

Youth's Corner.

VACATION-JOURNEY
IN SWITZERLAND.

At the distance of about five miles from Berne in Switzerland, you may see an establishment of eighteen buildings, some of them large and beautiful like the habitations of rich people in cities: they are so disposed as to leave abundance of open space between them, which, at certain hours of the day, is commonly enlivened by a cheerful set of boys, engaged in recreation or in regular exercises for the use of their limbs, called gymnastics. These boys you can readily know by their dress to belong to parents in the highest ranks of life, and you will at once conclude that they are at school here. But on the fields and in the meadows you see, besides, a number of boys in different clothing, coarse but just as good for use and comfort: these are at work, digging, weeding, mowing, or reaping; they are just about as cheerful as the others, and if you were to stop and listen to the talk of the one set and of the other, you would hear those in the coarse clothing show as good sense and as good temper and as good manners as those in the fine dress. They are at school too, after their manner; but they have nothing to pay for their support and tuition, so they help to provide for themselves by their work. The others are paid for by their parents, and are not brought up for country-work; therefore they have to spend more time at their books, and they exercise their limbs on the play-ground, instead of going into the fields to work.

It may be that you find an old gentleman moving about on horseback or on foot, talking kindly to a group of boys in the field or on the play-ground, as kindly to the one as to the other, and meeting pleasant faces from either: that is Mr. Fellenberg who owns the whole establishment and keeps it a going; he gets much money from the scholars who pay, and then he spends a good deal of it again upon the poor boys who have no one to pay for them. This is what a friend of mine used to call the dove-tailing of Providence. If you can look on, some day, how the carpenter cuts the edges of the four boards to make the sides of a box, you may observe that he manages so that where the one board is cut out, the other comes and fills up, and that is the way the four together make a complete thing: so among men, rich and poor must fit into each other, the one filling up where the other has a gap; that makes a sound state of society.

But on a certain day in August 1829, very early in the morning, the boys did not come out to play, but they did come out, one after another, with knapsacks upon their backs, and long sticks in their hands, till there were twenty of them assembled, impatient for Mr. Kapff to make his appearance and take the command, that they might set out on their journey. Mr. Kapff was one of their tutors, and Chaplain of the Seminary, and it was the commencement of their holidays. Many of the boarders went to spend the vacation with their parents, but these twenty were going to make a tour under the guidance of that gentleman. They had scarcely been able to sleep all night, and had risen before day, to make sure not to be too late; but Mr. Kapff was not quite so new at this kind of thing, and so he did not show himself till it was just about the time to set out. He had strapped on his knapsack as well as any one of them, grasped his Alpenstock (alpine stick) and gave the word "march!"

And now it went all in jumps for a little while, each of the boys trying to show how light he thought his load, and how well he would keep up with his companions. Mr. Kapff did not say anything about it at first; but he got them to join in singing a tune, as soon as he could. That made them march to the time; and so they got along steadily without any wasting of strength. He then began to talk to them about the length of the journey which he had proposed to himself with them for the day, and he assured them that those who set out skipping, were most likely to come in limping.

When the party arrived on the banks of the river Aar, they embarked in a ferryboat, and the men began to pole and to drag against the stream a good length, while the boys were wondering what all this was for, and why not dash right across and land on the opposite side. But Mr. Kapff was making his own reflections, for he knew that this is the way you will be led hundreds of times in the course of your life: it will but seldom do, dashing right through obstacles the shortest way you can set before you; when you get into the midst of them, they will overpower you so that you cannot recover yourself. The ferrymen went against stream near the bank, where they knew that those with the rope would find firm footing on land, and those with the poles would find bottom under water. When they had ascended high enough, they cut across slanting; and the force of the current itself served to bring them safe to their landing-place.

They had been four hours on their march, when they halted at the village of Belp, and made their early dinner of butter and cheese, which are a greater luxury on a walking tour in Switzerland than

warm meals, besides that they are cheap, and put the people to the least possible inconvenience. They rested during the hottest part of the day, and then set out again on their way to Thun (pronounced Toon) which took them five hours. You may be sure, there was no disposition then, to jump and skip; for the road was heated by the sun, the boy's feet began to be very tender, and some of them scarcely knew how to drag themselves along. But Mr. Kapff encouraged them with the promise of a bath in the Lake of Thun, and with the sight of the mountains Jungfrau, Schreckhorn, and Wetterhorn, which seemed to come nearer, as the distance shortened; and so they marched in at last through the old gate of Thun, and soon they enjoyed all the luxury of the cool water and the fine sand drawing the heat out of their soles, and fatigue out of their limbs, and making them look forward with pleasure to the next day's climbing.

