

YOUTH'S CORNER.

THE BOY WHO WOULD NOT SWEAR.
The boys seemed of the ages from eight to twelve; and there were three apparently opposed to two. As I drew nearer, I observed three to be in excessive passion; whilst one of the others looked with a calm steadfastness that was perfectly dignified; and the one who appeared his friend was earnest in persuading him to something.

"You did take it then?"
"I told you, I did not."
"Will you swear it?"
"I didn't take it."
"Swear it, then," said another.
"He dare not swear it."
"Will you swear it by God?"
"Why should I swear it? I've told you I didn't take it."
"I won't believe you, if you won't swear it."
"Do swear," said his friend, "and end it."

"Why should I swear it? I've said no; and that's enough."
All the three then began to pour out of their young mouths volleys of oaths and abuse, with voices in imitation of men; nor did there seem a curse or a blasphemy of which they were ignorant. God and Satan alike were invoked to bring down curses on him and themselves; threatening to thump him as long as they could stand over him.

As they approached him with doubled fists, the boy reddened with resentment, and his eyes flashed with indignant fire. "Stand off!" he said, in an authoritative tone. "I won't strike first, but I'll let you see I can defend myself."
"Swear it then, and we'll let you alone."

"If you come on me like savages, I'll say no more than no; I've told you the truth."

His spirit and firmness arrested them. One of them, with a curse in his teeth, said again, "Why don't you swear?"

"For a reason," he replied, "it seems you don't know; and all I wish is, that you'd leave me to myself, for I hate your blasphemies."

"Oh! oh!" the biggest boy cried, "a saint! a saint! a saint! a saint!" This turned the current of their abuse; and now they all with one voice cried out, "A saint! a saint!" pointing the finger of scorn.

Though my spirit groaned within me at the sight and sound, my attention was chiefly fixed upon the boy who stood so firm to his point. I was in a moment amongst them; and three, taking alarm from my countenance, caught up their sticks, and ran off very swiftly, before I could get hold of any. I did not pursue, as I expected to find them out afterwards—and I was anxious to know a little of "the saint."

I laid my hand on his head, and said, "What do they call you, my boy?"
"George, sir," he replied with readiness, but his voice still in agitation.

"Where do you live?"
"There, sir," pointing to a house near the end of the lane.

"You have had a strong contest with these sons of Belial?"

"Yes, sir; I'm glad they're gone."
"Tell me, George, why you would not yield to them, when they wanted you to swear?"

"Because, sir, I am afraid to offend God; and my father and mother always bid me be careful not to swear."
"How then came you to be in company with such boys?"

"I wasn't in company, sir; I only passed by just when they lost their ball; and they would have it that I'd picked it up; and they wouldn't believe me, when I said I hadn't."

"Why did you not give them some stronger assurance, without swearing?"

"Because, sir, father says, 'Remember what the Lord says, 'Let your conversation be yea, yea, nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil' and he charges me to take notice, if they won't believe for yes or no, that they only want to tempt me, and after all wouldn't believe me a bit the more for any more words; and so, sir, if they won't believe yes or no, I'm not going to say any more.'
"But suppose they had all set upon you, would you have remained steady to the point, without being afraid?"

"Why, sir, father says, 'George, mind you fear not them who after they have killed the body, have no more that they can do; fear Him, who, when he hath killed the body, can cast both body and soul into hell.' So, sir, I tried to set the law of God before me; and I hope I'd habit my tongue out before I'd sworn an oath to please them."
"Well, my lad, your father has taught you well by the rule of God's word; and God, in faithfulness to his promise, has given a blessing to his instruction. You owe much to such a father, and more to your heavenly Father, who gave you strength and simplicity to keep his word."

"I'm sure of that, sir; for I'm frightened when I hear such words as the boys used. I feel that I could soon learn them: if God was to leave me to myself, and they are very catching, even when one don't mean it; and so by keeping to father's great rule of yea, yea, and nay, nay, I'm saved from falling into that way of wicked words."

Now, when he repeated this, which has always been a favourite Scripture with me, I was exceedingly impressed by the present application; and, walking on with the boy, I remained silent, meditating upon the depth of this great rule. He, perceiving my mind engaged, set off in a trotting run homewards, and was soon at his father's cottage door.—*Guilty Tongue.*

THE YOUTHFUL MISSIONARY.

