

ASH-WEDNESDAY: and Mrs. Melville and her children were among the most attentive and interested worshippers in the little village church. The conversation of the preceding evening had made a deep impression on Jessie, and she understood and appreciated the privileges of the day, and realized, as she had never done before, its solemnity. Jennie went to church as usual in Robin's arms. When the minister's voice was heard in that impressive sentence designed to commence the public services, "The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him," Jennie arose with the congregation; but, before the *Exultation* was concluded, her wearied limbs refused to sustain her little frame, and she sank exhausted upon her seat. For the first time in her life, she sat throughout the whole service, having strength neither to stand nor kneel. Long before she could read, or understand what was going on, she had been taught that it was her imperative duty to stand, sit, and kneel with the other worshippers, as a manifestation of reverence for the God who was worshipped there; and her inability to do it on that day was a great grief to her, and prevented her, as she afterwards complained to her mother, from enjoying the services as she would otherwise have done.

Little did she think, as she feebly tottered along to the door, half supported by her mother, that it was the last time she would ever cross that sacred threshold; that when she worshipped with a congregation again, it would be in that blessed world.

"Where congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths have no end."

—From the *Little Episcopalian*.

GOVERNING CHILDREN.—We know religious parents who purposely checked, and crossed, and disappointed their children, as a system of home education, in order, as they alleged, to break the natural will, and thus make it easier for them in after life to deny self, and practice virtue. When we see such a course pursued, we think of the child's remark, when asked why a certain tree grew crooked—"Somebody trod upon it, I suppose, when it was a little fellow."

Childhood needs direction and culture more than repression. There is a volume of sound truths in these lines:

"He who checks a child with terror,
Stops its play and stills its song,
Not alone commits an error,
But a great and moral wrong."

"Give it play and never fear it,
Active life is no defect;
Never, never break its spirit,
Curb it only to direct."

"Would you stop the flowing river,
Thinking it would cease to flow?
Onward must it flow forever:
Better teach it where to go."

Selections.

FEATHER PILLOWS THE BEST LIFE PRESERVERS.—The following communication, which we cut from the *Richmond Dispatch*, contains some valuable suggestions. Readers must have been struck with the utter uselessness of the life preservers on board the Arctic:

"A WORD ON SAVING LIVES AT SEA.—The great sacrifice of life attendant upon the loss of the ill-fated Arctic brings to mind a circumstance that occurred many years since, and that may be of benefit to all 'who go down to the sea in ships.' It was as follows: A friend of mine being about to embark on a sea-voyage of great hazard, requested me to give him a letter of advice, to be followed in case of disaster. I gave him a letter, and therein stated that the only real and unavoidable accidents attending a life upon the ocean were the running ashore of vessels at sea in dark nights and during dense fogs. To obviate the former the use of lights may, to a certain extent, diminish the danger, and as a safeguard in fogs, resort must be had to the tolling of the ship's bell or the continuous firing of guns; but, after all these precautions, there is still great danger from collision.—Hence it is necessary that every individual, and most especially passengers, should be informed of the best means of saving themselves in those trying times, when each person is thrown upon his own resources.

It was to put my friend on his guard that I directed him to bear in mind the all-important fact that a feather pillow has a buoyant power fully equal to half-a-dozen of the best life-preservers ever invented, and that a common mattress would make a raft amply sufficient to float himself and trunk. I charged him, in

case of being wrecked upon a lee shore, to lay his blanket down upon the deck, place his mattress upon it, then tie up his trunk in the same, throw them overboard, and with his pillow secured around his body, jump after them.

It so turned that in the course of his voyage he was wrecked upon a lee shore, and following my directions, by the force of the wind and waves he was driven safe on shore, where he landed and saved all his clothes, together with several thousand dollars in specie, which were in his trunk. He was the only one on board that got safe to land with anything more than the scanty clothing in which they stood.

In conclusion, I have only to say that if persons on ship board would recollect that the pillows and beds upon which they sleep are the best and most reliable kind of life-preservers, there would be a great saving of human lives in cases of collisions and other casualties at sea.

THE PANAMA RAILROAD.—The Railroad, connecting the Atlantic with the Pacific coast at the Isthmus of Darien, it is expected, will be completed by the 1st of February. It has been constructed by a company chartered by the Legislature of the State of New York, in 1849, and under arrangements with the government of New Grenada. The road is 49 miles long, and rises 250 feet above high water on the Pacific—the grade being 53 feet to the mile on the Atlantic side, and 50 feet on the Pacific side. The first 23 miles rests on piles or cribs, filled with earth, and has been found to stand the heavy rains to which it is periodically exposed. Much of the timber used in the work was the native spruce, and other light woods, but these have been found unsuitable on the 23 miles which have been travelled for some time, and Lignumvita cross ties are being substituted along the whole line. The original capital stock of the Company was \$5,000,000, but application has been made to the Legislature to raise it to \$7,000,000, which will be required to perfect the line and the harbors at Aspinwall and Panama. The net receipts have already exceeded \$600,000 and it is supposed that the returns will ultimately be very great. The completion of the route through Nicaragua, and two other places, it is supposed, will modify the charges on this important line of communication.

