

Family Circle.

GOOD RULES;

OR, HOW GENERAL WASHINGTON CAME TO BE GOOD.

"Papa," said Eliza, "how came General Washington to be so good? Was he born good?"

"No, my daughter—like every other son of Adam, he was born with a depraved heart. His admirable character and habits were not the result of accident; they were the result of a regular plan. He knew that pains and labor were necessary to the formation of a good character. Accordingly, when he was thirteen years of age, he collected and wrote out more than a hundred rules for the government of his actions and the formation of his character.

"I should like to hear them," said George.

"I should like to copy them, and carry them with me all the time," said John.

"To practice a few of them would be better than to carry them all around with you. I will read you a few of them, and we will talk about them a little.

"Every action in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those present."

"You see that Washington thought it worth while to form habits of politeness. Some people think that politeness is not worth taking any trouble about. 'Do what is right, take no trouble about the niceties of manner,' say some. Now, the Law of right requires us to attend to the manner as well as to the motives of our conduct; and benevolence requires it, for we make others happy, when we treat them with genuine politeness. Some persons think they are above the laws of politeness—too great to be subject to them. Let such remember that Washington was not too great to attend to the rules of politeness.

"Be not hasty to believe flying reports to the disparagement of any."

"Some persons seem to love to believe such reports, and we easily believe what we desire. A little reflection will show us the meaning of such a disposition. When we hear a bad report, we ought to hope that it may not be true, and we must require abundant evidence before we receive it as true. We must never give currency to it unless we know it to be true; nor then, unless we are under obligation to do so."

"Unless we are under obligation to do so!" said George, with surprise. "If there is a report about a man, and it is certain it is true and I know it is true, have I not a right to tell it to any body I have a mind to?"

"No you are not to say anything to anybody's disadvantage, unless there is a call of duty for you to do so."

"But I may meet with a man who hasn't heard the report, and he is going to transact some business with the man, and he may be cheated; may I not tell him, even if he does not ask me?"

"Certainly, there would be a call of duty.—But then you must see to it that the motive be a desire to prevent the neighbor from suffering injustice, not a desire to injure the delinquent, or to gratify a taste for telling news."

"I think that would be a good rule for Mrs Semple to follow," said Eliza, in an audible whisper to her mother.

"You must not be too liberal, daughter, and give away what you may need yourself. In that very remark there was something very near a violation of the rule."

Eliza blushed, and thought she would make no more applications of what was said to others.

"Be careful to keep all your promises."

"In regard to this, also, little things must be included. Some persons keep their promises in regard to serious matters, and pay little regard to those which respect similar matters. But that was not the way with Washington. He was careful to keep his word in the least matters, and the consequence was, that he was always believed. His word was as good as his written obligation. He never failed to fulfil his promise in all things, even the smallest, though he had the care of the nation upon him."

"Suppose a man makes a promise to do what is wrong, must he keep it?" said George.

"Certainly not—a man has no right to do wrong."

"One of the boys promised another to go into Mr Field's pasture after chestnuts, and then Mr Field said nobody should go there—but he went because he promised to go."

"He did wrong, and he knew that he did wrong. People often render such reasons; but the amount of it is, they wish to do wrong, and they make their promise an excuse to themselves and others. It is wrong to make a promise to do evil, and it is wrong to keep it."

"I shall read you only one or two more of Washington's rules.

"When you speak of God, let it be serious and in reverence."

"Of course this rule prohibits all swearing. Among his rules there is no one against swearing; I suppose he thought it was unnecessary. Some think it is manly, and a mark of courage, to swear; but Washington did not think so. He was never profane, and he exerted all his influence to check profanity in others.

"There are some people who do not swear, and yet they use the names and attributes of God irreverently. They pronounce the awful

name of God as carelessly as they would pronounce the name of any other thing. Newton, the great astronomer, never uttered the name of the Creator without a reverential pause.—Washington charged himself to use it 'seriously in reverence.' See that you follow his example."

"Labor to keep alive in your heart that little spark of aboriginal conscience."

"Do you understand the meaning of this rule, George?"

