

The Family Circle.

THE JORDAN.

From "SKETCHES OF PALESTINE," by Rev. E. P. Hammond.

[Some time since we gave a hasty review of the English edition of this book. It is now just issued in this country, as will be seen by reference to our advertising column, by T. Nelson & Sons, New York. We quote from it the following lines suggested by repeated visits to the river Jordan.]

I stood beside the bubbling spring, From which the Jordan has its birth, And seemed to hear its waters sing, As they went laughing everywhere,— "We o'er the earth may roam at will, In every place be merry still."

Like reckless youth they dashed along, Coquetting with the flowers so fair, And oft I seemed to hear their song, As they went laughing everywhere,— "We o'er the earth may roam at will, In every place be merry still."

One day they went singing by, Kissing each flower that bowed its head; The golden sun from out the sky, Then to the youthful river said, "Wouldst thou in very truth be free? Then one day thou shalt dwell with me!"

At length its chasing waters dwelt Within the sea of Galilee,— Restraints of youth no longer felt, I seemed to hear it say to me,— "Here shall my manhood's days be passed, For hitherto we've run too fast."

But one day near the Southern shore, The waters born at Jordan's spring, Within the lake were seen no more, And pensively I heard them sing— "That joyous lake we now have left; We're hastening to the sea of death."

The waters, trembling, rolled along, Down, down, toward the bitter sea. Anon I heard their mournful song, While borne away from Galilee,— "And must we there forever lie, In yonder sea forever die?"

Thus filled with many doubts and fears, The waters of the Jordan fell Into the sea filled with the tears, Of Sodom sinners lost in hell.— The glorious sun with kindly power, Was with them in their dying hour.

The promise which when in their youth, They from the shining sun had heard, Was then vouchsafed in very truth, And yet again they heard His word; "All pure, you now shall dwell with me, Yon beautiful sky your home shall be."

Oh! Jordan, I would ever mind The lesson thou hast taught to me, And when I near the verge of time, From doubts and fears may I be free, Oh! Son of Righteousness Divine, Then take me to that home of Thine.

With triumph then I can exclaim, Grim death to me it has no sting, To all around I will proclaim, Thanks be to God, He makes me sing, "The sting of death is only sin, Thro' Christ the victory we win."

MR. HAMMOND'S LETTERS TO THE CHILDREN.—No. IV.

VERNON, Ct., Aug. 30, 1869.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS:—A few days ago I was walking quickly along the Railroad track, in Rockville, when all at once I saw a little boy about eight years of age, running to me, and with tears flowing down his cheeks he cried aloud: "OH, DO TAKE OUT MY BROTHER! HE'S FALLEN IN." He kept saying these words over and over, and at the same time pointed along the track in the way I was going.

I looked the way he pointed, but I could not see any one at all. I thought at first the train had run over his little brother, and half killed him, and so I looked carefully to find something on the track. But nothing was in sight.

I thought the little fellow's head must be turned, and so I left him, and on I ran, for I was in haste to see my dear sister, who had just returned home. But I did not go but a little way when down in the hole which had been dug to keep cows from walking on the track, was a little boy, not more than six years old, looking up with tears, and saying, "DO TAKE ME OUT."

As he stood down on the bottom, his head was two feet below the top of the ground, and so it was no wonder I could not see him, when his brother called to me. As I reached down to lift him out, he put his hand in mine, though he had never seen me before, and I quickly helped him up. He was pleased enough to get out of that ugly deep hole, and I was glad that a train did not come along when he was in that queer prison. Some of the burning coals might have fallen on him and set his hair on fire. At any rate, he would have been awfully frightened, and would have cried louder than ever.

You may wonder why I have told you this little story, but did you know that you are in a worse place than that boy was? And the trouble is, that unless you are a Christian—unless Jesus has opened your eyes, you are blind and so you don't know it. I know this is true, for Jesus says, "Thou knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind." Rev. iii. 2, If that little boy had been blind, he would not have known when I stood over that pit, and so he would not have called to me, and he could never have got out alone. But if his brother had followed back with me, and said to him, "Here is a man large enough to take you out, if you will ask him," then the little fellow would not have been long in saying: "Will you please take me out, sir?"

Now my little reader, I come to you, and find you in what the Bible calls the "HORRIBLE PIT" of sin, and I tell you that One "mighty to save," full of love—even Jesus, is standing by your side, waiting for you to say to Him, "Will you please take me out of this horrible pit into which I have fallen?" He is always seeking to save the lost. But He will never save you unless you in earnest ask Him. You "say your prayers," but have you shown half as much anxiety to be saved as that boy did to have me get him out of that little prison-house into which he had fallen? That boy was crying very bitterly when I first met him, just because his little bro-

ther had got into this ugly trap. O! it made me ashamed to think how few tears I have shed over poor lost sinners, who are in a thousand times more dangerous condition.

