

Family Circle.

A MOTHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT.

You may derive much encouragement from the fact, that thousands of Christian mothers have tried the faithfulness of God to his promise and have the happiness of witnessing the success of their labors in the conversion of their offspring. The history of the Church of God is full of instances in point. Let us look at one or two. The case of Augustine, one of "the fathers" of the Christian Church, is a striking one. He was one of the brightest ornaments of Christianity in the latter part of the fourth, and the beginning of the fifth century. But up to his twenty eighth year he lived in sin—From his remarkable "Confessions," written by himself after his conversion, we learn that he broke loose from every restraint, and gave himself, up to "work all uncleanness with greediness." He had, however a pious mother; and amidst all his wanderings, her tears and prayers came up for a memorial before God. At length her cry was heard, and the answer came. From her son's own lips she one day received the glad tidings of his conversion to God, and the voice of lamentation was changed into the song of praise. Not long after, as they were journeying together, she said, "My son, what have I to do here any longer? The only thing for which I wished to live was your conversion, and that the Lord has now granted me in an abundant manner." Five days after she was seized with a fever, which, in a few days more wafted her spirit into that blissful region where all tears are for ever wiped away. And the son, for whom she had shed so many tears, and breathed so many prayers, lived to be the admiration of his age, and the means of the conversion of thousands of his fellow-men.

That eminent servant of Christ, John Newton, was the son of a praying mother. Even at the worst period of his life, profane and dissolute as he was, the influence of the pious counsels which he received in childhood, was never obliterated. He has himself left it on record, that in the midst of the most daring wickedness, the remembrance of his mother's prayers haunted him continually; and that at times these impressions were so vivid, that "he could almost feel his mother's soft hand resting on his head, as when she used to kneel beside him in early boyhood, and plead for God's blessing on his soul." There is no reason to doubt that these impressions, received in childhood, and retaining their hold of the spirit in after life, were among the principal means by which he was arrested in his career of sin, and made a zealous and successful propagator of that gospel which he had so long despised.

The pious Dr Doddridge, whose "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul" is said to have been instrumental in the conversion of some thousands, was deeply impressed with a sense of Divine things long before he could read, by means of some Scripture prints on the Dutch tiles of the chimney, which were employed by a pious mother for the purpose of directing his attention to the important truths of religion.

A great and good man said, a little before his death, "I think I should have been an infidel, had not my mother taught me, when a child, to kneel by my bed and say, "Our Father who art in heaven."

Richard Cecil says of himself, "I had a pious mother, who dropped things in my way. I could never rid myself of them. I liked to be an infidel in company rather than when alone. I could not divest myself of my better principles. My mother would talk to me, and weep as she talked. I flung out of the house with an oath, but I wept too when I got into the street."—This child of many prayers and admonitions became a burning and a shining light in the Church of God.

A faithful and zealous minister of Christ gives the following account of himself in writing to a friend:—"As to my labors, to a spectator I may appear to do much; to myself, it appears scarcely anything. Ah! sir, you know but little of my obligations to almighty grace and redeeming love. I look back with dismay and horror to the time when I led the van in wickedness. Regardless of the prayers and groans of a pious mother, I rushed upon the thick bosses of God's buckler."

Even now my heart bleeds at the thought of the nights, when mad with intoxication, I have returned to my tender mother, between two and three o'clock, burst open the window, poured out a torrent of abuse, and sunk upon the bed a monster of iniquity. Next morning I have been aroused by a mournful voice, smothered with heavy sobs and tears. I have listened, and, to my inexpressible astonishment, found it was my mother pouring out her soul in this language: "O Lord! Oh, mercy, mercy, mercy upon my poor child!—Lord I will not cannot give him up; he is still my child. Surely he is not yet out of the reach of mercy. O Lord, hear, hear, I beseech thee, a mother's prayers! Spare, oh spare, for Christ's sake, the son of her old age! O Absalom, my son! O Absalom, my son, my son!" Yes! precious mother, thy prayers are now answered, and thy child, thy worthless, guilty child still lives a monument of boundless grace and incomprehensible mercy."

