

AUNT NORA'S CORNER.

"We have careful thought for the stranger
A smile for the sometime guest
But oft for our own the better tone
Though we love our own the best."

Some time ago Aunt Nora told her young friends about the helping word and its far-reaching influence. This week the subject of her chat is something very different, viz., the habit of fault-finding, or picking flaws in a neighbor's work.

There are many earnest, conscientious people who mistake ill-natured criticism for cleverness, ignoring the fact that the true critic is not inspired by spleen, but by love of truth.

If you succeed in your studies and become the leader of your class, do not forget that your intellect, your talents, are given to you by a merciful Creator, to enable you to help, not sneer at or hinder your weaker brother. Make the most of your opportunities, but find time to say a kindly word, thus imitating our Divine Lord, who, while He walked with the children of men, was loved and venerated for His simple, kindly courtesy as well as the dignity of His mission; even in the hour of His betrayal He greeted the Iscariot as "friend," the great loving heart of our Redeemer would not wound even the feelings of Judas.

Life is too short for fault-finding. What good does it do to hold up a brother's faults to the world? An unkind word will surely rebound and leave a wound in one's memory that time cannot efface.

In olden times the enemies of the Christians exclaimed in admiration: "Behold how they love each other." Our ill-nature, our fault-finding and censure prevents the same being said of our nineteenth century Christians.

Culture for culture sake is not the most essential thing in this life of ours. Sugar can be refined until it is devoid of sweetness. Learning and culture and the pleasures thereof sink into insignificance in comparison with the wealth of a loving and loyal heart.

Who will live the longest in the hearts of men? The morose, carping Carlyle or the great-hearted Boyle O'Reilly, who had not even an unkind thought for his persecutors.

During the residence of Robert Louis Stevenson in far off Samoa, a number of native chiefs were unjustly deprived of liberty. Hearing this the noble defender of the martyr priest, Father Damien, spared neither time nor expense until the prisoners were free. So grateful were the poor men for this kindness that before they made any enquiry about home or friends they built with their own hands a road from some important point to Stevenson's door as an evidence of their gratitude, calling it "The road of the loving heart."

Christ did not choose from the learned ones of the earth a successor to govern his Church; on the contrary, a simple unlettered fisherman was appointed to the post. So you see, dear young friends, knowledge and culture are not the things to be most prized; you may be successful in your studies, become clever doctors, lawyers, professors, or even ascend the dizzy height of the Editorial Chair, and still be without culture in the best sense of the term, for true Christian culture is found only in the road of the loving heart.

EARTHQUAKES.

DEAR AUNT NORA,—I have just been wondering if the earthquake reached the Corner and shook out any of your little nephews and nieces, so I made up my mind I would write and see if the mail-box was there anyway.

There was one terribly cold day last winter when the mercury nearly hid itself with shame at Jack Frost's tricks, and the wind went galloping along at an awful rate in its haste to get out of the country, and now would you think if the earth wanted to shiver, it would do it then and not when the sun is doing his best to coax her to yield her treasures.

Earthquakes are very serious affairs. Just a little bit of a harder shake and we might have all been in eternity. I mean to be more regular in my prayers after this, for I don't mind telling you, Aunt Nora, I was dreadfully frightened, and it made me understand better the mighty power of God, who can move the universe at will.

JOHN SMILEY.

[You have made a wise resolve, John. We should always be prepared for Death, for, like the earthquake that stirred the city, it may come suddenly.]

THE TOWN OF COBOURG.

DEAR AUNT NORA:—I want to tell you something about the beautiful town I live in. It is named Cobourg, and is situated on the northern shore of Lake Ontario, about 60 miles east of Toronto. It contained at the taking of the last census 5600 inhabitants, but a great many died this winter with the grip, and over so many more have gone away because there is no work for them here; so I think there is not quite 5000 people here now.

Cobourg is one of the most attractive and lovely spots in Ontario in summer

time, and many wealthy Americans from the Southern States have found this out and told it to their friends, and they have come North and built picturesque homes, and in the summer time they inhabit them, and our town wears a very lively and festive air when filled with these wealthy strangers.

