

Our Young Folks.

An Ower True Story.

A long, long way from here, across the wide ocean and many mountains and rivers, lies a lovely little valley, all hemmed in by high, wild hills and mountains—many of them bare and rocky, with sharp precipitous sides. The valley is—or rather was—a large flourishing village, or little town, in which lived about eight or nine thousand people. These people were chiefly peasants, who lived by cultivating the fertile sides of the valley, in which they sowed wheat and rye and other grain, or had little vineyards and plantations of mulberry trees. They were a happy, contented people, quite satisfied with their simple houses and dresses, and quiet country fare, and happy united family life, worshipping God as we do, and believing in Christ as their Saviour, though their churches and services are not exactly like ours, and would seem strange to American children. In the grey stone houses, which were large and roomy, though very simply furnished—we should perhaps think them very bare—lived very large families indeed, for it was the custom for married sons to bring their wives home to their father's house, and for all to live together—so that under one roof there would frequently be living twelve or fifteen or twenty children—besides grown up people. All these little cousins, playing together, must have made merry happy groups, and they seem to have lived kindly and affectionately together as children should, and every day going to the village school to learn to read and write. Of one of these families we know the names, and as they are names that probably American children never heard before, I will give them here. There was first an old grand-mother, whose name I do not know; and then there were her three tall, handsome sons, Giorghi, Iventolu and Stogen. Their wives were called Reika, Stoganka and Anka; and the children of the three families were Anghel, and Tragan, and Giorghi, and Iventolu, and Ietko, and Assan and Boydan, Sonka, Gingka, Marika and Reika—some of these being very little children—one or two probably babes. Their grand-mother thought them beautiful children, and good children too, and they were all very happy together.

Well, this last spring, when we were all rejoicing that the winter was gone, and the trees were putting out their young leaves in the soft balmy air—the people in the valley were rejoicing too, that the snow had all melted away from the mountain sides around, and that their hills were growing green again. The little waterfalls that dashed over the granite rocks sparkled gladly in the bright sunshine—the buds were opening on the vines and the mulberry trees, the cattle wandered in the fresh green pastures, contentedly chomping the tender herbage—the children shouted with delight as they gathered wild flowers among the rocks and made them into garlands or posies, and the men were busy sowing the crops which they hoped would yield them bounteous harvests when autumn came. There were rumours of war and insurrection in the air, and some of the restless spirits of this valley, as of others, had perhaps gone to take part in the impending conflict. But the people generally were going on quietly with their ordinary peaceful avocations, only desiring to live in peace and quiet—when one day as the children came home from school, a large force of Bashi-bazouks—a kind of fierce, half-civilized troops sent out by Turkey against her rebellious provinces—appeared in the distance, coming against the village with hostile demonstrations. The villagers knew well how cruel and rapacious these soldiers are, and they naturally at first thought of defending themselves and their families. All their weapons of defence were hurriedly brought out; and for a day or two there was fighting, brave enough to show the commander of these forces that so long as they had their arms the villagers would not be easily conquered. So he summoned a conference, and promised, by all that he held most sacred, that if the people would give up their arms to him, not a hair of their heads should be harmed. They believed him, as people who are true themselves are apt to believe others, and they all peacefully surrendered their weapons. Then when they had thus been made utterly defenceless, the Turkish Commander demanded all their money. They had no choice but to comply, and so all the little hoards which they had been frugally saving from the proceeds of their industry were brought out and given up to be used in carrying on a fierce and cruel war against their fellow-countrymen. What followed next is too horrible for you to hear or me to tell. Suffice it to say, that of all the horrible, cruel, fiendish massacres ever perpetrated, none perhaps was more cruel, more horrible, more fiendish than this. All day long that lovely valley echoed to pitiful wails, and shrieks, and cries for mercy to ruthless hearts that knew none. The little children were killed at their play or in the arms of their mothers, just as were the babes at Bethlehem eighteen hundred years ago. The voice of Rachel was heard "weeping for her children," where indeed it was not silenced in death. Aged parents, and tender babes, and blooming innocent girls—all were alike pitilessly sacrificed, when their protectors had been slain—the worst tortures being reserved for the gentlest and most defenceless.