DAYS WITHOUT NIGHTS.—Dr. Baird, in a lecture delivered recently in Cincinnati, said:

There is nothing that strikes a stranger more forcibly, if he visits Sweden at the season of the year when the days are the longest, than absence of the night.—He arrived at Stockholm from Gottenburgh, 400 miles distant, in the morning, and in the afternoon went to see some friends—had not taken note of time—and returned about midnight; it was as light as it is here half an hour before sundown. You could see distinctly. But all was quiet in the street; it seemed as if the inhabitants were gone away, or were dead. No signs of life—stores closed.

The sun goes down at Stockholm a little before ten o'clock. There is a great illumination all night as the sun passes round the earth towards the north pole; the refraction of its rays is such that you see to read at midnight. Dr. Baird read a letter in the forest near Stockholm at midnight, without artificial light. There is a mountain at the Bothnia, where on the 21st of June, the sun does not go down at all. Travellers go there to see it. A steamboat goes up from Stockholm for the purpose of carrying those who are curious to witness the phenomenon. It occurs only one night. The sun goes down the horizon, you can see the whole face of it, and in five minutes it begins to rise.

Birds and animals take their accustomed rest at the usual hours. The hens take to the trees about seven o'clock, P. M., and stay there until the sun is well up in the morning, and the people get into the habit of rising late too.

THE BAPTIST VERSION.—The contemplated new version of the Bible by the Baptist Bible Society is to effect wonders. Not only is it to close the mouths of the advocates of infant baptism, but, as one of the leading journals in the West assures us, it is to render obsolete and useless commentaries on the Scriptures. It is, in short, to be so exact and lucid, that he that runneth may read and be in no danger of mistake.—Specimens of the wonderful book occasionally appear, by way of anticipation, and our readers may be edified with the following. The received version of Revelation vi. 6, is as follows:—"And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny." In the new version we have it thus:—"And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures

saying, A chenix of wheat for a denarius, and three chenixes of barley for a denarius." Now if that is not clear without the aid of a commentary, of any such help, what can be?

RESPECT TO THE DEAD IN FRANCE.—A common practice in France, which impresses a stranger favorably, is that of lifting or taking off the hat, as a funeral paces. This is observed by all classes. A little while since (says a recent writer from Paris) I noticed a small funeral train, moving in the direction of the Madeleine. Evidently, the one borne to the burial was of the humblest class, for the body was followed only by a few workmen in blouses and women without bonnets. As it passed on, hats were taken off by the well-dressed crowd, sitting or moving on the walk, by gentlemen in carriages, with footmen in golden liveries, and by men driving their watering-carts through the street. It was a touching and beautiful sight.

JAWS IN THE UNITED STATES.—It is estimated that they number about 300,000; they have forty-two synagogues, and more than double that number of congregations that are not yet provided with houses of worship; some of them are agriculturists, and have large farms or plantations, but most of them, having come from Continental Europe, and being refugees from oppression and persecution, are compelled, by their ignorance of agriculture and their poverty, to adopt commerce in some shape or another as their means of livelihood; but they never become a burden on the public: none of them are paupers, but are universally distinguished by thrift, industry, perseverance, and untiring energy. Let them be beloved and cared for, "for their fathers' sake," and their own destiny to immortality.

KEEP OFF THE GRASS.—The earliest converts to Christianity in Africa were very regular and earnest in their private devotions. They had no closets to go to, but each had their separate spot in the thicket, where they used to pour out their hearts to God. The several paths to these little Bethels became distinctly marked, and when any one of those African Christians began to decline in the ways of God, it was soon manifest to his fellows, and they would kindly remind him of his duty by saying, "*Brother de grass grow on your path yonder.*" If any heart cares less for the Saviour's cause than it used to do, we may be sure the grass is growing on the path to our closet.

The window in the Ark was a skylight; the door was in the side—the Lord shut *that*. Noah was to have no intercourse with the raging billows, but only with the God who ruled and governed them. Let the believer learn an infinitely valuable lesson. It is his province, his wisdom, and his privilege, to converse with God in the midst of every storm, of every tempest, and to leave the billows to Him who rules them.—*Howells*.

Miss Dix, the philanthropist and friend of the imprisoned and the insane, went out to Europe recently, and when she called to pay her fare, the clerk tendered her a receipt in full, declining the proffered money, saying that Mr. Collins had directed him to offer her a free passage, which he begged her to accept. She acknowledged the kindness and obligation with emotion. May her mission be a blessing to many a weary and crushed heart!

THE FLAG OF THE TIGER.—A correspondent of the *Chronicle* contradicts a statement in the *Quarterly Review*, that the ship's papers and flag of the *Tiger*, when she was lost, fell into the hands of the Russians. This, he says, was not the fact. The papers were destroyed, and the flag was secured by one of the officers, and placed by him in the hands of Mrs. Giffard, the widow of the lamented Captain Giffard, on the occasion of her visiting Odessa, and in her possession it now remains.

A LUNAR OBSERVATION.—In referring to the moon Professor Phillips remarked, at a meeting of the British Association, at Liverpool, "At one time he believed that there was no trace of water to be seen; but he confessed that the more recent observations, particularly those made with Lord Rosse's telescope, shook his belief in that opinion."

By the English Life Table it is shown that the half of a generation of men of all ages passes away in thirty years, and that more than three in every four of their number die in half a century.

If we would understand our own characters, and the influence we exercise on others, we must test ourselves in the light in which they regard us. We may often learn more from the opinions of our enemies than from those by whom we are esteemed.