

## Family Circle.

From the American Mother's Magazine.  
LETTER TO CHILDREN.

My Dear Children—I have something to say to you about respect to the aged. It is not merely your duty, but it should be your pleasure, to obey their commands, to anticipate their wants, and bestow upon them all the little acts of kindness and attention in your power. Have you a dear old grandfather or grandmother, or some aged neighbor? Oh, how happy you can make them. Though they are so much older and wiser than you, they have hearts to love, enjoy, and suffer, as well as you. They are as well pleased with a kind word or deed as you are with the toy which cost the friend who gives it you the merest trifle. You may ask them sometimes to enjoy a walk with you, or if they are too weak or infirm to go with you, you can bring them the sweetest flower you can find, or tell them of the beautiful things you have seen, and my word for it, you shall see their wrinkled faces brighten up with smiles and very likely, they will repay you with a kiss, or tell you some pleasant story. It is, to me, a delightful sight to see old age and youth clinging to each other like the ivy and the oak; youth deriving wisdom and strength from age, and age freshness and beauty from youth—the dreariness of age dispelled, the wildness of youth softened and subdued.

Let me tell you of a little girl I once knew, and ask you if you would not be sorry to feel as she did. One day I saw this little girl doing something in a fretful and ungracious manner, and I asked her why she showed such bad feelings. She replied, "It is only for grandmamma." A few short months afterward her grandmother was laid in the cold earth, and I heard the little girl, while recalling to mind the trembling hand, the weak step, and the feeble voice of her that was dead, lamenting that she had not been more kind to grandmother. When you think of the stores of knowledge and pleasure which those who have lived before you have brought within your reach—the long years of toil which they have spent on earth, and that you enjoy the fruits of their labor—do you not see that it is your duty to be kind to the aged—to do all in your power to make them happy—will you not rejoice to improve every opportunity for evincing your gratitude to them?

A friend of mine being in the city of B——, saw a short distance before him an old man walking with great difficulty, and apparently very much fatigued. He seemed at a loss what direction to take. Between my friend and the old man, two little girls, eight or ten years of age, were walking and conversing about the old man. "How tired he looks," said one—"I wish we could help him," said the other. Just then a young man passed by, of whom the old man asked his way to No. 16—— street. A hasty answer, which was not at all intelligible, was the only reply. In his bewilderment, the old man struck against a post, and his staff fell from his hand. The largest girl sprang forward to support him, while the other handed him his staff, saying, "Here it is, sir." "Thank you, my kind girls," said the old man; "can you direct me to No. 16—— street? I came to the city to-day to visit my son—wishing to surprise him, I did not send word that I was coming. I am a stranger here, and have been a walking for a long time to no purpose." "Oh, we will go with you sir; mother said we might walk for an hour, and we can as well walk that way as any other." "God bless you, my kind girls," said the old man; "I am sorry to trouble you." "Oh!" replied the little girls, "It is no trouble; we love old folks, and love to do them a favor." They at length brought him opposite the house which he sought, and he was dismissing them but they said, "We must cross the street with you, lest the carriages run over you." What a delightful body-guard were these kind children. As they separated, the old man said, "If you ever visit Berkshire county, come to the house of John B——, and you shall have as hearty a welcome, and as good entertainment, as a Massachusetts farm-house can afford."

You can imagine, perhaps, how happy these girls were in the consciousness of having done a good deed, though it cost them so little effort. Little did they imagine that they should be held up as examples to others; but I am sure that you will strive to imitate them, that you may enjoy the luxury of doing good. My dear children, the palsied step, the tottering limbs, may one day be yours. You are now young and active, and froth with life—so was that old man once—but old age came and took away his youth and sprightliness, and time may spoil you of your activity and vigor, and you may become as much in need of the kindness of others as was this old man. Do then to others as you would have them do to you—be kind to the aged that you may in your turn receive kindness when old age and infirmity come upon you. Your affectionate friend, J. J. N.

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## PROVOKE NOT WRATH.

