Children's Sayings

by

William Canton

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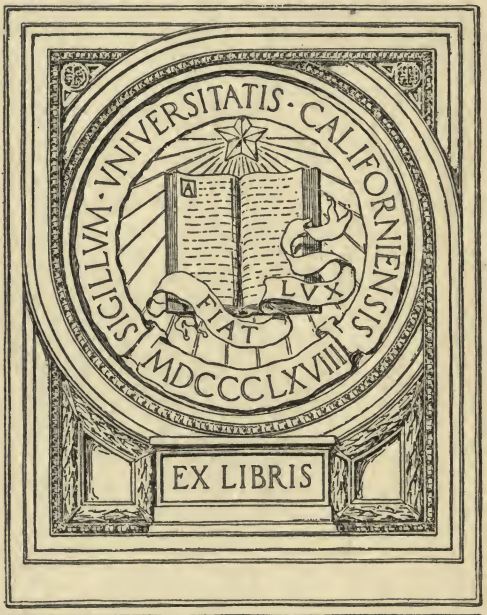

To Clara.

with love from
Bessie.

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CHILDREN'S SAYINGS

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EDITED

WITH A DIGRESSION ON THE

SMALL PEOPLE

BY

WILLIAM CANTON

AUTHOR OF "THE INVISIBLE PLAYMATE," "A CHILD'S BOOK OF SAINTS," ETC.

LONDON
ISBISTER AND COMPANY LIMITED
15 & 16 TAVISTOCK STREET COVENT GARDEN

NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY

1901

LB1115
L3C3

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

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I do not know of a more conclusive proof that the wisdom of the East has not been overrated than the fact that among the Hindoos the Children are known as the *Baba log*—the Baba folk. For the word *baba* is primarily a term of reverence applied to the head of a household, the ancient of the hearth, the old man venerable.

Scholars, of course, have ingeniously wasted much time in trying to discover what was the intention of the wise or witty man who first bestowed that remarkably accurate appellation. Some have conjectured that he must have been a believer in reincarnation, and have fancied that he recognised in the bald, reflective bit of humanity he called "son" an ancient ancestor returned to the goodly earth for another lease of life. Others have fancied that he was a profound philosopher who, looking into the

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long vistas of the future with their swarming generations, felt himself compelled to treat the *baba* with the respect due to the prospective parent of an innumerable progeny.

Others, again—and these I am disposed to believe have come nearer the truth—supposed him to have been a pleasantly ironical person, who, on finding that the new-comer had usurped his place of importance, and appropriated to himself his various creature comforts, had resigned his soul to the inevitable with a solitary word of humorous sarcasm—aimed probably at the *baba's* mother.

Whatever the correct explanation may be, it is obvious that no more adequate name could have been devised for that irrepressible and irresponsible "third estate," which has tyrannised over good men and devoted women from the beginning of time.

On the whole, the *Baba log* seem to have used their power graciously. One finds that in all ages their slaves and dependents took a delight in serving them, treasured as a joyful possession the memories of the days of their servitude, and when they outlived them, spoke of them with tears, and rarely outlived the sorrow of losing their small taskmasters.

East and West, tradition is the same: they have ever been a race of plaguey, adorable, impish, angelic, indistinguishable, unique little creatures; radiant as the dawn, changeable as April; the dewy flower of humanity. Many of the beautiful things said about them have perished, but one of the finest survives. "The great man," said Mencius, the Chinese sage, "is he who does not lose his child's heart." Grave old Homer, who was not given to trifling, takes pleasure in thinking of the motherly hand which brushes away the flies from the face of the sleeping babe; he smiles at the woeful two-year-old who plucks at the gown of the mother, too busy at first to take her up and cuddle her, but compelled at last to yield to the child's persistency; he knows what a delight it is to a little fellow to have two or three trees in the garden that he can call his very own; he has watched the youngsters making sand forts on the seashore, and has laughed to see the ass munch his way at leisure through the corn in spite of the blows showered on him by the feeble bird-scarers. Then one remembers the babes on the chest of Cypselus, and the small people of Tanagra, and the weeping maid at the knee of Niobe, and the

little maker of locust-cages in Theocritus, and the carver of peach-stones in Aristophanes, and the legend of Euphanes at Epidaurus; and no more is needed to indicate how in the old, old centuries the *Baba log* were loved by sages, artists, and poets.

How far that love differed from ours in these days it would be difficult to say. In its natural elements it was doubtless identical with our own. Indeed, there is a curiously modern air about the answer of the Greek statesman when, in reply to the question whom he considered the most powerful person in Athens, he pointed to his three-year-old and said, "He rules his mother, and his mother rules me." But it surely lacked the sense of mystery, the spiritual surmises and forecastings, the feeling of nearness to the unseen world, which with ourselves are such common experiences in our intercourse with the inscrutable new-comers. There was also wanting the sentiment which has come down to us from the foreshadowing of the Jerusalem of Zechariah, "full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof"; from the vision of the peace of the world foretold by Isaiah, when the reptile should cease to sting, and the wild

creature should lie down with the tame, and a child should lead them; from the star-lit mystery of the manger between the ox and the ass; from the parable drawn by a divine spectator of the singing-games of the children in the Jewish market-place; from the new charter given to childhood when a little one was set in the midst of the impatient and undiscerning disciples of the Master.

Much of that tradition of the Child the Jew carried with him into the far lands of his exile. The greybeard might have surrendered his last hope of ever again seeing the Holy City and the blessed hills which encompass it, but he found a happiness in the thought that his children or his children's children might one day return to Zion. So, on the eve of the Passover, when the departure from Egypt was told once more with laughter and tears and song and good cheer, a little fellow in the garb of a pilgrim came in, staff in hand and bread-wallet on shoulder, and the master of the house greeted him with the question, "Whence comest thou, O pilgrim?" "From Egypt," was the reply. "Art thou delivered from bondage?" "Yes, I am free." "Whither goest thou?" "To Jerusalem." "Nay, tarry with us to read the recital of the

Passover." And thereupon the ancient story, In exitu Israel de Egypto, was read from some long-treasured scroll.

Strangely modified by the casuistry of the Christian theologians, the tradition of the Child spread throughout Europe. Every now and then, in the musty old chronicles written in crabbed Latin, one comes across a beautiful little passage which looks as if a flower, pressed between the leaves half a dozen centuries ago, had been changed into words and made itself a place in the text.

Think, for instance, of that strange incident in the history of Augsburg, when all the babes of the city were gathered together and laid on the pavement before the high altar of the church, so that their cries might move the Lord to save the people from the sword of the besieging Huns.

Or picture that fierce fight in 1143, when the Senna Brook ran red with human blood and the baby Duke of Brabant hung in a silver cradle from a willow-tree while his gallant subjects slaughtered and routed the forces of the Lords of Grimberghe.

And here is another baby story, which belongs to the year 1307. Wasted and hard

pressed by Kaiser Albrecht, the Landgrave Friedrich was compelled to fly from the Castle of Wartburg—that famous fortress within whose walls, two hundred years later, Luther found his Patmos. Through the valley of the Neckar, with his wife and their infant daughter by his side, the huge-limbed Landgrave rode among his knights and men-at-arms, well aware that the Kaiser's troops were following hot-foot on their track.

Through all the first hour of their flight the child's fretful wail was heard above the clatter of hoofs and the clank of armour, till the colossal Landgrave could no longer endure it.

"What ails the poor little mortal?" he asked as they hurried onward.

"Alas! she is crying because she is hungry," answered the Landgravine, "and I fear she won't be quiet till she is suckled."

"Then suckled she shall be," exclaimed the giant, "if I lose all Thuringia for it. Halt!"

In a green wooded hollow he drew up his men to be ready to meet any attack, and bade them be silent, while the child lay nestling at its mother's breast. Knight and man-at-arms stood mute but light-hearted, thinking of the baby and listening for the hoof-beats of their

pursuers. But the green boughs hid the fugitives, and the Kaiser's troops swerved away from their traces and thundered off into space.

It is sorrowful to reflect that these incidents are typical of but one aspect of the mediæval Child legend. The other was based on the hideous dogma that until baptism had been administered the new-born babe was not a child of divine love, but a child of perdition. Of such was the kingdom of heaven—in no wise. In the Vision of Frate Alberico—the vision of a lad of ten years—one is shown the "place filled with red-hot burning cinders and boiling vapour, in which little children were purged"—poor helpless sinners no more than twelve months old. Human nature rebelled against this detestable theology; but even when at length the souls of the unbaptized innocents were rescued from the unquenchable fires and consigned to a "sorrow without torment," their limbo was still a region on the verge of "the abysmal valley dolorous." The Beatific Vision was denied to them whose angels do always behold the face of the Father which is in heaven.

Happily, we have in a great measure emerged from the shadow of that belief, though some

traces of it still survive in the minds of good men and good women, who continue to think that children are "born bad." But for how many centuries it must have darkened the lives of parents and children of Christendom. Indeed, it seems to me to be ultimately the real explanation of the blindness and perversity which characterised, even within living memory, the conception of a child's education. How otherwise can we account for the fact that in the early years of this century men and women seem to have lost all recollection that they too were once children; that it never occurred to them to regard a child as a small human being living in a half real, half imaginary world of its own; that they never discovered that love and beauty are a child's Guardian Angels, and that the golden bridge between the world of childhood and the world of maturity is a sympathetic imagination; that it never suggested itself to fathers and mothers that nine-tenths of a child's fractiousness and naughtiness spring from physical conditions, and that a merry laugh, a cheery word, a quarter of an hour of fresh air, are surer and saner remedies than slap or strap?

Any one who reads of the unhappy child-

hood so frequently recorded of those evil days, when babes and sucklings were doomed and unregenerate creatures, the wicked days when "tempers were broken," and poor shivering little souls, with the bloom of Paradise still rosy on their faces, were scourged into obedience and rectitude, and contrasts the stupidity of that time with the humane temper of our own, cannot well avoid conjecturing as to the cause of the change. It is not to be supposed that any living father or mother loves a child more devotedly to-day than our grand-parents and great-grand-parents loved their boys and girls; nor can it be doubted that they were as good and as well-meaning as any of their descendants. Yet how one's heart quickens and one's blood boils as one reads of the "discipline" which even religious people considered it their duty to inflict on the children of their love. No doubt the growth of education and the broadening of intellectual sympathies have enabled us to regard childhood and the problem of child-training from a wiser point of view; and it may be that art, poetry, and fiction have aided our too accustomed eyes to recognise the sweetness and beauty of child-life and to ponder over its mysteries; but more than to any other

single influence we must ascribe our change of views regarding the *Baba log* and our own dealings with them to the greater stress which has been laid in our own generation on the fatherhood of God and the sonship of man. The wise teaching of Richter and the tender humanity of Froebel have come to us at a moment when we are best fitted to understand and appreciate them.

Thrice happy child of to-day! Thy star glitters over the roof, and thou art born into a believing generation. We cherish the old legends which tell how the brute stones and wild waters and the winds of heaven are in league with thee; and how all woodland things, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop on the wall, from the bees that gave thee honey to the grey wolf that gave thee milk, are pledged to guard thee from wrong. We sing again the old cradle-songs of many lands, to bribe thee to sleep with promises of golden cradles and foreign towns and churches, and we guide thy little feet through the movements of the quaint singing-games of a time gone by. The poets have made thee the theme of their inspiration; the novelists are exploiting thee and thy sweetness and grave benignity; the educa-

tional statisticians are weighing and measuring thee, and recording thy ways and thy words in learned books.

To any one who has made acquaintance with the *Baba log*, unless indeed he be a curmudgeon, none of these things seem strange. Even as the merest babes they are imposing creatures. "There is something gigantic about them," wrote Tennyson with true observation. "The wide-eyed wonder of a babe has a grandeur in it which as children they lose. They seem to me to be prophets of a mightier race."

One of the strangest things in life, a mother will tell you, is what she calls the transparent veil that interposes between her and her babe, and renders the small immortal as inaccessible as Sirius. Occasionally there is a look of grave omniscience in its great tranquil eyes, which thrills her with an eerie apprehension of invisible witnesses. The tender and playful touch of its soft hands restores the comfortable feeling of its simple humanity. Then suddenly she becomes conscious that it is almost as much animal as human—that it is beyond human appeal, human reasoning, human comprehension. How she waits and watches for

that veil to be drawn aside! But it is never drawn aside. It breaks slowly thread by thread, dissolves as it were in an unaccountable way, and some day the last film disappears, and she finds with joy that the babe is neither angel, changeling, nor elemental creature, but a responsive child of sweet and wholesome flesh and blood.

Meanwhile the pigmy has been philosophically taking stock of the colossal world which is still a part of himself; drinking in light and colour and sound; making the acquaintance of that startling phenomenon, his own foot; discovering with surprise, not free from apprehension, that a certain podgy fist which bangs him occasionally is in reality an erratic prolongation—or possibly a colony—of his own personality. Out of his experiences he rapidly constructs a provisional standard of comparison and a scheme of the universe.

One wonders whether the physiologist will some day discover that there is a physical something in the unworn freshness and purity of a child's senses to account for the "dream-like vividness and splendour," which, as Wordsworth noted, invests the objects of vision in our early years, to explain that

curious hearing "in colours" referred to by Professor Sully, and to assist us in understanding the child's remarkable faculty for vitalising and personifying all that strikes on his perception. It has perplexed me exceedingly to reconcile, in the case of a little fellow of three and a half, his slowness to perceive something I point out to him with my stick, and the wonderful acuteness with which he has observed a thousand details about trains and engines—things which are his delight by day and his dream by night, but which scare him beyond words if he chances to come within fifty yards of them.

The little pilgrim of the dawn has now the freedom of what Professor Sully calls "the realm of fancy." In his active brain he has a magic wand which makes him master of creation. He fills the blank spaces between the zenith and the nadir with his imaginings; makes the woods fearful with wolves, discovers the haunts of fairies and tree-folk in holes under the tree roots, and associates the church, the barn, the lane, the brook, the gate, with the people and places of his story-books.

This realm is not only the land of fancy, but that of fetich. To one little fellow, born in

Siberia, the great god Pan was a reality. At night he would say, "Bye-bye, Poo-ah!"—"Good night, Out-of-doors!" Another went in mortal dread of a feather from the eider-down, or a fluff of the wool in which a banana had been packed, and he would flee with a yell when it moved towards him on a breath of air. Boy Beloved had an unspeakable horror of an indiarubber hot-water bottle, but if he had to pass near it, he would propitiate it with "Nice water-bottle!" and, watching it carefully, sidle out of danger.

In this realm of fancy a child's quaint and pretty sayings, his flashes of natural poetry, appear almost inevitable. He is continually checking off likenesses; he understands through similitudes. Spectacles could hardly fail to become "little windows"; a quivering compass-needle "a bird"; a butterfly a "flying pansy." "Oh, making mud-pies!" cried a little maid gleefully, when she saw some nursery gardeners hard at work; and "Want a drink of meolk!" when a waggoner drew up at the horse-trough. Boy Beloved had seen his mother's thread ravel, and when he could not pull open the cupboard door, stamped his foot and roared, "In a knot, in a knot!"

Imitation is one of the ways of checking likenesses. Sometimes one is apt to punish for disobedience—and all because one did not understand that some little man was a horse, and not a responsible human boy. One morning from my window I saw Boy Beloved standing on one leg, with the other doubled up close to his body and his arms half extended in a curve. The attitude was a puzzle till I noticed the fowl in front of him, and then it was evident that he was "playing at poultry." More curious still was his explanation of a long howl of his, which brought us to see what had happened. He laughed a droll little laugh and said, "I thought I was a puff-puff"—and the whoop was his notion of a steam-whistle.

One of the most interesting things in watching a child's play is the knowledge one acquires of the sharpness and detailed accuracy of its observation. A small "shop-lady" will consult the (invisible) ticket before she quotes you the price of her goods, and if by some negligence it has not been pinned on, she will refer the matter to the gentleman called "Sign." If you ride in an imaginary tram-car with Boy Beloved as conductor, he will say "Pling!" the sound of the bell-punch) before he gives

you an imaginary ticket and takes an imaginary fare.

