

Our Contributors.

SOME HOLIDAY PLEASURES.

BY KNOXONIAN.

Holidays are not all pleasure. If a man finds packing up and leaving home a pleasant kind of exercise he is a poor kind of man, or he has a poor kind of home. Saying good bye to a bore is pleasant enough, but it is not so pleasant saying good bye to one's wife. Kissing the baby on ordinary occasions does not require much of an effort from an experienced family man, but some fairly strong men do weaken perceptibly when they kiss the baby the last time for a month.

Now you are off. As the train steamed away from the station, you need not be ashamed to admit that you felt a rather uncomfortable sensation under the third button of your vest when you glanced through the window and took your last look of the town or city which contains nearly all that is most dear to you on earth. No, you needn't be the least ashamed to admit that. If you didn't feel a little that way you are not much of a man. This contributor has no ambition to act in the capacity of father-in-law for any young man who leaves home for a month without feeling a little sad. To be father-in-law to an iceberg is not a position we covet to any great extent.

But you are off anyway and you have not gone far until you perhaps find out that a crowded heated car and coal dust do not add much to the happiness of human existence. Coal dust is a most searching kind of thing. It searches all the territory between

neck and one's shirt collar with marvellous persistency. Your whitest linen soon changes colour under the malign influence of coal dust. As you go on your tour, you perhaps find yourself on a steamboat that has berths for seventy five passengers, but has 200 on board. If you are one of the 125 that got no berth, it may dawn on your mind some time during the first night you are on board that holidays are not all pleasure. A fit of sea sickness that causes you to give yourself away over the side of the steamer will greatly fortify you in that opinion. Some hotels and boarding houses remind one of home—by way of contrast. There are other holiday inconveniences which might be mentioned, but the worst one comes in at the end. As the weeks slip past your pocket book gradually takes on a slender form. By the time your holiday is over it becomes as thin as a pancake. We once saw the pocket book of a doctor in divinity when he got home from a tour to the Old Country, and his pocket book was scarcely thick enough to cast a shadow. Well, you sit down and solemnly open your thin pocket book and find you have spent more money than you expected to spend—one always does in this country—and you feel bad. This closing reflection over the thin pocket book is one of the most painful things about a holiday.

But if we rightly remember, we set out with the intention of saying something about some of the pleasures of a holiday. Like some preachers, we have wandered from the text. We have just as good a right to wander from the text as any preacher has. One of the greatest pleasures of a holiday is

MEETING OLD FRIENDS.

Perhaps they are old parishioners, or old school-mates, or old college chums, or old neighbours, old friends of some kind. You haven't seen them for years. You didn't expect to see them now, and perhaps the pleasure is all the greater because you didn't. The pleasure of surprise is added to all the other pleasures. And meeting an old trusty friend is one of the greatest pleasures we enjoy on this earth. There is just one thing better than a warm shake-hands with a true man, and that is a shake-hands with a whole-souled woman. Let any genial kind of man who has spent a month at the seaside, or in Muskoka, or in fact anywhere, say when he comes home what he enjoyed most and prominent among the enjoyable things he will always put "meeting some old friends."

We once heard a most excellent man say that if he had met his neighbour's dog in London he would have taken off his hat to the animal. The good man was "doing" London alone and he got very lonesome.

To have met a neighbour in the metropolis of the world would have been a rare treat. We all know how interesting a neighbour becomes when you meet him two or three hundred miles from home. Some neighbours need to travel about three hundred miles

from home before they take any interest in each other. Would it not be as well if neighbours did not depend so much on distance to stir up their neighbourly feelings?

Another of the pleasures of a holiday consists in

MAKING NEW FRIENDS.

There are a great many nice people in this world, and one rarely travels any distance or spends a week at a summer resort without meeting some of them. Probably we never heard of them before, never knew they were in existence, but in some way or another an acquaintance springs and ripens into friendship, and the friendship lasts for life. Many of the friendships we value most highly arose in this very way. You meet a man on train or steamboat, talk a little with him, find you have many things in common; later on, he visits you, and you visit him, and you are friends to the end of life's journey.

A third pleasant thing about a holiday is

AN INCREASE OF VITALITY.

You leave home with a weary brain, shaky nerves, deranged digestive organs, and a physical system generally out of tune. For the first week you probably feel worse. Then you begin to eat more and sleep better, and feel better generally. In a short time your landlord has a very small margin of profit on your meals. The less profit he has financially the more you have physically. When you never know you have a stomach except at meal time, and can sleep ten hours on a stretch, then you strike for home. And be thankful you have a home to go to.

TAMSUI AND THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN MISSION.

BY C. A. COLEMAN.

Contrary to the captain's prediction that we should have had bad weather because there was a missionary on board, we had fine weather, and our steamer, the *Fukien*, had a good passage of twenty hours across the Formosa channel, from Amoy to Tamsui, though one poor seasick passenger did not enjoy much.

We anchored just outside of Tamsui Harbour, Thursday morning about ten o'clock.