The church-yard of Port Louis, in the island to the east of Madagascar, called the Mauritius, contains the graves of many Missionaries. One of them is that of Mr. Sargent, a Wesleyan Missionary; another, that of the faithful servant of God, the Rev. T. Thomson; a third, that of the excellent and devoted Mrs. Harriet Newell, whose life you may some time read.

Near the grave of Mrs. Newell, is that of "little Willy," of whom I am now going to give you some account. This dear child accompanied his father and mother to the Mauritius, just as he had entered his sixth year. It was a great grief to his mother to quit her native land for a land of strangers, and during the voyage little Willy used often to try to comfort her, when he saw her in trouble, by nursing and playing with his little baby brother, reading the Bible to his mother, and singing hymns to her. The beautiful hymn which begins with the following lines, was a particular favorite with him:

"We may, like the ships,
By tempests be tossed
On perilous deeps,
But cannot be lost,
Though Satan engages
The wind and the tide,
The promise engages—
The Lord will provide."

Sometimes, when all but his mother were leaving the cabin to go on deck, he would linger behind, and then get close to her and softly whisper, "Now, mamma, if you will not cry any more, till you get to the end of the voyage, you shall see what I will do for you."

On his arrival at the Mauritius, after a voyage of eleven weeks, he became much concerned for the spiritual welfare and instruction of the poor black people around him. He took great pains to teach a little negro girl who came to live in the family, to read, and seemed greatly distressed that she could not understand him. She used always to be present at morning and evening prayers, but the black man-servant, who waited in the family, was not in the habit of attending. At this, little Willy expressed much concern to his mother, saying, that Volsey had a soul to be saved as well as Oederene, the little negress. One day his mother went out for a few hours. On arriving at home in the evening, a most pleasing scene awaited her. Not knowing how soon she might return, little Willy had collected the family around him for evening worship, and there was Volsey, the black man, sitting in the midst of them! True he could not understand English, but Willy had begged his mother's maid to explain to him what he read. Thus, "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings" can God, when he pleases, "perfect praise." As the family used to go to their place of worship on a Sunday morning, the mind of dear little Willy was greatly affected by seeing so many blacks go to and from the bazaar with merchandize. He longed for them to know about God, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. One day, when his mother was saying how sad it was that they were not taught about God and heaven, the dear little boy made no direct answer, but sweetly raised his voice in singing—

"Then, black and white, and bond and free,
The servants of one Lord shall be,
And nothing shall be heard above,
But sounds of praise, and peace, and love."

Only three months after his arrival in the Mauritius, it pleased God whose ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts, to take to himself this lovely and promising child. One week he was climbing the mountain top, in the full glow of youthful health and spirits—another week he was laid on the bed of sickness and death! During his last short and sudden illness, his dear mother never left him. He loved to have her near him. He loved to hear that blessed Word of God, which, though he was only six years and eight months old, was already his greatest delight. On one occasion he said to her, "Now mamma, read the Holy Bible to me; that chapter about being born again." And, as she read the third of John, he softly whispered "We must be born again." At another time, when she was reading to him about Jesus being crucified, he said, "I would have released Jesus, mamma." Another time, after looking sweetly at her for some minutes, he said, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want," and then sang—

"Oh that will be joyful, joyful, joyful,
When we meet to part no more."
Thinking of his little brother, to whom he often repeated the following verse, he again sang—

"Little boy, with cheerful eye,
Bright and blue as yonder sky,
Come and learn belimes to love,
That great God who reigns above."

Then, raising his eyes towards heaven, and waving his little hand, he said, "God is every where, mamma, managing all the worlds!" His afflicted mother, as she

fondly knelt over him, said, "Would you rather die, my precious, or get well again?" He replied "I would rather die; because, if I am a Christian, I shall go to heaven, and be far happier." Then clasping both his arms around her neck, he added, "Take me home, mamma. Take me home. You must come, and Louisa must come too." After this he was able to say but little more. Once or twice he softly breathed, "Papa," "Mamma," and then his freed and happy spirit was conveyed by angels to the bosom of that Saviour whom he loved. The next day, according to the custom of the country, in consequence of the extreme heat, his remains were conveyed to the little grave prepared for them, in the Port Louis church-yard. Thus the infant Missionary, little Willy, and those eminent servants of God who had devoted their whole powers to his cause, rest together, as to their mortal frames, until the resurrection morn.

