

Our Young Folks.

WHAT ARE THE CHILDREN SAYING.

I hear the voices of children
Calling from over the seas;
The wail of their pleading accents
Comes borne upon every breeze.

And what are the children saying,
Away in those heathen lands,
As they plaintively lifted their voices,
And eagerly stretched their hands?

"O, Buddha, is cold and distant,
He does not regard our tears;
We pray, but he never answers,
We call, but he never hears.

"O Brahma in all the shasters
No comforting word has given,
No help in our earthly journey,
No promise nor hope for Heaven.

"O, vain is the Moslem Prophet,
And bitter his creed of "Fate,"
It lightens no ill to tell us
That Allah is only great.

"We have heard of a God whose mercy
Is tenderer far than these;
We are told of a kinder Saviour
By Sahibs from over the seas.

"They tell us that when you offer
Your worship, He always hears;
Our Brahma is deaf to pleadings,
Our Buddha is blind to tears!

"We grope in the midst of darkness—
With none who can guide aright!
O, share with us, Christian children,
A spark of your living light!"

This, this is the plaintive burden
Borne hitherward on the breeze;
These, these are the words they are say-
ing
Those children beyond the seas!

—Margaret J. Preston, in *Children's Work for Children*.

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

JOHN DAWSON.

CHAPTER X.

AT MURRAY BAY.

"Papa," said Annie Sinclair, "it would be nice to have Katie Dawson with us at Murray Bay."

"Well, my dear," he replied, "I should not object. She would be a good companion for you and Polly, and good company for all of us. But this is not in our power to decide; she and her parents must be consulted."

The three school companions had grown up into "young ladies," but their early friendship continued, and as John Dawson, by diligence, gained his employer's confidence, the two families became more attached to each other, and the barrier which is so often made by wealth was not allowed to intervene.

If the Dawsons were not rich in this world's goods as were the Sinclairs, they possessed true moral worth—wealth of character—and their respectability was without a stain. Annie, seeing her father did not object, but rather approved, the proposal, asked if she might be entrusted with the task of trying to obtain the necessary consent, and having been so commissioned, she made her way to the house of the Dawsons.

After the formal courtesies had been exchanged, Annie said:

"We're going to Murray Bay for a few weeks, to see if change of air and scenery will benefit father."

"I hope you will enjoy your visit, and that it may do you all good," said Katie. "I hope it may. Have you ever been there?" asked Annie.

"No," said Katie, "it has not been my privilege to go to many places, and none so far away as that. Let me see, Murray Bay is down the St. Lawrence, is it not?" "Yes, it is. Do you think you would like to go?" inquired Annie.

"There are many things I should like, but which I must be content to do without, and going to Murray Bay, I fear, is one of them," said Katie.

"I am not so sure of that," remarked Annie, "for if you would not object to accompany us, we shall be very pleased, and shall accept it as a favour. In fact, the special object of my visit this morning is to invite you."

"Indeed, you are very kind to make me such an offer. I should be glad to go, but fear I might trespass upon your kindness," said Katie.

"If the fear of trespassing is all, then your difficulty can be easily removed, for I am sure you could not do that, especially with us," was Annie's response.

"As you are of that opinion, Annie, I will see what mamma says, and if she is willing, I will accept your very kind invitation."

So Katie consulted mamma; mamma's scruples were soon silenced, and Katie was booked as one of the Sinclair party.

Katie began to make the necessary preparations, and in a few days all was ready.

