

Our Young Folks.

WHAT ONE CAN INVENT.

Once upon a time there was a young man who was very anxious to be a poet; he wanted to become one by the following Easter, then he would marry and live by making poetry, which, as he knew, consisted merely in invention. But he could not invent. He was born too late; every subject had been taken up before he came into the world; everything in it had been put into poetry and written about.

"Ah! those lucky fellows who were born a thousand years ago!" said he. "How easily could they become immortal! Lucky were they, even, who were born a hundred years ago, when there was still something left to write poetry about! Now-a-days the world is completely used up as far as poetry is concerned; how should I write any into it?"

He mused over it so long that he became a poor creature, quite ill and stupid. Not a doctor could do him any good; but possibly the wise woman might. She lived in the little house close by the field-gate, which she used to open for those who drove or rode that way. But she knew well enough how to open more than the gate; she was wiser than the doctor who rides in his own carriage and pays title-tax.

"I must away to her," said the young man.

The house she lived in was small and cleanly, but a dreary place to look at; not a tree nor a flower-grove near it. There was a beehive just outside the door—very useful; a small potato-field—very useful; and a ditch with a sloe-tree which had finished blossoming, and bore fruit such as draws the mouth together if one tastes it before it has been nipped by the frost.

"Here I see the embodiment of an unpoetic age!" thought the young man; and it was at any rate thought—a grain of gold that he had gained at the wise woman's threshold.

"Write that down," said she; "crumbs are bread too. I know why you came here; you can't invent, and yet you want to be a poet by Easter."

"Everything is written down," said he; "our time is not like the olden time."

"No," said the woman; "in the olden time, wise women were burnt, and poets went about with empty stomachs and a holes at their elbows. The present time is very good—indeed, it is better than any—but you do not look at the matter in the proper way; you have not opened your ears, and you never say your prayers at an evening. There is an abundance of all manner of things to tell and to write poetry about, when one only knows how to tell them. You may extract them from the growth and produce of the earth, draw them from the running or the still water; but you must understand all about it—understand how to catch a snubman. Now, do just try my spectacles for once; put my ear-trumpet to your ear, then say your prayers, and leave off thinking about yourself."

The last was very difficult to do—more than a wise woman could expect.

He took the spectacles and the ear-trumpet, and forthwith was posted in the middle of the potato field. She put a large potato into his hand; there was a sound inside it, then came a song with words, a potato history; very interesting—a story of common life in ten chapters; ten lines, however, were enough.

And what sang the potato?

It sang about itself and its family; about the arrival of the potato in Europe, the prejudice it had experienced and the sufferings it had undergone before it stood acknowledged, as it is now, to be a greater boon than a lamp of gold.

"We were distributed by order of the king at all the town-halls; a circular was sent about getting forth our great utility; but people did not believe in it; at first they did not even know how to plant us. One would dig a hole and throw the whole of his bushel into it. Another would stick a potato here and there deep into the soil, and then expect that it would shoot up into a complete tree from which potatoes might be shaken down. In due time would come the plant and flowers and the watery berries, then it withered away; no one thought of what lay in the soil—the blessings—the potatoes. Yes, we have had trials and suffering—that is to say, our forefathers, and so we, for it comes to the same thing. There's a story for you."

"Yes, that is quite enough," said the woman. "Now look at the sloe-tree."

"We, too," said the sloe-tree, "have some near relations to the potato's native land, but more toward the North than where they grow; and there came Norsemen from Norway, and they steered westward through fog and storm till they came to the unknown land where, beyond ice and snow, they found plants and green leaves, bushes, with the bluish-black fruit of the vine—sloes which the frost turned into ripe grapes—as we are. And they gave the land the names Vinland, Greenland, and Sloeland."

"That is quite a romantic narrative," said the young man.

"Well, now come with me," said the wise woman; and she conducted him to the beehive. He looked in. What life and activity! Bees were posted in all the avenues, fanning with their wings in order to keep a wholesome current of air through all the large factory; that was their business. Then from the outside arrived bees, born with panniers on their legs; they brought flower-dust, which was shaken out, sorted, and prepared for honey or wax; some were coming, some going. The queen-bee wanted to fly, too, but then they would all have had to go with her, and it was not yet the proper time; but fly she would, so they bit off her majesty's wings, and then she was obliged to stay.

"Now climb up the side of the ditch," said the wise woman; "come and look out into the high road, where there are some people to be seen."

"That was a swarming multitude," said the young man. "Story upon story! what

a saying and maintaining! I see nothing but black spots before my eyes! I am falling backward!"