When I was a little boy, my dear mother, now in heaven, often used to weep because I would not in earnest ask Jesus to open my blind eyes and take me out of the dark pit of sin. I wish I was more like her, and that I might oftener weep when I think how many blind boys and girls there are in the pit of sin and in danger of at last being shut up in that dreadful prison, where God says all the wicked shall be cast. Read what the Bible says in Psalm ix, 17th.

But suppose that little boy had committed some great crime in Rockville, and the officers had decided that, as a punishment, he must, for a long time, be kept in that dreary place. Then I should have had no right to take him out without their permission. Now that is something the way it is with you. Before Jesus could have any right to come to save you, HE HAD TO SUFFER FOR YOUR SINS ON THE CROSS. To save you and me from "going down to the pit," he had to give Himself "A RANSOM" for us. O! then, do not turn away from SUCH A LOVING SAVIOUR, but call to Him and He will save you.

PRAYER.

Here is a little prayer, which you may like to use.

DEAR LORD JESUS, I HAVE FALLEN INTO THE DEEP PIT, AND I CAN NEVER GET OUT UNLESS THOU WILT HELP ME. THOU HAST DIED ON THE CROSS FOR SINNERS! YES, FOR LITTLE CHILDREN LIKE ME. THOU ART "MIGHTY TO SAVE." O! SAVE ME. I CRY TO THEE. SAVE ME, SAVE ME! AMEN.

A WONDERFUL CANARY.

FROM THE GERMAN.

At Cleves, a short time ago, a canary bird was exhibited, the wonderful tricks and feats performed by which made quite a sensation in the neighborhood. The exhibitor brought the bird forward, placed him on his forefinger, and said, "My dear Bigon, (the name of the bird) you are now about to appear before a number of talented and distinguished persons; take pains, therefore, that you may not disappoint the expectations which have been raised about you. You have won your laurels, do not suffer them to wither."

All the time the master was making this speech, the bird appeared to be listening, having placed himself in an attitude of the most thoughtful attention, bending down his ear towards the man's mouth, and whenever the exhibitor ceased speaking, nodding his head in the most expressive manner. If ever a nod was intelligible, indeed eloquent, it was this.

"Very good," said his master. "Let us now see that you are a bird of honor. Favor us with a little song." The bird sang. "Rie, that is too harsh, it sounds like the croaking of a hoarse raven; something sweeter."

The bird began to whistle, piping as if his little throat had been turned into a lute.

"Quicker!" or "slower!" the owner kept exclaiming. "Quite right, but what in the world have you done with your head and your feet? no wonder that you get out of tune, if you forget to beat time, Monsieur Bigon. That's a good Bigon, bravo! bravo! little fellow."

Everything that he was thus set to do, or of which he was reminded, he did with the most wonderful exactitude. With his head and his feet, he beat time, and followed every change of time and every variation in the movement he was performing. The cries he sang were most correctly rendered, and followed the strictest musical laws.

"Bravo! bravo!" sounded from all sides of the room.

"And won't you show your gratitude for all this praise?" exclaimed the exhibitor.

The bird bowed most respectfully to the audience. The next trick which the little bird exhibited was to play the soldier with a straw for a gun.

"You've had a hard piece of work to do, my poor Bigon," said the exhibitor, "and you must be getting tired. Just a couple more feats, and you shall have a rest. Show the ladies how to make a courtesy."

The bird drew one of his little feet behind the other, and sank and raised himself again with the utmost ease and grace.

"That's right, my little fellow; now for a polite bow."

He made one, bending his head and scraping with his foot.

"Now, let's wind up with a waltz! Quick! off and away." The elegance, the vivacity, the fire with which this command was obeyed, raised the delight and admiration of the audience to its highest pitch. Bigon himself, seemed to feel the thirst of approbation; shook his wings, and sang a song, in the notes of which one seemed to recognize the exultation of a conqueror.

"You have behaved in what I call a capital way," said the exhibitor, while he fondled his feathered favorite. "Just take a little nap, while I step into your place."

The canary feigned sleep, and acted his part so well, that he looked as if Morpheus had been exerting all his powers upon him. First he shut one eye, then the other, then he began nodding; last of all, he sank so completely on one side that several persons, among the audience, stretched out their hands to prevent his falling, and immediately he felt their touch, he turned round and lay down upon the other side. At last he appeared to fall asleep in good earnest, upon which the man took him off his finger, and placed him on the table, where, as his master told the audience, the bird would sleep as long as he himself took his place and performed his feats. Scarcely, however, had he begun doing this, before a large black cat sprang upon the table, seized the canary,

within his teeth, and in spite of all the efforts of those present, to save Bigon, rushed with him out of the window. The poor exhibitor was inconsolable, as, for some years, the little creature had procured him a subsistence.

