

Our Young Folks.

"I DO."

Don't you think it must be jolly when the rain comes down, To be a little duck, because a duck can't drown? And though the showers fall as if a sea had been upset, They only trickle off him, and he can't get wet.

Don't you think it must be jolly when the dust blows high, To be a flitting swallow in the deep blue sky? For all he has to do is just to beat his little wings, And up above the dusty earth his light form springs.

Don't you think it must be jolly when the moon won't rise, To be a feathered owl, and have an owl's round eyes? For he sails about the forest in the middle, moonless night, And can find his way much better than in broad sunlight.

Don't you think it must be jolly when the sun burns hot, To be like the gliding fishes in the sea-green grot? For they never can be thirsty, and they always must be cool, And they haven't got to dress themselves in hot, thick wool.

QUICKNESS OF THE LOONS.

The loon is the quickest living creature. A loon that has had experience can dodge the flash of a gun. You see a loon on a lake, but long before you see him he sees you and has taken a mental inventory of you and your belongings. If you have no gun, you may perhaps approach within one hundred yards before he laughs at you with that horrid shriek which gives him his name, and disappears under the water, but show a gun, and he does not stop to laugh; he goes instantly. When in a sportive mood he sometimes waits until he sees you about to fire, when, at the flash, he dives, and you see the shot spatter the water where he has just gone down.—Boys' Brigade Courier.

SQUIRREL AND RAT.

A young man living in the outskirts of Portland caught a squirrel the other day and started in to tame it, and he had such success that the squirrel is now as tame as a house cat. The squirrel, after being boxed up for a while, was given the run of the house, and went about upstairs and down at will. Then he was let out doors and allowed to play in the trees, but he got back into the house regularly at meal times and at night.

A few days ago the squirrel dodged into a rat hole, and began running through the walls. The house had been overrun with rats, and after the squirrel got into the walls there was a scampering and a racket which threatened to throw down the house. The squirrel came out of the hole after a while, and from that time nothing has been heard of rats in the house. The squirrel enjoys a scamper through the walls every day, but the rats have taken themselves off.—Portland (Me.) Argus.

IN THE ORCHARD.

Mabel lived in the country on a farm where there were two large apple orchards, and more apples than Mabel's mother knew what to do with.

"What a pity," she said one morning, "to have so many apples decaying on the ground, when the poor people would be so glad to have them!"

"Mabel," said papa, "I'll give you leave to distribute them. You may give a basketful to every poor child you see this week."

"There's one now," cried Mabel, as she saw Joel Barton going from the house with a basket. He had been into the kitchen to bring cook something from his mother.

"Look here, Joel; do you want some apples?" cried Mabel.

"Thank you miss, I'm sure my mother would like some. She said this morning how good apple sauce would be to eat with our bread. And she can make splendid apple-dumplings, and we all love 'em so."

"Well, come here and fill your basket. There, that's enough from this tree. Now we'll go over to the other orchard and get some lovely sweet ones for you to eat."

"Sweet ones are the kind to bake, miss," said Joel.

"You seem to understand about the cooking little boy," laughed Mabel.

"Oh, I know all my mother does," said Joel: "I watch her, and I hear her tell, I know how to bake sweet apples myself. Mary likes 'em, and mother says they are good for her."

"Who's Mary? And what's the matter with her?"

"She's my sister, and she's sick and weak."

"I'm glad you told me; I'll send her something special. Here's a lovely red apple for her to eat. Give it to her, with my love, and when these are gone come and get some more; will you?"

"Yes, and thank you, miss."

Mabel watched for a week, and gave the apples to many poor boys and girls, and when the week was over she did not want to stop.

"I guess Mabel has gotten more good this week than the poor folks have," said Farmer Ovington to his wife; which was very much like a verse in the Bible.

Can you think what it is? "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

ADVICE TO YOUNG CHRISTIANS.

Don't be discouraged if you happen to have some difficulties at first in your Christian life. The devil will make a hard fight to get you back, and will do everything he can to destroy your faith. But don't waver. Keep holding on to Christ. Count upon every moment, and you will be sure to get it.

