

the supreme importance of a religious life will, in all things, teach religiously; and partly because our libraries abound with books written much better than I could write on this particular subject. Besides which, the more I see of human life, the more I feel convinced that the religious *atmosphere* of home is that which ultimately proves of the highest value and most enduring influence in forming the religious character of youth.

This atmosphere, like the air we breathe, I have considered as comprehending different elements, as deriving its wholesome and health-sustaining properties from various sources, and as being subject to deterioration from causes equally varied. Over this department I have regarded the mother as ruling by her own light; and as she would without doubt be considered responsible as regards watching over, and caring for, the healthy condition of her household, so in a higher degree, because the subject itself is higher, as involving interests of a more exalted range, so is the mother responsible for the right training of her children under such religious influences as it is possible for her to bring around them. It is true that she cannot, even in her own department, do always as she would—that she cannot do even what duty seems to demand, where circumstances combine against her, or where opposing influences arise, such as are stronger than hers, or more attractive to youth. But she can still do much; and if a faithful, earnest Christian herself, we know that she will not be left to bear the burden of responsibility unsupported, but that help, sufficient for her day, will be administered in all her times of need.

Were any other stimulus required for the best efforts of the Christian mother, I think it might be found in this—that never again, throughout the whole of her children's after lives, will the same opportunity be afforded as that which their infancy and youth have opened to her instrumentality. Many a troubled time and many a happy time there may be in their future, when her children will come back to her as their warmest sympathiser and their truest friend; but the morning dew will not be upon them then, as it was in their early youth—the flower will not be fresh, and fragrant, and spotless, as it was then; other hands will have touched it less gently than hers, and other breezes will have blown upon it very different from the breath of home. It is before the child has left the parental roof that such close union of heart and mind, such entire understanding of each other, can alone exist between the mother and her children, and especially between the mother and her boys; and where the soul of the mother is deeply stirred with a sense of the importance of educating for eternity as well as time, she will feel that her work must be begun early in the morning of youth, and begun upon principles that will hold good to the latest hour of a well-spent life.

DONKEYS AND DONKEY-BOYS.

WHAT is the nature of the connection which undoubtedly exists between the genus donkey and the genus boy we do not pretend to have discovered; though that there must be some sympathising link that binds them together, we gather from the fact that wherever donkeys are found the boys are sure to be found in intimate relation with them. Wherever donkeys are an institution, the boy is generally the director and administrator of affairs, and has the management of matters in his hands. The rule seems to hold good abroad as well

as at home: man claims jurisdiction over the horse and the mule, but is generally willing to surrender the more patient ass to his juvenile competitor. It is worth while noticing, by the way, the effect of this delegated responsibility upon the character of the boy; we may express it in brief by saying that it makes a little man of him at once. The urchin invested with office is sure pretty soon to change the sense of responsibility with a sense of authority; if he was timid before, he parts with his timidity; if he was bashful, he loses his bashfulness; and if he does not take up with a more than tolerable amount of impudent confidence in their stead, so much the better for those who have to do with him. We all know something, by report at least, if not by experience, of the Egyptian donkey-boys, with their dark faces and grinning teeth, of the clatter and din they make, as they yell and shout and tout for custom, and clamour for sixpences. "Give sixpence, ole gentleman always give sixpence;" and the responses they often get in the shape of a tough bull-hide descending on their bare shoulders, for which liberal allowance they care very little indeed, if travellers are to be credited, so long as there is a possible sixpence in perspective. But we must not suffer ourselves to be tempted into a discussion of foreign affairs: our business at present is with the home department of the subject, which will furnish sufficient matter.

The donkey institution with us divides itself naturally into two sections, that of business, and that of pleasure. In deference to a time-honoured maxim, we shall take "business first, and pleasure afterwards," treating of both heads with exemplary brevity.

Any one who would qualify himself for forming a right estimate of the part which donkeys take in the work of the world, would do well to pay a visit to Covent Garden market in the height of summer, when the summer fruits and vegetables are abundant, and hot and thirsty London is eager to have them. He should time his visit so as to be there before sunrise, and note what takes place between then and nine or ten o'clock. Should he need further evidence, let him go on the following day to Billingsgate and make investigations there. He will find in both places, and indeed in many other places in London, that the quantity of donkey-labour performed every day must be reckoned by thousands of tons of comestibles of one sort and another, and still more thousands of the long-eared quadrupeds whose part it is to lug them about the city and outskirts. The notion was prevalent formerly—so prevalent, in fact, that it came to be stereotyped—that the London donkey led a starved and persecuted life. Later investigations have shown that nothing can be farther from the truth: the starved London donkey is the rare exception to the rule, and the reason for that will be found not so much in the superior humanity of the London boys and lads who look after them, as in the fact that to ill-treat the animals does not pay. The ass is a profitable servant only in London streets so long as he is in good condition and able to do his day's work. Starve or wound him, and you may as well kill him at once, since if he is not up to the mark he will break down in the street. At the same time, and for the same reason, he is not over-fed. An ill-trained donkey will eat all day long if he has an unlimited supply of food, and will be capable of little work in consequence. Donkeys thrive best with a moderate allowance of proper food, and it is a fact that they are nowhere found in better working order than in London and its near neighbourhood. This was made sufficiently apparent at the late donkey-shows at the

