

Family Reading.

For the Christian Messenger. My Sweet-briar Rose.

In a pasture near the wood, Grow wild flowers 'mid the grass—

'Mid the rushes on its brink, Purple iris lifts its head—

Daisies scattered here and there— Buttercups of brightest gold,

All around, and almost hid, White and purple violets grow:

These I love, but just hard by, Near a broken wall there grows,

One of God's best thoughts it is— Thought of beauty put in form;

Dear wild briar rose of mine, Soon the summer days will flee;

PHINTIAS.

New Select Serial.

A DEACON'S DAUGHTER.

BY MISS LILIAN F. WELLS.

CHAPTER XIV. (Continued.)

As Persis and Martha came back to the hotel, one morning, after a climb up the mountain-side, each found a letter awaiting her.

Martha's letter was from the lawyer whom Mrs. Iredell had made the executor of her will. It was a very brief letter—not more than a dozen lines in all.

Poor Martha! poor, now, indeed! She sat alone in her room, reading the few lines over and over in a bewildered way.

'Why, Martha, dear, what is the matter? Have you had bad news?' Martha had been too deeply absorbed for Persis' light step to arouse her.

'Oh, Martha, it's dreadful! What will you do?' cried Persis, in dismay. 'I have not quite come to that yet, though I might as well come to it at once, as it is the most important thing just at present.'

'To be sure. What else is there?' 'Oh—I do not know—of course I suppose there is not anything else. But—why, Martha, dear—you are to be married, you know!'

Persis laid her hands on Martha's shoulders, and looked down at her brightly. Martha's face was a study. It grew bright at first, brighter than Persis' own, then it suddenly clouded—flushed—grieved—grew doubtful—grew stern with determination.

Persis went, first stooping for a kiss,

and Martha set herself to her task. It was the only thing for her to do—she told herself—to write to Arthur at once, tell him that she had lost her money, and that she must begin again to work for her support.

Dr. Maynard decided to start without delay on their homeward journey. There were business matters that need his attention, and besides, he was tired of Europe, and wanted to get home.

About the middle of the second week, when Persis was able to get about her room again, there came to Martha another letter, scarcely longer than the one whose effect I have described, but a thousand-fold, more disastrous to the hopes of a loving, trusting heart.

Martha carried it away to her room, to be alone while she read it—her lover's letter. It came in the morning, and she went into her room with quick, light steps—a flush in her cheeks, a glad brightness in her eyes.

She went into Persis' room, and began her duties as nurse again, as quietly as if nothing were amiss. Something in her look forbade questionings; but keen-sighted Persis readily guessed how it was.

This is what had happened. At the house in Baden-Baden, where the Verlendens had spent the summer, there had also been a young lady of at least two very attractive possessions—she was beautiful, and an undoubted heiress of a handsome fortune.

It was a cruel, bitter blow to Martha. She met it with hard, proud determination, and no one ever knew how deep it went. No one but God.

That journey home—would it never end?—Martha wondered sometimes. What a weary, weary journey it was! She saw and heard everything as if through a thick, dreary, cloggy mist.

Gradually, too, she grew to realize that there was a change in Persis. Yes, it was true. Persis "shrank and grew cold, slowly, half ashamed."

'Just what I did before I went to Aunt Charlotte's, before I knew you. Be somebody's companion, or teach.' 'Must you really go to work again, Martha?' 'To be sure. What else is there?' 'Oh—I do not know—of course I suppose there is not anything else. But—why, Martha, dear—you are to be married, you know!'

Persis laid her hands on Martha's shoulders, and looked down at her brightly. Martha's face was a study. It grew bright at first, brighter than Persis' own, then it suddenly clouded—flushed—grieved—grew doubtful—grew stern with determination.

pushed them apart from each other day by day. Reading the wrong side of Persis' character now, Martha, in her bitterness of heart, despised her, and wondered at herself for ever having loved the girl.