GIRLS SHOULD LEARN TO KEEP HOUSE.

No young lady can be too well instructed in anything which will affect the comfort of a family. Whatever position in society she occupies, she needs a practical knowledge of household duties. She may be placed in such circumstances that it will not be necessary for her to perform much domestic labor; but on this account she needs no less knowledge than if she was obliged to preside personally over the cooking-stove and pantry. Indeed, I have thought it more difficult to direct others, and requires more experience, than to do the same work with our own hands.

Mothers are frequently so nice and particular that they do not like to give up any part of the care to the children. This is a great mistake in the management, for they are often burdened with labor and need relief. Children should be early taught to make themselves useful; to assist their parents every way in their power, and to consider it a privilege to do so.

Young persons cannot realize the importance of a thorough knowledge of housewifery; but those who have suffered the inconvenience and mortification of ignorance can well appreciate it. Children should be early indulged in their disposition to bake and experiment in various ways. It is often but a troublesome help that they afford, still it is a great advantage to them.

I know a little girl who, at nine years old, made a loaf of bread every week during the winter. Her mother taught her how much yeast, salt and flour to use, and she became quite an expert baker. Whenever she is disposed to try her skill in making simple cakes and pies, she is permitted to do so. She is thus, while amusing herself, learning an important lesson. Her mother calls her "little housekeeper," and often permits her to get what is necessary for the table. She hangs the keys by her side, and very musical is the jingling to her ears. I think before she is out of her teens, upon which she has not yet entered, that she will have some idea how to cook.

Some mothers give their daughters the care of housekeeping, each a week by turns. It seems to me a good arrangement, and a most useful part of their education. Domestic labor is by no means incompatible with the highest degree of refinement and mental culture. Many of the most elegant, accomplished women I have known have looked well to their household duties, and have honored themselves and their husbands in so doing.

Economy, taste, skill in cooking, and neatness of the kitchen, have a great deal to do in making life happy and prosperous. The charm of good housekeeping is in order, economy and taste displayed in attention to little things; and these things have a wonderful influence. A dirty kitchen and bad cooking have driven many a one from home to seek comfort and happiness somewhere else. None of our excellent girls are fit to be married until they are thoroughly educated in the deep and profound mysteries of the kitchen.—Presbyterian.

A WONDERFUL CLOCK.

I want to show you the wonderful clock which was placed in the cathedral many years ago, and of which I used to read when I went to the district school. I hardly believed the story then, and supposed it written only to entertain children; but it was all true.

It is called the astronomical clock, because it points out so many movements of sun, moon, and planets, and tells various other things peculiar to astronomy. Beside all this the clock also counts the hours of the day with a singular exhibition of moving figures. Look at the central tower, and about one-third of the distance from its base you will see the face of the clock. Just above it on either side, sit two cherubs. The one on the right of the clock holds in his hand a little hammer, and before him is a tiny bell. The one on the left, holds an hour-glass. Quite a little space above this in the tower, you observe the spectral image of Death, holding in each hand a hammer, while on either side is a large bell. At his left, just coming into sight is an infant child, having in his hand a weapon. At the same distance, on Death's right, is an old gray-haired man disappearing. Above this, in and near the top of the tower, stands a figure representing the Saviour. Now look at the right of the large tower, and you will see another more slender one, upon the top of which is perched a huge cock. All these points you must watch very closely when the clock strikes twelve. Now as we are quite early you may get a good standing place, for there will soon be a great crowd of people here. The crowd was so great when I was here, that I was pressed back very close to the wall. While we are waiting I will tell you what occurs at each quarter of the hour. At the first quarter the cherub with the clock face raises his hammer and strikes the tiny bell, then the little child above walks by and strikes with his little hammer the great bell of Death, and passes by out of sight, leaving his place to be occupied by a youth. At the second quarter the cherub strikes and the youth walks up and strikes the bell of Death twice and passes by and leaves his place to a man of middle age. At third quarter the cherub strikes and the middle-aged man gives the great bell three strokes and passes on, while an old man with a long white beard and stooping form, appears to take his place. Now you

will see as the clock strikes twelve, the moving of all the figures for the fourth quarter and the hour.

