

Our Young Folks.

KITTY KNEW ABOUT SHEEP.

Seven sheep were standing
By the pasture wall.
"Tel' me," said the teacher
To her scholars small,
"One poor sheep was frightened,
Jumped and ran away,
One from seven—how many
Woolly sheep would stay!"

Up went Kitty's fingers—
A farmer's daughter she,
Not so bright at figures
As she ought to be.
"Please, ma'am"—"Well, then, Kitty,
Tell us if you know."
"Please, if one jumped over,
All the rest would go."

Selected.

SPRING SOUNDS.

Such a flurry, such a scurry,
Such a hurry in the trees;
Such a whirring and a stirring,
Birds as brisk as busy bees;
Nests are building, 'tis important,
If you please!

Such a tripping, such a skipping,
Such a slipping o'er the stones;
Such a flashing and a dashing,
Such a melody of tones;
Brooks are hasting to the ocean,
Where it moans.

So much learning, so much earning,
So much tracing, mete and bound;
So much telling, counting, spelling,
Till the dizzy head turns round;
Patience, child, it is important;
So is knowledge found.
Harper's Young People.

SECRETS OF SNAKE-CHARMING.

A snake-charmer can, by a simple motion of his hand, make a moving snake stop instantly.

The reason is this: A snake is a most timid animal. His eyes, as has been said before, while dull of colour and form, are quick to motion, especially if it is rapid. If any large thing moves very quickly near him, he gets frightened and scurries off; while at certain distances the motion stops him if he be moving. He stops from astonishment, fear, or the wish to see what it is that moves. Hence he glides on, unconscious of the charmer's presence near him, so long as the latter remains perfectly quiet; the snake doesn't know him from a tree or a rock. But when he gives a sudden evidence of life, the snake is astonished, and immediately remains stock-still.

In India and Africa the charmers pretend the snakes dance to the music; but they do not, for they never hear it. A snake has no external ears, and perhaps gets evidence of sound only through his skin, when sound causes bodies in contact with him to vibrate. They hear also through the nerves of the tongue, but do not at all comprehend sound as we do. But the snake's eyes are very much alive to the motions of the charmer, or to the moving drum sticks of his confederate; and being alarmed, he prepares to strike. A dancing cobra (and no other snakes dance) is simply a cobra alarmed and in a posture of attack. He is not dancing to the music, but is making ready to strike the charmer.—G. R. O'Reilly, in *May St. Nicholas*.

THE ELEPHANT LAUGHED.

Mr. O'Shea, the well-known war correspondent, tells the following anecdote of an adventure with a herd of elephants:

"A young friend asked me once to show him some elephants, and I took him with me having first borrowed an apron and filled it with oranges. This he was to carry while accompanying me in the stable; but the moment we reached the door the herd set up such a trumpeting—they had scented the fruit—that he dropped the apron and its contents, and scuttled off like a jack rabbit. There were eight elephants, and when I picked up the oranges I found I had five-and-twenty.

"I walked deliberately along the line, giving one to each. When I got to the extremity of the narrow stable I turned, and was about to begin the distribution again, when I suddenly reflected that if elephant No. 7 in the row saw me give two oranges in succession to No. 8 he might

Imagine he was being cheated, and give me a smack with his proboscis—that is where the elephant falls short of a human being—so I went to the door and began de novo as before.

"Thrice I went along the line, and then I was in a fix. I had one orange left and I had to get back to the door. Every elephant in the herd had his greedy gaze focused on that orange. It was as much as my life was worth to give it to any one of them. What was I to do. I held it up conspicuously, coolly peeled it, and sucked it myself. It was most amusing to notice the way those elephants nudged each other and shook their ponderous sides. They thoroughly entered into the humour of the thing."—From the *Million*.

KEEP LIFE PURE.

