



THE ESCAPED BALLOON.

GIRLS AS PACKHORSES.

No sooner are the Swiss girls large enough to possess the requisite physical strength than they are set to the most servile work the land affords, says a traveller. The child has a pannier basket fitted to her shoulders at the earliest possible moment, and she drops it only when old age, premature but merciful, robs her of power to carry it longer.

I have seen sweet little girls of twelve or fourteen staggering down a mountain side, or a long rough pathway, under the weight of bundles of faggots as large as their bodies, which they no sooner dropped than they hurried back for others. I have seen girls of fifteen years, barefooted and bareheaded, in the blistering rays of an August sun, breaking up the ground by swinging mattocks heavy enough to tax the strength of an able-bodied man. I have known a young miss no older than these to be employed as a porter for carrying the baggage of travellers up and down the steepest mountain path in all the region round about. She admitted it was sometimes very hard to take another step, but she must do it. And she carried such an amount of baggage! A stout-

limbed guide is protected by the law, so that he cannot be compelled to carry above twenty-five pounds; but the limit to the burden put upon girls is their inability to stand up under anything more. But the burden increases with the age and strength of the burden-bearers, till by the time the girls come to womanhood, there is no sort of menial toil in which they do not bear a hand, and quite commonly the chief hand.

AS A LITTLE CHILD.

It was difficult for Jesus' disciples to understand that he was not to be, as they had hoped and believed, a great King on this earth, one who would conquer their enemies the Romans, and himself reign over the Jews.

Jesus had often tried to explain to them that his kingdom on earth was in the love of his people, and that it was his heavenly Father's will that he should die a very painful, humble death, and go back to prepare a place in his heavenly kingdom for those who love him. Still the disciples did not understand.

One day as they were walking along

one of the Galilee roads, the Master noticed that his friends were arguing hotly over something. When they came to the city of Capernaum, where they were to stay and rest awhile, Jesus asked them, "What was it you were talking of as we came along?"

The disciples were ashamed to answer, for they had been disputing as to which of them would have the highest place when Jesus should set up his kingdom.

But the Master did not need to be told, for he always knew what was in their thoughts, and this time he was very sorry because of what he saw there. Sitting down among them he said gently and sadly, "The man who wants to be first must be willing to work for and wait upon all the others."

Then he called a little child to him. The little one came willingly, for he liked the sweet, strong face and the kind voice of the man who called him.

With his arm about the child, Jesus said: "Whoever loves and trusts me as fully and simply as this little child, not looking for praise or reward, will have the highest honor in my kingdom, which is the kingdom of God on earth and in heaven."

You see how Jesus loves little children and wants them all to love him, and even the smallest of you can show your love to Jesus by doing what he would like you to do.

AN OLD TABLE.

"I have a table,"

Said Arthur to Mabel,

"Three thousand years old;

And though it has stood

So long, 'tis as good

As the finest of gold!"

"Oh, Arthur, your table,

I fear, is a fable,

And you are its knight.

Of course it is round,

But where was it found?

Now tell—honor bright!"

"'Twas found, they say, Mabel,

In the great tower of Babel;

And learned folks say

That wise old Hindus

This table could use

Before Egypt's day!"

"Why, Arthur," said Mabel,

"Do show us this table

That's older than Egypt—

As old as creation!"

"My table is square,

Not round—to be fair.

But why should I show

What all the girls know—

This very old table,

Called Multiplication?"