

Missionary Riddle.

The Religious Telescope says that this riddle was written in aid of the fund of a London missionary society, and is called on that account a missionary riddle. It will puzzle the brains of the young folks, but if it be looked for in one of the historical books of the Old Testament, it may not be looked for in vain:

Come and commiserate
 One who was blind,
 Helpless and desolate,
 Void of a mind;
 Guileless, deceiving;
 Though unbelieving,
 Free from all sin;
 By mortals adored,
 Still I ignored
 The world I was in.
 King Ptolemy's, Caesar's,
 And Tiglath Pileser's
 Birthdays are shown;
 Wise men, astrologers,
 All are acknowledgers
 Mine is unknown.
 I ne'er had a father
 Or mother; or rather,
 If I had either,
 Alive at my birth,
 Lodged in a palace,
 Hunted by malice,
 I did not inherit.
 By lineage, or merit,
 A spot on the earth.
 Nursed among pagans, no one baptized
 me;
 A sponsor I had, who ne'er catechised me;
 She gave me the name to her heart that
 was dearest;
 She gave me the place to her bosom was
 nearest;
 But one look of kindness
 She cast on me never;
 Nor a word in my blindness,
 I heard from her ever.
 Compassed by dangers,
 Nothing could harm me,
 By foemen and strangers;
 Nought could alarm me;
 I saved, I destroyed;
 I blest, I allowed;
 Kept a crown for a prince,
 But had none of my own;
 Filled the place of a king,
 But ne'er sat on a throne;
 Rescued a warrior; baffled a plot;
 Was what I seemed not, seemed what I
 am not.
 Devoted to slaughter,
 A price on my head,
 A king's lovely daughter
 Watched on my bed;
 Though gently she dressed me, fainting
 with fear,
 She never caressed me, nor wiped off a
 tear;
 Never moistened my lips, though parch-
 ing and dry.
 (What marvel a blight should pursue till
 she die?)
 I was rich, I was poor;
 'Twas royalty cursed me,
 In secret, I'm sure.
 I live not, I die not, but tell you I must
 That ages have passed since I first turned
 to dust.
 This paradox whence? This squalour!
 this splendour!
 Say, was I a king or a silly pretender?
 Fathom the mystery
 Deep in my history.
 Was I a man?
 An angel supernal?
 A demon infernal?
 Solve it who can!

THE RAIN FAIRIES.

All the little Rain Fairies had met to-
 gether, for the earth was dry and dusty,
 and all the pretty bright flowers were
 drooping their heads, they were so
 thirsty. The Rain Fairies, you know,
 live up in those soft white clouds that
 look so woolly to us below, but on the
 other side they are hard and shining.
 You have heard people say, have you not,
 that every cloud has a silver lining? It
 is on that side that the Rain Fairies live,
 and they are the most beautiful little
 creatures that ever were seen, because
 they are always so busy and happy.
 Their names are pretty, too, but not like
 ours, for what mamma would think of
 naming her little girl Silver, or Bright,
 Blue, or Merry, or Rose, Pink, Violet,
 Swift, or any name like those? I mean
 for a truly name, to keep always. And

yet these are names of the Fairies, these
 and many more like them, for there are
 crowds of the Fairies.

As I said, they all came together to see
 what they should do. "The earth is get-
 ting very dry," said Bright. "I heard
 the Robin last evening calling to us for
 rain. He said that he could find hardly
 dew enough to clear his voice for his part
 in the birds' morning concert, and his
 favourite pool is drying up so fast that
 there is hardly water enough for his
 morning bath."

"Yes," sighed little Silver, "and the
 violet which is my special care was
 drooping its head, and when I kissed it,
 it had hardly strength to smile. We
 must do something."

"I know!" cried Merry. "When the
 sun is setting to-night, we will all take
 our buckets, and we will run down the
 sun's rays and dip up water from the
 ocean. It will be such fun! And then
 to-morrow morning we will pour it all
 upon the earth, and how glad all the
 green things will be!"

And so, when the sun was setting, they
 all ran for their little buckets, and any-
 one who was looking might have seen
 long rays let down from the sun when
 he came near the ocean, and down these
 the Fairies trooped in long lines, crowds
 and crowds of them, and they worked so
 busily that they filled all the hollows of
 their cloud-home to the brim with water.

