

Anor's Prayer.

BY ELLEN PORTER CHAMPION.

Of what is my Anor a-dreaming,
As she watches the sunset to-night?
Through the changing clouds, purple and
crimson,
Then golden with glorious light.

She sees the bright hues, gleaming brighter,
Broad flash, ere they flicker and fade,
Till dim and more dim grows the sunshine,
Deeper and deeper the shade.

She's solving, with blue eyes dilated,
A problem oft pondered before,
As she whispers, "The sun's gone to heaven,
And now they are shutting the door."

"Once I was afraid of the shadows,
When the light faded out from the skies;
Now I know the kind angels watch o'er me;
The beautiful stars are their eyes.

"I think they look in at my window,
And smile when I'm saying my prayer,
And I ask them to take me to heaven,
For darkness can never come there."

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, APRIL 8, 1893.

THE SUNDAY STONE.

IN one of our English coal mines there is a constant formation of limestone, caused by the trickling of water through the rocks. This water contains a great many particles of lime, which are deposited in the mine; and as the water passes off, these become hard and form the limestone. This stone would always be white, like marble, were it not that men are working in the mine; and as the black dust rises from the coal, it mixes with the soft lime, and in that way a black stone is formed.

Now, in the night, when there is no coal-dust rising, the stone is white; then again, the next day when the miners are at work another black layer is formed, and so on alternately, black and white, through the week, until Sunday comes. Then, as the miners keep holy the Sabbath, a much larger layer of white stone will be formed than before. There will be the white stone of Saturday night and the whole of Sunday and Sunday night, so that every seventh day the white layer will be about three times as thick as any of the others. But if they work on the Sabbath they see it marked against them in the stone. Hence the miners call it "the Sunday stone."

Perhaps many who now break the Sabbath would try and spend it better if they had a "Sunday stone" where they could see their unkept Sabbaths with their black marks. But God needs no such record on earth to know how all our Sabbaths are kept. His record is kept above. All our Sabbath deeds are written there, and we shall see them at the last. Be very

careful to keep your Sabbath pure and white. Do not allow the dust of worldliness and sin to tarnish the purity of the blessed day. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

BOOK NOTICES.

Tim's Friend. By Annie M. Barton. London: C. Kelly. Toronto: William Briggs.

The tragedy of life among the lowly, especially of child-life among the lapsed masses, is almost too painful to contemplate, and were it not for the silver lining of the dark cloud, of the "all things working together for good," given in this story, it would be almost too sad for child reading.

Sinclair's Museum, and Other Stories. By W. J. Foster. Same publishers.

Mr. Foster's intimate connection for many years with the children's home have brought him into close touch with child-life and furnished him alike with themes for his stories and with deftness of skill in treating them that always secure him an interested circle of readers.

Jacob Winterton's Inheritance. By Emilie Searchfield, Author of "My Brother Jack," "Nina's Burnished Gold," etc. Same publishers.

This little book by its deft interweavings of Bible readings with the thread of the story will do much to make its readers familiar with the Book of books.

Nell, the Clown's Wife; or, How the Poor Helped Each Other. By Emily Gradidge. Same publishers.

This is another of those peculiar phases of English life of which we know almost nothing in Canada. Human hearts and human sorrows are much the same in a circus van as they are elsewhere. The little story will be read with much interest.

THE CRUISE OF THE "SARRY-ANN."

BY DONALD G. PAINE.

THE *Sarry-Ann* slowly made her way across the cove and drew near Codfish Point. Outside rolled the waters of Massachusetts Bay, and as they beat upon the rocks, sent up huge masses of spray. Inside was a land-locked bay known as Fisherman's Cove.

The crew of the *Sarry-Ann* consisted of Joe Williams, captain and pilot, and Bob Sturgis, first officer and chief engineer. These positions were frequently exchanged, for the boys took turns in rowing. The *Sarry-Ann*, as you have probably guessed, was a good-sized row-boat. In this the boys had cruised around the cove all summer, and had met with small adventures, to be sure, but nothing of any consequence.

