

Our Contributors.

MORE ABOUT THE NORTHERN PLAYGROUND.

BY KNONONIAN.

Port Carling—the place where we left our readers last week—is the centre of the Northern playground. The main feature of the town is the canal. Through this canal the Cockburn steamers pass on their way to Lake Joseph and Lake Rosseau. The canal is not much to look at but it is useful. Its Northern bank is usually covered with tourists during the season and among them you can always see a number of clergymen clad in Muskoka costume. Muskoka costume is not specially clerical. The canal proper is about the length of a good sized steamboat. It was built or perhaps we should say dug, soon after Confederation and was named after the Hon. John Carling who was Commissioner of Public Works in the Sandfield McDonald Government. There are two or three summer hotels at the Port and judging from the number of people who ornament the Northern bank as the steamers pass through, we should say the place is a favourite resort for tourists. One of the advantages of the place is that you can see every body that goes to Lake Joseph or Lake Rosseau by simply standing on the canal bank when the steamers are in the lock. There is a good deal of business done at Port Carling. It is the distributing point for the Northern part of the playground. We saw a hundred and thirty barrels of flour put off there one afternoon. The people who stood on the deck of the steamers grumbled far more about the little delay than the young fellows who handled all that flour, did about the work. It is always so, especially in the church. The men and women who do nothing grumble much more than the men and women who work.

There is some splendid scenery to be seen immediately after leaving Port Carling. The sail out of the river and into Lake Rosseau is grand and when you enter the lake there are islands to the right of you, islands to the left of you, islands in front of you, islands everywhere. Here you may turn either to the right and go up to the village of Rosseau at the head of the lake or to the left, and, passing through the cut at Port Sandfield, sail into Lake Joseph. For the present we shall turn to the right and visit some of the interesting points on the east side of Lake Rosseau. Every island in this part of the lake has a picturesque summer house on it and many of the summer residences are beautifully decorated. Far away to the left one can see the little island on which Neil, R. P. McKay, Gandier, Argo, and several other esteemed brethren discussed high points in theology last summer. There may be an odour of Calvinistic theology about that island yet, but the steamer did not go near enough for the passengers to catch it.

That splendid island to the right is the summer residence of Senator Sanford, of Hamilton. Sir John Thompson, the Premier of the Dominion, is there taking a rest after the worry and labor of the session. On that thickly wooded island even the Grits cannot reach him with questions. Now we are at Windermere, one of the most popular places on the playground. Here we may leave the steamer for a little and take a look around. There are two hotels conducted on strictly prohibition principles. About a hundred and fifty guests are at the larger one and sixty or seventy at the other. Distinguished men abound. That handsome man over there on the lawn, clad in summer costume, is W. R. Meredith, Q.C., leader of her Majesty's loyal Opposition in the Ontario Legislature. Sir Oliver Mowat was here last summer and is expected again in a few days. If the veteran Premier comes, he and Mr. Meredith and Sir John Thompson can easily find a rock on which they can sit together and discuss affairs of state. Affairs of state in this region generally mean something about the man who can swim farthest, or catch the largest fish, or tell the best fish story. Sir John Thompson frequently comes over for his mail and as a rule the guests salute him. Sir John politely raises his sailor cap on the slightest possible

provocation. Taking a survey of the Premier one soon gets the idea that strength and perseverance are his main points.

One of the best qualities of Ontario character is seen here every day. The arrival of a senator or a millionaire at an American watering place rarely fails to make a sensation. The report soon goes around that the new arrival is worth a certain number of millions or that he occupies this or that prominent position. People here salute Sir John Thompson or Sir Oliver or Mr. Meredith with becoming respect, as they should do, but they never staidy after anybody. The arrival of a millionaire would not create as much sensation as the arrival of a fellow who has caught a large fish or of a lady who had secured a fine collection of water lilies. To their honor be it said that Sir John Thompson, Sir Oliver or Mr. Meredith never pose as distinguished persons. The man who isn't anybody in particular is always the fellow who tries to attract attention.

Professors and clergymen are here in force. Among others we notice Dr. McMullen, ex-Moderator of the General Assembly, Mr. McDonald, ex-editor of the *Knox Monthly*, Mr. Eastman of Oshaw, at the Windermere House. Dr. Dewart is at the Fife House. Last Sabbath Mr. Eastman and Mr. McDonald preached excellent sermons to the Presbyterians and Dr. Dewart gave the Methodists some good wholesome diet. Last Sabbath was better kept here than in the towns in which most of us live when at home.