But why should I multiply examples? Time

would fail me were I to attempt to set before you the tithe of what is on record to prove the faithfulness of the Hearer of the mother's prayer. Let one fact more suffice. It is one which speaks volumes in proof of our position. An inquiry was instituted in the United States in six theological seminaries, belonging to three different denominations of Christians, by which it was ascertained, that of 507 students who were being educated for the ministry, no fewer than 428 were children of praying mothers.

Christian mothers! be of good courage! You are surrounded with a great cloud of witnesses—witnesses to the faithfulness of God's promise—witnesses to the power of believing prayer—witnesses to the efficacy of sound religious instruction. Go forward in your work with holy confidence. Great and many indeed, are your difficulties, but greater is He that is for you than all that can be against you. "Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for with the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." "In due time you shall reap if you sownot."

May the Lord grant you grace to be faithful, and may you at last have the unspeakable happiness of entering, along with all who have been committed to your care, into "the heavenly holy place," there to celebrate for ever the praise of redeeming love, and to serve God day and night without ceasing.

INFLUENCE OF A CLEAN HOUSE.

A neat, clean, freshaired, sweet, cheerful, well-arranged, and well-situated house, exercises a moral as well as a physical influence over its inmates, and makes the members of the family peaceable and considerate of the feelings and happiness of each other; the connexion is obvious between the state of mind thus produced, and habits of respect for each other and for those higher duties and obligations which no laws can enforce. On the contrary, a filthy, qualid, noxious dwelling, rendered still more wretched by its noisome st, and in which none of the decencies of life can be obtained, contributes to make its unfortunate inhabitants selfish, sensual, and regardless of the feelings of each other; the constant indulgence of such passions render them reckless and brutal; and the transition is natural to propensities and habits incompatible with a respect for the property of others, or for the laws.—*Com School Journal.*

THE PRIDE OF A YOUNG LADY REPROVED.

Pride, hateful to God, and ruinous to mankind, is one of the foulest and most unseemly vices of our race. Its indulgence converted angels into devils, and has made earth and hell wail with sorrow for nearly six thousand years. It besets and ruins persons of all ranks and ages; but as the young are especially its victims, we submit to their perusal the following incident.

"Some years ago, a young lady who was going into a northern county, took a seat in a stage coach. For many miles she rode along; but there was enough to amuse her in the scenery through which she passed, and in the pleasing anticipations that occupied her mind. She had been engaged as governess for the grandchildren of an earl, and was now travelling to his seat. At midday, the coach stopped at an inn, at which dinner was provided, and she alighted and sat down at the table. An elderly man followed, and sat down also. The young lady arose, rang the bell, and addressing the waiter, said, 'Here is an outside passenger.' The stranger bowed, saying, 'I beg your pardon, madam: I can go into another room,' and immediately he retired. The coach soon afterwards resumed its course, and the passengers their places.

"At length the coach stopped at the gate leading to the castle to which the young lady was going; but there was not such prompt attention as she expected. All eyes seemed directed to the outside passenger, who was preparing to dismount. She beckoned, and was answered, 'As soon as we have attended to his lordship, we will come to you.' A few words of explanation ensued, and, to her dismay, she found that the outside passenger, with whom she had proudly refused to dine, was not only a nobleman, but that very nobleman in whose family she hoped to be an inmate.—What could she do? How could she bear the interview? She felt really ill, and the apology she sent for her non-appearing at the castle was more than pretence.

"The venerable peer was a considerate man, and one who knew the way in which the Scripture often speaks of the going down of the sun. 'We must not allow the night to pass thus,' said he to the countess; 'you must send for her, and we must talk to her before bed-time.' He reasoned with the foolish girl respecting her conduct, insisted on the impropriety of the state of mind that it evinced, assured her that nothing could induce him to allow his children to be taught such notions, refused to accept any apology that did not go the length of acknowledging that the thought was wrong; and when the right impression appeared to be produced, he gave her his hand."

If pride thus indulged against an earthly peer can produce such pain as this poor deluded would-be-somebody had to sustain, who can bear the thought of being accused of pride at the bar of "the King of kings?" Proud youth, loathe thyself before thy Maker, and delay not

to crave of him genuine humility; and if it be thy honor to obtain this boon, ever afterwards wear it as a garment.—J.

Geographic and Historic

SOUTH AFRICAN SKETCHES.