"No," said the old woman, "go straight forward; go right into the swarm of men; keep eyes and ears open for them, and your heart, too, and so you will quickly invent something. But before you go, I must have my spectacles and ear-tube again." And she took them both away from him.

"Now, I do not see anything at all," said the young man; "now I hear nothing more."

"Well, in that case you cannot be a poet by Easter," said the wise woman.

"How soon then?" he asked.

"Neither by Easter nor Whitsuntide. You do not pick up the knack of inventing."

"What shall I do then to get a living out of poetry?"

"That you may manage to do before Shrovetide! Abuse the poets; let their writings, and you let them, only don't let yourself be frightened; strike quickly, and you will get dumplings enough for both yourself and wife to live on."

"How some people can invent!" said the young man; and so, since he could not be a poet himself, he abused all the rest who were poets.

This we have from the wise woman. She knows what can be invented.—Hans Christian Anderson, in *Avant Judy's Magazine*.

A SWEARER ALONE WITH GOD.

A carrier in a large town in Yorkshire heard his cart on one day in the yard swearing dreadfully at his horses. The carrier was a man who feared God, spent his Lord's days as a teacher in Sunday-school, and endeavored to promote the spiritual good of his fellow-creatures. He was shocked to hear the terrible oaths that resounded through the yard. He went up to the young man, who was just setting off with his cart for Manchester, and kindly expostulated with him on the enormity of his sin, and then added, "But if thou wilt swear, stop till thou get through the turnpike on the moor, where none but God and thyself can hear."

The poor fellow cracked his whip and pursued his journey, but he could not get over his master's words. Sometime after, his master observed him in the yard, and was very much surprised to see him so altered. There was a seriousness and quietness about him which he had never seen before; and he often seemed as if he had something to say that he could not get out. At length his master was so much struck with his manner, that he asked him if he wanted anything.

"Ah! master," said he, "do you know what you said to me about swearing? I was thunderstruck. I went on the road, and I got through the turnpike, and reached the moor; and there I thought that, though I was alone, yet God was with me; and I trembled to think how he had been with me, and had known all my sins and follies all my life long. My sins came to my remembrance, and I was afraid that He would strike me dead; and I thank God that I have been aroused to seek after the salvation of my poor soul."

The master, as may be supposed, was overjoyed to hear the young man's confession; and it is gratifying to know that his subsequent conduct gave proof of his having ceased to be a slave to sin.

A word spoken in due season, how good it is!—*English Paper*.

TWO NEW YORK PREACHERS.

The *New York Evening Post* has the following description of the style and matter of two preachers in that city who are just now attracting considerable attention. Rev. Wayland Hoyt is pastor of the Second Avenue Baptist Tabernacle Church, and Rev. Wm. Taylor, D.D., is pastor of the Congregational Tabernacle church, Broadway and Thirty-fourth Street, to which Rev. J. P. Thompson, D.D., so long ministered.

"Mr. Hoyt is not a sensational preacher, but combines in his method and style, like Rev. Wm. Taylor, Dr. John Hall, and some few others, those peculiar qualities which fit him to reach the masses—people of higher or lower order of intelligence—effectively. With a good deal of fluency of language and beauty of style, he is direct and forcible in presenting the truth, and generally earnest in appeal. His expositions, illustrations, and practical applications of his subject to his hearers are more like the method of Dr. Taylor, of the Broadway Tabernacle, than any of the younger preachers of the city. Like this preacher, he has generally a brief exordium, and goes into the pith of his subject at once. Like him, he applies the truth to the conscience and heart of his hearers while in the white heat of the discussion of each point in his sermon; and those points are always few. The mind is not wearied or confused by a series of points and applications.

"Rev. Dr. Taylor is an older man by many years. He has had a large experience of eighteen years as a preacher. In these long years he has been brought to the severest tests and has attained the widest scope, both by education and by long contact and intimacy with the finest models among the preachers of the English, Irish, and Scotch Church—such men as Hamilton, Chalmers, McChesney, John Ker, Dr. Arnot, Dean Stanley, Mollville and others. Mr. Taylor has a great analytic power, and is an able logician. He has very marked ability in making a simple, clear, and forcible statement of all theological points and doctrines which are not easily understood; hence his preaching is very instructive. Hence his reflections are always few in his closing remarks, and he often rises to a climax of number, but he often rises to a climax of appeal with a sincerity and punction which leave an indelible impression. The mind holds the subject and the heart feels the impression long afterward. And in en-

forcing the truth Mr. Taylor is very effective in what may be termed the objective character of his illustrations, and they are often given with telling effect.

