

Miscellaneous.

"THE LITTLE BRIGHT-EYED BOY."

Step softly! 'tis a solemn spot,
Where rests our pride and joy;
Step softly! for he sweetly sleeps—
"Our little bright-eyed boy."

'Twas dark as night, the shade that stole,
Across his sunny face;
And none, we felt, save God alone,
The long, long sleep could chase.

Those feet shall tread life's path no more,
With weariness oppress'd;
And folded are those little hands,
Upon the quiet breast.

So gently did the angel come,
Who bore him hence away,
It seem'd as though he only slept,
Just at the break of day.

But now we feel that he is gone,
"Our little bright-eyed boy;"
We miss him—miss his little voice,
So full of love and joy.

The children miss him when they meet,
To sing of Jesus' love,
He's gone to swell in sweeter tones,
The children's song above.

O then submissive be the tears,
Shed for our pride, our joy;
Soon, soon we hope to meet again
"Our little bright-eyed boy."

Hastings.

KAVANAGH.

A WORD SPOKEN—UPON WHEELS.

We remember being much struck with a little story, that "a word fitly spoken," or to use the expressive Hebrew reading, "a word spoken upon wheels," even by the weakest and youngest, is precious as gold and silver.

One day a boy was tormenting a kitten, when his little sister said to him, with tearful eyes, "Oh, Philip, don't do that, it is God's kitten." The word of the little one was not lost; it was set upon wheels. Philip left off tormenting the kitten, but many serious thoughts were awakened regarding the creatures that he had before considered his own property. "God's kitten—God's creature, for he made it," it was a new idea. The next day, on his way to school, he met one of his companions, who was beating unmercifully a poor starved-looking dog. Philip ran up to him, and almost unconsciously using his sister's words, he said, "Don't, don't, it is God's creature." The boy looked abashed, and explained that the dog had stolen his breakfast. "Never mind," said Philip, "I will give you mine, which I have in my basket," and sitting down together, the little boy's anger was soon forgotten. Again had a word been unconsciously set upon wheels. Two passers by heard Philip's words, one a young man in prosperous business in the neighbouring town,—the other a dirty ragged being, who, in consequence of his intemperate habits, had that morning been dismissed by his employer, and was now going home sullen and despairing. "God's creature!" said the poor forlorn one,—and it was a new idea to him also;—"if I too belong to God, He will take care of me, though no one else will." Just then he came to a public house where he had been in the habit of drowning his miseries, and then staggering home to inflict new ones on his wife and children. He stopped, the temptation was strong; but the new idea was stronger. "I am God's creature,"—and he passed on. His wife was astonished to see him sober, and still more when he burst into tears, declaring that he was a ruined man, but that he was determined to give up drinking, and to trust in God. At that moment a knock was heard at the door, and the gentleman came in to whom we have before alluded. He too had been rebuked by the boy's words, for the scorn and loathing which he had felt to the miserable object before him. "God's creature! therefore entitled to help and pity." We need not detail the words of hope and comfort, the promise and the performance of active assistance, which in a short time lifted up the poor man's head, and made him one of God's thankful and joyful "creatures." It would be well for us all, old and young, to remember that our words and actions, aye, and our thoughts also are set upon never stopping wheels, rolling on and on unto the pathway of eternity.—Miss Brewster—in Eng. S. S. Tea. Mag.

THE MIND AND THE HEART.

It is a very instructive fact, that under the highest efforts of reason in other matters, the human mind has been satisfied with the most childish and absurd notions on the subject of religion. The men who erected the pyramids and left behind them those architectural monuments which still excite the admiration of the world, cherished with all their intellectual grandeur the most puerile and degrading notions of religion. Think of the men who planned and erected the pyramids worshipping cats, black beetles, and onions!

The Phenicians, who claimed the glory of the invention of letters, "and the knowledge of military and naval arts," were accustomed, when attacked by enemies, to chain the images of their gods to the altars that they might not abandon their city. The men who had in their hands the letters and commerce of the world, worshipped gods which they felt themselves obliged to tie up with chains, lest they should run away through fear! The statesmen, and orators, and poets of ancient Rome, are even now read in the highest schools in Christendom; but think of Cicero, and Tacitus, and Augustus Cæsar, looking into the entrails of a sheep, or watching the flight of birds, to propitiate the gods, or predict the result of a military campaign! This contrast between the mind and the heart becomes more striking when we look at distinguished individuals. Plutarch thought that our souls were made out of the moon, and would therefore return to it. This elegant and discriminating writer of ancient biography, gravely tells us, "that some think the inhabitants of the moon hang by the head to it, or, like Ixion, are tied fast to it, that its motions may not shake them from it; and it ought not to seem surprising that a lion fell out of it, into the Peloponnesus." Even the wise Plato thought the stars required and received nourishment. Seneca was of the same opinion, who says, "Hence it is that so many stars are maintained; as eager for their pasture as they are hard worked both by day and night."

This contrast between the mind and the heart is certainly one of the most striking anomalies in human nature. Do we not behold the same anomaly at the present day? Does men's knowledge of religious things keep pace with their general improvement? How often are the most penetrating genius and the largest acquisitions associated with religious opinions that are grossly incorrect and miserably low! What a practical comment is here given us upon the inspired declaration, "They did not like to retain God in their knowledge."—*Ibid.*

THE WAY TO EMINENCE.

That which other folks can do,

Why, with patience, may not you?

Long ago a little boy was entered at Harrow School. He was put into a class beyond his years, and where all the scholars had the advantage of previous instruction, denied to him. His master chid him for his dulness, and all his then efforts could not raise him from the lowest place on the form. But, nothing daunted, he procured the grammars and other elementary books which his class-fellows had gone through in previous terms. He devoted the hours of play, and not a few of the hours of sleep, to the mastering of these; till, in a few weeks, he gradually began to rise, and it was not long till he shot far ahead of all his companions, and became not only leader of that division, but the pride of Harrow. you may see the statue of that boy, whose career began with this fit of energetic application, in St. Paul's cathedral; for he lived to be the greatest oriental scholar of modern Europe—it was Sir WILLIAM JONES.

When young scholars see the lofty pinnacle of attainment on which that name is now reposing, they feel as if it had been created there, rather than had travelled thither. No such thing. The most illustrious in the annals of philosophy once knew no more than the most illiterate now do. And how did he arrive at his peerless dignity? *By dint of diligence; by downright pains-taking.—Life in Earnest.*

THE SNOW.

The snow was proverbially called the "poor farmer's manure" before scientific analysis had shewn that it contained a larger percentage of ammonia than rain. The snow serves as a protecting mantle to the tender herbage and the roots of all plants against the fierce blasts and cold of Winter. An examination of snow in Siberia shewed that when the temperature of the air was seventy-two degrees below zero the temperature of the snow a little below the surface was twenty-nine degrees above zero, over one hundred degrees difference. The snow keeps the earth just below its surface in a condition to take on chemical changes which would not happen if the earth were bare and frozen to a great depth.

The snow prevents exhalations from the earth, and is a powerful absorbent, retaining and returning to the earth gases rising from vegetable and animal decomposition. The snow, though it falls heavily at the door of the poor and brings death and starvation to the fowls,