

SHOOTING A CANADIAN RAPID.

As we approached, the steersman in the first canoe stood up to look over the course. The sea was high. Was too high? The canoes were heavily loaded. Could they leap the waves? There was a quick talk among the guides as we slipped along, undecided which way to turn. Then the question seemed to settle itself, as most of these woodland questions do, as if some silent force of Nature had the casting vote. "Sauter, sauter!" cried Ferdinand, "en-voyez au large!" In a moment we were sliding down the smooth back of the rapid, directly toward the first big wave. The rocky shore went by us like a dream; we could feel the motion of the earth whirling around with us. The crest of the billow in front curled above the bow of the canoe. "Arrete, arrete, doucement!" A swift stroke of the paddle checked the canoe, quivering and prancing like a horse suddenly reined in. The wave ahead, as if surprised, sank and flattened for a second. The canoe leaped through the edge of it, swerved to one side, and ran gayly down along the fringe of the line of billows, into quieter water.

Everyone feels the exhilaration of such a descent. I know a lady who almost cried with fright when she went down her first rapid, but before the voyage was ended she was saying:

Count that day lost whose low-descending sun
Sees no fall leaped, no foaming rapid run.

It takes a touch of danger to bring out the joy of life.

Our guides began to shout, and joke each other, and praise their canoes. "You grazed that villain rock at the corner," said Jean; "didn't you know where it was?"

"Yes, after I touched it," cried Ferdinand; "but you took in a bucket of water, and I suppose your m'sieur is sitting on a piece of the river. Is it not?"

This seemed to us all a very merry jest, and we laughed with the same inextinguishable laughter which a practical joke, according to Homer, always used to raise in Olympus.—From "Au Large," by Dr. Henry Van Dyke, in *Scribner's*.

THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE.

The sacred use of the Bible has sealed the eyes of men to its beauty in letters. There are but two great world books in the tongue and this is one of them. Here English speech has done its all and its highest. Here it drops sweet like honey and here it marches like armed men when the battle is nigh. The deeps are laid bare by its words, and night sits on the souls of men, and no peace is nigh, and here, too, like a river, flows the peace which hath no let nor stay. The love that men have and their hate and the joy of birth-pang and the end of all in death,—all these are in its words as no man has said them in all the long line of English speaking men. No man can know the tongue to whom this book is not known, but its form turns some from it and others are lost in the long pages which tell of the generations of men and the mere haps of old.—*Talcott Williams, in Book News.*

So far as education is concerned, Siberia, it appears, is ahead of England. In the far off city of Irkutsk, schools and colleges, all kept by Government authorities, abound, and in Tomsk ten years ago, the University, then scarcely finished, had a library of 60,000 volumes, and possessed Acclimatization Gardens which would be envied by any city in the world.

The large statue of the Queen, which is being executed for Rangoon by Mr. F. J. Williamson, sculptor to her Majesty, is approaching completion. When erected it will be the first piece of marble sculpture in the Burmese city.

The English newspapers of the 7th ult., containing reports of Mr. Gladstone's speech at Chester, were stopped by order of the Porte, and were not allowed to be distributed by the Post office there.

Our Young Folks.

POLLY'S DREAM.

There's something that I've thought
I wish you'd 'plain to me:
Why, when the weather's warm,
There's leaves on every tree,
And when they need them most
To keep them warm and nice
They lose off all their clothes
And look as cold as ice.
Of course it's right for folks,
But I'm thinking 'bout the trees.
I'd like to wrap them up in shawls
For fear they're going to freeze.
—L. E. Chittenden in *The Outlook*.

TELLTALES.

Pussy-willow had a secret: that the snowdrops
whispered her,
And she purred it to the south wind while it
stroked her velvet fur;
And the south wind hummed it softly to the busy
honey-bees,
And they buzzed it to the blossoms on the scarlet
maple-trees;
And these dropped it to the wood brooks brim-
ming full of melted snow.
And the brooks told Robin Redbreasts as they
chattered to and fro;
Little Robin could not keep it, so he sang it loud
and clear
To the sleepy fields and meadows: "Wake up!
cheer up spring is here!"
—*Youth's Companion*.

THE SWAMP BEHIND THE
LOGGING CAMP.

The year had opened. January brought deeper snow to the Maine forest. Voices could be heard.

"I say, Mark!" It was a man who called.

"What, sir?" It was a boy who heard the man.

"Tell Uncle Pierre that the trees in the swamp are cut and I want him to send his oxen up, to begin to haul at the end of the woods by the stage road."

Mark Soul, the boy, made no reply. He looked toward Charles Martin the man, and then at the trees beyond. The trees in the swamp were not cut. There they stood, stiff and stubborn, and tough as thirty years' growth could make them.

