

Literature, &c.

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.  
**WHERE HAST THOU BEEN  
MY BEAUTIFUL SPRING.**

BY EDWARD CAPERN.

The author is a rural postman, or letter-carrier, trudging thirteen miles a day, not excepting Sunday, between Bideford and Buckland Brewer, and supremely happy in the visits of the muse, and revenue of a half guinea a week.

Where hast thou been, my beautiful Spring?  
To the sultry south, on the swallow's wing;  
Kissing the little kidnapped slave,  
Ere borne away on the deep blue wave;  
Brushing the tear from the mother's cheek,  
As she wept for her child at Mozambique?  
Else whence comest thou with this potent charm,  
Chaining the winds to the frigid zone,  
Making the breast of Nature warm,  
And stilling old Winter's undertone?

Where hast thou been, my beautiful Spring?  
Away with the honey-bee wandering,  
Sipping the nectar of famed Cashmere,  
Sporting amid the Turk's parterre,  
Quaffing warm Araby's balmy breeze,  
And spicy scents of the Ceylonese?  
Else whence comest thou with the odorous breath,  
Chafing the cheek to a rosy bloom,  
And scattering the poisonous air of death,  
By flinging abroad a rich perfume?

Where hast thou been, my beautiful Spring?  
Up, 'mid Heaven's music revelling?  
For the tones of thy song from the greenwood bush,  
The lark in the sky and the mountain thrush,  
Speak as if it were given to thee  
To list to seraphic minstrelsy.  
Aye there thou hast been. Not sunny France,  
Or old Italia's land of song,  
Can furnish such notes from the poet's dance,  
As the melody poured from the musical tongue.

Where hast thou been my beautiful Spring?  
Plucking rich plumes from the parrot's wing,  
Robbing the clouds of their rainbow crest,  
Bathing thyself in the glorious west,  
Robbing 'hy form in the peacock's hues,  
And gathering pearls from the orient dews?  
Else whence comest thou, with this proud array  
Of beauties to sprinkle the russet wood,  
Those Lent-lilies bending as if to pray,  
And hyacinths fringing the marge of the flood?

And tell me whence cometh, my beautiful Spring,  
Each star of the earth, each odorous thing,  
These white-fringed daisies with golden-dipped eyes,  
These butter-cups gleaming like summer-lit skies,  
These violets adorned with rich purple and blue,  
These primroses fragrant and innocent too;  
And lastly, the sweetest and richest, I ween,  
Of all thy fair daughters, my beautiful Spring,  
The buddings that stood all thy pathways with green,  
Say, where were they gathered to shake from thy wing?

From Godey's Lady's Book for June.

**THE TWO MAY-DAYS.**

BY MRS THOMAS P. SMITH.

Chapter I.

'Order is Heaven's first law.'

SLAM! bang! went the doors of an elegant house in one of the finest streets in the city of Boston, as two handsome boys passed from the dining-room to the library, and from thence to the parlour, in search of something. In his rude haste, one of them knocked over a little sister, who was coming through the entry, and when she cried with fright, only said, very harshly, 'Well, then, keep out of the way.'

At length they found what they were after, which was a riding-whip, in the hand of a little fellow, who, astride a chair, was enjoying a fine morning ride, with his little eyes and cheeks sparkling with delight. Quickly was this joy dispelled, however, by the boy, who, twitching it out of his hand, gave him a cut with it, saying: 'There, take that, and learn not to meddle with my things again.'

Running to his mother, little Johnny told her, through his sobs and tears, that nurse gave him the whip and said he might play with it till George wanted it. She pacified him, and they went to the window to see the boys mount their horses, which stood at the door, and ride off.

It was a pleasant morning. An early breakfast had been hastily dispatched by the lads, in order that they might join a procession of boys who were going on a May-day excursion.