"The sun is drawing water," said the
 wise ones. But it was not so at all; the
 Fairies were drawing water.
 Little Mischief stood at the very edge
 of the cloud, looking over, eager to empty
 her tiny pail of water at the first peep of
 day. From where she stood she looked
 directly down into the nest of the Robin
 family. Mrs. Robin was very tired, for
 her family was always hungry, and the
 nice fat earthworms had all gone deep
 into the ground, because it was so dry on
 top; so she had to work hard to feed all
 her growing children that day. So Mrs.
 Robin slept soundly till one of her chil-
 dren woke and cried. This little one had
 been greedy, and had snatched a nice
 plump white worm that was meant for a
 weaker and younger brother, so now he
 had had dreams and could not sleep.
 —J. W. Dree.

A LIVING BRIDGE.

BY KATE HAMILTON.

Johnny's elbow rested on the table, his
 hand supported his head, and he was
 buried, mentally, in the open book before
 him. Uncle Dan sat before the open fire,
 leisurely fitting a new handle into his
 mallet and glancing occasionally at
 Johnny, or through the window into the
 street. His thoughts wandered with his
 eyes. A man passed by on the opposite
 side of the street, and Uncle Dan smiled,
 half complacently, half contemptuously,
 as he recognized in the bent figure a man
 who worked by his side in the great
 agricultural shops. "Jim Brent is back
 in the shop again, but he won't keep his
 place long," he mused. "He thinks he
 is reformed, but he won't pass them sa-
 loons many weeks till he'll be drunk once
 more, and then he'll be sent off for good.
 His likin' for liquor is a big ditch that
 he'll be sure to tumble into first or last,
 and then he will be hangin' round the
 saloons the same old way he was before.
 And his boy will be out of school once
 more. That's a nice enough boy of Jim's,
 too, if he had half a chance. Why can't
 the man take care of him as I do of
 Johnny? It takes Johnny to get ahead
 with his studies, though! He just drives
 into things."

The old man looked proudly at the
 boy's bowed head and earnest face.
 "What are you studyin' into now,
 Johnny?" he asked, not because he ex-
 pected to be much enlightened by the
 answer—Johnny's studies were usually a
 mystery to him—but because it was such
 a gratification to be awed by the boy's
 learning.

"Ants," said Johnny. "The teacher
 wanted us to learn what we could about
 them and the wonderful things they do.
 Just think, Uncle Dan, of ants that
 march in long columns, have officers, dig
 tunnels so that they can make their jour-
 neys under ground, and keep out of the
 heat of the sun, attack men—"

"I never came across any ants of that
 kind," interposed the old man, rather
 doubtfully.

"Oh, these are African ants," explained
 Johnny. "Du Chaillu—he's a great
 traveller, Uncle Dan—tells about them.
 But the queerest thing they do—our
 teacher told us that, and I was trying to
 hunt it up—is to make bridges of them-
 selves. When they came to a stream a
 number of them hang on to each other
 with their claws until they form a cable
 long enough to reach from a tree or bush
 on one side of the stream to one on the
 opposite side, and so they make a living
 bridge on which the whole regiment can
 cross in safety. The teacher said that if
 human beings would sometimes try to be
 living bridges, and help other people
 over hard places, there would be—"
 Johnny's eyes went down to his book
 again, and the last words of the sentence
 came drearily after a long pause—"more
 safe travelling."

"H'm!" grunted Uncle Dan, looking
 into the fire once more, with his thoughts
 going back to his weak shopmate.

There was a long hour of silence:
 Johnny was busy with his book and
 Uncle Dan with his thoughts. Then the
 old man spoke hesitatingly:

"Johnny, maybe you could like Will
 Brent well enough to sort o' help him
 along a bit—when you see a chance?"

"Why, I do," answered Johnny, won-
 deringly. "I only hope that he can stay
 in school."

"I've been thinking," pursued Uncle
 Dan, "that if I kept watch of Jim—
 walkin' with him to and from the shop,
 mostly, and lendin' a friendly hand now
 and then—he wouldn't be so likely to go
 down again. We might have him and
 the boy here sometimes, and maybe me
 and you could be a kind o' livin' bridge
 for 'em, Johnny. I do reckon that's what
 the Lord wants us to be."

Johnny's whole eager face showed how
 much he wanted to help his friend, but
 all he said was:

"Now I know what African ants were
 made for."—Forward.

THE MUD HOUSE.

It was a warm, sunny day in June,
 when a wasp decided to build herself a
 house. For some time she had watched
 her three cousins as they busily worked
 on their own homes, but their ways did
 not suit her.