And with what ease and dramatic *vraisemblance* the mimics throw themselves into a situation! Promenading round the garden, in old days, with her doll, W. V. exclaimed, "Look, baby; there's pappa!"—then, in a hurried aside, "Wave your hand, father!" "Ta-ta!" I said to nurse once, as she took Boy Beloved downstairs; "write when you get there!" "Wouldn't it be funny," cried W. V., "if nurse wrote a letter for him:

'DEAR PAPPA,
Dot dere,
BABY'"

Wonderful are the ways of a girl with her doll. "I am an anxious-minded doll-mother," observed a true make-believer, as on a windy night she gave up her eider-down to her favourite and "tucked her in" with tender solicitude.

The doll is one of the best teachers of a child, and it is one of the happy chances of language that the very name "dolly" carries us back to St. Dorothea (God's gift) and her beautiful rose-legend. "Dorothy," writes Miss Yonge, in her "History of Christian Names,"

"was once one of the most usual of English names, and 'Dolly' was so constantly heard in every household that it finally became the generic term for the wooden children that at least as late as the infancy of Elizabeth Stuart were called babies or puppets." And this God's gift to girlhood has many things to teach mothers if they will but watch and try to understand what they see.

Professor Sully is of opinion that the perfect child's faith in dolldom passes away early; in most cases, it would appear, about the age of thirteen or fourteen. It is then that the young people begin to realise the shocking fact that dolls have no "inner life." I should have imagined that the sincerity of simple faith died out long before the age of fourteen. Judging from a conversation with W. V. when she was a serious matron of seven and dolly lay listening in her arms, the perfect faith sometimes does not outlast half that age.

"Does your little girl talk?"

"Oh no."

"How is that?"

"Why, she's only a little baby—three months."

"I see. And when will she talk?"

"I should think when she's five years old; perhaps when she's four."

"Are you fond of her?"

She cuddles the doll and smiles radiantly.

"Do you think she is fond of you? Is she as fond of you as Guy-boy is of *his* mother?"

"Guy is a *real* baby—a *live* doll," with a laugh; "this one isn't—I pretend she is. She will never be able to really talk, you know."

"What is the good of pretending?"

"You *have* to pretend—unless you have one of those dolls that speak when you pull a string."

"But what pleasure have you in pretending?"

"It is nearly as nice to pretend—when you can't have a real live baby."

And the art of pretending cuts Gordian knots with such a deft facility. "These spoons are too big for the toy tea-set," says Olive. "Oh, let's pretend they are little," rejoins Giggi—and that mountain is cast into the sea; to have made it a mountain at all was "perferly 'idickerlus!" But if you think that a make-believer cannot be strictly accurate and uncompromising when he likes, you are mistaken.

Giggi's mamma was telling sympathetically how he had slipped, and "sat down suddenly," and hurt his back. "That isn't my back, mamma," interposed Giggi; "that's where my legs live!" And if you suppose that an anxious-minded doll-mother is not keenly alive to the difference between the credible and the incredible, you will find that your figures come out wrong. "Of course Bunyan says, 'And I dreamed a dream'; but it would take three or four dreams to make a whole book. He must have made up some of it, father, when he was awake!"

Yet it is in this same region of make-believe, I suppose, that we must place that bewildering habit of so many children, of playing with imaginary companions. An instance is given in the Sayings which follow, but, from a considerable number of letters which I have received on the subject, I am forced to believe that it is an experience by no means uncommon in child life. But this is a topic which I must treat as the Highland divine treated "a great speeritooal diffeeculty"—look it boldly in the face and pass on.

When does the first flash of self-consciousness occur in a child's experience—the first

clear realisation that *he* is *he*, something quite distinct from the rest of creation?

As might be expected, it is not easy to collect information on this obscure but singularly interesting subject. So far I have only come across two instances. In his Letters James Smetham writes: "My first awakening to consciousness, as far as I can remember, was in a valley in Yorkshire, outside the garden-gate of my father's house, when at the age of two. I have a distinct remembrance of the ecstasy with which I regarded the distant blueness of the hills, and saw the laurels shake in the wind and felt it lift my hair." Mary Howitt, in her Autobiography, makes a similar statement, but unfortunately she leaves the reader to conjecture her age as between three and four years: "Then I recollect a curious little epoch in my life, as we were returning one evening from a forest ramble with my father. It was the first evidence to my mind that I could think. I remember very well the new light, the gladness, the wealth of which I seemed suddenly possessed. It has curiously connected itself in my mind with passing a pinfold. That particular spot seemed like the line between rational and irrational existence;

and so childish was I in intellectual life, that it seemed to me as if before I passed the pinfold I could only say and think 'Bungam'—such was the expression in my mind—but that after passing it I had the full use of all intelligible speech."

Very few persons seem to recollect that first flash of revelation, and indeed the habit of humanising everything he sees is so inveterate in a child that it is easy to conceive that, in spite of the revelation, the original vague dream-life with its magical illusions may continue for years. There is more than make-believe in what I may call the anthropomorphism of childhood; there is an unreasoning but very positive belief that everything is alive, and in precisely the same way as the observer. One day Boy Beloved knocked his head against the bannister. After crying and receiving the usual remedial kissing, he went and laid his head against the bannister, so that *it* too might "kiss the place better." Naturally enough, for when any of us had hurt him, had not *we* kissed the spot? And surely this was an improvement on the ancient tradition of retaliation—the mistaken *beating* of the bannister.

So, too, one morning, sitting up in bed with his bricks and toys, he called to the gas: "Ower here, gas! Come, build for Guy; play cricket for Guy, gas!" It was not till his mother had made the gas say No in a far-away tone that he reconciled himself to a solitary game. On another occasion, after "picnicking" quietly for a long while in the shadowy woods under the dining-room table with his horse and engine, he brought out the latter with the request, "Kiss this old train, pappa," for he is the most affectionate of little mortals, and will in the most unaccountable way climb a couple of flights of stairs to "kiss your nice hand," or even your sleeve or dress. If the humour takes him to play at buying something in the woods, he will convert an oak or a birch into a shopkeeper, and you can see his lips moving as he describes what he wants and makes his purchase.

One of the most interesting incidents, however, occurred when his wooden engine fell down. He picked it up, kissed it, and said cheerily, "All better now; don't cry, puff-puff! Be a brick!"—and added in a low voice to himself, "He's going to be a brick." And the other evening, on going to bed, his

attention was caught by the brightness of the sunset. "The daylight has forgotten to go away. Tell him to go, pappa!" After a while: "Has he gone?" "Not yet, dear; he is just waiting to see his sister before he goes." "His sister! Has he a sister?" "Yes; she is called Starlight: when he sees her, he will say good-bye and go away!" "Oh!" That seemed new, but quite natural and reasonable; so he lay down quietly, with that ready acquiescence which is a child's predisposition to obedience.

Curiously related to this dream-life, and to the sudden awakening from it, is the way in which a child's occasional consciousness of the unreality of its dreams affects its confidence in the reality of its perceptions while awake. Professor Sully, who has recorded so many delightful and significant observations of child life, mentions a boy of five who asked his teacher, "Wouldn't it be funny if we were dreaming? Supposing every one in the whole world were dreaming, wouldn't *that* be funny? They might be, mightn't they?" The strange thing is that this sense of the illusiveness of the world is not confined to childhood. Wordsworth told Professor Bonamy Price that

there was a time in his life when he had to push against something that resisted, to be sure that there was anything outside of him. "I was sure of my own mind; everything else fell away and vanished into thought." And these strange "fallings from us" and "vanishings" come within the experience of Tennyson. Just as Wordsworth "used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade himself that, whatever might become of others, he would be translated, in something of the same way, to heaven," so Tennyson had moments in which, at one time, "he felt he could not die," and at another

> seem'd to move among a world of ghosts,
> And feel himself the shadow of a dream.

And a yet more striking coincidence may be found in Newman's "Apologia": "I thought life might be a dream, or I an angel, and all this world a deception, my fellow-angels by a playful device concealing themselves from me, and deceiving me with the semblance of a material world."

Every now and again one is startled by some preternaturally wise or beautiful saying from the lips of a child, which seems to justify the poet's thought that

The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.

What could be more like a sweet and clear echo from the "Fioretti" than the words of the little boy who, as Professor Sully tells us, remarked to his mother that if he could say what he liked to God, it would be, "Love me when I am naughty"; or the lovely saying of a little girl to her mother, who was weeping for a beloved one: "Why do you cry? It is only that *he* has woken up and we are still asleep."

"Such sayings are not unwholesome or precocious," observes the writer of a notable article in *The Pilot*,* from which I have quoted the last incident: the priggish, mawkish, unwholesome sayings are of a very different character, and have a deplorably sanctimonious ring about them. "We are having quite a theóllojun for our son!" remarked a little girl of her four-year-old brother when he hazarded some comment on the divine intention in the making of trees. And indeed in children the theologian is often born a twin

* "Some Reflections on Childhood." *The Pilot*, Sept.8, 1900.

brother of the poet. How can the busy brains help speculating on the God who is the Father they pray to, the heaven which is His dwelling-place, the angels who watch unseen around their cribs? It would be unnatural indeed if they did not try to find convenient places for these invisible spirits in their small world, just as certain tropical birds contrive means for lighting their nests with fireflies.

The childish speculator is logical, free-spoken, and bold to audacity, but he is never irreverent. He listens greedily, and his retentive memory stores away unintelligible talk for future deliberation. He is prone to put awkward questions, and in our stupidity and impatience, or, it may be, in our dread of indulging a spirit of curious levity, we are apt to impose silence somewhat brusquely on the eager inquirer. This is a miserable mistake, especially if we insist at the same time on giving religious instruction regarding truths which it would frequently be much wiser to leave for maturer years. If we teach, we must be prepared to listen to many theological difficulties, to the oddest conjectures, and the most amazing assimilations of ideas only half understood. "What *do* they do in heaven?

That puzzles me sometimes," said one little girl. "Why does Jesus take little babies up into heaven again? Does He send them down to any one else?" "Does God like us to show our moons" (the white crescents at the root of the nails, from which a child should always press back the skin when drying her hands)? But most surprising of all was the account of how God once went to Hades—to visit there, and she might perhaps have gone with Him. (She might have been eight years old, in heaven, before she came here; but she did not know.) *He* went because He wanted to know what it was like. Of course, He made Hades, but He didn't know what it was like; He had workmen to make it for Him, no doubt. He took all those in heaven down with Him—babies and all. Alongside of her unhesitating speculativeness ran a grave sense of decorum: "Of course it isn't proper to laugh when you are saying your prayers. You would behave if you went to see the Queen; and God is greater;" and a perfectly clear sense of right and wrong: "Don't you feel reckless sometimes, mother?—as if you wanted to disobey the laws of God!" and a truer conception of the divine compassion, I trust, than is to be

found in some human creeds, for she had been reading about what she called "Top-het," and after asking whether "that pit of darkness and fire" were one with Hades, observed: "There must be only very few people in Tophet; only those, I should think, who *won't* be sorry for what they have done." Singularly enough, too, even the moral of a story is apprehended in a way that would astonish many novel-readers. "Oh no, I can't be Theseus," exclaimed the same child, when it was a question of playing at "The Heroes." It was not because she was a girl—that never presented any difficulty: "I wouldn't be Theseus for anything, for, after all his great deeds, there is a chapter which says 'How Theseus fell by his pride'"!

Who will enable us to form an adequate conception of what a child thinks about those "lesser brethren" in feathers and fur which we are pleased to call the brute creation? In this respect, as in so many others, there are two very different sides to a child's nature—its confidence in animals and its dread of them. The little man or little woman appears to trust the four-footed much more readily than the feathered bipeds. Why, it would be

exceedingly difficult to say, unless we catch at the notion that in an early stage of their existence our own immortals were also small quadrupeds. One small person I knew—almost two years of age—was for some time thrown into absolute panic by the sparrows in the garden. It was ludicrous beyond belief to see her when a bird dropped down on the grass anyway near her. She would stamp, and scream "No, No!"—and when the handful of feathers would not be driven off she would scuttle headlong into the house with a yell for "Mamma!" Yet this singular little coward would blow kisses to a donkey of her acquaintance, and when she had a chance would bustle up fearlessly to a dog-kennel and imperiously summon the chained tenant, "Come out, donnie [doggie]; naughty donnie!" And who has not seen village babes, for whom cattle had no terrors, kept at bay by a couple of formidable geese on the common—geese? nay, fiery dragons hissing and red with ravin.

Yet, when there is confidence between them, what can be more winning than the child's half-shy advances towards a speaking acquaintance; and, on the other hand, what more beautiful—pathetic almost in its wistfulness—

than the response made by many dumb creatures? Even a cat, devoid as it so frequently appears to be of any attachment to persons, will allow itself to be turned all but inside out by infantine hands. It may be lifted by the tail with impunity, or utilised as a cushion, with the inevitable result that the *baba* fresh from Paradise acquires appalling possibilities of cruelty. With the big dog it is not quite the same. Devoted as is his subservience, tender as is his care, long-suffering and parentally tolerant as he is, there is a strong placid look in the creature's human eyes that distinctly indicates the line beyond which the angelic little savage must not go. Occasionally one has a pleasant glimpse of the friendly offices which a child wishes to exercise when relations appear to become a trifle strained among playmates. "Pussy and the jackdaw are such lovely companions," W. V. confided to me on her return from a visit. "Pussy never runs at him, except when he is on the ground. She can't help it then; can she, father? But he's all right when he's up a tree. I'll tell Paul she can't really help it."

In one of his books Michelet draws an

exquisite picture of the destiny of the animal, "that sombre mystery, that world of dreams and dumb sorrows," through the long ages, and of his redemption through the little Child. In a remote antiquity the East conceived the idea, to which it still adheres, that the animal is a soul enchanted and cast into deep sleep, a prisoner on the night-side of nature. In the Middle Ages the people returned to that belief in spite of the dogmas of the early theologians, who had argued, some that the brute creation had no souls and so were beyond the pale of our sympathy and compassion; others that they must have souls—seeing that they were devils! It was the Child who, for a time at least, raised these "lower brethren" from this degraded bondage and oppression.

The tiny mortal—himself under a spiritual ban—had no fear of these supposed incarnations of evil. He played with them; he made them his friends and confidants, and in turn they loved him and grew docile to his will. The grown-up people saw that nothing disastrous came of this familiar intercourse. On the contrary, they discovered a curious similarity between their own little ones and these dumb playmates. The animal became

one of the family. It was treated as a poor relation; it shared the joys of high feast-days, and went into mourning in time of bereavement. At last it was even admitted to church on Christmas Day, and had its anthems, half in ecclesiastical Latin and half in the popular speech. Then sprang up the lovely mediæval legends, in which animals were not only recognised as God's creatures, but as the humble and helpful companions of man. By solitary waters and among the rocks of the mountain forest, bird or beast gladdened the rude home of many a saintly anchorite.

This golden age of reparation did not long endure. Popes and councils barred the church doors; philosophers and casuists decided that the animal had no soul, no God, no compensation for toil and suffering and cruelty; little solace in this world and no hope for the next. Still, a beginning had been made; pity for the brute had been born into the world of the West, and from it have sprung our abhorrence of the wanton infliction of pain and our recognition that the brute has its rights. Even the theologian, when he now approaches the subject of the life and destiny of animals, does so in a

spirit of wonder and humility which contrasts in a striking manner with the unfeeling and short-sighted assurance of his antique predecessors. "It is indeed," writes Newman, "a very overpowering thought, when we get to fix our minds on it, that we periodically use—I may say hold intercourse with—creatures who are as much strangers to us, as mysterious, as if they were the fabulous unearthly beings, more powerful than man and yet his slaves, which Eastern superstitions have invented. We have more real knowledge about the angels than about the brutes; they have, apparently, passions, habits, and a certain unaccountableness, but all is mystery about them. We do not know whether they can sin or not, whether they are under punishment, whether they are to live after this life; we inflict very great sufferings on a portion of them, and they in turn, every now and then, retaliate upon us, as if by a wonderful law. . . . Cast your thoughts abroad on the whole number of them, large and small, in vast forests, or in the water, or in blue air, and then say whether the presence of such countless multitudes, so various in their natures, so strange and wild in their shapes, living on the earth without ascertainable object,

is not as mysterious as anything Scripture says about the angels."

