

Family Circle.

Mother! is your Child obedient?

We often press the subject of obedience and its vast importance on the attention of mothers, and we assure them, again and again, that it will be for the happiness of themselves and their families that they listen and ponder over this momentous duty; but, alas! we know, from all we hear and see, that very few mothers believe it to be a matter of consequence, and they tell us it will "be time enough yet," while at the very moment they are really and in truth the very slaves of infants, who have never been made to understand that there is a mind or a will in the wide world superior to their own, and who, although the tiny mortals can scarcely walk or talk, rule the whole household. We are not among those who like to see dear little ones treated roughly, and made to fret and cry for every trifle, and scolded into obedience. No, no; there is no necessity for anything of this kind—firmness and decision is all that is needed. We have known little children of a few months old capable of understanding the word "No!" said in a firm voice, and with a grave face, when the little hand has been stretched out for a forbidden article in the parlour—and we maintain it is possible to train a very child to be obedient, by firmness and love. But if mothers will allow their children to rule them, while they become their willing slaves, of course they must suffer all the consequences—which will, indeed, be fearful. Still we would earnestly warn them, as they pass along the journey of life, and ask them to pause and ponder over the results, both to themselves and their interesting charge, which will surely follow. Take an instance where ruin followed such conduct. In one of the small gloomy rooms of a large gaol was a young man, about twenty-eight years of age; he had been found guilty of making and passing bad money, and his sentence was that he should be removed to another prison, where he was doomed to spend the rest of his life; but he was now too ill to be taken from the dreary spot where he was sitting, thinking of the past;—the green fields—the cool spring—the shady trees around his father's house, all seemed present to his distressed mind; the recollection of the resting-place he found when tired, on a dear mother's knee, with the kind voice near his bed, when suffering pain in boyhood, all made the contrast of the past and present dreadful to him. Now he is ill in a dark gaol, with no one to care for him, surrounded only by those whose chief delight is cursing and swearing—all without and within combined to make him wretched. When told that he must be removed to another prison, he replied, "I shall never be able to go; I am too ill—but, oh, if I could feel ready to die, it would not matter so much!" "Are you not ready to die?" asked a friend. "Oh, no!" said he; "I am afraid to die, because I am such a sinner." "There is hope and mercy," and salvation for sinners through Jesus Christ." "I have no hope," he replied; "you may talk to me about Christ and salvation, but there is no hope for me, and that makes me afraid to die." The friend spoke of his father, but he was unmoved—his mother was mentioned—his lips trembled, and a tear stole down his burning cheek. "Was your mother a Christian?" was asked. "Oh, yes—yes, and a good woman she was—many and many a time has she warned me of this." "Then you have had good instruction," the friend continued, "and perhaps you had parents who taught you to pray, and prayed for you?" "Oh, yes—yes, I had." "Then why are you here?" The young man looked up sorrowfully, and replied, "I can answer you all in one short sentence—I DID NOT OBEY MY PARENTS!" These were the last words spoken to a Christian friend by a dying man. Now, mother! just look at this prison picture, and then at your precious boy, and ask, "Shall it be thus with thee?" But look again at another picture,—there sits a young mother, and an infant boy is standing by a nice chair, with his back towards her—he is very quiet now, and very busy—what is he doing? Well,

we will tell you. He is one of those young "lords" who is accustomed to have everything he cries for, and to cry for everything he wants. Just now we had a roar for his mother's scissors, and instead of saying, "No, no—not for baby," with a grave countenance, she put the dangerous thing into his hands, to "hush him up."—Now, behold! he has made a dozen holes in the nice chair cover, and it will cost his father half a day's labour to buy another. This is not all—to-morrow, when that mother again opens her work-box, we shall have another roar, and perhaps a worse consequence. Say, will you follow her example, and run the risk of seeing your sparkling little one grow up a self-willed, reckless youth, a misery to himself and a pest to society, ending his days in a gaol, and perhaps awaking in the prison of hell? No, no!—you cannot bear the thought—then begin in his earliest days to make him obedient, and follow up your teaching by fervent prayer—remember the sowing and the reaping will correspond. You must not expect to gather grapes from thorns. A self-willed, disobedient, indulged child will, in all human probability, become a proud, conceited, reckless, overbearing and ruined man—and you may be the cause! Take care, mother!—take care!

Are you Careful how you Speak?

