

Our Young Folks.

THE DOOR TO THE HOUSE.

There were idle thoughts came in the door,
And warmed their little toes,
And did more mischief about the house
Than any one living knows.

They scratched the tables, and broke the chairs
And soiled the floor and wall,
For a motto was written above the door,
"There's a welcome here for all."

When the master saw the mischief done,
He closed it with hope and fear,
And he wrote above, instead, "Let none
Save good thoughts enter here."

And the good little thoughts came trooping in
When he drove the others out,
They cleaned the walls, and they swept the floor,
And sang as they moved about.

And last of all an angel came,
With wings and a shining face,
And above the door he wrote, "Here Love
Has found a dwelling place."

—Katharine Pyle.

RE GENUINE.

Said an old and successful teacher, recently. "One of the most disheartening traits of character observable in some boys and girls, is the disposition to be someone else, rather than themselves, to repudiate their own ideas, to cast a shadow over their own home-life and occupations, that they may ape the ideas, manners and performances of others."

To do this is surely a grave mistake, for one of the most charming things noticeable in creation, everywhere, is the infinite variety, the wonderful individuality of plants and animals, which make their study so interesting. We all admire the queen of flowers, yet if budding spring-time brought no pansies to talk to and love, no lillies-of-the-valley to cherish, but in their stead only the beautiful roses, would we not sorely miss our other little friends, and sigh for only a few forget-me-nots? The same variety and individuality that is seen in the lower animals and plants is needed among people for their mutual happiness and instruction.

Dear boy, dear girl, the world needs you individually! If there be anything wrong in your life, strive to make it right. It matters not how humble your origin, how plain your home, or what meagre advantages you have had, it is your privilege to think for yourself, to study thoughtfully, to put your theories into practice, noting the results. Be gentle, be teachable; let the light of all that's best and noblest quicken your vision, so that you can weed out the wrong habits, strengthen the good ones, and engraft upon your character all that is excellent and ennobling, making it a part of yourself, and not like a garment borrowed from a friend, whose use you but half understand.

WONDERFUL LENSES.

In 1843 a petty accident happened at Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass. A dinner-bell was broken, and the pieces of metal were carelessly thrown away. A student of more than average thoughtfulness picked up the pieces and carried them home. He put them in a crucible in the kitchen stove, and mentioned to his family the apparently unimportant circumstance that he was going to make a telescope.

His father did not discourage the aspiring boy, but became interested in his purpose, and gave his own trained genius to the accurate shaping and polishing of his son's reflector.

Thus, an accident to a dinner-bell was of value to science, for the boy astronomer became the head of a firm that makes the greatest refracting telescopes in the world.

Years passed. New systems and suns, new planets and satellites had been discovered. Great observatories had been built, when a group of Harvard students found themselves one day inspecting the unassuming shops in which were made the instruments by means of which these wonderful discoveries had become possible.

They were a rollicking lot of boys, just crossing the outer threshold of science. They stood, half carelessly, before a huge lens, forty inches in diameter and nearly an inch thick. The maker pointed to it with pride, but cautioned his visitors not to touch it.

"How long did it take the glass works to make this disk ready for polishing? Six months?" A student asked the question, as though he himself were giving the information.

"It took four years," said the telescope maker, quietly. "The workmen failed many times before they succeeded."

The boys uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"And how long will it take to polish it?" asked another.

"Two years. This forty-inch lens has a fifty-foot focus. That is, it must catch the rays of a star upon every point of its surface, and refract them to a common point exactly fifty feet away. If one ray falls but the breadth of a hair from that focal point, the glass is defective."

"But how can you do it?" asked one of the group, sobered by the thought of such a problem.

"With patience and without machinery," replied the lens-maker. "It is all done with the trained eye and a deft hand. A dab of beeswax here, a bit of rouge there, or the pressure of the thumb on the defective spot—that is all."

"Thumb?" exclaimed the thoughtful student. "Can you wear that flinty glass down with the bare thumb?"

The maker of the lenses, seeing that the student was the one in twelve—the earnest boy, the real seeker after truth—took him into another room, and, walking up to a table, showed him a lens that had been laid aside. Then the master gave the tempered glass a few sharp rubs with the thick of his thumb.

"If that had been a perfect lens," he said, with an authoritative smile, "the rubs would have changed its shape enough to ruin it, perhaps, beyond remedy."

The heart of the telescope and the heart of man have many points in common. It takes years of toil and patience to perfect either. Which needs the finer polishing—the lens or the soul? The one is made to reflect the stars; the other, God himself.