The time, it is to be hoped, is not far distant when no creature will fear man, and when it will be considered shameful that a child should be frightened into that senseless dread of animals which so often prompts to hostility and cruelty.

There is a trait in childhood which is too often taken for granted as universal and invariable—that of demonstrative affection. So far as my observation goes, one is more struck by the gay thoughtlessness, the happy indifference of the *Baba log*, than by their tenderness. Doubtless there are numerous exceptions, but in the main children seem to be somewhat impatient of caresses and not too spontaneous in their endearments. Nature is a wise mother in this as in other things, and it is prudent in fathers and mothers to refrain from too frequent interference. But how delightful it is when a manly little fellow of two or three lets you see how his joyous heart—his whole "eatable" body, indeed—is sparkling and bubbling over with his affection for you. It was one of Boy Beloved's charming ways to come, with his open hands placed side by side in front of

his breast, and to dance as he uttered his cooing yearning cry, "Oooo, mamma!" "Nice hand!" he would say later, taking it in both of his own and pressing it to his face, to his neck, to his breast; "other hand too!" Indeed, there never was such a hand-olater. Suddenly, as you are walking along with his fingers crumpled up in your palm, he will bend aside till his lips rest on your poor worshipful knuckles. Sometimes he will leave his "chattels," as he calls them, and come with the petition, "Let me kiss you a little, mamma! Let us love ourselves"; then it is "Thank you!"—and he trots off to his incessant toil as porter, station-master, engine-driver (and engine, too, so far as the whistling goes), for his motto is *Nulla dies sine lineâ*—no day without a (railway) line. When he is full of gleeful mischief, and you foolishly say, "Won't you give me a kiss?" he may reply with a giggle, "They are not ripe yet!" and it is just as well that you should learn to let your apples redden on the tree.

At night a certain farewell duologue has been nearly invariable for two years:

"See you in the morning, mamma!"

"All right, dear."

Da capo several times.

"All right, my sweet!"

"Am I your sweet, really?"

Or, after kissing of hands, back and palm, kissing of cheek, forehead, and hair, it is:

"I like you, pappa!"

"And I like you!"

"Do you like me?"

"Yes, dear."

"And I like you; you are so nice, you are so sweet, you are so very lovely!"

"So are you!"

"So are you! I like you, and I love you!"

"And I love you. Go to sleep now, like a good boy."

In a deep voice, and with a sigh of satisfaction: "Yes, I will."

And now I must draw this desultory gossip to a close. I fear I have already exceeded all reasonable limits, but temptation, in introducing this small collection of Children's Sayings, to say something myself of the Venerable Folk, the *Baba log*, has proved too strong. Of course I have kept to the sunny, the idyllic side of the subject. Why not? I know there is another side, but this is a true side; it is the side

always turned to me, and I am well pleased with it, just as most people are well pleased with the single sunny side of the moon. Wherefore should I go needlessly beyond the luminous disc into the darkness and cold behind?

One of the merits of this collection is that all the Sayings have been vouched for as true. They were contributed to the *Sunday Magazine*, in the pages of which, from time to time, most of them have appeared. Here and there I have ventured now to add a comment. The object in publishing them in the present form is nothing more ambitious than the reader's pleasure, though I have no doubt that they may be made to serve an excellent practical purpose beyond pleasure.

A child's sayings are often a curious and comprehensive commentary on the characters of the unsuspicious persons concerned in their up-bringing. It is not always flattering when some chance phrase it utters enables us to see ourselves as it has evidently been in the habit of seeing us; and possibly our friends may have sometimes had amusement at our expense in consequence of the twitterings of these tell-tale "birds of the air." Sometimes, too, in its

dramatic moods, a child shows itself more acutely critical of its own character and conduct than its parents are capable of being. In the character of an imaginary Gladys, Pinaforifera used to make her own foibles the subject of her kindly sarcasm. Gladys was overpowered by the blessings showered on Pinaforifera: "She is so awfully well off; you are so kind to her—and her mother is too. I never had a tea-service when I was a little girl; and only one doll, which I kept for—I had it when I was two, and I am now fourteen; how many years was that? Could P. keep a doll so long?"

"I don't think so."

"No, I don't think so; she wants a new one every month."

As I write I hear the children singing in the garden: they have come to see "poor Jenny Jones, poor Jenny Jones, poor Jenny Jones," and for various ingeniously devised reasons Jenny is not to be seen just now. Did it ever occur to you, as you lay on the warm grass of a summer evening, in how many places in all the sunny shires of England little children were at that moment playing at some old-world singing-game, handed down from generations

long forgotten? Just picture to yourselves the countless rings and groups of the *Baba log*, gleefully singing and dancing hand in hand, laughing and shouting, all over the forty counties; and think that on every village green, on the broad highway, on the strip of common, in the streets of towns, in the slums of crowded cities, there have been children just like these, singing the same songs, acting the same small dramas in practically the same fashion—for children are rigorous conservatives—for centuries. Then let your fancy travel over seas and into still remoter times, till at last you come to the market-place of a Syrian town, where the small dark-eyed youngsters have fallen out in their sport, and will neither dance to the marriage pipes nor beat their breasts when they hear the wailing of the mourners. And the one supreme Lover of Children looks on, half amused, half grave, as He sees in their childish caprice and their bickerings the very image of their elders: "For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners."

CHILDREN'S SAYINGS

One of the most charming characteristics of childhood is, as I have said, its tenderness and loving-kindness, and in the attempt to group these Sayings I give precedence to this most angelic quality.

A rosy face, two big grey eyes, a bit of a nose, and a little rosebud of a mouth, a head crowned with a fuzzy crop of sunshiny hair, a blue cotton "overall," and two firm, shapely little legs. That is Joyce.

She was only nineteen months old, and as she stood at her mother's knee that mother thought for the hundred-and-first time that there never *was* such a baby-girl.

"Mother's little lamb!" she said aloud tenderly. Joyce wanted to make an appropriate response, and looking up lovingly answered:

"Baa!"

Cyril was seven years old. He loved his mother very dearly, and had been separated from her sometimes, as she had to go to India.

Once when she came to wish him good-night he was under the bed-clothes. He came out with a flushed little face, and said as he hugged her tight, "Mummie, do you know what I was doing? I was asking God to love

you as much as I do. He *couldn't* love you more."

His mother was very delicate, and one day in winter he said, "Oh, father, please shut that window; mummie may catch cold, and we *must* take care of our best."

A loving-hearted wee man said sweetly to his mother, "Mother, I'm sorry I'm not *your father*, for then I would love you so much and take care of you."

"How much do you love mother?" a little child was asked. "Up to the sky, *along a bit*, and down on the other side."

Two little lads of our acquaintance were discussing how much they each loved father and mother.

The elder said, "Oh! I couldn't *live* without 'muvver': if she ever dies, I shall go and dig her up."

His brother replied, "Yours is a very stupid plan: when 'farver' dies, I'm going to have him stuffed!"

The story brings to mind an incident in the childhood of Henry Ward Beecher. When his mother died he was too young

to go to her funeral, but he missed her sadly and made many inquiries about her. By some of the family he was told that she had gone to heaven, by others that she had been laid in the ground. Putting both statements together, he formed his own conclusion and determined to act upon it. One morning his sister Catherine looked out and found him digging beneath the window. He lifted his curly head at the sound of her voice and answered, "Why, I am going to heaven to find mother."

The answer of the second boy recalls the grotesquely pathetic story, given in Bishop Walsham How's "Lighter Moments," of the poor man who had just lost his little boy and who was being consoled by a clergyman. The unhappy father burst into tears, and exclaimed in the midst of his sobs, "If 'twarna agin t' law, a should ha' liked to have t' little beggar stoofed."

"Oh, my boy, hitting mother!" exclaimed the recipient of a gentle blow on the shoulder from the hand of her little son.

"Not angry smack—love smack!" was the nice distinction given to the action by the little four-year-old.

"Not angry smack, love smack!" the meaning, did we know it, of many a childish blow.

Having lost our dear father, my sister and I, accompanied by two of his little grandsons (aged four and seven respectively), paid our first sad visit to his grave, on leaving which we noticed that the younger boy ran back and deposited something on the slab. When he rejoined us he said, "I thought poor grandpa might want money, and so I put a halfpenny on his grave."

Last year, when Hugh was only three years old, he lost his baby sister. He was told that "gentle Jesus" had taken her. He missed her very much, and seemed to have an idea that she would be coming back again.

One afternoon while talking to his nurse he said, "Ray, when 'gentle Jesus' brings my baby sister back again, we will hang up her crown in the hall [the usual place for his garden hat], and I will take her upstairs, and we will

both get into my beddy-bye, and *won't* we be happy."

Little Sidney put his curly golden head down on his dear nurse's knee. He loved nurse "so welly mutz," he must pray for her. "Bless Lizzie," he prays with clasped hands, and then adds with great fervour, "bless the very chair she's sitting on!"

Our dear little girl said one day, "When I am a big auntie, oo' will be a likkle Marion; den I'll fasten oo's shoes for oo'."

Professor Sully, in his "Studies of Childhood," has gathered together several illustrations of this belief of children that grown-up people will all grow gradually smaller and smaller as they approach their second childhood. "I cannot learn," he writes, "that there is any such idea in primitive folk-lore, and this suggests that children find their way to it, in part at least, by the suggestions of older people's words." But I cannot help thinking there must be some trace of this notion in folk-lore, could one but put a finger on it. Does it not lie at the base of the classic

myth of Tithonus, for whom Aurora obtained the boon of immortality but not that of everlasting youth and its beauty? As her mortal lover grew old he shrank and dwindled away, till at last, the burden of life being intolerable and the gift of life irrevocable, she turned him into a grasshopper.

Our children often amuse us with their odd and pretty sayings. The other day our little boy was asked by a young lady to kiss her; he did so quietly, and said, "Wait a little, and I will give you one with more *music* in it."

Another child who heard for the first time the story of Elijah's translation in the fiery chariot began to weep bitterly. His mother said, "What are you crying for, Willie?" "'Cos I'se fear'd 'Lijah will be burned," was the unexpected answer.

A mother was trying to hush her restless baby to sleep. Little four-year-old Neil had toothache, and claimed attention too.

"Oh, do not disturb baby," pleaded the mother.

Neil dried his tears, and with a look of

dignified reproach said, "Well, mother, I forgive you, but if *you* had been *my* little boy, I would have said, 'Come to my arms, my darling son!'"

A little boy of a very sensitive disposition, bewailing a childish disappointment, declared, "My wee heart is broken!"

Hugh is a little boy just over four years of age, and a veritable piece of human sunshine. One day his mother was preparing him for his morning nap, when he turned and said to her, "I don't love you, mother, I don't."

"Oh, sonnie, what was the text you learnt this morning?"

A bright look came over his face, and he repeated slowly, "Be ye kind one to another."

The mother then enlarged upon the meaning of the words.

Presently he was in his cot, still wearing his socks for fear his feet should get cold. However, he objected to them, but was told that if he wanted them off he must take them off himself. He struggled with them for some time, but his feet were hot and the socks were tight. At last, half laughing and half crying,

he looked up in his mother's face and said, "Be *ye* kind one to another."

When taking my family round the city to see the Jubilee illuminations, we stood in front of a building bedecked with coloured lights. All my efforts to draw the attention of Charles Willie—three years last March—to them were in vain. After the lapse of a few minutes, pointing to a man a short distance off, who I noticed had lost one of his legs, he asked: "How does that poor man *sit down*, father?" His sympathies were so touched that the illuminations seemed to have no charm for him.

Closely allied to the child's tenderness towards its own kind is its affection for other living things, though it would not always be easy to say where the line should be drawn between "living things" and things not alive.

"Oh, Gippie," said three-year-old Isobel, hugging her dog in an agony of tears and sobs, "I'm *so* sorry for you, darling Gippie, because you've got no soul." Then, suddenly brightening up, though still sobbing, "But never mind, Gippie dear, because, though

you've no soul, you've a spirit; and father says you've a *great* spirit."

A little dog was trembling with fear at the high wind, and Percy put his arms round it, saying, "Don't be afraid, Fido; all the hairs of your head are numbered."

My little brother was very fond of a cat which had belonged to his dead uncle, and one day when she became ill he was in great distress, and wanted to know whether she would go to Uncle Harry when she died. He was told she had no soul to live in heaven.

When soon after the cat died, he came in sobbing, "Mother, can't *any* part of pussy go to heaven?" His one thought was how sad it was she could not go to her old master.

A wee man, who much enjoys bible stories with mother, was found relating them to his little dog, because "I fink 'Spot' ought to know his bible well."

Here is little "Lo, the poor Indian"! Probably his thoughts do not travel so far as the "equal sky" of his red brother, but evidently he intends that his faithful dog shall be made as eligible as possible.

Another little boy, on seeing his pet cat out in the garden after a sharp shower, ran after him, crying, "Oh, Pussie! Pussie! you mustn't go out in the wet in your stocking-feet, or you'll get cold."

Bertha was a mite of three, whose greatest love was given to flowers. She had a pet pot of flowers which she used to carry about, and was found kissing the buds one day. "I'se des kissing them to make them open," she explained when questioned.

I have already referred to the strange way in which so many children make for themselves imaginary companions and playfellows. The following is another illustration:

Their active imagination leads lonely children to invent for themselves companions and reproduce to their vision what is described in words only. When some one was speaking of the "Shekinah cloud" in a twilight church Bob exclaimed, "There it is!" pointing to the chancel. The gathering darkness perhaps helped his thoughts.

Little Fred was continually talking of unseen

companions, to whom he gave names and would be quite hurt if his mother in any way seemed to neglect them. "You are letting Willie's head hang down," or, "Rosie is being squeezed," he would say, as if some unseen companion were in the perambulator with him. After a time, at his mother's suggestion to send them home, he would say, "Willie gone home now." He would also report conversations with his invisible playfellows, who were evidently quite real to him.

A child, however, may be a dreamer and a seer, but it need not on that account cease to be either logical or practical. Indeed, one of the odd things is the combination of wild imagination and sound common sense. The following Saying has the air of being an ingenious way of begging, but I have no doubt the little speaker was quite innocently stating the actual facts. He had set out for town on a dream-errand, and only became aware that it was a dream when spoken to.

A lady, meeting a small boy whom she knew, asked him where he was going. He

answered, "I'm going into the town to spend a penny, but I haven't got one!"

A gentleman found his little daughter crying bitterly because she had had a tumble.

"Never mind, Wynnie," he said; "won't a chocolate make it better?"

"No," said the child between her sobs, "but two would do it."

Ten-tenths of a child's waking life is spent in observation. Those sharp, frank, innocent eyes are constantly on the watch. He may be talking, he may be playing, he may be day-dreaming, but he is observing and speculating all the time; and out of his observations he is quickly filling up for himself a complex system *De omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis.* The following are a few examples of the way in which the great work is carried on.

Bessie is an only child, and rather a lonely one. "Look at the sun," she remarked, watching the sky one day as the sun disappeared behind a cloud. "He has gone to call on the moon. Why, there he is again!" she exclaimed,

as he reappeared almost at once: "I suppose she wasn't at home."

It was pretty to see a London child in a copse carpeted with wild hyacinths. She gathered great bunches of the blue flowers, and shaking them on either side of her head, cried, "They ring the sweetest music I have ever heard."

The unfolding of the fresh, unsullied bud of a child's mind is one of the redeeming graces of our time-worn old world. Seen through those trailing clouds of glory which enwrap the opening soul, the familiar commonplaces of life and nature are transformed into wonderful bewitching mysteries. "Hush!" said a little worshipper, to whom each blossom was the temple of a goddess, on passing a field of closed-up daisies. "Hush! the fairies are all in bed: see, their curtains are all closed!"

Small Kenneth said to me one day, "Auntie, if I could throw a stone to hit the sky, I wonder what kind of a sound it would make?"

Again, he had interestedly watched some convolvoluses which grew in a garden that he passed in his morning walk. Returning

late one evening, he found them shut and curled up.

