

Family Circle.

SEND YOUR CHILDREN TO SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

Parents of the following classes, hear us when we propose to you that your children should be sent to the sabbath school.

I. *You that care about your own and your children's souls.* We believe you are seeking out the best means of benefiting those under your care. We, therefore do no more than ask you to consider whether or not it would be useful to send your children to our schools. If other circumstances are suitable, then your example might influence some of your neighbours; and by your attention to your children, in preparing them to attend the sabbath school, you would have at the satisfaction of your children become a pattern to others.

II. *You that care about your children, though you are not yourselves converted.* We know that this is no uncommon case; even infidels have wished their children to know Christ. Now, if you feel that you yourselves have got no change of heart, we entreat you to send your children to sabbath-school. There, by the blessing of God, they may be led to Christ. The teacher's whole aim is to bring them to the cross of Christ, to carry them to the Shepherd who gave his life for the sheep, and to bathe them in the fountain open for sin and uncleanness. But if you allow them to spend sabbath evenings, and perhaps all the day too, in whatever manner they please, you may expect soon to hear them uttering oaths, and be grieved by their profanity, their contempt for the ordinances of God, their filthy and foolish deeds, and other signs of a hardened heart. But oh, if they were saved, you would be freed at the great day from the reproach of their ruin! and perhaps they might even carry home salvation to you! What if they should lead you by the hand to Jesus?—What if your experience should be that of a parent who said, "I was thirty years old before I knew that I had a soul. But one of our boys went out on a sabbath to play, and was brought in with his ankle-bone out of joint. Next sabbath another of the boys got himself lame. I resolved to send them to school to be out of the way. It was there that they learned, and I learned through them, that I had a soul."

III. *You that care neither for your own nor your children's souls.* Whether you care or not, still it is true that there is a Saviour standing with open arms, saying, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." Mark x. 14. Will you allow us to be kind to them, and lead them to this Saviour? You would wish them to be obedient to be well behaved, to be useful; you would not wish to see them grow up to be thieves, drunkards, and pests to society. Let us, then, try what we can do to lead them to Christ. Do not hinder us from showing kindness to your children. We entreat you not to be unmerciful to their souls.—Let not your eye be evil toward the children of your own bowels. Would you wish that any of them should yet curse the day that ever they were born in your house, and had you for their parent?

And now that we have ended our few words of expostulation, we must say to those of you who agree to put your children under our care for a few hours on sabbath, that we do not in any degree free you from the obligations you yourselves are under to attend to their souls. No; we cannot take upon us your responsibility, which became yours at your children's birth, and was sealed on you at their baptism. We cannot stand in your place at the judgment-day. You must yourselves at home watch over them. Help them in their lessons for their classes, and speak to them on their returning home, as anxiously as if we had never said a word. We offer only to help you. It will prove your more sure condemnation at last if it be the case that strangers cared more for your children's souls than you yourselves do,—the father that begot them, and the mother that bare them. But oh, how blessed, if led by the Holy Spirit yourselves, you become the means of leading your children to Jesus! We will stand by, rejoicing to hear you say, "Behold, Lord, I and the children whom thou hast given me!"

"IT IS ONLY ONCE."

A minister, recently addressing the young men of his congregation on their peculiar dangers referred, towards the conclusion of his discourse, to some of the pleas which sin urges for its indulgence, and, amongst the rest, to this, "It is only once." "Permit me," said he, "to relate to you a fact from my own experience. When a boy of twelve or thirteen years of age, I remember asking my beloved and honoured father a question which afforded him the opportunity of impressing on my mind an important caution. I will remember the time, and the tone of voice in which it was uttered. 'One false step has ruined many a young man.' I never forgot it. I was moved by a young man's temptations, and was sometimes on the verge of compliance, but the serious voice of my father seemed to sound in my ear, 'One false step has ruined many a young man,' and I believe it saved me. If, my dear young friends, I could impress that thought on your hearts, I should deem the evening's labor not lost. You may be tempted to enter that tavern and the plea may be, 'It is only once.' It is a false step; it may ruin you."

