

THE BARK CANOE.

(FROM LONGFELLOW'S HIAWATHA.)

"GIVE me of your bark, O Birch-Tree!
Of your yellow bark, O Birch-Tree!
Growing by the rushing river,
Tall and stately in the valley!
A light canoe will build me,
Build a swift Cheemaun for sailing,
That shall float upon the river,
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,
Like a yellow water-lily!
"Lay aside your cloak, O Birch-Tree!
Lay aside your white-skin wrapper,
For the Summer-time is coming,
And the sun is warm in heaven,
And you need no white-skin wrapper!"
Thus aloud cried Hiawatha
In the solitary forest,
And the tree with all its branches
Rustled in the breeze of morning,
Saying, with a sigh of patience,
"Take my cloak, O Hiawatha!"
With his knife the tree he girdled;
Just beneath its lowest branches,
Just above the roots, he cut it,
Fill the sap came oozing outward;
Down the trunk, from top to bottom,
Sheer he cleft the bark asunder,
With a wooden wedge he raised it,
Stripped it from the trunk unbroken.
"Give me of your boughs, O Cedar!
Of your strong and pliant branches,
My canoe to make more steady,
Make more strong and firm beneath me!"
Through the summit of the Cedar!
Went a sound, a cry of horror,
Went a murmur of resistance;
But it whispered, bending downward,
"Take my boughs, O Hiawatha!"
Down he hewed the boughs of Cedar,
Shaped them straightway to a framework,
Like two bows he formed and shaped them,
Like two bended bows together.
"Give me of your roots, O Tamarack!
Of your fibrous roots, O Larch-Tree!
My canoe to bind together,
So to bind the ends together,
That the water may not enter,
That the river may not wet me!"
And the Larch, with all its fibres,
Shivered in the air of morning,
Touched its torch-head with its tassels,
Said, with one long sigh of sorrow,
"Take them all, O Hiawatha!"
From the earth he tore the fibres,
Tore the tough roots of the Larch-Tree,
Closely sewed the bark together,
Bound it closely to the framework.
"Give me of your balm, O Fir-Tree!
Of your balsam and your resin,
So to close the seams together
That the water may not enter,
That the river may not wet me!"
And the Fir-Tree, tall and sombre,
Sobbed through all its robes of darkness,
Rattled like a shore with pebbles,
Answered wailing, answered weeping
"Take my balm, O Hiawatha!"
And he took the tears of balsam,
Took the resin of the Fir-Tree,
Sweated therewith each seam and fissure,
Made each crevice safe from water.
"Give me of your quills, O Hedgehog!
All your quills, O Kagh, the Hedgehog!
I will make a necklace of them,
Make a girdle for my beauty,
And two stars to deck her bosom!"
From a hollow tree the Hedgehog
With his sleepy eyes looked at him,
Shot his shining quills like arrows,
Saying with a drowsy murmur,
Through the tangle of his whiskers,
"Take my quills, O Hiawatha!"
From the ground the quills he gathered,
All the little shining arrows,
Stained them red and blue and yellow
With the juice of roots and berries;
Into his canoe he wrought them,
Round its waist a shining girdle,
Round its bows a gleaming necklace.
On its breast two stars resplendent.
Thus the Birch Canoe was banded
In the valley, by the river,
In the bosom of the forest;
And the forest's life was in it,
All its mystery and its magic,
All the lightness of the birch-tree,
All the toughness of the cedar,
All the larch's supple sinews;
And it floated on the river
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,
Like a yellow water-lily.

The Empress of Russia has just ordered a cloak of sable fur, trimmed with gold and enriched with precious stones, the whole cost being placed at \$43,000.

MISSIONARY EXERCISE ON JAPAN.

BY SOPHIE S. SMITH.

Prayer—By Pastor.
Scripture Reading—1 John 5th chap.
Singing—Good Tidings. (No. 47 in Missionary Songs.) "Shout the tidings of salvation," etc.
Talk on Japan—By the Superintendent and scholars.
SUPT.—Bertie, can you give us some facts concerning Japan?
BERTIE.—Japan consists of nearly four thousand islands, situated in the Pacific Ocean, east of China. The country is mountainous, the climate is mild and the scenery is beautiful. The people call it "The Sunrise Kingdom;" the name, Japan, being derived from the Chinese word *Zi pan gu*, which means, The Kingdom of the Rising Sun. The population is about thirty-six millions.

SUPT.—Mary, can you tell us something about the people and how they live?
MARY.—The Japanese were supposed to have originally come from China. But they resent this idea, and consider it a disgrace to be compared with the Chinese. They are a refined people, very polite, and exceedingly clean. They are intellectual, industrious, and ingenious. Japan women have an easier and pleasanter life than those of any other Asiatic country, and are treated more like companions than slaves. Their houses are built of light wood, generally one storey high, and divided into rooms by folding screens, which can be changed at pleasure. They have neither chairs nor beds; but sit and sleep on thick mats, spread on the floor, with a block of wood for a pillow.

SUPT.—Jennie, what can you tell us of the children of Japan?
JENNIE.—Japan is the "Paradise of Babies." The people are very domestic and pay much attention to the amusement of their children. The girls have a "Feast of Dolls," once a year, when they bring out all the dolls that have been preserved in the family for years, dressed as lords and ladies, and go through all the forms of court life. The boys have a "Feast of Flags" when they tie a huge paper fish on the top of a high pole, and let it float in the air, while they play around the pole and amuse themselves pretty much as American children do on the Fourth of July. They receive a great many toys, have various games, and lead a very happy life.

