

Sunday School Advocate.

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A Series of Talks, by Old Huncks.

TALK THIRD.



IN my last talk I promised to tell you something more about our School; the first School began in "Muddy Little York," as people who lived out of town then justly called it, (although we who lived in it, were very much offended when any one called it so.) the now great City of Toronto.

My last story was a sad one, this shall be more cheerful, but perhaps not so well calculated to do you good. It may innocently interest you. It is about our *first examination*, which was not conducted exactly as they are now.

There were no school libraries then of any kind, much less these nice assorted ones which you have now. Instead of that, the friends of the Sabbath-school, from time to time, clubbed together, and bought reward books, which were not the suitably prepared ones that you get now; but such small books as could be found in the few small book stores the country afforded. Shall I tell you the names of some of the first that I got? I received a great many, but I can only remember the names of a few; they were really very interesting books, but their titles will sound very strange in connection with a Sunday-school. Here they are, "The Picture of the Seasons," "Harley, or the Man of Feeling," "The Wanderer of Switzerland," and "Russell's Seven Sermons," among which was one on the "Sin against the Holy Ghost," which I read, young as I was. It did me a great deal of harm, and well it might, for I think its teaching very erroneous. But I am wandering.

Our Sabbath-school in the old framed Methodist Meeting-house on King-street, between Yonge and Bay Streets, was the first school established in the town. Some time after that, a newly appointed Judge from England, a christian gentleman, Judge Willis, began a Church of England Sunday-school in what was called the District School-house, which we would call a Grammar School house now. It stood in the centre of the next square, north of the English Cathedral—that is between Adelaide and Richmond-streets one way, and between Church and (I think you call it) Division-street the other. The last mentioned street was the dividing line between what we used to call the "Old Town" and the "New Town. It was all commons around the school-house for a long ways then. The boys had play-ground enough.

About this time, there had become a good many schools in the country, and the Provincial Parliament granted *three hundred pounds*, or *twelve hundred dollars*, to get books for them. Among the rest, the York schools were to get their share. The two schools were brought together (would you believe it?) in the *English Church*, which stood where the Cathedral now stands. We were all examined by the Rev. Doctor Strachan, the now aged Bishop of Toronto, in the knowledge of our Holy Scriptures. Boys and girls would stand up and answer on the teachings of the Bible. I have often thought much better then than now. Now only one here and there will condescend to answer. This is a great shame, but it is most likely they have a good reason—they *cannot answer*. If I were to go into your school

and ask you questions on the Scriptures, and you did not answer, I must either think you had learned nothing, or else that you were very disrespectful.

But I think we on that occasion answered well. The gentlemen present commended us very much; and reward-books were then dealt out very liberally. They were mostly Bibles and Testaments. They were inscribed with the name of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province, Sir Peregrine Maitland. I was very happy that day, as well as a great many others, for I received the first Bible I ever owned. It was a great prize for a little boy of ten years old to have a whole Bible all to himself. You, perhaps, have had so many, you don't think anything of a Bible; but I assure you I did think something of mine.

I am afraid you will think this talk very long, I therefore bring it to a close.

A PARAGRAPH FOR BOYS.



I wish our young friends, especially the boys, would read the following many times over, and never forget the wisdom it contains:—

My uncle is a woodman; he is now getting to be an old man. Some people say he is cross, but I do not think so. Trouble and thought may give to his face a thoughtful look sometimes; but I know he has a kind heart. Of one thing I am certain—he has got a wise head. Meet him whenever I may, he has always got something to say. If you would like to hear some of his sayings, I will write down some of them for you.

One day I saw him with an axe in his hand, standing by a branch he had just cut from an old oak-tree, when he began:—

If you set a thistle-seed, there will spring up, not one or two, but twenty or thirty; and it will be just the same if you set one sin. One sin, he says, has been known to bring forth a hundred more. The farmer ought to take care that no thistle-seeds are sown on his land; and you ought to take care that no sins are sown in your heart.