The journey to Murray Bay down the magnificent St. Lawrence, though long, was pleasant and enjoyable. The travellers tried to do all they could to promote one another's comfort. The few weeks at Murray Bay were spent very pleasantly and very merrily. Trips were taken to Ha Ha Bay and other points along the Saguenay River, and what with boating, driving and other enjoyments, the time passed joyously and all were glad. But Mr. Sinclair found Miss Dawson a constant source of pleasure to him during the evenings. She would sit and read aloud to him out of good and useful books. He had not accustomed himself to much reading beyond the daily newspaper and market reports. In business he had found his sole pleasure, and had given to it his whole attention. Katie had taken with her a copy of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," Leeb Richmond's "Dairyman's Daughter," and both these books she read aloud to Mr. Sinclair, who became much interested in them, and began to see that there were pleasures to be found away from stocks and shares and ledgers. Katie knew that the Bible was not often read by Mr. Sinclair or his family, and she ventured to introduce her own pocket Bible, and asked if she might be permitted to read a portion of it every evening, as this was their family custom. The request was granted, and Katie had the satisfaction of knowing that the influence of her good example was not lost, for Mr. Sinclair showed signs that the lessons he had learned from the books Katie read to him were causing his thoughts to be turned away from earth and worldly things, to those things which are more enduring and eternal. One evening she selected the beautiful and affecting narrative of the Prodigal Son, and as she concluded reading, Mr. Sinclair gave a heavy sigh, and in a kind of loud whisper, exclaimed, "My poor Tom!" The chapter gave him comfort, for he began to hope that his prodigal son would resolve to "arise and go to his father," and it suggested to his mind also the great truth that Jesus wanted to convey when He used the parable, viz., "that man had strayed from God, the universal Father, and that He was waiting to restore him to his lost favour and His heavenly home. Thus, while seeking health of body, Mr. Sinclair received great spiritual blessings.

CHAPTER XI.

CHRISTIAN USEFULNESS.

The Dawsons were a religious family and a great source of strength to the church and Sabbath school at Midleton, the flourishing town where they resided. Mr. Dawson was an elder in the church and Superintendent of the Sabbath school. John and Katie were both teachers; teachers who took an interest in their respective classes, who studied their lessons well, and thus while preparing to teach others, got their own minds stored with Bible truths and facts.

The usefulness of the family was in the personal service they rendered, rather than in the large amount of money they were able to contribute either to the Church or school, and yet they did their duty in this respect also.

Willing hearts are more acceptable to God than long purses. Wealth without love, is but as sounding brass or as a tinkling cymbal, but the great moral quality, love, will endure eternally; the Dawsons had not much wealth, but they had great love. John Dawson's spare time was devoted to usefulness; he taught in the Sabbath school, and gave great attention to the lesson; he considered it unjust and unfair to the scholars for a teacher to have no well-digested lesson ready for his class. In this he took a right view of his duty. I wish that all Sabbath school teachers did the same. He also sought out the poor and needy and supplied their wants as far as he was able; and the aged had his special care. Many were the blessings of those who were ready to perish but for the timely aid he rendered them. On one occasion he paid his weekly visit to an aged Christian, old George Hurst, who was getting on for eighty years of age, who was as poor in earthly estate as he was rich in faith, but who was able to rejoice in the prospects of an immortal youth, having been a faithful follower of the Saviour for more than half a century. After John had read to him a psalm and offered a prayer, he was about shaking hands and wishing him good-bye, when the old man said, "We may never meet again on earth; I shall be in glory before another week."

The old man spoke so earnestly and devoutly that John was moved to tears, and he felt that his toil for Christ was amply rewarded in that one scene. We are blessed by those we bless.

On another occasion, the church requested John to accept an important office for which he was thought well qualified; he hesitated to undertake the duty as he shrank from the responsibility. Another old man heard of his decision in the matter, and taking him by his hand, said, "John, the way of duty is the way of safety; the Church has called you, you must obey." These words were as a stimulus to his soul and he took the office. Thus, the feeble gave strength to the strong, and vigour to him who was ready to halt.

I need hardly narrate how useful John tried to make himself in everything that had for its object the removal of evil, and rendering assistance to those in distress. But whatever were his calls or duties in connection with the Church, he so arranged them that they should not interfere with his duty to his employer. His commercial duties were to him religious obligations, and whatsoever his hand found to do, he did it with all his might and prospered. He was not "slothful in business," at the same time he was "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

(To be continued.)

THE QUEEN OF ALL.

