

—got into his desk and made a speech, half pathetic and half funny, about the way in which the young generation pushes up and drives off the old one. This old man said some very sensible things about the equal division of enjoyment among the various ages of life. He said that youth has quite as many pains as enjoyments, and old age as many quiet enjoyments as pains; and concluded by saying that in entertainments of this kind all ages could be pleased. This was true, Tom, for the little ones went home before the speeches began, and all the grown people seemed to enjoy listening to speeches far more than I have ever seen music, dancing and cards enjoyed at gay London parties. We had more general conversation, and if no one was very wise or witty, I did not hear any ill nature—not that I suppose your pious people don't love to pick holes in a neighbor—I know they do—but that evening I heard none of that talk. The soiree concluded with another fine old hymn and a short dismissal prayer.

You may not consider such a soiree very 'jolly' or 'spicy'; but I can assure you, Tom, that I have not very often found one less tedious.

I remain, dear Tom, your affectionate sister,

MARY GREEN.

There is nothing very remarkable in Mary's style of writing; a cleverer person would have made a much finer thing of this affair; but as she has told the truth simply, as it appeared to her, we have asked Tom's permission to copy her letter for the benefit of our readers. We confess to having found one or two useful ideas in it ourselves; if others find them too, the end in printing it is answered.

From the London People's Journal.

THE FIRST LESSON.

No teaching like a mother's!—no lessons sink into the virgin soil of childhood so deeply as those learnt at the loving mother's knee; the seed sown thus and then may be hidden for years, but it still lives and influences the life and actions of the learner ever thereafter. Ill fares it with the man who has no remembrance of kneeling as a child beside his mother's knee, and learning his first lessons from her lips—he knows nothing of one of life's holiest memories; and great is the responsibility of that mother who confides her child's first teachings to another—who allows a stranger to write on the tablets of her child's mind that which will bias its whole life career, and be as indestructible as the mind itself. The lives of the great men of history, most of them—and when we say great men, we understand good men—prove this; they have looked back to the time when their teacher was their mother, and thence have traced a silent influence that was ever about them—a "still small voice" heard amid the loud turmoil of busy life; and though

Chances mock'd and changes fill'd the cup of alternation,

that chiefly led them onward, and set them in high places in sight of their fellows. And all great men have loved the memory of those mothers: other loves may have possessed them—the love of honor, of fame, of woman—but the love of her who framed their childish accents, and formed their minds, has transcended all—set as a star apart, and worshipped when they looked to heaven. Other loves may fall "into the sere, the yellow leaf"—may have been mingled with suffering, and have left regret and disappointment behind; but this, beginning with the first breath of being, ends only with its last. Years will steal beauty from the mother's brow, light from her eye, and leave whitened hair and feeble footsteps, but, what of that?—when the three score years and ten, attended, it may be, with sorrow and trouble manifold, are ended, and poorly chequered with scanty joys, and the boy who knelt at her knee has grown into a man experienced in the world's many ways, her love for him is fresh as ever; and his for her will have but grown warmer deeper: then looking on that countenance, in which still lingers the early beauty that had clothed it as with a glorious garment, he may feel as did one whose filial love found such words as these to picture his mother in her matron solitude—"Hail to thee, my parent! as thou sittest there, in thy widow's weeds, in the dusky parlour in the house overgrown with the lustrous ivy of the sister isle, the solitary house at the end of the retired court, shaded by lofty poplars. Hail to thee! dame of the oval face, olive complexion, and Grecian forehead; by thy table seated, with the mighty volume of the good Bishop Hopkins spread out before thee; there is peace on thy countenance, the true peace: peace around thee, too, in thy solitary dwelling. No more earthly cares and affections now, my mother! Yes, one. Why dost thou raise thy dark and still brilliant eye from the volume with a somewhat startled glance? What noise is that in the distant street? Merely the noise of a hoof; a sound common enough: it draws nearer—nearer, and now it stops before thy gate. Singular! And now there is a pause—a long pause. Ha! thou hearest something—a footstep, a swift but heavy footstep! thou risest, thou tremblest: there is a hand on the pin of the outer door, there is some one in the vestibule; and now the door of thy apartment opens; there is a reflection on the mirror behind thee—a travelling-cap, a grey head, and a sun-burnt face—My dearest son?—My darling mother? Yes, the mother recognised in the distant street the tramp of her son-wanderer's horse.