Next week we may take a little trip to Rosseau.

INTEMPERANCE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

If we recall the close connection between dietetics and health, if we consider how many diseases issue from the sink of intemperance and the excesses of the table, we would discover that true morality is the soundest medicine.

Many doctors are accused of epicurism: be it so, if it is true that many of their patients pay them only with a dinner. But if it is not their interest, it is at least always their duty to extol Temperance, guardian of health and safe protectress against the most cruel maladies. Near to nature and truth, we will endeavour to fix the limits within which man may judiciously confine himself so as to separate hurtful vices from those pleasures accorded in this life to the legitimate use of our functions. Nature having placed voluptuousness at the door through which man sees the objects indispensable to his existence, and the perpetuity of his species, he is only too prone to give himself loose rein, especially in youth and the vigour of his age.

Intemperance springs from two principal kinds of appetites: that of food and drink, and that of incontinence. In fact, the senses of sight, hearing and also smell, although contributing delightful pleasure and enjoyment, rarely lead to abuses dangerous to health and morals; but it is not so with taste and touch. These two, which seem to be but modifications of one another, and brought into activity by the immediate contact of bodies, are the rudest and most material of all, and the only ones that are never absolutely wanting in the whole animal kingdom, even in the least perfect species. They are also the most necessary to animal life in the search for food and sexes of different species. They form the lowest, the most animal of the functions of sensation, or relation with exterior objects, nature has attached to them the most sensual pleasures, in order that the animal may be a prey to vehemence and ardor, whether in seeking its food or propagating its species. But as the preservation of the species is even more precious than that of the individual, nature has bestowed more delicious pleasure in the latter than the former.

These two sensations, in affinity with the body only, are the most debasing for the intellectual faculties; whilst what we see or hear is adapted to our instruction and enlightenment of our proceedings in life. Smell occupies a sort of middle position between the intellectual and material senses, since it may affect either the imagination or the taste by fragrant perfume or peculiar exhalations.

Man, being the most sensitive, or most nervous, of all creatures, can also go to greater extremes in the abuse of his senses than the brutes. With the animal, instinct is appeased, as a rule, when its wants are satisfied. When the famished wolf has fed abundantly, he hides the rest of his prey underground. When quadrupeds have abated their ardor, nature's limits are rarely overleaped. On the contrary, the industry of man has led him to a thousand preparations which incite his appetites beyond measure, and precipitate him into the most pernicious excesses. These dangerous arts unceasingly setting on fire an organization already disposed to enjoy sensuality, necessarily force the barriers that instinct and reason set up before its abuse; and if man is the most sickly of animals, he must not accuse nature, but his own intemperance.

It is not as a man that this vice is characteristic of our species, but as an animal. With the brute, the functions of nutrition and generation prevail more than the intellectual and sensitive life which dominate in man. Consequently, the more scope we give to the first, the more we descend to sensuality, and the intellectual faculties necessarily lose their preponderance. Look at the animal! The projection of its muzzle, the recedence of its forehead and brain, seem to say that it takes more pleasure in eating than thinking. It stoops to the ground to feed and graze; but man, who raises his head towards heaven—man, whose jaws and mouth shorten in proportion as the capacity of his cranium expands, manifests that he was destined to reflect rather than devour.

Although we may cite the excesses of the tables of Alexander, Marcus Antony, and perhaps other renowned personages who inherited these vices amidst their surroundings; no man, illustrious by the splendor of his genius, ever was or ever can be intemperate, whether from the pleasures of the table, or of love.

Let us consider what individuals display most affection for sensual voluptuousness. As to taste, they are those of a ruby phiz, all those tools of Bacchus, those friends of the gormandiser and lovers of gastronomy who make a god of their belly, a servile vice affected by vulgar people who haunt the taverns and never reflect. The inhabitants of cold countries are more voracious and more given to drink than those of warm climates. In like manner a Spaniard is very sober compared with a German or an Englishman.

The habit of intemperance, when it is not followed by cachexy and the most deplorable maladies, makes the body plethoric, effeminate, lymphatic and sanguine. The intemperate man is inclined to quick passions, such as joy and anger, and rushes rashly into dangers and battle. If he is imprudent, dissipated, licentious, inconstant and impetuous, he opens his mind with more frankness, cordiality and courage than the generality of sober men; these are more dissembling, more sluggish in their affections, more avaricious and reserved in everything, harsher in their virtues than the others in their vices. The intemperate man almost always abandons himself to the fury of his impulses of love or hatred without any disguise; the temperate man, with much more prudence and reflection, governs himself with fear and circumspection.