SUPT.—Harry, what are the religions of Japan?
HARRY.—The most ancient religion of Japan, is Shintoism. They have a great many gods called *Kami*; and each god has a temple, where the people bring their offerings of rice, fruit, meat, and living birds, and say their prayers. They have no images or idols, but keep a mirror and a strip of white paper on the altar of the temple, to represent their god. The prevailing religion of Japan is Buddhism. They have one hundred thousand temples, each containing a statue of Buddha. The greatest Buddhist idol in Japan is Dia Butz. He is made of bronze, fifty feet high, is hollow, with a chapel fitted up inside, where thousands of pilgrims go to worship and pray. The Japanese also have praying machines, which consists of a stone wheel set in a post, with

numerous letters and figures written on the sides. When a man wants to say his prayers, he gives the wheel a turn, and every time it revolves, a prayer is recorded to his credit in heaven.

SUPT.—Susie, what have missions done for Japan?
SUSIE.—The first Protestant missionaries went to Japan about twenty-three years ago. At first they did not meet with much success, but during the last ten years Christianity has made rapid progress. There are eighteen religious societies now in Japan, with one hundred and seventy male and female missionaries. There are more than eighty churches, over 3,800 communicants, and a Christian community of ten thousand. Schools and dispensaries have been established, the Bible has been translated into Japanese, religious books and papers are printed, education is compulsory, and the Christian Sabbath is recognized as a legal holiday; and still the good work goes on.

SINGING.—"I love to tell the Story."
(No. 58 in Mission Songs.)
A RECITATION.—By three boys and three girls.

First Boy.
"In due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

First Girl.
He that goeth forth and weepeth,
Trusting in the Lord,
Let him know that all he soweth
Of the precious word,
That he'll reap.

Second Boy.
"There shall be one fold and one shepherd."

Second Girl.
And is the time approaching,
By prophets long foretold,
When all shall dwell together,
One shepherd and one fold?
Shall every idol perish,
To moles and bats be thrown,
And every prayer be offered
To God in Christ alone?

Third Boy.
"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the rivers unto the ends of the earth."

Third Girl.
The whole wide world for Jesus!
Once more before we part,
Ring out the joyful watchword,
From every grateful heart;
The whole wide world for Jesus!
Be this our battle cry;
The Crucified shall conquer,
And victory is nigh.

LETTER TO THE CHILDREN FROM JAPAN.

DEAR CHILDREN: thousands of miles from your happy land, on the bosom of the great ocean, lie four large emerald isles. The beauty with which God has clothed hill and dale, mountain and valley, has given the people a love for nature and her simple pleasures. "If it were as easy 'here' for the heart to be true, as for grass to be green and skies to be blue," the Japanese would be a happy people. This love for the beautiful things God has created makes them kind and gentle to one another. The way they live enables one to see that this is true. Their low, wood coloured houses, shut in on three sides, stand with open front on the street. Here, one sees the inmates cooking, eating, buying, selling, and doing all kinds of handiwork from the fashioning

of an artistic vase to the making of a child's toy. The street is both the public highway and the playground to the children. You would be delighted to see the harmony and kindness among the motley crowd of men, women and children, and horses that throng the streets. But the sad neglect of the children would soon attract your notice. They seem left to care for themselves and one another. The baby is tied to the back of mother, sometimes, but oftener to that of a little brother or sister. Asleep or awake, for hours its uncovered, shaven head is exposed to the hot sun. Many of the children become blind or grow up with such sickly, feeble bodies, that they cannot be good, useful men and women.

The sick are often taken to Bindzuru, the god of medicine, to be cured. One day at the temple Asakusa in Tokio, I saw an old man lead a blind girl to this wooden idol. She rubbed her hand over the sightless eyes of the idol, then over her own. Any part of the body that is diseased is treated in the same way. So constantly are these idols resorted to that some have nose, ears and arms quite rubbed off. Only the people that have learned of the Great Physician, Jesus, know how to take care of the body and soul.

Japan is called the "Land of the Rising Sun." While you see the sun setting we see it rising. Will you, a million and a half of Sunday-school children, daily, at sunset hour, ask our Heavenly Father to bless the children of Japan with a knowledge of the Sun of Righteousness? With this petition in your heart, as the years go by, you will learn this lesson of our Saviour:

Not what we give, but what we share—
For the gift without the giver is bare:
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three,
Himself, his hungering neighbour and me.

LORD CHESTERFIELD ON THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

IN 1743 Lord Chesterfield thus addressed the House of Lords on the license question: "Luxury, my lords, is to be taxed, but vice prohibited, let the difficulty in the law be what it will. Would you lay a tax upon a breach of the Ten Commandments? Would not such a tax be wicked and scandalous? Would it not imply an indulgence to all those who do not pay the tax? It appears to me, my lords, that since the spirit which the distillers produce is allowed to enfeeble the limbs, vitiate the blood, pervert the heart, and obscure the intellect, the number of distillers should be no argument in their favour, for I never heard that a law against theft was repealed or delayed because thieves were numerous. It appears to me, my lords, that really, if so formidable a body are confederate against the virtues or the lives of their fellow-citizens, it is time to put an end to the havoc, and to interpose whilst it is yet in our power to stop the destruction.

"Let us crush at once these artists in human slaughter who have reconciled their countrymen to sickness and ruin, and spread over the pitfalls of debauchery such a bait as cannot be resisted."

"THERE are people who live behind the hull," is an old German proverb, which means that there are other folks in the world beside yourself, although you may not see them.