"I don't know that I do perfectly."

"What is conscience?"

"I know what conscience is well enough but I don't know what he means by keeping it alive."

Eliza by her manner, though she did not speak, seemed to say that she knew.

"Well, daughter, what is it?"

"I think it means that we should always obey conscience—always keep a good conscience," said Eliza.

"That is it. Conscience is that power of the mind by which we perceive what is right and what is wrong. Before we act, we should consider whether that which we design to do is wrong, and act accordingly. By so doing conscience is kept alive. By using it properly, it will prove a vigilant and faithful monitor."

A TERRIBLE SCENE.

The writer of this was called about mid-day to visit a young man in the last moments of life. He was a professed infidel, and refused any spiritual aid or the service of a minister.—On entering the room the scene was truly awful—the young man was dying. Near the bed sat his widowed mother and sisters. He was struggling to hide his fears and appear calm and collected in the conflict with death. As I approached him, (the window was slightly opened to admit sufficient light,) he turned towards the window, and as his eye for a moment rested on me—it was only a moment however, for he as quickly turned away his face towards the wall seemingly determined to prevent my conversing with him. I took his hand, he withdrew it.—I asked him to look at me and talk about his latter end; he groaned, and hid himself beneath the bed-clothes. Again I held his hand, and by gentle force turned him towards me. His countenance was intelligent, his features good, his appearance indicated twenty or twenty-one years of age.

"Shall I pray with you?" my friend.

"No, no," said he; "I don't believe in prayer."

"Shall I read a portion of God's holy word?"

"No, Oh, don't worry me! I don't believe the Bible; why add to my sufferings with such things? I tell you I am an infidel, and all I ask is to be left alone."

"Do you know you are dying, my young friend?"

"Yes, I know it well enough. I never shall see that sun rise or set again—I wish it was over—I wish I was dead—I wish you would leave me—I did not send for you. Mother, mother, send this man away; it is useless to talk with me."

"Oh, my boy," cried the almost heart broken mother, "do listen to the word of truth; you will soon be beyond its reach; you are fast hastening to the judgment. Oh, my child, it is a fearful thing to meet God unprepared."

Her sobs choked her utterance. I knelt by his side and prayed for God's Spirit to bring the wanderer back. He rolled and tossed in the bed, and constantly interrupted me during prayer. I then read from the Bible such verses as I thought would lead his mind to right reflection. He hid his face, placed his fingers in his ears, and begged me to desist; and groaned so audibly as to alarm those in the room. As I passed towards the door I grasped his hand and said, "Farewell, my friend." He raised his eyes towards me, and seemed to be willing to listen.

"Suppose," said I, "we were on board a ship together, and in some violent storm the ship was wrecked—I had secured a plank, and, as I cling to it for safety, refused to let you take hold; what would you think of me?"

"Think of you," said he; "I would think you were a selfish wretch."

"We have been wrecked; here," pointing to the Bible, "is the plank on which I rest; the billows of death are riding over you; and will you lay hold before it is for ever too late? Before you is the shoreless ocean of eternity; the voice of mercy may yet be heard. Turn you, for why will you die? Your infidelity is no security for such a storm. Think of your Saviour; oh look to him as your only staff, your only sure support."

He kept my hand, the tear started in his eye; his whole soul centred in the gaze of agony. "It is too late, too late there is no mercy, no hope for me—I am lost, for ever lost!"

Before the sun set his soul was in eternity—gone to the audit. At twelve years of age he left the Sabbath school, entered a printing-office associated with infidelity, and drank the poison. At twenty summoned to the bar of God, without a ray of light to cheer the darkness of the valley of the shadow of death. Young man think of this sad story and flee from sin to holiness and God.

Geographic and Historic.

ORIGIN OF THE PRAIRIES.