After that, a great and awful silence fell upon the little valley. There were no more cries and sobs; no more fighting; neither were there any more people going to their daily work, nor children playing in the streets. The corn and rye that had been sown grew and waved green in the sunshine, and then the golden ears ripened and bent heavily on their stalks, but no step of the reaper came near to gather them in. Those vine blossoms grew and disappeared, and their lowing was no longer heard. Save the occasional howl of a wild dog, or the note of a bird, there was no sound or sign of life in all the beautiful valley; for the few people whose lives had been spared had fled from the spot in such terror that they never dared to return to their ruined and desolated homes.

At last, three months afterwards, an English officer who had heard about this wicked deed, and was determined to investigate the truth of what he had heard, made a journey to the place, and with him came some of the poor refugees, taking advantage of the protection his presence afforded. When he reached the spot he beheld horrors greater than his mind could have conceived. The valley was really a valley of "dry bones." Wherever he went he trod amid poor human remains. The ruined houses were strewn with all that remained of their inmates, and the church which had so often echoed to hymns of praise and the voice of prayer was filled with the ashes of those who had crowded into it for refuge, and been burned alive by their fiendish enemies. So was the school-house, where two hundred women and children had taken refuge. The house in which had lived Anghel, and Tragan and Giorghi, and their little brothers and sisters, was like the rest, a heap of bones and ruins, with only the poor old grand-mother left to return with the English officer, to mourn—she could not weep—over her desolated home. Here there had lived a man who had a little blind brother, and this poor man wept like a child when he revisited the spot where his little blind brother had been cruelly killed, and could not be comforted even by being reminded that the child had gone to God to be blind no longer. Wherever the English officer went he walked among bones and skeletons, and heard the poor women wailing in heart-breaking tones over their lost homes and children. Then he wrote an account of all he had heard and seen, and sent it to England, where it has roused many of the people to an inexpressible indignation against the wicked and cruel Turks, who carry on war in such a fiendish way. And one brave, good man, Mr. Gladstone, who has always taken up the cause of the oppressed, has written a pamphlet to stir up the English nation against even seeming to support their alliance, a power capable of permitting such fiendish atrocities.

Now, why should you be saddened with so terrible a tale? Because, in the first place, it is well that you should know what Turkish tyranny is, and that, as a power, it is as cruel and blood-thirsty as it always has been. In the next place—to teach you what horrible wickedness our corrupt human nature is capable of when unrenewed by God's grace and untaught by His Word. And in the third place, to show you what the religion called Mohammedanism is, though some people who should know better have called it "an almost unmitigated blessing, and better for some of the people who own its sway than even Christianity would be." Now these fierce and wicked soldiers had been taught to believe that if they killed a certain number of "infidels," as they call Christians, they would go to heaven in spite of all their wickedness. And so, in killing these poor women and helpless babes, they thought they were doing what would secure for them the heaven of sensual pleasure for which they longed. Is it not sad that they should so cruelly deceive themselves, for unless they are brought to repent of their sins, they are far more to be pitied than the poor people whom they slew. And should we not, all of us, be thankful that we have been taught to live under the sway of a religion which tells us how our hearts and lives are to be purified, and where we are to get the grace we need; and which shows us the gracious face of Him who reveals to us the Father, and taught men to love one another, instead of one that falsely offers a world of sinful self-indulgence to be attained by cruel and bloody deeds. And if we gratefully rejoice in the blessing for ourselves, we shall earnestly seek to extend it to others. The terrible record of the massacre at Batak and elsewhere of Bulgarian Christians should quicken the interest of every man, woman and child in Christian missions, especially in Mohammedan countries. Even children can do something—besides giving pennies to their missionary boxes—to hasten the time when such things shall be no longer possible. If every Christian child would but make the words "Thy kingdom come" a heart-felt prayer that the kingdoms of the world might soon become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, our faith warrants us in believing that this world advance that blessed time when we shall no longer see "the garment rolled in blood," nor hear the "confused voice" of the battle—but when the Prince of Peace shall rule from shore to shore, "and they shall not hurt nor destroy in my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

A. M. M.

The Drunkard's Baby.