Wondering why, he said, "I suppose God has shut them up not to let burglars see them and get them."

When the sun shines on the falling rain, every Scotch child knows that "the fairies are baking"; but a succession of such showers raised a serious problem in the vexed question of supply and demand.

"What *can* they be doing with all the bread?"

"I doot they'll be goin' to give a party the nicht," was the ingenious solution.

We Scotch cannily say, "I doubt," when no doubt whatever is meant to be understood.

A little girl from an orphanage was spending her holidays in the country. She was listening to a wood-pigeon, and inquired, "Is it singing or crying?"

One little friend gave us a pretty idea. When told she was going to be taught music, she asked if she would have to play all those little birds sitting on the telegraph-wires.

Does not the idea recall the lines "written for gentle souls who love music," in "The Professor at the Breakfast Table," on the music of one of the first pianos ever played in the hearing of the children of the Western world?

> Just as the "Jubilate" in threaded whisper dies,
> "Open it! open it, lady!" the little maiden cries
> (For she thought 'twas a singing creature caged
> in a box she heard),
> "Open it! open it, lady! and let me see the *bird!*"

One stormy day my little girl came to me and said, "Come, mother, and listen to the *likkle* voice in the drawing-room door."

It was the wind whistling through the key-hole.

She always says in her prayers, "Bless Thy little lambs *good-night.*"

A child of about five was staying at the house where at that time I most frequently visited. She was put to bed one evening without the curtains of her room being drawn. It was one of those nights when clouds come over and veil the sky and then disperse. Some one went up to see whether the dear little girl was asleep.

She said, "The stars all went in just now, and then came out shining *brighter* than ever; I think they must have gone to look at Christ."

Sometimes the unconscious mingling of prosaic and romantic produces a quaint effect. Carpet-laying had been engrossing attention during the day, and the star-points, appearing one after another in the evening sky, seemed familiar.

"Oh! look at the gold tacks in the carpet of heaven!" We laughed, but one quoted softly:

> . . . Look how the floor of heaven
> Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.

So true it is that the greatest is ever most akin to the childlike.

But Anaximenes, without the help of a carpet, came to the same conclusion regarding the heavenly bodies four and a half centuries before the Star of Bethlehem stood still over the manger. They were designed for ornament, he thought, and nailed, as it were, like studs in the crystalline sphere.

My little girl of three looked up at the sky bright with stars and asked, "What are these pretty little shining things?" When told they were the stars, she said, "Oh, I thought it was the moon's eyes."

A little London girl, on seeing a half moon in Edinburgh when out one night, exclaimed, "Your moon is not nearly so round as ours."

Somewhere in Plutarch—in his "Morals," I think—the passage occurs: "No man is an exile where there is the same fire, water, and air. . . . We should certainly laugh at his folly who should affirm that there was a better moon at Athens than at Corinth; and yet we in a sort commit the same error when, being in a strange country, we look upon the earth, the sea, the air, the heavens doubtfully."

"God's blue tent spreads equally over all."

Flossie was enjoying her first visit to the seaside, when one morning her mother told her she would have to go into the town instead of to the shore. "Oh, mother," said Flossie, "and all that beautiful water will be wasting."

"A big baff, and p'enty of soap in it," said a

tiny maiden, looking from the deck of the steamer at the foaming water round the paddles.

One remembers the description of Charoba's childhood in Landor's "Gebir":

Past are three summers since she first beheld
The ocean; all around the child await
Some exclamation of amazement here:
She coldly said, her long-lasht eyes abased,
"Is this the mighty ocean? *is this all?*"

Little Ronald, aged eight, was at the seaside, and one day exclaimed, "Auntie dear, don't you think the waves are funny?"

"How, dear? What do you mean?" said auntie.

"Why, the top part comes faster than the bottom part, and then it tumbles over and goes sliding down the hill all white."

Tennyson noticed the same "funny" phenomenon, and described it as

the curl'd white of the coming wave
Glass'd in the slippery sand before it breaks,

and as the great waters which break

Whitening for half a league, and thin themselves
Far over sands marbled with moon and cloud.

Bunnie, aged seven, was staying in the

country, and took a great deal of interest in the baby lambs.

"I suppose, mummie," he said one day wonderingly, "that God puts the wool on them so that when they fall down out of heaven they do not hurt themselves!"

Two small boys were looking at a picture of a long-eared rabbit.

"That's a rabbit," said one of them.

"A wabbit!" replied the other scornfully. "A wabbit indeed! Who ever seed a wabbit wif *wings* on his head?"

Another little one was looking at a spider's web, and asked if the spider could really eat a fly. On being told it could, he said, "Well, what would it do with a *windmill* fly?" (a daddy longlegs).

Nelly, five years old, watching the flies: "How does flies sit down, mother?" Addressing her three-year-old brother on another occasion, she observed, "When you get *a bit older* I will tell you all about Jesus on the Cross; you wouldn't understand *now*, if I did."

Have you ever taken a town-bred child into the country for the first time? It is delightful

to hear their quaint remarks about everything they see.

One springtime I was in a wood with a six-year-old friend of mine, when, to our mutual delight, we found a thrush's nest. The child had never seen a bird's egg before, so I promised to blow one, that she might keep the shell.

"Oh," she exclaimed in anxious delight, "shall I see the little bird fly out?"

Ivy, about four, has been to visit her "Jannie" (grannie) and see the fields where primroses grow. She lifts her face with a look of awe to tell you, "And they were all quite clean!"

A wee Scotch laddie, spending his first night at a country farmhouse, awoke his mother early in the morning, saying, "Hark hoo the hens are callin' on me; I must rise from my bed and be awa' oot to them."

The following anecdote may be told without irreverence of this same little lad, for it was spoken from the simplicity of his childlike heart. He was watching some cows lowing in a meadow, and after their usual manner at

every low they stretched their necks upward. "See, mammy," said the little fellow, "hoo the coos are lookin' awa' up to Jesus."

George, aged eight years, visited his grandma on a cloudy unsettled day last August, and the following conversation took place:

"We are going to have a storm, grandma."

"Are we, dear?" replied grandma.

"Yes; that dark cloud is not the lightning cloud, but that red one underneath it. I like storms. There's nothing to be afraid of, grandma, if there's plenty of rain; and I'm very fond of lightning and I like it forked."

A wee man of three picked up some lime berries, and asked if they would grow to trees if *sown*; but he said, "Nurse won't lend me her needles!"

Another time he said, "What is to-morrow? No, not to-morrow, the next day behind?"

He once remarked, "God does not make the sky, the puff-puff makes it—it's all smoke."

Giggums, who was not yet two, was looking out of the window. Pointing to the sky, he said, "Train! puff-puff!" I looked out and saw some trailing white filmy clouds, which

he evidently mistook for the steam of an engine.

Janet was one day requested to ring the bell for the servant. She rang, but no Mary appeared.

"Ring again, Janet," her mother said.

She pulled the handle more vigorously, and we noticed that she was whispering something to herself.

"What are you saying, Janet?" her mother asked.

"Oh, mother," she replied, "I was saying, 'The more you ring, the more I won't come.' I think that's what Mary is saying to herself very likely."

This morning at school one little girl was asked, "What is this word 'TO'?"

"It 'ooks 'ike a man and a d'um, and the man is not playing it," was the unexpected answer. "And oh, auntie, 'ook at dat fat man wiff his back to anoder d'um; what is him?"

It was "**do.**"

Occasionally the small observer's scrutiny gives rise to embarrassing situations if people happen to be "touchy."

"Is oo's head c'acked, auntie?" said little Marion, aged three.

"I hope not, dear. Why?"

"'Cos dere's a line down de front."

A little boy went with his parents to have tea at a friend's house. During the repast he was observed thoughtfully watching a lady guest having a plate of cake handed to her.

To the amusement of all, the admonitory words then broke from his lips, "Bread first, cake after." So he passed on what he himself had been taught to the grown-ups, who he thought were equally in need of it.

Molly's candour, if a little embarrassing, is very refreshing, and her gift of repartee, though it sometimes leads to grave results in the way of punishment, is irresistible. One day she said, in all good faith, to a lady, "People would think you were young if they only saw your hair!"

And one day in the schoolroom, when she was very naughty and stubborn, her governess told her to come and stand beside her. The child went, and stood immovable.

"Molly dear," said her governess, "you

must answer my questions; it's no use your standing there with your mouth shut."

"It's no use me standing here with it open," said Molly.

A number of these Sayings fall naturally under the heading of Language, and they serve to illustrate the heroic attempts of the small people to master the speech of their elders, the very remarkable way in which they generally succeed in doing so, and the odd mistakes they occasionally make when a word has more than a single meaning.

H. was very fond of appropriating the longest words which he heard.

One day, being sent to play upstairs, his father, thinking him somewhat quiet, called out, "What are you doing, my boy?"

At once came back the astonishing answer, "Only playing with physical things!"

A lively, imaginative girl of eight, talking with her dolls, made a boy-doll say to a girl-dolly, "You will write to me sometimes while you are away, won't you?"

To which the other doll was made to reply, "Oh yes, with *exceeding great joy!*"

This was overheard by a boy relative, and great was the teasing our precocious little maiden received.

But she was also an ardent bible reader for her age, and soon surprised her friends by exclaiming, "It was quite right to say 'exceeding great joy,' because it's in the bible about the Wise Men."

When about six years old, Janet was taught in her geography lessons that "Yarmouth is celebrated for the *curing* of herrings."

"Oh, how funny it must be," she exclaimed, "to see the little ill-herrings sitting round *getting better!*"

A wee girl, whose baby sister was teething, was found pushing a pair of scissors into her doll's mouth, and looked up to say, "I'm cutting dolly's teeth."

When F. was quite tiny, he excused himself for being a long time getting out of bed by saying that he "couldn't *essicate* his foot from the bed-clothes!"

Another time, hearing a woman talking in a shrill tone to a man with a very gruff voice, he remarked, "I call that light and dark, don't you?"

Children are very quick to adapt new ideas to their own purposes. The following borrows its touch of pathos from a tragic background.

A young Englishman of twenty-one had just died of yellow fever in a foreign hotel, casting a hushed gloom over the other residents. Two small boys were playing horses outside in the verandah; the elder was overheard to say, "Come on, Frank; put on the reins and I'll drive you to an early grave."

Reading in the Kindergarten is often a source of amusement to the teacher.

"What is a nib?" asked a little reader of four years.

"Oh, I know!" said Dick; "it is that thing that there isn't when you buy a pen," an explanation that all the little ones seemed to understand by experience.

On asking a child to tell me the name of the mouth of a volcano, I received the answer, after some hesitation, "The chimney-pot of the world!"

"Aunty," said my small nephew, "do let me give a penny to that poor man pretending a leg!" (He had a cork leg.)

The directness of a child does not always grasp the meaning of "chaffing," to use a slang term for a sort of good-humoured banter.

Harold heard his father chaffing his mother one day about household expenses.

He listened for some minutes in silence, then he burst out, "You *are* an 'obzexionable" husband, pappa!"

My little friend Teddy, the less-than-four-year-old son of a Wesleyan minister, had been greatly interested in the construction of a martin's nest outside his father's study window, and had made many inquiries concerning it. He thus reproduced his newly acquired knowledge of the habits of different birds. "Do you know that the swallows go away in winter, but the sparrows *belong to this circuit?*"

At the time of the first outbreak of influenza, about three years ago, many fatal cases occurred where a tiny nephew of mine lived, and he saw the frequent funeral *cortèges* pass the house.

One day his mother, though having a cold, was going out, when the little boy (aged four) said, "Mother, do take care of your cold, or you will make a *funeral* of yourself."

A little boy, when describing his baby sister and recounting her many virtues to a lady friend, concluded by saying, "She is just an Amen baby."

"And what kind of baby may that be?" inquired the lady.

"She holds up her little hands so! Like what the minister does at the blessing," exultingly replied the proud brother.

A little girl living in a country village was in the habit of hearing very frequently from her mother's lips the expression, "Well, that is a miracle!" If her possessions, her spectacles or her knitting needles—laid down in one place—were shortly afterwards found in another, having apparently travelled there when left by themselves in that astonishing way with which we are all familiar, she would make use of the above expression, or when in perplexity it would fall from her lips.

One day when the inspector was examining the school he asked, "What is a miracle?"

The little one instantly put up her hand and replied with great confidence, "Something that mother does not understand."

"Sleep," said a small boy of eight, "is a

kind of rest what comes over you, and sometimes it makes a thickle noise."

The same boy, on being asked what a character was, replied after a moment's thought, "I should think it was a dictionary of our actions while we are on earth."

A. once came running in from the greenhouse and gave me a leaf, and he said, "Look what a lovely 'temper' leaf it is!" It was off the *passion*-flower.

Reefer jackets used some years ago to be called pilot jackets: my sister had one. When she was going out for a walk one day she asked, "Shall I put on my Crucifixion jacket?"

"What do you mean?" said mother.

"Why, my Crucifixion jacket!"

"Oh! I suppose you mean your pilot jacket!"

"Well, pilot [Pilate]! I knew it had something to do with the Crucifixion."

The novel interpretations they constantly put upon words—so familiar to their elders as to make the latter think all explanation totally unnecessary—are often most comical. Two little lads were heard, one Saturday night,

singing lustily and with particular emphasis the opening lines of the hymn beginning

> Ere another Sabbath's close,
> Ere again we seek repose.

Their mother suggested that this was a hymn more suitable for Sunday than for Saturday night—to their great astonishment. "But, mother," they protested, "on Saturday night *you* air our clothes for Sunday, while *we* seek repose,"—the words, as *they* rendered them, being

> Air another Sabbath's clothes!
> Air again: *we* seek repose!

Father had a great many canaries, and spoke of selling some of them. Charlie looked up horrified. "Mother," he said, catching his breath, "will daddy cut the poor little dickies into halves?"

"No," replied mother, laughing; "why do you ask?"

"Well, mother, he said they would be 4*s.* *a-piece*, and I thought he was going to chop them up."

Children mix up their knowledge in rather a distracting way sometimes. One little girl, on being asked how she knew a horse was an

animal, replied, "Because it has four equal sides and four right angles."

The same child declared people could live without air. "For," she said, "I know a gentleman that has none on the top of him."

A little girl of our acquaintance was repeating her prayer:

> This night when I lie down to sleep,
> I give my *soul* to Christ to keep.

On reaching this point she looked up in her father's face and asked the startling question, "Will I give Him my *heels* too?"

On one occasion Lillie, seeing a bow on the back of her mother's mantle, remarked proudly, "I have a bow on *my* mantelpiece."

"Mr. Weston has just been with us a year to-day," observed a widowed mother to her children, in reference to a boarder who had taken up his abode with them to augment the family purse.

"Three cheers for Mr. Weston, mother!" cried the eldest boy.

"And three *sofas* too, muvver," shouted three-year-old Alec, waving his cap in the air.

An apple-charlotte and a plum pudding were on the table, and the children were asked which they would have. Charlotte chose apple-charlotte. "*Not* apple-*Charlotte*," said baby Charlie when it came to his turn, "but plum-*me!*"

"What did you have for dinner to-day?" a mother asked her little son.

"Indigestion," was the prompt reply.

Little Cousin John's birthday was a source of mysterious trouble to him. When the other children spoke gleefully of their birthdays the look on Johnny's face became very sorrowful: "Oh, John's birfday fell down; John's birfday tummle over!"

None of us could guess what terrible mishap it was that was disturbing his little soul, till one day he murmured sadly, "John's birfday *knocked over!*" Then the light flashed upon us, and we were able to comfort him. Johnnie's birthday was *in October*.

My small boy asked me if the sycamore tree was called that because it was more sick than any other tree.

Isobel was told to leave something on her plate for "Mrs. Manners." "But who *is* Mrs. Manners?" asked she, and before any one could answer, "*I* suppose it's the water that washes the plates."

Edwin for some years persisted in speaking of himself in the third person, as "he," never as "I."

One very frosty day his mother was warning him that if he fell down in such weather his little legs would break like sticks of sealing-wax.

This warning failed to produce the desired effect, as the child replied, "He *likes* his little legs to break like sticks of sealing-wax."