A Western correspondent of the New York *Recorder* writes as follows on this topic—"Respecting the origin of these immense fields, we have no satisfactory knowledge. It is conjectured, and I believe with a good degree of probability, that their surface was once covered with the waters of the lakes; and that these having receded, they were left in their natural evenness of surface, to be enriched by the deposits of ages, and thus fitted for the most luxuriant vegetation that the world ever saw.—There is something imposingly grand in the idea that the waters of the great lakes once extended to the base of the Rocky Mountains, and that dammed back by these mighty barriers they were sent eastward, to be huddled over the precipice of our own Niagara, and thence through the St. Lawrence, to find enlargement in the ocean. What a world of waters rolled their tides over this quarter of the globe then, and what a cataract was Niagara! By what causes such a change has been wrought—whether it was by the gradual draining of the fountains which now send their diminished supplies through the beds of the Western rivers, or by some mighty convulsion of nature—it is utterly useless to conjecture. But that the origin of the prairies is such as I have suggested, seems to be indicated by their structure, their soil, their productions, and the alluvial deposits which lie beneath their surface. Who can say by what mysterious process this garden of the world has been preparing for the occupation, or enterprise of Anglo-American civilization, or enumerate the ages which have rolled away since they commenced? In vain does fancy grope among the unillumined labyrinth of the past, for something which shall satisfy the ever recurring inquiries of the curious or the thoughtful mind. He only who involved order from the primal chaos can answer such inquiries; and in his own time, if he so choose, he will make the revelation."

THE POLAR BEAR.

From our proximity to the sea, I have often been surprised that we know nothing of the Polar Bear. He ought to be well known on the coasts of Labrador, and I should suppose, also, in the gulf of this river; but somehow, he is known to us only by books, which give a very short description. As the cold weather confines me to the warmth of a comfortable room, I shall give you some of my notes, written many years now passed away. Of the several species of Bears, the Polar Bear is the only one that wears a white coat, and as the lazy brute never changes his coat, he is commonly called the White Bear. This animal affects a Northern climate, and is found on the sea-side and the mouths of large rivers, but never beyond the ascent of the tide-water, and keeping the line of the sea-coast, they appear more numerous than they really are. Some of the male Bears grow to a large size. I have measured his skin, when stretched on a frame to dry, ten-and-a-half feet. The fore paw of one of them, killed at Churchill Factory, weighed thirty-two pounds—a very decent paw to shake hands with—the claws strong, but only about three inches in length. Their flesh is so fat and oily, that a considerable quantity is collected for the lamps and other purposes. At Churchill, a whaling-boat party shot a she-bear and one of her cubs; the other cub they took alive into the boat, and brought him to the Factory, which being very young became quite tame. At first, he had to be carefully protected from the dogs, but by the time he was two months' old, he was a match for any of them; and, being somewhat of a pugilist, the blows of his fore paws taught them to keep their distance. Thus Bruin continued to grow, and his many tricks made him a favorite especially with the sailors, who often wrestled with him. In the severity of Winter, when spruce beer could not be kept from freezing each of four men had a full quart of molasses in lieu of beer. Bruin was fond of beer and grog: used, every Saturday, to accompany the men to the Steward's shed, and when the weekly rations were given out, the Steward gave him some on one of his fore-paws, which was cleaned into his mouth. On one of these days, the Steward and Bruin quarreled, and, as punishment, Bruin got no molasses. He sat very quietly at the door, while the Steward was putting all in order, and seeing him ready to shut the door, made a dash at the hoghead of molasses, and, thrusting his head and neck to the shoulders into the half-frozen molasses, to the utter dismay of the Steward, carried off a large-gallon on his shaggy hair. He walked to the middle of the yard, sat down on his rump, and then, first with one fore-paw and then with the other, he brought the molasses into his mouth, until he cleaned that part of his coat smacking his tongue most deliciously. Whatever quarrels Bruin and the Steward had afterwards, the latter always took care to give to the former his share of molasses. Every Saturday night, the sailors had their allowance of rum, and Bruin was sure to find his way into the guard room. One night, he had tasted some grog from some of them: he came to a sailor accustomed to wrestle with him, who was drinking too freely, and Bruin was so liberally treated

that he got drunk. With one of his fore-paws, knocked the sailor down, and took possession of his bed. At fifty-cutt's, the sailor was sure to be beaten; and, being determined to take possession of his bed, he shot Bruin—a sad effect of intemperance.—*Correspondence of the Montreal Gazette.*

HUNTING EXPLOITS IN AFRICA.

