

The question was not settled when Mr. Lester started to the store, but a little girl just ahead of him gave him a clue. "Please, mamma," she said, "let me wear my old dress this summer; you can let it down a little and fix it up so it will do, and we will take the money and buy tulips, and lilies, and roses, and have a little garden. I love flowers so much—please say I may have them, mamma." And then they turned a corner and were gone, but the question was settled.

Anna had tried to find out what her present was to be, but not succeeding shew as completely surprised, and not much surprised, and not much pleased, when she received it. First came a dozen choice gladiolus bulbs, looking somewhat like small onions; then four rough, "humpy" things, looking as little like flowers as anything could look, but they were marked, "anemone;" next came a dozen funny little things marked, "lily of the valley," and a dozen packets of seeds.

Never had a girl such a curious birth day present, and never was a girl so surprised as Anna. She forgot the kisses and thanks she usually gave after receiving gifts; but her parents did not notice that, and her papa took the catalogue and read to her all it said about her bulbs and seeds, so she soon began to feel interested, and went to the garden eager to begin her work. Mr. Lester had showed her how to make the beds, and, as it was vacation, she worked faithfully until her mamma, fearing she would get too tired, called her in to rest.

When the beds were ready she set out the bulbs, but she could hardly wait until it was time to sow the seeds. However, they were all planted at last, and then she watched very anxiously for their coming up. When they did come out of the ground how glad she was! She was puzzled, too, to see so many things coming up that she had not planted, but she soon learned to tell the flowers from the weeds, and a part of each day saw her weeding and hoeing in her little garden.

After many weeks she had her reward, for little buds came and, slowly expanding, grew into perfect flowers. Never had Anna seen flowers quite so nice and fragrant as her own were. Hers were "the brightest pinks that ever grew," her portulacas were "the hand somest ever seen," and her balsams were "the doublest balsams in the world." The gladioli were "just splendid," the anemones "perfect," and the lily of the valley "too sweet for anything."

She had disappointments, of course; but they come to all, and we must learn to bear them patiently. One packet of seeds failed to report themselves for duty; whether they were worthless, or whether the weather was unfavorable, I do not know. Then, a visitor's dog broke the only flower stem on one gladiolus, so she must wait until next year to see what kind of flower that one has. But she had flowers in her garden, and mamma's vase was always full, and the little lame girl in the hut by the mill, where never a spear of grass dared show itself, had many a lovely bouquet that summer. And gran'ma Peters, who was always grieving for pinks and marigolds of her youth was obliged, to admit that Anna's phlox and verbenas were "good enough for any one."

Every day the flowers showed new beauties, and rejoiced her heart. Every day, now, she gave thanks for her homely birth day gift, and her parents, seeing her happiness, and the growing brightness of her eyes, and the hue of health returning to her pale cheeks, rejoiced that they had chosen so wisely for their darling child.—R. D. Blaisdell, in *Vick's Illustrated Monthly*.

THE VICTORY OF FAITH.

In an article on "Unsuspected Treasures," I have just read, "Faithful parents may meet wayward children whose repentance in a dying hour has not been spoken with the lips."

An incident related in our ladies' prayer-meeting so forcibly shows the truth of these words that I would like to send it to you:

A son of godly parents, and a child of many prayers, wandered away in early manhood from the paths in which his earlier steps were lovingly guided. He seemed wholly indifferent to everything of a religious character. He never attended church, but on summer Sundays would pass nearly the whole day in his boat upon the river with companions as worldly as himself. He was at one time in great danger from drowning. Strong arms rescued him and bore the cold, almost lifeless body to the shore, and it was a long time before there was any sign that life still lingered. Then he was carried home and lay unconscious for hours, only a feeble flutter at the wrist to keep alive the hope in the hearts of his friends.