On the return voyage Martha kept her berth. It would have been hard to find on sea or land a being more utterly miserable than Martha Stirling. Life had no brightness for her now—no sweet promises to urge her to effort for their fulfilment.

But the dread messenger passed not at her side. Many a spirit received its summons and returned unto God who gave it, during the time that the great steamer was speeding on its way from Liverpool to New York, while Martha lay in her berth sick in body and soul, and longed that there might come an end to it all.

Once on land, and recovered from bodily sickness, Martha's spirits also began to revive a little. Dr. Maynard, knowing nothing of the separation between his daughter and her friend, insisted that Martha should make his house her home until she should find something to do.

Teaching seemed the thing that presented itself to her most favorably. After considerable hesitation, she decided to go to Mrs. Walsingham and see if her former position there were obtainable. Mrs. Walsingham received her very kindly, but said that Fay had a governess now with whom they were well satisfied; there was a friend of hers, however, who had been looking for a governess. Perhaps she had not found one yet.

But there again she was disappointed. Mrs. Walsingham's friend had succeeded in finding a governess only a few days before. Martha came back to Dr. Maynard's weary and discouraged.

'Why not give it all up, go home, and settle down to a hum-drum life there? Why should I care to keep on trying any longer to do or be something? Success, even if I should finally obtain it, would not be worth the having.'

Yet she could not bring herself to be resigned to the thought of a life in Sherwood. She would wait a few days longer and see.

'Martha,' said Dr. Maynard, when they were sitting down to dinner, did you succeed in finding a situation this morning?' Martha replied in the negative.

'The doctor. I am one of the Board of Directors of a Grammar School, as perhaps you know. We had a meeting this morning, on account of the illness and consequent resignation of one of the teachers. Another must be found to supply her place, and I took the liberty of presenting your name. Of course it can be withdrawn if you wish. Will you try for the position?'

'Yes, sir, I will,' said Martha, decidedly.

Child Life in India.

One of the most interesting things to the traveller—if he be a lover of the little folks—is the observation of national traits in the children of various countries. Although the doings of children throughout the world have more similarity in them than the habits and customs of adults, yet there are exceedingly interesting differences in the performances of groups of youngsters in Central Park, New York; Hyde Park, London; the Champs Elysees, Paris; and the bazaar of a Hindu town.

The Hindu child possesses in a remarkable degree the patience for which the nation is noted. To call it apathy in both parents and child, were perhaps unkind, at least ungracious. Let that be as it may, patience or apathy, the Hindu child even as an infant, possesses it to a marvellous extent. All day long will the poor coolie woman's child

cling to her hips—tired, hungry and sleepy—but seldom will you hear from it a murmur of complaint or fretfulness.

The Hindu baby will lie for hours on a hard cot in a dingy room, tormented by flies and mosquitoes, supremely contented, apparently, in the contemplation of its dusky little hands. The good-naturedness of Hindu babies is a matter of remark among European ladies in India, and I take great pleasure in adding my own favourable testimony to this very important subject.

For the boys and girls too, I have a good word. They have a joyous, innocent look, and a frank behaviour, which makes us love them. Their unfortunate surroundings, however, soon rob them of both, and with the years come a coarse sensual look and a deceitful behaviour, which make us wish they might always remain children.

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy! Shades of the prison-house begin to close About the growing boy."

Hindu children are timid, and as a rule, respectful to their elders, obedient to their parents, and well behaved in public. They are less active and boisterous than European children. The boys do not engage so freely in outdoor sports, and among the girls such recreations are almost unknown.

Those who have an opportunity to go to school learn readily. In subjects which require the use of memory they excel, and the facility with which they learn by heart 'is surprising. In all intellectual work the children of those who have in past generations belonged to the learned class, are much more ready than those of the illiterate castes but then among Pariah boys there are some with extraordinary bright minds.

Hindu parents are fond of their children. Though they like the boys better, it does not follow that they dislike the girls. The disappointment which is felt at the birth of a daughter is not so much because it is a daughter as because it is not a son. It is not that they like daughters less, but that they like the sons more.

