

with a Mollah for teacher, who holds sway in the proverbial fashion which requires every child to make as much noise as possible under pain of a rap if for a moment he ceases to add to the general hubbub. Persian, Arabic and sometimes French, are the languages taught, though the Koran is read merely with the eye and not with the understanding. The Arabic Bible, which is frequently trumpeted as giving the Scripture to the 120,000,000 of the Mohammedan world, Persia included, could not be understood by one in a thousand of our population. But in spite of their deficiency in school education, the upper classes are intelligent and quite well informed. It is sometimes surprising to find how much information on science, history and the world's doings they have obtained without instruction or reading. The desire for education is developing among them, and they would gladly welcome any efforts which are not mixed with designs to subvert their accepted faith.—*Presbyterian Banner*.

In the accompanying picture the central section represents the great mosque of Teheran, the capital of Persia. Its splendid dome, lofty arch and twin minarets will be noticed. The other groups represent travelling and domestic scenes, the upper one being a caravansary or inn, and the lower the court of a private dwelling.

The Reaper and the Flowers.

THERE is a reaper whose name is Death; and with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath, and the flowers that grow between.

"Shall I have naught that is fair?" saith he;
"have naught but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet
to me, I'll give them all back again."

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
he kissed their drooping leaves;
It was for the Lord in Paradise he bound
them in his sheaves.

"My Lord has need of these flowerets gay,"
the reaper said, and smiled;
Dear tokens of the earth are they, where
He once was a child.

"They shall all bloom in fields of light,
transplanted by my care;
And saints upon their garments white, these
sacred blossoms wear."

And the mother gave in tears and pain, the
flowers she most did love.
She knew she would find them all again in
the fields of light above.

Oh, not in cruelty, not in wrath, the reaper
came that day:
'Twas an angel visited the green earth, and
took the flowers away.

Her Reward.

BY ERNEST GILMORE.

THE superintendent felt very anxious to find a teacher willing and able to manage six rough, ignorant boys, whom he had picked up here and there about the town. He announced his desire before the school, but found no response; each teacher seemed to have his hands already full, and no scholar in the advanced classes appeared to feel equal to the undertaking. At last he requested the minister to ask from the pulpit if there was anyone in the congregation who would venture to lead so many black sheep into the fold. If there should be one such, he would like that one to report after the dismissal of the congregation.

There was one in the church who listened to what the minister said, in whose mind a train of thought ran

speedily. This person was a little woman dressed in mourning. Not much of her face was visible, because of the crape veil folded about it, but the glimpse one could get revealed a face sweet and earnest, but heavily marked with grief. And no wonder. She was not only a widow, but her only child—a bright and winsome son—had gone astray; at the present time she did not even know his whereabouts.

The minister's eyes grew moist as Mrs. L— touched his arm after service, and said firmly: "I will try to lead the black sheep if you think I'm capable, but, you know, of course that I have a black sheep of my very own wandering off somewhere." With a voice husky with deep feeling, the minister said, "Yes, yes, I know, and I hope and pray that his feet may soon turn toward the fold. As for you, God bless you, that you are willing to lead these others while your heart is heavy and bleeding." The following Sabbath, Mrs. L— was introduced to her class, surely a decidedly unpossessing one, and rather formidable too. In ages the boys ranged from twelve to sixteen. The twelve-year-old boy was both awkward and ignorant; he seemed too stupid to learn anything except mischief. Then there were three boys about fourteen, regular street Arabs, their eyes gleaming with an intelligence of an undesirable kind. The remaining two were not repulsive, although they were not encouraging scholars. They were twin brothers, bright, but rude, and deplorably ignorant concerning the Saviour who had died for them. They paid very little attention to what Mrs. L— said, and they were constantly whispering, while their eyes wandered off on a tour round the pretty room. Most teachers would have been discouraged with such a class—and justly so; even Mrs. L— felt somewhat dismayed but she reasoned wisely: "Faint heart never won a battle yet; it seems to be my duty to lift up these poor boys. If I shirk my duty, I ought not to expect that anyone else could take it."

It did not take long for Mrs. L— to find out that the stupid boy had been beaten upon the head by a drunken father, until it was no wonder he was stupid. Her heart went out to him there. She visited him in his wretched home, and comforted him, and after awhile had the satisfaction of seeing him reach out his hand to clasp the Saviour's. As for the Arabs, two of them did not come after the second Sabbath; they had gone off on a ship; so she never knew whether the little seed she had sown in their hearts had taken root. The remaining Arab reached the "green pastures" and the "still waters" before the close of a year, and after that he moved steadily upward, leading some of his associates with him.

At the end of two years you would not have recognized the twin boys. They were eighteen now; great, noble-looking fellows, with a purpose in life, and faithfully pursuing it. Through Mrs. L—'s influence they had attended a night-school, and had progressed rapidly.

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Five years have gone. It is New Year's Eve; the snow is beating drearily against the windows of Mrs. L—'s home. She feels strangely desolate to-night. For two years she has been an invalid, and it is four

years since she has heard from her only child. Just a little after dusk, the minister who had asked God to bless Mrs. L—, entered her home, and saw the servant, doing her mistress's bidding, packing a basket for some poor neighbour.