Agricultural Hall, where, among the hundreds exhibited, there was not a single one bearing marks of ill-treatment, though most of them were in daily work, and where there were many capable of trotting ten miles an hour in a cart, and not a few that could do considerably more than that. There is a difficulty in providing for the London donkey the green food he should have occasionally, and it is often got over in a characteristic way by his youthful proprietor foraging for him in the suburban lanes and hedgerows, where he may be met with of a summer's evening cutting down the long succulent grasses that line the watercourses, and carrying it off in sacks. In the matter of stabling, perhaps, these public servants are not so well off as might be wished, rents being high. Where they are all housed at night it is hard to tell, though we know that some of them are littered down in area arches and cellars, and therefore have to go down-stairs to bed.

For the lean, angular, bruised, and more than half-famished donkey, one must look, not in London, but in the provincial towns and cities in the neighbourhood of sand-pits and coal-pits. Thousands of miserable asses pass their lives in carrying on their backs (not drawing in carts) small sacks of coal from the pit-mouth to the dwellings of the consumers. The price of the sackful, which weighs but a hundredweight, is less to the buyer by a full half than what it sells for in the town; but it sells so cheap that to make the journey pay, the poor beasts must be heavily loaded. They are met with in droves, sometimes of sixteen or twenty, all in charge of one lad, and wearily plodding with bowed head and ears bent back under loads of three to five sacks, according to their strength—the driver bawling "Coal, ho!" as soon as he comes in sight of a dwelling. A more ragged *cortège* it is impossible to imagine. The driver flutters in sordid rags; the hides of the brutes are torn into rags by the cruel friction of the sacks; the sacks themselves are often mere rags, being full of holes from which the coals would scatter along the road but that each hole is ingeniously corked with a lump too big to get through it. The policy of the driver leads him to lighten the loads of the weakest first; and when the whole of the day's cargo is sold, which is not until near sundown sometimes, he starts leisurely on the back track, suffering his disburdened beasts to crop the hedgerows by the way. During the summer they get nothing else but what they can pick up for themselves by the road-side or on the barren wastes on which they are turned at night. Not one in fifty of these anatomies could get through the day's work of a London costermonger's donkey, or could be urged to the pace at which they are seen trotting out of town on high days and holidays.

The sand-boy is proverbially jolly, and though the sand-boy's donkey is anything but a jolly subject, his is not such a deplorable case as that of the collier's luckless brute. The sand, if it is heavy, does lie softly on his back, and does not gall his poor flanks into painful and unsightly sores. Then he has more leisure, for as the sand-boy digs his own sand, and may be seen burrowing for it in a bank head-foremost, his legs only visible without, donkey can stand at ease, or graze while his master digs, and, making good use of his time, can pick up a passable living. The cry of "Sand, ho!" is generally heard in the town a full hour before noon, and is commonly accompanied by a succession of significantly sonorous thumps on the flanks of the animals, just to wake them up. As in the case of the coal, there is no return cargo; the only load the beasts have to carry back is the sand-boys themselves, whose characteristic jollity usually breaks out when their staple is turned

into cash and their day's work is done. Then it is that they race with each other on the homeward route, "as jolly as sand-boys."

In country villages and hamlets we sometimes find the donkey in clover, and see him at his very best. He is the pet of the small farmer's wife, and draws her dairy produce to the market, where he rivals the pats of butter in plumpness. Or he is some well-to-do dame's substitute for a pony, and, glorious in japanned harness, glittering with buckles and studs of imitation silver, is driven out in the low four-wheel to pay morning visits. Or he is the property of the parson's little daughter, who humours him and allows him to have his own way, and only makes a show of beating him when the seductions of a fine juicy thistle draw his nose into the hedge and bring him to a standstill: and in either case he is sure to be the special charge of some boy whose pride it is to turn him out in spruce trim, and who exacts a wild gallop out of him now and then when opportunity offers.

