

Growth.

The Stream

Yes, build your dam as high as you can. You think it is small, but I'll tell you all I'll get over it. Over just below And make your wheel buzz down below You can't stop me while water flows, I may be a river yet—who knows?

The Acorn.

See how the brown mould over me sits, Bury me deeper 'til leaves in drifts; Run on here, deep out of night, Where it is dark—as dark as night, You can't hide me while acorns grow—I'll be an oak tree the next you know

The Boy.

Keep me in dresses, and play I'm a girl; Keep my long hair nicely in curl; Run on here, deep out of night, And some bright day I'll be a man, The world will know me—that's what I said— For I've a thinker in my head

OUR PERIODICALS:

Table listing various magazines and their prices, including 'The Best, the cheapest, the most entertaining, the most popular' and 'The Weekly Family'.

WILLIAM BRIGGS, Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto. C. W. Coats, 2115 St. Catharines St., S. F. Hewart, Wadby Park Book Room, Halifax, N.S., and others.

Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK Rev. W. H. Whitrow, D.D., Editor. TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 30, 1899.

SOME QUEER CUSTOMS OF THE JAPANESE.

By MISS RICHARDSON.

In making their clothes the costliest material is often put in for lining, and the largest patterns, widest stripes, and brightest colours are used for the babies. It used to be the custom for a married woman to keep her teeth blackened. But now we see only old women with black teeth now. I think the custom is not followed now by women when they marry. The women do not have their hair combed more than twice a week. The feet are round-shaped and pigeon-toed, not from any physical cause, but because they deem it more becoming. The babies are carried on the back instead of in the arms. They do not wear shoes, and do take off their shoes when they go into the house. Foreign dress is fast being adopted by the men, but I am speaking of the Japanese customs where they have not adopted anything foreign.

In addressing a letter it is not Mr. John Smith, No. — Street, — City, — State, but, State, city, street, number, Saint John, Mr. —. And the writer's name and the postage stamp are placed on the back of the envelope. Directions are not north-east and south-west, but east-north and west-south. In writing a column of accounts the prices come before the names of articles. Books begin at the back and so the fairs is where our title-page is. Each line reads from the top to the bottom, and the pages from right to the left. The footnotes are put in at the top, and the bookmarks are placed in so that they show at the bottom.

They think foreigners very filthy because they do not bathe each day, they have public baths where men, women, and children bathe together, and any number will use the same bath during the day. So you can imagine how clean the water is in Japan—but they have a bath every day, and the foreigners do not. When a person wants to buy land, or do other business, he does not go to the

man, and make his own bargain, but gets some one to go for him; and usually the "go-between," as he is called, gets some one else to go for him. So that by the time he has made a bargain, it has passed through a number of hands, and, of course, each wants some pay for his work. If a servant wants a place—he sends some one else to see about it instead of the courtship and arrangement.

When a woman marries and takes a man's name she must go to his home to be married. No matter if he does live in a distant city, she must go for him. Often if there are no boys in the family, they adopt a son by marrying him to one of the daughters, and then he takes her name and goes to her house to be married. The courtship and arrangement for marriage are not carried on by the young people themselves, but they have their go-betweens do all that.

Japanese pull their boats up on the shore stern first, and they are rowed scullped from behind instead of the side. Carpenters work the lumber while it is wet. Should it happen to get dry before they want to use it, they soak it in water before working it up into furniture or building material. No wonder then, is it, that furniture and things shrink when kept in warm, dry rooms? Things do not shrink in them. The houses, coal fire, and the houses are cold and damp. The saws and planes are pulled toward one instead of being pushed from one. The kitchen fire is in the front, and that they have is a little charcoal fire, and the houses are cold and damp. The saws and planes are pulled toward one instead of being pushed from one. The kitchen fire is in the front, and that they have is a little charcoal fire, and the houses are cold and damp.

In the barn the horses are backed into the stable and tied by ropes from each side of the head out to the sides of the stalls, and fed from a bucket suspended in what to them is the front, but what to us is the back of the stall. The man mounts from the right side, and the horses' manes are on the left. Instead of reining the horse's head up, they rein it down, and the horses are led, not driven.