Dear children, who read this account, let the example of little Willy, though dead, yet speak to you.—*Children's Missionary Magazine.*

A MOTHER'S LOVE IN THE ORKNEY ISLANDS.

Almost all the people in the parish were leading in their meadow hay on the same day of midsummer, when the great golden eagle, the pride and the pest of the parish, stooped down, and flew away with something in his talons. One single, sudden female shriek, and then shouts and outcries as if a church-spire had tumbled down on a congregation! "Hannah Lamond's bairn! Hannah Lamond's bairn!" was the loud fast spreading cry. "The eagle's ta'en off Hannah Lamond's bairn," and many hundred feet were in another instant hurrying towards the mountain. Two miles of hill, and dale, and copse, and shingle, and many intersecting brooks lay between; but in an incredibly short time the foot of the mountain was alive with people. The cry was well known, and both old birds were visible on the rock ledge.

But who shall scale that dizzy cliff, which Mark Stewart, the sailor, who had been at the storming of many a fort, attempted in vain! All kept gazing, weeping, wringing of hands in vain, rooted to the ground, or running back and forward, like so many ants trying their new wings in discomfiture. "What's the use—what's the use o'ny puir human means? We have no power but in prayer! and many knelt down—fathers and mothers thinking of their own babies—as if they would force the deaf heavens to hear."

Hannah Lamond had all this while been sitting on a rock, with a face perfectly white, and eyes like those of a mad person, fixed on the cryic. Nobody had noticed her; for strong as all sympathies with her had been at the swoop of the eagle, they were now swallowed up in the agony of eyesight. "Only last sabbath was my sweet wee wee baptized!" And on uttering these words she flew off through the brakes, and over the huge stones; up—up—faster than ever huntsman ran in to the death, fearless as a goat playing among the precipices. No one doubted, no one could doubt, that she would soon be dashed to pieces.

No stop! no stay! she knew not that she drew her breath. Beneath her feet, Providence fastened every loose stone, and to her hands strengthened every root. How was she ever to descend? That fear, then, but once crossed her heart, as up, up, up she climbed to the little image, made of her own flesh and blood. "The God who holds me now from perishing, will not the same God save me when the child is on my bosom?" Down came the fierce rushing of the eagles' wings, each savage bird dashing close to her head, so that she saw the yellow of their wrathful eyes. All at once they quailed, and were cowed. Yelling, they flew off to the stump of an ash jutting out a cliff, a thousand feet above the cataract, and the Christian mother falling across the cryic, in the midst of bones and blood, clasped her child,—dead, dead, dead, no doubt,—but unmangled and untorn, and swaddled up just as it was when she laid it down asleep among the fresh hay, in a nook of the harvest field. Oh, what a pang of perfect blessedness transfixed her heart from that faint feeble cry! "It lives!—it lives!—it lives!" and baring her bosom with loud laughter, and eyes dry as stones, she felt the lips of the unconscious innocent once more murmuring at the fount of life and love!

Where, all this while, was Mark Stewart, the sailor? Half way up the cliffs. But his eye had got dim, and his head dizzy, and his heart sick; and he who had so often reefed the top-gallant sail, when at midnight the coming of the gale was heard afar, covered his face with his hands, and dared look no longer on the swimming heights. "And who will take care of my poor bed-ridden mother?" thought Hannah, whose soul, through the exhaustion of so many passions, could no more retain in its grasp that hope which it had clutched in despair. A voice whispered, "God." She looked round, expecting to see an angel, but nothing moved except a rotten branch, that under its own weight broke off from the crumbling rock. Her eye, by some secret sympathy of her soul with the inanimate object, watched its fall, and it seemed to stop not far off on a small platform. Her child was bound within her bosom; she remembered not how or when, but it was safe

and, scarcely daring to open her eyes, she slid down the shelving rock and found herself on a small piece of firm root-bound soil with the tops of bushes appearing below. With fingers suddenly strengthened to the power of iron, she swung herself down by brier and broom, and heather and dwarf birch. There a loosened stone leaped over a ledge, and no sound was heard, so profound was its fall. There the shingle rattled down the scree, and she hesitated not to follow. Her feet bounded against the huge stone that stopped them, but she felt no pain; her body was callous as the cliff. Steep as the wall of a house was now the side of the precipice; but it was matted with ivy cent uries old, long ago dead, and without a single green leaf, but with thousands of arm-thick stems petrified into the rock, and covering it with a trellice.