The Cape Frontier *Times* of February 22, thus alludes to the sporting exploits of Mr. Ruallyn Cumming, second son of Sir William Gordon Cumming, Bart., of Altyre, who a few years since, was reckoned the foremost sportsman in the north of Scotland.—"We have been favoured with some interesting intelligence relative to the late trip into the interior of that well known and accomplished sportsman and traveller, Mr R. R. Cumming, formerly of the C. M. R., who is now on his way from Bloemfontein to Calcutta, after an extremely hazardous and fatiguing expedition of eleven months. In this journey, it is said, he has penetrated many hundred miles beyond the highest point reached by any white man. He shot forty-three elephants, three of which only were females.—Many of these males carried tusks of enormous size, measuring seven feet in length, and sometimes weighing 100lbs each. Sixty hyppopotami, the finest of the troops to which they belonged, having been singled out for slaughter, such is the abundance of this game, that, with his rifle, he might have killed two hundred of them. The rhinoceros, buffalo, camleopard, eland, gemsbok, roan, antelope, waterbuck, hartebeest, sasaby, black and blue wildebeest, koodoo, pallah, zebra, rietbok, kopspringer, &c., were found by him in such abundance, that he rarely expended his ammunition upon them except when in want of the flesh, or to get their heads as specimens, to grace his collection of sporting trophies, which is described as being now so extensive as almost to require a small ship to send them home. He is said to have discovered a new sort of antelope unknown not only to science, but even to the native tribes living upon the tropics. It is a very beautiful species, and, with much time and difficulty he procured twenty-two specimens, both male and female. His losses have unfortunately counterbalanced the excellence of his sport.—He has lost all his horses, fifteen, all his oxen, thirty; and all his dogs, twenty; and his best waggon-driver. His horses were killed either by lions or by horse-sickness, and the fly called tsetse. All his oxen were killed by this insect. His dogs were killed, some by the lions, some by the panther, crocodile, and by different kinds of game. The waggon driver was carried off on a dark and cloudy evening by a monster-lion, which Mr Cumming shot next day.

THE STONE INDIANS.

There is an old saying in England, "give a Yorkshire man a bridle and he will soon find a horse." My old friends the Stone Indians of the great plains, are more complaisant, they find both the bridle and the horse; and are so noted for horse stealing, that the sight of two or three of them, makes all those who own horses, be on the alert, to collect, and guard them. Yet they have so many tricks, that they commonly succeed, sooner or later, in getting each man a horse, and as many more as come to hand—but use no violence all is fair stealing. They frankly declare themselves so fond of "Sangar tangar," (horses) that they cannot help taking them away, to be their companions. They have cost me many nights watching, and after all my care stole some of my horses. Some years ago, three or four of the servants of the Hudson's Company, had the care of about fifty horses during the summer, and carefully guarded them; each man had his gun ready to protect his charge. The horses were kept in a low rich meadow, near the Saskatchewan River.—A fine bank was at one end, on which the men took their station, not a bush or tree on the whole extent, which comprised sixty acres. Six Stone Indian young men, prowling about, saw those horses, they were all in good condition, a most tempting prize, for five days they waited for an opportunity, to no purpose; the men were so vigilant, and all night walked among the horses, though they were not aware of thieves being so near them. The Stone Indians now made themselves appear like antelopes; each man had the horns of a buck on his head, and waited until the men were at dinner they then, on all fours, imitated the deer, and pretending to take a bite of grass here and there quietly got among the horses, the men paying no attention to them, taking them for deer.—Having marked out the best horses, to the utter astonishment of the men, these horned deer sprang each on a horse, and all giving the hunting whoop, and dashing about, drove off all the horses, and before the men recovered from their surprise, were far out of shot. They had only about one hundred and fifty miles to their camp where they were received with the applause of the men, and the songs and dances of the women.—*ib.*

It is stated that a number of substantial farmers in the west of Scotland are throwing up their farms for the purpose of emigrating to America.