One cousin was boring her nest in a
 decayed fence-post; a second had hung
 hers from a limb of a tree; while a third,
 too lazy to do either the one or the other,
 had taken possession of a deserted angle-
 worm's hole in the ground, and was now
 carrying into this hole a kicking green
 caterpillar as food for the young grub.
 "No," thought our wasp, "I shall not
 do as my cousins are doing, for I know I
 can do better. I suppose my cousin in
 the fence-post thinks that she has chosen
 a safe place for herself, but she did not
 stop to think that in a thunder-shower
 that post may be struck by lightning.
 Then, too, perhaps the farmer will tear
 down these old rails and put up new
 ones. I shouldn't wonder a bit if he did,
 for that wood is so rotten that it cannot
 stand many more strong winds."

"Now, see the foolishness of my tree-
 cousin! It may be pleasant to have the
 breeze swing her huge paper nest, up
 among those green leaves, but she had
 better take care! Breezes sometimes be-
 come hurricanes, there is the same danger
 of being killed by lightning, and it would
 be just like one of those horrid human
 beings to cut down the tree itself.
 "My earth-cousin is no wiser than the
 others. She may be trodden upon by any
 kind of animal that happens to come this
 way, or those dreadful creatures that live
 in the ground will bore into her nest
 and eat her little grub. The angle-worm
 and that owns that hole may come back and
 drive her out. How angry he would be
 to find that she had moved in without
 even asking the price of the rent!"

"Work on, my cousins, and run your
 risks! I shall either learn how to make
 a home where I can live without fear,
 or I shall build none at all," and she
 flew down to a brook to drink, and rested
 a while, to think of a way to begin her
 task. Just then she saw some soft clay
 at the edge of the water, and said to her-
 self,

"Now that clay would be exactly the
 thing to use for the walls of a house.
 When dry, it would be so hard and firm
 that no insect could get through it to

hurt my little grub, and if I fixed my
 nest to something that would not be
 struck by lightning, or blown away, I
 should be all right. Let me see—there is
 the very spot!"

She had spied a stone wall near by,
 and upon looking more closely, found a
 snug corner under one of the largest
 stones.

"This is fine!" said she. "The wall is
 so strong that no wind can blow it over,
 and so solid that it cannot fall."

She flew back to the brook, gathered
 into a tiny ball as much wet clay as she
 could carry, and hurried to the wall.
 Here she stuck the mud to the stone and
 went again to the brook for another load.

When her nest was done, a more cozy
 place for a grub baby could not have
 been found. The mother wasp brought
 small caterpillars and bugs, and packed
 them into the nest with the baby, so that
 when it awakened from its long nap, it
 would have something to eat. She next
 closed the door so that nothing could get
 in, and felt happy with what she had
 done.

One day the cousins paid her a visit.
 "What a smart cousin we have!" said
 they, but although they praised her work,
 they would not believe her house was
 any better or safer than theirs, and per-
 haps it was as well they were satisfied,
 for, after all, no harm came to the fence-
 post house, the tree house, or the ground
 house, and all the wasp babies were fat
 and strong.—Blanche Elizabeth Wade, in
 The Examiner.

"One, Two, Three."

It was an old, old, old, old lady
 And a boy who was half-past three,
 And the way they played together
 Was beautiful to see.

She couldn't go running and jumping,
 And the boy, no more could he,
 For he was a thin little fellow,
 With a thin little twisted knee.

They sat in the yellow sunlight,
 Out under the maple tree,
 And the game that they played I'll tell you
 Just as it was told to me.

It was hide and go seek they were playing,
 Though you'd never have known it to
 be—

With an old, old, old, old lady,
 And a boy with a twisted knee.

The boy would bend his face down
 On his one little sound right knee,
 And he'd guess where she was hiding
 In guesses One, Two, Three!

"You are in the china closet!"
 He would cry and laugh with glee,
 It wasn't the china closet,
 But he still had Two and Three.

"You are up in papa's big bedroom,
 In the chest with the queer old key!"
 And she said, "You are warm and
 warmer,
 But you're not quite right," said she.

"It can't be the little cupboard,
 Where mamma's things used to be,
 So it must be the clothespress, gran'ma,"
 And he found her with his Three.

Then she covered her face with her
 fingers—
 They were wrinkled and white and
 wee—
 And she guessed where the boy was
 hiding

With a One and a Two and a Three.

And they never had stirred from their
 place

Right under the maple tree—
 This old, old, old, old lady,
 And the boy with the lame little knee,
 This dear, dear, dear old lady
 And the boy who was half-past three.

A shepherd once left his dog to watch
 a part of his sheep while he drove the
 others to a fair. While there he forgot
 about the flock at home, and did not re-
 turn until the third day. He at once in-
 quired about the dog. No one had seen
 him. "Then," said he, "I know that he
 is dead, for he is too faithful to desert
 his charge." He hurried to the fold and
 found his dog just able to crawl. With a
 look of joy it crouched at his feet and al-
 most immediately died.