"Mr. Hoyt combines in a large degree those higher qualities in which so many preachers are wanting, and constantly impresses more the intellect than the heart. All his subjects in his evening sermons are of a practical character, and calculated to have a quickening and elevating influence upon the masses. They are entirely extempore, but evidently well studied. In view of the enormous frauds, the ruinous speculative spirit, the extravagance, and the mania for a showy and false life which, since the war, have afflicted not our great cities merely, but the whole nation, and are sapping its best and highest if not all its true life, this kind of preaching is a thing of great moment to all our city populations. It is heartily welcomed by many earnest and reflecting minds; and there are multitudes here, in the midst of a crowded round of popular amusement, who yearn for thought and life free from sensation and show."

LIFE IN CHINA.

The private life of the Chinese is, especially at Peking, so profound a mystery for Europeans that there is nothing to interest them in the city except its architecture and ornamentation, which, though most curious and ingenious, do not appeal to any of the tastes or sentiments of Western peoples. There is always food for the imagination in the contemplation of the outside of objects whose interior is "forbidden," and thus the traveller looks longingly at the enclosure of the sacred city, which he must never pass, and dreams of the treasures which it is said to contain—the golden columns, the silver pearls, the furniture incensed with fine meats; but what he sees is a very rude case for such a jewel. As for the famous Me-chan, a very third-rate Pagoda in Siam is more splendid, externally, than the sacred dwelling of the Son of Heaven. At Peking, external ornament, or even decency, is not regarded as desirable. The city is sedulously divided into the noble and military, the trading and the poor quarters, and in the former it is etiquette to conceal all curiosity concerning strangers. After a while, the traveller learns to recognize the rank of the Mandarins by the arrangement of the moveable wheels of their carriage. The more "blue-button" or "red-button" a mandarin is, the farther the wheels are removed from the centre of the huge machine. The palanquin is a far easier vehicle than the jingling, jolting carriages, but the use of it is sedulously restricted to princes and ministers.

The middle class and poor quarters of the town have something picturesque about them in the midst of much which is horrible. They consist of one interminable winding street, with an impossible name, in which there are three hundred shops with scarlet boards hanging upon poles before them, covered with gilded inscriptions, and where only animation exists in Peking. The motley scene is crowded with carts, palanquins, camels, mules, coolies, Chinamen, buying, selling, poking about and examining all sorts of merchandise, myriads of children, and old men pushing their way to the waste ground near the walls, that they may proudly fly the kites whose strings they hold in their hands. Absurd as the notion of kite flying as a national pastime seems to us, it is interesting to learn to what a pitch of perfection the manufacture of the familiar toy has been carried. M. de Beauvoir says "I have seen in numerous instances a kite which becomes a flying-dragon, a flying eagle, or a flying mandarin, seven yards in circumference, lighted, and given motion and gesture." They construe these wonderful things without fails, a peculiarity which implies extraordinary art; and so dexterously manage their equilibrium, that they rise calmly, steadily, without any of the jerks of our kite-flying, and float, glittering like stars, vertically above the head of the cord-holder. They fit a kind of Eolian apparatus to them, almost imperceptibly small, which imitates the songs of birds or the voices of men, and when the air is crowded with kites, produces a tremendous noise; and they send "messengers" up the cords with an incomprehensible dexterity. Another singular musical invention deserves special notice. They make tiny Eolian harps hardly heavier than soap-bubbles, but beautifully worked, and affix them to the tails of doves and pigeons, fastening them to the two central feathers; as the bird strikes the air, it resounds through their harps, loudly or pathetically, according to the speed of their flight. Nor are these tiny triumphs of ingenuity merely mechanical utilities, like so many Chinese curios; they serve to save the birds from the claws of the vultures which swoop in ominous flocks above the bastions.—*Chamber's Journal*.

There was an extraordinary ritualistic service at St. Bartholomew's Church, Elgin Road, Dublin, on Tuesday, to commemorate the establishment of the Irish Church Society. The ceremonial commenced with an open-air procession, which encircled the church with cross-bearers. The Rev. Mr. Maturin preached a highly vituperative sermon, in which he impeached the sincerity of the revision party, and taunted them with having never discovered the errors of the Prayer book until the Church was deprived of Siate support. Communion was then administered, and the proceedings closed with another procession round the church.

Anything is better than overlasting poring over yourself, and your own frames and feelings. The cold of the winter will not, by being thought of, give a man any warmth. All the frosts that ever were will not create heat by our meditating upon them. Neither does any man rise into life and joy through merely meditating upon his own spiritual death and misery. Turn away from the darkness, and look at the light. Spring comes from yonder sun, and so our revival in religion, and our restored joy and peace, come from God our Father. Blessed be his name, it has come from him before, and it will come from him again. Let us wait upon him in solemn confidence that he has not left us forever, but will return to us in mercy.—*Spurgeon*.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRESS.

