

Youth's Corner.

BREAK THY BREAD TO THE HUNGRY.

Some years ago, a pious widow in America, who was reduced to great poverty, had just placed the last smoked herring on her table, to supply her hunger and that of her children, when a rap was heard at the door, and a stranger solicited a lodging and a morsel of food, saying, that he had not tasted bread for twenty-four hours. The widow did not hesitate, but offered to share to the stranger, saying, "We shall not be forsaken, or suffer deeper for an act of charity."

The traveller drew near the table; but when he saw the scanty fare, filled with astonishment, he said, "And is this all your store? And do you offer a share to one you do not know? Then I never saw charity before! But, madam, do you not wrong your children, by giving a part of your last morsel to a stranger?" "Ah," said the widow, weeping, "I have a boy, a darling son, somewhere on the face of the wide world unless Heaven has taken him away; and I only act towards you as I would that others should act towards him. God, who sent manna from heaven, can provide for us as he did for Israel; and how should I, this night offend him, if my son should be a wanderer, destitute as you, and he should have provided for him a home, even as poor as this, were I to turn you unrelieved away!"

The widow stopped, and the stranger, springing from his seat, clasped her in his arms; "God, indeed, has provided just such a home for your wandering son, and has given him wealth to reward the goodness of his benefactress. My mother! O my mother!"

It was indeed her long lost son, returned from India. He had chosen this way to surprise his family, and certainly not very wisely; but never was surprise more complete, or more joyful. He was able to make the family comfortable, which he immediately did; the mother living for some years longer, in the enjoyment of plenty.—*Religious Tract Socy's Anecdotes.*

last argument, for it was plainly meant to inform me that I had better mind my own business; therefore I passed on, and so did summer's heat and winter's cold, and blithely the thistles grew. The common never bore a finer crop; and I was obliged to own the flowers looked very pretty.

Meantime the goodman's store increased; the funds were forthcoming, the field was ploughed and sown; the wheat came up, and so did the thistles. No force could have ejected them that year, after so long possession. They had all the advantage; for while the wheat was to be sown afresh for each succeeding year, the thistles came up of themselves. Then they were goodly men and tall; they lifted their heads to the sun-beams and scattered their seeds in the breezes, while the sickly wheat lay withering in their shade. I did not question my goodman of his crops. Every spring I saw him rooting up thistles, and every summer I saw the thistles blow; and for every one he left, there next year came up twenty.

Whether, as years advanced, they became less numerous, or whether he tried to see them exterminated, I cannot say; I have left that part of the country.

[The above is related by Caroline Try's "Listener;" and lest her readers should think Goodman Hodge's folly impossible, or his mind insane, she states several cases of Thistle-growers which are notorious: Some of them in our next number.—E. B.]

ALARMING DANGER.

If we should hear, from a hundred workshops, the clink of the mechanic's hammer forging false keys by which to enter our dwellings, should we not strive to sequester and destroy these implements of stealth before they were on their way to unlock our doors? And are we less in danger when, in a hundred minds, the disposition and the habit of theft and violence are forming and maturing, and are daily making those juvenile essays, on a small scale, which only await the years of manhood to become nightly plunder and havoc? If we should see a hundred chemists, engaged in manufacturing a fire-apparatus for the incendiary, should we not seize and annihilate the felonious compounds before they could be applied to our dwellings or temples? But is the certainty of the peril less, when the elementary passions which lead to incendiarism are known to be combining in a hundred hearts, and only awaiting the torch of temptation to set the city on fire? When, hereafter, the thief shall be arrested squandering the gains of his larcenies; when the robber shall be seized yet red with the blood of his victim; when the city shall glare and the sky redden with the midnight conflagration; and these facts, at that hour, will be no more apparent to the natural vision than they are now to the mental. In the light of cause and effect the end is as visible as the paths which lead to it. He is no more physically blind, or bereft of his natural senses, who cannot see a culprit in the hands of a sheriff, or a criminal court with its officers, or a prison with its armed guards, than he is morally blind who does not see criminal manhood in neglected childhood. Leaving to others the appeal to the high and holy considerations of religion, it may still be said that if there be any philanthropy, or civic patriotism, or worldly prudence remaining in the city, it will not sleep over the present condition of so many of its children, which, however terrible it may be as a fact, is still more terrible as an omen.—*From 10th Annual Report of the Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education.*

NATIONAL PROVISION FOR AGED SCHOOLMASTERS.