A boy is the Hindu parents' greatest earthly delight. The boy it is who will support them in old age, who will kindle the sacred fire when their bodies are consumed, and who, after they are gone, will minister to their departed spirits and hasten their entrance into a better state. Children are always spoken of as the special gift of God, and to be childless is considered a grievous misfortune.

The mortality among the children of the poorer classes is very great. Their food is of the very coarsest kind, and often utterly unfit for human consumption. During times of scarcity we have known poor children to subsist for several months on wild roots and berries, the pith of corn and millet stalks, a few raw heads of grain, and an occasional bowl of bran and water. As a consequence of insufficient and improper food the children of the lower classes have a lean, pinched appearance, and are generally very small for their age.

Among them the use of soap and water is also shamefully neglected, rendering not only their appearance unsightly and their presence disagreeable, but subjecting them to various kinds of skin diseases which must often make their very existence a burden.

As for clothing, none whatever is thought necessary for children under seven or eight years of age. It does not seem to have entered the minds of even well-to-do Hindus that a certain amount of clothing might not be out of place even on small children simply for decency's sake. It is no rare thing to see children—boys and girls—whose sole clothing consists of a necklace, a charm, and a string around the wrist with a few bells attached. One of their proverbs says, 'Children and the legs of a stool do not feel cold.' So far as the climate in most parts of India is concerned, there is only a small portion of the year when clothing is really necessary as a protection against the cold; but even at this time the children are often cruelly neglected. It is no uncommon thing to see parents well wrapped up while their unfortunate children are shivering with cold. When remonstrated with, they say, 'Oh, children do not feel the cold.'

Children of the wealthier classes are often dressed in gorgeous silks, and covered with valuable jewels. Gold coins of all kinds, English, French and

American, as well as their native coins, are in great demand, and are strung together as necklaces. I have counted as many as fifty 'Sovereigns' and 'Napoleon's' on the necklace of boys not more than ten or twelve years old. The silly custom of loading down small children with valuable jewellery leads to many cases of kidnapping and child robbery. The poisoning or otherwise killing of children as a mode of revenge is not unknown in India. We have known several such instances. In one case a child was deliberately thrown down a well by a woman who had a petty quarrel with its father. Recently two children were brought to the Gun-toor Hospital who had been poisoned out of revenge.

Infanticide prevails to some extent in all countries, and India is no exception. It is to be doubted, however, whether this sinful practice is as rife here as in some Western countries. As for the offering of children to the gods, throwing them to crocodiles, hanging them out in baskets, etc., we have never either heard or seen anything of it. We do not say that such things have never taken place in India, or that they may not even now occasionally occur in certain places, but we are quite sure that they have always been the exceptions rather than the rule, and that they have received their full share of attention on the part of European writers.

The most cruel treatment of children which we have ever seen in India, or which could well be imagined, consisted in starving them during the late famine. Many children were subjected to great privation by heartless wretches who claimed to be their parents, and who hoped by this fiendish process to gain a comfortable livelihood for themselves.

Strong men and women who were able to earn a livelihood for themselves and those dependent upon them, at the Government relief work, wandered about the country carrying miserable skeletons of children whom they thrust into your presence to excite your sympathy. Others were instructed in pitiful stories of distress, which they were told to repeat before the European houses and in the market-place. Children of eight or ten years old would rush up to you and, with tears streaming down their cheeks, declare that both their father and mother had died of cholera along the way, while they were in search of work and food; that now they were left utterly helpless and must die in the streets unless they could get help.

If you felt very compassionate towards the 'poor little things,' and offered to place them in an orphanage or send them to the relief camp, they replied that they would be only too glad to come, but first they must go and get a bundle which they had left under a tree by the road side. If you felt less concerned for their future welfare and sent them away with a silver coin, they were exceedingly happy, and so were their parents, who were anxiously waiting in some concealed place, the result of the painful story which they put into their children's mouths.

