

length. 'I cast the deviding vote. It seems to me you're twins in more things than being born on the same day. Seems to me you've both done the hardest kind of jobs.'

'And it seems to me since Canal-Boat Kate is one and Canal-Boat Kate is another, and you two men are one and two at the same time, the thing is so mixed—'

The twins did not stop to hear the rest. Backs were flat in an instant. Over and over they rolled toward each other, and for a space of seconds Uncle Ebb could only see one kicking, squirming, whooping animal with four legs and no arms at all, for each man was trying to hug the breath out of the other. Each one knew his twin was the better man!

So they both saw the originals of the sketch—the old brown mare, the wife of the canal-boatman, whose name was Kate, too, the weather-beaten, beautiful, smelly, perfectly delicious old canal-boat—and all the rest of it.

### Do Your Best.

A Glasgow minister was moving along one of the streets meditating, and only half-conscious of where he was, and as he strode along he left his starchy clerical dignity behind him and began whistling a well-known tune, just as if he had been in the solitude of a Highland glen. A wee birkie of a street laddie followed his reverence closely up, noting his musical performance, and, on the first opportunity, put in—'I could do better than that.' 'Could you?' was the response. 'Let me hear you.' Out strikes the laddie with the tune, and the minister had to admit he had done better than himself. 'Yet,' added he, 'I could do better than that,' and started again. The wee man, standing open-mouthed, waited to the end of the clerical performance, and then burst in reprovingly—'But hoo did you do't like yon, when you could do't like that?' We should always do our best, as we never know who is watching to copy or improve us.—Temperance Leader.

### Pen and Ink Culture.

'I don't see any use in so much writing!' exclaimed a young girl student. 'Writing—writing on topics I don't know anything about, care anything about, or have any use for.'

Her aunt, Mrs. S—, a successful author, smiled; for she had memories of rebellious school days.

'Well, let's see,' she finally said. 'What are the advantages of much writing for a young student? First, it improves the penmanship.'

A merry peal of laughter stopped her short.

'Papa, for instance. He has done nothing but write up law papers for twenty years, and see 'he beautiful result,' holding up a paternal epistle which indeed rivaled Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Mrs. S— joined in the laugh, and acknowledged her point not well taken.

'Second it improves one's grammar. In speaking the words usually go out on the air and melt into nothingness, while only the thought transmitted remains. But in the writing the words abide to stare one in the face, with disagreeing substantives and predicates, nouns and pronouns, verbs and adverbs, jarring upon one's nerves, and crying persistently for harmony.

This was admitted, and, warming with her subject, she proceeded:

'Writing enlarges and enriches one's vocabulary. When the words lie before us in black and white we note the tiresome repetition of adjectives; we feel the lack of exact meaning in some words employed, and we seek the dictionary for relief.

'Writing aids greatly in concentration. How a bit of paper and a pen or pencil will hold the mind to a subject till one is utterly oblivious of passing millinery and buttoned cadets—a pair of rosy hands covered her lips here, and she was forced to admit that she was straining this point. But unabashed, she continued:

'Writing puts thoughts into concrete shape. It does for the thinker what plaster does for the sculptor. It shapes his thought so he can handle it, manipulate it, beautify it, perfect it.

'Then,' Mrs. S— went on, after a moment, 'the habit of writing proves a great safety valve in times of indignation and anger. When I am attacked with righteous or unrighteous indignation, I just write it out fully and minutely; then I lock the document up for a whole week (this is an imperative requisite), and at the end of that time I invariably burn the paper and my wrath.

'Lastly, and best of all to me,' she went on softly, 'there are things which cannot be spoken—sweet thoughts, which are shy; tender thoughts all a-tremble in speech; sad thoughts too full of tears for words.'

They sat in silence a minute, and then, with the energy of the twentieth-century girl, she inquired: 'What form of writing is most helpful?'

'Prose usually for the beginner. But for real mental gymnastics, pruning superfluities, strengthening the style and fitting words, tuning the ear to rhyme and rhythm, beautifying form and figure, give me poetry. It is the best mental gymnasium.'—'Kind Words.'

### Ping-ti's Discoveries.

(Ruth Winant, in the 'Sunday School Times'.)

Grandfather Fang had died, and that left thirteen-year-old Ping-ti and his grandmother who was over eighty, alone in the wee wooden house on the hillside of Nan-yang. Alone, that is, save for the occasional visits of Uncle Han-chu. This was two years ago, when outside their home, by his grandfather's grave, faithful grandma Fang daily burned paper money, so that her husband might not be in want in the spirit world to which she supposed he had gone. And to his grave she hobbled twice a day on her three and a half inch feet to leave him a bowl of food lest he be hungry; while before a piece of wood, called an ancestor tablet, her oldest son, Han chu bowed reverently upon each visit, to worship his father's spirit.