Honour the dear old mother. Time has scattered the snowy flakes on her cheek, but is she not sweet and beautiful now? The lips are thin and shrunken, but those are the lips which have kissed many a hot tear from the childish cheek, and they are the sweetest lips in all the world. The eye is dim, yet it glows with all the soft radiance of a holy love which can never fade. Ah, yes, she is the dear old mother. The sands of life are nearly run out, but feeble as she is, she will go further and reach down lower for you than any other on earth. You cannot walk into midnight where she cannot see you; you cannot enter a prison whose bars will keep her out; you cannot mount a scaffold too high for her to reach that she may kiss and bless you in evidence of her deathless love. When the world shall despise and forsake you; when it leaves you by the wayside unnoticed, the dear old mother will gather you in her feeble arms and carry you home, and tell you of all your virtues until you almost forget that your soul is disfigured by vices. Love her tenderly, and cheer her declining years with holy devotion.

Teacher and Scholar.

Nov. 26th, 1893. } THE CHRISTIAN HOME. { Col. iii., 12-25.
GOLDEN TEXT.—I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. Ps. ci. 2.

The epistle to the Colossians was written from Rome about the same time as that to the Ephesians, which it much resembles. Colossae was a city of Phrygia, Asia Minor, and Paul does not seem as yet even to have visited the church there. The epistle was occasioned by tidings Epaphras had brought of error creeping into the church. Paul meets this throughout the epistle, by holding up Jesus Christ as the one all-sufficient Mediator, and Head of all creation and of the Church. The present lesson which joins fitly on with that of last Sabbath, deals with the outward life flowing from and corresponding to union with the risen Christ.

I. The social graces of the renewed life. These are here spoken of as garments becoming him whose life is Christ. They call for the manifestation of that disposition towards others which God in Christ has manifested towards us. The believer should be moved to seek these from the special relation in which he stands to God. He belongs to a chosen race, whom God has sanctified and made the objects of His fatherly love. First, is the compassionate, pitiful heart, attentive to the troubles of others, neither through the commonness of distress rendered unfeeling, nor through selfishness, exhausting itself in mere feeling. Kindness is wider, the sunny, sympathetic disposition that is ready to do a good deed to any. Humility does not mean an estimate of oneself lower than truth. But lowly-mindedness will accompany a true understanding of our position in God's sight, and the remembrance that all we have is given. This forms the basis of the graces that follow, the meekness that patiently endures evil without giving way to harshness, and the long suffering, closely akin, which holds out against provocation without seeking to return it in kind. In active exercise these two graces show themselves as forbearance and forgiveness. For this, the great pattern and motive, is Christ Himself. Over all these graces, as the outer garment holding them all together, is to be put on love. This not only binds them into a unity, but gives to them a perfectness, which apart from it, they could not have.

II. Precepts through which these graces are realized. The peace of Christ (R.V.) is to be sought, the peace which He Himself enjoys, and which He bequeathed to His followers (John xiv. 27). This comes from yielding up our wills to His, and has its way within us as we keep near to Him. As an arbitrator this is to rule in the heart, controlling the exercises of the soul. God has called us to share Christ's peace, and through this common possession, believers realize themselves to be one body. The thought of this makes Paul urge them to be thankful. Then the truths of the Gospel, the word of which Christ is the subject, should be deeply and earnestly studied, that the heart may be richly stored with it. This store will enrich the mind in the highest wisdom. The believers are enjoined by doctrinal teaching and ethical admonition to help one another, and especially to let the divine grace in their hearts express itself in spiritual songs from the Old Testament psalter, and other productions of the spirit of devotion. Moreover the entire activity of the life is to become sacred by being done in the name of Jesus, in obedience to His authority and dependence on His help. This continual direction of the mind towards Christ will become a continual thanksgiving.

III. Application of these graces in the family. The reciprocal duties in the ordinary family relationships are here stated. The true wife finds satisfaction in that subjection, which is animated by love. This is becoming to one who is in the Lord. On the part of the husband, this subjection is to be evoked, not by command, but by a love that is free from all bitterness, self-sacrificing, self-forgetting. To children belongs the duty of obedience, so important as to have been made one of the Ten Commandments. This obedience is to be thorough, unless a positive wrong is commanded, but fathers are counselled not to act arbitrarily or unreasonably so as to provoke outbursts of temper and discourage their children. The servants addressed are slaves. Faithfulness, undividedness of motive is enjoined on them. Paul gives a glory to service by bidding them perform it unto the Lord, the true Master. As His servants, they will receive the reward of service, the heavenly inheritance if faithful, but if wrong-doers, for the wrong that they have done.