You may be tempted to forsake the sanctuary, and to break God's holy day, and the plea may be, 'It is only once.' It is a false step; it may ruin you. The property of others may be within your reach, and you may be tempted to appropriate that sum of money to your own use, thinking, perhaps, you will never be detected, and the plea may be, 'It is only once.' It is a false step; it may ruin you. If the one false step do not itself prove ruinous, it may be the first on the high road to ruin. It may lead to others, which will issue in your present and everlasting destruction. Resist beginnings. Avoid, I beseech you, the first false step.

May not Christian parents be encouraged to avail themselves of every opportunity of inculcating right principles on their children? "A word spoken in due season, how good it is!"

"MOTHER, I WILL GO."

Some years since a fine young man, the only son of a widowed mother, on becoming of age, and receiving his patrimony, entered into company, and indulged in the dissipation of general society. Her watchful eye saw his danger, pointed out its tendency to ruin body and soul, and used every argument, persuasion, and entreaty in vain. One day she learned he was to dine with a large and joyful party, and she spent the forenoon in persuading him to relinquish it, but all in vain. "Mother, I will go." "Then, John, I will retire to my closet," said she for you, till I see your face again." He went to the party, but could find no enjoyment; the thought of his mother being on her knees, wrestling with God in prayer for him, formed such a contrast to the scene before him, that he slipped away—found his mother in the act of prayer—knelt down by her—fell on her neck—and, from that day, became the delight of his pious mother's heart, "a brand plucked from the burning." A religious parent's prayers are never offered in vain.

A WORD TO YOUNG MEN.

Wishing, and sighing, and imagining, and dreaming of greatness, said William Wirt, will never make you great. But can a young man command his energies? Read Foster on decision of character. That book will tell you what is in your power to accomplish. You must gird up your loins and go to work with all the indomitable energy of Hannibal scaling the Alps. It is your duty to make the most of your talents, time, and opportunities. Alfred, king of England, though he performed more business than any of his subjects, found time to study.—Franklin, in the midst of all his labors, found time to dive to the depth of philosophy, and explored untrodden paths of science.

THE EARWIG AND THE SPIDER.

SOMETHING FOR BOYS.

I was much amused the other day, in my study, near an open window, by watching a sharp battle between a large spider and a strong earwig; each had met his match; they engaged a long time, and fought fiercely. At last mister spider seized the earwig by the head, and held him so firmly as induced him to turn up his tail erect, as though in self defence; when the spider, keeping his hold firmly, wound with his long legs his web a great number of times around his opponent's body, so preventing entirely the use of his legs; and after this he soon dragged him to his hole, and enjoyed the fine feast. I thought this would be a fine lesson for little boys, which contains two parts:—

1. A lesson of watchfulness, to keep out of danger of *sin, Satan, and the world*; had the earwig been watchful, he would not have been caught by the spider.

2. A lesson of perseverance.—The spider never ceased one moment till he had entirely conquered his foe, though he was large and strong, and difficult of conquest. So, if you have an evil temper to conquer, persevere in prayer to God, and he will conquer it;—so, if you have a difficult study, persevere, and you will be a conqueror like the spider.

GOOD EFFORT.

Let us lay it down as a principle, that no good effort is entirely useless. Let us never be discouraged, because we do not command an amount of means; but, instead of bewailing what is impossible, let us labor to effect what is practicable. Let us never excuse our negligence by accusing our stations; but remember, that the ways of doing good are infinitely various, and that they are found in every period of life, in every relation, in every condition, in every circumstance,—that the *luxury* of doing good is so great, that the Father of Mercies had not condescended to a low, all may be kind; all cannot be generous, but all may be useful.—Jay.

GOLDEN DUST.

In order to achieve your good work which you have much at heart, you may not be able to secure an entire week, or even an uninterrupted day; but try what you can make of the broken fragments of time. Clean up its golden dust.—those raspings and filings of precious duration, which so many sweep out into the waste of existence.—James Hamilton.

Geographic and Historical.

HERCULANEUM AND VESUVIUS.

BY REV. ROBERT TURNBULL.