To be continued.

THE ISLAND OF ST. KILDA.

St. Kilda is the westernmost island of the Hebrides, on the coast of Scotland. The length of the island is about three miles, and its breadth nearly two miles from north to south.

The ground is chiefly used for pasture, and the men keep a stock of sheep and black cattle on it, from which they are supplied with articles of clothing, milk, butter, cheese, &c. There is no moss or turf bog on the island; and the only fuel consists of turf cut on the hills, and carried home as it is needed.

Their houses, or huts, are all of the same form and size, and also completely alike inside. They consist of but one room in which the family live at one end, and the cattle at the other. The walls contain their beds, and places for their stores, for which purpose they are generally six or seven feet thick. No chairs or tables are to be seen; wooden stools and even stones being made to supply their place. The ashes are never carried out of the house, nor even removed to the part of the room set apart for the cattle, but are spread every morning under the feet of the inmates. The floor, thus raised in the course of the season to a great height, is reduced to its proper level only once a year, when the whole matter so collected is conveyed to the fields. There is scarcely any thing like division of labour among them, every man being his own tailor, shoemaker, and, in most cases, weaver; there being no thorough-bred workman of any kind in the island.

The chief employment of the men consists in bird-catching; and the fulmar and solan goose, which frequent their rocks in immense numbers, are of great service to them, both as to the payment of their rents, which they generally do with the oil and feathers, and as to affording them provision—for they salt the carcasses, and lay them up for winter store. Their mode of killing these birds is attended with great danger; but long practice has inured them to it, and they seem to be quite fearless. In some cases they let down each other by ropes, along a steep rock, two or three hundred feet, while others at the top, are holding fast the ropes, and ready to haul him up, who is loaded with his prey, whenever he gives them a signal. So great is their skill in this work, that on one of the days I was on the island, the people, in the course of a few hours, brought home their boats deeply laden with 1200 of them, and left 400 more on the field of action, to be sent for afterwards. When the booty was brought on shore, it was divided by lot, into 20 equal parts, according to the number of the families, a method of dividing almost every kind of property, to which they have frequent recourse.

While their rents are paid chiefly in feathers, they present to the taxman of the island all other articles of produce which it affords, such as beef, mutton, cheese, oil, &c., and for any overplus that remains after the amount of the rent is deducted, he gives them value in other articles which they need; such as printed cloths, handkerchiefs, hats, indigo, &c., of which he takes with him an annual assortment for their supply. Hence, a native of St. Kilda can never be rich; neither, while he can work, need he ever be poor, or in total want. Money is of little use to them, except when the taxman comes round; yet they do not object to receiving a present of that kind from a friend, when it is put to their offer.

The people of St. Kilda have not been destitute of the means of public instruction. I found that they had some knowledge of the Scripture-account of the creation and fall of man—the deluge—the history of the Israelites—the appearance of our Saviour in the world—his obedience and death in the room of the guilty—his resurrection and ascension to glory, and his intercession for men at the right hand of God, &c. But their knowledge in regard to these facts is rather confused, and, in some respects, imperfect and false. The people themselves make mention of a young man, some years ago, who was eminent for piety; so much so that, as they express it, "he was not fit for this world, nor it worthy of him; and that therefore the Lord took him to himself." He died at the age of twenty, and this is said to have been his character for the last four or five years of his life.

They show a strong desire, to have the word of life purely dispensed among them. This I am able to affirm, both from their own repeated declarations on the subject, and from the reception which they gave to my poor labours. Never shall I forget the day, when at parting with them on the shore, amidst cries and tears, which were enough to rend any one's heart, the whole of them as with one voice, exclaimed,—"Never shall we see his face more."—"Never shall we have such truths told us more!" And, upon my assuring them that the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge has every wish to provide them with a minister; and that, whether they should ever see me or not, I hoped they would have the Gospel established among them: "God grant it,"—and "our thousand blessings rest on the heads of these gentlemen" was the general reply.—From a Missionary's Reports.