Of the miscellaneous class of donkeys which turn up wherever one goes, and which belong to pedlars, tinkers, gipsies, hucksters, and vagabonds of all denominations or no denomination at all, there is little remarkable to be said beyond the fact that they have the ugly knack of getting into the parish pound, where they run the risk of famishing before their owner thinks it worth while to pay them out. In this luckless position they afford an admirable lesson of patience in misfortune, bearing their imprisonment and forced abstinence with far greater equanimity, it seems to us, than would their owners, for whose default they are vicarious sufferers.

But if the career of the donkey is suggestive of hard work, of privation, of neglect and suffering, it is also emphatically suggestive of pleasure and enjoyment, of seaside rambles, of forest picnics, of mountain-climbing, of rural excursions, and of holiday dissipation in all its phases. And this brings us to the other section of the subject, that of pleasure. Wherever we go in search of recreation when the vacation comes, there is the donkey, and there is the donkey-boy with his sandy smock, his sunburnt face, his cudgel of office, and his sharp eye for the coppers. Look at the pair on Ramsgate sands, for instance, as they skirt the edge of the tide when the breakers come tumbling in and the foamy ooze swirls up beneath their feet. Donkey, if you could see him, may be as ragged as a whole ragged-school, as scarred as Munchausen, as old as Old Parr, and as lean and bony as Rosinante—but you can't see him; all these hypothetical shortcomings are covered with the white robe of innocence in the shape of a linen cloth, which envelopes him from shoulder to crupper. He knows there is an urchin on his back greedy for a gallop, or at least a trot; he knows that Bob is behind with that stout cudgel, but he is too sagacious to "put that and that together" and mend his pace accordingly. Obstinate! do you say? not a bit of it—why obstinate? He is merely philosophical: he has gone through all that before, you see, perhaps a thousand times, and he knows that if he were to be so insane as to gallop at the instigation of the cudgel, that youthful appetite on his back would but grow with what it fed on, and there would be no end to his galloping or cudgelling either. No! he plods on as he has done any time these twenty years—he knows that Bob knows what is to be got out of him, and what isn't, and that his rider is fast coming to the conclusion to which he is bound to arrive, viz., that he (donkey) will go his own pace, and that "it is no use knocking at that door any more." To say the truth, though Bob is liberal in demonstrations, out of regard

to the baksheesh, he is considerate in laying on, not only because he has no wish to increase his own speed from walking to running, but also out of regard for his old dumb companion and fellow-labourer.

When bound for inland excursions the seaside donkey works under higher pressure than he does upon the sea-marge; still he seems to relish the change from the soft wet sands to the hard dry road, and at times will even break out into a trot as if to show his mettle. When harnessed with a yokefellow in a light carriage, he has a tendency to run into the ditch either to right or left, and if his companion is of the same mind, into the ditch he goes twice or thrice in a mile, when the equipage has to be pulled out and start afresh. This disagreeable contingency, however, may be obviated by yoking two of the long-ears of opposite tendencies together, so that they may counteract and in a manner balance each other—a policy, we imagine, applicable in other cases besides donkey-driving, and worth resorting to for the sake of avoiding the extremes of party.

As a coadjutor in picnic excursions, donkey is often indispensable, especially when the route boasts no practicable road for a wheeled carriage. Then he carries a pair of panniers in which are stowed away the jars, bottles, pies, loaves, biscuits, the kettle for cooking, with the knives, forks, dishes, and et ceteras not to be done without on such occasions. Marvellously pleasant it is, when the weather is in laughing humour, to unbend and give a loose to the frolic of the hour amid the cool shadows of the greenwood; only, let us impress a word of caution on madcap parties bent on such indulgences. Be sure you tie up the donkey, that he may be forthcoming on the return journey. From want of such precautionary measure, it happened this very last summer that a party of picnickers had to load themselves with their own baggage, pots and all, on their return route—Mr. Donkey having preferred to walk back unhampered, and quietly betaken himself home while nobody was caring about him.

Sagacious donkeys are to be met with at times on the breezy slopes of Malvern—sagacious, that is, in sparing themselves unnecessary trouble. You engage them, of course, to carry you from the base to the summit, and having settled the preliminaries, away you start; but about halfway up your steed surprises you by slipping out from under the saddle, and leaving you foundered midway with that between your legs; in which enviable position you have the pleasure of overhearing some complimentary criticisms from the spectators upon your elegant style of assmanship. If you take a carriage and pair, the pair may chance to conspire against you, and come to a deadlock far short of the goal, when you have either to sit there in durance, or to accept the boy's suggestion and walk the remainder of the distance. Equal sagacity, though we have heard it called by other names, is sometimes manifested by the much-enduring beasts of Blackheath, Hampstead Heath, Epping Forest, and other London-haunted localities. It is shown in perfection by the animal's taking to kicking, jibbing, shying, and even rolling, as soon as you have prepaid his hire, and continuing these peculiarities until you decide, as you very soon do, to have no more to do with him. How far this is due to his natural sagacity, and how far to the training of his owner—who in those resorts is not the genuine donkey-boy, but a sort of outcast of the gipsy race—we leave the reader to determine.

