

version of the Psalm: "Lord, thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made, thou art God from everlasting, and world without end. Thou turnest man to destruction; again thou sayest, Come again, ye children of men."—*Youth's Companion*.

CHILDHOOD.—The sympathy with childhood which gives its colouring to modern literature and art, is to be traced back to utterances which have influenced more than the literature and art of modern Europe. "Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," was a perfectly new utterance to the world. The fresh aspect under which all weakness, all dependence, appeared in the light of that teaching, was evidently bewildering to its hearers; a bewilderment perhaps betrayed in some confusion of the record through which these utterances reach us. The greatest of the Apostles, we cannot but suspect, never heard of the words having been spoken; his own saying, "When I became a man, I put away childish things," though not a contradiction of them, seems to us not a natural utterance from one who remembered them; and here, we fancy, Paul was a Greek. Indeed, the typical significance of this stage of human life as a pattern of the human attitude and a clue to the whole meaning of man's sojourn in this world, is pregnant with a wealth of meaning that could only be unfolded in long ages, and exhibited in the whole various realms of human desire, hope, and fear.

Wonderful is the power of childhood. A tiny right hand steals into our palm, while the left is clasped in that of our deadliest foe, or an alienated friend more remote than any foe,

and instantly we feel the resentment, or distaste, or bitter indignation thin away, grow transparent, and almost disappear. Our level gaze meets above the curly head, and neither finds nor conveys reproach; we become fellow-guardians to the little one whose tottering steps regulate both ours and those of the person who seemed in all things to set his feet to a different path from ours. Let twenty years hurry by, and the child whose infant steps we guided has become a mere tedious neighbour, powerless to stir our atmosphere, or bring one waft of healing power. For a year or two in this pilgrimage of ours, the most commonplace, the most tiresome of us, is invested with this wonderful capacity; every human being has once upon a time hushed enmities, and bridged estrangement. We have all possessed unconsciously this magic; with the consciousness of its possession, its spell were gone. Let us not so admire children that we banish childhood; the child is only blessed so long as he is child-like. When we make him our equal, we drag him from the Eden we perforce quitted long ago, to which neither he nor we can return. Wordsworth might well have addressed some lines of his "Ode" rather to the parent than the child, and almost all parents in our day would do well so to read them:—

Why with such earnest care dost thou provoke

The years to bring the inevitable yoke?

Full soon *his* soul shall have its earthly freight,

And custom lie upon it with a weight
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

—*London Spectator*.

TRAVELLING IN CENTRAL AMERICA.—Thousands of ox-carts are still employed between the towns of Esparza and Alajeula, the termini of