As they passed out of sight, Mrs Miner, who had been looking with a mother's delight at the fine appearance they made, turned from the window and took her place again at the breakfast table with her husband and younger children. Then, on examination, one might see that her countenance was not all expressive

of delight; it looked somewhat anxious, and Mr Miner looked quite serious; at length he said—

'Mary, I think you did wrong to let George go to ride after what he did yesterday; you said he not only disobeyed you, but told a direct falsehood; if so, you should not have indulged him to-day.'

'I know,' said Mrs Miner, 'he should have been punished; but I knew he would trouble me all day if he was at home, and besides it is not the first time by a great many he disobeyed me and told fibs, and I thought it no use to say any more about it.'

'I must say,' said Mr Miner, 'it pains me to see them growing up so lawless and extravagant, to say nothing of principles of which they do not seem to have much idea. I don't say that you can or ought to do any more than you do; but it seems to me it would be better to dispense with some of their fine clothes, and spend the time in teaching them truthful and wholesome principles. Clothing the soul in a garb of loveliness and beauty is far nobler than decking the body, while all is going to ruin within; but I must go to business; good morning.'

'Well,' said Mrs Miner, when he had left, 'that is very kind, truly, of a May-day, not to ask me if I wanted a ride, or anything! And he wants me to teach the boys more, forsooth! But there is no need of it, and I won't make a slave of myself so. There are not two handsomer, healthier, smarter boys in the city, than James and George; and what signifies such a strain for principles? They are shrewd enough to get through the world, I guess. Leave the cunning chaps alone for that.'

Yet Mrs Miner did not feel happy or comfortable. She knew her husband did not feel satisfied with her, and she did not with herself, and altogether she passed a gloomy day.

Chapter II.

'Upon thy heart is laid a spell

Holy and precious—oh, guard it well.

James and George returned from their ride in as good order as could be expected, the horses alone having appeared to suffer from their recklessness. They gave their mother an account of their day's adventure, whom they had seen, &c., but, from sundry whisperings and winkings between the two, it appeared very probable that some part of the day's performance had been kept back; indeed, on James refusing to lend George his knife, George was heard to say, 'If you don't, I'll tell all about it,' and the knife was handed over quickly. If there was any secret, it remained in their own bosoms. Yet from that May-day there seemed to be a change come over the spirits of these two lads.

Having never been properly controlled, they were always restless and rude, but now they took no notice of anything pertaining to the family, but appeared as if something of an absorbing nature was continually in their thoughts.

Mr Miner often inquired of his wife if she knew what the boys were about when they were out of school. 'About their play, she supposed; they were not at home much.'

Soon after May-day, Mrs Miner remarked a couple of ill-looking fellows several times inquiring after James and George, and on asking who they were, and what they wanted with the boys, they told her they kept a refreshment saloon, to which the lads went on May-day, and had a small sum owing them which they wanted to get.

Although their father had forbidden them to run in debt for anything, yet Mrs Miner thought rather than have a 'fuss,' she would say nothing about it. Little thought she that by so doing she would have a more serious 'fuss,' one that would make her heart ache through her life long.

It was a warm day in August. Mrs Miner sat in her room feeling not well, and just then thinking of the change she had observed in the boys, when she heard the front door open and voices and feet as of many persons below. Alarmed, she stepped to the entry, and looking down, beheld a number of men, among whom were two police officers and James and George. The officers inquired for Miner, in his absence for her, and told her, as gently as they could, that they had just surprised a company of counterfeiters whom they had been watching some time, and as her sons had been seen several times in company with them at a certain refreshment saloon, they felt obliged to search their rooms.

Horror-stricken, yet knowing it must be done, and hoping, yet not without fear, that her boys had not fallen so low in dishonesty, she permitted them to ascend to the rooms—they had bedrooms adjoining. In George's was found nothing; but, shocking to relate! in James's were found not only counterfeit money in abundance, but also materials of various kinds for counterfeiting! These were so secretly placed under the carpet, and even under the floor itself, that no one would have thought it could have been discovered; but police officers are accustomed to find things; and James was taken off before his mother's eyes, to be locked up as a criminal!

Although nothing was found in George's room, yet she knew well they had been together

in it, and that George, being the older, was most to blame.