Here we shall draw bridle, not because we have exhausted the subject—for, as everybody knows, there need be no end to a chapter on donkeys—but because we have got to the end of our tether.

Varieties.

AMERICAN ANTIQUITIES.—At the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, recently held in the city of Chicago, many of the papers indicated considerable activity in the researches into the activity and character of the early races of men who inhabited America. Colonel Charles Whittlesey, in a paper on the "Geological Evidences of Man's Antiquity in the United States," maintained that four American races preceded the red man: first, the mound-builders; secondly, a race in the territory now called Wisconsin; third, a warlike race in the region south of Lakes Ontario and Erie; and, fourth, a religious people in Mexico. Pottery, arrow-heads, etc., have been found in conjunction with and beneath the mastodon and megatherium. Human remains have also been found during excavations at New Orleans at a depth of sixteen feet. Mr. Foster exhibited a copper knife found in New Orleans, which he believed was a relic of the mound-builders. A water-jug, surmounted by a human head, and a statuette of a captive, with his hands bound behind him, both from Peru, and evidently of extreme antiquity, attracted much attention. It may also be mentioned that the recent explorations of Mr. E. G. Squiers in Peru, and the curious photographs of ancient temples, dolmens, etc., which he has brought back, have renewed some old theories as to a connection in origin between the earliest inhabitants of America and those of the oriental countries.

MR. RUSKIN AND THE JEWS.—Mr. Ruskin recently wrote a letter addressed to the query, "Is England Big Enough?" in which the distinguished art critic made use of the following illustration:—"A youth at college loses his year's income to a Jew; but the Jew must spend it, instead of him. Misery or not, the day must come when his hands relax." Mr. Barnett, of Bowden, thinking this a blow aimed with needless severity at his nation, addressed a letter, which we find too long for quotation, to Mr. Ruskin, in the course of which he says:—"I do not for a single moment presume to question the authority of a gentleman of your high moral and literary reputation. I merely notice you drifting, free of animus, no doubt, into a practice savouring of the dark ages." We give Mr. Ruskin's brief rejoinder:—"Denmark Hill, August 12, 1868.—Sir,—Permit me, in reply to your courteous letter, to assure you that I had no purpose of suggestion injurious to your nation when I employed the word 'Jew' for 'usurer' in the letter you refer to. But you must remember that the Gentile prejudice which was appealed to, and rendered almost ineffaceable by the greatest of our writers, is founded not only on the history of your nation, but on the peculiarity of its law. For as the Jews are forbidden by their law to take usury of each other, but may take it of Gentiles, the fact of their ever taking it is virtually a profession of hostility to us, and eternal separation from us, which we are too apt, in thought, and sometimes in word, to answer with reproach. You are wholly at liberty to make any use you please of this letter. I am, sir, your faithful servant, J. RUSKIN."

THE CLIPPER RACE FROM CHINA.—This year the Ariel was the first of the competing clippers from China. The Ariel left Foo-Choo-Foo on the 28th of May, in company with the Taeping and the Sir Launcelot. She was built in 1865 by Messrs. Steele & Co., of Greenock, and is 853 tons burden. Last year the main struggle was between the Ariel and the Taeping. The Taeping arrived at the London Docks on the 14th September, and the Ariel on the 23rd; but as the former sailed from Foo-Choo on the 4th June, and the latter on the 13th, the Ariel claimed to have won in actual speed, doing the distance in 103 days against 104. In 1866 the Taeping did the distance (14,000 miles) in 99 days, entering the docks only half an hour in advance of the Ariel, and an hour and three quarters in advance of the Serica. From May 28, the day on which the Ariel started this year, to the 4th September, is 99 days.

COST OF A GENERAL ELECTION.—The actual expenditure has been roughly stated at two millions sterling, but the published returns, as presented to Parliament in the session of 1866, give it at rather over one-third of that sum. These, however, were very defective. They did not include the expenses of three counties and eleven boroughs in England, one county and four boroughs in Wales, one county in Scotland, and thirteen counties and three boroughs in Ireland. There was another serious omission, for in many cases the