From Danbury's Residence at the Cape of Good Hope,

THE DUTCH AT THE CAPE.

The Cape Dutch in general have a strong dislike to the English, yet I found them tolerably civil, even on my journey back from the frontier, when I was not in company with the Governor. They will not, however, put themselves out of their way for anybody; so that a traveller must conform to their habits and hours, and at whatever time he arrives at a house he must wait for food till the customary meal time of the family. Coffee, indeed, is always ready, and a cup of it is offered to the stranger on his arrival; but they have no notion of making any other preparation for him; nor, perhaps, would it be reasonable to expect this. They eat two plentiful and substantial meals of animal food in the course of the day; one about noon, the other at seven or eight o'clock in the evening. They offer you coffee or tea again in the morning before you start, but seldom anything else as they are not in the habit of eating breakfast.

The national character of the Dutch appears to have been greatly modified in this colony by the abundance of the means of subsistence, the scanty intercourse with strangers, and the system of slavery. The Cape farmers have neither the cleanliness, the industry, nor the love of money, which are said to be characteristic of the Hollanders in their own country. * * *

As to their physical characteristics, the Boer appeared to me, in those districts through which we travelled, to be in general a tall and large limbed race of men; but often with something heavy and ungainly in their movements, as if their joints were not compactly knit. I have heard the same thing remarked of the inhabitants of North Holland. In the district of George, more especially, I was much struck with the almost gigantic stature of many of the young men.

SOUTH AFRICAN VEGETATION.

We travelled from Uitenhage North-eastward to Addo Drift on the Sunday river, twenty-five miles over a hilly country, covered for the most part with low but thick "bush;" the soil a hard clay. Though the general appearance of this kind of country is in some degree monotonous, yet its rich and singular vegetation is very attractive to the eye of a naturalist. The strange, stiff, gaunt forms of the leafless euphorbias, which suggest the idea of some monstrous Indian idols; the aloes, with their spear-like leaves and their scarlet spikes; the pale green foliage of the spekboom (*Portulacaria Afra*), which is said to be the favorite food of the elephant; the crassulas, covered with milk-white blossoms; the cotyledon, with its bluish leaves and bright red flowers; the scarlet geraniums peeping from amidst the other shrubs,—altogether form a combination extremely interesting to a botanical eye, and which must strike every traveller of ordinary habits of observation by its dissimilarity to anything that is to be seen in other countries. There cannot, indeed, be a vegetation more peculiar or of a more marked character.

CAPE TOWN.

Cape Town is about equal in population to Yarmouth in Norfolk; but, being less closely built, probably covers more ground. The main streets are broad and regular, crossing one another at right angles; but they are unpaved, and consequently at this season excessively dusty; many of them are shaded by rows of oak trees, and a canal, at present nearly dry, runs down the whole length of the principal street, which is called the Heergracht. There are no regular foot pavements; but in front of most of the houses are brick terraces, more or less raised above the level of the street: this terrace is called the Stoep, and forms the usual evening lounging-place of the inhabitants. The houses are rather low, always flat roofed, either white washed or painted, with glass windows of numerous small panes.

The mixture of English and foreign in all that meets the eye is one of the striking things in town: a great proportion of the names over the shop doors are English; most of the advertisements, names of trades, and the like, are in our own language, and one meets English faces at every turn: all this makes an odd contrast with the foreign look of the town, and the motley mixture of various nations and colors which inhabit it—Dutch, Malays, Negroes, Hottentots, and intermediate breeds of every shade of color.

All heavy goods, such as wine, timber, &c., are conveyed in long low waggons, drawn by as many as twelve, fourteen, or even more oxen, and driven by a Hottentot, with an immensely long bamboo whip. These waggons are among the most singular objects to the eye of a stranger. Those which carry lighter goods are drawn by horses, and driven often at a smart pace.

Cape Town is defended by a castle of tolerable strength, and some lesser forts. It is exposed to great heat in consequence of its situation, facing the noon-day sun, and immediately backed by naked mountains. But the greatest inconvenience at this season is occasioned by the dust, which is always more or less floating in

the air, and during the prevalence of a strong south-east wind is almost intolerable; it dims the whole air, penetrates everywhere, clogs one's pores, fills one's eyes, disfigures one's clothes, spoils books and furniture; the trunks of the trees in the town look as if they had been painted with red ochre, and the verdure of the leaves is half-hidden by the same red incrustation.