The Richmond Advocate tells a touching story of a little girl, just three years old, and endowed with unusual sprightliness and loveliness both of person and disposition, who had been so terrified by the drunkenness of her father that she cried out to a friend who was taking leave of her mother, "O please take me home with you, and hide me so papa can't find me." What a world of woe is contained in the plaint of this poor babe! And what a tragedy in home-life it reveals. The most loving thing in all the world, the most trusting, the most confiding, and the most innocent in its helplessness, is made to turn in an agony of apprehension from the one on whose bosom she should naturally rest in perfect truthfulness, sure of his protecting love. Rum had converted him into an object of fear, almost of aversion. O rum, who can tell the pitiful scenes for which thou art responsible—the love thou hast quenched, the hopes thou hast wrecked, the hearts thou hast broken, the homes thou hast desolated, the graves thou hast dug! Think of these baby hands raised in piteous appeal, strikers like rods of iron on your hearts. Think of these quivering baby lips and overflowing baby eyes, ye who sell that which makes drunken fathers and causes all this woe, and be warned, lest in the last great day many women and little children shall say to you, "We owe the untold wretchedness and agony of our lives to you; our blood be upon your skirts."

John Hewitt—A Missionary Martyr.

Seventeen years ago, a young lad in Ulster went into his room one evening to speak with God. It was the evening of a Communion Sabbath—his first Communion: he was full of joy and faith, and he wrote out a covenant with God. In this he gave himself up to God's will; he would go where Christ called him; he would leave all to follow Him; and he pleaded for grace to be true to his promise. He went to college, where he made many friends. His teachers and companions thought more of him the better they knew him, and they loved him. One thing they all saw in him—his faith in Jesus; and that is the best thing that our friends can see in us.

Soon after leaving college, John Hewitt was asked by the people of Muckamore to be their minister. The congregation there soon loved him as much as his friends at college, and the same love followed him afterwards to another congregation at Whitmore. He was happy in his life; it was pleasant to him to work for Christ; and every one who saw him at his work thought how useful he would be, and saw how happy he was.

At this time a sorrow had come over our little Church in India. Mr. Dixon, a brave young missionary, had died of fever. One after another at home was asked to go out and take his place, but no one stirred. Then some of the other missionaries fell sick, and still no one would move to their help; and this went on for many, many months.

Mr. Hewitt was thinking about this all the time. A college friend of his was now a missionary in Gujarat, and wrote to him that the need was very great. He thought about it the more. He remembered the promise he had made—that he would go wherever Christ would ask him—that he would leave all to follow Christ. He knew that in Ulster every one might go to a Sabbath-school, and hear a minister preach, but that there were so few ministers in Gujarat that thousands upon thousands could never hear about Jesus, but would live and die worshipping their idols. At last he made up his mind to go to India—that this was what Christ was asking of him; and one evening, during the General Assembly of 1874, he rose up and said so to the vast crowd that filled the place of meeting. They were greatly touched, for they felt that all his heart was in what he said, and that he loved the Mission for the Lord Jesus sake.

The children remember how he went out to India that autumn, and two other young men of the same spirit with him; and the missionaries rejoiced, and felt how good God had been in giving them so much help, for the help had not come a day too soon.