We would wish that lessons of deceit on the part of parents to their innocent children were confined to the late famine. This kind of training on a small scale, and in a mild form, is, alas, too common among all classes. Truthfulness, honesty, and uprightness, are lessons which are not sufficiently impressed upon the children of India. The parents, by precept and example, with sadly few exceptions, teach them directly the reverse.

The home training of the young is very deficient, and the lessons of deceit, strife, selfishness, hatred, and indecency learned there, are not easily counteracted by schools and churches, except as these gradually reform, elevate, and purify the whole family, and give that sacredness to home which is known only in Christian lands.—From Every-day Life in India.

A very practical experiment has been made in Boston for some time past. In the Winthrop school, the girls have been taught how to cut out and make clothing and that without interfering to any injurious extent with their regular book studies. These girls are in great demand and find no difficulty in obtaining good situations as dress makers and seamstresses.

The Way to Illustrate.

'An illustration is a window in an argument, and lets in light. You may reason without an illustration; but where you are employing a process of pure reasoning, and have arrived at a conclusion, if you can then by an illustration flash back light upon what you have said, you will bring into the minds of your audience a realization of any argument that they cannot get in any other way. I have seen an audience time and again, follow an argument doubtfully, laboriously, almost suspiciously, and look at each other, as much as to say, 'Is he going right?' until the place is arrived at where the speaker says, 'It is like;' and then they listen eagerly for what it is like; and when some apt illustration is thrown out before them, there is a sense of relief, as though they said: 'Yes, he is right.'

Illustrations, so called, ought always to be clear, accurate, and quick. Do not let them dawdle on your hands. There is nothing that fires an audience so much as when they have to think faster than you do. You have got to keep ahead of them. Do you know what it is to walk behind slow people and tread on their heels? How it tires and vexes one! You know how people are vexed with a preacher who is slow and dilatory, and does not get along. He tires people out, for though he may not have but six or seven words of his sentence completed, they know the whole of it; and what is the use, then, of his uttering the rest?

With illustrations, there should be energy and vigor in their delivery. Let them come with a crack, as when a driver would stir up his team. The horse does not know anything about it until the crack of the whip comes. So, with an illustration. Make it snap. Throw it out. Let it come better and better, and the best at the last, and then be done with it.—Missionary Baptist.

The art of Forgetting.

What a blessed thing it is we can forget. To-day's troubles look large, but a week hence they will be forgotten and buried out of sight. Says one writer:

If you would keep a book and daily put down the things that worry you, and see what becomes of them, it would be a benefit to you. You allow the thing to annoy you, just as you allow a fly to settle on you and plague you; and lose your temper. But if you would see what it was that threw you off your balance before breakfast, and put it down in a book, and follow it up, and follow it out, and ascertain what becomes of it, you would see what a fool you were in the matter.

The art of everlooking is quite as important. And if we should take time to write down the origin, progress, and outcome of a few of our troubles, it would make us so ashamed of the fuss we make over them that we would be glad to drop such things and bury them at once in eternal forgetfulness. Life is so short to be worn out in petty worries, frettings, hatreds and vexations.

Don't sell to them.

One day a young man entered the bar-room of a village tavern and called for a drink. "No," said the landlord, "you have had the delirium tremens once, and I cannot sell you any more."

He stepped aside to make room for a couple of young men who had just entered, and the landlord waited on them very politely. The other stood by silent and sullen, and when they had finished he walked up to the landlord and addressed him as follows:

"Six years ago, at their age, I stood where those young men are now. I was a man of fair prospects. Now, at the age of twenty-eight I am a wreck, body and mind. You led me to drink. In this room I formed the habit that has been my ruin. Now sell me a few more glasses and your work will be done. I shall soon be out of the way; there is no hope for me. But they can be saved. Do not sell it to them. Sell it to me and let me die, and let the world be rid of me; but for Heaven's sake, sell no more to them."—Temperance Banner.