

The Family Circle.

"ONLY A YEAR AGO."

One year ago—a ringing voice,
A clear blue eye,
And clustering curls of sunny hair,
Too fair to die.

—Mrs. H. B. Stowe.

[From the Little Corporal.]
LOU'S MISTAKE.

Lou Parker had an unfortunate window, at school, looking out at the broad, sunshiny country; at the woods, with their rustling billowy tops and the purple dark depths; at the little "run," that had green, buttercup starred, peppermint banks, at first, and after a while broadened into the bright creek; at Aunty Rool's orchard, and the old "spring lane," where the yellow butterflies loved to hover upon the thistles.

could she ever meet her father, and the boys, there in the humble, plodding little home, where they all looked up to her so, and were so sure she was going to be an honor to them all, some day? Such a miserable, heartless, good-for-nothing she had been, and now they would all know it. And Lou thought, as she walked towards home, of her mother's hard, work-scarred hands, and her pale face, and her slow steps; and remembered how she always said, "Never mind the work, dear. You brought your books home, you know. I'll call Robbie down stairs, and you can go up there and be by yourself!" Much she studied up there by herself! She only dreamed over her books, and how she despised herself for it, now! It seemed to her that she could never go home, and yet she had gone hundreds of times, when she was meaner than now.

to get an education, and keep mother and me comfortable, too. We had an uncle that wanted to help us, only he wouldn't as long as Johnny meant to be a preacher, for he hated preachers. And we couldn't give that up, you know—we'd rather die first. So Johnny worked and studied himself sick. It was along, fearful fever, Lou, and he isn't over it yet. It was his delicate brain the fever hurt most—our poor, beautiful Johnny. Then mother died, and I had to give up the house, and the garden, and the dear, old, blossomy front yard, and all; and Johnny was sent to an asylum. He was there a long time, and at last they sent him to me, cured, they said; but it's as you see, and I mean to keep him with me, now. He's more like himself with me than anywhere else, and I'm a great deal happier taking care of him. I'm a real good nurse, and don't you see? I keep his little room in there just as fresh and bright as they do at the asylum. We go to the woods, and gather flowers and leaves, to make wreaths to hang up in there till it's perfectly beautiful; and Johnny enjoys it so, when it's all done. I can see that he's getting better every day, and O, I am so glad! Such a very deep, perfect gladness it is, that I don't feel a bit like clapping my hands and singing over it.

Jem felt sad to know that any thought him guilty. But he told the story over and over to his heavenly Father, and was comforted. Jesus made him strong to bear this sore trial. After a few days a gentleman sent for Jem and offered to hire him. Jem asked if he knew about the pocket-book.

CLEANLINESS AND VIGOR OF THE JAPANESE.

Beautiful as Simoda seemed, the chances were, judging from our Chinese experience, that it would prove a very sepulchre of a city,—full of all uncleanness,—upon a closer inspection.

bust, and muscular. Indeed, I used to look with admiration at the laborers, for example, in the stone-quarries near Hakodadi, and wonder how their mighty limbs could grow so great without the animal food which Buddhism prohibits. In the city streets and on the country roads, one meets bright eyes and ruddy countenances. The folks look as if they had blood in them and life in them. They are active and industrious—perhaps not less industrious than the Chinese—and that is saying a great deal, for the Chinese are the most industrious of all peoples; but in the activity of the Japanese is somehow an elasticity and vivacity which I could not discover in the patient, drudging, machine-like industry of China.

THE HIGHLAND BOY'S FAITH.

A traveller in Scotland observed some choice and rare plants growing on the edge of a precipice. He could not reach them, but offered to a little Highland boy a handsome present, if he would consent to be lowered to the spot by a rope round his waist. The boy hesitated. He looked at the money, and thought of all that it would purchase, for his parents were poor, and their home had few of the comforts of life; but then, as he glanced at the terrible precipice, he shuddered and drew back. At length his eye brightened, and he said, with decision, "I'll go if father will hold the rope." And he went.

NEVER GIVE UP.

In most cases the wise and good men will come down, but never give up. The heroic thing to say is this: Things are bad, but they may be worse; and with God's blessing I try to make them better. Who does not know that by resolute adherence to this principle, many battles have been won after they had been lost? Don't the French say that the English have conquered on many fields because they did not know when they had been beaten; in short, because they would never give up?

JEM AND THE POCKET-BOOK.

"Jem, I dropped my pocket-book somewhere out here. Have you seen it?" asked a farmer one day of a boy who was hoeing potatoes for him in a field.

—Country Parson.