Wielding, as the newspaper press does, a commanding influence over families and communities, a blessing or a curse attends in proportion to its disposition to uphold what is wrong, or defend what is right, to debase the moral sense, or elevate the standard of public and private virtue. Aspiring to its management, some attempt it foolishly, some corruptly, and others without any idea of moral responsibility. In such cases journalism becomes degraded professionally, when its aim should always be laudable, and its influence salutary, whether its object be to amuse or instruct. He is conspicuously base-minded who uses it for his own selfish ends, reckless of what is printed, if it only "pays." But, as a means of diffusing light and knowledge, of public usefulness and popular guidance in the right direction, the wisest and most gifted may honorably seek its possession as an eminently desirable, though in its ample scope it requires a combination of qualities rarely found in any one person. It is to be earnestly hoped that both publishers and editors will have a deepening sense of these responsibilities, they have assumed, and be vigilant in excluding from their printed sheets whatever is low in sentiment, or corrupt in principle, or profligate in example; thus making them vehicles of unobscured entertainment and useful knowledge. A well-conducted paper, imbued with the spirit of progress, is an acquisition to any community and deserving liberal encouragement, but into no family claiming to be governed by the rules of propriety should any periodical be admitted if it may not be read without detriment to the manners and morals of the household. The observance of this rule would weed out many a worthless sheet and elevate the tone of the domestic circle, as well as promote the general welfare.—*N. Y. Independent*.

Random Readings.

As a general rule, age makes the good better, and the bad worse.

We have against us one-half of ourselves. The flesh striveth against the spirit.

Hot water satisfies no thirst; angry words mend no broken cups and saucers.

Nothing can really disturb us save self-love and self-esteem.

As thou desirest, so thou speedest; little desiring, little speeding; great desiring, great speeding.

He may do a great deal that is never idle, and he may go a great way that is never out of the way.

Fullness of Christ is fountain fullness—ocean fullness—dwelling fullness—universal, efficient fullness.

Tears, like rain drops, have a thousand times fallen to the ground and come up in flowers.

Everything in religion is God's gift. It is better on all accounts it should be so than otherwise.—*Rev. T. Adams*.

He who has ceased to enjoy the superiority of his friend, has ceased to love him.

Whoever understands a subject thoroughly and intimately, can speak well about it.—*Luther*.

It is less injurious to Christ to doubt even of his existence, than to doubt of his willingness to save a wounded, broken-hearted sinner.—*Kyland*.

The believer makes the glory of God his chief end, the providence of God his chief support, and the divine precepts his chief delight.

When we come to God for counsel we must be willing to put our whole case in his hands—to take the up-hill step instead of the smooth one, should he point to it.

A few minutes devotion at night will not clear the conscience of a foul trick done during the day, nor will going to church on Sunday atone for the willful sins of a week.

Unbounded patience is necessary to bear not only with ourselves, but with others whose various tempers and dispositions are not congenial with our own.—*Guyon*.

"Faith," says Thomas Adam, "may be called a divine touch on our spirits, and the effect produced by that touch proves the reality of it."

To follow Christ is like walking on a path which the Saviour's precious footsteps have trodden into smoothness, and lighted with the lamp of his Spirit.

Pride is a sin which first showeth itself in children; yea, and it groweth up with them and mixeth itself with all they do; but it lies most hid, most deep in man as to his soul concerns.—*Bunyan*.

To read profitably you must not be voracious, but weigh and ponder, applying what you read bit by bit to your own soul, with much meditation and prayer.—*Francois de Sales*.

Let the enemy rave at the door, let him knock and batter, and do his worst; we know that he cannot enter the soul save by the door of one's own consent; keep that well shut, and there need be nothing to fear.

The voice of God is heard in the silence of the soul. The operation of grace is in silence, as it comes from God, and may it not reach and pass from soul to soul without noise of words? O! that all Christians knew what it means to keep silence before God.—*Guyon*.

Sin is a basilisk, whose eyes are full of venom; if the eye of thy soul see her first, it reflects her own poison and kills her; if she see thy soul unsoiled, or seen too late with the poison, she kills thee; since therefore thou canst not escape thy sin, let not thy sin see thy observation.—*Quarles*.