There are beautiful drives and romantic spots for picnicking, and the voice of the great broad lake is ever sounding in our ears. It is nearly 70 miles wide at this point, and uninterrupted by islands great or small. Just one endless stretch of water as far as the eye can reach, and then the sky bends down and seems to mingle with it. It is a grand but awful sight to see the lake when a storm passes over it. Its waters pile up into great mountainous waves, and bend and curl until they are all crested with foam, and then with a mad rush and a thunderous roar they dash upon the sandy beach, and in a moment are drawn back into the mighty flood of waters again.

We have a convent, too, and it is under the charge of the Rev. Sisters of St. Joseph. It is a fine building with wings and pointed gables, and is known as "Brookhurst," because a deep brook flows through the grounds. Our new church, St. Michael's, was completed about a year ago, and we are very proud of it, and of our Rev. Pastor, who has accomplished so much good in the parish.

I did not mean to write such a long letter, dear Aunt Nora, but as my teacher has often told me, "my heart runs away with my head" before I notice it.

Your new niece,

CHATTERBOX.
[Aunt Nora is glad to welcome a new niece that has such an earnest love for her home and appreciates the beauty of her surroundings. Your town is a lovely spot, dear child. Aunt Nora knows it well, and the lake is its crowning glory.]

WILLIAM'S TROUBLES.

DEAR AUNT NORA,—It is a dreadful thing to be a boy with a red head. Now, I made up my mind at the very beginning of Lent that I would not lose my temper once during the whole seven weeks, and I did my very best to keep my resolution, but my tongue has tripped me up a good many times with its hasty words, and now I believe that the fault is not all mine, but that a little of it lies at the door of my red head.

I hope that as I grow older my hair will grow darker, and my temper a little milder, and I suppose until that happens I shall just have to learn patience and try to practice it.

In sympathy with all your suburban-haired nephews and nieces, I sign myself,

WILLIAM.

[Your good will and earnest endeavor will do very much to curb your hasty temper, William. Some of the greatest saints had the same difficulty to combat. Do not find so much fault with your bright locks; the trouble is deeper-rooted, William.]

ACADIA MINES, Londonderry, N.S.

DEAR AUNT NORA,—As I promised you I would write again, I now take the occasion to do. I stood on McCord street facing good old St. Ann's Church, and as I stood there quiet and alone, gazing at the beautiful structure with the bright clear sky above it and the bright sun shining down upon it, when all of a sudden there came upon my ears the sweet strains of the "Wearing of the Green" and "St. Patrick's Day," and as I gazed in the direction of the Wellington Bridge how great was my joy to behold such a magnificent display of flags, bands and banners, and realized that it was St. Patrick's Day. Oh! what a feeling of love and joy springs up in every true Irish heart at the mention of that day. Again, I found myself standing in front of St. Patrick's Hall on McGill street, listening to a gentleman I did not know, addressing a sea of upturned faces and calling upon the listeners in a strong and impressive manner to stand by Archbishop Langevin in the stand he had taken on the "Manitoba School Question," but my disappointment can be better imagined than described when I was awakened by my mother telling me it was time to get up and prepare for school, and as it flashed across my mind that I was in Nova Scotia, still I thanked God with all my heart that I had once more seen the St. Patrick's Day parade in Montreal, even if it were only in a dream.

WILLIAM MARTIN WILLIAMS.

[The love for your old home, William, has not been chilled by the sea breezes of Nova Scotia. When you write again tell us something about Acadia Mines and the surrounding country. Your old schoolmates and your cousins of the Corner would like to know something of the town you live in.]