They pick and eat fruit and vegetables green, and let fish lie around until it is stale before eating. One kind, however, they always eat fresh, for they eat them alive just as they catch them by the hand, or they fry them in fish.

Custom and location determine who are one's neighbours. Some places, one on either side, and the three opposite; in other places the number is as high as seven. The custom is situated being one's neighbours. When a person moves into another neighbourhood, the neighbours do not call first, but the newcomer must call on the neighbours first, and give some house money. The amount depends upon the locality; sometimes it is three sen for each neighbour, and sometimes more.

In summer they wash their clothes and hang them on bamboo poles to dry. The winter kimono are lined and wadded with cotton; these they rip up before washing; as each piece is washed it is stretched upon the white wet, and then it need no ironing.

Even in nature some things are reversed. Most of the maples are more like shrubs than trees, and have delicate leaves, many about the size of skeletons. Some have bright red leaves all summer. On the other hand, the oleanders and camellias are like trees. Muskweeds are more like big cucumbers, while perennials have large, round skeletons. Instead of the peach and cherry bearing luscious fruit they spend all their strength in blossoming. The flowers are large, double, fragrant, and from pure white to dark red in colour. —Our Church Record.

"GUMPTION" AND A FILE.

If a boy has any "mechanical faculty," if it comes to him to use tools, let him be thankful. It is sometimes called—"gumption." It is a gift of nature, and is not to be cultivated, but will serve its possessor many a good turn, though it may never serve him quite so well as it served a man who tells this story in the Cleveland Plain-Dealer. He opened a door for himself in a really striking manner. "When I was fourteen years old," he says, "it became necessary for me to go out into the world and earn my share of a dollar a week, and walked in with small success for a week or two, and then I saw a card hanging in a store window: 'Boy wanted.' 'I pulled down my hair, brushed the front of my jacket, and walked in. 'Do you want a boy?' I asked of the clerk. 'No, back office,' he said. 'I walked back to the little den with a high parting around it, and pushing

open the door, which I noticed was slightly ajar, cap in hand, I stepped in. It was a child's day in November, and before I had time to get my hat, and he was bending over a desk, I turned to close the door. It squeaked horribly as I pushed it shut, and then I found that the door was not fastened so that the socket which should have caught the latch was a trifle too high. I was a boy of some mechanical genius, and I noticed what the trouble was immediately. 'I came to see you to learn to close doors?' said the man at the desk. 'I turned around quickly. 'At home, sir.' 'Well, what do you want?' 'I want to see about you about the boy wanted,' I answered. 'Oh!' said the man, with a grunt. He seemed rather gruff, but somehow his crisp speech didn't discourage me. 'Sit down,' he added. 'I'm busy.' 'I looked back at the door. 'If you don't mind,' said I, 'and if a little noise won't disturb you, I'll fix that door while you're gone.' 'All right, go ahead.' 'I had been sharpening my skates that morning, and the short file I used was so long that it didn't fit. I took it off and filed down the brass socket so that the latch fitted nicely. I closed the door two or three times to see that it was all right. When I put my file back in my pocket, I saw that the man at the desk was staring at me. 'Any parents?' he asked. 'Mother,' I answered. 'Have her come in here with you at two o'clock,' he said, and turned back to his writing.

"At twenty-five I was a partner in the house, at thirty-five I had a full interest; and I have always attributed my success to my father's recommendation. I then had in my possession—the file.—Youth's Companion.

A HASTY WISE.

By ADA DUTTON COLE. Jessal seated at the table, pouring; Nannie and Carrie enter. Nannie—Wise, Jessal, you look cross. Jessal—No wonder, am cross. Carrie—That is too bad, for we came to take you with us. But what is the matter? J.—Oh, everything; I just wish I was in China. J.—And do you think you would be happier there? J.—I don't know, but I should hope I wouldn't have to run on errands all the time. N.—Perhaps your feet would be so crippled that you couldn't. I am glad I live in a country where girls are well cared for and their feet are not. J.—Yes, Jessie dear, you do care; you are out of temper now, but come with us and learn of the children who are less favoured than we are.