It is remarkable that the Apostle Paul, in his epistles addressed to the Ephesians and the Colossians, uses the same individual expression. "Ye fathers provoke not your children to wrath." In one epistle he adds a reason for this injunction, "lest they be discouraged;" in the other

a counsel as to the right manner of conducting the education of youth, "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Knowing as we do, that Scripture is given for reproof as well as for instruction, and, "given by holy men as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," we have good reason to conclude that Christian parents in those days of primitive religion were in the habit of provoking their children to anger, and needed caution and reproof in that respect. And who that enters the families of these days, but will find that St. Paul wrote with the pen of inspiration? Who that can look with impartial eye on the domestic scene, as we may suppose the Apostle to have done, not having taken upon himself the vows of husband and father, will not see much in parents to condemn in regard to manifestations of temper, and ebullitions of wrath in their offspring? Let us instance some of the ways in which parents provoke their children to wrath.

1st. By ill managed reproof. Parents may not sufficiently inquire into causes of misconduct or the degree of temptation presented; they may reprove the innocent for the guilty, or bestow upon the offender an unmerited amount of censure. Above all, parents may not inquire into the motives of action by which alone the Lord judges. Often have I seen the little brow overcast at one or all these causes, and as often have I mourned, that a parent should himself cause his child to violate the fifth commandment. A parent may also arouse anger in the breast of his child by the manner of his reproof. How beautiful is the image of God in man!—how I love that man, who, like his Maker, is long suffering and slow to anger! But how different is often the case. The brow of the parent is clouded at the smallest error; clouds gather—the storm bursts. The child too is mortal, and he burns in self defence; but the tongue is bound, and the fire burns deeper within—"his face answereth to face," so the heart of man to man." What erring parent when he reflects upon his past derelictions in this respect, but will mourn to have transmitted his unholy passions to the breast of his offspring, and will cry "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation." The timely use of the rod seldom causes anger in the breast of a child, for the means of God's own appointing, he will bless. But the use of the rod in a passionate state of mind, will undoubtedly communicate the same temper to children; and it is remarked by teachers of youth, that no children are so absolutely incorrigible as those who have been severely and passionately dealt with by their fathers. Beautiful and full of meaning is the expression of the Psalmist, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Our children are part of ourselves; they inherit our depraved nature; they are ourselves in miniature, and are repeating those errors and follies which, if we would look back a few years, we would see in ourselves.

2d. Too frequent fault finding is a common cause of anger in children. They imbibe the idea that it is impossible to please their parents; every reproof only strengthens their conviction, till at last, yielding to discouragement, they seek their happiness in the society of others, and become careless of the approbation of their natural protectors.

## DOMESTIC PEACE.

Pert to a father! Cross to a mother!  
Rude to a sister! Proud to a brother!  
What traits are these for children to possess!  
Who, such a child, could love or care for?

Nothing in the wide world is so pleasant to behold as a loving family. This was intended to be the happiest place on earth. When our first parents were formed, it was to make each other happy, and when children were given to them, it was to increase their happiness by sharing it with others who were bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh. God has chosen the family relation to represent his kingdom—He speaks of himself as our father, and tells us, when we pray to him, to say, "Our Father which art in heaven!" He speaks of those who love and obey him as his children—his sons and daughters—adopted into his family, and made his heirs. He teaches us to regard our fellow men as brethren, and heaven as our final and happy home. In all these descriptions however, it must be that peaceful as well as happy home is meant. We have seen houses or rooms in which a father, and mother, and brothers, and sisters lived, whose temper and conduct towards each other would lead us to think of anything rather than happiness. Loud and harsh, and sometimes profane words; sullen looks, selfish and cruel acts, cries and blows; these and other things like them, remind us of that dreadful place to which all the wicked will go at last, and where no kind word, or look or thought, will ever enter! Is your home as happy as you wish it to be, young friend? If not, can you not do something to make it happier!

Punctuality—This virtue is the soul of business. Its exercise is an element of social morality; its violation an outrage upon society. And yet, while few transgressions are more mischievous and commonly practised, few errors are more readily excused and accounted of more lightly. Whoso is guilty in this matter, let him cultivate forecast, and he will reap a rich reward. He will find few helps in his way more timely and effectual.

## Geographic and Historic.

## ORIENTAL SCENES.

MAHOMET AND HIS CREED.