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.

THE FLOWERS OF GOD.

BY REV. JAMES GILBORNE LYONS, LL.D.

"Consider the lilies of the field."

THE welcome flowers are blossoming,
In joyous troops reveal'd;
They lift their dewy buds and bells
In garden, mead, and field;
They lurk in every sunless path
Where forest children tread;
They dot, like stars, the sacred turf
Which lies above the dead.

They sport with every playful wind
That stirs the blooming trees.
And laugh on every fragrant bush,
All full of toiling bees.
From the green marge of lake and stream,
Fresh vale and mountain sod,
They look in gentle glory forth—
The pure sweet flowers of God.

They come with genial airs and skies,
In summer's golden prime,
And to the stricken world give back
Lost Eden's blissful clime.
Outshining Solomon they come,
And go full soon away,
But yet, like him they meekly breathe
True wisdom while they stay.

"If God," they whisper, "smiles on us,
And bids us bloom and shine,
Does He not mark, oh faithless man!
Each wish and want of thine?
Think, too, what joys await in Heaven
The blest of human birth,
When rapture such as woos thee now,
Can reach the bad on earth!"

Redeemer of a fallen race!
Most merciful of kings!
Thy hallowed words have clothed with power
Those frail and beauteous things.
All taught by Thee, they yearly speak
Their message of deep love,
Bidding us fix for life and death,
Our hearts and hopes above.

From "A Visit to Moscow, by an American."

SIBERIAN EXILES.

AFTER church we drove out beyond the limits of the city to a prison where the exiles to Siberia are confined previous to their departure. Every Sunday a number of these exiles set out on foot, under a guard of soldiers, for their last home on earth; and whoever comes to Moscow from abroad to see its sights, is generally present at one of these sad spectacles. Upon sending my card into the superintendent of the prison, I was immediately let within the gate, and I found myself in the yard where the exiles or prisoners were already assembled previous to their starting off, which generally takes place at two o'clock. They were standing, two deep in a line, and there were about twenty in all. Each prisoner had on a coarse grey overcoat, and a cap of the same coarse cloth. There was one woman among the prisoners. My valet immediately conducted me to an old gentleman who was standing near the prisoners, and who, he said, was the "prisoners' best friend." He received me very kindly. This gentleman is an old Russian, formerly possessed of riches, which he got rid of in doing good to his fellow men, who visits the prison every Sunday from pure philanthropic motives to attend to the wants of the prisoners, and aid them, as far as he is able, with the small sums of money which he collects for them during the week. He is a man of education, and speaks French perfectly.

Almost the first words he spoke to me were—

"These poor unfortunates have reason to remember your noble, your good Washington."

His remark surprised me—I could not understand it—when he explained that George Washington was the founder of a library which now gives to every exile a good book to take with him to his dreary home. It was Washington who originated the idea and furnished the first sum of money towards establishing a fund for procuring books to be given to the Siberian exile. And now, not an exile starts upon his long and wearisome journey without his book to read if he will, upon his way. Thus even in the wilds of Siberia, the memory of our Washington is precious, and will endure forever.

While we were talking, I observed a benevolent old Russian merchant approach the exiles and distribute among them some pieces of money from the bag he held in his hand. From my observations I am prepared to say that the Russians are very generous. I contributed a might for the poor fellows, which they thanked me for. I ascertained from Mr G—, the prisoners' friend, the offences for which they were going to Siberia. The greater part of them were to go to the "colonies," so called, where they were to remain but they would have their liberty. I also learned from Mr G— that some of these colonies were very flourishing. On their arrival, the exiles are furnished with a tract of land, which they must cultivate or starve. Among the number was one poor fellow who was sent for smuggling. There was one very hard case among them—that of a peasant, or serf, for whom, because he had not worked and paid to his master a yearly revenue for the last three years, his master had procured an exile to Siberia! This poor fellow was heavily chained about his feet. But the hardest part of the story is yet to be told. The

poor peasant had a wife and two little children—one quite an infant—and she and her little ones were to accompany him in his exile! The mother and children were seated in a rude little cart, drawn by one horse, and they were to follow the prisoners as they went onwards. One of the prisoners was to work for life in the mines—his crime was murder. The woman had killed her child; through shame she strangled it at its birth. She was a young woman. I pitied her, and was glad to learn that she was only an exile to the colonies. The prisoners appeared to be all well clothed. The hair from half the head of each prisoner was shaven.