From the Marquis of Lansdowne's speech in the House of Lords, February 5.

He now came to another subject which he considered to be materially calculated to affect the cause of general education; he meant the state and condition of the schoolmaster himself. There was no class of persons in this country, who, from all that he had heard, from all that he had seen, from their exertions on the one hand, and from their condition in society on the other, were better entitled to the attention and to the favour of Parliament than the great mass of the schoolmasters of England. (Hear, hear.) There was no class of society who were less likely to reap, in a wordly sense, the reward of their merits and exertions. They were a class of persons, many of them most meritorious, many of them mainly instrumental in advancing the fortunes and future interests of the children committed to their charge, whom they saw advancing in prosperity, and some of them approaching wealth, whilst they themselves were chained to their laborious duties, trusting, no doubt, to their own consistency and to their own virtue for the faithful discharge of their duties, but at the same time, in many instances, dispirited by living long in hopes, and in their old age condemned to see the current of their feelings, and the current of their thoughts chilled by want and checked by fear. They were persons placed in immediate contact with the clergy, and performing some of the duties that were almost in common with theirs; but whilst they took their share in the performance of those duties, they had an inadequate means of reward to stimulate them; and he thought that any extension of the system of education in this country would be imperfect which did not in some degree—he hoped to a considerable degree—ameliorate their condition, excite their hopes, and reward their industry. It was, therefore, proposed that a provision, small, undoubtedly, nevertheless he had reason to believe it would be thought a great object to the individuals themselves—that a small provision in their old age should be made to every well-conducted schoolmaster and schoolmistress, who could show that they had for fifteen years unexceptionably conducted schools of a certain size. There would be a certain portion of the public funds allotted for the specific purpose of providing for

these persons in their old age; and besides these retiring pensions it was intended that a certain number of gratuities, under particular limitations, on the report of inspectors, should be given from time to time to schoolmasters who had not retired from the exercise of their vocation, but to whom the obtaining such gratuity would no doubt prove a useful stimulus.

SCHOOL-INSPECTION.

The importance of it.—*From the above speech.*

The parliamentary grants for the promotion of education, from 1833 to 1846, had been gradually, he was happy to say steadily, he could confidently say to a limited extent, excessively increased. During the time from 1833 to 1846 inclusive the grants had amounted altogether to £490,000. The schoolhouses erected with the addition of these grants, with those which were completed, which had already received grants, provided for the instruction of 550,030 scholars. In addition to this, there had been provided inspection for about 3,550 schools. The schools which had invited inspection, not assisted, contained more than 150,000 scholars, and he might call attention to the fact that so many not assisted by the Government or the Privy Council had invited inspection, to show the confidence entertained in the system, and above all, that which was his desire on every occasion to impress upon their Lordships—the extreme importance of inspection. He hailed it, therefore, as a circumstance of infinite importance, and one which he had viewed with peculiar gratification, that besides all those schools which had required the aid of the Privy Council, and previous to receiving which aid it was an indispensable condition that they should submit to inspection at all times when inspectors were sent, there had been this large proportion of schools not requiring aid, already founded without receiving aid, and, nevertheless, the Council over which he had the honour to preside sent inspectors to them to give the benefit of their advice and assistance. These 150,000 with 550,000 amounted to 700,000 nominally provided for; but he should deceive their Lordships if he wished them to think that the whole of that number were actually in the schools. He believed it would be found, on a fair calculation, that you might deduct 200,000; so that at least more than half a million of children were provided for by the schools as they now existed.

