

The Children's Page

A LITTLE SUNBEAM.

(By G. H.)

A little sunbeam in the sky Said to itself one day: "I'm very small, but why should I do nothing else but play? I'll just go down to earth and see if there is any use for me."

The violet beds were wet with dew, Which filled each drooping cup; The little sunbeam darted through And raised their blue heads up; They smiled to see it, and they lent The morning breeze their sweetest scent.

On, on it went, it might not stay; Now through a window small It poured its glad but tiny ray, And danced upon the wall: A pale young face looked up to meet The sunbeam she had watched to greet.

And so it travelled to and fro, And danced and glanced about; And not a door was shut, I know, To keep that sunbeam out; But ever as it touched the earth It woke up happiness and mirth.

I may not tell the history Of all that it could do; But I tell you this, that you may try To be a sunbeam too.

"A sunbeam too!" perhaps you say. Yes, I am very sure you may.

For loving words, like sunbeams bright, Dry up the fallen tear, And loving deeds will often help A broken heart to cheer.

So loving and so living, you Will be a sunbeam too. —Ave Maria.

THE WIZARD'S MOUNTAIN.

(Extension.)

The city of Mazapah was very rich and beautiful and contained everything that its people wanted, including a pretty princess with very long golden hair, whom they dearly loved. But in Mazapah there also lived a magician, whom the people did not want at all, for, as you know, wherever there are magicians there is sure to be trouble.

Kohikara—that was the magician's name—was a dreadful nuisance to everybody. He asked for nearly all the people's good things, and if they did not give them to him he just took the roofs off their houses or made all the milk in the land go sour, or turned cows and horses into wood, like big Noah's Ark animals.

Of course, the people were very much afraid of him, but he became so greedy at last that they said they must get rid of him somehow. So they met together and talked the matter over, quite forgetting that Kohikara could hear every word that was said.

When the meeting was over they went home to bed; and while they slept, Kohikara was very busy taking his revenge. He raised a great mountain in the midst of the land, so high that nobody could see where it ended, and so steep that it seemed impossible for any one to climb it. There, in a tower at the very top, he put the little princess, and after stealing all the riches of Mazapah and hiding them in the tower, too, he went off as fast as he could, for he was afraid of what the people would do to him.

In the morning when the people saw how he had spoiled their beautiful land and stolen their riches and their beloved princess, the women put their heads into their aprons and cried, while the men tried to climb up the straight sides of the mountain. But it was no use; they could not find a way at all; and so, after a time, all but one gave up trying. That was Basil, Princess Millie's little playmate, and he said he would never give up.

One day, while he was looking up into the blue mist that almost hid the top of the mountain and wondering how he was ever going to reach the princess, a little black mouse with frightened eyes came running up to him and peeped into his face, and to Basil's surprise, began to talk.

"I am dreadfully frightened," said the mouse. "I want to help the princess, but the magician has turned himself into a cat, and is hunting me. Please let me get into your pocket."

Basil stroked it and put it into his pocket. He had hardly done so before a great big cat came smelling round him. But the little mouse crept into the farthest corner, and the cat, which was really Kohikara, went off to the town to look for her.

"Now," said the mouse, when Kohikara had gone, "I've made the earth all loose so that you can climb into my hole, and beyond there is a way nearly to the top of the mountain, and the princess is making a rope of her golden hair to help you up the rest."

They scrambled through the hole and started up the steep path, but the magician, Kohikara, could feel when anyone was on his mountain, and he came rushing back. When he saw Basil he was in a dreadful rage, but he could not do anything, while he was a cat. So he went off as fast as he could to get his magic wand and turn himself into a magician again.

"Hurry, hurry," squeaked the mouse, "or he will catch us." But the path was very steep and rough, and Basil could not go very quickly.

By and by they heard Kohikara scrambling through the hole below; and just at that moment they saw something bright flash in front of their eyes and they knew it was the Princess Millie's rope of golden hair. Basil made the little mouse go first, and she ran along as nimbly as if she were on the floor. But Basil did not find it so easy, and he could hear Kohikara coming nearer and nearer.

At last Basil reached the water that ran around the tower, and there was the little princess looking so white and anxious, all her beautiful long

hair being cut off at the shoulders. "Oh, do be careful," she called to Basil, "and hurry, for I can hear Kohikara coming."

Then, just as Basil sprang onto the wall beside the princess, Kohikara came into sight at the other end of the rope, looking very wicked and angry.

"What will he do to us?" sobbed the princess. "I am so frightened," and she hid her face in Basil's cloak.

"Don't be afraid; he shall not hurt you," said Basil; and when Kohikara was right in the middle of the rope, Basil cut it, and plump went Kohikara into the water.

