



QUESTIONS.

Can you put the spider's web back in place  
That once has been swept away?  
Can you put the apple again on the bough  
Which fell at our feet to-day?  
Can you put the lily-cup back on the stem,  
And cause it to live and grow?  
Can you mend the butterfly's broken wing  
That you crushed with a hasty blow?  
Can you put the bloom again on the grape,  
And the grape again on the vine?  
Can you put the dewdrops back on the flowers,  
And make them sparkle and shine?  
Can you put the petals back on the rose?  
If you could, would it smell as sweet?  
Can you put the flour again in the husk,  
And show me the ripened wheat?  
Can you put the kernel again in the nut,  
Or the broken egg in the shell?  
Can you put the honey back in the comb,  
And cover with wax each cell?  
Can you put the perfume back in the vase  
When once it has sped away?  
Can you put the corn-silk back on the corn,  
Or down on the catkins? say.  
You think my questions are trifling, dear?  
Let me ask another one:  
Can a hasty word ever be unsaid,  
Or a deed unkind undone?  
—Wide Awake.

VEGETABLE NEEDLE AND THREAD.

A friend of mine, says a writer in *St. Nicholas*, who was travelling in Mexico not long since, says that across the Rio Grande where the maguey-plant, shown in the accompanying picture, grows wild, it is called the "needle-and-thread plant." The Indian boys search for it and, on finding one with dark-brown thorns, they grasp the thickened end, and, with a quick jerk, pull out the spines, or needles, with their sinewy fibres, or threads, attached.

In some varieties, these woody thorns crowd so closely upon one another that there is not more than an inch of space between any two, and the little copper-skinned native often pricks his fingers badly while gathering the sharp needles.

When they have collected a large quantity, they carry them home, and the mother hangs them on lines in front of the low adobe hut. After a few hours' exposure to the sun, the juice dries out, and the needles and threads are ready for use.

"At the railway stations near Monterey," says my friend, "I saw an interesting sight. On the floor were piles of cloth made from the coarser fibres of the maguey and woven in a loom of simplest device, similar to that in which the Chinese manufacture their matting.

"Here, in his leather costume, sat an Indian, folding bags in which pecan-nuts are exported to New York and other cities. Scattered around him were scores of these natural needles. He used them to join three sides of the bag with a sort of cross-stitch. They were then filled with the nuts, and closed at the top with a twine twisted from the same fibre."

How many vexations a little Mexican girl may be spared in making her doll's wardrobe by the use of this slender, eyeless needle, "not hard to pull through,"

and a thread that never comes out, because it has grown there, and will never twist nor get into a snarl! Kind Nature has supplied this half-civilized people, who are not ingenious enough to invent intricate machinery to produce these articles, with a needle that never breaks, already filled with many threads.

One of the most curious uses of this thread is the making of a hair-brush from it. The shape of the brush is like that of a curtain-tassel, and it is made from the fibres doubled over and tied around with a twine. Once a week the squaw has the task of combing her husband's long raven locks with this brush. She sits on a rude bench, her spouse at her feet, while she humbly performs this household duty. He then returns her kindness and carefully smooths her glossy hair.

PLEGGED.

It was a hard-looking crowd; three or four rough men standing in front of what appeared to be a rude shed or hovel, but which was a saloon. Now a saloon originally meant a "spacious and elegant apartment for the reception of company," but the most of you know that the word has come to have a very different application; and when we speak of the saloon, in these days, we mean chiefly a place where liquor is sold, and many times the place is far from spacious or elegant. Mike Rooney's place of business was narrow, dingy, dirty, and vile-smelling. And yet these men spent both time and money in that same unwholesome place! Without doubt, all were much the worse for their visit that morning, but one showed more plainly than the others the sort of entertainment to be had inside. While the others looked on and laughed occasionally, he was loud and boisterous, staggering about, swearing at the saloon-keeper who, he said, had robbed him, at his companions, and at two boys who were trying to persuade him to go home. These boys were the sons of the drunkard, and fearing that their father would get into a fight with his cronies, they wanted to get him away. It was not easy to accomplish their purpose, but at length they succeeded in getting him started; but they could not prevent him every now and then taking a drink from a small bottle he carried in his pocket, and long before they reached home he was so overcome that he sank down by the roadside, and the boys were unable to get him up.

"There is only one thing to do," said the older boy. "I will watch father while you go to the house for a blanket to put over him. Before you go we will roll him out of the road into the fence corner, and when we have covered him up we must go to our work."

"Dear! it seems dreadful to leave him so," said the younger boy.

"I know it; but it's dreadful to have him get so we have to leave him. I wish there wasn't a drop of whiskey in the world! If I had my way I'd burn up all the places where they make it, and sink such places as Rooney's in the ocean so deep that they'd never come up!"

Presently Joe came back with the blanket, and the boys, having made their father as comfortable as they could, were obliged to leave him, knowing that in all probability he would sleep off his stupor, and come home at night tolerably sober, unless he went back to Rooney's.