IMBIBING KNOWLEDGE.—The great statesman

WILLIAM PITT had a talent of improving a man's own sentiments, and returning them to him in a better dress, which Lord Sidmouth used to illustrate very happily by the following anecdote:—Once, he said, he dined at Pitt's with Dundas and Adam Smith; when the latter said to him, after dinner, "What an extraordinary man Pitt is—he makes me understand my own ideas better than before." This faculty Mr. Pitt exemplified on a larger scale on the following occasion.—Mr. Walker, a large cotton manufacturer, Lord Stanley, and Mr. Blackburn, M.P., once waited upon Mr. Pitt, as a deputation on the state of the cotton trade; when Pitt succeeded so effectually in reconciling them to his own views, which were directly opposed to theirs, that Walker said to Blackburn, on leaving Downing-street, "One would suppose that man had lived in a bleeding ground all his life;" and yet, as Lord Sidmouth remarked, in another conversation, "How Pitt got his mass of knowledge no one ever knew. He was hardly ever seen with a book in his hand after his accession to power, sat late at table, and never rose till eleven, and then generally took a short ride in the park." He must, therefore, have extracted information from those he conversed with, as plants imbibe nutriment from the air around them.

GIGANTIC PIGEON ROOST ON THE RIVER LICKING, KENTUCKY.

Within the past week or two, says the *Cincinnati Commercial*, myriads of pigeons have doubtless been noticed by most of our citizens as passing in one direction for a few days, and then changing into an exactly opposite course, which has been considered as an indication of the weather; and having been impressed with the idea that a southerly direction of these birds indicated the approach of cold, and *vice versa*; we have never been led to any different supposition, until the recent excitement gotten up by visiting the "roost" of these pigeons, which was discovered to be some fifteen miles up the *Licking*, where they are now congregated in such numbers that they cannot be counted or even gessed at. A gentleman who had been there, remarked on our hearing, yesterday, that to multiply a few hives of bees by 500,000, one could have a clever beginning towards coming at the number in the novel location which has been selected so near our city, on account of the quantity of beehives there found. This great neighbourhood of pigeons, we are informed, is daily nearing the city about one mile; that is, as fast as they clear the ground of food. Their movement undoubtedly is to enable them to keep up the means of subsistence, as they would, in the course of a few days, entirely consume all the sustenance in any one spot. As soon as one beech grove is cleared, their aim is to find another. Therefore, the old prediction of the course of these birds being an indication of the weather, must give place to the more reasonable supposition that their movements are actuated by calls of hunger, and they change their course to the direction where there is the most probability of finding the food they like. A clear case, in our opinion, and from this time will, we apprehend, be a settled fact in relation to the moving in flocks of wild pigeons. Those who have visited the roost up the *Licking* have returned with as many as they could possibly manure to "lug" home. The trees are represented as being so full of pigeons that it seems

to be attended with some risk to venture under the limbs to make the attack, for fear of the immense weight crushing the daring sportsman; but this of course can be guarded against. The other day one of our sportsmen was at the roost without a sack, the article generally used to bring the bodies home in; he had a bushel or so of them. The person immediately took off his shirt, made the collar part fast by tying it with the sleeves, thereby forming a sack, with which he brought home a full load of the fattest birds imaginable. Loads are taken daily, and no diminution is perceptible. The sound of the trees is said to be extremely novel, and unlike other sounds. A steamboat daily makes excursions to the place, taking up large numbers of people to see this curiosity, and to procure pigeons.

CAREER OF AN ESCAPED CONVICT.

Many of the escaped convicts become pirates and banditti, whilst others endeavour to deserve well of society by industriously gaining their living in their own way. Among the most notorious of the former was one Michael Howe, of Tasmania. He at first joined a large party of bushrangers which spread terror and desolation through the country. His indomitable courage and fertility of resources soon gained him a pre-eminence among his companions. But, though ruthless himself, the society of other villains was distasteful to him, and he separated from his companions to pursue his career alone. Twice, disgusted with his own mode of existence, he surrendered, on condition that his life should be spared; but the lawless impulse was too strong within him to be quieted, and he eventually returned for good to the bush. Every settler heard with terror that Michael Howe was again abroad, and their fears were too often realised.