The Germans have been celebrating the centenary of Kaiser Wilhelm I., who was born March 22, 1797. A colossal monument erected to the memory of the dead emperor was unveiled by his grandson, the present Emperor of Germany, on Monday, March 22. The monument consists of a long colonnade with small pavilions, the domes of which rest on columns, which stand in its centre. The pedestal as well as the colonnade is of polished granite. All the statues, including the equestrian one of the Emperor, are in bronze. The monument is flanked at the four corners by figures of Victory standing on globes of the world. The Emperor is on horseback in full uniform, with the cape of his great coat thrown back over his shoulders, while in one hand he holds a field marshal's baton. The horse is walking, led by the goddess of peace, whose right hand grasps the bride; in the left she bears the palm. In the col-

onnade and the pavilions are numerous niches, in which it is planned to place statues of all the celebrated generals and supporters of the Emperor. The sides of the pedestal are adorned with reliefs of an allegorical character, the figures of which are life size. On the front of the pedestal is the inscription: "William the Great, German Emperor, King of Prussia—1861-83." On the rear of the pedestal is inscribed: "With gratitude and faithful love of the German people."

THE Dreaming Stone.

(By EDWARD O'MEARA, IN HIBERNIAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE.)

IN THE vicinity of Askeaton is the small village of Shanagolden, one mile southeast of which, and closely approaching the mountainous tract lying between Limerick and Kerry, stands out a prominent grassy hill of considerable elevation and steepness. It is unconnected with any other eminence in its vicinity; this is the hill of Shannid—quasi Shannid. "The old place." It terminates in a double peak, evidently artificial, each forming a truncated cone, fashioned in ages remote for purposes of defence. That to the north is surmounted by a castle, the area of which, 180 feet in circumference, covers the whole extent of platform. In height this structure is something between 30 and 40 feet; the walls are ten feet in thickness. Its form is polygonal without, circular within. It contains neither vault nor staircase. An external wall, about twenty feet in height, and but little in advance from it, surrounds the structure. Lower down, a deep fosse, 600 feet in circumference, flanked by an earthen rampart, forms a girdle round the hill. Previously to the seventeenth century this castle was held by the Earls of Desmond, and the cry of "Shannid aboo," i.e., "Shannid victorious, or hurra for Shannid!" forms the motto of the knights of Glen, a still subsisting branch of the Geraldines, as "Crom-aboo," from the place called Croom, in the same county, has been adopted as the motto of another branch of the same spreading family—that of the Duke of Leinster. The southern peak is crowned by one of the ancient raths; a hill fort, formed of earth, and surrounded with deep fosses and ramparts. The area of this is extensive, and it possesses a feature peculiar to it, that of being subdivided into four equal portions by the intersection of a rather deep cut through the centre; with what object it is hard to determine. The structure is, of course, of greater antiquity than the adjacent castle. The utmost date that can be assigned to the latter is the commencement of the twelfth century, whilst that of the rath may be lost in the clouds and mists of the remote ages. The purpose for which it was erected was at once of a domestic and military character. In a country so subdivided as was ancient Ireland, into clans or tribes of different descents, and almost perpetually harassed by internal dissensions, security of residence was not always easily attainable; but every means which the knowledge and experience of the time suggested was made available for the purpose. The site, of course, was a cardinal object—a hill, the neighborhood of a river, a wood, or a morass, was sought out, and this being chosen, the fosse was hollowed out, the high embankment thrown up, and the interior of the enclosed area was wrought, in the style Cyclopean, into galleries of intricate maze, serving at once as repositories for valuables, as granaries, and sometimes as outlets in case of emergency, and often as places of interment. The form of these forts was generally round; the circle, indeed, appears to have been a favorite figure with the ancient Irish; it was adopted in their dwellings and their temples, whether these last consisted of stone pillars or lofty towers. Caesar found the Britons attached to a similar form in the construction of their houses. The square fort is, however, often found, but made of similar materials. We are to presume that the buildings which occupied the area within the intrenchment were generally formed of the same material, still used by the peasantry in the erection of their "mud edifices"—earth intermixed with rushes or straw, and the roof composed of thatch or shingle. Timber, doubtless, was also extensively used in these structures; indeed, the ancient Irish are reputed to have been well skilled in what the venerable Charles O'Connor calls "lignarian architecture." Such scenes are, indeed, everywhere very productive of superstitions; some of them are not without a moral, as our readers will find, if they have the patience to accompany us through a story related to us upon the very spot we are describing.

Two men are leaning against the buttress of an old park wall, which in many places was overgrown with ivy; the youngest was hardly more than a youth, although there was evidence in his firm and assured manner that he had for some time considered himself a man; the other was considerably advanced in years, and was of a much humbler class in society than the younger, to whom he looked with all the affection which an Irish forefather bears for the child his wife has nursed.