As the boys were busy hoeing the few rows of potatoes they had been able to plant that spring, Joe said suddenly, "Say, Jack, don't people sometimes put their names to a paper that binds them not to drink any whiskey ever?"

"I don't know. Seems to me I have heard of something of the sort. Why?"

"Well, I thought if there should be such a thing, you and I better fix it so that we would never come to the place where father is. Don't you think so?"

"Maybe," said Jack. "I am going to ask mother when we go to the house."

The mother being appealed to, told the boys that long ago, in the place where she came from, she had seen what they called temperance pledges, but she said she had never heard of any one in their part of the country signing one. And she added: "We've been here now going on ten years, and in all that time I've never heard a sermon, nor seen a minister, nor heard of a temperance man. I declare, I had almost forgotten that there were such things."

"I'll tell you what I am going to do," said Joe that afternoon, "I am going to write out a pledge, as mother calls it, and put my name to it. I shall never feel safe until I have bound myself not to touch liquor. I don't mean to be like the men around here."

And with a piece of pencil and a scrap of paper, Joe wrote out his temperance pledge, the like of which was never seen anywhere. It ran thus: "I ain't never going ter drink any whiskey, nor gin, nor any cider nuther; I ain't going ter go inter any places where they drinks it, becase I don't wanter to be a drunkard and go staggering around. I am going ter be a teetotler."

"That is what mother says they called folks as drinks only water," he explained, pointing to the last word of his unique pledge. "I didn't know how to spell it, but I know what it means;" and he signed his name, saying, "There, now I feel safe. You won't ever catch me at Mike Rooney's. Jack, put down your name."

Five, ten years have passed. The other day one who has known them always, said: "It is a wonder those Martin boys are temperance men. Why, their father was very intemperate, and died from the effects of liquor. But both the boys are set against drinking, even moderately, and against the traffic. Jack told me he did not believe in license at all, high or low, and Joe carries his pocket full of pledges, which he tries to persuade every boy he meets to sign. He says that signing a pledge saved him.—*Faye Huntington in Pansy.*"

NOT GIVE UP, BUT TAKE.

Ernest Trevor, a young man, rich, handsome, in high social position, and living what the world calls a life of pleasure, was greatly discomfited when Arthur Elleslie, an old college chum, arrived in town completely changed from his old tastes and manner of life.

Completely spoiled Ernest thought him, but the spell of an old friendship was strong, and Arthur evidently would not be shaken off. He continually "dropped in" at his friend's chambers, his bright face wearing such an expression of calm joy that Ernest, whose head was often aching from late hours, could not help a feeling of envy. And yet Arthur never lectured, never dogmatized, but, after telling straight out the story of his conversion, he left the heaven to work, only aiding it now and then by a little warmth of kindly influence or protest.

The only persistence he showed was in the attempt to bring Ernest into the family circle where he had received so much blessing; but Ernest, knowing from Arthur's case that their religion was "infectious," would not go. At length, however, he yielded, and was startled by the refinement, and intellectual culture, and social grace he found there.

During the evening he found himself tete-a-tete with the ringleader—as he mentally termed her—of

all this spiritual fuss and excitement, and thinking to forestall any remark of hers, he said in his pleasant, graceful, way,—

"I know what you will say to me, 'Give up the world, give up this pleasure and the other;' now I wish to tell you frankly that I don't intend to give up anything."

She flashed upon him a quick look of surprise. "Excuse me, Mr. Trevor, I was not going to ask you to give up anything; I had thought of asking you to have something—I did wish to ask you to have the love of Christ in your heart, and any giving up would be left entirely to yourself."

And then the conversation was turned to other subjects; but all through the evening, through the whirling dance of a fashionable rout that followed in its later hours, there came like a sweet refrain the words, "have something, have the love of Christ."

They seemed to master him, to drive him, with a magical constraint, away from that gay scene, away to his own room, where, kneeling by his bed, "the powers of the world to come" upon him, he cried, with the intense earnestness of an awakened soul,— "O God, if there be a God, reveal thyself to me!" Need we doubt the answer? His whole consequent life, consecrated, joyous, soul-winning, has testified to its reality.—*English Paper.*

KNEEL TOGETHER.

"How shall we keep our boys in sympathy with prayer and religious services as they grow toward mature years?" This question referred particularly to mothers, and was answered by a mother, who said: "As soon as my boy was old enough, I taught him to pray, kneeling at my side. The time came when he grew too large for this, and with a pang I felt a breach coming between us. However, before the separation came, I asked myself, 'Instead of kneeling by me, why can't he kneel with me?' At this thought a burden seemed lifted, and from that time we knelt and prayed together. The boy was led to see how friends kneel together; how his father knelt with me. What such people could do he could. He is now nearly a man, but he has never shown any reluctance to say his prayers with me. Our petitions are short, but they serve to hold us together and to God."—*Golden Rule.*