Mr. Hewitt was sent to Borsud; and round about Borsud there are a great many of the Dherds, a low and poor people, who have been very glad to hear the Gospel, and many of whom now worship God. Indeed there are so many, that small churches must be built in a number of the villages. Some of these churches the poor people will try to build as far as they can themselves, but there are others that Christian men and women at home intend to build out of their own money, and make a present of to the Dherds. And I am sure the Sabbath-school children everywhere will be glad to think that they can do just the same; and that if they are all very busy, and try to save their pennies till they have five hundred pounds, they themselves can make a present of two churches, and that the people will always think of these two as the Children's Churches. Well, a Christian merchant in Belfast is building the first church, at a village called Khadama—that is, he is paying the cost of it. But the place is very far from any large town, so that it is difficult to get a person to look after the building; and Mr. Hewitt, who, by being very earnest and steady and patient, had learned the language quickly, went last March to look after the building himself. He lived in a tent just beside the workmen, so that he might be always on the spot. But in April the weather is very hot—hotter than our hottest summers—and a tent is no great protection. Delays carried the work on into this hot month, and Mr. Hewitt wrote from his tent that the heat was not that of the sun merely, but that the wind scorched like infernal fire. In the end of April he went with Mrs. Hewitt to Bombay for a change. A next news that came was of his illness, at a very soon after this there came the sad news that he had died of fever.

God sent him many kind friends. One of them gave up a beautiful home he had by the sea to Mr. Hewitt's use; another was a doctor, a medical missionary, who watched over him night and day. But no kindness or no skill could save his life; and one Sabbath morning, Mr. Montgomery, our oldest missionary, hurried to his bedside. He was quite clear and calm. A text that hung on the wall before him was a great comfort; it assured him that *My grace is sufficient for thee*. He bade good-bye to his young wife, and talked of the meeting they would have in heaven. He spoke of what would be done after his death, and asked that a telegram would be sent to each of the Mission Stations, that all the missionaries might know. Up to the last he was able to say, *Jesus is with me still*, indeed they were his last words. And then, on Sabbath the 2nd of July, at noon, "his spirit gently passed away."

The funeral in India follows quickly upon death; and at six o'clock on Monday morning the little procession started from the house for the beautiful cemetery of Sevrée, by the sea. "Heavy clouds rolled across the sky, and now and then the rain fell in torrents; but it ceased as the missionaries lowered the coffin into the grave; and when they left it there, they felt like Abraham, to whom God had promised the whole land of Canaan, and who owned no more of it than a burial-place,* and they were fully persuaded that what God had promised He was able to perform."

Mr. Hewitt went out to India on the work of the Lord Jesus, and he died in that work; and when we are to die, there is nothing better that we can be doing than

* Gen. xlii. 17-20.

† Rom. iv. 21.

working for the Lord Jesus Christ. He will not write any more letters for the readers of "Daybreak," for the Lord has written for him, and he has gone to join the spirits of just men made perfect. Yet the children will not forget what he wrote, and how, in May, he told them of the poor blind men who sing and speak for Jesus among the Dherds. Would it not be a simple way to keep so good a man in memory if the children did what he asked, and if six Sabbath-schools came forward to support, each, one of these blind colporteurs?

And now the Mission in India is weakened again. It needs more and more men like John Hewitt. Are there not boys and girls too who will be as ready as he was to leave every thing for Christ when they are older—who will long to do in India or in China what he longed to do—whose hearts are already making a covenant with the Lord Jesus that they will go where he calls them? W. FLEMING STEVENSON.

Underneath.—Deut. xxxiii. 27.

Moses, in his last address to the children of Israel, said, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. How beautiful this picture! God is not above us merely, extending over us the arm of His power, saying to us, 'Reach up and take hold upon me.' If so, we might stretch out our arms to the utmost and not be able to grasp him; or having taken hold upon him we might grow faint and weary, and lose our hold."

God is not before us merely, stretching out his arm to show us the way, and to clear it of obstacles, saying, "Follow me. I will guide and guard you." If so, we might not find strength in ourselves to obey. We are spiritually weak, and the path of life is steep and narrow. It is easier to see where we should go than to go. Many a soul would gladly follow Christ, but so totters and stumbles, that it is tempted to give up in despair.