All things being now ready, the good old man addressed the exiles, exhorting them to be patient on the road, and to obey without a murmur the orders of the officers. They then all turned to the cross upon the dome of the prison chapel, and repeatedly bowed and crossed themselves. The order was now given to take up the line of march; and these poor fellows, "flesh from the knout and recent from the chain," filed off one by one, and each man was counted as he left the yard. Arrived outside the wall, a guard of soldiers and four mounted Cossacks received them. Here they stopped for a moment, and here I witnessed a heart rending scene. A poor old woman had been anxiously awaiting the exit of the exiles from out the yard; and when at last they came out she saw a brother and a son in their gang. She uttered a shriek, and fell upon the ground raving most piteously, clutching the earth, then looking to the exiles, and making the air ring with her screams, till the drum beat and the prisoners marched off. She then rose, and followed on after the procession, crying and sobbing very hard, but she was not permitted to approach near those so dear to her. Not a word could she say to them; not even a last farewell was allowed.

I stood upon the hill and watched the exiles till they were out of sight. Some of them were in tears as they went along. They walk about fifteen miles a day, which is not so much as I supposed. After this scene the like of which I do not care about witnessing again, I drove to Sparrow-hills; and here stood upon the spot where Napoleon and his army, joyous with anticipations never to be realised, saw the first of the old Tartar city. I could imagine their feelings when, after the dreary journey they had made, and the toils they had endured, the beautiful city burst upon their sight. Under any circumstances, the view from Sparrow hills is hardly equalled, in its kind, in the world; and what must have been Napoleon's feelings as he gazed upon the Kremlin and the gilded domes that surround it, and thought that he was soon to be master of them all! I could fancy him exclaiming with delight, "Now will the dream of my ambition be satisfied; I have conquered all Europe, and I am now about to have Asia within my grasp!"

And now I traced him and his veterans on their march. I saw his army cross the Moskova, whose sluggish stream was at my feet, and upon the other side of the river, stop at the large convent of the Devritchei, whose walls, turrets and battlements remain now as then, and rest for the night; and I saw it advance in the morning towards the city, meeting with no opposition on its way, becoming masters of the thrones and palaces from the Tartar kings, till the cry of "fire!" broke out from palace, temple, and hovel, and the devouring element forced the invaders to withdraw.

The afternoon was beautiful—the sun was at my back, and its beams were thrown across and over the entire city; the gold and silver domes and crosses of the churches seemed as if on fire, and the thousand stars that dotted the green and the blue minarets looked like balls of fire. I was lost for a moment in the grandeur of the view. I cannot describe it to you, or impart the sensations which it awakened in me. At one time I thought I was dreaming, and was having a view of the "golden city." Then, casting my eyes to the Kremlin, the wars of the ancient Tsars, and Ivan the Terrible, rose up to my imagination; and then I thought of the conflagration of Moscow! and I saw the stern child of destiny himself, mounted upon his snow-white steed, with folded arms and flashing eyes, gazing upon the wonderful city which cost him the lives of so many of his veteran guard to behold.

ANECDOTES OF CHILDHOOD.

THE features of Mary's childhood which she most distinctly remembers, is an intense thirst for knowledge, a natural inclination to ask. Why? What for? What makes it so? In consequence of which many of her acquaintances styled her little Miss Whywhy, and I believe thought her a troublesome child; for often has she retired into her little bedroom and wept bitterly, when one or other of the above questions have been met by the reply:

"Don't ask such silly questions. Children should not be inquisitive." And again and again did she resolve that she would ask no more; but a child's resolution is feeble, and the promptings of a natural disposition are strong, and therefore her friends were still annoyed by her queries.