That fatal May-day! The keeper of the refreshment saloon, on the watch for weak subjects to draw into his net of iniquity, had fattened the character and lax principles of the boys, and by cajoling and feasting, and alas! by drinking with them too, had won them over to be his tools. Once in his fangs, although they wished to get back, threats of exposing them if they did, kept them until the accidental exposure took place.

The trial came on. James was of course found guilty, but, in consideration of his youth and it being his first offence, his sentence was commuted by the governor, on condition of his being sent on a long voyage to sea. But the judge made some remarks to parents which it would be well for the youth of our land were they hung before every parent's eye in letters of gold.

'Principles,' said he, 'the best instilled by the worthiest parents in childhood, should be watched and guarded in youth, from the years of twelve to eighteen, with more than former fidelity and strictness. This a father should aid to do all in his power, and he may do much even though the time of his being with his children may be short. A few words of kind advice, or of reprimand from a father, even a look, will sometimes deter a lad from some path of error and win him to purity and truth. But on the mother, mainly, at this period, is depending the lad's future character. She is at home; knows, or ought to know, what is going on under her roof. She has, or might have, the full confidence and love of her sons, and know from day to day, and hour to hour, what is interesting their thoughts, and should suggest proper subjects of pursuit to them. May this case be a warning to parents in the middling and higher walks of society to be more watchful of their children after they suppose them past the vices and follies of childhood, seeing that more potent temptations and more frightful dangers await them.'

James appeared very penitent, reflected upon no one but himself, yet he said he thought boys could not be brought up too strictly; that George and himself had been out nights and absent days engaged in almost everything bad, which, had they been more strictly managed, they could not have done; that he had often felt bad, and wished to stop, but George had prevented him.

Mrs Miner and her husband were now plunged into the depths of woe. James went immediately to sea; and though George had not been tried, yet they knew he was as false in his principles and more confirmed in vice than James, and a much worse character, inasmuch as he evinced no penitence, but a sullen, dogged determination to do as he pleased still, and not to be controlled.

At length Mr Miner concluded the only thing to do with him was to send him with a very pious, excellent captain of a ship—an uncle of his—on a voyage. Thus the two beautiful boys, on whom Mrs Miner had looked with a mother's delight on May-day, thinking they would 'get through the world by their shrewdness as well as by good principles,' were banished from her in disgrace, and one of them forever; for, tenderly brought up as he had been at home, and not submitting to his fate very cheerfully, George soon sank under a change of condition, and was cut down in the springtime of his days.

Often, at night, when the winds howled, would Mrs Miner shudder, and, as she thought of the two sweet babes she had once there nestled to her bosom, who were now far away, buffeting the waves and the winds, scalding tears would bedew her pillow—tears not unmingled with self-accusings that she had not looked more to their real good than to their appearance.

Mr Miner said but little; but the deep fountains of his spirit had been stirred—almost broken up; and as two other boys, the very image of the absent at their age, now clambered up his knee and lisped 'papa,' the remembrance of his first born would almost unman him, and he could not enjoy their infantile prattle for the sad reflections to which they gave rise.

He often said: 'The duties of the parental relation cannot be neglected with impunity; that, above every other duty, rises paramount—and the spring of every other important attribute of character—that of instilling good principles into the minds of children, and then watching to see that they are practised upon.'

Chapter III.

'We were not born for lives of ease.  
Ourselves alone to aid and please;  
To each a daily task is given—  
A labour which shall fit for heaven.  
When duty calls, let love grow warm—  
Amid the sunshine and the storm;  
With faith life's trials boldly breast,  
And come a conqueror to thy rest.  
Bare on, bare bravely on!

Time takes us rapidly on, the boy soon becomes a man, the child a father.

James Miner had returned home. With a fortitude and determination worthy of commendation, he had borne his punishment, reformed, been a successful merchant some years, settled, not in his own city, for there a stigma

attached to his name and always would, but having married a lovely girl, he has been established many years on the banks of the Hudson, where we now find him living with a sweet family of children of his own.