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In the cavern near Mecca, where the pigeon had sheltered him from the Korishites, he compiled that Koran, which displayed such wonderful knowledge of human nature. These revelations were written by his disciples on shoulder blades of mutton and on palm leaves, and the chapters, both animal and vegetable, were placed indiscriminately in a chest, belonging to one of his wives. It was not until two years after the death of the Prophet that these writings were transcribed and collected into a volume by Abubeker, the successor of the divine editor.

It is the fashion of the illuminated minds of the present day to find out wonders of eloquence and novelty, and meaning, in what that dull race of men, our forefathers, found trite, or bombastic, or obscure. The Koran is new eulogized by Europeans in terms that might make a Moslem conceited, yet I am free to confess that, having labored through "its incoherent rhapsodies," from the chapter of the "Cow" to that of "Men," I am only astonished at the strength of fanaticism that could distil meaning, or a faith, out of its incoherent pages.

I will not attempt to enter into the doctrines that Mahomet inculcated, either in this Koran, or in the Sunna, or oral law. Its leading principles are prayer, alms, and fasting. The first brings the Moslem half way to God; the second to the door of his palace; and the third obtains him admittance. Cleanliness is the key to prayer, and the purity of the body must typify that of the mind, perhaps it does; nevertheless, the Moslem is the filthiest of mankind, though he washes his hands and beard three times a day. Abstinence and fasting are rigidly enjoined; but there is no limit to the harem—Charity involves at least a tenth of the Moslem's income being spent in alms. There are, moreover, parochial institutions for destitute dogs, and asylums for houseless cats; yet the Moslem will cheat his father, if his father does not anticipate him; and woe to the orphan or the stranger who is dependent on a Moslem's honesty, or the justice of a Cadi's court!

This dishonesty, it is true, is not to be laid to the account of the Koran's precepts directly; but when that Koran Jesuitically justifies falsehood towards enemy, or even wife, veracity ceases to exist, and integrity of conduct cannot long survive.

It is true that the most religious Moslem is at best a Pharisee; that he is only religious towards his co-religionists; that there is nothing catholic in his faith; that, with all his abstinence, sensuality is allowed; that his paradise is one of gluttony and eye-delight; yet Mahometanism claims the first and highest place amongst uninspired religions. It proclaimed the unity of God, and inculcated entire resignation to his will. In its passive quality, it was eminently the religion of endurance; in its active quality, it was, beyond all other, the religion of conquest. Intended as a *manstrum* in which all other faiths were to be fused, it endeavored to conciliate the Jew by adopting the Patriarchs; the Sabæan, by admitting gen and starry intelligences; the corrupt Christianity which it encountered, by asserting the divine mission of Christ, the existence of purgatory, and of a Paraclete, which was Mahomet himself.

It is to be observed that Mahometanism is much more latitudinarian in Egypt, than in Syria, Asia Minor, and Persia; yet even here the devoutness of its professors, and the universality of its operation, is very striking, and has given rise to the following eloquent observations by a recent author:—"For my own part, I never experienced a stronger impression than the first day I spent in a Mahometan country. It is like returning at one step to the old dispensation; to the condition of mankind, standing, without mediation, without sympathy, alone, beneath the will and might of God. There the whole life goes on in the distinct presence of the invisible; there prayer is no mental process, but a plain act of dutiful service, a mere obedience of the laws and conditions of existence, there reverence is the distinction between man and the inferior animals; and the scoffer and the scorner would be rebels against the common sense and decency of mankind."

Mahometanism was the child of the sword, the soldier was its Priest; its existence depended on its advancement: when it stood still, it languished. Strictly eastern in the rites and the habits of thought that it prescribed, it never was adapted to advance amongst a northern people. Had Mahomet succeeded in conciliating the Jews, it would have materially altered the character of the East, by consolidating their strenuous character with that of the volatile Arab, and rendering uniform the eastern faith. It is evident that his keen vision perceived the importance of the conversion of the Jews, and perhaps he was led towards their creed by his zeal for the unity of the Deity and his abhorrence of idolatry. But the descendant of Ishmael, of whose pure blood the Koreish prided themselves in being, was never to coalesce with the children of the promise. "Thy hand against theirs," was not spoken in vain three thousand years before, and was fulfilled when

the children of Abraham scornfully rejected, even to the death, amalgamation with the Ishmaelites. Had they come otherwise, in all human probability would Jerusalem have been restored, and the Hebrews become once more a people, but a mightier hand pointed to a different issue. The same obstacle, that had rejected the Son of Heaven, incurred the hatred of his foe, and the Jew is devoted by Mahomet to destruction in this world, and damnation in the next. Spiritual warfare found no arena in the minds of the combatants. The fanaticism of the Koran never came into mental collision with the fierce faith that chivalry had evolved from the Gospel of peace.