Hush!—why should you speak against the character of a female? it is all she has to depend upon in this world. Just give the impression wings that she is not so good as she ought to be, and it will fly to every nook and corner of the town. The story you whisper will return in tones of thunder to astonish even yourself, who was the first guilty wretch to repeat so base a charge. A word has often proved the ruin of a virtuous person! A word thoughtlessly spoken, it may be, but reported by an evil mind. Suppress any thought which, if uttered, might wound the character or feelings of another. A thought may be stifled, but a word spoken may never be lost. Weigh everything you may utter, so that none may misconstrue your language, or receive a wrong impression. Above all, never, even in jest, whisper a word which, if true, would throw a blight upon a spotless reputation. Few, in public or private life, escape the tongue of scandal. There is a propensity in human nature to cover its own defects by talking of the misdeeds of others; and it is not easy, even for a Christian, to sit still and hold his peace when idle tongues are dealing with his fair name. If wise, however, he will do so, and let the falsehood die a natural death, instead of galvanizing it into life by the battery of passion.* Let us learn of Him, who, "when he was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not, but committed himself to Him who judgeth righteously."

* Tasso being told that he might take advantage of a very bitter enemy, replied, "I wish not to plunder him, but there are things I wish to take from him—not his honour, his wealth, nor his life—but his ILL-WILL." See also the history of David and Saul, 1 Sam. xxiv.

Are You ever Sulky?

Sulkiness, if you are not too blind to perceive it, is a temper to be avoided by all means. "What can be the matter with father?" said a little boy, "he has not spoken to mother for a week; he goes to work and he comes home and says nothing." "Maybe he has a sore throat, Billy, like mine was once," said young Sally. "No, he hasn't though," quickly replied the boy; "for he eats his bacon just about as well." What an example was here for the little children! What a subject for their conversation! Well, we think a sulky man is bad enough, but surely a sulky woman is worse! and that woman a mother! Only think of the delight of sitting at the same table for a week, and not exchange a word all the time! It would be bad enough to be scolded all this time; but we really think sulkiness is even worse than scolding. People say the remedy is to "let it have its full swing;" but we think it is far better not to have the disease in the house; and if you would not have the trouble of sulky

children, pray do not set them the example. But this is not all; it is very sinful to be sulky, because you know the Bible says, you are not to allow the sun to go down upon your wrath, and surely there is "wrath" in sulkiness! We are advised to count ten before we speak, if we feel angry; and if very angry, to count a hundred. We heard of an old lady who always ran up to her own room to pray when she felt angry, and she was sure to come down smiling. Allow us to advise you to follow her example if you ever feel sulky, and come down TALKING and SMILING.

Life's Last Hours.

Life's last hours are grand, testing hours—death tries all our principles, and lays bare all our foundation—many have acted the hypocrite in life, who were forced to be honest in the hour of death. Misgivings of heart, that have been kept secret through life, have come out in death; and many, who seemed all fair and right for heaven, have had to declare that they had only been self-deceived. A gentleman of renown was on his dying bed, when a friend, near at hand, spoke of the Saviour. "As to the Bible," he replied, "it may be true, I do not know." "What, then, are your prospects?" he was asked. He replied, in whispers, which, indeed, were thunders, "Very dark—very dark." "But have you no light from the Sun of Righteousness?" "Have you done justice to the Bible?" "Perhaps not," he replied; "but it is now too late—too late." A mother, who had laughed at religion and religious people, was seen, restless and miserable, on her bed of death. She desired that her children should be called—they came; in broken accents she thus addressed them:—"My children, I have been leading you in the wrong road all your life; I now find the broad road ends in destruction—I did not believe it before: Oh! seek to serve God, and try to find the gate to heaven, though you will never meet your mother there." Her lips were closed for ever, and her spirit departed to its account, while the household looked on horror-struck. Mother! would you die thus?—Oh, no. Then point to Heaven, and lead the way.

General Miscellany.

The Coral Formation.

The workers which build the coral formations are so insignificant in appearance, that, until the year 1720, they were considered to belong to the vegetable kingdom. We are indebted to M. de Peyronnet for the discovery, that these animals belong to the polypi tribe; they are generally named *Zoophytes*, or plant animals; though, by some naturalists, they have been called *Lithophytes*, or stone plants. Many species are known; those with which we are best acquainted are about thirty-eight in number. They are found of many colors, as white, black, red, purple, green, yellow, &c.; the species best known are the white, red, and black; they may be found in the Mediterranean, but much more abundantly in the Indian Ocean; indeed, it is in this sea, that the mighty changes have been wrought by these diminutive workers.