Uncle says a boy seldom looks forward unless it is to a holiday; when he is well, he seldom dreams of being sick; when he has money, he thinks it will last him for weeks; and when the sun shines, he almost expects it to shine forever; but he says we should be ready to endure patiently, as well as enjoy gratefully. "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" (Job ii. 10.)

Uncle says that if a traveller once leaves the turnpike road in a part of the country he does not know, he may wander about in lanes the whole of the day, and when night comes, get stuck in a bog at last; and that if I wander away from the path of duty, I may lose myself in the cross-roads of error and vice all my days, and at last fall into the pit of destruction.

Uncle says he had rather read the Bible, and never look at any other book, than read every other book in the world, and never look at the Bible; for this reason—other books are the books of men, but the Bible is the book of God; and as man's knowledge is but ignorance when compared with God's knowledge, so the wisdom of all the books of men is but folly, when compared with the wisdom of the book of God.

Uncle says that a bushel of wheat will weigh more than two bushels of bran; and that a little modesty is worth more than a great deal of conceit. He says that a boy who is modest will learn twice as much as one who is conceited. The modest boy will always be wiser than he appears, while the con-

ceited will not know half what he pretends to understand. I must strive to be modest, and watch against self-conceit.

Uncle says that it requires more steadiness and true courage to despise the laugh of a bad companion, and to say "No," when tempted to do evil, than it does to march up to a cannon's mouth. He says hundreds, who are not afraid of bullets, balls, and bayonets, have not courage enough to resist the derision of their thoughtless companions. I will try my best not to be overcome by a laugh; and I will learn, if I can, to say "No" when asked to do evil.

Uncle says that forgiving an injury is better than revenging it; and that doing one kind action is better than intending a hundred. I wonder whether I shall ever be as wise as my uncle is! He says the first step towards wisdom is the fear of the Lord, and that the second is much like it.

Uncle says, that, take the year round, where we have one hour of pain we have ten of ease, and where we have one misery we have at least a score of mercies. If this be true, and I have no reason to doubt it, where I thank God once, I ought to thank him a hundred times over.

Uncle says a boy will do more good in one month by correcting his own errors, than he will do in a year by finding out the failing of others; and that he will get more knowledge by studying his own heart, than by watching all the people that are around him.

A TOUCHING REPLY.—In a Christian family near Amoy, China, a little boy, the youngest of three children, on asking his father to allow him to be baptized, was told that he was too young; that he might fall back, if he made a profession when he was only a little boy. To this he made the touching reply:—"Jesus has promised to carry the lambs in his arms. As I am only a little boy, it will be easier for Jesus to carry me." This logic of the heart was too much for the father. He took him with him, and the dear one was ere long baptized. The whole family, of which this child is the youngest member, the father, mother, and three sons, are all members of the Mission Church at Amoy.

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.—"What is a parable?" inquired a Sunday-School teacher of her class, who had been reading the thirteenth chapter of St. Luke.

"A story teaching heavenly truth" was the reply. After some further questions concerning the story, the inquiry was put, "Now what is the heavenly truth taught here?"

"That God looks for fruit on us," replied one of the girls.

"And what is the fruit for which he looks?" continued the teacher very naturally.

One of the youngest of the class, a child of about eight years, replied promptly and beautifully, yet most unexpectedly, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

A CHILD'S PRAYER.—A little girl instead of saying the form she had been taught, prayed one night in her own words. The following sentences were noted down:—

"Make me quite like Jesus—like what Jesus was when he was down here. Wash me in thy blood, which is so precious and so pure. Let me have the white robe, and with Christ be seen."

Could an adult have offered a sweeter prayer.

EMMA'S REQUEST.—"Pray for me before I go to bed," said Emma to her nurse one night.

"What shall I pray for?" asked the nurse.

"That Jesus will wash me in his blood quite clean," was the child's beautiful rejoinder.