Pierre Bonapart was boss of a logging-camp two miles away. He had promised his nephew, Charles Martin, to let him have the use of a team of oxen for hauling logs out of the swamp, whenever they were cut, and at the same time he engaged to let the same yoke haul out the logs in the forest near the stage-road.

"But"—added Uncle Pierre, knitting his brows. (He was a black-eyed, swarty man. He had great, overhanging eyebrows, and when he had a mood of scowling and brow-knitting, his rugged face looked like some of the old pictures of Jupiter Tonans.) "But," thundered Uncle Pierre, "I don't want you to send for my oxen before you really want them. I need them here. When the trees in the swamp are cut, and you really need my oxen, let me know."

And there stood that deceiver Charles Martin, asking Mark Soul to lie for him.

"If I were an ox, and you asked me to pull on the biggest log in the mountains, I'd do it for you; but I can't take a lie to Pierre's camp," replied the boy resolutely. A man asking a boy to load up with a lie, and haul it to the next camp! Sunday, too! No, sir! Mark did not add these last words but he felt them.

"See here!" savagely roared Charles Martin, brandishing a sharp ax he had taken from his camp. "You—you give—that—message—just—as—I tell—it—to—you—or—I will—send—you—back—to—Canada."

Mark looked at his boss one moment, caught in the glitter of the sunshine, looked down, then looked up. He shook his head at the boss of the logging-camp and moved away.

To be sent back to Canada! That would be a disappointment. To earn a little money that would make home more comfortable, he had come down into Maine,

and Charles Martin, the boss of a logging camp, had hired him. But he could not haul that lie to the next camp for all the chances in the camps of the state. He had begun the new year with a promise to himself and to God to walk the straight lines of the truth always; not to misstate, not to prevaricate, not to deviate in any way from those straight lines. New Year was a good time to form this purpose. And, now, was he going, like a dumb, unthinking ox, to draw that big load of a lie to Pierre's camp?

"No—sir!" This he said aloud, and trudged energetically along the forest road. The snow sparkled up to the sun, and the sun smiled down at the snow. It was Sunday, and in Pierre's camp there was to be a Sunday service. To think that Mark should attend that service, taking a lie with him! How could he be easy? How could he face Pierre? How could he enjoy his walk home through the big silent forest alone with God, and in his heart the black shadow of a lie?

As it was, he went back to camp happy, prepared to take the stage the next day for Canada. He neared Charles Martin's camp. Built of logs, tucked away under the rustling pines, it had a secure, sheltered look. The winds might howl, and Jack Frost might freeze, and the cold moon might look down without pity. The smoke that stole up through the branches of the big trees was proof that life in the logging camp was warm and happy. As Mark thought of the pleasant hours spent in the old camp, he did not want to leave it; but he had to take a lie into the camp, sleep with it in his bunk, rise to eat with it at the homely but well-spread table, to go out into the lonely forest, and have this same lie for company—he preferred to quit all and journey back to Canada.

But hark! Did he hear the sound of an ax? A chopper at work anyway.

"Whack—whack—whack!" Then came the sound of a crash—sh—sh! Then echoed something else: "Help—p—p!"

Mark ran out toward the swamp, making his way through the snow as best he could, for no road as yet had been laid out to the swamp. There on the ground, struggling, writhing under a limb, he saw Charles Martin. One sin is a nest egg for another. Having conceived in his disobedient soul the sin of a lie, it was easy to plan another, to swing that ax, and do a lot of Sunday-breaking.

No ax-swinging now! "Ob—Mark—get me out!" cried Charles Martin, writhing away.

"I will," said Mark. He could handle an ax, and he quickly cut a stout stick with which he pried up the limb, and the imprisoned leg was set free.

"There!" exclaimed the boss of the logging camp. "If you will let me lean on you, and let me have the help of your arm—there! Now I will hobble home."

"He doesn't want me to start for Canada just yet," Mark thought, but he was man enough to be silent. His boss, though, was man enough to speak of it.

"Guess I don't want you to go to Canada. You didn't say anything to Uncle Pierre?"

"No sir."

"Ob, I was a fool, a fool! I am glad you said nothing about the oxen to my uncle. Why didn't you tell him?"

"I saw somebody."

"You saw somebody? Who was it?" he asked eagerly. "My uncle in the forest?" "Ob, no!"

"You didn't see old Thornton?"

Old Thornton was the rich lumberman. He owned all about Bear Mountain, and Fox Mountain, and Owl Mountain, rich as money-bags and pine tree could make him.

"See old Thornton! Did you think he might be up here?"

"Yes, and you told him and appealed to him?" "Ob, no!"