On this particular Friday the weather looked threatening outside and there was a good swell down by the "point," so the boys cruised in that direction to get a sniff of real salt air. Just before reaching the point, Bob had relieved Joe at the oars, and when the real cruise began, the *Sarry-Ann* was officered in the usual manner, Joe being forward in command.

The point was rounded slowly and carefully, for the boat had begun to feel the motion. Suddenly Joe cried, "Steady, Bob, keep her well in for the point; there's Ben Holliday's boat drifting in on the tide."

"Can we catch her before she strikes the rocks?" came from Bob, as he braced his feet and sent the *Sarry-Ann* through the water more swiftly towards the point.

"Just about an even chance as we go now," replied Captain Joe. "A little more on your right, Bob; that's it, keep her in line with the tall pine."

Bob having got his bearings bent to his oars, and, slowly but surely, began to gain on the drifting boat. The race was exciting, but the *Sarry-Ann* proved her reputation as a fast boat.

"We won't dare go any farther outside," said the cautious captain as Bob rested on his oars. "We would be apt to get upset or swamped if we didn't take the waves just right."

"I'll hold her as close to the rocks as I can," replied Bob, "and when she drifts in, you grab her and I'll back off."

The *Sarry-Ann* lay right in the track of

the drifting boat, and the boys felt sure that it would be an easy matter to capture her. Some unknown set of the tide, however, began to carry her past them on to the rocks just around the point.

"We've got to get that boat, Bob!" exclaimed Joe, just then, "there's somebody in the bottom of her, and if she goes on the rocks we can never get him."

"All right, Joe," replied Bob, "got down as low as you can, so as to keep her steady."

The point was skilfully rounded. Just ahead of them was the boat. In the bottom lay a man, apparently alive, from the slight motions he made with his feet and hands.

"One more good stroke, Bob," said Joe, "and then stand ready to back her as hard as you can."

To seaward, great combing waves could be seen, and it seemed as though they were chasing each other in. It was necessary to reach the boat and draw it away from the rocks, before one of these whitecaps should strike her. How slowly the *Sarry-Ann* seemed to move. Joe leaned far out and grasped the drifting boat.

"Now, Bob, now back with her," cried Joe, winding his legs around the seat in his own boat and clinging to his prize with both hands. Bob backed with all his might. The strain on Joe became intense. He saw the oncoming wave break, and felt its power as it tossed the boat like a feather toward the rock.

Joe's cry to back was unheard by Bob, who was putting all his strength into the oars. The strain on Joe's arms relaxed a little and he knew that they had succeeded in keeping the drifting boat off the rocks. A few more of Bob's vigorous strokes carried them around the point and into smooth water.

"It's Ben Holliday himself," cried Bob, excitedly, as the two boats were drawn alongside, "and,"—sniffing at an empty bottle at Ben's side,—"he's been drinking." "I guess your right, Bob," answered Joe. "We had better tow him home just as he is."

Taking the oars from Ben's boat and making it fast astern of the *Sarry-Ann*, the two boys bent to their task of rowing home. It was no easy matter to do this, for the boat they were towing was a heavy drag.

By the time they had reached the landing, ten or fifteen people had gathered there, and with their assistance Ben was landed and carried home.

"Drunk again as usual," grunted one old sailor, after he had heard the boys' account of their adventure. "Went fishing, took some whiskey with him to keep out the cold and wet,—took more than was good for him—anchor rope chafed through—got adrift, and if you boys hadn't happened along in the *Sarry-Ann*, this would have been the last fishing trip Ben Holliday ever made."

These were the facts, as the boys afterwards learned from Ben's own lips, but in addition to that they also heard him agree to sign the pledge. The next day Bob and Joe placed their names on Ben's pledge as witnesses. He wanted their names, he said, to remind him of his narrow escape from death on the rocks of Codfish Point.