But even the conversion of the Jews to Islamism would not have altered the relations of the Moslem with Christendom, or made any difference in the result of the battle of Tours. It would, perhaps, be bigotry to ascribe to Christianity, such as was then practised, the check that the Saracens experienced in Europe; but the vehement and firm will and iron vigor of the Norman prevailed over the wild enthusiasm and unconnected activity of the Oriental. However strong in numbers, and powerful in resources, every expedition of the Saracen was a mere expansion of the foray of an Arab tribe. The Moor was, as he described himself, a thunder-bolt of war; but the cloud that bore it must move on, or be dissolved. When the Moslem reached France on the south, and Hungary on the east, he encountered that stern northern race to whom the conquest of the world seems allotted. Baffled and thrown back on Barbary and the Bosphorus, the tide of Islam, that must ever either flow or ebb, had turned. From that hour, it began to shrink, and is now rapidly subsiding into the narrow channel whence it overflowed.

Would that we could find a pure and uniform faith following upon its retiring tide, as the harvest pursues the reeding Nile! As yet there appears little probability of such a result; but, come what may, it is consolatory to believe that the opened eyes and expanded hearts of men will never more submit to the Moslem's creed, in whose path has followed, like its shadow, oppression, insecurity, poverty, and intolerance.

It is not, however, by conversion that Islamism is on the decline. "Moslem once, Moslem ever," is a proverb among the Greeks. His very being is identified with his faith; it is interwoven with every action of his life; it is the source of all his pride, hope, and comfort—Amongst us, too generally, our religion "is of our life a thing apart;" with the Moslem it seems inseparable.

Inquire of the historian, the traveller, or even of the Missionary, what number of conversions have taken place among that people on whose soul, from their very infancy, the faith of the Prophet and the scorn of the Christian seems stamped indelibly, and they will answer, "None." It is only, then, with a failing population that this war faith seems to fail: *Ubi solitudinem, pacem*. Then comes the Greek, or the Roman Catholic, or the Jew, who multiply apace; and the same belief in destiny that once carried the Moslem over the world irresistibly, now bids him submit to extinction or emigration.

The Egyptian Moslem presents all the evil results of his religion in a striking manner, with little admixture of its better qualities, except the resignation, the hospitality, and courteousness that it enjoins; to which must be added, respect to grey hairs, and filial reverence. The numbers of the Moslem in Egypt is one million seven hundred and fifty thousand, including Turks and Nubians.

## VALUE OF TEACHING-TALENT.

No men are more justly entitled to fair prices than truly qualified and competent teachers.—And this, not barely because of the value of what they give in return, but because of the great outlay of time and money necessary to prepare for their profession. Some teachers have spent a dozen years in preparation, and have laid out many thousand dollars; a capital of time and money sufficient to have made them rich in merchandise, or at any mechanical art. Few persons can estimate the value of things, where the results are produced with ease, and in a moment. They must see the labor performed. Most can readily believe that a railroad, a canal, or a ship, is worth all the money asked for it; but cannot understand why a painting or a statue should be held at many thousand dollars; nor can they be amazed that Paganini should expect twenty guineas for a single tune performed on the violin! A plain, but frank-hearted and sensible farmer once called at the office of a celebrated Chief Justice in the South, and asked him a very important question, that could be answered in an instant, categorically—yes or no. "No," was promptly returned. The farmer was well satisfied. The decision was worth to him many thousand dollars. And now the client, about to retire, asked the lawyer the charge for the information. "Ten dollars," replied he. "Ten dollars!" ejaculated the astonished farmer; "ten dollars! for saying No?" "Do you see these rows of books my friend," rejoined the Chief Justice, "I have spent many years in reading them, and studying their contents, to answer No." "Right! right," responded the honest farmer, "right! I cheerfully pay the ten dollars."