

Our Young Folks.

SNOW BIRDS.

Your cheery chirp I hear,
O little birds of brown;
Though frosty fields are drear,
And snowflakes whirling down.

Your merry hearts ne'er grieve
Howe'er the breezes blow;
Your tiny foot-prints leave
A star upon the snow!

I wonder if you miss
The daisies which we knew?
Ah! wondrous change is this
From summer's bloom and dew.

Though houghs are lone and bare,
Though brooks are songless quite,
You never seem to care
If fields be green or white.

What makes your heart so glad?
The secret I would know;
For winter days are sad,
Birds cannot like the snow.

Not what we like, dear child,
And not what we may miss,
Be seasons chill or mild,
The secret lies in this:—

"A hopeful heart content
Will find in any place,
And take whatever is sent
With trustfulness and grace."

"Those eyes are very blind,
Those hearts have lost their glow,
That cannot always find
Green grass beneath the snow!"

Then, startled, off they flew,
But left their song with me;
I know it must be true,
And mine this song shall be!

THE KING'S LITTLE FLOWER.

Ruthy stood in the south door-way under the big maples watching the yellow Worthington 'bus come rattling up the country road. It turned in at the gate, and the panting horses drew up under the trees, while a pale young lady climbed out and walked slowly up the path.

"Yes, it must be Miss Emily," she said to herself, as her mother came in from the kitchen to welcome the new-comer; and she herself slipped into the north bed-room to see that everything was fresh and sweet and cool, though she had satisfied herself upon that point at least five times since the six-thirty train whistled. Then she slipped out again by the north door before Miss Emily got inside.

The next morning Miss Emily was sitting very still at her white-curtained window, that looked out through the honey-suckle vines and across the big orchard. It was very still and sweet there, and she leaned back in her easy rocker with a long sigh of restfulness. The wind blew softly across the grass, and seemed to smooth away the pain that throbbed at her temples.

All at once she caught sight of a little face peeping in at her door; it was Ruthy with a fresh posy for her vase. She stood a moment on the threshold, looking shyly in, herself so like a sweet pink flower that Miss Emily smiled.

Miss Emily's face was very sweet always; and when she smiled her eyes had a way of shining, and when she said softly, "Come here, little flower," Ruthy crept up to her with the lily clasped fast in her hand, and looked straight into her face. Miss Emily kissed her cheek.

"What are you?" she asked; "a little pink rose fresh from the garden, or a daisy, or a little wild flower?"

"I am Ruthy," the child answered.

Ruthy and Miss Emily grew to be great friends, and they had long talks together that reached straight down into the child's innocent little heart.

Sometimes they talked about the King, for Miss Emily knew the King well, and loved Him, and it was the brightness of the light of His happy kingdom that made her face so sweet and her eyes so shining.

"Yes," she said one day, "I am very sure the King loves flowers. Wouldn't you like to be a little flower yourself, and blossom for Him?"

Ruthy looked up with wondering eyes.

"How can I?" she asked.

"Ever so many ways," answered Miss Emily brightly. "You have found out some for yourself already. One morning I know the King looked down and saw a little girl helping her mamma wipe the dishes, when I just know she wanted to go out into the yard and see if the big yellow pansy had opened yet."

Ruthy laughed gleefully.

"Why, that was me!" she said.

"And the King said to the angels that were with Him: 'See this little heart's-ease, how it is growing!' Then the angels turned and watched, and the King smiled down at the little girl."

Ruthy looked up, with a sudden grave sweetness in her eyes.

"That must have been when I felt so happy; and it was because the King smiled," she added softly, half to herself.

"Are you trying to be a flower, Miss Emily?" she asked, suddenly.

Miss Emily's face was very bright, and she bent and kissed the upturned face. "Yes, dearie; I am."

Then Ruthy put her lips close to Miss Emily's ear, and whispered softly: "I am going to try to be the King's little heart's-ease all the time."

"Dear little girl!" said Miss Emily. And her eyes said, "I'm so glad!"

There were a great many ways that the little heart's ease learned to blossom for the King. Papa grew to watch for a little maid at the gate when he came up from the fields, tired and worn, after his day's work. No matter how worn and grave and weary his face might be, it always brightened at the sight of her, and, by the time they reached the well under the apple tree, all the lines would be smoothed away from his forehead. The same little maid shone like a sunbeam all around the house, helping her mother in the hot kitchen or in the spring-house or the pantry; for hadn't Miss Emily said that one way of being a flower was to be happy and glad, and to help other people to be so? Sometimes the little flower blossomed for old Miss Martin, across the road in the brown cottage; sometimes she brought a cup of cool water for some dusty wayfarer.

