

HOME JOURNAL

Life, Literature and Education

IN THE WORLD OF LITERATURE AND ART.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier has been consulted in regard to the transformation of the Plains of Abraham, near Quebec, into a National Park.

The death of Mr. Horatio N. Courtlandt in Simcoe, Ontario, ended an active life of eighty-one years, over sixty of which had been spent as a teacher in public and high schools of Ontario.

The people of North Dakota are planning to erect a monument in honor of President Roosevelt on the campus of the North Dakota Agricultural College. The president once owned a ranch in Dakota.

The following have won Queen's University theology scholarships: W. D. McIntosh, North Bruce; W. Stott, B.A., New Westminster, B. C.; G. D. Robinson, Blackfalds, Alta.; J. G. Shaver, Kingston, Ont.; J. McAskell, B. A., Highgate, Ont.; R. H. Leggett, Millbrook, Ont.

Hoppner's portrait of Mrs. Simpson, was offered at auction. The highest bid was 4,600 guineas, and the picture was withdrawn. It will be recalled that Hoppner's portrait of Lady Louise Manners was sold at auction in 1901 and brought 14,050 guineas.

Sir Lewis Morris, the noted Welsh poet, is dead at the age of seventy-four. Beside his literary works he was a pioneer in the movement for education in Wales. His chief works are the "Songs of Two Worlds," "Songs Unsung," "The Ode of Life," "Songs of Britain," "A Vision of Saints."

A unique branch of Christian work is being undertaken by the Broadway Baptist church of Winnipeg. Miss Brown, one of the members, who is also a teacher in the Deaf and Dumb institute, has organized a class of deaf mutes to meet at the church every Sunday evening, when she interprets to them the service in the mute language. One corner of the audience room is separated from the main body of the church by a screen and Miss Brown and her class are so placed behind this that while the class may witness the preacher the rest of the audience is not disturbed by the motions of the interpreter. This is the only service of the sort in the city, and as the class is open to all deaf mutes, it is hoped that others will join the number who now meet every Sunday evening.

THE PLACE OF THE AGED.

A noticeable feature of this Western country to the new comer is the small number of old people to be seen. There are children galore, young men and women in plenty, and large numbers of people in the prime of life,—but there are very few really old people, and the newness of the land as a dwelling place is sufficient explanation of the scarcity.

But they are missed; and just how much they are missed does not come home to the mind except on special occasions. It was one of those occasions on Friday, November 8th, in Grace Church, Winnipeg, when a service was held for aged people by Wilbur Chapman's evangelistic band. Careful arrangements had been made by a committee and the old people came,—some from the hospitals, some from abodes of comfort and more from homes where old and helpless age feels the burden of its infirmities. The street cars, automobiles, carriages, wheeled chairs and the strong arm of youth lent their aid in bringing the feeble to the service, the first that some of

them had been able to attend in many years. The floor of the great church was given over to them, the back seats and the galleries being left for the more youthful whose hearing was not dulled and whose steps were still sure.

As the crowd gathered they sang old hymns—favorites for which no books and spectacles were needed—"Shall We Gather at the River?" and "The Sweet Bye and Bye." As the music rose softly all over the church the sun shone through the great windows and lighted up a scene that brought a lump to the throat and dimness to the eyes as one looked down upon it. The kindly touch of the light fell upon white hair and trembling hands; it gilded the little old lady richly dressed with lace, chiffon and fresh frills making her a dainty and lovable sight, but it glowed as warmly upon the shaggy hair, shabby dress and pitiful attempt at adornment of her aged sister in the pew in front. There were old men who had held high positions honorably but had laid down the burdens for younger fellows to pick up without losing the bearing of those who have shouldered great responsibilities. There were old men whose lives had been a constant plod, a steady round of toil in a narrow circle without opportunity, and there were those whose lives had been lived in the shadow of disease and sin and poverty and who would gladly lay down the body which had borne it all.