Spiritual and scientific laws are not so far apart, after all; and, perhaps, this incident of the wonderful lens will help us to realize the sensitiveness of our own hearts to benign or malign pressure.

TWO RULES.

"The Bible is so strict and old-fashioned," said a young man to a gray-haired friend, who was advising him to study God's Word if he would learn how to live. "There are plenty of books written nowadays that are moral enough in their teaching, and do not bind one down as the Bible."

The old merchant turned to his desk and took out two rulers, one of which was slightly bent. With each of these he ruled a line and silently handed the ruled paper to his companion.

"Well," said the lad, "what do you mean?"

"One line is not straight and true, is it? When you mark out your path in life, do not take a crooked ruler."

A BEIRUT BOY.

In Beirut, a city of far away Syria, there is a beautiful hospital for the care of unfortunate people who may be in need of such service as a hospital can bestow. It is in charge of a band of sisters of charity belonging to the Lutheran Church, and is called the Hospital of St. John. This building is just a short distance from the Presbyterian school, where that most delightful man, Dr. Jessup, so long presided, and who was there at the time the following incidents occurred.

The hospital is a great white structure, and is perfectly appointed in every way. Those who are able to pay for attention are expected to do so, but if they are too poor to pay, every care that their case demands is freely given.

The man-of-war to which I was attached, while lying in the harbour at Beirut, had a man on board who was suffering from a severe attack of inflammatory rheumatism, and he was taken to this hospital for treatment. Poor Sam Coles could not speak a word of German, the language of the nurses and doctors, nor of Arabic, that of most of the other patients; and though he had plenty of books and papers, and occasional visits from his shipmates, he was having rather a lonesome time of it till he became interested in a little Arab boy, who was there for treatment for a white swelling in his knee.

The poor little fellow at last had to have his leg taken off, and as Mr. Coles' case was a stubborn one, the two fellow-sufferers became great friends. The boy was keen, apt, and anxious to learn, and he soon became able to speak fairly good English. He was utterly penniless and his parents were very, very poor, but Mr. Coles shared his luxuries with him, so the probability is that he never lived so well in all his life as he did while at the hospital. They both got well about the same time, and Mr. Coles came back to the ship, where he had everything comfortable and necessary, but the little boy had to go back to a gloomy life, in a country where there is no such thing as Christian charity and pity among his own people.

Mr. Coles remembered him, however, and at the very first opportunity he rented a little store-room, a hole in a wall about as big as a show window, and started the lad as a fruit merchant. He put him under the care of the United States Consul, and told the missionaries there about him and sailed away.

The little merchant grew and prospered, and to-day he is one of the most influential and respected merchants of that great city. Best of all, he is a thorough Christian gentleman. His influence brought his father, mother and brothers into the church there, too. Through intense suffering he came forth to worldly prosperity and the blessings of Christianity. His pathway was a long, dark, cheerless one at first, but it ended in a glorious brightness at last.

TO-DAY

Hood's Sarsaparilla stands at the head in the medicine world, admired in prosperity, and envied in merit by thousands of would-be competitors. It has a larger sale than any other medicine. Such success could not be won without positive merit.

HOOD'S PILLS cure constipation by restoring the peristaltic action of the alimentary canal. They are the best family cathartic.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

Jan. 5,
1893.

REBUILDING THE TEMPLE.

Ezra iii.
i-13

GOLDEN TEXT.—They praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid — EZRA iii. 11.

INTRODUCTORY.

About 50,000 Jews returned from captivity in Babylon. It had taken them a long time to make the journey. They had to toil slowly along on foot, a distance of from 500 to 700 miles. Joyous as their deliverance was there were many hardships to be endured. Old people, women and children could not travel fast, and it is supposed that it took four months for the people to reach the end of their journey. Glad though they were to settle again in their own land, the sight that met them was one of desolation. The ruin made by Nebuchadnezzar's army remained.