It is a long time ago that Ruthy learned how to blossom for the King. She remembers so well the day Miss Emily went away to the King's country; she was glad to go; she was so tired, and in the King's country there was rest. Ruthy herself laid the white lilies in her hands, and with them the little heart's-ease blossoms.

It is a long time since; but, though she has grown to be a tall young woman, Ruthy has never forgotten that she is the King's flower, and every day her life grows and blossoms in the sunshine of His love. Sorrow and tears have come with the years, but they only make her heart more sweet and tender; and the King of heaven looks down, and is glad because of His little flower.

A HANDSOME SOUL.

One day a boy, who was taking his first lesson in the art of sliding down hill, found his feet in too close contact with a lady's silk dress. Mortified and confused he sprang from his sled, and, cap in hand, commenced an apology.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am; I am very sorry."

"Never mind that," exclaimed the lady; "there is no great harm done, and you feel worse about it than I do."

"But your dress is ruined. I thought you would be angry with me for being so careless."

"Oh, no," she replied; "better to have a soiled dress than a ruffled temper."

"Oh, what a beauty!" exclaimed the lad, as the lady passed on.

"Who, that lady?" returned his comrade. "If you call her a beauty, you shan't choose for me. Why, she is old, and her face is wrinkled!"

"I don't care if her face is wrinkled," replied the other, "her soul is handsome, anyhow."

A shout of laughter followed, from which he was glad to escape. Relating the incident to his mother, he said, "O mother, that lady did me good. I shall never forget it; and when I am tempted to get mad, I will think of what she said, 'Better to have a soiled dress than a ruffled temper.'"

A SIOUX INDIAN'S PRAYER.

The first recorded prayer of a Sioux Indian was made in 1837. Walking-Bell-Ringer was not a Christian, according to Rev. S. W. Pond, his teacher, and his prayer had little reference to Christ. The Sioux had no word for forgive, but they asked God to forget their sins. The following prayer shows the earliest manner of worship, and it was offered in the Mission house at Lake Harriet, which stood a few rods beyond the park pavilion:—

"Great Spirit, my Father, I would worship You, but I do not know how. How I wish You would teach me. I want to understand Your Book. I have grown up in ignorance, and have worshipped stones and trees and everything, but I wish now to worship You alone. I want to throw away everything that is bad, and listen to You. If I hear evil conversation among men or women I will not listen to it, but leave the house. I wish my soul to be happy when I die. When the spirits of all the dead are assembled in judgment, and the bad are cast into the fire, I want to be saved with the good. I will not unite any more with the Indians in their idolatrous feasts. I want you to forget my sins. I want the Son of God to forget my sins. The Sioux are all ignorant and wicked. We have all grown up in ignorance and have done wrong. We have forgotten You and prayed to things that have no ears. I want You to pity all my relatives and take care of them. I want You to pity me."

Many a child of the Church would be put to shame by the pagan's prayer.

ANOTHER VICTORY FOR CLEVELAND'S.

Oh March 4th the contract for supplying the U. S. Army with baking powder was again awarded to the Cleveland Baking Powder Co. This makes the sixth consecutive order for Cleveland's Baking Powder from the Government, and now the proposals specify that baking powder offered must be "in quality equal to Cleveland's."

This is commendation that speaks volumes.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

April 4. } THE WAY OF THE RIGHTEOUS. { Psalm 1: 1-6.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.—Psalm i. 1.

INTRODUCTORY.

The lessons for the second quarter of the present year are selected from the book of Psalms and from the prophecy of Daniel. Many of the Psalms were written by David, King of Israel, and the authors of some others are not known now by name, yet they have been received as divinely inspired by the Jewish and Christian Church.

