

of things that are sometimes quite allowable."

"But father said the other day that children were not expected to fast."

"Not in the same way as grown people, by going without their food; but fasting and abstinence mean something more than that. Can you give me another word for them?"

"Self-denial," said Arthur, gravely.

"Yes, that means doing something that we do not like. We have two natures, and the lower nature is always trying to make us a slave to it. It is natural to want to eat and drink and sleep, but when we indulge these feelings too much, they become sin, and we cannot control ourselves. Self-control is one of the great ends of fasting. We have to break ourselves in as you saw Mr. Baker breaking in that young horse last week. When it is broken in, it will turn as its master wishes, when he holds the reins, as we shall obey the teaching of the Holy Spirit when we do not let our temper and our selfishness get too strong for us."

"Then, mother," said Mary, slowly, "father said in his sermon this morning that it was a good thing to make a rule for Lent. What did he mean?"

"He meant this, dear. It is a good plan to think over quietly before Lent comes, and to make up our minds what we will do. He said, you will remember, that it was well to let this rule have something to do with our besetting sin. If anyone were lazy and inclined to doze off again when it was time to get up, it would be a good rule for him to make up his mind that he would jump out of bed the moment he was called. He would have a few minutes' extra time, and might say with his morning prayers, the Collect for the First Sunday in Lent, or a short prayer in the Visitation Office, beginning, 'O Saviour of the world.' Or, if a child were quick-tempered and hasty, it would be a good rule to make, not to answer again when he felt angry, and to remember the silence of the Lord."

"But, mother," said Arthur, "those sound such little things. Is that fasting?"

Mother smiled, and said: "The saints were not people who did great things, but those who did little things with great devotion. But, if you want it, there are ways in which you can fast at meals without injuring your health. If there is jam tart and rice pudding, you can take the rice pudding; only," she added, gravely, "in all these things try to say what you say at the end of your prayers, 'for Christ's sake, or you may grow proud of your fasting.'"

It was nearly teatime, and the talk had to be ended; but, as mother left the room, she felt Mary's hand on her arm, and stooped down to listen.

"My rule shall be," said the child, "to get up directly nurse

calls me, without once turning over."

And as she wished Arthur good-night, he said:

"I mean not to answer back, for you know Mary is sometimes so provoking."

But, a week later, mother found him sitting moodily alone.

"It's no good!" he cried. "I've broken it! So it's all over."

"No, my boy, it has only begun. Begin again. The crown is for those who persevere, not for those who succeed." And then she wrote something on a bit of paper. "This is a prayer I learned as a child from one who had learned it from Dr. Pusey. Say it with your prayers to-night."

Arthur read:

"Blessed Jesus, give us the gift of Thy holy love, pardon of all our sins, and grace to preserve unto the end."—E. M. Green, in Golden Sunbeams.

A KISS FOR MOTHER.

The young people who have laughed over Eli Perkins' funny speeches may not find anything to laugh about in this article from his pen; but they will find much to think about:

I want to speak to you of your mother. It may be that you noticed a careworn look upon her face. Of course, it has not been brought there by any act of yours; still it is your duty to chase it away. I want you to get up tomorrow morning and get breakfast. When your mother comes and begins to express her surprise, go right up to her and kiss her on the mouth. You can't imagine how it will brighten her dear face.

Besides, you owe her a kiss or two. Long ago, when you were a little girl, she kissed you when no one else was tempted by your fever-tinted breath and swollen face. You were not as attractive then as you are now. Through years of childish sunshine and shadows she was always ready to cure, by the magic of a mother's kiss, the little, dirty, chubby hands whenever they were injured in those first skirmishes with the rough old world.

Then the midnight kisses with which she routed so many bad dreams, as she leaned above your restless pillow, have all been out of interest these long years.

Of course, she is not so pretty and kissable as you are; but if you had done your share of the work during the last ten years the contrast would not be so marked.

Her face has more wrinkles than yours; and yet, if you were sick, that face would appear far more beautiful than an angel's as it hovered over you, watching every opportunity to minister to your comfort, and every one of those wrinkles would seem to be bright wavelets of sunshine chasing each other over the dear face.

She will leave you one of these days. These burdens, if not lifted from her shoulders, will break her down. These rough, hard, hands,

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JOHN W. PRITCHARD,
Editor Christian Nation."

Minneapolis, Minn., Jan. 28, '97.
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which have done so many necessary things for you, will be crossed upon her lifeless breast. Those neglected lips, which gave you your first baby kiss, will be forever closed, and those sad, tired eyes will have opened in eternity, and then you will appreciate your mother, but it will be too late.

THE QUEEN'S SWANS.

The rivers of England, while not as large as our American rivers, and not surrounded by the grand scenery we have on the banks of so many of our fine rivers, have a beauty all their own.

The lovely quiet rural villages, the green meadows and peaceful glades, the many quaint and beautiful buildings, ruins and towers on every side add much to their charm.

There is one other beauty which they have, and one which is entirely wanting to our American rivers, and that is the number of stately swans floating so gracefully on the quiet waters.

While at Hampton Court this year we went up the Thames about half-way to Oxford.

The river was full of pleasure-boats, with gaily-dressed ladies, and the whole scene most bright and lovely. The stately swans were everywhere, floating on the water, eating from some fair lady's hand, or taking a quiet bite from some tempting lunch, spread out in the boat, when the members of the party were not watching.

The quaint, ugly little dark-grey swans or cygnets made us think of

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Hans Christ of "The Ugl..."
As we spoke of the gentleman to swan in eye the Queen, mark put on on one leg. There were many more England than Swans are brought into of Richard C

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