It is by no means uncommon for the small person to express a special liking for the disaster which is foretold as the certain result of some act of self-indulgence or disobedience. The peculiar form of speech referred to in this last Saying is also of frequent occurrence, though probably less common and much less perplexing than the habit of saying "What I'm going to do?" when the speaker means "What are *you* going to

do," and "Come and kiss you," when he means "Come and kiss *me*." It seems to me that there is a very natural explanation of this transference of the pronouns. A child is addressed as "you," and he accepts the word as a sort of *name*, so that when he speaks of himself he very properly uses the name in which he is spoken to: "'You' did this"; "'You' loves mamma." Similarly he hears his elders speaking of themselves as "I"; obviously that must be their name, and he is quite logical when he addresses them as "I": "Where I'm going to? [where are you going to?] You [I] go with I [you]."

It is often at a very early age that we find the little people tackling the mysteries of time and space, the enigmas of birth and death, the marvels of heaven, and a crowd of other questions to which we ourselves shall find no answer on this side of the grassy gate and the dusty way. In all these matters the children's views take the colour of the parents' teaching.

Harry, aged three, was of a very inquiring

mind. He was always wanting to know "where yesterday had gone," and "why did counting never end?"

"Do our souls never die?" asked Jack. "No, dear." "But wouldn't they if you put them in water?"

One day my nephew, aged four, was playing with toys on the hearthrug, I reading by his side. Suddenly he raised his head and asked, "Auntie, where was I before I was born?"

Much surprised at the question, I replied, "Nowhere; there was no little Harold."

He rose indignantly, and standing before me, said, "I was—I was up in heaven all in pieces, waiting for God to make me up."

Little Molly, on hearing something that had happened two years ago, remarked, "Aleck was not in the world then; he was only dust flying about the street."

Two little boys were one day recalling incidents in their brief past, and asking each other, "Do you mind [remember]?"

Presently their younger brother joined in the conversation, and said he minded too, but the eldest little lad quickly exclaimed, "How

can you mind? You were flying about dust then."

One day my little son saw a heap of dust in the road, and asked if that was what God had made him out of.

Two little children being awakened by their nurse one morning and told that they had a new little brother, were keen, as children are, to know where and how he had arrived.

"It must have been the milkman," said the girl.

"Why the milkman?"

"Because he says on his cart 'Families Supplied.'"

Two small cousins (into each of whose homes little strangers had arrived) were overheard comparing notes as to the respective virtues of the little brother and sister.

"Arthur, did you say that your baby came in a trumpet?"

"No, Eva; it makes a noise like a trumpet, and wakens me in the night."

To which Eva replied, "My baby came on the wings of the wind."

When I had a new baby my other little ones were brought in to see it.

My youngest child said, "Where did she come from?"

The elder one, four years old, said, "The angels brought her down on their wings."

A small boy asked whether, if he prayed for things in *church*, he would surely get them. It was explained that prayers were not always answered, as sometimes the Father did not think it best to grant the request, but that it was all right for him to present his petitions either at home or in church.

Two years later a new little sister came to the house, and he told his mother that she did not need to take care of this baby at all, as he would, for he had prayed for her and got her, though, he added, "I had to pray an awful lot before she came."

And surely the child of many prayers was carefully tended and loved and petted by her oldest brother, till called home on his sixteenth birthday.

She, a tiny tot, one day surprised me by asking, "Mamma, what did you do in heaven?"

Without thinking, I answered, "Why, my dear, I have never been there."

"Oh yes, but you have."

"When?"

"Why, before you came here a little baby."

"Well," I replied, "tell me what you did there, for you have only been here four years, and I have been a great deal longer."

"Oh," she answered, "I have been thinking, and trying to 'member, but I can't one bit."

"Lord Jesus, kiss me before I die," was the nightly prayer of a sweet little maiden, her idea being that a kiss was the sign of forgiveness. And when she was four years old the angels came and laid her in the Good Shepherd's bosom, and I doubt not He gave His little lamb the kiss she so earnestly desired.

"I don't want to go to heaven for a good long time, mother!" said a little girl.

"Why not, dearie?"

"Well, I wouldn't know any one there, you see."

"But God would know you, darling; He is your heavenly Father."

"Would He take me on His knee, mother?"

"Yes, I am sure He would."

These children are always striking ancient chords of feeling with their simple questions. Many will recollect the passage in Abbé Carme's Life of Madame de Farcey, "When the soul arrives in heaven, God takes it on His knees and calls it His daughter." And have we not a lovely companion passage in the sixteenth canto of the "Purgatorio":

Forth from the hand of Him, who fondles it
Before it is, like to a little girl
Weeping and laughing in her childish sport,
Issues the simple Soul, that nothing knows
Save that, proceeding from a joyous Maker,
Gladly it turns to that which gives it pleasure.

"Do you know what God does when He wants poorly people not to get well again?" asked Gerald of his sister just after their grandfather's death.

"He makes them die, of course," answered the matter-of-fact Florence.

"Ah!" said Gerald, with a far-away look in his eyes, "but do you know how He does it?"

Florence shook her head.

"Why, God just stoops down over them, and breathes into their mouths, and their souls fly right away to heaven."

A little seven-year-old boy, on hearing for the first time about the Röntgen rays, exclaimed, "If I were a doctor, I know what I should do. I should turn the Röntgen rays on to a person who was dying, so that I could see his soul going to God."

My little girl was three or four years old. When walking out one day she saw a funeral. Telling us of it next morning, some one kindly and solemnly said that one day she too must die and be buried.

An emphatic denial was the immediate reply.

"Oh yes, dear, indeed you must."

I glanced anxiously at my child, for I had purposely kept the subject of death away from such little ones.

Never shall I forget the horror expressed on that young face, instantly succeeded by a look and tone of glad triumph as she appealed to me.

"No, I shan't; shall I, mamma? Jesus died instead of me, and I shall live for ever."

After a swift prayer for aid I replied, "Well, dear, your body *must* die, but your body is not really *you*. Your soul's *you*; that which thinks and feels and loves."

She seemed satisfied, but I wondered if she understood. A week later she looked up at me and said, "My body will die, but my body is not me; my soul's me, isn't it, mamma?"

Perhaps most of us are slow to realise how early the heart of a child vibrates with tender sympathy, and how easily that sympathy is aroused.

Little Charlie had been taken for a walk through the cemetery, which lies on the slope of the old seaport town and just within sound of the sea. His bright keen eyes seemed to take note of everything, and at tea-time he gave his father an animated description of the place.

Suddenly he asked, "What does 'R.I.P.' stand for? Some of the gravestones had a lot of reading on them, and then at the bottom of the words there were the big letters 'R.I.P.' What do they mean?"

"What does my little son think they mean?" said his father.

Charlie paused for a moment. Then, lifting his earnest little face, he voiced all unconsciously the longing of many a broken heart whose dead lay sleeping in that "God's Acre":

"I think, father, they must mean '*Return If Possible.*'"

Maurice's father died when he was quite a little chap, but Maurice used to love to talk about him; and one day, when his mother had been telling him that his father was really alive, only out of sight in heaven, Maurice said thoughtfully, "Mother, I wish God would put some panes of glass in the floor of heaven, so that we could see dear father's feet just now and then when he's walking about."

It was touching and beautiful to hear a dying child say, "Mother, I have been praying to Jesus not to let you cry. I don't like to see you crying."

Wonderful strength was granted the mother in answer to her darling's prayer, and the child passed away, without being distressed by her mother's grief, to the land where there are no more tears.

Leslie was only just four years old when grannie died.

"Do you ever think of grannie?" some one asked.

"Oh yes, I always think of dear grannie on

Sundays: I look at the altar, and I think God is there, and grannie must be there too, for grannie is with God."

And, hearing of the death of one who had known grannie, Isobel said, "*What* a surprise dear grannie in heaven will get when Mr. S. from S. walks in!"

"Yes," said Leslie; "he'll tell her all about us."

"Yes, I know it's Mr. McT.'s funeral, but where is he?" said three-year-old Isobel, with that curious searching into the unseen that often characterises very young children.

Evelyn was sitting with her aunt, when her uncle came in and said, "Mr. —— is dead," referring to a friend who had passed away.

"Auntie," said the child, "I wonder what Mr. —— is doing now. I suppose the angels are just showing him round."

"I'm very sorry Mr. Egerton is dead," remarked six-year-old Maggie, on hearing of the death of an old friend of the family, "but" (cheerfully) "I suppose he has seen dada by now, and told him how we all are."

The other day our youngest heard of the death of a friend, and instantly remarked:

"Then she sees Ag to-night," Ag being a sister who had gone home at the age of ten years.

We often hear interesting conversations in the Kindergarten. The following is one:

"Oh, Eric, my boy, I have told you so often not to scribble on your book; now you are four you ought to know better, Eric."

"But, auntie, it is my name, and Jesus says if my name is not written in the Book I shall be punished."

ETHEL. "What is punished?"

IDA. "Whipped."

ERNEST. "Put in a corner."

LAURA. "No, it means 'not go to heaven.'"

IDA. "Well, I don't believe you do go to heaven."

ERIC. "Yes, you do; my father says so."

IDA. "But they put you in the ground; I've seen them."

ERNEST. "Oh, and does the nasty dirt get in your eyes?"

ETHEL. "No, they put you in a big box to keep you clean."

IDA. "Well, you see, you don't go to heaven."

LAURA. "Yes, you do if you are good. Don't you know when it is dark at night Jesus comes down and gets you out of the box. He fastens some wings on you, and away you go with Him."

ERNEST. "Does He bring a scewdiver wiff Him?"

LAURA. "No, silly boy; don't you know Jesus is strong enough to do anything?"

Percy's merriment while a friend of the family lay dead shocked his brother, who said, "I wonder you can do that when Mr. M—— is dead."

When the reproof had been administered several times, Percy retorted, "Oh, stop saying that. The world must go on."

It is curious to note the easy and indeed inevitable transition from the grave to heaven and the angels.

James was a little boy of about four years old. One day he was walking with his mother in a cemetery. Impressed evidently by the peace and beauty of the spot, he

looked up and said thoughtfully, "Mother, isn't it nice that the dead have such a pretty *home-place?*"

One lovely spring day little Annie was taken by her mother to the cemetery. Seeing all the tombstones and flowers, and the spring sunshine over all, she said, "Oh, mother, how lovely! Is this heaven?"

A little boy, eight years old, when lying ill in bed, asked his governess to read to him the "Burial of Moses." "It am beautiful," he said, "to be buried by the angels."

When he lay dying, watching the setting sun, his words were:

"How lovely it must be on the other side!"

Little Willie was listening attentively while the story of Jacob's ladder was read at prayers. When I was putting him to bed he said, "Now I know how it is when people die. They get to that place where Jacob's ladder was, and climb up by that to heaven."

I said, "Not quite, Willie: wherever we are when we die, if we love Jesus we go straight up to heaven."

He said, "Yes, mamma; but that was one of the gates of heaven, wasn't it?"

"I do think it rather funny of mother to have gone away and left little Nannie," sighed a little three-year-old maiden who had just been left motherless; "but, never mind," continued she, a tender smile trembling on her lips, "she's gone to grannie, and it's always summer weather there."

"I've been to heaven!" brightly exclaimed another child, who, with his brothers and sisters, had been taking flowers to "Grannie's" grave. And then, shaking his little head, he emphatically added, "but I shouldn't like to live there!" He had been to the funeral of this same dear friend, and had then been told she was "gone to heaven."

When that great and good man, the late Archbishop Plunket, passed away, a bright blue-eyed little fellow, who was walking with his grandmother on the road running at the foot of the beautiful Dublin mountains, suddenly looked up and said, "Oh, grandma, I wish you would take me to St. Patrick's to the good Archbishop's funeral."

"I will take you there some Sunday," I said.

"Oh no, grannie," he said; "it would be too late. I would rather go to the funeral. I have never seen the gate of heaven, and when such a good man is being buried I am sure it would open, and I should see in."

The other world is such a real and glorious place to children, that it is a subject of some surprise when they see the tears of their parents in times of bereavement. "Mamma cried when grandpa was taken to heaven, but we did not cry," said a little girl.

A little thing of three years, hearing that nurse had been to her husband's funeral, ran up to her and asked, "Have 'ou been to heaven, nursie? Do tell baby all 'bout it."

Death, to them, is like "stepping into another room."

A sweet, winsome little maiden, three years old, lost the father who had loved and prized her as "the flower of the flock"—his youngest. A year or so later she showed his photograph to a visitor, saying, "That is my father! My papa is in heaven, but he loves us just the same."

"Who told you so, darling?" the visitor asked.

With a rather indignant air, she replied, "*No one* told me. I know it *myself*."

The same little queen of the house allowed her auntie, who had just come to see them, to put her to bed on condition that she told her stories. After hosts of anecdotes, auntie talked to her about "Jesus loves me, this I know."

The wee maiden then enlarged upon it by saying, "Yes, Jesus loves mother, and Bertha, and me, and auntie—and *every one*. I do love Jesus so. I'm going to write Him a letter to say how I love Him."

Bertie sat up in bed, blowing good-night kisses to every one. "There's a kiss for father, and a kiss for mother, and a kiss for baby," said he gleefully.

"Baby can't get a kiss now, dear," said father; "he is with God in heaven."

"Oh, then I'll blow a kiss to God, and He'll give it to baby." And raising his little face, he blew a kiss to God for baby.

Tricksy Four-and-a-half-years to her nurse: "When I am a licky angel I s'all come down

and kiss you, and I s'all get in your bed, side of ze wall. It will be funny to sleep with me when I have wings; I hope I s'ant f'ighten you."

Auntie had come to tuck Joyce up in bed, and had been reading to her from the well-worn copy of "Peep of Day." As she took up the candle to leave the room, Joyce, who had spent a delicious day in the garden with her dolls, said meditatively, "I s'all have to leave my dollie's pram behind when Jesus comes to take me tc heaven?"

Auntie was obliged to answer in the affirmative. Then, in a rather more cheery voice, the small niece exclaimed:

"But I 'spect He'll have lots of moons and things for us to play wiv up there!"

Three-year-old Georgie had lost a very dear grannie, and one day, having asked his mother when grannie was coming back, she explained that grannie would not return to them because she had gone to heaven, but that some day they would go to her. Several days later, after sitting quiet for some time, he suddenly asked, "When you, an' me, an' Johnnie go to live with Jesus, who'll make dada's tea?"

A little girl who was delicate, and had frequently to rest in her crib during the day, inquired of her sturdy brother whether there were any "tibs" in heaven. "Oh no," was the answer. "They sing hymns there all day and fly about all night."

Another child evidently appreciated what he must have considered very prudent foresight on his father's part. "Mamma," he asked, "why is it that people don't have enough to eat in heaven?" His mother was naturally surprised—not to say shocked; but he persisted, "Well, then, *why* does father pray every day, 'Make us more meat [meet] for heaven'?"

Little Eric was discussing heaven one day with his friend Ernest; it was just before Christmas. Eric said, "I want to go up to heaven to see what it is like, and see if Jesus and David and Paul are there."

"But," said Ernest, "I wouldn't go before Christmas, 'cause you'll get nothing in your stocking there."

"Oh! won't you?" exclaimed Eric.

Next day we heard him tell Ernest confidentially that he wasn't going at all,

"because Ada says they have nothing to eat in heaven."

Two little boys had been tucked into their cots for the night, when the elder was overheard describing to the younger the glories of heaven.

As he paused, tiny Eddie asked anxiously, "But, Ivey, won't there be anything to eat in heaven?"

"Why, yes," replied Ivey confidently; "there'll be angels' food, of course."

Paul was riding outside an omnibus, and from this coign of vantage saw a dying horse in a crowded London thoroughfare. He cried so bitterly that mother had to explain that the poor horse was tired, so God had sent it to sleep.

Weeks later his mind reverted to the scene. "Mother, do you remember that po-o-r horse we saw in London?" he asked. "He's in heaven now, isn't he, with a beautiful golden crown on his head?"

"Mother," said three-year-old Innes, who had been to church, "I didn't see God, and sister said it was God's house?"

"God lives in heaven," explained mother,

"and if you are a good boy you will go to heaven, too."