And it was then, in the midnight stillness, that his mother knelt beside his bed, and thinking that his ear was closed to every sound, poured forth her soul to God, and blessed and praised him that in mercy her son was not sent unrepentant to eternity. She prayed in agony that his life might be spared, at least till he should seek and find forgiveness. As she prayed the cold hand she held in hers gave

a feeble pressure, and the eyelids quivered a little, but did not lift. It was not until the next day that he looked at his mother, and said in feeble tones, "Mother, I am saved." Saved from drowning she thought he meant, and replied, "Yes, dear, you are saved, thank God!" Another day of silence passed before strength returned to the young man so that he could speak. And then it was in broken sentences, often long resting spells between the words, that he told his remarkable experience. "Mother, I heard you praying; if I had died you would have thought I was in hell; but I am saved." He said that when he realized that he had lost his hold on the boat thought came, "Now I am helpless, I am lost, I am going to eternity with all my sins;" and then he prayed, "O God, wilt thou forgive and save me!" A voice seemed clear and distinctly to say, "I will save thee, trust me." He felt that it was the voice of Jesus: he simply trusted and all fear was gone, and he knew nothing more until he heard his mother pleading with God for him. "I should have been safe with Jesus, mother, and you would have mourned me as lost."

Many there were who said this was only an excited imagination, and when health returned it would all be forgotten as a dream. They were mistaken. The life so mercifully spared was a consecrated life, and long years of loving activity in the service of the Master have proved that the faith put forth in that hour of peril was a true and living faith.—*Illustrated Christian Weekly*.

HOW SARDINES GOT INTO CHINA.

I have a friend who, having resided some thirty years in China, is a good authority on the manners and customs of the central Flowery Land. Questioning him about the things to eat, drink, and avoid, when a European is invited to partake of Chinese hospitality, he told me that, as a matter of taste, and it may be prejudice, Europeans liked their own dietary best. As for puppies and rats, and such like horrors, one does not meet with these things at the table of a Chinese gentleman. Neither will he give you butcher's meat. Fowls, ducks, stewed tendons of deer, fish, and in very rich families birds'-nest soup, *bêche de mer*, or sea-slug, as a relish, and rice, of course—such things are the staple; and as for birds'-nest soup, my friend says he does not dislike it. From his description, this celebrated soup would seem to be like oyster-soup, without the taste or the smell of oysters—that is to say, white, creamy, and insipid.

A middle-class Chinaman will never expend more than equivalent to fourpence English for his dinner; but Chinese gentlemen, when they take a fancy to any eatable, will pay, if needful, an enormous price for it. Nor is John Chinaman altogether so conservative as Englishmen at home set him down for. As an example, rich Celestials now consume a goodly lot of tinned sardines in oil. The custom, however, has only prevailed a few years, and it came to be adopted by accident.

"I'll tell you all about it," said my friend. "First, do you know what smalt is?"

"To be sure I do. A blue compound of oxide of cobalt and silica."

"Exactly. Well, the Chinese import this smalt, I believe, for painting blue figures on their crockery. At any rate, some years ago the London agent of a Chinese mercantile firm received an order for a large quantity of smalt—a very serious quantity, of some thousands of pounds sterling value.

"But the word smalt was so badly written, or so wrongly written, that the London agent, instead of smalt, read 'smelt;' so he went about in many promising quarters to buy those delicate little fish. Not enough were to be had in the market at the time, and he was advised by a London provision dealer that whenever procured they would be enormously expensive. 'Let me advise you to try sardines,' was the counsel of the London provision dealer. 'Sardines are rather cheap now, and I'm sure they'll give satisfaction.'

"So the bargain was struck, the sardines were bought, packed, shipped, and sent to China.

"On arrival, a dispute arose. John Chinaman avowed he had ordered a blue pigment, not fish, whether smelts or sardines; and John Chinaman appeared to have the right of it in law; so he shrugged his shoulders and left the boxes of oily little fish in charge of the merchant, who did not even try, I believe, to dispute the bargain with the London salesman, so alive was he to the mistake he himself had committed.

"What was to be done? The affair was serious.

