

do it? And again the cry arose, "Oh, what shall I do? What shall I do?"

She looked out at the flowers. The storm was over, the sun shining again, and every thing looked sparkling and pretty with raindrops. How cool and pleasant it appeared! She wished she were there—anywhere than where she was—anywhere so long as she could be rid of her companion. She could have no message from the queen while in the grotto, she thought, for the leaves could not whisper loud enough to be heard in there; but a wish—an earnest wish—arose in her heart to do right, even if it were expected of her to send the hated reptile away.

Just then a bird sang out loudly and clearly, and although to a little boy or girl it would have been but a bird's song—nothing more—the little fairy, as she listened, heard the words—

"To the brave and true  
Strength comes anew."

New strength and the desire to be brave and true came to her as she listened, and moving boldly forward, she actually had the courage to touch the toad with her foot. It did not move, so she touched it again. Then she fluttered her wings; but it was no good; there it was, and there, to all appearance, it intended to stay. Nay, it even turned towards her, and opened its terrible mouth, and Ina shivered, and hid her face in her hands. But with this dreadful trial came a new thought, and putting her hand in her bosom, she drew forth something so small that our eyes would scarcely have seen it; yet, tiny as it was, it was a casket made of precious stones. Breathing upon it, the lid flew open, and a strange, sweet perfume filled the air. Instantly the toad waddled away, and the little fairy, casket in hand, walked round the garden, looking carefully under the dripping leaves, and wherever any of her adversaries were, she boldly held out her casket, and they vanished.

When the moon rose there she was still, and so bravely did she pursue the insects and toads that by morning they had all disappeared—crept away under the garden gate, and taken refuge by the roadsides, and in the pond at the edge of the common.

Dear children, who is it has given you a work to do, and appointed a day of reckoning? Who is it speaks to your hearts when you look at the flowers and listen to the whispering of the summer breeze, the thunderstorms, and the songs of birds? Who is your enemy, and how are you to overcome him? Not in your own strength. God has given you His Son to be your refuge and strength. Pray to Him, and you will be a conqueror in this life, and much, much more in the next. Remember, the crown of glory awaits you there.

## A CHILD'S SIMPLICITY.

FROM THE GERMAN.

**D**URING the autumn of 1799, the war between France and Austria had penetrated as far into Switzerland as Canton Schwyz, and many families had to escape into the mountains for fear of the fierce soldiery. Among these fugitive families was that of Anton Ulrich, of Steinen, who was himself with his flocks on the higher pastures, on a part of the mountains so invested with Austrian troops that he was unable to get to his wife and children. Elizabeth—such was the name of his wife—was with her sister and her two children at their home, village of Steinen, and they determined to escape to the Urniberg (a part of the Rhigi range), so as at least to secure their lives from the enemy. The two women packed one basket with such of their clothes and other worldly possessions as they could manage to bring away with them, and filled another with provisions for their journey. The elder child, Franz Anton, a spirited little fellow of four years old, insisted on being allowed to carry a smaller basket, which contained the clothes of his little sister, who was scarcely a year old. The poor mother took her infant up in her arms, and placed one of the baskets on her head. The other basket was carried by her sister, who at the same time led her little nephew by the hand.

In this way the sorrowful party of fugitives set out on their melancholy journey, leaving their beloved home at the mercy of the enemy, and passing through the well-known village-street without knowing when they would behold it again.

But Elizabeth said to her sister, "The good God can help us and ours in some way we know not of."

At the end of about an hour's time they reached the foot of the mountain, and clambered up the steep path until they came to a pleasant spot of level ground under the shade of beech trees, where tall rocks on either side formed a sort of natural grotto. Here the two poor women hoped to be able to rest for a short time, but scarcely had they seated themselves on the soft green grass ere a couple of French soldiers came upon them from a neighbouring wood. One of them (apparently an Alsatian), and who was able to speak German, addressed the poor women in that language, and demanded the two baskets of them with the most violent threats. With bitter tears Elizabeth and her sister acceded to this rude request, but the little boy, seating himself upon the basket, declared sturdily that he would not part with it, because it held his little sister's clothes.

The soldiers laughed at the boy's defiant manner, but only pushed him from his seat, and was preparing to carry away the basket; but when the little fellow saw that resistance availed nothing, and that the treasure he had so carefully guarded was about to be carried off, he threw himself at the soldiers' feet, clasped his knees, and exclaimed eagerly—

"Oh, do leave my poor little sister her clothes; take my own clothes, and take me myself, only do leave my poor little sister here."

This went to the soldier's heart, hard as it was. He explained to his comrade the nature of the child's request, and having obtained a promise that he should be uninjured, he turned to Elizabeth, and said,—

"My woman, for the sake of that spirited little lad of yours we'll do you no harm, and will not meddle with your things. Come back with us into the village, we'll protect you there; don't be afraid. I promise you no harm shall happen to you."

The whole party then descended the hill, and took the path which led to the village of Steinen, and Elizabeth and her family returned to their own house. The soldiers kept their promise faithfully, not a hair of their heads was injured, and while all the other houses in the village were broken into and plundered, theirs was carefully protected.

"There," said Elizabeth to her sister, "Didn't I tell you that God would protect us and our little property in some way we knew not of?"

JANET.

## HOW TO UNDERSTAND POETRY.

**S**OMETIMES a boy or a girl says, "I should like to understand poetry; I do like to read it and repeat it, but I cannot always tell what it means."

Dear children, some things go under the title of poetry which are incomprehensible to young and old, to wise and foolish alike. But the way to understand true poetry—that of nature, at least—is to love the beauty of which it is the picture and the song. The best poetry is simple and natural as life itself; and by listening to the sweet voices which are always floating unheeded on the air, you will feel what it is, through all your being. Only keep eye and heart open, and never let it be possible for you to scorn and neglect the least thing that God has made.

Look for poetry and you will find it everywhere—in the fairy-cup moss under your feet in the woodland footpaths, in the song of the robin at your window in the morning, in the patter of the rain on the roof, in the first rosy cloud on the horizon at dawn, and the last that fades out in the west at sunset. For poetry is written all over the earth by a Divine hand, before it can get into books.

The Creator is the great poet. All that is beautiful to eye, or ear, or heart, is His handwriting. Wherever a bud opens, a rivulet slips along its pebbly path, or a leaf-shadow dances in the sunshine, there He has written a poem which He meant should be read with delight by every passer-by.

It is best not to dispute where there is no probability of convincing.

The Christian falls not asleep in the fire or in the water, but in the sunshine.

Providence has a thousand keys to open a thousand doors for the deliverance of his own.