Taking time by the forelock, we set out, at early dawn, one beautiful morning, to visit Mount Vesuvius, and it possessed, Herculanum and Pompeii, and resolved to do this, as far as practicable on foot, partly for the sake of economy, and partly to prove, that some things can be done as well as others. Furthermore, we had found from experience that the pedestrian is in the best situation to enjoy sight seeing.—He can go fast or slow just as it pleases him, jump over a hedge or wall, and wander in the fields, drop into some out of the way corner and saunter about in meditative mood, talk with the people of the country, enter their houses, and if the humor seize him, take an entirely different direction from the one he first intended. There is an exhilaration, too, in walking which is exceedingly pleasant, and adds great zest to the enjoyment of natural objects. Fatiguing, to be sure, it often is; but rest can always be enjoyed by an easy, independent pedestrian. He can seek a sheltered spot, on the brow of the hill, or in the shadow of the trees by the brink of the river, or the side of the fountain, eat his bread and cheese, chat with his friend, or gaze upon the fair and changing aspect of nature around him,—or he may drop into a cottage, converse with the inmates, and gather useful information while resting his weary limbs. This was our method, generally to visit the various points of interest, in our European tour. We went over the wider spaces and less interesting regions, in diligence or steamer, but ever preferred to ramble amid fair or classic scenes. Both of us had been great walkers in our early days, and we felt somewhat, while thus ranging about in nature, as if we had grown young again, as if nature had assumed a more beautiful and cheering aspect.

The morning we set out for Vesuvius was bright and warm, but a cool breeze was blowing from the sea. All nature wore a smile, and old Vesuvius, even, as he loomed up in the distance with scarred and blackened visage, assumed a glad and gracious look. As we passed through the streets, we found them lined at an early hour, with stalls of rich vegetables and luscious fruit, the finest I ever saw. We purchased a pound of large ripe figs for a single grano, a little less than a cent, and a pound of apricots for two granos. Plums, oranges and other fruit common in this country, can be procured equally cheap. We met long trains of mules and asses, accompanied by people from the country, with the products of the soil. Some of the women were carrying immense loads on their heads, but all looking lively and pleasant. The climate of this country is so charming that it acts upon the animal spirit, as much almost as the wine which it produces; and hence, notwithstanding all their poverty and misery, the Italian,—those in the country especially,—often wear a happy look, and pass along murmuring gay tunes, as if music were a sort of natural breath. In some of the cities and villages, you see much squalid wretchedness; but an Italian, in good health, and with a grano in his pocket, is naturally a happy fellow. The poor women are the worst off; for their liege lords bind upon them heavy burdens, which are grievous to be borne. The care and sorrow of poverty stricken homes come upon them, and hence many of them seem to be prematurely haggard and grey. It was pleasant, however, this morning, to see the long trains of people, with their burdens of produce, approaching the city, with little apparent anxiety, except to get there as speedily as possible. The men follow their asses and mules, conducting or rather showing them on, by the tail! We passed the bridge of Madelana, walked through the long suburb, which extends two or three miles to Resina, at which place we hired a couple of horses to assist us in ascending the mountain.

Previous to this, however, we visited the ruins of Herculanum, which lies beneath Resina, and is partly covered with its buildings. It was overwhelmed with lava from an eruption of Mount Vesuvius, in the 79th year of the Christian era, at the same time that Pompeii and Stabæ (now Castellamara) on the sea coast, were buried with sand and ashes. Herculanum, lying just under the mountain, was obliterated in the red hot lava, whole rivers of which must have passed over it, while the other places mentioned, being at a greater distance, were simply covered with sand and ashes. It must have been a city of considerable extent and great splendor. A part of the city only has been excavated, and most of the marble statues and other articles found in it have been conveyed to the museum at Naples. Besides, all the excavations have been filled up but one, in which we descended, by means of steps, taking lighted candles in our hands. The city lies from fifty to sixty feet beneath the surface, which consists mainly of lava, harder than the solid rock. In the position we visited we found the remains of an extensive theatre, capable of containing many thousand persons. In shape it is circular, like an amphitheatre, with ranges of stone benches for the spectators, and seats of stone for the musicians encircling the stage in the centre. It was affecting to walk, with long candles, around the long corridors of this ancient building, fifty feet beneath the solid lava,

which had formed its sepulchre for ages. How dark and silent now, where, at one time, all was splendor, madness and merriment!