The young man was of noble bearing, well grown, and finely proportioned; the jesting expression of a mouth whose muscles seemed almost too flexible for a determined purpose, was corrected by the intelligence and fervor of the eyes, and the breadth and dignity of a lofty brow. He had thrown off his hat; perhaps it pressed too heavily upon his throbbing temples; perhaps it was cast upon the grass that the wind might play more freely through his clustering hair; but his temples did not tremble, and his lip was trembling with emotion. He spoke no word in reply to the aged savior's garrulity, he talked on, as though his heart rather than his mind were overpowered. Seeing himself on a fragment of rock at the young man's feet,

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the old man talked as earnestly and respectfully to the youth as though he had been the heir of the O'Briens, not a discarded younger brother of the name and race.

"Things must mend, Master George—they must mend!" he said, over and over again. "Many an Irish gentleman would be proud to have fifty young brothers like you, just to make divarshin for himself and his friends, and keep the pulses of life bating through the house. Why don't you turn to the army at once, sir? I've heard the old master say he had forty promises for commissions for the whole of ye. Or marry an heiress? Well for her to get you! Ay, sir, you've looked too often in the glass not to believe that!—Or—But where's the use of thinking? thoughts are—nothing!—not worth a thrashed straw! Who would have thought your own brother could—Well, there, I'll not say a word against him—only he is the most unnatural—well, I'm done! But—it's no matter—I wonder how he'll look his father in the face hereafter! But he never can—well, there, Master George, I've finished! Sure, if you must make your way, you've a power of talents and beautiful book learning—can't you be a counsellor or a judge, at once, sir? Deed, Master George, you're breaking my heart with your silence, so you are, sir; and I've thought of everything!"

"And done nothing," added the young man. "As usual, plenty of words and no acts!"

"What can I do, dear!" replied the servant. "Sure, I'll lay down my life any day, and follow you to the world's end. I'll do that, and never leave you while there's a shadow of trouble over you; I'll never leave you until you're a great man, sir, and then, may be, I'd come back to my own little place, and lay my bones beside her's that loved you so dearly. Sure I wonder she's not stirring in her grave with the knowledge of your trouble? I don't know what's it for now at all—barring—you'd drame!—Now don't look that way, don't! for its as true as gospel! There's a deal of 'hidden treasure' about the place, and if you could but drame of it you'd surely find it!"

"Corney" answered the young man—"Corney, I've been dreaming all my life; it's quite time I awake."

"Oh, sir, how can you say that? Sorra a more active young gentleman is in the country—or a better shot—or a more beautiful dancer—or a finer horseman—or one with a better voice. And all the world knows you're a fine hand at the pen; and, sure, the beautiful song you wrote last is sung by all the ladies in the county, as well as every ballad-singer blackguard in the street—and that's blame any how; and they tell me there isn't a head in the kingdom you could not take off with your pencil; and one I know said, 'If Master George had only one of the talents he possesses, he could get good bread by it all over the world.' 'Dreaming,' indeed! Faix, no! its wide awake you've been, not a wink on your eyes or ears, sir—but I wish you would drame. You're the seventh son, with only a trifle of girls between; and that's luck, and you've only to lay your head on the dreaming-stone on the seventh day of the seventh month, as the morning comes alone out of the dark twelve of midnight (morning drames are always truest), and I'll lay and wager your eyes will be opened—in your sleep—and you'll drame of the hidden treasure that all the world knows is in the family, if it could only be got at. It's a pleasant place, sir—sheltered and to its self—close to the boheren you cross to get to Slieveburgh when you go shooting. They say a white doe comes once a year to drink at the stream, and its close to a holy well, and in sight of a cross road, so that altogether it's a place you may rely on."