Read your Bible a good deal, for by doing so you will be giving God a chance to talk to you, and He can tell you things there He could not speak of anywhere else.

Join a church, and be a worker in it. God will make a place for you there, and give you something to do. Remember that it is better to be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. A loafer in God's house is as worthless as one anywhere else.

Be faithful in attending the means of grace. Angels can tell about how much religion you have by the amount of rain it takes to keep you away from prayer-meeting. Hear all the preaching you can, and try to carry the sermons home with you.

Go to praying for the people around you who are unsaved, and remember that Jesus wants you to help Him to get them to heaven.

Make up your mind in the start that the devil of fault-finding shall never go to church with you. Don't criticise the preacher or any of the members. The moment you begin to find fault, you will begin to backslide. Don't look for flaws in people. Look for Christ. Try to see something in them that God sees, and every Christian you meet will make you richer.

Get a good Oxford Bible, silk sewed, with a flexible back, if you have to go without bread to buy it. Every Christian ought to have his own Bible, and one good enough to last him his life, no matter how much he handles it. By doing this, he will get to know it so well, that he can almost find what he wants in the dark.

Whenever you find a promise in the Bible, mark it, and make it yours for life. That is one way to get faith that will move the arm of God.

The promises of the Bible are better than checks on any bank. They are God's word, and that can never break. Psalm 37:3 is good for house rent and board anywhere on earth, and you can have anything else you want by going into the next verse.—Ram's Horn.

When the threshold of your heart is sore with the tread of departing joys, remember that Christ is emptying you of all else that He may fill you with Himself.

Teacher and Scholar.

June 11, 1893. } THE CREATOR REMEMBERED. { Eccl. xii. 1-7, 13, 14.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.—Eccl. xii. 1.

Ecclesiastes closes with a counsel to the young which strictly commences, Ch. xi, 9, where the young man is encouraged to cultivate his natural faculty of enjoyment, not by reckless indulgence, but in subjection to the thought that God will bring him into judgment. The true enjoyment of youth will be attained when God, the Creator, is remembered therein. Hence we have

I. Exhortation to early remembrance of God, our Creator.—He who has given life, whose power over it is supreme, should never be dropped out of the thoughts. Remembrance of our Creator indicates keeping Him in mind, in what is known of Him and of his relations to us. Providence and redemption disclose the eternal and supreme Creator to be just, holy and merciful. He remembers Him who lives consciously as in His presence, and under His government. This will include a life led in accordance with His laws. Many reasons suggest themselves for the special emphasis placed on the days of youth. It increases the satisfaction of life, for that which is led in conscious nearness to God alone is truly satisfying. It provides a higher strength against the trials and temptations of life. It makes the service of life greater. The earlier such service commences the longer a proportion of life will it embrace; and it will include possibilities of service which if unused in youth become lost. Then besides the possibility that no other season than youth may be given, the longer man lives away from God, the more unfit, humanly speaking, does the time become for him to draw near. Old age is the most unfavourable time of all, as Ecclesiastes goes on to indicate.

II. Exhortation enforced by considering the close of life.—The evil days painted are the inevitable accompaniment of declining years or disease. They enforce the exhortation by implying the warning that when overtaken by old age or infirmity, it will not be easy then for the first time to remember God. Evidently the figures represent the loss of vital powers in these pleasureless years.