God is not merely beside us to keep us from tottering and stumbling. He does not say merely, "My arms encircle you. They hold you on the right hand and on the left." Nay, he meets the sense of utter weakness that comes over us in the hour when temptation would drive us to despair. He says: "I know that you are a more babe; you can not climb; you can not even walk. Hence I have put underneath you the everlasting arms." As a mother puts her loving arms not only around, but under her babe, as she holds it to her heart, so God holds and upholds them that trust in him. Is there a more tender and cheering statement than this among the wondrous revelations of our Father's love?

The arms underneath us are "everlasting." They are the arms of Omnipotence. They will never grow weary. The harder we lean on them the better. It is easy for God to uphold us. He loves to do so. The greater our faith in him the more abundant his grace to us.

Men, in worldly affairs, often get discouraged. They say "the bottom has fallen out." "The very foundations are gone." But the Christian knows that whatever else may fail, there is something beneath that can not. Under all the things that come and go abide those everlasting arms. Even when earth itself recedes; when the soul must go forth from every familiar scene and loving human friend into the great unknown, it need not tremble, and it can not fall, for underneath are the everlasting arms. They will bear it across the cold river to its home on the other side. Whenever temptation assails us let us think of those everlasting arms. Let us rest our weak and weary spirits upon them. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee." Isa. xxi. 3.—Herald and Presbyter.

Mr. Ruskin and Bible-Reading.

To any one anxious to know the secret of Mr. Ruskin's clearness and beauty of style, we would point out the following little bit of autobiography in the *For's Claviger*: Mr. Ruskin, in continuing his autobiography, notes especially "how much I owe to my mother for having so exercised me in the Scriptures as to make me grasp them in what my correspondent would call their 'concrete whole'; and, above all, taught me to reverence them as transcending all thought, and adorning all conduct. This she effected, not by her own sayings or personal authority, but simply by compelling me to read the book thoroughly for myself. As soon as I was able to read with fluency she began a course of Bible work with me, which never ceased till I went to Oxford. She read alternate verses with me, watching at first every intonation of my voice, and correcting the false ones, till she made me understand the verse, if within my reach, rightly and energetically. It might be beyond me altogether; that she did not care about; but she made sure that as soon as I got hold of it at all I should get hold of it by the right end. In this way she began with the first verse in Genesis, and went straight through to the last verse of the Apocalypse; hard names, numbers, Levitical law, and all; and began again at Genesis next day; if a name was hard, the better the exercise in pronunciation; if a chapter was tiresome, the better the lesson in faith, that there was some use in its being outspoken. After our chapters, (from two or three a day, according to their length, the first thing after breakfast, and no interruption from servants allowed—none from visitors, who either joined in the reading or had to stay upstairs—and none from any visitings or excursions, except real travelling,) I had to learn a few verses by heart, or repeat, to make sure I had not lost something of what was already known; and, with the chapters above enumerated, I had to learn the whole body of the fine old Scottish paraphrases, which are good, melodious, and forceful verse, and to which, together with the Bible itself, I owe the first cultivation of my ear in sound. It is strange that, of all the pieces of the Bible which my mother thus taught me, that which cost me most to learn, and which was, to my child's mind, chiefly repulsive—the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm—has now become of all the most precious to me in its overflowing and glorious passion of love for the law of God."

Home Adornment.