This singular being had formed a connection with a native girl of some personal attractions. She accompanied him in all his expeditions, and seemed to return the attachment she inspired. What were the exact feelings with which he regarded her are not known, but that there was considerable depth in his love may be inferred from the manner in which they parted. One morning they were sitting in their hut, concealed in the depth of a wood, when the ever-vigilant Michael heard a significant crackling of the fallen branches, and instantly perceived that his life or liberty was threatened. A body of colonists, indeed, which had long been on his track, had surrounded his habitation. Conscious of his vast strength, his agility, his knowledge of every path, he felt confident of being able to escape; but what would become of his partner? Should she be suffered to fall into the hands of the colonists? The desperate casuist soon decided the question, and he shot her, not "because he imagined she might occasion delay," as Captain Stokes, repeating the expression used in Tasmania, remarks, but as others, with more probability, believe, because he could not brook the idea of her falling into rough and unkind hands. Leaving her weltering in her blood (she died by-the-by, but was taken to Hobart Town) Michael Howe escaped, and continued for some time to lead his predatory life.

At one period he formed the plan of penetrating into some unknown fastness, whether the foot of man would never follow him, and of establishing himself there as a solitary colonist. For this purpose he procured the seeds of a variety of flowers and vegetables, and endeavoured to persuade himself that he could pass the remainder of his life in peace, engaged in the cultivation of his garden. But his conscience would not allow him to remain quiet. Night and day he was tortured by the recollection of what he had done. This is no imaginary picture, drawn from the prevalent ideas of what criminals must suffer. The man himself had striven to escape from the terrors of his own mind by analysing and studying them. He kept a sort of a journal of his dreams, in which, partly by a few words pregnant with meaning, partly by means of uncouth sketches, he recorded every morning what he had mentally suffered by night. The man's mind seems to have been of great capacity; his imagination was rich and vivid. Every evening, as soon as he had laid his head on the stone that served for his pillow, the most frightful images rushed across his brain. The faces of those he had killed, their gory hair, their deeply-stained garments, every material adjunct of murder; the horror of the day of judgment, too, filled his imagination, and the awful pains of the condemned seemed revealed to him. One single trait will evince the rude sublimity of his mind. All this dreadful journal was written with his own blood—as if any other liquid would have been polluted by recording the diabolical thoughts that haunted him. There is no evidence that the religious sentiment ever came to his aid, but we would fain hope that all his agony was not suffered in vain. He was killed by three men, who had planned his capture, after seven years' residence in the bush.—*Foreign Quarterly Review, with a few omissions.*

STATISTICS OF BRITISH SHIPPING.

From Mr. Ricardo's Speech in favour of a Committee on the Navigation Laws.

He held in his hand an estimate of the comparative tonnage of British and foreign shipping in the British ports in 1814, the last year of the war; 1824, the year of the first reciprocity treaty; and 1846, when 27 of those treaties were in existence. The return gave the following results:

Year	British	Foreign
1814	1,248,000	690,287
1824	1,797,320	759,541
1846	4,310,630	1,735,079

The proportions being as follows:

1814	as 65 tons British to 31 foreign.
1824	70 " " 29 "
1846	71 " " 29 "

The excess of British shipping in 1846 being double the amount of 1824, and nearly four times as much in 1814. But he had also a return of the tonnage of protected and unprotected shipping in the years

1826 and 1844, from which it appeared that there were, measured in tons:

Year	Protected.	Unprotected.
In 1826	1,778,879	1,009,176
In 1844	3,012,133	1,488,152

showing an excess of 1,233,254 tons, or 69 per cent as respected protected shipping; but of no less than 2,578,976, or 136 per cent, as respected unprotected shipping; just double the amount of increase in the other classes.

These were facts which spoke for themselves. They were facts, he believed, which clearly proved that protection had not answered its purpose, and that there were better and surer modes of encouraging our marine than by systems of protection and prohibition. If our commercial marine was a nursery for our navy, what was the nursery of our commercial marine? The answer was evident, commerce itself. If they stifled commerce, they stifled our commercial marine; the two must go hand in hand together, and must prosper by each other's prosperity.

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