

be obliterated. So there is in youth a beauty and purity of character, which when once touched and defiled, can never be restored—a fringe more delicate than frost-work, and which, when torn and broken, will never be re-embroidered. When a young lad or girl leaves the parents' house, with the blessings of a mother's tears still wet upon the cheek, if that early purity of character be once lost, it is a loss that can never be made up again. Such is the consequence of crime. Its effect cannot be eradicated: it can only be forgiven.

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The Prayer of the Ice-bound.

BY THE REV. W. W. ROSS.

HAIL! thou longed for king of day,
Kindle new thy slumbering ray;
Emblem of the Lord our God,
Break the stern oppressor's rod,
Freeing, in thy daily round,
Winter's captives, long ice-bound;
Quell the tempests madly raging;
Keep the snows from further drifting;
Oppress the doors to stabled kine
That for thee do wait and pine;
Speeding upward to deliver,
Break the bands that bind the river;
Fill the streamlets running low
With the floods of melting snow.
From the mountains to the main
Swelling waters bless thy reign,
List'ning to thy high behest,
Throbbing warm her frozen breast,
Loosed from every burial band
By thy wonder-working hand;
To new life, O let the Earth
At Thy word again come forth!

Wellington Square, Ont.

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The Best Way of Learning.

THE method of mental culture to which John Stuart Mill was, as a child, subjected by his father, is deserving of note; for, sadly as that father neglected the spiritual training of his precocious son, he was untiring in his efforts to develop and discipline his intellectual powers. How such a mind was trained is worthy of attention.

The father did not *lecture* his son, but set him early at reading, and then made him tell the substance of what he had read. The son says, that while he was from four to seven years old, his father took daily walks before breakfast, for exercise; and, he adds:—

"In these walks I always accompanied him; and with my earliest recollections of green fields and wild flowers, is mingled that of the account I gave him daily of what I had read the day before. To the best of my remembrance this was a voluntary rather than a prescribed exercise. I made notes on slips of paper while reading, and from these in the morning walks, I told the story to him; for the books were chiefly histories of which I read in this manner a great number."

The true test of a scholar's knowledge, is what he can state of it in his own language to another. And a scholar's knowledge of what he has learned is clearer and more firmly in his mind through his telling of it. James Mill knew the better what his son had acquired, and John Stuart Mill had a new understanding of it and a firmer hold on it, because of these morning way-side walks. What a scholar can tell his teacher of his lessons, proves the attainment thus far made by that scholar.

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SURGEON says it always seemed a strange conceit of Coleridge, in his *Ancient Mariner*, when he represents dead men as managing the ship. "But," he adds, "I have seen its parallel: I have seen a Church carried off by dead men—a dead man in the pulpit, dead men in the Sabbath-school, and dead men in the prayer-meeting." So it sometimes happens that our Christian work goes on after Christian faith and earnestness have lost their force.

MISS GRANT, the teacher of a school for Chinese girls at Singapore, one day asked her scholars this question,—“Were you sure of dying to-morrow, what would you do to day?” One said, “she would be getting her grave ready,” which is a very important business among the Chinese; but another with a resolute countenance, said, “I would believe *strongly* in Jesus,”

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