"Well, who, who was it you saw in the forest?" "God."—*By Rev. E. A. Rand.*

Teacher and Scholar.

BY REV. W. A. J. MARTIN, TORONTO.

Sept. 5th, 1895. | THE CITIES OF REFUGE. | Josh. xx. 1-9.
GOLDEN TEXT.—Heb. vi. 18.
MEMORY VERSE.—"4th."
CATECHISM.—Q. 40.

Home Readings.—Mt. Josh. xviii. 1-10. T. Num. xxxv. 9-34. W. Deut. xix. 2-13. Th. Josh. xx. 1-9. F. Josh. xxi. 1-26. S. Josh. xxi. 27-45. Su. Heb. vi. 9-20.

The facts to be noted in this lesson particularly are those which have reference to the organization for religious purposes. The Levites had no special district assigned them, but were given forty-eight cities, with their suburbs scattered throughout all the tribes; the Tabernacle was pitched at Shiloh, where the tribes were to assemble three times during the year to spend a week in religious services; and provision was made for the just punishment and restraint of crime, while at the same time the Oriental institution of the *Gol* or Avenger of Blood was not abolished. For the last, cities of Refuge were appointed by God's command, and with them our lesson has to do. We shall consider "the cities of refuge" and "their purpose."

I. The Cities of Refuge.—The first thing to be noted is the situation of these cities. There were six of them, three on either side of the Jordan, about equally distant from one another, and so selected that some one of them was of easy access from any part of the land. The cities were prominent and ready of access from every direction; and it is supposed at least that there were good roads, with finger posts having the words "Refuge, Refuge" upon them all along the way. They were all Levitical cities, and, therefore, inhabited by men of the highest intelligence and worth, men specially qualified to carry out the purpose of the cities' establishment.

II. The Purpose of the Refuge Cities.—It was not for the protection of criminals, but for the regulation of the Eastern custom of Blood Avengers. This custom was only a particular application of a far reaching principle, which made one's "next of kin" the natural guardian of all his rights of whatever kind. Thus, when a man was slain the duty devolved upon his *gol*, who was always the nearest relative, to see to it that his kinsman's death was avenged. The result of such a custom, if left without any regulation whatever, must have been endless enmities, just as can be seen in many of the faction or family feuds which exist in the more lawless portions of our Western countries. Therefore, the cities of refuge were established, in order that justice might be meted out to the satisfaction of all parties interested, and endless quarrels might be avoided. Though the text of our lesson seems to indicate that only he who had slain another unwittingly had any right to seek refuge from the avenger of blood in any of these cities, yet a little careful study will make it plain that the thought is that only such had any right of refuge there. The man who had maliciously killed another had a right to flee to the nearest city of refuge; but before any one's stay in that city could be confirmed, his case must be carefully enquired into. Every one seeking asylum must "declare his cause in the ears of the elders of the city," and not in private either, but standing "in the gate of the city." This was the most public place about the city, and seems to have been the recognized place where all questions of justice were decided. If by the mouths of two witnesses the refugee could establish the fact that the killing had been accidental, he was permitted to remain within the city of refuge, and its suburbs; and so long as he confined himself to these boundaries he was safe from the avenger of blood. If, however, evidence could be adduced to show that the killing had been pre-meditated, he was given over to public execution. To make it less likely that a man should be executed on the strength of false testimony, the witnesses were compelled to take part in this public execution, so that a man would hesitate to swear falsely, if he knew that by so doing he would be compelled to add murder to perjury. But even the man who had accidentally killed another must suffer certain privations. He must be excluded from his home and business, and remain within the city of refuge "until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days." Human life must be regarded as too sacred a thing for its taking away carelessly to go unmarked. The establishment of such cities it can be easily seen must have done much to regulate capital punishment, and to secure justice both to the accuser and the accused; while at the same time it was no sudden and arbitrary interference with "rights," which had the sanction of long continued usage behind them. In fact, it seems as though it were a better way of dealing with the matters involved than some of our modern methods. But if we study this lesson merely as a legal curiosity it will be most unprofitable for us. Our golden text indicates that there are some points in which the cities of refuge illustrate what Jesus Christ is to the sinner. Here there is danger of being too fanciful, and so weakening the truth concerning the atoning work of Christ as to make it void entirely. However, when we remember that the broken law declares "the soul that sinneth it shall die," we can see the parallel between it and the avenger, when we recall the fact that it is only as we are in Christ through faith, and abide in Him, that we are safe from the demands of the law, since "He died, the just for the unjust," we see that He is our only true refuge; when we note that God has made the way to Christ easy of access and that He has given many things to point the sinner to Christ, we must needs praise God for Jesus our City of Refuge.