To whatever degree the moderns have pushed the luxury of gastronomy, there is nothing in our most far-fetched entertainments comparable to the extravagance with which the Romans, in their orgies, swallowed up the rarest productions of the then-known world, and devoured the revenues of many kingdoms. But it was the *people-king, populum latè regem*, descendants of Curius and Cato, who lived on the bannock, the cabbage and the turnip. Some pushed their greediness so far as to glut themselves with food which they were forced to reject again. This shameful and disgusting habit was daily practised by those strange gluttons, and even women followed the custom, although doctors raised their voices against vomiting by such mechanical means as the introduction of a finger or a feather into the throat. These cleansings were only a preparation for new excesses:—

Vomunt ut edant, edunt ut vomant, et opulens quas toto orbe conquirunt, nec conquire dignantur. Senec.

We do not pretend to vaunt those Pythagoreans who practised fasting as a virtue, and had the table covered with the most exquisite dishes on which they feasted their eyes for some hours, and carried them back without touching them. Aristotle assures us that when we wish to habituate ourselves to temperance, it is much more prudent not to fasten our eyes upon those objects of concupiscence that excite us, for the sight of carnal pleasures makes the mouth water. He claims that temperance and moderation in drinking and eating preserve serenity of soul, the calm sense of reason and wisdom; he maintains that they make the character sweet and forbearing, the feelings modest, the mind more reflective, the affections more chaste and continent, and the manners more pure and simple; that order and method are better preserved, that our passions are less impetuous; and that we know better how to economize and conduct ourselves with prudence. Studious and contemplative men are obliged to abstain from the excesses of the table and of love if they wish to fulfil to perfection those sublime functions of the mind to which they have consecrated their lives. Intemperance or an insatiable desire for voluptuousness becomes the mother of all bestial passions. Nothing quenches the imagination, degrades the memory, and stupefies the judgment more than excesses of the table. Sobriety is so necessary to the maintenance of a healthy body that athletes and soldiers among the ancients were bound to practise temperance and continence, as Horace says: *Abstinuit venere et vino*. Old men have more need of temperance in all things than young men.

Health, it is said, is the sweetest seasoning of life. Doctors cry out that gluttony and other intemperate habits are the sinks of iniquity, the cloaca of disease, the stagnation of digestion, visceral obstructions, tumors, cachexy, burning fevers, gout, gravel, apoplexy and caverns of all ills. Hippocrates, and all the ancient philosophers praise temperance and labour, the true props of prudence and of health. Then, the native heat of the body, or vital force, distributes itself with ease among the members, makes us lively, firm and sound. Despise voluptuousness, that nurse of suffering, says Plato. Shun, says Socrates, those pernicious ragouts that excite us to eat beyond what hunger demands. Is it not shameful for a man, the noblest of creatures, to brutalize himself by drunkenness, to drown his reason by intoxication, to wallow in the mire of vice more than the lower animals themselves; then to come out in this shameful state only to experience articular torture, calculus, fever, and other insupportable ills? What indiscretion to purchase these fatal maladies at the price of a momentary pleasure! Look at the drunkard that he lifts from the gutter, throwing up what he has taken, crying like a madman, and tossing about on his dunghill! See him after his recovery, dull and besotted, sometimes with a headache and colic and sometimes with a fever! Is it the brute or is it the man that hearkens best to the voice of nature? We see the beast take the simple food that the earth provides for it, satisfied with the limpid water and sweet sleep to recuperate its strength. Man, on the contrary, insatiable amidst all the gifts of the universe, ceases not to fill himself, like the tun of the Danaides. He gathers from every quarter, not the things he needs, but rather new sources of disease. Nothing satisfies his shameful voracity whilst he bursts with plethora and corpulence; whilst he drags his heavy mass, *latamque trahens inglorius alvum*, he still dreams of new festivities until a cruel death puts an end to his frenzy for swallowing and engulfing like a bottomless pit.

Would they take as a sign for an eating-house the sober goddess, Hygieia, offering her cup to the wise serpent of Epidaurus, emblem of abstinence and mother of health? Would the allegorical statue of Temperance place a bridle on their devouring jaws? No, doubtless, the age would view with horror such shackles imposed upon its pleasures. Temperance is one of the four cardinal virtues. She restrains concupiscence, and inspires us with pure thoughts; infuses wisdom into the mind and puts the animal appetites of man in subjection. Epicurism and voluptuousness will still be the fashion until man and wo-