A few years after, the same minister kindly acceded to the wishes of the Directors of the Society already mentioned, in again visiting the people of St. Kilda. The manner in which he was received by the inhabitants, and the attention and anxiety with which they listened to his instructions, are fully explained in the following Journal, which he has transmitted.

St. Kilda, Friday, May 13, 1832.—This morning about eight o'clock, we loosed from Pabbay, and, with a fine N. E. breeze, which continued all the way, arrived here by four in the afternoon—thus making a passage of nearly sixty miles in eight hours. We had no sooner appeared in sight, than the people flew down to the shore to meet us, and stood in a body on the shelving rock on which we were to land, to receive ourselves and our little bark. We had no sooner effected a landing, (which, owing to the mild state of the weather, was not difficult,) than they all pressed around me, and grasped my hand each in his turn, when I thought they would have wrung the very blood out of it. Few words passed for a minute or two, but tears trickled from every eye. I was overcome myself; at last, silence was broke—"And," says one here and there, "This is a surprise." "This is more than looked for." "We little expected to see his face again; (for they addressed themselves to one another.) God bless him for this visit—He will bless him, whatever becomes of us." After I could speak, for indeed my heart was full, I told them, I came once more to see them, at the request of the Society in Edinburgh, who took an interest in their welfare. "Many, many blessings on the head of the Society, for their attention to us, and for sending you among us." "And now that I have come (said I) to labour for a short time among you, I trust you will endeavour to make a good use of the opportunity thus afforded you." "Yes, yes," said they, "as we can; and the Lord enable us to do so." All hands were now called to unload the boat, and haul it ashore—a process which took them nearly three hours; so that it was about eight o'clock before we reached the village. We immediately entered the old barn, in which we were wont to assemble—offered prayer and praises to God for his mercies, and especially his kindness, in permitting us again to meet; and so closed the scene of the day.—Children's Friend.

EDUCATION.

My attention having been attracted by the neat appearance of one of my neighbours, and the excellent order of her family, I one day entered into conversation with her, enquiring what methods she had used to render her children so orderly and industrious. "Ma'am," she replied, "it is just according to what we use 'em to from the very beginning. As to our children, neither their father nor I could ever bear to see them idling and tearing about the streets; we never go gossiping about, ourselves, and so they don't look for it neither; and then, I never spare to get them any little thing they wish for, so that I can keep them busy at home at their books or their work. My Anne (eight years old) can now rub the chairs bright, and sweeps and cleans the house for me; and as to James, he knit himself two pair of stockings before he went to school, though he was but six then; and now, Ma'am, that school is broken up, I have left him at home amusing himself with reading, writing, and carving little pieces of wood into ships and toys." Do not suppose that this person had more than common advantages to assist her in bringing up her family; she had three children, her own health was far from good, and her husband rarely earned more than nine shillings a week!

Thus you will find that the surest way to help your children, is to teach them to help themselves, and that by bringing them up to activity and industry, you will, according to the old fable, leave them a better and more certain provision than "a golden treasure," with idleness and disorder.

We have advised that children should be supplied with little books to employ their leisure hours at home; but in the present day there are so many dangerous publications sold at a cheap price, that the greatest caution is necessary in choosing books for young people, or you may give them those which will corrupt and poison the mind instead of improving

it. There are few who might not find some kind friend to assist in supplying their families with little books, or to recommend such as would be proper for them. And let parents be guarded against the arts of pedlars, who sometimes will place religious books at the top of their baskets, and talk in a canting style, but afterwards offer for sale indecent ballads, pictures, songs, improper tales, novels, and other books of the most hurtful kind. A few days ago, I met with a woman who is in the habit of dealing with a pedlar. She pointed to one of her daughters, a girl of about fifteen, and said to me, "Now, Ma'am, that girl is, I assure you, quite of a religious turn: she will sit and read two or three hours together, and I have bought her such good books!" at the same time mentioning the titles of several romantic tales, which a girl so situated could not read without injury!—Friendly Advice to Parents.

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Pa. cix. 57.—Thou art my portion, O Lord! I have said that I would keep thy word. 1st Samuel, iii. 10.—Speak, Lord! for thy servant heareth.
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