MUSIC OF NATURE.

Among the Japanese there exists a tradition which relates that their first idea of music arose from the circumstance of one of their ancestors having heard the air make a melodious sound as it passed through the hollow of a bamboo tube, which happened to be hanging accidentally from a tree. It induced him to imitate it. Thus, perhaps, may be derived the fable, that music descended from heaven. They have a very curious species of Æolian instrument formed of bamboo, very common to some of the Australasian isles, which emits as well some very fine tones as elicits some discordant notes.

THE BOOBY.

The English name for a genus of birds in the family *Pelicanide*. These birds derive their name from their apathy in allowing themselves to be captured, or knocked on the head, without an attempt to escape, whence their stupidity has become proverbial. Thousands breed on the island of Ascension, on the Bahamas, on the islets of the coast of Guiana, along the shores of New Spain and the Caraccas as well as of Brazil. They are found also on the Island of Rodriguez, the Alcranes, &c.

Though well furnished with oars, the Booby seldom swims, and never dives. Its mode of taking its prey is by dashing down from on high with unerring aim upon those fishes which frequent the surface, and instantly rising again into the air.

Nuttall says:—"The Boobies have a domestic enemy more steady though less sanguinary in his persecutions than man. This is the Frigate Pelican or Man of War's Bird, who, with a keen eye, descrying his humble vassal at a distance, pursues him without intermission, and obliges him, by blows with his wings and his bill, to surrender his finny prey, which the pirate instantly swallows. The Booby utters a loud cry, something in sound betwixt that of the raven and the goose; and this wailing is heard more particularly when pursued by the Frigate Bird, or when the assemblage happens to be seized with any sudden panic." Feuillee says—

"When the Boobies return in bands towards the evening from their fishing, the Frigate Birds are in waiting, and, dashing upon them compel them to cry as if for succour, in doing which they disgorge some of the fish which they are carrying to their young ones; and thus do the Frigate Birds profit by the fishing of the Boobies, which they then leave to pursue their route." Leguat thus writes:—"The Boobies came to repose at night upon the island of Rodriguez; and the Frigates, which are large birds, so called from their lightness and speed in sailing through the air, wait for the Boobies every evening on the tops of the trees. They rise on the approach of the latter very high in the air, and dart down upon them like a falcon on his prey. The Booby, struck in this manner by the Frigate, gives up his fish, which the Frigate catches in the air. The Booby often shrieks, and shows his unwillingness to abandon his prey; but the Frigate mocks at his cries, and, rising, dashes down upon him anew, till he has compelled the Booby to obey."—*The National Cyclopaedia of Useful Knowledge Vol. III.*

VOLUNTARY SLAVES.

About Quillmanne and Luabo, and, indeed, in all the Portuguese possessions on the coast, are numbers of Colonos, or free blacks, who hire themselves out as wood cutters, machila bearers, or labourers, and such is the degraded state of society, that these men are taunted by the slaves as having no white man to look after them, and see them righted when oppressed.

They are kept in subjection by a very severe and separate code of laws, and if they break or injure anything which they cannot pay for, they become slaves. After the death of Moraes, Azvedo's father-in-law, who was a very severe master, no less than eighteen slaves, who had deserted and escaped into the interior, returned to the estate and resumed their work, preferring slavery to the iron rule of the chiefs of their own color, others come frequently to sell themselves, and to buy them is the greatest boon a good master can bestow, and their price is from three to five pieces of clouty or dungaree. Azvedo relates an anecdote of a man who day after day had been importuning him to take him as a slave, and, when he found that he could not get rid of his freedom by fair means, he watched the opportunity whilst Azvedo's little boy was walking in the garden with his nurse, and tore the child's frock, which created a great hubbub and noise, and the father running out, found his son dreadfully frightened, and the black rolling in the dirt, according to the custom of his country. Embracing his feet, he cried out, that as he had refused to buy him, he had torn his child's frock, and having nothing to pay for it, he was his slave by the law of the country; so seeing he was so determined, he gave him his clouty, and he has worked away steadily ever since.—*Barnard's Cruise in the Mozambique Channel.*