Looking around, Innes said incredulously, "I don't see the stairs!"

"But you will have wings like the angels," was the reply.

After pondering a while, the wee fellow asked in somewhat wisful tones, "Mother, can the angels take off their wings when they go to bed?"

A little boy, whose mother was teaching him about the angels, suddenly exclaimed joyfully, "Mother, wouldn't the little angels be pleased to get my 'hullabaloon' what went up?" meaning a coloured air-balloon, the string of which had broken.

"I think the angels must be our little dead brothers and sisters sent to watch over us," said sweet little Connie, who had recently lost two sisters.

Little Pansy had been told that her grandmamma was in heaven. One day during a thunderstorm she toddled up to her mother's knee and said sadly, "Big noise up in heaven to-day. Poor grandmamma!"

A child I know intimately very much amused her family by the way she showed a little touch of jealousy. She was one of a very large family, but there having been six boys born between her birth and that of her elder sister, she was naturally very much petted. A little more than two years after her advent another little sister was added to the fold. Being very delicate, this baby had to receive more attention than baby number one quite approved of, but when about six months old she died. This had to be explained to the child, and her elder sister, taking her on her lap, told her that "dear little Jessie had gone to live with God and the angels in the beautiful heaven." After a moment's thought the child answered, in a very contented tone, "And a welly dood place for her, too."

"I hope I shan't die the last," said a little girl to her father.

"Why, dearie?"

"Because," she answered, "there won't be any one to fasten on my wings for me."

Tommy had been hearing about the angels in heaven in their white robes. "Do they all wear white robes, auntie?"

"Yes, dear."

"Are there very many angels?"

"Oh yes, a great many."

"How many?"

"Oh, thousands and thousands."

"What a big wash-house God must have!"

A little niece visiting me asked if God gave everybody in the world bread. I said "Yes." She said, "What a large bread-basket God must have."

The baker brought our bread to the door in a basket.

I have now reached a section of the Sayings which cannot but suggest to thoughtful readers many serious considerations. It opens with two very pregnant utterances:

My little girl, when very young, on being found fault with for fractiousness, quaintly remarked, "I not naughty, I not kite well."

Another child: "I don't feel very well to-day. I feel rather ugly."

Both remarks are "quaint" enough, but

they embody an important truth which most of us are exceedingly slow to recognise—that much of the fractiousness and naughtiness of the little ones springs from some unfavourable physical condition, and should be treated from a physical point of view. A brisk run in the fresh air, a merry greeting, a tune on the piano a few minutes' frolic, will often restore the physical equilibrium, and the child will cease to feel ugly and to seem naughty.

And the Saying which follows, audacious as it may sound in its frank wording, conveys a warning which no wise father or mother will venture to neglect:

"If you don't forgive me *now*, mother, *when I'm sorry*," exclaimed a little boy who was in disgrace for a fault, "I'll soon *not be sorry*, and then I won't *care* about the forgiving!"

It is not my province, however, to convert these childish utterances into homiletic texts. I will set them down without further comment, and let the reader derive from them what amusement or instruction he may.

"If there was just *one* Sunday in the year,

how well I should keep it!" sighed eight-year-old motherless Godfrey, as he applied himself to the learning of the hymns and paraphrases which his grannie thought necessary for the "keeping" of Sunday.

Davie, on hearing a hand-organ out of doors: "Don't talk to me now. The music makes me think of heaven and of my dear mamma," but on the first Sunday on which he was taken to chapel Davie said, "I wish I was a butterfly, and then nobody would ask me to go to chapel."

Jim had managed to learn his first hymn. A friend was visiting the family, and the mother, pleased with Jim's progress, asked him to repeat a verse, whereupon he said gravely:

"I'm a little pilgrim
And a stranger here;
Though this world is pleasant
Sunday is always near!"

Molly was always a little church-goer, being promoted from children's service in the afternoon through evening service (in the summer) to the long morning services, and great was her pride therein. After two or three Sundays,

however, the length of the service palled on her, and one day, coming from church, she said wearily to her mother, "Oh, mummy, I *do* hate the Litany; it makes me *so hungry!*"

Time passed, and Molly could read a little, though the long words were still to be avoided or looked at askance, but one Sunday mother noticed a thoughtful, puzzled look on her face, and wondered. The solution soon came.

"Mother," said Molly, "why is that prayer called 'a general *confusion?*' Is it because everybody kneels down and kicks the seats?"

One Christmas Day, when Molly and her brother were having their usual happy time, the little woman remarked, "Christmas day is Jesus's birthday, but it seems as if *we* get all the presents!"

Walter, aged four, accompanied his mother to the church of which his father was the minister, and for the first time in this little boy's life he was allowed to remain and see the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

On his return home he eagerly inquired of his mother what it all meant, and she gave him a simple but satisfactory explanation of the whole service.

It happened the next day his father was very ill in bed, and both mother and child were naturally anxious about him. Taking her little one on her lap, the mother said, "Walter, what should we do if dear papa were to die?"

The little fellow looked very pensively in her face, and evidently remembering her explanation of the service which had so interested and impressed his mind the day before, he said with great emphasis, "We must take a little bread and a little wine in remembrance of him."

An embryo divine, of six years, remarked, "Father, you said in your sermon that *our* disappointments are *God's* appointments, but *I* think that *our* appointments are sometimes *God's* disappointments."

A little boy of my acquaintance, about three years old, when saying his grace after dinner was in the habit of enumerating everything of which he had partaken: one day his pudding was brought in covered with a new cover. When he said grace he said, "Thank God for meat, potatoes, pudding, and my nice bright cover."

Lily, learning the Lord's Prayer for the first time, paused at the petition for daily bread. "Oh, gramma, a little bacon too!" she interpolated.

A little sister one night added to her prayers, "Bless uncle, auntie, Willie, but not Bennie —teasy boy."

Little Ian's father was visiting London, and had promised to bring a toy train for his little son. The day that the father was to travel Ian prayed, "God bless papa, and bring him home safely, and—and—and his luggage!"

Margaret was in the meadow one Sunday afternoon, when a dark cloud came over the sky. She stopped suddenly and said, "Pray, God, don't let it rain on my new pelisse," and trotted on again.

Children's prayers frequently show a wonderful faith, though it is difficult to keep grave over the strange requests they make.

After hearing the story of the Prophet Elijah, a little girl knelt down and said, "Pray, God, send the Prophet Elijah to tell auntie to knit me blue stockings instead of grey. I don't like grey."

To her delight, the blue stockings were given to her.

It was the close of a happy day, bed-time had come, and the little boy, whose fourth birthday it was, had said his prayers and was kissed good-night, when suddenly, with one of those flash-light looks peculiar to children, he inquired, "Do you think God would *mind* if I thanked Him for my nice day?"

Being told that the kind Father would certainly be pleased, the little white-robed figure knelt again, and bending his head, reverently and gratefully added, "I am much obliged to you, God, for my nice birthday."

"I hope you pray for your baby sister," said mother to a little girl.

"Oh yes" (with emphasis); "I *always* pray for my baby sister, and the doctor, and Gippie." Gippy was the nursery dog and faithful playfellow.

"But don't you pray for the others in the house too?"

"Oh no; *they* can pray for themselves."

Father was going away on business, so he called his eldest little boy and said, "Johnnie

while I'm away I want you to take *great* care of mother. I leave her in your charge."

That night, when Johnnie knelt at his mother's knee saying his evening prayer, he said as usual, "Please, Lord, bless grandmamma and take care of her; bless father and take care of him; but you needn't trouble about mother, because *I*'m going to take care of her."

Little Maisie had a tiny brother who was ailing a little from teething. In her prayers she never omitted to ask God to make Georgie better.

By-and-by a baby sister came, and nurse remarked, "You'll have another to pray for now, Maisie."

"Oh no," replied the little girl; "I must finish with one first!"

She had surely got hold of the Pauline principle, "This *one* thing I do!"

Three little children were left together at home while their mother went on a visit, their grandmother coming to stay with them part of the time.

The elder little girl, who was about seven, was very motherly in her manner towards her

sister and little brother, but when she said her prayers at her grandmother's knee on the first evening she only prayed for her sister.

On rising from her knees her grandmother expressed surprise that she made no mention of the little brother, and asked her the reason. "Why did you not ask God to take care of your little brother also?"

The child raised her finger in an emphatic manner and said, "Oh no, grannie! He is only a little one, and I can take care of *him myself!*"

What could have been more confidential than Innes's prayer for his father in Ceylon. "Please, God, send daddie safe back—and then we'll *keep* him."

The same child said, "When I say my prayers I always see everything. When I say 'Deliver us from evil,' I see God going out with a spear to fight Satan; and when I say 'Forgive us our trespasses,' I see Him with a big rubber cleaning a blackboard."

"Don't close the window, mother dear," said Gwendoline softly one night when just about to say her prayers.

"Why not, darling?" asked her mother, with a smile.

"I'm so afraid God might not hear me say my prayers if you do," replied the little one wistfully.

It was the evening hour again, and Lucy knelt to lisp her evening prayer. Her little heart was bursting with self-satisfaction—she had been so exemplary all through the day.

"O Lord!" she said, "make me very good, *even* better than I am."

"Auntie, I love you," said little Eric; "I always say you in my prayers."

"Thank you, dear: what do you say for me?"

"I say, 'Please make auntie good and let her go to heaven.'"

"God bless grandmamma, and help her to speak the truth," was the prayer of a six-year-old when he wanted a special blessing for his saintly grandma.

Paul was out for a walk with a bigger boy, who, when he began to flag, mounted him on his back, to Paul's great content. "Dear Jack," he murmured, clasping soft arms round

his neck, "I hope the Lord will give you strength to carry me home again."

A little fellow of six, who always preferred saying his prayers by himself, was remonstrated with one day by his mother, who thought he had hurried over them.

"Lloyd, I am afraid you did not pray for daddy and me to-night."

"Of course I didn't, mummie; if I had there would have been nothing for you to say at bedtime: you would have said, 'Lloyd has prayed for me,' and it would have made you lazy."

"No, darling; I should have found plenty to say. I might have told God that Lloyd was not a very good boy to-day."

"Do you mean to say you would have complained to Jesus Christ about me? Now I do call that mean."

A dear little child was saying her prayers aloud beside her mother's knee, and added a prayer on her own account: "Oh, please, dear God, make me pure, absolutely pure as Epps's cocoa."

A young friend was on one occasion shut into a closet as a punishment, when he was

overheard uttering the unique prayer, "O Lord! now's your *chance* to make me good."

My little boy, when he was between three and four years old, had a toy which was wound up to make it go. It was hopelessly injured, his governess told him, as over and over again she tried to make it go. He disappeared under the table. It was evening and dark there. Presently he came out with a look of heaven on his face.

"Please try again; I'm sure it will go now."

Still hopeless, she did so, *and it went!* Under the table he had asked God to make it go.

Another time, during a thunderstorm, he said, "Mamma, I wish God would not talk so loud."

A little girl who had prayed for several sick friends, hearing of their recovery, said, "God has done all mine;" meaning her prayers were answered.

"God made all the p'itty ickle flowers, but God must 'scooze me if I don't pick zem all, 'coz I haven't time."

At five years, in church, when singing the

"Venite," she whispered, "Mother, will God 'scooze me ? I don't know a bit of it ! "

"Thank you, God, for letting me pick some buttercups and daisies to-day, and you have put a lot in my garden for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

And "Thank God for the grass and the fir-trees, and the cows and the sheep, and the sunshine and the shadows of the fir-trees!" was the older prayer of R. L. Stevenson.

Marion had been cautioned against the habit of throwing stones, but one day so far forgot herself as to do it again. Her tender conscience soon reproved her, and coming home she retired to a quiet corner, and with a deep-drawn sigh exclaimed, "Oh, muvver! I do wish I could remember to be good always."

A dear old lady aged eighty-four was lying seriously ill, and one of our little boys loved to sit beside her bed. On one occasion, wishing him to leave her, she said to him, "Tell me a nice text to think of until you return again."

He thought for a moment, and then said, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, &c."

The old lady could not forbear smiling at the inaptness of the text to her years and state, and said, "Dear Willie, think of one more suitable to my old age."

He paused to think, and then said, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked!"

Frequently with the touchingly simple faith of a little child is quaintly blended a most judiciously practical turn of mind. A small brother was patiently repeating after his mother the well-known hymn, "Scatter seeds of kindness"; and, after an evident attempt to grasp the full significance of the injunction, inquired, "Is them good to eat, mamma?" he being at that age when tangible and realistic comforts meet at times with greater appreciation than those of a more spiritual character.

A mother, when teaching her little daughter the twenty-third Psalm, was asked, "What are the paths of righteousness?" "Well, dear, you know the little tracks up and down the hills where the sheep tread—those are called paths." One day, when out walking with her nurse, Muriel wandered away by herself up a hill. On being asked where she was

going, she replied, "I'm walking in the paths of righteousness."

Once while coming downstairs Hugh asked to be carried, but was told he was too heavy. "Auntie Kathleen," he coaxed, "you be the Good Shepherd and I will be the little lamb, and you shall carry me downstairs." He conquered.

A small son of mine was going away to school for the first time, and for some days before he was seen trying to write something on a piece of paper. On the last day he gave his mother a little slip on which was written:

Jesus, Friend of little children,
Be a Friend to mother, will you?

He had substituted "mother" for "me," and added "will you" to the first two lines of a hymn he knew, his idea being that when he was gone there would be no one to take care of her.

He asked one day whether the bells rang to *invite* one to church or to tell that it was time to go, adding, "I am sure *our* cathedral bells invite, don't they?"

A little friend of mine had been told by her

mother that she must not kill the flies, because God had made them all.

One day she was eating a piece of bread and jam, and was much annoyed by a big fly that was buzzing around her, attracted by the jam.

At last she could stand it no longer, and exclaimed, "Way home, fly, and get a piece and jam from God."

Another small mortal, seeing his grandmother kill a wasp on the window-pane, asked where the flies went to when they were dead. She told him they went to heaven. A few days later she found him trying to kill a fly on his own account. In reply to her question and look of rebuke he answered gravely, "Oh, g'anma, f'y 'anted [wanted] heaven!"

A lady promised her nephew of eight a bicycle on his birthday. On consideration she thought a tricycle would be safer for so young a child.

When the day came it was put in a room where the boy would pass through, his aunt concealed in a corner. Instead of delight, he was heard to exclaim, "O God, I thought

you knew the difference between a bicycle and a tricycle!"

A mother leant over her baby's crib.

"What shall I ask Jesus to-night, my darling?" she said.

The sleepy blue eyes opened. "Say, take me to our bootiful home."

The mother's eyes filled with tears; she could not spare her darling yet. She said no more about it, but a few days later she went into the nursery and found Hilda sitting up in bed, with a look of indignation on her face. "And He's never come for me *yet!*" she said.

Children are often more logical than grown-ups. The little son of bible-loving parents had a great dislike and fear of being alone in the dark. They tried to reason him out of it both on common-sense and religious grounds. The child listened with puckering brow.

When they had finished he asked, "Do you wish me to do evil, then?"

"Why do you ask that?" questioned his father.

"It says in the bible people 'loved darkness because their deeds were evil,'" argued the puzzled boy.

Jim's mother sent him downstairs in the dark, saying, "Don't be afraid, dear; God is on the stairs."

"Yes," he replied, "God is on the stairs, and Alice is in the kitchen."

His faith in Alice was evidently the stronger.

Mother had just gone upstairs in the dusk. Presently she heard the little pattering feet of her two-year-old boy at the foot of the stairs, and then a wailing cry, "It's dark!"

At once his sister of four years ran to him with the exclamation, "Take my hand, Ally, and it won't be dark!"

Hand in hand the little ones mounted the stairs, to be clasped at the top in the arms of the parents who had just learned a needed heavenly lesson from their children.

Scottie had prayed for some months that God would bring his father safely home from Africa. One night his aunt noticed that he omitted the usual petition.

"You haven't prayed for father, dear," she reminded him.

"It's no good," replied Scottie in a weary

voice, getting up from his knees ; " father never comes home. I'm tired of praying for him."