An Arabian princess was presented by her teacher with an ivory casket, exquisitely wrought, with the instruction not to open it until a year had rolled round. Many were the speculations as to what it contained, and the time impatiently waited for when the jewelled key should disclose the mysterious contents. It came at last, and the maiden went away alone and with trembling haste unlocked the treasure; and, lo! reposing in delicate satin linings, lay nothing but a shroud of rust; the form of something beautiful could be discerned, but the beauty had gone for ever. Tearful with disappointment she did not at first see a slip of parchment containing these words: "Dear Pupil: May you learn from this a lesson for your life. This trinket, when enclosed, had upon it a single spot of rust; by neglect it has become the useless thing you now behold, only a blot on its pure surroundings. So a little stain on your character will, by inattention and neglect, mar a bright and useful life, and, in time, will leave only the dark record of what might have been. If you now place within a jewel of gold, and after many years seek the result, you will find it as sparkling as ever. So with yourself; treasure up only the pure, the good, and you will ever be an ornament to society, and a source of true pleasure to yourself and friends."

A GLIMPSE AT THE CHINESE.

In more ways than the one designated by Bret Harte "the heathen Chinese is peculiar." A writer in *Wide Awake* touches upon these peculiarities as follows:

If one argues that China being upon the opposite side of the globe, must be literally upside down, he will not find himself very much mistaken. Dinner begins with cake, pudding and confectionery and ends with soup. Lemonade is always as hot as hot can be. If a friend sends you a letter, he often sends only an empty envelope addressed to you, and the bearer delivers the message orally. But what seemed to me one of the oddest of all the odd customs of the Chinese was the mode of resenting an injury. There is very seldom a real fight. Sometimes they resort to hair-pulling, and they pull with a vengeance; but as a rule, when one feels deeply injured in any way, he goes right out on the street and begins to tell the story of his wrongs, "at the top of his lungs," shouting the relative or neighbour who has wronged him with all the hard words and hard names he can think of. I have seen women on the low, flat roofs of their houses, screaming all sorts of horrible things about their husbands, and men sitting in the streets with their backs against the wall, shouting until they were dark in the face, and too hoarse to speak, telling everybody about their cross and obstinate wives. The most curious part is that no one seems to listen or care anything about it, and, really, I do not think that the people who are howling care, either, whether any one listens or not. Out upon a country road I once came upon a man who was ventilating his wrongs in this way, and I am sure that, except his own family, there was not another mortal within the sound of his voice; yet he was rattling on at a great rate, concerning the treatment he received from his family.

Teacher and Scholar.

MAY 21ST, 1893. } AGAINST INTEMPERANCE. { PROV. XXIII 29-35.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise. Prov. xx. 1.

This lesson occurs in an appendix to the first main collection of the Book of Proverbs, which extends from ch. x, 1. to ch. xxii, 16. In this appendix (ch. xxii, 17; xxiv, 22) the arrangement is less precise than in the preceding collection. The contents differ also in character, being for the most part direct inculcations of a certain line of conduct. The lesson may be regarded as a connected short poem.

I. Characteristics of the drinker.—In a series of animated questions, six features are referred to, which in the answer are ascribed to the drinker. The woe and the sorrow are literally interjections (R. V. margin), Who hath cause to cry Oh and to say, Alas? Woe and sorrow sometimes darken the life, through things wholly beyond the individual control, but the drunkard brings them upon himself. The characteristics which follow may be regarded as some of the woes of the drinker. They are both mental and bodily, for drink leaves its mark upon the whole nature. The sorrow of the drunkard is not confined to remorse on his own account, or the bitterness of realized degradation. It should be the more intense because of the sorrow his conduct causes to his family and friends. Again, drinking begets contentions. The mind stupefied by drink is usually under no restraint, as to either giving or taking offence. Like the fool the drunkard uttereth all that is in his mind, and with his inflamed passion and weakened will, is often ready to find ground of quarrel where no offence was intended. The babbling may refer to his sorrowful complaint (R. V.) over the losses, which he is thus inflicting on himself. The contentions lead on with very slight provocations to drunken brawls, in which wounds and bruises that have no justifying cause, are incurred. Redness (or R. V. margin, darkness) of eyes, refers to the dim, obscure, blurred vision which is the accompaniment of the drunkard. The answer which connects these characteristics with drinking (v. 30.), indicates the tendency drink induces to prolong indulgence in it, and to seek satisfaction in what is increasingly intoxicating. Long carousals (Is. v. 11.) will be followed by seeking after mixed wine, which has its intoxicating power increased by spices and drugs, probably the strong drink of Scripture.