"I know the dreaming-stone well, Corney," answered young O'Brien; "but if hidden treasure is to be discovered, why don't you send my brother there, or some of the elder ones; they're the legitimate dreamers?"

from home, and the moment he saw its peak rising from amid the clouds, he shouted as if to an ancient friend. But he must not think of that now; his brother had insulted him; he had rudely bade him forth, with a sneer at his "fine sentiments." Full of sad thoughts, mingling as they did with fancies, those misty fancies, that—

"Come like shadows, so depart"—thoughts, the very vapors of the imagination, gathered into something more formed and fixed, as some plan for the hereafter crossed his brain and then vanished.

Making some excuse to get rid of his old follower, George O'Brien wandered through what was now only the brushwood of a forest, which had been for centuries the pride of his ancestors. As the evening gathered on he threw himself on the grass beside the stream where he had thrown his first fly, and, after much patience, hooked his first trout. The dinner bell rang; its crackle and bitter tone sounded in his ears rather as a warning from than an invitation to the festive board; he felt he could eat there no more; was it really no more? The bright vision of his father's blessing, floated round him; and, covering his face with his hands he wept bitterly; and those tears relieved him. He reviewed the past, and was only roused from his reverie by the gathering of a thunder storm. It must have been near midnight when he left the cottage of an old gamekeeper where he had taken shelter: from the heavy rain of a July storm that would have drenched him to the skin. Peal after peal of thunder rolled through the heavens and the lightning played the most fearful pranks round the peak of Slieveburgh, now circling his rocky head as with glory, then fixing, as it were, its centre there, and radiating round the summit in lines of many tinted light. Despite his determination not to enter it he wandered in the direction of the old hall, more moody and thoughtful and yet as planless for the future as ever. It might have been the light falling in a particular way, but as he stood for a moment upon the ruined wall of the deerpark, surveying with aching eyes the hill and dale of his favorite haunt, he thought he saw a white doe rush into the glade in which the "dreaming stone" had lain for centuries. Prompted by the instinct of a keen sportsman he rushed after it; and surely he could not be twice deceived—the creature paused and looked back and then darted forward as before. Of course he followed, but still more strangely lost sight of it exactly where the "dreaming stone" was sheltered by a projecting rock that was overgrown with every species of wild flower and fern, while a little bright gurgling stream, whose bed was dotted with silver pebbles, meandered round the rock, now almost leaving its base, at other times rambling far away as if it intended to return there no more. George thought he had never seen the spot look half so lovely; the sky, cleared of every vestige of cloud by the past storm, was one canopy of blue, starred by the countless multitudes of unknown world; the young moon was like a bride amid her handmaids, the earth beneath glittering with dew, and fragrant from the herbs and thyme he had crushed beneath his feet. The half-sleepy chirp of the tender nestlings, disturbed in their repose by his hasty footsteps, was answered by the insect murmur which is felt rather than heard to be a mouse in the stillness of the holy night.

An unaccountable stupor arrested his steps; he passed his hand over his brow in vain; by a violent effort he sprang over the bubbling brook, but it seemed as though he had entered a charmed circle; nothing could exceed his drowsiness; the winking stars became paler and more pale; the winds whispered the softest music through the trees; the air was warm and perfumed; he endeavored to keep his eyes open, but they closed and closed, and at last, completely overcome by the "drowsy god," he sank beneath the shelter of the rock, his head resting on the "dreaming stone," which, covered as it was by a deep bed of the softest moss, was as soothing and refreshing a pillow as a weary man could desire. But, however much overpowered when he laid down his head, George O'Brien declared he found it impossible to sleep when once fairly resting on the moss; but if he found it impossible to sleep he found it also impossible to move; he was spellbound; everything painful or unpleasant passed from his memory, which was rendered pure and gentle and docile as the mind of a little child. All that he had heard and loved in his infancy was with him in that perfect and entire repose which his restless spirit tasted for the first time, and as moments passed, elevated by a new nature, all was peace. Gradually a veil of mist, soft and transparent, descended from the

brow of the overhanging rock and curtained him round about; and, although another manner of spirit possessed him, he still retained enough of the spirit of the old world to wonder if he should really dream, or learn aught of the "hidden treasure" which tradition said should one day be revealed to whichever of the O'Briens was most worthy of the revelation—provided he sought the mysterious knowledge on the "dreaming stone."

(To be continued.)

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