The first thing you will notice is the quick turning of the hour-glass by the cherub at the left of the clock face. Then the other will strike the little bell, and immediately the old man above will walk slowly up and strike the bell of death with a trembling hand four times and pass by out of sight. This is for the fourth quarter and the completion of the hour, and instantly following Death will strike slowly each bell alternately until the twelve strokes are given when there will appear in the niche above, the figure of a man walking before that of the Saviour, and as he passes Him he will stop and bow, and the figure of Christ will raise His hand to bless him. Then another will come and another until twelve have passed, representing the twelve apostles. During the passing of the apostles, the cock on the other clock-spire will stretch his neck and flap his wings and crow three times.

But the crowd is here and the policemen are here. It is just one minute more. See, they raise their hands to hush the people. The silence is so great that our very breath disturbs it, while we wait to see the workings of this wonderful clock at Strasbourg, in France, on the Rhine.

BUDGET OF ANECDOTES.

At a certain splendid evening party a haughty young beauty turned to a student who stood near her, and said—

"Cousin John, I understand your eccentric friend L— is here. Do bring him here and introduce him to me."

The student went in search of his friend, and at length found him lounging on a sofa, "Come L—," said he, "my beautiful cousin Catharine wishes to be introduced to you."

"Well trot her out John," drawled L—, with an affected yawn.

John returned to his cousin, and advised her to defer the introduction to a more favorable time, repeating the answer he had received.

The beauty bit her lip; but the next moment said—

"Well, never fear, I shall insist on being introduced."

After some delay, L— was led up, and the ceremony of introduction was performed. Agreeably surprised by the beauty and commanding appearance of Catharine, L— made a profound bow; but instead of returning it, she stepped backward and, raising her glass surveyed him deliberately from head to foot; then waving the back of her hand towards him drawled out—

"Trot him off, John! trot him off! That is enough."

The North Indian Sphinx is a periodical conducted by the soldiers of the 2nd battalion 10th Foot, now at Secunderabad. The printing, the work of soldiers themselves, would be creditable to professional workmen. The following story is worth quoting:—"The drill instructor, one of the old stamp of martinet sergeants—who was the terror of every recruit, and the remorseless tyrant of the awkward squad, was putting a firing party through the funeral exercise. Having opened the ranks, so as to admit the passage of the supposed cortege between them, the instructor ordered the men to 'rest on their arms reserved.' Then by the way of practical explanation, he walked slowly down the lane formed by the two ranks, saying as he moved, 'Now I'm the corpse—pay attention.' Having reached the end of the party, he turned round, regarded them steadily with a scrutinizing eye for a moment or two, and then remarked in the most solemn tone of voice, 'Your 'ands is right, and your 'eads is right, but you 'aven't got that look of regret you ought to 'ave.'"

A preacher, whose custom it was to preach very long sermons, exchanged with one who only preached half as long. At about the customary time for dismissing, the audience began to go out. This hegrta continued until all had left but the sexton, who stood it as long as he could, and then, walking up to the pulpit stairs, said to the preacher in a whisper, "When you have got through, please lock up, will you, and leave the key at my house, next to the church?"

A recent Paris paper thus reports a conversation between two worthy conservatives: "And what has become of the son of our friend X?" "Don't ask me; he has turned out badly." "How's that? I thought he was intelligent and industrious. What has become of him?" "He has become a journalist." "A journalist—and his father was such an honest man; it is incredible."

Many years since an old lady, more noted for her piety than her learning, left her native Highland hills, for a short visit (her first) to Edinburgh. While there, she was taken to see the various public places of interest, and among the rest, Holyrood Palace and the Chapel Royal. After having shown her and her friends some of the resting places of the Scottish kings, the guide at length stopped short at a particular tomb, and in a more than ordinarily impressive manner remarked, "And this is the tomb of King David," on hearing which announcement, the good old woman became greatly excited, and clasping her hands, and casting her eyes heavenwards, gasped out, in wondering accents, "Eh, sir, d'ye tell me so? Eh, did I ever think my auld e'en would see sic a glorious sight? An' is it really here whar the great Psalmist rests?" This rather ludicrous mistake caused much amusement to the bystanders, as well as to the astonished official, who little dreamt his eloquence would have such a startling effect.

The counsel of good Dr. Marsh to the tradesman was very sound. The tradesman said:—"I have enough and yet riches flow in. Should I not retire from business?" Dr. Marsh answered:—"Yes, if your heart be set on wealth, or if you intend to hoard it; No, if you intend to lay out your profits in the service of God and man."