I. The Altar Rebuilt.—In the seventh month of the Jewish year, corresponding to part of September and October in our calendar, the people assembled for the rebuilding of the altar, for the sacrificial offerings. At that season there were three important religious celebrations, the feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles. The people assembled with enthusiasm "as one man," they were one in sentiment and in purpose. Joshua, another form of the name Joshua, the high priest, as was fitting, took the lead in the work in which all were interested. He was the son of Josedeck, and his grandfather Seraiah was priest at the time when Jerusalem was destroyed. Another who took a prominent part in that day's work was Zerubbabel, the adopted son of his uncle, Shealtiel, who was the leader of the people in their deliverance from captivity. The rebuilding of the altar, the first thing in the work of restoration, was significant of the idea that spirituality of worship is of the first importance. The ruined walls of the temple could wait, but it was necessary that the altar should be erected and sacrifices symbolical of the atonement for sin, should be regularly offered in conformity with the law of God. "They set the altar on its basis," they rebuilt the altar on its former foundations. As every part of the arrangements for God's worship had been divinely prescribed to Moses, there was no desire to make any change. The restoration of the altar on its old foundations signified that the people were devoted to the religion they had professed before the captivity. Though the people were back in their own land, they were surrounded by hostile tribes, "fear was upon them because of the people of those countries." In seeking to set up the altar and worship God there they were putting themselves under His protection. Provision was at once made for the daily worship of God, "they offered burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord, even burnt offerings morning and evening."

II. Religious Celebrations Renewed.—The altar, no doubt, may have been ready for the offering of the sacrifices on the great Day of Atonement, which was celebrated on the tenth day of the month, but it is not here so stated. The Feast of Tabernacles, which was held five days later, is the one here specially mentioned. This festival was the national thanksgiving at the close of the harvest, hence it is sometimes called the feast of ingathering. It continued seven days, during which time the people dwelt in tabernacles, tents made with green boughs taken from trees. The eighth and last day of the feast was held as a holy convocation. At this particular celebration, the first that had been held there in seventy years, the people were particular in their manner of observing it. It was observed "according to the custom, as the duty of every day required." The sacrifices to be offered during this festival are detailed in Numbers xxix. 12-38. From that time onward the worship of God was publicly and regularly maintained. "The continual burnt offerings, both of the new moons and of all the set feasts of the Lord that were consecrated, and of everyone that offered a free will offering unto the Lord."

III. Restoring the Temple.—The restoration of public worship having been accomplished, the people and their leaders were alike anxious to see the temple rebuilt. They set about it at once. Skilled workmen were employed. Among those who returned from Babylon there would be many of this class. They were paid for their labour in money, while the workmen of Tyre and Sidon were paid in kind, as had been the case in the days of Solomon, when the temple was first built. Some of the Phœœcian workmen were engaged in cutting cedar trees on Lebanon, while others made them into rafts and floated them along the coast to Joppa, now Jaffa, the western terminus of the railway to Jerusalem. In those days the heavy timber was transported overland from Joppa to the sacred city. To carry on work on so great a scale much money would be required. The people themselves contributed liberally; and Cyrus, king of Persia, had made them generous grants. He had given them permission to rebuild the temple, the right to obtain the necessary material, and, no doubt, considerable money to aid them in their great enterprise. In the second year of their return in the month that corresponds to our month of May, the national leader, Zerubbabel, the high priest, Joshua, the priests and the Levites from twenty years old and upward, were all engaged in urging forward the work of reconstruction. As is customary in our own time in laying the foundation stones of churches and public buildings, the Jewish people made the laying the foundation stone of the temple an occasion of great rejoicing and ceremony. The people assembled when the priests, arrayed in their splendid robes, sounded their trumpets. The sons of Asaph, who had charge of the service of music, sounded their cymbals, and sang in turns psalms of thanksgiving to the Lord in the words that David had employed first when the ark was brought to Jerusalem. Give thanks unto the Lord; because He is good, for His mercy endureth forever. When the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the temple was completed, all the people assembled, responded with a shout of praise unto the Lord. The old men who had seen the first temple in all its splendour were overcome with emotion when they saw the preparations for the new building. They wept aloud. They could not forget that some of the special glories of the first temple would be wanting in the second. They could not command anything like the resources that were at the disposal of Solomon, when he engaged in its construction. The rest, and by far the larger portion of the assembled multitude, did not feel the distress that afflicted the old people. By their shouts of gladness they overbore the sounds of weeping. Gladness prevailed because there was now the prospect of a restored temple in which God, who had been merciful to them and had delivered them from a second bondage, could be worshipped as in the best days of their nation.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

The restored captives made a good beginning. Their first care was for the restoration of God's service. They built the altar on its former foundation.

By being deprived of their religious privileges in Babylon the restored captives had learned to value them. They re-established in their midst the daily public worship of God.

With gratitude and praise they laid with becoming ceremonies the foundation stone of the new temple, wherein the service of God, as He had appointed it, should be regularly maintained.