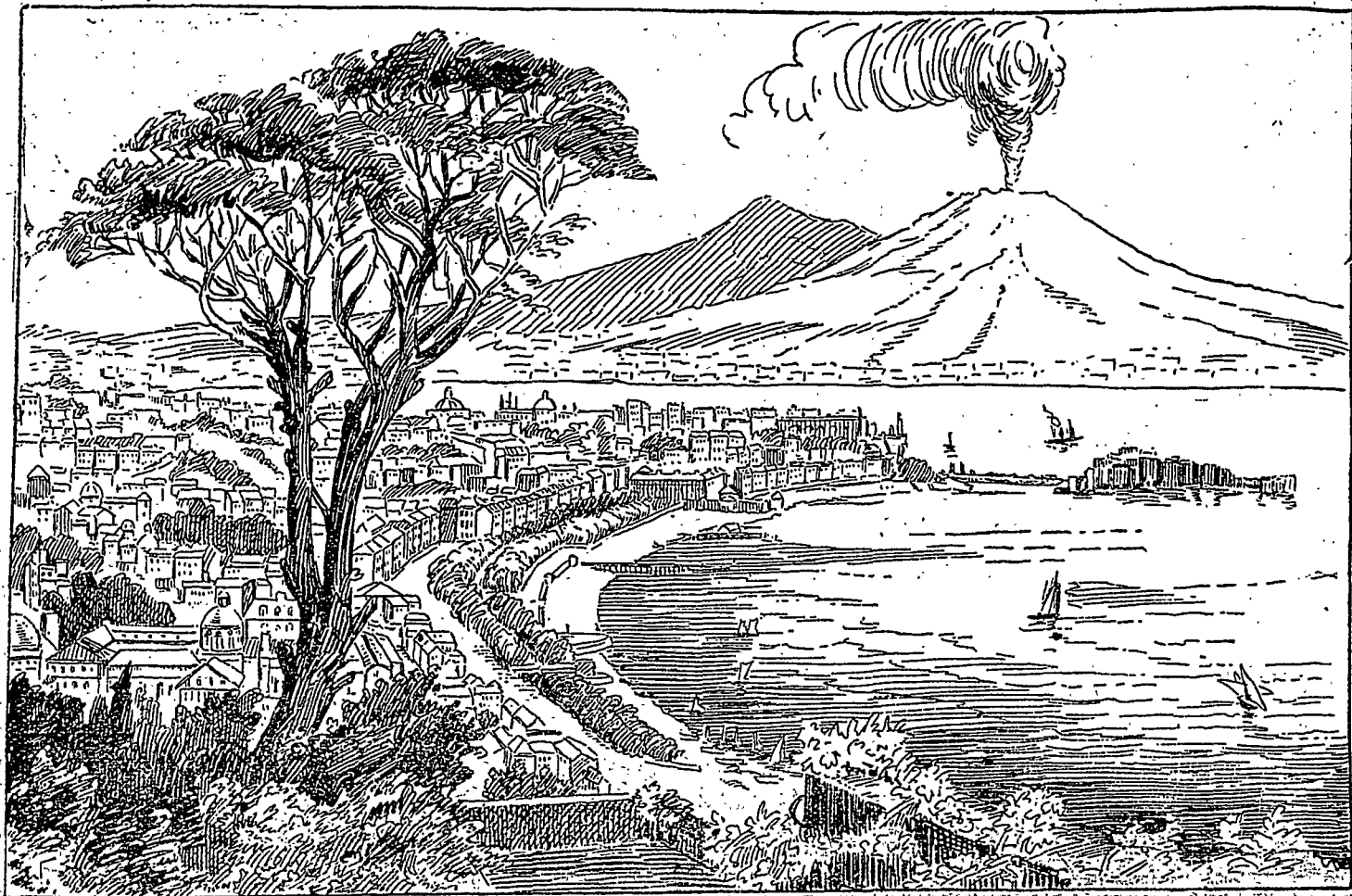
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THE BAY OF NAPLES—MOUNT VESUVIUS IN THE DISTANCE.

Who's Your Guide.

(‘Cottager and Artisan.’)

On July 1, 1891, two travellers from Brazil were sitting smoking on a terrace that looked out on that most lovely spot in Europe, the Bay of Naples. Suddenly one of them exclaimed to the other, ‘Come what may, I must go up there.’ As he spoke he pointed to Mount Vesuvius, which was in eruption at that time, and from the top of which flames and smoke were pouring forth. But the ascent could not be done without a guide, and not one of those who are licensed by the government to conduct people up to the mountain was at hand. But that difficulty was soon got over. A man was found who declared he knew the mountain as well as he knew his own house. And so off the three men started towards the top of Vesuvius, which was wrapped in vapor, smoke, and fire.

When not far from the top the man who had proposed the ascent asked the guide whether it would be safe to go on farther, so as to get near the edge of the crater from whence there were issuing smoke and burning lava. The guide told him he need not fear; many a traveller had gone nearer to the crater than they were at that moment, and that there was no danger. So on the man went, when suddenly, without the slightest warning, the ground under his feet opened, and in an instant he found himself falling headlong into a fearful chasm from which there came up suffocating fumes of sulphur.

Down the unfortunate wretch went, perishing in the flames and red-hot lava inside the mountain. The two other men were helpless. All they could do was to turn and flee down the mountain in terror, fearing lest the earth should open in the same way under their feet and swallow them up as it had done their companion.

A more ghastly and awful death than that which came upon that poor man on Vesuvius could not be imagined.

What verdict on the cause of his death could be given but this: He chose his own guide. That guide was incompetent and ignorant. Hence the result.

In other words, if a man chooses to follow a guide who leads him wrong he will have to put up with the consequences.

For instance, a man takes for his leader an infidel or atheist. That man's end and doom will accordingly be that to which the following of such a leader leads. That man will not escape that doom by saying he was mistaken in his guide.

There is no such thing as the followers being excused because the leader they chose turns out to be incompetent and ignorant. Men think it very fine to call themselves followers of men who laugh at Christ and his words. Whether it be a fine thing to be a follower of such guides remains to be seen. When we know the exact doom to which the teaching of such guides brings men, then we shall be in a position to judge.

But do not forget that it will be too late then to say that you made a mistake and chose the wrong guide. We choose our

guides now; we get the consequence of that choice hereafter. God must be the safest guide. For he cannot be either ignorant or incompetent. He promises to guide us with his counsel now; and after that to receive us into glory. Can the infidel leader do as much as that for us?

Learning Together.

(By Ellen E. Kenyon Warner, in ‘Canada Educational Monthly.’)

‘What can your children spell?’ asked the superintendent in the first room. The teacher glibly answered, ‘The Primer words to page 47, the days of the week, the months of the year, the twelve most common first names in the class, the seven colors, the four seasons, and this list of opposites—sweet, sour, hot, cold.’

The examiner tried them. They popped up in rows and jerked out their letters and syllables with such startling celerity that the examiner was beset by nervous doubt of his ability to give out words fast enough for them. He put on his best gallop, however, and in an incredibly short time, the last little speller had dropped into his seat. Only six out of the fifty children had ‘missed,’ and in four of these cases, the ‘next’ had caught up the word and rattled off its orthography before the examiner could be quite sure it had been misspelled. Mentally out of breath, but seeing in the gaze of the self-satisfied class that immediate and complimentary comment upon their performance was expected, he said under his breath,