She bound her baby closer to her neck, and with hands and feet clung to that fearful ladder.

Turning round her head, and looking down, lo! the whole population of the parish, so great was the multitude, on their knees! And hush! the voice of psalms—a hymn, breathing the spirit of one united prayer! Sad and solemn was the strain, but nothing dirge-like—breathing not of death, but of deliverance. Often had she sung that tune, perhaps the very words, but them she heard not, in her own hut—she and her mother—or in the kirk, along with all the congregation. An unseen hand seemed fastening her fingers to the ribs of ivy, and in sudden inspiration, believing that her life was to be saved, she became almost as fearless as if she had been changed into a winged creature. Again her feet touched stones and earth. The psalm was hushed—but a tremulous sobbing voice was close beside her, and lo! a she goat, with two little kids at her feet! "Wild heights," thought she, "do these creatures climb, but the dam will lead down her kid by the easiest paths; for oh, even in the brute creatures, what is the holy power of a mother's love!" and turning round her head, she kissed her sleeping baby, and for the first time she wept.

Overhead frowned the front of the precipice, never touched before by human hand or foot. No one had ever dreamt of scaling it; and the golden eagles knew that well in their instinct, as, before they built their cryic, they had brushed it with their wings. But all the rest of this part of the mountain side, though scarred, seamed, and chasmed, was yet accessible—and more than one person in the parish had reached the bottom of the Glead's-Cliff. Many were now attempting it; and ere the cautious mother had followed her dumb guides a hundred yards through, among dangers that, although enough to terrify the stoutest heart, were traversed by her without a shudder, the head of one man appeared, and then the head of another, and she knew that God had delivered her and her child in safety, into the care of their fellow-creatures. Not a word was spoken—eyes said enough: sheushed her friends with her hands, & with uplifted eyes, pointed to the guides sent to her by heaven. Small green plants, where those creatures nibbled the wild flowers, became now more frequent; trodden lines, almost as easy as sheep-paths, showed that the dam had not led her young into danger; and now the brushwood dwindled away into straggling shrubs, and the party stood on a little eminence above the stream and forming part of the strath. There had been trouble and agitation, much sobbing and many tears among the multitude, while the mother was scaling the cliffs,—sublime was the shout that echoed afar, the moment she reached the cryic; and now that her safety was sure, the great crowd rustled like a wind-swept wood.

And for whose sake was all this alteration of agony? A poor humble creature, unknown to many even by name—one who had but few friends, nor wished for more—contented to work all day, here, there, anywhere, that she might be able to support her aged mother and little child, and who, on sabbath, took her seat in an obscure pew, set apart for paupers in the kirk!

"Fall back, and give her fresh air," said the old minister of the parish; and the circle of close faces widened round her, lying as in death. "Gi'e me the bonny bit bairn into my arms," cried first one mother, and then another; and it was tenderly handed round the circle of kisses, many of the snooded maidens bathed its face in tears. "There's no a single scratch about the puir innocent; for the eagle, you see, maun ha'e stuck its talons into the long claes and the shawl. Blin, blin maun they be! who see not the finger o' God in this thing."

Hannah started up from her swoon, looking wildly round, and cried, "Oh! the bird, the bird! the eagle, the eagle! The eagle has carried off my bonny wee Walter!—is there nane to pursue? A neighbour put her baby into her breast! and shutting her eyes, and smiting her forehead, the sorely bewildered creature said in a low voice, "Am I wauken? O tell me if I'm wauken; or if a' this be the wark o'a fever, and the delirium o'a dream?"—*Children's Friend.*

BLEMISHES IN A CHRISTIAN.—You would not like to see your own likeness splashed with mud, or covered with dust; so God does not mind to see your soul defiled with sin, when he has made it reflect his image.

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