"Don't send all the chickens off; you'll need some here," he warned, and then he entered the invalid's room, where she sat sick and sad. "I've a little story to tell," he said; "please promise not to interrupt. I will make it short, but it will be eloquent in fruitful suggestion. Some years ago a broken-hearted Christian woman undertook to lead some wanderers home. Her task was no light one, but she did not shirk it. Sweetly, but firmly, she picked up the golden opportunities, and made a gleaming crown that will shine upon her forehead in the glorious hereafter. But," and a strangely tender quiver came into his voice, "she'll have some reward for her labour even here. Two of the lads—twins—young men now, found in a great wicked city, two years ago, a widow's only child, when they learned whose child he was they laboured untiringly to lift him from the depths of degradation, where they had found him. It was wearying work, but they never slackened their love or their zeal. 'It is her boy,' they said, 'he must be saved.' And a year ago he was saved from the gulf of intemperance. He longed then to return to his mother, but he would not until he felt sure that he could stand firm. Now his feet are upon the Rock."

Mrs. L— put out her hand beseechingly. All the pain had faded from her face, and in its place shone only joy unutterable.

"Where is my boy?" she asked.

"Coming."

The jingle of bells was heard at the door, then quick steps through the hall, and three young men entered—the rescuers and the rescued.

The happy mother felt that her reward had come.—*Westminster Teacher*.

The Lost Child.

ONE day the Count von Stornan went hunting. While in the woods a cry of distress from a cliff high above arrested his attention. Looking up in the direction from which the cry came, he saw in an eagle's nest a sweet little boy, whom the bird of prey was just on the point of throwing to her young for food. The sight of the lovely child moved the heart of the Count. He climbed the cliff as anxiously as the most of loving fathers, and rescued the child from the beak and talons of the bird.

The Count afterwards educated the child, who was called Otto, in all useful and necessary knowledge, and in return the boy gave his foster-father a great deal of happiness, and grew up to be a promising youth.

After some years had passed away, the Count went with Otto to his country seat. There came one day a stranger to the castle. He had recently lost his humble cottage by a disastrous fire, together with all his other possessions, and was now obliged to ask help of benevolent people.

Otto, who at this time was feeding the fish in a pond in the garden, as soon as he saw the poorly-clad man, went up to him, and speaking kindly to him, asked what he wanted. Upon hearing the poor man's sad tale he assured him of his sympathy, and conducted him to the Count.

The Count was very gracious to the afflicted man, and after encouraging him by promising help, ordered him to wait until he should return from his study. In the meanwhile the poor man looked about him in the beautifully furnished room, and discovered a picture which represented the rescue of Otto from the eagle's nest. The Count had caused this picture to be painted in memory of that adventure and hung in this room. The poor man gazed long on this picture. Tears glistened in his eyes.

"Oh, gracious sir," said he, greatly excited, when the Count came back again into the room, "pray tell me what this picture represents?"

The Count then related how he found his beloved Otto in the eagle's nest, and had taken him to himself and treated him as his own; and how, in spite of all his efforts, he could never gain any reliable information concerning his parents.

"I, too," said the distressed man, "about twenty years ago, lost a darling son in like manner. We were mowing in the meadows, and the child was asleep on the grass near, when a powerful bird of prey, swooping suddenly down, seized him and flew away."

The Count thought instantly that perhaps his Otto might be this man's child. He said to him: "Do you know of no mark by which, if the child lives, you can identify him?"

"Oh, yes," answered the man, "our little Martin had a mother-mark on his right arm."

Now, the Count had already discovered such a mark on Otto's right arm, and the clothes which Otto wore at the time of the rescue were identical with the description which the man gave.

The Count could now doubt no longer. Pointing to Otto, he said, "Look, my good man! that youth who brought you to me is your lost Martin!"

For a moment the happy father could not speak for joy; then he began to weep and cry: "Oh, my son!"

Otto cried, "O my father!"

And each embraced the other heartily. They could not sufficiently thank and bless the good God who had prepared for them this great joy.

The Count now desired to know the mother and Otto's brothers and sisters. He sent his own coach for them, and after a few days they arrived at the castle. The happiness which both parents and children felt at meeting thus with their long-lost Martin was indescribable.

The Count, when he became satisfied of the poor man's perfect honesty, made the proposal that they should settle near there with his family, and gave him a nice farm for his own.

Jacob—for that was the poor man's name—soon was in comfortable circumstances; but Otto became an active and noble man. He was esteemed and loved by all who knew him, and afterwards the Emperor, in consideration of the valuable services he had rendered the country, raised him to the office and honour of Baron Alderheim.—*Selected*.

LITTLE NELL—"What church were you married in, grandma?" Grandma—"I was not married in a church, dear." Little Nell—"Were you married at home?" Grandma—"No dear, I was a very naughty girl and ran away with your grandpa." Little Nell—"Mercy me! I'd never run away with such a fussy old gentleman as grandpa."