

# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

TORONTO, JUNE 17, 1893.

[No. 24.]

Vol. XIII.]

## SUMMER IN SWEDEN.

The farm-folk of Sweden in the summer send their cattle to the upland pastures, and send with them their sons and daughters to care for them and perform the dairy work. These live in little thatched houses called "saeters," the sleeping rooms being generally small apartments under the roof over the cattle byres. Their summer life in the mountains is varied by midsummer and saint's day festivals, when the lads and lasses get out their holiday attire and have a rustic holiday. The costumes of the girls are often very picturesque and beautiful, with embroidered sleeves and jackets and a profusion of inexpensive jewellery. I do not know whether the young girl in the engraving knows what a pretty picture she makes framed in the little window. I have no doubt that she does. Many of these Swedish girls in country parsonages and farm-houses are remarkably well educated and speak two or three languages, and are, perhaps, more familiar with the best English literature than many young people of their own age in either Great Britain or Canada.

## BEFORE YOU ARE FIFTEEN.

STRAWS show the way the wind blows, and a little straw blowing the way of the wind before you are fifteen, may collect another straw, or two or three, after you are fifteen, and then, it will not be a little thing but a large one, blowing the way of the wind.

To illustrate: When a girl I know was a little thing, she said about some temptation, "I can't do that; I can't explain, but it doesn't seem fair." And she didn't do it. That straw showed that the wind her way blew fair and honest.

Years afterwards she told me a comical happening, showing that the wind, her way, still blew fair and honest.

Perhaps this was only a straw also. "It's hardly worth telling," she began, with a laugh: "Opening an envelope several weeks ago I found that it contained an advertisement of something I didn't care for in the least and would never think of buying; but there was an envelope with printed address and two-cent stamp.

"Now it would take my time to reply, and my time was precious, and my refusal to buy his wares would take the advertiser's time to open and read; the only use in taking the time, or in wasting the time of both, would be the courtesy of the thing and the honesty. But had he any right to demand a return of the stamp? He would not gain the stamp. And, wasn't it my stamp, after all? Couldn't I carefully remove it and use it? It would pay the postage on that bundle of papers I had rolled up to send to the invalid child eagerly watching for it. And I hadn't a two-cent stamp in the world. In my pocketbook was exactly enough to pay that bill. (There usually is a bill to pay.) But, was it honest? It was his stamp, to be used for his purpose, and he had trusted me with it. (I might have written while I was thinking, but I was busy about something else at the same time.) It was quite a new thing to be trusted with, some-

body's two-cent stamp, and a very new question this question of honesty about two cents. I confess I looked at it and desired it for that little package.

Could I be dishonest about such a little thing? What nonsense! What did I get twisted up about it for?

"I hated to waste it; but I did, and it blazed. Diving down deeper, I exclaimed.

"There was the sealed, addressed, and stamped letter I was sure had been mailed, and gone to the Dead Letter Office, for I had received no reply.

"A letter answers itself in time,"



SUMMER IN SWEDEN.

"I dropped it into my scrap-basket, resolving not to use it until I could do it with a clear conscience. (The papers had to wait over a mail or two.)

"Not long after, in making the parlour fire, I drew upon the resources of the scrap-basket—there was the freshly printed envelope and fascinating stamp. (A two-cent stamp is always worth more than two cents.)

said Napoleon. And this had answered itself. I could remove this stamp and be honest.

"The two were in the same scrap-basket; and would I not have felt mean if I had stolen a stamp, when my own was waiting for me?"

Was she too particular? What would you do?" But she began to be "particular" so long ago, and like all other habits

(good and bad) it grows upon her. The beauty of it is that we can begin right things so young, that doing them will become a second nature, and we shall forget that we ever had a first nature to be trained.

The straws are constantly blowing—watch and see which way your wind blows.

## PERSEVERING.

The following story is one of the traditions of a manufacturing firm in Glasgow, Scotland. Thirty years ago a barefoot, ragged urchin presented himself before the desk of the principal partner and asked for work as errand boy.

"There's a deal o' rinning to be done here," said Mr. Blank, jestingly, affecting a very broad Scotch accent. "Your first qualification wud be a pair o' shoon."

The boy, with a grave nod, disappeared. He lived by doing odd jobs in the market, and slept under one of the stalls. Two months passed before he had saved enough money to buy the shoes; then he presented himself before Mr. Blank one morning and held out a package.

"I hae the shoon, sir," he said quietly. "Oh,"—Mr. Blank with difficulty recalled the circumstance—"you want a place? not in those rags, my lad; you would disgrace the house."

The boy hesitated a moment, and then went out without a word. Six months passed before he returned, decently clothed in coarse but new garments. Mr. Blank's interest was aroused. For the first time he looked at the boy attentively. His thin, bloodless face showed that he had stinted himself of food for months in order to buy these clothes. The manufacturer now questioned the boy closely, and found to his regret that he could neither read nor write.

"It is necessary that you should do both before we could employ you in carrying home packages," he said. "We have no place for you."

The lad's face grew paler, but without a word of complaint he disappeared. He now went fifteen miles into the country and found work near to a night school. At the end of a year he again presented himself before Mr. Blank.

"I can read and write," he said briefly.

"I gave him the place," the employer said years afterward, "with the conviction that in process of time he would take mine if he made up his mind to do it. Men rise slowly in Scotch business houses, but he is now our chief foreman."

Thoreau says to a young man, "Be not simply good; be good for something."

"God," says Benjamin Franklin, translating the *Magian* into English, "helps the man who helps himself."—*Youth's Companion*.

The Mohomedans sometimes write desirable names on five slips of paper, and these they place in the Koran. The name upon the first slip drawn out is given to the child.