"The following was done. Some British residents at Shanghai purchased some of the sardines as just a slight alleviation of the unfortunate merchant's trouble. The whole lot, however, was a gigantic lot, and had it depended on European consumption alone, the unfortunate consignee would have waited over long to turn his capital. Fortunately it happened that an English purchaser of some of the sar-

dines knew a rich Chinese epicure, to whom he gave a box, to have his opinion. It was not long coming. The Chinaman having partaken of the barbarian fish, licked his lips and pronounced them good. Other Chinamen followed the lead, and all pronounced the little fish excellent. The entire lot went off apace, and other lots followed. Now *Sardines à l'huile* are quite a Chinese institution.

"So that's the way," said my friend, "that sardines got into China."—*Leisure Hour*.

GEORGE III. AND THE ETON BOYS.

One of the most pleasant traits of all the years of his life is his unvarying attachment to Eton School and all the succession of boys there. He always knew the more eminent of them, whether for rank or scholarship, by name. He never missed an opportunity of honoring the boys who were worthy of honor, and the boys paid him back as boys can pay back their favorites. "Think highly of Eton," he said to young De Quincey. "All people think highly of Eton; every one praises Eton." Immediately after his marriage he took the young queen over the venerable school, and left £230 with the provost, to be spent, as he thought best, in giving pleasure to the boys. He was always hospitable to them, and there are stories of his sending for them all in a body to meet him on the terrace at Windsor, and keeping them all to supper, and irritating the masters immensely by forgetting to ask any of them; so the boys remained merry with the monarch, and there was nothing for it but for the masters to go away in dudgeon.

In 1805, when the Castle of Windsor was completed, after the long period during which it had undergone repairs and improvements, fitting it henceforth to be the royal residence, in place of the inconvenient lodge, the king, of course, had a magnificent house-warming, and he added to his other pieces of hospitality on the occasion that of personally going down to Eton School and inviting eighty of the Eton boys to sup with him in the presence chamber, a truly beautiful instance of royal, neighborly, and affectionate benignity. And he was kind to individual boys. Once, as he was walking down Eton street, a boy, almost too late, came rushing along at a tremendous pace, and went butt up against the king, almost overturning the royal person. Of course he stopped to apologize, and thus his appearance even for the second call was absolutely hopeless. The good-natured king enquired his name, and took the trouble to write a little note to the head master to explain the cause of the boy's delay. Nothing delighted him more, upon his recovery from his illness in 1804, than the rapturous reception the boys gave him upon the first appearance of his carriage. They gathered round it with enthusiastic huzzas and repeated rounds of cheers. Forming a circle round it, they ran along by its side, before and behind it, forming a sort of unpremeditated escort, until he alighted at the gates of Windsor Castle. The next day, walking out, he fell in with two or three of the scholars, and entered freely into conversation with them, thanked them for the reception they had given him the day before, and told them to thank their fellows. This was better than writing a note to the school—a beautiful and gentle king! He had been educated at Eton himself some short time, and with him were many of those who became statesmen in his time; indeed, nearly all the great statesmen of the reign of George III. from the Earl of Chatham to the Duke of Wellington, had been Eton boys. Probably he thought of this, or something like this, when, verging towards his mournful close, at the commencement of the last of those terrible mental disorders with which he was afflicted, he was standing at one of the windows of his apartments in Windsor Castle with the late Marquis of Wellesley, who had also been an Eton boy. His eye caught the view of

"The distant spires, the antique towers,
That crown the watery glade,
Where grateful science still adores
Her Henry's holy shade."

"Look, my lord," he said, in a voice which implied the tenderness and pensive, reverential affection passing through his mind—"look, my lord, there is the noble school where we were all educated!"—*Leisure Hour*.

WHAT ARE RICH MEN DOING?