Ping-ti was a live boy, and he doubted the commonsense of these doings. In the dead of a memorable night he crept into the yard where the grave lay, to see if grandfather Fang's spirit rose from the ground to eat the rice and fruit placed there, or, with trembling fingers to grasp the paper money. How creepy he felt out alone under the stars! He never forgot it. Ten minutes, twenty minutes—still he watched, straining his eyes in the darkness. An hour passed, and in the dead silence a frightened rat scurrying across the ground alone broke the stillness, and made Ping-ti's heart beat like a trip-hammer. But no angry spirit came to condemn the midnight-watcher, or to take the food prepared.

Ping-ti slipped back into the house, convinced that he was a discoverer, and that his discovery that spirits didn't need things of this world, was one that would shake the empire were it known.

A few days after this the tenants at the end of the winding street moved out, and in the rubbish left Ping-ti found an ancestral tablet.

'I wonder,' he thought, 'if one of a man's three spirits really lives in that piece of wood, after his death?'

Often before he had wondered when he saw Uncle Han-chu bow before the tablet of his grandfather. Now, as he questioned, he grew more bold, and finally decided to light the tablet and see what would happen. Gingerly he started the flame, but the wood was wet, and it sputtered and groaned like a living thing, until in terror the boy dropped it and fled, as if for his life. Then, ashamed of his folly, he came back, a few moments later, to find the revered tablet a mound of smouldering ashes. Spellbound, he watched them, then with a twig poked the dying embers, but no angry spirit jumped forth to denounce his desecration.

So Ping-ti recorded discovery number two; that ancestors do not live in tablets of wood; a discovery that would touch almost every Chinese home.

This was the beginning. The end came when a missionary, a woman almost as old as grandmother Fang, came to tell them what did happen to those who die; and she told of the place Jesus has gone to prepare, a happy home with every need supplied. And

both grandmother Fang and Ping-ti believed it, nodding approvingly as the messenger of Jesus told the glad news; and they accepted Jesus Christ that day.

Then no more need sham money be burned at the grave of the grandfather. No more need the tired, tiny feet of Grandmother Fang climb steep steps leading away from the house to the grave. And no more did the ancestral tablet reign supreme in the home. But on the shelf where the tablet had stood, Ping-ti, one Sunday, placed seven chopsticks. Each day he removed one, until there was only one stick left. By this these two new disciples knew what day was the Lord's day, for the stores and theatres do not close at Nan-yang on Sunday. Thus Ping-ti made another discovery; and never again was the Sabbath forgotten in that home.

Just one more discovery. It was in the early morning, and Ping-ti, Bible in hand, was spelling out the words, and looking for a verse to learn, when he found this:

'For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.'

'Why, that is what Ping-ti means, the "Prince of Peace," the boy shouted.'

And with a wild whoop of delight, he bounded into his grandmother's room exclaiming:

'I've made a discovery: Jesus and me have the very same name!'

And Grandmother Fang's joy was so great that she never even stopped to correct his grammar.

### What Two Blind Men Couldn't See.

There was a friend of mine preaching on Glasgow Green a few years ago, when some one from the crowd called out, 'May I speak?' After getting permission he pushed his way through the crowd, until he was standing on the platform beside my friend.

'Friends,' he exclaimed, 'I do not believe what this man has been talking about. I do not believe in a hell, I do not believe in a judgment, I do not believe in a God, for I never saw any of them.'

He continued talking in this way for a while, when another voice was heard from the crowd, 'May I speak?' The infidel sat down, and the next man began:

'Friends, you say there is a river running not far from this place, the river Clyde. There is no such thing; it is not true. You tell me that there are grass and trees growing around me where I now stand; there is no such thing; that also is untrue. You tell me that there are a great many people standing here. Again I say, that is not true; there is no person standing here save myself. I suppose you wonder what I am talking about; but, friends, I was born blind. I never have seen one of you, and while I talk, it only shows that I am blind, or I would not say such things. And you,' he said, turning to the infidel, 'the more you talk, the more it exposes your own ignorance, because you are spiritually blind, and cannot see. Dear friends, try the life that Christ lived. There you will find life and love and everlasting joy.'—R. B. Stewart.

### Loyal Canadians.

We all knew we were loyal on Victoria Day, didn't we? with flags and banners and fireworks and noise. But there was something deeper than that in many a heart, a thought perhaps not clearly defined, but which, put into words, might well be 'Our late beloved Queen—we honor her memory.' 'Our King—God bless him! May we be worthy of the heritage of the past and measure up to the responsibilities of the present.'

One immediate service our boys and girls can do for their country is to see that EVERY SCHOOL IN CANADA has a good flag. If you are not provided already, we'll help you get one WITHOUT A CENT OF OUTLAY. And we will supply any home on the same basis. Write to our Flag Dept., and let us tell you our plan. See advt. on another page.