A gentleman of Wilmington had two of his children, aged respectively three and five years, in his yard during the recent eclipse, for the purpose of viewing it. While thus engaged, he doubled the lining of his coat, and on looking

through it discovered he had as good a view as through smoked glass. Of course the children had to be accommodated with a peep through this impromptu telescope, in which they became deeply interested. In the evening when the coat was hanging up in its place, the eldest child went toward it, when the little two year old boy frantically shouted to her to leave papa's coat be, for he had the eclipse in his pocket, and she must not touch it.

Charley V—, a bright little fellow of nearly four years, attended a series of protracted meetings with his mother, in the town of B—. Charley's father was a very surly man, and seldom spoke pleasantly to anybody. One evening, at meeting, the minister talked about bearing the cross, if we wished to go to heaven; and the next morning at the breakfast table, Mr. V— seemed to be more surly than ever; he scolded at everybody, found fault with everything on the table, and finally left the house in a great rage. He had scarcely closed the door, when Charley said, "Ma, pa will go to heaven, won't he?" "I don't know, my child," said his mother; "what makes you think so?" "Why, ma, you know the minister said, if we want to go to heaven we must bear the cross, and I'm sure pa does the most of anybody, for he is 'cross all the time!"—Rural New-Yorker.

THE BOY THAT DON'T CARE.

"James, my son, you are wasting your time playing with that kitten, when you ought to be studying your lesson. You will get a bad mark if you don't study," said Mrs. Mason to her son.

"I don't care," replied the boy, as he continued to amuse himself with the gambols of Spot, his pretty little kitten.

"But you ought to care, my dear," rejoined the lady, with a sigh. "You will grow up an ignorant, good-for-nothing man, if you don't make a good use of your opportunities."

"I don't care," said James, as he raced into the yard after his amusing playmate. "Don't care will be the ruin of that child," said Mrs. Mason to herself. "I must teach him a lesson that he will not easily forget."

Guided by this purpose, the lady made no preparations for dinner. When noon arrived, her idle boy rushed into the house, as usual, shouting:

"Mother, I want my dinner!"

"I don't care," repeated Mrs. Mason. James was puzzled. His mother had never so treated him before. Her words were strange words for her to use, and her manner was so cold that he could not understand what it meant.

He was silent awhile, when he spoke again.

"Mother, I want something to eat."

"I don't care," was the cool reply.

"But recess will soon be over, mother, and I shall starve if I don't get some dinner," urged James.

"I don't care."

This was too much for the boy to endure. He burst into tears. His mother, seeing him fairly subdued, laid down her work, and calling him to her side, stroked his hair very gently, and said:

"My son, I want to make you feel the folly and sin of the habit you have of saying, 'I don't care.' Suppose I did not really care for you, what would you do for dinner, for clothing, for a nice home, for education? You now see that I must care for you, or you must suffer very seriously. And if you must suffer through my lack of care for you, don't you think you will also suffer if you don't care for yourself? And don't you see that I must suffer, too, if you don't care for my wishes? I hope, therefore, you will cease saying, 'I don't care,' and learn to be a thoughtful boy, caring for my wishes and your own duties."

James had never looked on evil habits in this light before. He promised to do better, and, after receiving a piece of pie, went off to school a wiser, if not better boy.—S. S. Advocate.

A CHINESE VERSION OF THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON.

Chow Awah, a young Chinaman, is a scholar at the Five Points House of Industry. He reads the Testament in English, and then gives the sense in a dialect of his own. The following is given in the Monthly Record for May. It is the Parable of the Prodigal Son:

"A man he two sons. Son speak he to father; father got money; give some he; father he take it all right. 'I just now give you half.' He give him half, he go long way—like me come China to New York. No be careful of money, use too much; money all gone; he very hungry. He went to man. He want work; he says all right; he tell him to feed pigs. He give pigs beans; he eat with pigs himself. He just now talk: 'My father he rich man—too much money. What for me stay here hungry? I want go and see my father. I say to him, I very bad. He knows I bad. Emperor (God) see I bad. No be son, me be coolie.' His father talky to boy, and say: 'Get handsome coat; give he ring, give he shoes, bring he shoes; bring fat cow—kill him; kill him; give him to eat.' They very glad. He all same dead; just now come back alive; he lost, he get back. Number one son come. He hear music; he tell servant, 'What for they make music?' He say, 'Your brother come back; your father very glad he no sick; he kill fat cow?' Number one son very angry; he no go inside; very angry. Father he come out, he say: 'No, no be angry. Number one son, he say: 'I stay all time by father; never make him angry. My father never kill one fat cow for me. My brother he very bad, he use money too much; he have fat cow and music.' Father say, 'You no understand; he just dead; he now come to life; he lost, he now come back.' They make music."

—Still another style of postage stamp is mediated by our authorities.