I. The Righteous Man and His Blessedness.—Spurgeon very aptly says "The book of Psalms, like the Sermon on the Mount, opens with a benediction." The description of the righteous man begins with a statement of what he avoids. It is negative. "He walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly." He takes no pleasure in their company. He does not seek advice from them, nor adopt their opinions and maxims. He does not follow their example. His life is apart from theirs. "Nor standeth in the way of sinners." The good man does not follow the course pursued by sinful men. Their way is not his. As he has no sympathy with their counsels, neither does he indulge in their practices. These words indicate a gradation in wickedness. The counsels of the ungodly may signify evil thoughts and opinions; the way of sinners may be regarded as descriptive of continuing in sinful practices; and sitting in the seat of the scornful, may be taken to describe those who are so hardened and confirmed in evil ways that they scoff at everything good, and who by their contemptuous sneers ridicule those who seek to do right. It is the steady endeavour of the righteous man to avoid all forms of evil, and to hate it in every manifestation and degree. In contrast to this "his delight is in the law of the Lord." That in his heart he prefers to the counsels of the ungodly. His delight is in the law itself. He regards it as pure, upright, and holy, an expression of the infinite righteousness of God. The law of the Lord in Scripture sometimes means the revealed will of God. The righteous man delighted in the word of the Lord as made known in Scripture. If we love God we will delight in the Bible which contains God's law for our obedience, and His will for our salvation. In the law of the Lord the good man meditates. He studies its contents, and on these he reflects. He thinks on what he reads. It is one of the most helpful things to spiritual life to cultivate the habit of meditation. There is too little of it in these bustling and feverish days. The good man meditates day and night, that is he avails himself of every opportunity for thinking on what God says in His word, in the intervals of the busy day and in his waking moments in the quiet watches of the silent night. The good man is compared to "a tree planted by the rivers of water." Even the commonest objects in nature are very beautiful. A tree is almost always pleasing to the eye. The tree that grows near a stream is generally healthy. Even in the extreme heat of summer it presents a fine appearance, with its abundant foliage, of richest green. So the good man is likened to a tree, in vigorous and healthy growth, intellectually, morally and spiritually. He is a fruit-bearing tree, one "that bringeth forth its fruit in its season." The good man is not a cumberer of the ground; he has been planted by the rivers of water that he might bring forth fruit. The fruits of the spirit are meant, love, joy, peace, and every good word and work as opportunity offers and occasion demands. It is in "the season" when fruit is expected. So in whatever circumstances a man may be placed he must exemplify the virtues of the Christian life in a manner suited to the circumstances. It is grateful to the eye to see in a desert a tree clothed in rich verdure, so the Christian may sometimes be in uncongenial circumstances, but though all around him may be spiritually dreary, he fails not to yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness, living a life morally beautiful, witnessing to the fresh supplies of grace that enable him to be a faithful witness for Christ. The good man like the tree continues to flourish. The tree whose roots are abundantly supplied with water retains the fresh beauty of its leaves, they do not wither. The old leaves are speedily replaced by the new. Then the Psalmist leaves the figure and speaks directly of the good man, when he says "and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." He will be successful in the true sense in what he engages in. Wealth is not prosperity, neither is it essential to prosperity, but a good man is in the very best position to be a prosperous man in the right understanding of the term, and it is certain that his soul shall be in health and prosperity.

II. The Wicked Man and His Doom.—The contrast between the good man and the wicked man is sharply and distinctly drawn. "The wicked are not so;" the contrast is complete. The wicked are those who walk in the counsel of the ungodly, who stand in the way of sinners, and who sit in the seat of the scornful. They are unlike the righteous in the principles they profess, in what they believe and in what they do. They are not compared to a stunted and fruitless tree, but to "the chaff which the wind driveth away." The threshing floor in the East was prepared on an eminence, so that the wind could have a free sweep of it. When the grain was trodden by the oxen, it was thrown up in the air. The wheat came down and was collected, while the light chaff was blown away. The character of the wicked is like chaff, light, unstable, useless. This character unless changed leads only to one result: "therefore, the wicked shall not stand in the judgment." In the judgments of life they are not in a condition to come clearly out of trial; in the final judgment they will be unable to stand the calm, clear, searching light of Him who is seated on the great white throne. Neither will they have a place in "the congregation of the righteous." They have no claim to be reckoned as such, whatever their pretensions. They do not belong to the company of those who truly and sincerely serve God. In the great congregation of God's redeemed they will have no place, for nothing that defileth can enter there. Once more there is a word of contrast, "for the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous." This evidently means a sympathetic knowledge, for God knows all things and knows the way of the wicked as well as that of the righteous. He knows their struggles against sin, their difficulties, their trials and temptations. He watches over them lovingly and bestows upon them His blessing and His grace. The way of the righteous under God's gracious guidance is the way of uprightness, of peace, and of eternal happiness. "But the way of the wicked shall perish." It is the wrong way, it is the way of misery and unhappiness, and it leads surely to destruction. "The end of these things is death."

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

There are many shades of personal character in the world, but according to the divine estimate there are only two well-defined classes—the righteous and the wicked.

The righteous man delights in the law of the Lord; the wicked man neglects and despises it.

The final destination of the two is widely different. Life everlasting awaits the good man, while destruction is the portion of the wicked. What tremendous issues depend upon the choice you make,