

minutes later strange sounds announced that said Sunday School lesson was of a somewhat stirring character, to judge by the amount of disturbance it was producing. The paterfamilias repaired immediately to the scene, where his presence seemed to have a wonderfully soothing influence. The soothing influence, however, proved only transitory, for presently a succession of vigorous outcries showed the still rousing qualities of the Sunday School lesson—or something else. The outcries soon subsided, and the paterfamilias returned to the drawing room, apparently quite pleased, even amused.

"Those young rascals were playing leap-frog, instead of learning their lesson," he explained.

I mildly protested on behalf of the "rascals" that I thought their taste was natural, and rather to be admired than otherwise. I would suspect there was something wrong about a boy who preferred catechism to leap frog," I said. He could not be a healthy child, and I should expect him either to die young or turn out badly.

"Well," answered the paterfamilias, who evidently was secretly very glad his children had the normal amount of wickedness, "that may be, but it would never do to relax discipline."

Indeed this is one of the few families I know where anything like discipline exists. Scotch, rather than American ideals prevail, though it is a modified Scotch system, I think. The precepts of Solomon (who ought to be an authority, considering the somewhat numerous family he brought up, though, for all that, the results do not seem to have been altogether satisfactory in their case) are not literally observed, though a certain deference is paid them.

Just at this point the carriage came round the drive and the heads of the family departed. I went to the library to see how the catechism was progressing, but found that nothing but leap-frog and the book of Lamentations

had yet been learned, so I turned all the boys loose out in the grove at the back of the house, while I wheeled the sleeping baby and her carriage out upon the tennis lawn and into the shade of the trees that bordered it. We should have catechism later on, I announced.

Now the boys have come back, their woes forgotten. It is not only children who find that if they can but touch nature's spirit they will go forth healed of almost any sorrow. They fling down their spoils upon me in a perfect shower of roses. My lap is a mass of soft, dewy, pink petals. Beautiful little things, in an hour they will be faded and limp, but what of that? For a moment only the sad suggestiveness of it comes with the memory of one of Shelley's sweetest but mournful little songs:—

"The flower that smiles to-day,  
To-morrow dies;  
All that we wish to stay  
Tempts and then flies;  
What is this world's delight?  
Lightning that mocks the night:  
Brief even as bright."

Pretty poetry, but misleading philosophy. The roses I hold in my lap this moment, and whose fragrance I take in with deep inhalations, will soon wither and die; but in yonder field thousands of buds are bursting into bloom, and when their hour is past others will take their place. And when the month of roses is over, the bountiful earth provides other flowers and other beauties. The glory is constantly changing, but there is always glory about us.

My eyes fell upon a catechism. "Come, boys," I said, "let us get this work done."

First I try them collectively, but the plan fails. Then I decide that individual teaching is the best; so I begin with the eldest, a serious little fellow of ten, who is so fond of poking into mysteries that I have named him the wise man. He knows his lesson considerably better than his teacher does in less than a minute, so he is dispatched