—What are you going? N.—To our Girls' Missionary Band. J.—I don't want to go, there isn't any fun, is there? Besides, I've heard papa say that this kind of work is very big. N.—We don't want smoky blazes, only the pure, clear light of Jesus' love shining into all hearts, and that is why we meet to pray for our world. J.—I had been with us last Saturday, you wouldn't want to be in China. N.—No, indeed, our teacher told us all about it; if you were there your father and mother would love you, and you wouldn't be Jessie Cornell either, you would be No. 2 and Allie would be No. 1, for the Chinese don't think girls worth naming.

J.—How silly! I am as good as Fred, any day. C.—But the Chinese wouldn't think so, sometimes they kill the girl babies. N.—And your own father may have only a child, meaning Fred, for you and Allie wouldn't count. C.—And Fred would go to school, but there are not many schools for girls. Then if your father should die, your mother would have to obey Fred just as she minds her now. J.—The idea of my dear, good mother obeying her son. C.—That is Chinese; now don't you wish to be in China? J.—If I was a woman I would go there and teach them better. N.—That would be running on a big errand, would it not, Jessal, and you would be in China to escape errands, you know. J.—That isn't fair, Nannie, to tease me so; I didn't know about Chinese girls when I made that silly wish. I do wish I was good enough to help.

Q.—You don't have to wait until you are big; you can help now. J.—How? What can I do? N.—Come with us to our meeting; we give our prayers, and besides we are earning money to pay part of the expenses of a dear missionary woman who has left her home and gone to foreign lands to teach the people of our Saviour.

Q.—I should like to go. I'll ask mamma if I may give my half-dollar I was saving for a doll. I don't need a new doll as much as the Chinese girls need to be taught. C.—I am so glad our teacher says that if we cannot go abroad ourselves we can send these Gospel tidings to "every creature." Let us sing: "Christ to-day is giving thee Harvest work beyond the sea. While already is the field, First eternal it should yield. All the fields of earth are white, Hosts are crying, 'Give us light.' Spread the truth and ceaseless pray, Christ will haste his promised day."

JUNIOR SUGGESTIONS.

JUNIOR FINANCES. Train the Juniors to give systematically. Youth is the time to learn the grace of giving, so that when they are older it will be a "habit crystallized." The open meetings of the Junior society may be made an opportunity for parents to help their children to give. The Juniors rely on this, but rather emphasize the systematic gifts of money by the Juniors themselves.

CONSECRATION SERVICE. Concert repetition or chanting of the pledge is a good exercise for the consecration service, or some games suggestive of the thought of such a service, as:

"I will go where you want me to go, Lord, Over river or mountain or sea; I will say what you want me to say, Lord, I will be what you want me to be. Whenever you specially will listen, I will read your sweet words every day. And belong to you only and always, At my home, in my work, in my play."

THE DAILY BIBLE-READING.

Make prominent in your talks about the daily life of the private devotee. To encourage the Juniors ask all to study the same portions of Scripture. For variety or extra work, take something beside the topic readings. Have also an appeal series for the interest and gather concentration of attention as studying individual verses will not do. As this is considered to be the model way for Bible studies the Juniors, why not try it with the Juniors?

MISSIONARY ROLL-CALL.

In answer to the roll-call ask the Juniors to bring some missionary fact about the workers in their own church fields. This will help to make them familiar with the names of the missionaries and of the fields in which they toil. Have also an appeal series for the interest and gather concentration of attention as studying individual verses will not do. As this is considered to be the model way for Bible studies the Juniors, why not try it with the Juniors?

ONE NEW THING.

The interest in your meetings will depend on whether you teach the Juniors at least one new thought at each meeting, or give them only one kind of act to put into practice through the next week. Your Juniors must be stimulated to new thought and action if they are going to grow in service and a live enthusiastic interest is to be maintained. Keep your eyes and ears open for new plans, and then put them into practice.

THE PLANS OF THE JUNIORS.

Ask the Juniors for suggestions, five minutes at business meetings might be profitably used for this purpose. Sometimes have it as an open parliament, and occasionally announce it the week previous, and have the Juniors bring their suggestions written on slips of paper and drop them into a basket. Then have some one read them and adopt the occasional announcements to be carried out the next week. The Juniors will be more interested in their own plans, and it will help to make them ingenious.—Epworth Herald.

It is always safe to take it for granted that, as yourself, so others are trying to do their best. Showcoming is no sin, but the unwillingness to be whipped is never whipped in—Wara.