II. Deceitfulness of drink.—The attractiveness of the winecup to the eye and taste (v. 31.) is contrasted with the real issue of indulgence in it (v. 32.). The description indicates those characteristics of wine which make the very sight of it a temptation to the drinker. The red wine (that which shows itself ruddy) is most highly esteemed in the East. To give its colour (lit. its eye) is to sparkle in the cup. The sparkles or bubbles are like the pupils of little eyes, and their formation when wine is poured out is regarded as a sign of its strength. Another quality highly appreciated by drinkers is mellowness, that is, the property of going down the throat smoothly (R. V.) with no feeling of roughness. To him who indulges, these things, seen or called to mind, make even looking on wine a source of temptation. With all this attractiveness of appearance it is like the brilliant-coloured, flashing-eyed, smoothly gliding serpent, and in the sequel poisons with the serpent's bite. More specifically it is likened to the sting of the adder, the most venomous of serpents. The impressiveness of these images would be very vividly realized in the East, which is woefully cursed with poisonous reptiles of all kinds. What is at the first a pleasing stimulus, leads on at the last to a goading, unquenchable fire of desire, and a ruined life.

III. Consequences of drink.—It attacks directly what is highest in man, blunting the moral sense and defiling the imagination, so that the drunkard readily gives

way to the lower lusts of his nature. It attacks the intellect, dethroning the reason, so that the heart of the intoxicated person utters he knows not what. All manner of incoherences and perversities may be given forth. The recklessness is seen not only in utterances, but in actions. Regardless of danger, he is as one that seeks sleep in the midst of a stormy sea, where a stupid, careless sleeper may easily roll overboard. Or he is like one in greater exposure, asleep at the mast head, where the rocking and reeling is much more violent. The striking imagery indicates the great actual danger of the drunkard, together with his utter insensibility to it. This is further indicated by the words put into the mouth of the drunken one. He ridicules the admonitions of his friends. Warned of blows and wounds, he expresses a drunken insensibility to bruises. His resolve to seek the cup again, after the drunken stupor is slept off, strikingly shows the uncontrollable appetite, which will trample over everything to reach strong drink.

DEFENDING THE FAITH.

It is, of course, in vain to plead, amid the contests around doctrinal points, for peace and work, unless peace be founded on sound interpretation of God's word, and work be inspired and sustained thereby. It is easy to decry the motives and methods of those who seek to defend the one written revelation of God. It is easy, but it is wicked to sneer at those who in any organized Church seek to insure faithfulness to the standards of doctrine on the very basis of which the Church has been organized. Blessed be the zeal that is according to knowledge, but even the zeal that cannot boast the highest attainments yet seeks to defend what it feels to be the truth, is better than supreme indifference. Cackling geese once saved a city, and God sometimes uses the things that are despised and the things which are not to bring to naught the things that are. When criticism attacks or even appears to attack the foundation of God's word, indifference is criminal and silence is treason. Not only is the Bible all we have claimed for it, but it is also the sword of the Spirit with which the forces of evil must be overcome, if overcome at all. Anything that leads men to question whether it is the Damascus blade it has always been supposed to be, will lessen their faith in the weapon, and they will be loathe to advance with it upon the works of darkness. Old veterans who have led the forces of their God to glorious triumph sword in hand, and that sword, God's blade in Anglo-Saxon handle, will continue to pursue the battle to the gates. It will be hard to shake the faith in a weapon tried and found so true. Young officers, on the other hand, those who by and by must take the veterans' places, will go forth with a feeble hand upon the hilt and do poor execution in battle for the Lord if their confidence in the weapon be impaired. But a score of ecclesiastical trials and consequent ecclesiastical deliverances would never do so much to exalt the divine word, or to establish confidence in it, as would the revival attendant upon such a study of its treasures as we have suggested. The very best defence we any of us can make of the Bible as the very word of God is to become permeated by its teachings and spirit, and to so put these into practice that our fellow men may realize the power that dwells within us. A ministry thus revived would preach the truth with new force. Then as Carmel's host of spectators shouted: "The Lord he is the God!" at the sight of Elijah's burning sacrifice, men everywhere, feeling the force of the truth proclaimed, would acknowledge that the Bible is the word of God.—New York Observer (Presbyterian).

The true Christian is like the sun, which pursues his noiseless track, and everywhere leaves the effects of his beams in a blessing upon the world around him.—Luther.