The darkening of the various sources of light seems to refer to the failure of mental powers. From this loss there is now no recuperation, as in youth. Then it was like the clear shining after rain, but now after the shower the clouds immediately gather for the next, one mental infirmity follows another. The old man is like some ancient mansion falling into decay with all connected with it. The watchers or guards tremble in feebleness. Their masters, the strong men, also bow themselves together. The grinding-mills, reduced to a few, and weakened in bodily frame, cease their tasks. The ladies, accustomed to look out of the latticed windows (Judg. v, 28; 2 Sam. vi, 16; 2 Kings ix, 30) no longer see through them, and all the outer doors are closed. Special analogies may be suggested here to the trembling limbs, the once strong "hands that hang down," the sparse and almost useless teeth, the failing eyes, and the gradual closing of the senses to the outside world. As the bodily organs fail the bodily functions weaken. The low voice faintly mumbles in the mouth (the grinding mill). The light sleep is broken early in the morning, when the birds begin to sing. The dull ears no longer take pleasure in music (Comp. 2 Sam., xix. 35). To the failing strength not only is each height magnified to a mountain, but the level way is beset with fears. The snowy hair reminds of the almond whose white blossoms completely cover it some time before its green leaves appear. To the feeble frame even the weight of the grasshopper, the type of littleness, (Is. xl. 22; Num. xiii, 33), is oppressive. The sluggish appetite is no longer excited by the caper-berry (R. V.), whose buds and berries are used as a relish and stimulant. All these indicate that death is at hand: even the professional mourners are waiting in the streets ready to be hired.

Or the end may come unexpectedly. The silver cord, the thread, from which the golden lamp of life is suspended, suddenly snaps, and the precious vessel falls crushed, its oil poured out, the light of life extinguished. Two other images portray the abrupt end of life, the pitcher shattered at the fountain, and the wheel used to draw water from the cistern, suddenly breaking down in the process. The consideration of either the gradual or the sudden approach of death warns to early remembrance of Him to whom the spirit must then return.

III. Conclusion of the whole.—Vv. 13, 14 are the practical conclusion of the entire book. The whole active life of man finds its true realization in inward piety and outward obedience. The fear of God, which is true wisdom, is that reverence and religious feeling that springs from a recognition of His real character. This expresses itself on the one side in worship, on the other in keeping His commandments. The obedience which springs from filial fear works by love. It harmonizes with what is most spiritual in man; so that the commandment becomes a delight, not grievous, a light burden, the expression of what is most truly man. This conclusion is enforced by the consideration that a righteous judgment, searching and all-embracing, will finally determine the character of every work.

THE CHORUS OF DAWN.

Across the eastern hills whose outlines dim
Swell vaguely darksome thro' the misty light,
Tall poplars stand along the daybreak's rim,
Like sentries on the fading walls of night.
A dull gray haze hangs over sky and earth
And westward glides, half dark, with silent flow,
To guard the mystery of morning's birth
From eyes that fain would watch it here below.

In solemn silence, night has westward fled,
And now, as morn's first beams grow dimly light,
From orchard branches bending overhead,
Half hidden 'mong the blossoms, ruby white,

From the deep pine grove down below the hill
And all the cloud-wrapt valley, eastward drawn,
Swell up in joyous notes, and free, and shrill,
The birds' wild welcome to the coming dawn.

But, watching for the hour of daybreak's change,
For me the air is filled with mystic song
And all the misty scene grows vague and strange
With no familiar things that there belong.

On Gobi's desert plain 'tis opening morn,
And round and fiery from the eastern rim
Looms up the sun across the waste forlorn
And floods its glory o'er the desert grim,

And, as the rising sunlight, warm and strong,
First o'er the wide east throws its glory fair,
Strange sounds of music, and of sacred song
Fill the lone chambers of the desert air.

The sound of cymbals and the voice of praise
From some lone wand'ring, trailing caravan
As, with his head bent low to east, he prays—
Fire-worshipper, the loneliest son of man.

But soon the dreamy vision fading dies
And backward on the tide of song up-borne
I see the glories of our dawnlit skies
With night-shades prostrate at the feet of morn.
—James T. Shotwell, in The Week.

A cheerful soul that believes in the wisdom of the Creator, and is not at every turn thinking how much better he might have made the world, who now and then churns up the region below the diaphragm with a hearty laugh or sends a cheerful message to the solar plexus, denoting that he is in harmony with God and nature; living in peace and good will with the rest of mankind; who is, in fact, an optimist and a practical philanthropic Christian—can never become a dyspeptic.