Are they hoarding money for lawyers and children to quarrel over, or midnight and graveyard ghouls to be hunted and finally to be rewarded with? Graves have their force, and good men often speak grandly by virtue of a finished life. But a man who sacrifices while he lives, who does good with his means when he could use them for the expansion of his business, who now and then contracts his capital a little and gives the slice to great benevolences, not only prevents a large measure of litigation, but is a living witness to the virtue of a great sacrifice. He spares from himself that he may share with the world. Who can manage a great charity so well as

the hand that first created it? Who can so well advise concerning it as the brain that conceived it and the heart that blessed it? We suspect that the recent strifes over great estates, and the uncertainty which overhangs their management and distribution, are going to produce a revolution in the grace of giving. Men are going to give earlier in life; they are going to make benevolence more of a study; they are going to give an attention to it in their vigorous youth, which will make them examples to the world of the beauty of self-denial, and the true means of leaving a legacy of love to posterity. There are vast accumulations of wealth at this moment in all our great centres that ought to be thrown into the better channels. Misery predominates everywhere. The suffering prevail over the strong. As to the future of what a liberal soul leaves behind for children and friends, after a lifetime of good and wise giving to great causes, we believe it will do more, reach further, and live longer, than if it were the undivided estate of a clenched hand, and an uncharitable. There are cases where a half is more than the whole, and this is one of them.—*Examiner*.

TALK TO THE CHILDREN.

Children hunger perpetually after new ideas. They will learn with pleasure from the lips of parents what they deem drudgery to study in books; and even if they have the misfortune to be deprived of many educational advantages, they will grow up intelligent if they enjoy in childhood the privilege of daily listening to the conversation of intelligent people. We sometimes see parents who are the life of every company which they enter, dull, silent, and uninteresting at home among their children. If they have not mental activity and mental stores sufficient for both, let them first use what they have for their own households. A silent home is a dull place for young people, a place from which they will escape if they can. How much useful information, on the other hand, is often given in pleasant family conversation, and what unconscious, but excellent, mental training is lively, social argument. Cultivate to the utmost the art of conversation at home.—*Selected*.

Question Corner.—No. 14.

Answers to these questions should be sent in as soon as possible and addressed EDITOR NORTHERN MESSENGER. It is not necessary to write out the question, give merely the number of the question and the answer. In writing letters always give clearly the name of the place where you live and the initials of the province in which it is situated.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

- 157. Who were Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and On, and what was their fate?
- 158. Why was the plague sent after the destruction of these men, and how many died by it?
- 159. Where did Miriam die?
- 160. Why were Moses and Aaron prevented from entering the promised land?
- 161. What is the meaning of *Meribah*?
- 162. Where did Aaron die?
- 163. Who succeeded Aaron as high priest?
- 164. Why was Horeb so called?
- 165. For what was the plague of the fiery serpents sent among the people?
- 166. How were they cured of the bites of the serpents?
- 167. Where is the brook Arnon situated?
- 168. With what two kings did the Israelites go to battle at this time?

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN NO 12.

- 133. On Mount Horeb, near Mount Sinai, Ex. iii. 1, 2.
- 134. Compelled them to gather stubble for the bricks instead of the straw with which they had heretofore been supplied, Ex. v. 7.
- 135. Water turned into blood; frogs; lice; flies; murrain; boils; hail; locusts; darkness; death of all the first-born, Ex. vii. 17.
- 136. Rameses, Ex. xii. 37.
- 137. Succoth, Ex. xii. 37.
- 138. Across the northern part of the Gulf of Suez.
- 139. They found no water, Ex. xv. 22.
- 140. Bitterness.
- 141. In the wilderness of Sin, Ex. xvi. 1, 4.
- 142. The battle between the Israelites and Amalekites, Ex. xvii. 8, 16.
- 143. The Lord my banner.
- 144. Sinai, Ex. xix. 1.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

The river that went out of Eden.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

To No. 12.—Olive Haskin, 10; John Goldsbro, 10; Clarissa F. Berryman, 8; Hepsie McEvers, 9; John F. Wier, 9; Ella Huff, 10; E. A. Hamilton, 11; Rosetta J. Feren, 10; Euphemia M. Foster, 8; Fred E. Bell, 11 ac.; Mary Haycock, 10; Hilda Sing, 11; Wm. C. Wickham, 9; Lucy Richardson, 11.

To No. 11.—Laura Reid, 9; John Sutherland, 11; Maggie A. Cuyler, 5; Adeline A. Orford, 8; Hilda Sing, 10; Arthur Wright, 3; L. Stephenson, 9; Lucy Richardson, 9.