To give a fair insight into the character of his wife, and her management with the family, we have chosen another May-day, and the more readily, that the disagreeable and sad reminiscence of the other may be obliterated by the cheerful ones of this in a well regulated family.

The 30th of April closed pleasantly, and gave the many little heads looking forward to the next day bright waking visions of going a-Maying, and rainbow dreams of roses and posies gathered on May-day.

'Mother,' said Albert, the second son, 'I want to be waked at four o'clock; the girls from down in town are coming up this way, and I want to be out early to meet them. Will you please have me waked?'

'Well, that depends very much on who the girls are,' said the mother. On being informed, and approving the companionship, she readily acquiesced.

'May I have the poney, mother, and will you lend me your riding-whip?' said James the eldest son. 'Charley Horton is coming to ride with me on horseback. Will you please get it out to-night, as I am afraid you will not be up as early as I wish to start?'

After enquiring where and how long they were going, she agreed.

'I doin' Mayin', too; please wate me up four o'clock, mamma,' lisped Winny, three years old, in which Julia and two other little fellows joined.

Mrs James Miner gave orders to the nurse to waken the two eldest boys, as they desired; but was not surprised, on rising at six o'clock, to have it do again—a chilly morning not having tempted one from their beds.

'Now let me see which will be down the quickest and look the neatest. Papa is in the library already for prayers, and the bell will ring in two minutes,' said their mother.

They were soon all assembled in the library, when their father, having read a chapter in the Bible, offered a fervent prayer for a blessing on the day, and particularly that the young minds before him might be kept from evil, and strengthened to every good purpose.

The family altar, how precious its influence; how it soothes, elevates, and refines the minds of all! and, in after years, how the child looks back to it with reverence and pleasure! How beautiful the sight—father, mother, and children, together kneeling, each morn, to seek daily guidance and daily mercies!

After this exercise, as might be expected, a pleasant breakfast followed. Then Albert went to meet the little girls, while James made himself ready for his horseback ride, having received his mother's whip, with a request not to lose it, as, being a birthday present from himself, she valued it highly.

A sudden shower brought them both back very soon, however, with James's friend, and they were obliged, by the rain, to remain housed all the forenoon. Mrs Miner, though in delicate health, with some ingenuity invented satisfactory amusements for them all, and an early dinner, to which she invited the young friend, finished, very pleasantly, one half of the day.

Notwithstanding the disappointment of all in not 'going a-Maying,' and of Mrs Miner, too, whose husband had remained from his business to take her to ride, they were all cheerful and happy. Well-regulated tempers prevented grumbling at what they 'knew was not to be altered, and, when 'a story from mother' was called for by all, she felt that she was repaid as she sat with her little flock around her in their innocent admiration and love, for all the hours she had spent in their service, and, giving them the 'good-night kiss,' the younger ones retired, the two eldest, alone, remaining up.

Chapter IV.

'By the gathering round the winter hearth,  
When twilight called unto household mirth;  
By the pleasant tale, or the legend old,  
In that ring of happy faces told,  
By the quiet hour when hearts unite,  
In the parting prayer and the kind 'good-night,'  
By the smiling eye and the loving tone,  
Over thy life has the spell been thrown.  
Bless thou that gift; it hath gentle might—  
A guardian power, and a guiding light.'

'Well,' said Mr Miner to them, 'how have you spent the day, boys? Rather dull, I suppose.'

'Oh, no, very pleasant! Mother told us some of her stories, and we had some nuts to pick, and somehow the day has flown very quickly and happily.'

'Why don't you ask me to tell you a story, sometimes?' inquired he.

At this both boys laughed, and said: 'We did not think you knew any.'

'Well, I do: I know one at least,' looking significantly at his wife, and coloring a little. 'I know one which your mother and myself have often talked of telling you; it is a story of folly—guilt, and its punishment; and when I tell you it is of myself I must speak, you will see it is not very pleasant. Your mother has