As you know, magicians lose all their power if they touch water; that is why they wash in milk. So the minute Kohikara fell, the magic mountain began to tuck away, and in a short time the beautiful tower was standing on the ground and the princess and Basil were in the midst of all their friends.

"But where is that dreadful Kohikara?" asked everyone. "Here I am," said a squeaky little voice, and there stood a wet little miserable old man. From that time, having lost all his powers, if Kohikara wanted any good things he had to work for them like the rest of the people.

The little black mouse, you will be glad to hear, lived with Princess Millie, and had cake and cheese every day, and while she lived, no cats were allowed in Mazapah. For his courage the people named the rescuer of the little princess, "Basil the Brave." A great feast with a triumphal procession was held in his honor. When he grew to manhood he was made Lord High Mayor of the city. As Basil had often attempted to molest the citizens, he had many chances to prove his right to the title the people had given him, and his courage never failed him.

Since the people no longer had to hand over all their wealth to the little magician, they spent much money in improving their city. Under the direction of Basil, beautiful parks were laid out, fine churches and schools were built and large playgrounds were provided for the children. The people were very proud of their Lord High Mayor and every stranger who came to the city was told all about Basil's courage and shown the place where the mountain formerly stood, and the exact spot where the magician met his downfall.

THE NAMES OF STATES.

Ohio is Indian and means "beautiful"; Massachusetts, "about great hills"; Utah, "mountain home"; Texas, from the Indian word "tear-eyes," which means "friends." Kansas gets its name from the Indians, and the word means "smoky waters." The word Wyoming comes from the Indian and means "broad valleys"; Nebraska, "black water"; Missouri, "muddy water"; Iowa, "across"; Wisconsin, "rushing waters"; Illinois, from "Illini," which means "tribe of men"; Kentucky, meaning "at head of river"; Oregon, from War-egan, "beautiful water." Arizona means "uncertain," because of the desert land where the Indians found game scarce; therefore a journey through that portion of the country was uncertain. New Mexico was named after Mexico proper, and the word comes from "Mexiti" of the ancient Aztecs and signifies "god of war."

The Indians call great lakes "seas," and "seas" in Indian is "Michigan." Mississippi is named after the river which is so called by the red man because of its greatness in width and length. The word means "father of waters."

The two Dakotas were so named after the Dakota Indians, which at one time embraced an immense tribe, all the branches of the Sioux. There are states which do not owe their names to the Indians. California is named after an imaginary island of Spanish romance; Nevada means "snowy"; Colorado is so named because of the red granite and sandstone rocks which are everywhere in the mountain regions. Florida means flowers.

FACTS ABOUT FLAGS.

To "strike the flag" is to lower the national colors in token of submission. A "flag of truce" is a white flag displayed to an enemy to indicate a desire for a parley or consultation. The white flag is also a sign of peace. After a battle parties from both sides often go out to the field to rescue the wounded or bury the dead under the protection of the white flag.

The red flag is a sign of defiance and is often used by revolutionists. In our naval service it is a mark of danger and shows a vessel to be receiving or discharging her powder. The black flag is a sign of piracy. The yellow flag shows a vessel to be in quarantine or is the sign of a contagious disease on board.

A flag at half mast means mourning. Fishing and other vessels return with a flag at half mast to announce the loss or death of one or more of the crew. Dipping the flag is lowering it slightly and then hoisting it again to salute a vessel or port.

When a flag is displayed "with the union up"—that is, the flag reversed—it is a signal of distress and a call for assistance.

TO FOLLOW HIS FATHER.

It is stated that as soon as Prince Edward of Wales, who is now in his tenth year, is old enough, he will be entered as a cadet at the new Royal Naval College, Osborne, which was opened by the king during last regatta week at Cowes. Should this prove true, the prince will only be following the example of his father, who at the age of twelve, was sent to the Britannia with his brother, Prince "Eddy"—his senior by just seventeen months—to learn the rules of the sea service. After spending two years on the Britannia, the two brothers started on a three years' voyage