" God doesn't make me a good boy! Pappa makes me a good boy!" a baby of two stopped to reason in the middle of his prayers one night. " He whips me! I won't pray to God any more!"

As might well be anticipated, three mysterious beings engross much of a child's speculative musing—the Creator, the Saviour, and the Evil Spirit. With regard to the former our conventional reverence is frequently shocked by the surmises and questions of the small inquirers, but in these matters a child's thought is invariably free from irreverence, and its quest of truth ought not to be roughly checked as idle curiosity, but should be met with the seriousness we should give to an older inquirer. With regard to the Spirit of Evil, it seems to me an unhappy mistake that we should begin to darken a child's bright world at the very dawn with the thought and name of Satan. That knowledge will intrude itself only too soon ; but in our zeal or our thoughtlessness we often contrive to make our children

deplorable little prigs and jesuitical apologists.

Emmie had overheard the remark, during a thunderstorm, that the thunder was God's voice; and on seeing a grown-up person looking frightened as the storm increased, she said, "If God lets us speak to Him, we must let Him speak to us too."

A rather pretty idea concerning the stars was the following from a little boy of my acquaintance. He thought the stars might be the places where God put His fingers through. This reminds one of the words of David: "The firmament sheweth His handiwork."

The thoughts of children are a continual source of surprise and enjoyment to those who watch their development, and the independence of each soul is shown by the quaint and unexpected ways in which they are expressed. For instance, the little boy who made the following remarks must have attained, by his own line of reasoning, a very vivid realisation of the marvellous patience of the Almighty God. Standing by a window watching the flies on the pane, he said:

"Didn't you say God made everything, mother?"

"Yes, my boy, everything."

"Then He made the flies?"

"Yes, even flies."

After a momentary silence he remarked:

"Fiddling work, making flies!"

Doris (aged four): "What a horrid cake!"

Jim (aged 14): "Oh, Doris! don't say that! God gave us the cake."

Doris: "Yes, but God didn't make it!"

Telling Frances that God gives us everything, Isa said, "Oh yes! and He gives us baked apples, only we bake them."

A cousin of ours was taking charge of her nephews and nieces. Says preaching baby to practical baby, "Do you know, Helen, God could make you die this very minute if He pleased?"

Practical baby, not at all scared from her bread and butter: "I don't think He could; I'm having my tea."

My little brother, on being told that God made the world and everything in it, said, "If God made everything, what does Mrs. God do?"

A little girl whose finger was cut was told by her sister "Not to cry, for as fast as the bleed runs out, God puts bleed in."

A little niece who loved to hear of the Great Healer one day startled her aunt by saying, "Aunty, if we ask Jesus to make grandma better, won't He *come down* and heal her?" But, without waiting for a reply, she added solemnly, "Only He would break His legs coming down."

On another occasion, when she saw a picture of Cupid suspended in mid-air with the familiar missive in his hand, her comment was, "Oh, look at the wee boy! he is taking up a letter to Jesus."

When listening to the story of the Crucifixion she was much touched with the words of our Lord, "I thirst"; and on hearing of the sponge filled with vinegar being given to Jesus, she put her hand up to the narrator's face as if to make her pause in the recital and said, "If good men had been there they would have given Jesus a drink out of a *tumbler*."

Little Phil, aged five, was grieved and horrified by the story of the Crucifixion. "Oh,

mother," he cried, "if father had been there, *he* would have sworded off their heads!"

The same passionate revolt filled the heart of the heroic Crillon as in his old age he sat in church listening to the story of the world's tragedy. Unable at last to control himself, he sprang to his feet and cried aloud, "Où étais-tu, Crillon?" "Oh, Crillon, where wast *thou?*"

So, too, spoke a fierce Iroquois Indian, Charlevoix tells us in his "Histoire de la Nouvelle France," when he heard the narrative of the Saviour's sufferings: "Oh! if I had been there!"

But centuries earlier still, according to the old Irish records, King Conor Mac Nessa uttered almost the same words. The king had been wounded by a ball from a sling. It had lodged in his head, and the physicians had allowed it to remain, warning him, however, that all violent exercise, anger, or excitement would be dangerous to his life. For years he enjoyed good health until the very day of the Crucifixion, when, in consequence of the shaking of the earth and the darkening

of the sun, he inquired of his Druid the cause of this strange perturbation of nature. The Druid informed him that Christ Jesus, the Son of the living God, was at that moment being crucified by the Jews. "What crime has he committed?" cried Conor. "None," said the Druid. "Then they are slaying him innocently?" "They are," replied the Druid. Then in a sudden outburst of fury the king drew his sword and rushed out to the wood opposite his palace door, where he began to hew down the young trees, exclaiming in his rage, "Oh! if I were present it is thus I would cut down the enemies of the innocent man!" In his rage the ball was dislodged, the blood burst from the wound, and King Conor fell dead. "He has been counted in Ireland ever since as the first man who died for the sake of Christ."*

In a Sunday-school class a teacher was trying to make clear the lesson on the comforting presence of the Living One. It was a

* O'Curry: Lectures on the MS. Materials of Ancient Irish History.

thoughtful little lad who explained, "We can't see Jesus, because He is in our hearts."

One day my little daughter was playing with a magnet puzzle which seemed to interest her greatly, and lying on my invalid couch I watched the sweet face and earnest eyes absorbed in a somewhat difficult task. The same evening, in coming to wish me good-night and have the "cuddle-talk" which children love so much, my Theodora whispered, "Mother, I did enjoy doing the puzzle this afternoon: I thought the magnet was just like our Lord Jesus Christ, for He is as true as steel, you know, and He draws all true hearts to Himself."

A little boy of seven years repeated to me one day the text, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." Then, after thinking for a little, he said, "I see how it is: the blood of Jesus Christ is God's indiarubber; when it is rubbed over the page of the book where our sins are written, it takes them all away."

The other day I was talking to my child about her father, who had been suddenly taken

from us, and telling her how much good he had done in the world, how beautiful his character was, and how everybody loved him. She looked up quickly and said, "Daddy got all that from Jesus Christ, you know."

"Can Jesus do everything?" inquired a six-year-old laddie. "Yes, dear," said his aunt. "Can He really: can He undo knots?"

It was Christmas-time, and the children were wild with delight over all the manifold joys which that season brings.

But the chief interest centred round the wee maiden lying in mother's arms, the baby of four weeks old. "Here, baby!" said Joyce, as she generously tried to press a piece of biscuit into baby's mouth. Baby opened her mouth, not, alas! in gratitude, but to protest in a vigorous cry.

"Oh, darling, baby can't take that," exclaimed mother. At that moment up comes the sturdy, toddling brother, and presses a chocolate, very moist and half-melted, against poor baby's lips; and mother has hard work to keep these untimely attentions in check, and to make the resentful givers understand that baby really *cannot* eat what they can, as she has no teeth.

This sad fact subdues them for a moment. Then, after a pause, in which she tries to grasp the full significance of baby's deficiency, Joyce says half-reproachfully:

"Jesus *might* have sent us one wiv teef."

There was no thought of irreverence in the words. It was only an inexplicable mystery to the small mind. It seemed such a *pity* that the Lord had sent baby unfinished, so to speak.

Will some of our perplexities be as easily solved in heaven, I wonder, as Joyce's difficulty will be before long?

A little girl of three, having been accused by nurse to her mother of having deliberately pulled a button off her coat, stoutly announced, "It was not I that did it, it was Satan;" on this occasion giving the author of all evil rather more than his due.

"Pray, God, make Satan a good boy, 'cos he do make Nancy so naughty," was a little one's penitent prayer after she had been cross.

Isobel had some lovely fungi in her hands that she was carrying home. Suddenly, with one sweep of her little hand, Leslie broke off their frail loveliness.

"You wicked little girl," said father, moved by Isobel's distress, "what made you do that?" "Oh, father!" wept Leslie, "it was the devil."

A lady, when teaching a class of poor children, put the question, "If boys and girls do not love and follow Jesus, and follow Satan instead, what will he do for them?"

"Burn them!" shouted a little urchin.

A little boy and girl whose mother was ill and inaccessible were overheard by their aunt holding the following pathetic consultation on the subject of their nurse's unkindness to them:

"What shall we do?" said the girl hopelessly.

"I'm going to ask father to send nurse away," replied her brother sturdily.

"What shall you do if he won't?"

"Then I'll ask God to help us."

"But perhaps God won't send her away."

"Well, then," said the little chap in desperate earnest, "I'll see what the Devil can do for us."

After proper investigation nurse was dismissed.

A little fellow about five years old wished

he could be God just for five minutes. On being asked what he would do, he said, "I would kill the Devil."

Jack was lying on the rug one Sunday, meditating; his aunt had been reading to him. He looked up and said, "Auntie, who mends hell-fire?"

Edith was a little mite about three years old who had some strange theological fancies. "Mother," she asked one day in deep, solemn tones, "has the Devil got a Saviour?"

The answer is not recorded. Whatever it may have been, it is pleasant to remember that touching old legend which tells how the Neckan sat playing his golden harp on a boulder in the river at evening, and the children of the minister coming by mocked at him, saying, "Why do you play on your harp, Neckan? Do you not know that you can never be saved?" and the poor Neckan ceased playing and singing, and began to weep bitterly. But the children went home and told their father, who reproved them and sent them back with a message of comfort. "Do not cry,

poor Neckan," said the children; "father says that your Redeemer liveth too." And the Neckan sat on the rock and joyfully played on his harp till long after sunset.

Equally beautiful—it could scarcely be more beautiful—is the legend referred to by the Count de Maistre: "A saint, whose very name I have forgotten, had a vision, in which he saw Satan standing before the throne of God, and listening, he heard the evil spirit say, 'Why hast Thou condemned me who have offended Thee but once, whilst Thou savest thousands of men who have offended Thee many times?' God answered him, 'Hast thou *once* asked pardon of me?' . . . . What matter whether the saint had or had not heard the sublime words I have quoted? The great point is to know that pardon is refused only to him who does not ask it."

Infinitely preferable and wiser has been the training which underlies the following incident:

Willie, aged four, came to his mamma one day with the complaint that sister Nellie (who was busy making cake down in the kitchen)

would not give him something to eat which he had asked for.

Mamma generally considered it wise to uphold her daughter's authority with the little ones, as she had often to leave them in her care, but to-day she remembered that her little son had eaten very little at the last meal; so she told him to ask Sissy very nicely and say that mamma had said he might ask again.

Then off he ran, but as he trotted down the kitchen stairs he called out, "Now me's brought some *contradingtion* for you." Needless to say, he soon returned with a very downcast face, saying Sissy still would not give him what he wanted.

Then mamma told him she had heard what he said to Nellie, and was not surprised that she had refused him, ending by asking why he had spoken like that when he had been told to ask very nicely.

He stood looking down for a few moments, then raising his lovely blue eyes to her face with a most penitent look, replied, "Me really didn't mean to, mamma, but the little man inside me *just made* me do it."

In the following group of Sayings the effect

of bible-class lessons and bible reading is very conspicuous. In most instances it is evident that the young people have carried away the lesson and retained it, though their application of what they have learnt is more amusing than edifying. That, if we regard it rightly, is so much to their credit.

Economy was the prescribed subject of a little girl's essay. She was much puzzled for an example, and mother suggested the well-known incident of the Queen and her bonnet-strings.

Suddenly the small scholar looked up radiantly and said, "I know a better, mother—the Creation. It was made out of *nothing*, and was very good."

A mother asked her little daughter who was the first man. She replied, "Adam." Then, turning to the little boy of three, "And who was the first woman?" "Madam!" came the prompt reply.*

* A very similar story appears in "Lighter Moments, from the Notebook of Bishop Walsham How" (Isbister); but if this reply was given once, it has probably been given hundreds of times. It is more obvious than little Tom Hood's guess that the name of Noah's wife was Joan —— of Arc.

A little boy of four years old was sitting on his sister's lap while she was reading to two elder children Drummond's charming little book about a cricket match, which he takes as typical of our life on earth.

A week after this event, the fall of Adam and Eve was read at family prayers. The little boy looked up into his mother's face and said, "Adam and Eve were both bowled out first ball, weren't they, mamma?" Few people would imagine that a child so young could so thoroughly grasp the author's true meaning.

Teaching the story of the fall in a mission school, a lady asked her class where Adam and Eve hid after they disobeyed God.

One wee lassie smiled and said, "Please, up an entry!"

Needless to add, that was *her* idea of a hiding place.

R. had been listening to the story of the serpent in the Garden of Eden, and was told that the reptile was Satan. The little fellow then said, "I saw wee Satan peeking [meaning creeping] about among my feet."

My little maiden of four was to have a tea-

party. "Tell me your friends' names," I said, "and I will write to them."

"There is first my dear Cain and Abel, and darling Samuel," she replied; and I heard her afterwards gravely telling her aunt that I had asked them, but they "could not come," as Samuel had influenza (of which she has had a lion's share in her small life) and Cain was busy killing Abel!

Two little people had a friend who was going to the Holy Land and Egypt. One of them wondered if he "would find any broken bits of Moses' 'Tables of Stone,'" and the other thought that perhaps their friend might "get a sail in Peter's boat," and thought it must be "very nice to be going to Canaan."

Two or three Sundays ago I was explaining what a long training Moses had to fit him for his work, and how he was eighty years old when he led that great army out of Egypt.

"But," interrupted little Alfred excitedly, "my grandmother's eighty-two, and she can go up hill like anything."

While teaching the two elder children the ten commandments, the fourth being the lesson of

the day, Norman said, "Mamma, Gyp is our cattle, isn't he?"—Gyp being a small Scotch terrier and the only beastie "aboot the hoose."

A little girl aged six was one afternoon at the washhand basin, washing her hands. Her father, coming in on the same errand, was about to ignore her presence, when he was thus promptly called to order for his seeming breach of etiquette: "Father, you should be like Moses."

"How?"

"Because he let the women to the water first, and drove the men away."

Our embryo divine of seven delights in recounting the ever-fascinating bible stories with original variations. This is how Jonah is "handled":

"No, Jonah wasn't 'zackly a bad man, only he didn't want to go and teach the children which was their right hands and lefts."

He is not very clear on this point himself, so this is given out with a fine air of scorn.

"So, of course, the whale swallowed him; but I 'spect he felt pretty tight, for he soon began to cough, and cough, till up came Jonah,

and he wasn't hurted the least bit; but I *think* he must have been very dirty. And so—well, that's all about Jonah."

A class of little boys had been having lessons on Elijah. The chariot of fire had been the subject of the last lesson. When their teacher asked, "What did Elisha say when Elijah left him?" one small boy said, "Please, teacher, I know: he said, 'My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen, they are off!'"

Paul interrupted a story of Daniel and the pulse, which was described as porridge to simplify it. "Was it Quaker oats or Waverley?" he asked, mindful of recent experiences.

One of our boys was most anxious to be permitted to work his mother's sewing machine. Once, after listening attentively to the story of Daniel's deliverance from the lions' den, he asked eagerly, "And did his mother let him work the sewing machine after that?"

A lady, who was conducting a class of boys in a Sunday-school in the High Street of Edin-

burgh, gave for a lesson the call of Samuel in the night.

The small urchins began a discussion, one boy's version being that the gas went out, and Samuel was left in the dark: another exclaimed, "It was naething o' the kind; it was just a paraffin lamp."

When little Ada, aged three, had been told the story of Lot's wife being turned into a pillar of salt, she asked her mother anxiously, "Is *all* salt made of ladies?"

Later, when six years old, she was called one Sunday, "Come, Ada, and learn your catechism," whereupon she answered roguishly, "If it's for *me*, it ought to be a kittychism!"

A little nephew and niece of mine were playing in the garden, when their mother observed that they had quarrelled and the younger, a boy of three years, was crying.

On going down to inquire the cause he said, "She called me a bad name, mother, and I'm not that."

The culprit confessed that she had pointed at her little brother and said, "Go up, thou bald-head, go up, thou bald-head," to him.

She was told then that the children were being taken to the Zoo, and she should be left at home, when she smartly replied, "If I went perhaps the bears would eat me!"

I well remember the following incident of early days in the old North-country home. When my eldest brother (an exceptionally gifted man, who scarcely lived to middle age) was a very little boy his mother had occasion to correct him for some fault, telling him that his parents could not love him so well if he did such things. He thought a moment, then gravely replied, "When my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up!"