Pause a moment, and listen to the echo of home adornment. The word home gives a certain sense of security to the mind. What a sweet world it is, and how much is contained therein! Many there are who know not its meaning. The object of home is to be the centre, the pivot on which the family life turns. Home is not a name, nor a form, nor a routine. It is a spirit, a presence, a principle. The first requisite is to make it so attractive that none of its inmates shall care to linger long outside its limits. All legitimate means should be employed to this end, and no effort should be spared that can contribute to it. Many houses called homes, kept with neatness by painstaking, anxious women, are so oppressive in their neatness as to exclude all home feeling from their spotless precincts. The name of home is synonymous with personal freedom and relaxation from care. Cheerfulness is more essential to home than all the spotlessness that ever shone. Therefore we should adorn our homes with love, sunshine, and flowers. Nothing is more remote from selfishness than a moral expenditure in building a home and adorning it with all that makes it beautiful without and lovely within. Children that are surrounded by books and cultivated natural objects become refined in thought by familiarity with art. Whatever expenditures refine the family and lift it into a higher sphere of living, are really spent upon the whole community as well.

Communities need example to excite ambition. Fine grounds not only confer pleasure on all who visit them, but they incite ambitious men to improve their homes. Every element that adds to the pleasure and refinement of the family puts honor and dignity upon it. Whoever makes home seem to the younger dearest and happier, is a public benefactor. Then, dear friends, let us adorn our homes with instructive books, music, and beautiful pictures. In so doing we promote not only our own welfare, but encourage literature, music, and art. You believe with me that a farmer's home may possess much grace and beauty, and be somewhat suggestive of high hopes, as well as others. The realities of a noble life here are so easily attainable, that every country dweller may adorn his home, and cultivate his appreciation of the beautiful in art and nature.

In the adornment of our home we should not only care for the social position of our children, but for their personal comfort. We should cultivate charity, cheerfulness and love. Charity is placed at the head of all Christian graces. Cheerfulness and smiles are the very essence of existence. What sunshine is to the flowers, smiles are to humanity. They are but trifles, to be sure, but scattered along life's pathway, the good they do is inconceivable. How often do we see persons who reserve their smiles and courtesies for society, while they hurt and wound the feelings of the dear, loving friends at home.

Then do not adorn your homes
Only with wealth and pleasure,
For we can give our loved ones
A far greater treasure.

If we give them smiles and love,
When we meet them day by day,
It will win their loving hearts,
And cheer them on their way.

Prussian Schools.

It has often been remarked that one reason why the Prussians were victorious over the French five years ago was because the Prussian soldiers were much better educated, and therefore more intelligent. Education in Prussia is universal and compulsory. There are very few Prussians, indeed, who have not passed through the common-school course. This is because the law requires that every child shall be sent to school. If a parent neglects to send his boy or girl, he is fined; and if he continues this neglect, his fine is increased, and he is even sometimes put in prison.

Every town and village throughout Prussia is obliged to have schools, supported by taxes levied upon their inhabitants. No matter how poor the parent is, he must send his children to be educated. A small fee of about two cents a week is charged for each scholar; and if the parent cannot pay even this small sum his children are taught free.

The village schools differ from those of the towns in the studies taught. In the village schools the pupils are taught to write in German characters, reading, geography, history, and the four rules of arithmetic. In the town or city schools they are taught to write in Roman text (such as we use), and advance in arithmetic to fractions and the rule of three.

Children are only compelled to attend the town or common schools. It is as the parent likes about sending his children to the higher schools. In all there are eleven grades of schools in Prussia, all supported by the State or by public taxation.

The lowest grade is that of the common village or town schools, of which we have already spoken. Next come what are called "citizen schools," in which further progress is made in the ordinary branches begun in the common schools. The third grade is that of the "real schools," in which languages, arts, and sciences are taught.

The seminaries are one step higher. These are a kind of normal schools, wherein young men and women are trained to teach in the common schools. Then, in order, come "colleges," industrial schools, schools of architecture, schools of mines, schools of agriculture, veterinary schools, and finally the universities.

The teachers in the public schools are considered as state officials, and they, as well as the schools, are all under the control of the minister of public instruction. The salaries paid to teachers in Prussia are very small. The highest paid in Berlin is masters is only \$600 a year, while the lowest is only \$200. The cost of living in Prussia is much less than in this country.

In all there are about 28,000 common schools in Prussia, with over 3,000,000 pupils.—*Youth's Companion*.