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known fact that the mother has far more influence on the religious development of the children than the father. There are sections (even in Catholic Bavaria) in which the old rule still holds that the sons follow the religion of the father, the daughters of the mother. Even if the parents agree to ignore this rule, Protestant pastors and school inspectors and in most cases the judges, too, will see that it is enforced. But what tells most against the Catholics is the fact that they constitute for the most part an oppressed minority in the empire. Most of the higher offices in the government are closed against them. Here are only a few instances in point: Of the twelve provincial presidents of Prussia only one is a Catholic—Baron von Schorlemer of the Rhine Province. In the Ministry the Catholics are conspicuous by their absence. Very few of the ambassadors are Catholics and the only Catholic general in the army (Field Marshal von Loe) died some months ago. Public higher education is almost entirely in the hands of Protestants. All the higher railroads and mining officials are blue and a Lutheran baptismal certificate is a condition sine qua non for obtaining a place as director or inspector in the mine administration or even as a higher teacher in the mining schools. In the greatest mining region controlled by the Prussian government, the Saar region, there are about 50,000 men employed; 38,000 of these are Catholics, but of the 80 officials only 11 are Catholics. The rule seems to be blue above ground, black underground. Can we be surprised that many a Catholic father yields to the temptation and secures for his son the coveted passport to success? There is surely no lack of reasons to explain, if not to excuse, the enormous yearly leakage in the Catholic ranks. Statistics may prove that through mixed marriages Catholics are no greater losers, relatively, than Protestants, but what of that? From a Catholic Christian point of view it is a very sad state of affairs. It must wound every true Catholic to the quick to think that they are lost to the Church and that as a consequence the ranks—if not of Protestantism, then surely of socialism—are replenished in proportion. The German Catholics are fully alive to the importance of the question confronting them. Much is being done in the press and from the pulpit and the platform to make the faithful realize the magnitude of the danger which is threatening the very existence of the Church in Germany. Father Krose's book has opened the eyes of many, and has proved in figures that can not lie the truth of the statement made by the great Dominican preacher, Father Bonaventura, at the Katholikentag, in Mannheim, that in the last fifty years in Berlin alone a quarter of a million souls have been lost to the Catholic Church.—Catholic Standard and Times.

round the world on the Bacchante, after which Prince George gradually ascended the ladder of naval rank till, in 1890, he was given the command of a gunboat on the West Indian station. After the death of his brother in 1892 he had to abandon his naval career in order to prepare himself for his ceremonial duties.—London Daily Chronicle.

MIXED MARRIAGES IN GERMANY

The question of mixed marriages has always been a very live one in the United States, from the time of the first Council of Baltimore till the present day. It is necessarily so in every country in which Catholics and non-Catholics live side by side. The question becomes still more acute when a country is divided between two denominations more or less hostile to each other. This is the case in Germany to-day.

Ever since industrial development, facility of transportation and the right of moving within the country unceremoniously broke down the artificial politico-religious boundaries in the empire, the number of mixed marriages has increased enormously. In many communities mixed marriages have become the rule, purely Catholic marriages the exception. Thus in Berlin and Brandenburg there were in the years 1901-1905 1,557 Catholic marriages and 4,874 mixed marriages. The same is true of Pomerania, Schleswig-Holstein and Saxony. In 1906 the proportion was, for Prussia, 100 to 30; for the whole empire, 350 to 100. (The figures are from Krose, S.J., "Kirchliches Handbuch" ("Ecclesiastical Handbook") Herder, 1908.)

Prussia there existed in 1905 359,985 mixed marriages, 72,778 of these falling to the Rhineland, the stronghold of Catholicity. Of the children born of these unions 423,895, or 56.8 per cent., were Protestant, 321,955, or 43.2 per cent., were Catholic. Nearly half a million children lost to the Catholic faith. Appalling figures certainly, and they are rising every year.

From the fact that in the majority of cases of mixed marriages of races in the Protestant religion, Protestant writers have repeatedly drawn the conclusion that the attractive power of their Church must be greater than that of the Catholic Church. Such a conclusion is unwarranted, even from a statistical point of view. Statistics for Germany prove very clearly that in the religious education of the children of mixed unions that denomination has the advantage which is numerically stronger in the respective territories. Thus in East and West Prussia, Westphalia, the Rhineland, Hohenzollern, Alsace-Lorraine and Bavaria, the advantage is on the side of the Catholics, owing to their preponderance in these states and provinces. The province of Posen forms only an apparent exception to this rule. As Poles and Germans seldom intermarry the number of marriages between Catholic and Protestant Germans is comparatively very large and as the Protestants are in the majority and occupy all the more lucrative positions, the result is that usual one—a preponderance, very slight in this case, of Protestant children. But to return to our argument. In Germany only 35 per cent. of the entire population is Catholic. According to the ordinary rule of statistical probability, we could expect only one-third to belong to the Catholic faith. Now, statistics show that two-fifths of the children of such marriages are Catholics—a proof of the greater attractive power of the Catholic Church. Furthermore, we must bear in mind that purely Catholic marriages are almost impossible in some districts of Germany. A sudden boom or industry draws hundreds of Catholic workmen into the very heart of a Protestant province, such as Mecklenburg or Saxony or Anhalt. Catholic women or girls are not to be found and as these men do not generally feel called to lead a life of celibacy, they do the best they can and marry some Protestant girl or other. As pastoral supervision is rare, and Catholic elementary instruction rarer still, the chances are all against the Catholic rearing of the children in such cases. Besides, it is a well-

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