Another little child was sitting on a stool at her mother's knee, learning a short prayer. On former Sunday afternoons the reward for a well-learnt text had been a French plum. Winnie, as she sat clasping her fat little hands on her fat little knees, chanced to catch sight of the bottle with its white label, and the dear, sticky, black things inside.

"I am thy servant," she repeated dreamily; "I am thy servant: give me, give me—*a plum!*" A plum was so much more desirable than mere dull "understanding."

"Now, what would you have done, Jim," asked a young teacher, giving a lesson on the Flood, "if you had been there?"

"Taken a twam," said five-year-old Jim wisely.

L. lived in Kensington. He was naughty, and as a punishment his mother shut him in a room and went out. As she returned she saw her boy leaning as far out of the window as he could, shouting, "Oh! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?"

It is very interesting to get at the real thoughts of a young child; you find sometimes that they have very practical minds.

Eric had said his text, "But now I am a man I have put away childish things," and remarked, "I think it was too bad of Paul to put away his childish things, auntie; he might have give them to another little boy."

We remember a girlie who was often taken by her grandma to visit the graves of little ones dear to her.

One day, much to grandma's sorrow, she found her girlie had told an untruth; so, to improve the occasion, the story of Ananias and

Sapphira was related. Judge of the narrator's feelings when the little one asked, "Are they buried in Rosebank?" the cemetery she was in the habit of walking in.

Doubtless she thought of visiting their graves!

At a class of boys I had in the Sunday-school, when they were reading aloud the Gospel one of them read, "And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day," in a tone of astonishment, and in the same breath, in a tone of disgust, "How mean, teacher!"

A little girl, on hearing the parable of the Prodigal Son, remarked, "I don't believe a whole calf *could* be put on a dish."

"Who was Father Christmas's father?" asked a teacher of a child of seven, thinking to puzzle him.

Like a flash came back the answer, "I should think, like Joshua, he was the son of Nun" [none].

Last Christmas morning the teacher of an infant class asked a child, "What day is this?" "To-day is Jesus's birthday, and yesterday was Sammy's," he answered.

The same children were asked, "Who was Joseph's father?" Their faces were all blank, until the teacher said "Jacob," when little May brightened up, saying, "We get cakes from Jacob" (the biscuit manufacturer).

Tom was present when his aunt, speaking of Tennyson's death, said, "After all, he was an old man; it was time for him to be in Abraham's bosom." "Abraham's bosom must be nearly full now," said Tom; "perhaps he will have to go into Isaac's."

Lillie, seeing in a familiar hymn the line—

Cherubim and Seraphim falling down before Thee,

said, "Mother, was Cheru the boy?"

"What do you mean, dear?" asked her mother.

"Because, you see, Sarah was the girl!"

Evidently she thought that the Bim and Phim families were the worshippers.

A paterfamilias, having been in Leeds, found it impossible to reach his home in Scotland except by travelling with the Saturday night express, which landed him at his destination about eight o'clock next morning. One Sunday morning, some weeks later, he found his two

boys, aged respectively five and two, driving a railway express improvised from the drawer of a wardrobe.

"Boys," he said, "trains don't go on Sundays."

"Oh, this is the Leeds train," said number one, and went on with his mimic journey at full speed.

"Willie! didn't I tell you not to play with that cart on Sunday?"

Willie remembered watching his father drive off that morning to one of his appointments in the country.

"Yes, mother," he replied; "but *this* is a *preacher's* cart."

Once, after a lesson on being unselfish, one child had been given a piece of paper on which to scribble, when her brother of six made a practical application: "I suppose, baby, you won't be self-denying and give me that paper?"

Once a little girl about seven years of age was at school, and seemed very eager to learn and try to understand all her teacher said to her. She was exceedingly fond of dolls, and her mother had lately bought her a new one,

which she kept carefully. One day, while her teacher was trying to explain to her class of little ones about the well-known hymn, "Ye must be born again," this bright-faced child looked up eagerly and said, "Then I'll keep my new doll until I am born again."

One day a wee man remarked to his sister, who was nearly six years old, "I'm going to be a minister and pweach to the people."

"Well," she said, "it is one of the safest of trades."

Some of their uncles are soldiers. When the girl was between four and five years old her grand-aunt read her Matthew xxv. Her comment was, "When I am on the right hand, and when I see you on the left, auntie, I'll be so sorry."

"I hope, Ernest, that you will come one day and see my home," said a lady to a small boy from whom she was soon to part.

"It will have to be soon," said Ernest, "for you might be dead."

"Do you think me so very old?"

"Yes."

"Well, if we should never meet again on earth, I hope we shall meet in heaven."

"Oh," said Ernest, "but there are two places!"

One Sunday forenoon a boy aged three years old was playing: he looked up and asked, "Ja-Joe, if a sailor dies at sea, is he buried in the sea?"

Ja-Joe answered "Yes."

"And do the fishes eat him, Ja-Joe?"

"I suppose so."

Then a pause, when he said, "Ja-Joe, I'm not going to be a sailor, because on the resurrection morning they will have such a scramble out of the fishes' bread-baskets."

Kate, aged eight, had been promised sixpence to spend at the toy-shop. When she was ready to go for her walk, her mother was unable, for some reason, to give it her. "You shall have it another time, dear," she said.

Kate was very angry, and sulked all the rest of the morning. At last her governess said, "It is very naughty of you to be so cross, Katie, when mother gives you so many sixpences. Think of the poor children who never have any pennies!"

Kate became very dignified, and said in a most injured voice, "You need not think it's

the sixpence I am troubling about, Miss Smith; I am only grieved to find that my mother does not keep her promises!"

One day Kate's elder brother, who was a great tease, said, "You don't know your Scripture history a bit, Kitty!"

"Indeed I do," the small maiden replied.

"Oh no, you don't," went on Master Gordon: "you don't even know who were Ruth's father and mother!"

"Yes, Gordon, I know quite well," she answered indignantly, "only I never can pernounce those hard names."

The remaining Sayings fall naturally into the group which is conveniently called miscellaneous, though several of them are more or less closely related to one or other of the preceding sections.

A little six-year-old nephew of mine, who is very fond of modelling men and women with pastry, arrived at a knowledge of the universal fatherhood of God in a very unexpected way. He and his sister were dining with their parents, when the girl spoke rather authoritatively to the servant. Their mother

took an opportunity to reprove her, and finished by saying:

"You know, Nancy dear, you must not look down on any one because she is a servant. God made us all, and He might have made you a servant had He chosen."

The boy then thoughtfully remarked, "Yes, Nancy, don't you know we are all God's pastry?"

The sequel to this was rather pretty, for a day or two after he was watching with disgust some boys playing in the mud, when some one recommended him to join them, "because you know, Arthur, we are all God's pastry."

I expect the colour of some of his own pastry occurred to his mind, for after a moment's thought he answered, "Yes, so we are; but I'm sure they are made of much dirtier pastry than we are, and I won't play with them."

A practical illustration of love was given by a little boy in a London omnibus. Sitting on his grandmamma's knee, he saw a nigger passing along the street. "Me not like black man, nasty black man," began the child.

"You must not say that," instructed the

grandmother: "black man's very nice; you should like black man."

There was silence for a moment, then the child looked up with a winning smile: "Would you kiss black man, grandma?"

A funny remark was made by a little boy who passed the cake to a lady caller and said: "Please have some." She refused, and he said, "Oh! *please* do; it is getting *so* dry."

When one of the children was on a visit she was invited to take some gingerbread. She would not, and the lady said, "Do take some, it is really very nice."

Little Margaret said, "It's not so werry nice if you don't *like* it."

"I wonder which of us will die first!" said a little boy pensively to his sister.

"You will," said the little girl briskly, "'cos you are the eldest."

"No," answered her brother, not anxious for the privilege; "ladies first."

A little fellow aged two years and nine months got into a bad habit of refusing to say good-night. His aunt wished to make him

prove himself wrong, and the argument got to "Who is older, you or I?"

Promptly he said, "I."

"Very well, then; you should teach me what is right: what should I say before I go to bed?"

With a slight pause he said, "You' prayers," then laughed most merrily.

The lecture collapsed.

A little girl was corrected by her mother for something which she did not consider wrong, and after some time she relieved her mind by saying, "I *love* you, mamma, but I don't *like* you."

A little boy (*ætat.* five) once told me he didn't think it was any use for him to begin writing a diary, as he could not write the past years of his life; but when *he* had a little boy he should write his diary from the time he was born, and then give it him when he was old enough.

It is comical to see the practical side of a child's mind in its developments. My little girl was only two and a half when she first experienced the delight of a garden "all for her very own."

"And will you plant potatoes in it?" asked one inquiring friend.

"Yes," said the small maiden, with a gleam, at that early age, of a housewifely sense of appropriate association; "yes, I will plant potatoes *and gravy* in my garden!"

This same small damsel shortly before gave her mother a most effectual check which could not well be ignored. The latter, with the usual rather provoking tendency of a grown-up person, was apt to seize on minutes of comparative quietude and docility, and try to improve the shining hour (or say, rather, moment) by serious and edifying admonition.

I cannot quite remember whether the—sermonette, shall we call it?—on this occasion was prompted by some wrongdoing, or whether it was simply the effort of a young parent to point a useful moral. However, encouraged by rather unusual quiescence on the part of the auditor, she must have exceeded the very limited patience of that small person, for at length, in the most indescribably coaxing and altogether irresistible way, she was interrupted by "'*Amen*' now, mamma!" and who *could* continue after that broadest of hints?

One of our little girls was looking out of the window, and noticed a lady passing who was wearing a respirator. She remarked, "How silly! *she* would not bite," evidently thinking it was a sort of muzzle.

A little fellow was looking carefully at his baby sister, and said, "Poor baby, she has no teeth at all; you should take her to Mr. M.'s," mentioning the family dentist.

A little girl walking along a road carrying a pitcher of milk made up to a big, strong-looking man, who was going in the same direction. She looked up in his face and said, "If I was a strong man like you, I know what I would do for a little girl walking beside him. I would offer to carry her pitcher."

Children's candour is often very inconvenient to their elders. A gentleman kept very secret from his neighbours what his business was in London. Finding his little boy alone one day, a friend said to the child, "Papa has gone to the City to make you 'bread and cheese,' I suppose?"

"No," was the grave reply; "papa makes the finest varnish in the world."

"Oh, do you think Miss —— will *die?*" said a sweet little girl of four years old, referring to a great friend of her own who had been taken ill.

"Oh, I hope not!" said her sister of five years cheerfully, and then added in a consoling tone, "but if she does, it will at least be put in the newspapers!"

Little worldling!

"Poor Uncle Horace," said Isobel, after a visit to an English rectory, "he gets *so* sad: he wants all the people in the parish to go to heaven, and they *won't* go."

A little girl was alone, amusing herself in an unusually quiet way. Her grandmamma, noticing this, called, "What are you doing, Lizzie?" "Up to mistif, gannie," the little maid replied.

"I felt a d'op of rain," said a tiny urchin, as he trotted down the lane by his mother's side.

"Really? *I* did not," said she.

"How *could* you, when it came on *my* nose?" was the reply.

"That's for *'ou*," said a small church-goer, popping her penny into the rector's hand instead

of the offertory-bag which he was handing to her, and looking up admiringly into his amused face.

Very ludicrous is the infantile assumption of manliness. A little fellow was helping—I beg his pardon, being helped by—a girl to house turnips, and paused with a single "neep" in both hands to say gloatingly, "You an' me's a richt ma-a-n, Mary," rolling the a-a like a sweet morsel.

He had often been told that his father was away "workin' for meal," so one day he set out to bear his part. Finding the men carting manure, he unhesitatingly began to turn over the unsavoury heap on his own account, and on being somewhat peremptorily asked "what he was daein' there," announced with an air of conscious but unappreciated rectitude, "Howkin' for meal."

There was a small man who was always wanting a set of wickets, and one day, to his surprise, his mother got him one, and among other little boys he spent the day at cricket. In the evening his mother went to bring him home, and seeing that Bobby looked tired, she said,

'You must be exhausted; shall I carry your bat and wickets?"

"Oh no," replied the boy; "I'm not tired; but if you carry me, I shall manage to carry the wickets."

A little friend, seven years of age, cried bitterly in the evening, because "Mother has not even let me have *one* little grumble to-day," and once when she had behaved badly at table, she looked up at her father (who was looking solemn as the occasion required) and said sadly, "I wish mother had married a man who did not frown at me!"

A sweet little girl selling artificial flowers to us at a bazaar showed her conscientious mind by saying, "They are a penny each; but you know they are not alive; they are stuffed."

A father, before punishing his little son, who had been naughty and stubborn, said they would both pray. The father did so, and then the little boy said, "Please, God, give me a better father."

Little Gracie's father is a slater. One very wet day she met an acquaintance of her mother's, who said to her, "Well, Gracie, we

will need a very big umbrella to-day, to cover up the hole in the sky."

"Oh no," replied the child; "I'll just tell my daddy to go up and mend it."

A gentleman, standing in front of a mirror arranging his hair, was asked by his little daughter, "Does 'ou sink 'ouself vessy pitty?"

The same child, when her father appeared in his volunteer uniform, inquired, "Is 'ou playing at being a soljer?"

One of the children had been taking great notice of a young baby. She said afterwards, "That baby's face was *so* hot, it had melted its eyebrows quite off."

One little fellow was ill and feverish, and said, "Oh, I am *so* hot; I am sure I should fizz if you put me in water!"

"We are both going to start a hobby," said two small boys to me once. One was seven years old and the other eight.

"That is right," I replied; "it is a good thing for boys to have a hobby. What is yours to be?"

"We are writing books," was the prompt reply.

"Indeed!" I replied, as gravely as possible; "and what are your books called?"

"Mine," said the younger, "is called 'Poyntry for the Young,' and it begins:

Under a spreading chesunt tree
The village black-snitch stands.

"And mine," said the elder child seriously, "is called 'Recollections of my Early Days.' But the worst of it is that when once you begin there seems such a lot to write about."

There was a little sister in the house who was rather delicate. She often used to say, "Oh, I do wish I were an angel." Her brothers and sisters always imagined that her wish only originated from her saintly nature, for she certainly was a very good child. She greatly astonished them one day, on being somewhat closely questioned, by saying, "Then I should be able to fly up into the nursery, and it does make me so tired to walk."

And this reminds me of the story of another

little girl, who lived and died hundreds and hundreds of years ago. When she was worn out and almost too weary to move, she did not wish she were an angel, but she said her simple prayers; and lo, in a moment it seemed to her that the prayers became visible creatures with shining wings, and they caught her up into the air, and carried her, in the twinkling of an eye, to the place where she would be. That, I think, must be the real meaning of the legend told of St. Catherine of Siena; for when she "was a little child, and went to be a hermit in the woods, and lost her way, and sat down to cry, the Angels, you know, did really and truly waft her up on their wings and carried her to the valley of Fontebranda, which was very near home. And when she was quite a little thing, and used to say her prayers going up to bed, the Angels would come to her and just 'whip' her right up the stairs in an instant!" That is still the way with prayers—even in these days; only, as a rule, they don't become visible.

Looking quite thoughtful, a little boy of

barely three years old said, "Mother, over whose neck do you say your prayers?"

A nurse was putting the finishing touch to her charge's toilet, preparatory to sending the little girl into the dining-room for dessert. Seeing a speck of dirt on the child's face, she took the corner of her apron and damped it in her mouth. The guests were suddenly convulsed by hearing through the half-open door a shrill childish voice, "Tompany or no tompany, me won't have my face washed with spit."

"Oh, mother," said Winnie, "you never let me come into your bed now. You know I would be as quiet and still as a deep lake."

"What say?" was a favourite phrase of Giggi's till I began to use it in speaking to him. To my question "What say?" one evening he replied with great dignity, "I don't say that now, pappa; I say 'What you say?'"

"Is it 'some time' yet, mamma?" inquired a patient little boy, who had begged for a knife

some weeks before, and was told he should have one "some time."

Which of us has not desired to find a day for "some time"?

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