After the reading and exposition of the Shepherd's Psalm came the address, not of warning or advice or pity, but a tribute to the possibilities of old age. "Old age," the speaker said, "is the cream of life." The dimming eye kept out a sight of things better unseen, but the spiritual vision was cleared to see the King in His beauty and the City afar off; the physical ear was dulled to sounds better unheard, but the hearing was quickened to hear the still small voice and the music of the new song. The little children needed the loving sympathy of the grandmother and grandfather who were coming back to childhood again; the young men and women needed in their strength and vigor the restraining hand of the aged to curb their tendency to boisterousness; the workers needed to have the helplessness of age before them to teach them gentleness in the midst of the rush for wealth and position. The world needs all its old people and they should be tenderly cherished, not alone for what they have done, but for what they are doing.

THE ACTOR'S LESSON FOR THE PREACHER.

When I went to school, during the occasional absences of the principal his assistant conducted the morning devotions. On those rare mornings we *prayed*, on the others we had *prayers*. The service was of the simplest, just the Shepherd's Psalm and the Lord's Prayer, but so reverently and carefully voiced that the memory of it stayed with the students all day. There was no attempt on the leader's part at posing or creating an impression with tone or gesture, but he made voice and hand express what was in his heart and so his hearers were made to share the feeling. He preached a whole sermon to us in that five minutes.

The place of the reading of the scripture in a church service would seem to be a very unimportant one, if it is fair to judge from the way in which too often it is rendered. It gives one the impression that the main feature of the service is the sermon, to which the speaker will devote his oratorical powers with an ability one would not have suspected who had listened to the reading of the lesson. Yet, if a preacher could or would read the prodigal son to the erring, the 103rd psalm to the ungrateful or

the 14th of John to the grief-stricken, as these passages deserve to be read, he would not need to preach a sermon at all that day.

The preacher may learn a lesson here from the stage. The good actor can sway an audience to smiles and tears not so much by what he says but by the way in which he says it. For the time being he is the character he is representing, and it is his sincerity, his consciousness of himself swallowed up in the depths of the personality he is portraying, that holds the audience even when the actual words spoken are trivial and unimportant. What could the preacher not accomplish in impressing his people, if with the magnificent material at his command, he gave the same attention to comprehending the spirit of what he read and then to presenting it in such a manner that his hearers cannot help but comprehend its fullness also? He could make the Bible a new book to many who have read its pages and heard them read after a fashion from early youth, but who have had words presented to their ears rather than word-pictures to their minds. And the preacher could do this without overstepping the bounds of dignity prescribed for the pulpit, and without the least danger of becoming theatrical or melodramatic.

A minister, belonging to a ministerial association whose friendly relations made friendly criticism possible, once brought up this subject with his brethren of the other denominations. They were so convinced of the correctness of his statements that they formed an elocution class, invited in the Sunday-School superintendents, obtained an excellent teacher and set themselves to learn how to read the Bible as it ought to be read. The church-goers in that town soon noticed the difference, and enjoyed the change without a critical analysis of wherein the difference lay. There was no longer the monotonous intoning, the stumbling and hesitancy, the disregard of punctuation, but the forceful musical presentation of truth by a man who was feeling them and was anxious to impress others with their solemnity.

STEALING AMONG CHILDREN.

It may be that the papers give it more prominence than ever before, but there appears to be an alarming prevalence of cases of stealing by children. Just last week a gang of Manitoba small boys were arrested for stealing from houses and carrying firearms. Because of their youth the police magistrate let them off with a warning, but inside of a week two of them were back, again accused of theft and sent to jail.

Jail is not the place for boys, but something must be done with them to prevent a continuance of their depredations. It is a question whether the whip judiciously applied would not be more merciful and more efficacious than a term in prison with habitual criminals. But, as in other forms of transgression, prevention is better than cure, and easier. The home and the school can do a great deal towards lessening this particular evil. Great care should be taken both by precept and example to inculcate a sound knowledge of the difference between mine and thine; brothers and sisters should be taught to respect one another's property rights even if it involves nothing more valuable than a marble or a pencil; and parents should be particularly careful not to be offenders themselves by using a child's possessions without replacing them, or borrowing money from his bank and neglecting to replace it.

Some children have a strong natural tendency to take what is not their own, and these should be specially watched. Temptations to offend in this direction should be removed if possible, but if the deed is committed the parent or teacher must not even in a single instance let it pass unproved or unpunished. Many faults of impulse and temper in children can afford to go unnoticed but only unhappiness can result from neglecting to check at its first appearance the tendency to take what is another's property.