From the steamer, looking towards the harbour, one sees on the right hand some low lying land a mile or so in width, behind which are some mountains, the highest point, Kwanyin, goddess of mercy, being 1,800 feet high. To the left past some rising ground lies Tamsui, hardly visible from the nature of the ground, and several miles off across the table land, a short range of mountains bars the view in that direction, Tai-tun, the highest peak, being 2,800 feet above the sea.

Conspicuous in the interval between the steamer and the mountain is the old Dutch Fort, now used as the British Consulate. It is of red bricks, built about 1644 A.D., by the Dutch, when that once maritime power was trying to wrest the Chinese trade from the Portuguese and Spaniards. Its walls are eight feet thick, and during the bombardment of Tamsui by the French in October, 1884, while fifty or sixty Chinese men, women and children were taking refuge in it, a shell struck it and sinking into the wall, remained there without exploding.

Our steamer having to wait outside till afternoon for high tide, I went ashore in a sail boat that had come off for the mails; the boatman saw I was a stranger and tried to make an honest dollar out of me by a persistent attempt to overcharge for my passage, but I had met Chinese boatmen before.

The boat stopped at the custom house, where I landed, and was directed by the customs officers, one of whom proved to be an old acquaintance from Canton, how to find the houses of the Canadian missionaries.

Going along the road from the custom house, the British Consulate is passed on the left hand, the wall of which, by the road, is built of round stones from the beach, and out of its embrasures from the ugly muzzles of rusty unmounted cannon.

Turning up the hill at the south-east corner of the consulate, Oxford College, the Girls' School and the houses of the missionaries are in full view just when the top is reached.

The mission grounds form three-quarters of a square. A brick wall separates the two-quarters on which Oxford College and the Girls' School is built, from the one quarter which contains the two mission houses and outbuildings.

Two avenues, lined on both sides with trees, lead from the public road to the college and school, a distance of about one hundred yards, and similar avenues run across the grounds and from school to college.

The mission houses are substantial stone buildings, one story high, built bungalow style and raised by a stone wall several feet from the ground. Each house has verandas on three sides, which help greatly to keep them cool in the hot, trying months of summer. A picket fence lined with trees, and a small lawn and some flower pots, separate the houses from the road, and lawns and a brick wall separate the houses from each other. Behind each house there is the necessary kitchen and servants' quarters; besides small vegetable gardens in which can be seen fine cabbages, Swedish turnips, carrots, beets, tomatoes, etc. Some poultry is seen in each backyard.

OXFORD COLLEGE.

Oxford College is a handsome brick building, having seventy-six feet frontage and depth of 180 feet. The friends of the mission in Oxford County, Ontario, furnished the money for its erection.

It was opened on the 26th of July, 1882, in the presence of hundreds of converts and visitors, among the latter was her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Mr. A. Frater, who was chairman, and two Chinese mandarins. The building was decorated for the occasion with evergreens and flowers, and the flags of Great Britain and China.

The college has three rooms in front, the centre and largest one being the lecture room, of the other two, one is a class room, the other a bookroom. The lecture room, which is 20 x 30 feet, is lighted by means of two windows on each side, and skylights above; there is an open space between it and the back of the building. The rooms of the students are in the rear of the class room and bookroom, and on each side open into the space behind the lecture room by a single door. The back of the building, separated by a little space from the students rooms, contains the diningroom, kitchen, and four other rooms. The whole building is floored with tiles.

A tile platform about a foot high occupies the west end of the lecture room, on which is a small desk and several chairs; the body of the room contains seats and desks for about thirty students.

As the students face the platform they see two oil paintings on the wall before them, that on the right being a life size portrait of Dr. Mackay, that on the left a similar one of Mrs. Mackay, in Chinese dress. These portraits were presented to the college by the preachers and students. Above the blackboard, which occupies the middle of the wall, is a portrait of the QUEEN, and a little below that the inscription in Chinese characters, "Tsu tsai Siong-ti," The Lord God. Two photographs at the end of the inscription show, in one, a view of the college, in the other, a group of students by the side of Dr Mackay. One of Johnston's coloured natural history charts hangs under each of the portraits, and a Chinese map of the world in hemispheres, on one wall, and a map of solar system on the other hang opposite each other. Over the fireplace is a mirror, and on the mantelpiece a picture of "The Old Bridge at Stirling." The mention of two four lamp chandeliers completes the description.

THE GIRLS' SCHOOL.

The Girls' School was built with money contributed by the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church, in Canada, and was opened January 19th, 1884.

It is a substantial stone building as large as the college, with walls fully two feet thick, the back wall even thicker because it is from that direction the typhoons come.

Behind both college and school a plantation of young trees is laid out, which when grown will protect the buildings from the strong north-east winds.

There are three lecture rooms leading into each other, in this part of the school, the largest being in the centre is lighted and situated as the lecture room in the college; behind the smaller lecture rooms are the private rooms of the girls, each opening with its own door into the open space behind the lecture room, in this respect better laid out than the college. The rear of the building contains dining room and kitchen, and rooms for the cook and his wife, who is matron.

The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society also provides \$400 a year for the maintenance of the school