Thy ignorance in unrevealed mysteries is the mother of a saving faith; and thy understanding in revealed truths, is the mother of a sacred knowledge; understand not therefore that thou must believe, but believe thou must understand; understanding is the wages of a lively faith, and faith is the reward of an humble ignorance.

SIX DAYS FOR BUSINESS AND ONE FOR REST.

A distinguished capitalist and financier, charged with a immense amount of property during the great pecuniary pressure of 1857, said: "I should have been a dead man had it not been for the Sabbath. Obligated to work from morning to night, to a degree that no hired day laborer would submit to, through the whole week, I felt on Saturday—especially on Saturday afternoon—as if I must have rest. It was like going into a dense fog. Everything looked dark and gloomy, as if nothing could be saved. I dismissed all from my mind, and kept the Sabbath in the good old way. On Monday it was all bright and sunshine. I could see through, and I got through. But had it not been for the Sabbath, I have no doubt I should have been in my grave."

THE BEST KINDS OF COAL.

The best kinds of Soft or Bituminous Coals are, "Briar Hill," "Mount Morris," "Willow Bank," "Massillon," and "Strattsville." Briar Hill and Mount Morris are of the same quality. They are the most even burning coals, and the most lasting. They do not contain as large an amount of bituminous as several other varieties of coal—they burn with less smoke for this reason.

Willow Bank burns more freely and gives a more intense heat—a grate half filled with Willow Bank coal will give out as much heat as a well filled grate of Briar Hill. If judiciously used, Willow Bank coal is the best coal brought to this market.

Massillon coal is much like Willow Bank does not handle quite as well, and burns with rather more smoke.

Strattsville is a coal but recently introduced into Toronto. It is in appearance much like Briar Hill; a good coal that we can confidently recommend as likely to give satisfaction. It can be sold at about fifty cents a ton less than Briar Hill.

PROSPECTS OF THE COAL TRADE.

This year, we believe, it is safe to say that the course of the market will be constantly, though we trust steadily, upward. The production of coal is now substantially under the control of a combination of the miners and mining companies, who have determined on the policy of a sure and probably gradual advance. The lowest limit is set at ten cents per ton, at wholesale, each month. The probability is that coal laid in now will be bought at from twelve and a-half to thirty per cent. cheaper than that purchased on the opening of the cold weather.

It is hardly worth while now to discuss the causes which have placed the power to regulate the price of an article of such vast consumption in the hands of a few men. It is enough to say that such a consummation has, through many changes and after innumerable contests, been reached, and thus, we imagine, no one familiar with the facts will deny. It is to be hoped that the great power of the combination will be used with moderation, and with a rational regard for the widest interest of the coal producers. We do not suppose that the mining companies will pretend that they are actuated chiefly by consideration for consumers, though they naturally assert that the consumers will prosper by their course. They intend, undoubtedly, to extend the consumption of coal as rapidly and steadily as possible. It is plainly to their interest to do so. At present, it is generally believed that the capacity for producing and transporting coal is out of proportion to the active demand for it, and this fact is used to account for the sudden breakdowns, followed by the extreme rises in the price of coal for several years back. It is now understood that the companies' action will be guided by the theory that a steady market is more advantageous to the extension of consumption than one which is occasionally very low, but again very high. We do not pretend to say how this theory will work when applied for any considerable period. The task undertaken by the combination—the control of the anthracite coal market—is a vast one, and may be seriously interfered with if pursued, as it will be, for years in succession. But for the present season, we believe there is no doubt of the success of the combination, or that householders may safely be guided by that fact.

SHORT WEIGHT IN COAL.

There seems to be an impression very generally abroad in the community that coal dealers are a regular set of swindlers—that they are in the general habit of sending out 1700 or 1800 pounds for a ton; that they sell coal nominally at cost, depending upon what they can steal for their profit. If these charges are true, the citizens ought to take some measures for protecting themselves against such an imposition. We have city ordinances regulating the sale of bread, of butter, of meats, etc. Why not have one regulating the sale of coal? The city could erect scales at a small cost, at easily accessible points, and require all coal to be weighed on such scales, at a small charge to cover cost of weighing—or, let them pass an ordinance similar to laws in force in many cities in the States empowering policemen to order a load of coal, which they believe deficient in weight, to be driven to the city scale and weighed; and, if found deficient in weight, to confiscate it for the use of our charitable institutions—such as the Orphan's Home, Boys, and Girls' Home, House of Providence, etc. If half the stories told of dishonest coal dealers are true, our charitable institutions would thus be provided with a liberal supply of fuel. Such an ordinance would not only be a protection to the public, but also to the honest dealer as well. We commend this suggestion to the consideration of our City Fathers.