This was the last cruise of the *Sarry-Ann* that year, and in fact when the next summer vacation found the boys at the cove, they learned to their delight that Ben Holliday was the owner of a new cat-boat. On her stern they read the name *Sarry-Ann*, and were offered the use of her whenever they wanted to "cruise."

ABOUT SWANS.

BY REV. C. E. CLINE.

THERE is scarcely any bird of which we really know so little in its native habitat as the swan. They breed in desolate regions far away to the north, where there is little chance to observe them. In late autumn they migrate, and many of them spend the winter on the Columbia River and along the Pacific coast from Seattle to Portland and San Francisco. In flight they usually go so high that little can be ascertained about them then. Occasionally one is shot in the vicinity of Astoria at the mouth of the Columbia, and the hunter who does this is considered an expert.

By the way, the migratory habits of birds is a subject of scientific study now-a-days by the United States Government at Washington, and the writer has been for some years engaged in observing and reporting for the officers at Washington having this matter in charge. The object is to ascertain, if possible, the cause of birds going north and south at particular seasons; whether the old or young ones of the same species travel together; what lines of flight they take, and why; and numerous other things of interest to scientific men.

Some believe that birds like swans migrate to the north, so they may find there lonely regions where they may bring forth their young in security; but this explanation is not the only one, as there are uninhabited regions and equally desolate in the south. I think the north is the natural home of the swan, and of almost all the water-fowl. Here the young swans are hatched and grow large enough to fly; and they go south simply because they are forced to do so by the cold, which not only makes them uncomfortable, but freezes up the lakes and streams till they cannot procure suitable food; and as soon as the ice is gone in the spring, they hurry back in great flocks, rejoicing that they can again come home.

Almost all water-birds come from the south in spring poor in flesh and tasting "fishy," showing that they have been reduced to extremities for food. In early spring the swans, like great white angels, pass high overhead, going on and on till they reach a swamp or water-course within the Arctic circle, where they build a nest high as a man's head, and large round, usually in shallow water, and where the mother swan sitting to hatch her eggs can have a pretty good view of the region round about and detect her dreaded enemies, the eagle and the fox. In this nest she lays from four to six eggs of immense size, upon which she sits at least six weeks, when the little swans come out covered with the most delicate down imaginable. This down is of a bluish gray when they are first hatched, but soon changes to a pure white. The swan we are writing about is known as the "trumpeter," because of the note it gives resembling the sound of a long, melodious trumpet. The "trumpeter," when grown, is in colour the whitest white conceivable, excepting the bill and feet, which are jet black, and a slight bronze is observable on the crown of the high but beautifully arched neck.

The swan is eagerly hunted by the Indians on the Yukon River in Alaska, their skins bringing a high price on account of the beautiful down. It is estimated that not less than five thousand of these magnificent birds are killed annually for their skins and plumage. This is too bad. The killing of these swans is done in the night. When the Indians ascertain where the birds are on the water in flocks, they arrange a canoe with a strong light made of dry wood or pitch-pine in the front end of it; behind this light they sit rowing, or, if the game be down stream, they allow the canoe to float noiselessly to meet the coveted prize, when, strange to say, attracted by the light, they come swimming toward it till within range of the deadly arrow, which is shot so silently as not to give alarm. In this way a boat is sometimes loaded in a single night.

AN OLD MAN'S REASONS.

THERE is an old man living in the State of Maine who is said to be nearly one hundred and thirty years old. Just think of it! How many changes he must have seen during his long life! How different things must be from what they were when he was young. He has had good health all his life, and enjoys it now. He must have had simple, healthful habits, and what is a very telling fact, has never used strong drink. Someone asked him what he supposed was the reason for his living so long, and he replied: "I believe it is because I have always worn woollen clothes both in summer and winter, and have left all intoxicating liquors alone." Somebody told him that alcohol was needed sometimes for medicine, but he shook his head, and replied that "wormwood was much better, and was always safe."

COME unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.