

THE BROKEN SWING.

"Papa, may I have a swing to-day?" said a little boy to his father, who was just going out.

"Not to-day, my boy," the father replied; "but you shall to-morrow."

To-morrow seemed a long time to the little boy, who was not willing to wait so long.

A little time after his father was gone out, the child stood at the parlour window; the swing hung between two trees at the bottom of the garden.

"Nobody will know," thought he to himself: "I'll have just one swing."

He ran down into the garden, and got up into the swing; and, as he flew backwards and forwards through the air, was saying, "How unkind of papa not to let me swing," when the rope broke, and he fell to the ground. His mamma and the servants heard his cry, and ran to help him; and when he was carried into the house, it was found he had broken his arm.

When the little boy saw how grieved his kind mamma was, he felt very sorry that he had done wrong. Then the doctor gave him so much pain in putting the bone right. But even this was not so bad as when his father came home in the evening, with a new rope in his hand for the swing, that the boy he loved so well should have the promised treat without danger.

My dear children, your parents will often refuse you things which you may wish for very much, because they are not good or safe for you. Don't ask the reason "Why?" but trust them; and when you grow older, you will find your Heavenly Father, who is the "giver of all good," will sometimes not give all you ask, or keep back something you would wish to have. He, too, knows what is best: trust in Him. In the end it will be all for good. There are many things we want, which, if God gave them, would be like the little boy's broken swing.

A LESSON FROM THE FLOWERS.

"Dear mamma," said a lovely little girl, "why do you have so few of those beautiful double almonds in the garden? You have hardly a bed where there is not a tuft of violets, and they are so much plainer! what can be the reason?" "My dear child," said the mother, "gather me a bunch of each. The little girl soon returned. "Smell them, my love," said her mother, "and see which is the sweetest." The child could scarcely believe herself, that the lovely almond had no scent; while the plain violet had a delightful odor. "Well, my child, which is the sweetest?" "Oh, dear mother, it is this little violet!" "Well, you know now, my child, why I prefer the violet to the beautiful almond, Beauty without fragrance, in flowers, is as worthless as beauty without gentleness and good temper

in girls. When any of those people who speak without reflection, may say to you, "What charming blue eyes! What beautiful curls! What a fine complexion!" without knowing whether you have any good qualities, and without thinking of your defects and failings, which everybody is born with, remember then, my little girl, the almond blossom; and remember, also, your affectionate mother may not be there to tell you, that *beauty without gentleness and good temper is worthless.*"

THE NUMBER OF LANGUAGES.

The least learned are aware that there are many languages in the world, but the actual number is probably beyond the dreams of ordinary people. The geographer, Babi, enumerated eight hundred and sixty, which are entitled to be considered as distinct languages, and five thousand which may be regarded as dialects. Adulguns, another modern writer on this subject, reckons up three thousand and sixty four languages and dialects existing, and which have existed. Even after we have allowed either of these as the number of languages, we must acknowledge the existence of almost infinite minor diversities; for almost every province has a tongue more or less peculiar, and this we may well believe to be the case throughout the world at large. It is said there are little islands, lying close together in the South Sea, the inhabitants of which do not understand each other. Of the eight hundred and sixty distinct languages enumerated by Babi, fifty three belong to Europe, one hundred and fourteen to Africa, one hundred and twenty-three to Asia, four hundred and seventeen to America, one hundred and seventeen to Oceania,—by which term he distinguishes the vast number of islands stretching between Hindoostan and South America.

A PERSIAN PRINCESS.

Children, more especially those of the higher and wealthier classes, are but too apt to be indifferent to, or at least forgetful of, the feelings and sufferings of those beneath them, and to consider them as formed for their use and comfort alone. This, it is feared, is not confined to the children of worldly parents, but is too often met with among those of Christian families, who are taught that we are all equal in the eyes of God.

May the following instance of native kindness in a little Persian Princess lead every Christian child who reads it to be kind and considerate to those who serve them.

A soldier related to me a touching anecdote of a very young member of the late Princess Royal's (Abbas Meerza) family,

"I was sentinel," said he. "one bitter-winter's night at his highness's quarters, before the harem, where there were many of the women and children, when a little girl, his royal highness's daughter, put her head out between the serperdahs (canvas walls), and said to me, 'Serbaz (soldier), are you not cold?' 'Very cold,' said I. 'And are you not hungry, too?' asked the little princess. 'Very hungry, your highness,' said I, 'but I am so cold I could not even hold a bit of bread, nor eat it, if I had it.' 'Have patience, wait,' said the little girl, and, disappearing from the serperdahs, she ran to the nazir, or steward, and would not let him have rest till she got food of all sorts, and a good jibbek, or great coat, which she made them give me, with a golden ducat, saying, 'here, serbaz, here is a ducat for you, and a great coat to keep you from the cold.' Oh!" added the man, "it went to my very heart; I can never forget it."

CORK.

What is Cork?—It is the thick, spongy, external bark of a species of oak-tree, which grows abundantly in Portugal, Spain, and the South of France, and Italy.

How it is procured.—The tree when arrived at a certain age, sheds its bark naturally, but the cork is then inferior in quality to that which is cut from the tree. The removal of the bark does not injure the tree; indeed, it is said to render it still more vigorous; every successive cutting being of a finer quality.

Its Preparation.—After the pieces of bark have been carefully detached, they are first steeped in water, and then placed over a fire of coal, so that all the cracks and blemishes may be filled up with soot and dust. They are then loaded with heavy weights till they are perfectly flat and even; and afterwards dried and packed in bales for exportation.

Its Use.—It is chiefly made into bungs, and corks for bottles, for which purpose it is well fitted, as it is soft and elastic, and may be compressed or squeezed into a narrow opening, after which it again expands to its utmost extent, and then fills up every possible crevice, so as to exclude the external air. Cork is also used for shoe soles, buoys, swimming-jackets, floats for fishing-lines and nets, and the bottom of the drawers in entomological cabinets. The parings of cork are burnt to make Spanish black.

When first employed.—The use of cork appears to have been known at a very early period. The Romans, according to the account given by their naturalist, Pliny, used it not only to stop up the openings in casks, but as soles for the winter shoes of women. It was about the middle of the fifteenth century that it was first employed in England for stopping glass bottles.