One day Mr Mond, an intelligent gentleman, who thought it not beneath him to spend his time in doing good to those of whom our saviour said, "Suffer them to come unto me, and forbid them not," was present, when some persons were speaking of a "diving bell," and heard little Mary ask—"What prevents the water getting into the bell?" and he heard too the reply—"Oh, such a tiny

child can't understand these things—don't ask such questions." The color rose in Mary's cheeks, the tears into her eyes; and with a throbbing heart, she was about once more to enter her little room, and there renew her weeping and her resolution, when Mr Mond took her hand, drew her toward him, and placing her upon his knee, said soothingly—"My dear little girl, I will tell you all about the diving bell presently; you may ask questions, only not when any one is speaking."

The readers must recall their own childish feelings, to understand how great was Mary's joy when she thus heard, for the first time, that it was not wrong to ask questions. She wiped her eyes, and in the fulness of her heart threw her tiny arms round Mr M.'s neck, saying—"Then I will never again ask questions when any one is speaking." And although she was not at that time six years old, I believe she kept her promise, and with gratitude remembers, that to this valued friend with his amiable wife, she is indebted for the purest enjoyments of her childhood, for they taught her also that she might, young as she was, dig for knowledge in her own mind and often find it for the digging. They encouraged her too to hope that she might one day become as wise and good as she often desired with earnestness to be. If all who have to do with little children would thus care for them, how much of early sorrow and later worthlessness would be avoided.

THE SKYLARK.

BISHOP Hall, whose writings are especially rich in reference to the analogies which may be observed between things natural and spiritual, makes this allusion to the skylark:—How nimbly doth that little lark mount up, singing towards heaven in a right line; while the hawk which is stronger of body and swifter of wing, towers up by many gradual compasses to his highest pitch; that bulk of body and length of wing hinders a direct ascent, and requires the help of both air and scope to advance his flight. Just so it is with the souls of men in flying up to heaven. Some are hindered by those powers which would seem helps to their soaring up thither. Great wit, deep judgment, quick apprehension send men about with no small labor for the recovery of their own incumbrance; while the good affection of plain and simple souls, raises them up immediately to the fruition of God. Why should we be proud of that which may slacken our way to glory?—why should we be disheartened with the small measure of that, the very want whereof may, as the heart may be affected, facilitate our way to happiness?

DE QUINCY ON STYLE.

PERHAPS it will shock the reader, certainly it will startle him, when I declare solemnly my conviction, that no two consecutive pages can be cited from any one of the very best English authors, which is not dignified by some gross equivocation or imperfection of structure, such as leaves the meaning open, perhaps, to be inferred from the context, but also so little expressed with verbal rigor, or with conformity to the truth of logic, or to the real purpose, that supposing the passage to involve a legal interest, and in consequence to come under a judicial review, it would be set aside for want of internal coherence. Not in arrogance, but under a deep sense of the incalculable injuries done to truth, small and great, by false management of language, I declare my belief that hardly one entire paragraph exists in our language which is impregnable to criticism, even as regards the one capital interest of logical limitation to the main purpose concerned.—Hogg's Instructor.

ANECDOTE OF GEN. JACKSON.

THE Hon. ———, who was a Baptist preacher, and Lieut. Governor, had at one and the same time been in the service of the Lord, and of the State of Illinois, becoming dissatisfied with the honors or profits, or both, of the posts he held, determined to resign them, and devote his time and talents to the assistance of the administration in carrying on the general Government. Accordingly he went to Washington and laid his case before the President. He stated his pretensions and wishes, narrated at some length all the prominent events of his political life, dwelling especially upon his untiring devotion to the Democratic party, the sacrifices he had submitted to, the exertions he had made in its behalf, and its consequent indebtedness to him, but said not a word of what he had done for the cause of religion. General Jackson heard the clerical aspirant through in silence, and after musing for a moment, put the following question to him:

"Mr K., are you not a minister of the Gospel?"

"I am, sir," was the reply.

"Then, sir," said the General, with his usual quiet dignity, "you hold already a higher office than any in my gift—an office whose duties properly performed, require your whole attention; and really I think the best I can do for you will be to leave you at liberty to devote your whole time to them, for, from what you tell me, I fear that hitherto they have been neglected."

SECRET OF COMFORT.—Though sometimes small evils, like invisible insects, inflict pains, and a single hair may stop a vast machine, yet the chief secret of comfort lies not in suffering trifles to vex one, and in prudently cultivating an undergrowth of small pleasures, since very few great ones, alas! are let on long leases.