Leaving Resina on horseback, we began to ascend the mountain. A rough road has been hewn of stones, lava and ashes, which gradually runs up the mountain, winding around from point to point, vineyards, olives and other fruit trees, growing luxuriantly upon the ashes emitted from Vesuvius in by gone days. A striking symbol of the manner in which good is reduced from evil, of the life which springs from death, of the paradise which blossoms on the ruins of sin. It took us an hour and a half to ascend as far as the horses would go, and we went part of the way at a pretty fair trot.—The ascent was sometimes difficult and toilsome, then again easy and pleasant. We arrived at what seemed to be the former top of a mountain, and where we could discover the evidences of remains of two former craters now filled up. This part of the mountain is of immense extent, and is partly covered with verdure and trees, but becoming bare and desolate towards the centre. On this stands a separate and recently formed cone, which rises abruptly, and to an immense height. Vegetation is extended, though somewhat scantily, nearly to the foot of this second cone, and we observed flowers growing far up the mountain, amid its black and desolate masses, where nothing of the kind would be expected, just as in the lowest depths of degradation, one may discover a few stray flowers of virtue, some better and purer strays, some remains of a holier state, it may be, mute promises of a happier time to come.

Several persons had offered themselves as guides, at the foot of the mountain, but we had learned to distrust the knaves, who pounce upon inexperienced travellers, and make them pay for their disagreeable attentions. On this account we had resisted all their importunities, and turned them off. One fellow, however, seemed determined to follow us, and we saw him toiling on behind the horses, in the hot Italian sun, with as much apparent vigor as the horses themselves. We said nothing, but kept on, and as we approached the second cone, referred to, had lost sight of him. But just as we had begun in vain, to dispose of our horses, in order to make the ascent, he made his appearance behind some masses of lava and ashes, with a basket of provisions and fruit upon his head, took possession of our horses, and fastened them in a way peculiar to himself, to some of the loose blocks of lava, and accompanied us, with his basket on his back, up to the very top of the volcano. His body must have been of iron to do so. But we really felt obliged to him, as, without his aid, it would have been impossible for us to gain the summit. It took us, at least two hours to ascend the second cone, which is covered with loose scoria, sand and ashes. At first it did not appear very lofty, but when we had ascended a great distance, and exhausted our strength, at least for the moment, it rose above us height upon height. We rested and refreshed ourselves from the welcome basket of our guide, then began our ascent a second time, and after going up almost as far as at first, were obliged to sit down again, when finally making a desperate and long continued effort with limb and cane, we reached the top of the mountain, on the edge of which, we sat down to breathe, and partook a second time, of the homely, but inviting fare provided for us. We then walked some two hundred yards, or more, over ashes, sand, and stones, and came to the rim of the crater, which is of great extent, being over a quarter of a mile in diameter—some say half a mile, but this is an evident exaggeration—and descending abruptly at least a hundred and fifty or two hundred feet. We went down into it some thirty or forty feet, but I found it impossible to go further. I endeavored to go a little further, but so alarmed my travelling companion that he insisted on giving it up. It would have been dangerous to attempt it, owing, in part, to the rapid plunge of the descent, and the noxious vapours which fill the crater. Even on the spot where we stood, the ashes are hot to the touch, and little jets of steam or gas are proceeding from the crevices. Our guide roasted half a dozen eggs, which he had brought on purpose, simply scraping a little hole, and covering them with sand.

At the bottom of the crater there is another little cone, quite recently formed from the materials thrown out of the burning mountain, and in which opens a huge vent or chimney, for the fire and smoke which are constantly rising from it. Within this fiery mouth, you hear a dashing, rumbling noise, as if a mighty sea of burning lava, were heaving in the heart of the mountain, and far down in the bowels of the earth, occasionally rising, like the swell of the sea, and throwing its burning waves to the surface. Every now and then it would seem to gather itself up for an effort, and with loud thundering explosion, cast up red hot stones and ashes, mingled with the lava flame and smoke. Every explosion produces a prolonged echo in the cavern, and a trembling of the mountain.

Scientific men affirm, that no flame proceeds from volcanoes, but Vesuvius certainly presents an appearance of flame. At all events it has fire enough, the reflection of which on the ascending smoke makes it so like flame, that it may well be described as such by common observers.

To be continued.