The general shape of the growing coral is in the form of a plant, something like a cauliflower, with a fixed stem and calcareous subdivided branches, according to an account of these animals in the Oxford Encyclopedia. If a coralline plant be strictly observed while still growing in the sea, and the animal be not disturbed, either by the agitation of the water or by the touch of the observer, the little polypi will then be seen in infinite numbers, each issuing from its cell. In some kinds the head is covered with a little shell, resembling an umbrella, the arm spread abroad in order to seize its prey, while the hinder part remains attached to its habitation, whence it never wholly removes. If, in our researches after the nature of these plants, we should break off a branch of the coralline, we shall perceive that its whole substance, which is jagged and irregular, is covered by a mucous fluid, and in almost every part studded with little jelly-like drops,

which, when closely examined, will be found to be animals of the polypus kind.

Captain Basil Hall thus describes a coral reef in the seas around Loo Choo, the zoophytes in these seas belonging chiefly to the genera *asteria*:—"The examination of a coral reef, during the different stages of one tide, is particularly interesting: when the sea has left it for some time it becomes dry, and appears to be a compact rock, exceedingly hard and ragged; but no sooner does the tide rise again, and the waves begin to wash over it, than millions of coral worms protrude from holes in the surface, which were before invisible. These animals are of a great variety of shapes and sizes, and in such numbers that in a short time the whole surface of the rock appears to be alive and in motion. The most common form of the worm at Loo Choo was that of a star, from four to six inches long, which moved about with a rapid motion in all directions, probably in search of food. Others were so sluggish that they were often mistaken for pieces of rock; these were generally of a dark brown color, and from four to five inches long.—When the rock was broken near the level of high water, it was found to be a solid stone, but if any part of it were detached at a level to which the tide reached every day, it was discovered to be full of worms, of various lengths and colors, some being as fine as threads, and several feet long, generally of a bright yellow, and sometimes of a blue color; while others resembled snails, and some were not unlike lobsters and prawns in shape, but soft, and not above two inches long."

The red or true coral grows in an expanded and somewhat flattened form; the flesh is of the color of red lead, inclining towards vermilion, soft, slippery, and full of minute veins. The mouths of this species consist of eight valves, which rise up in a conical form. They have eight claws, each of which has a double fibre at both edges.

The red coral is found in the Mediterranean, on the shores of Provence, from the Cape de la Couronne to that of St. Tropez, about the isles of Majorca and Minorca, on the south of Sicily, on the east of Africa, and about Cape Negro, in the Ethiopic Ocean.

The black coral is found on the shores of the Indian Ocean, in the Mediterranean Sea. It grows in a shrubby form, reaching the height of about two feet. This species is covered with grey flesh.

Coral of all species are most abundant in the equatorial zones, and diminish, both in number and variety, as we recede from the tropics. The reefs disappear about 52 deg. 15 min. north latitude, and 29 deg. south latitude.

Some ranges of these reefs are very extensive; throughout the whole of the Polynesian Islands, a length of three thousand miles, they are found to exist. One of these, the Aurora Island, is very remarkable, being about fifteen hundred feet above the level of the sea. Captain Wilkes sounded it at the base of the cliff, and found no bottom with a line nine hundred feet in length.—This island bears conclusive testimony that it has been elevated by an upheaving force.

An Anecdote.

In 1832 an agent was sent by the French Government to this country to ascertain how our mechanics' institutions were conducted, and to gain particular information as to the schools provided for the education of the working classes. The agent visited several towns in England and Scotland, and was much pleased with all he witnessed. When at Glasgow, an incident occurred which is worth recording:—An English gentleman took him one evening to a devotional meeting, held by Sunday-school teachers; and, soon after he entered, the intelligence of who he was, where he came from, and what was his mission, became known to those assembled. The agent remarked to his friend that he had not often met with a more courteous or intelligent assembly of "ladies and gentlemen." No reply was made, as the opening prayer was offered up by one of the male teachers. After this a hymn was given out by one of the females, and, at the conclusion of the service, a prayer was offered up by another of the teachers. The agent, who understood English well, was not a little surprised to find, that in the course of this prayer the Almighty was reverently besought to "bless and prosper the stranger now pre-