

## Our Mother.

Many lips are saying this,  
Mid falling tears to-day,  
And many hearts are aching sore,—  
Our mother's passed away;  
We watched her fading year by year,  
As they went slowly by,  
But cast far from us o'er the fear  
That she could ever die.

She seemed so good, so pure, so true  
To our admiring eyes,  
We never dreamed this glorious fruit  
Was ripening for the skies;  
When at last the death-stroke came,  
So swift, so sure, so true,  
The hearts that held her here so fast  
Were almost broken too.

She robed her in familiar dress,  
To smooth her gray hair down,  
To give one last kiss, then laid her 'mid  
The autumn leaves so brown;  
In each took up the broken thread  
Of life and all its cares;  
And sad the heart 'mid daily tasks—  
To miss our mother's prayers.

None shall know from what dark paths  
They may have kept our feet;  
How holy will their influence be  
While each fond heart shall beat;  
As we tread the thorny way,  
Which her dear feet have trod,  
We shall feel our mother's prayers  
Leading us up to God.

For the one still left to us—  
Our father, old and lone,  
Who hears perhaps by night and day  
The old familiar tone—  
We'll gather closer round him now  
To guard from every ill,  
Near the darksome river side  
Who waits a higher will.

And when the storms of sorrow come  
To each bereaved heart,  
A faith glance upward to the home  
Where we shall never part;  
Here one awaits with loving eyes  
To see her children come,  
One by one we cross the flood  
And reach our heavenly home.

## Letters from Florida.

BY THE EDITOR.

WE reprint from the *Toronto Globe* the following account by the Editor of HOME AND SCHOOL, of his visit to Florida:

It is a very striking change from the old and blustering March morning on which I left Toronto, to the warm, summer-like day on which I write these notes by an open window, and gladly seek the shade when out of doors. I rode over the Credit Valley, and the Canada Southern Railways through Western Ontario, the fields were covered with snow. As I passed through Michigan and Ohio the snow gradually disappeared, at Cincinnati I took the comfortable buffet sleeping car of the Louisville and Nashville road, and in twenty-six hours passed from the domain of winter to that of summer. One of the most striking characteristics of the South is the ubiquitous presence of "our brother in black," and a very picturesque object he is. There is about him a strange immobility of attitude. As he stands motionless as a statue he looks like a black bronze antique. But to see him at his best you should see him in animated conversation with his brother black. Then

## HE IS ALL LIFE AND ENERGY,

his white teeth gleam, his eyes flash, and his jolly laugh pours forth peal on peal in an inexhaustible flood. A very small joke causes infinite merriment, and you feel that "a jest's prosperity lies in the ear of him that hears it."

Pensacola, on the Gulf of Mexico, is the first Florida port at which we stop. It has a noble harbour, and sometimes floats more square-rigged shipping

than any port in the United States. It is a favorite sail down the harbour to the historic Fort Pickens, Fort McRae, and the U. S. Navy-yard. The principal exports are timber and naval stores. All through Alabama and Northern Florida are vast "turpentine orchards" of the long-needed pitch pine. The trees are scarfed with chevron-shaped gashes through which exudes the resinous sap. This is collected and in rude forest stills is manufactured into turpentine, tar, and resin. A very picturesque and rather uncanny sight it is to see the night-fires of these stills and the gnome-like figures of the blacks working amid the flames.

## THE SOUTHERN CHAUTAUQUA.

There are few more striking evidences of the growth of the Chautauqua movement than the existence of a successful Chautauqua Assembly here in the heart of Florida. It bids fair in time to rival its Northern prototype. The grounds are magnificent—260 acres, surrounding a lovely lake a mile in circumference. At night, when illuminated with a score of blazing camp fires, it looks like fairyland. The programme covers a month, and embraces lectures, concerts, readings, stereopticon entertainments, illustrations in costume of oriental life, etc. New York, Boston, Chicago, St. Paul, Toronto, and other remote places are represented. Prof. Sherwin, Col. Cowden, Governor Perry, General C. B. Fisk, President Hopkins, Dr. Deems, Col. Bain, Bishop Walden, Dr. W. H. Withrow and a host of others give variety to the exercises. If, in this sparsely-settled country, such a successful Assembly can be held, we think it

## BEYOND QUESTION THAT A CANADIAN CHAUTAUQUA

on the Niagara would be an equally great success. Here the local patronage is almost nil, the great bulk of the visitors are from the North, and a great attraction it is to exchange our March winds for out-of-door amusements and pleasant company in the Sunny South. The management of this Assembly think that they can greatly help our Canadian Chautauqua by organizing summer excursions to take in the Falls, Niagara, and Toronto. Canadians might reciprocate by returning the visit with benefit to both parties.

## JACKSONVILLE.

This pleasant city is the great rendezvous of tourists and health-seekers in the South. It is the largest city in the State, its resident population being about 16,000, but probably 100,000 tourists pass through it during the winter months. It is always a surprise to the Northern visitor. On one side of the car is the St. John river, with its palmetto-fringed shore, and on the other side an almost metropolitan city greets his eyes. Fine buildings, crowded streets, and the rush and bustle of a Northern city are something unexpected in a region long considered almost a wilderness. A large business is done in lumber, cotton, sugar, fruit, fish and early vegetables. Of the red Florida pine about 50,000,000 feet are shipped annually. It is a remarkable wood, heavier and harder than oak, of a very fine grain and taking a beautiful polish. It is so saturated with resin that it catches fire from a match like tinder. This resinous quality makes it very enduring when used for ship-building.

## ST. AUGUSTINE.

From Jacksonville you go everywhere in east Florida. A favourite trip is up the St. John river and by rail to St. Augustine on the Atlantic coast. The railroad traverses barren pine flats where not a house or sign of life meets the eye. St. Augustine is the oldest settlement in the United States, and its history carries one back almost to the middle ages. It was founded by the Spaniards in 1565, more than half a century before the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth. It still retains much of its Spanish aspect, strangely quaint and in harmony with its romantic history. The medieval fort and gateway, the narrow crooked streets, the Moorish bell tower, the shovel-hats and black gowns of the priests, the gliding figures of the nuns, and the dark brown and black eyes and hair of the people seem like a chapter from life in old Spain. The indolent sweet-do-nothing air of the natives complete the resemblance. The most interesting feature of the town is the old fort San Marco, now Fort Marion. It was captured from Spain by the British, and was said to be the handsomest fort in the King's dominions. Its castellated battlements, its frowning bastions, bearing the royal Spanish arms; its portcullis, moat and drawbridge; its commanding look-out tower and time-stained, moss-grown, massive walls impress the observer as a relic of the distant past, while its heavy casemates, its dark passages and gloomy dungeons suggest still darker memories. Anything more thoroughly quaint and unfamiliar to Canadian eyes it would be hard to conceive.

## Both Sides.

A MAN in a carriage was riding along,  
A gaily dressed wife by his side;  
In satin and laces she looked like a queen,  
And he like a king in his pride.

A wood-sawyer stood on the street as they passed;  
The carriage and couple he eyed:  
And said as he worked with his saw on a log:  
"I wish I was rich and could ride."

The man in the carriage remarked to his wife,  
"One thing I would give if I could—  
I'd give my wealth for the strength and the health  
Of the man who sawed the wood."

A pretty young maid, with a bundle of work,  
Whose face, like the morning, was fair,  
Went tripping along with a smile of delight,  
/While humming a love-breathing air.

She looked on the carriage: the lady she saw,  
Arrayed in apparel so fine,  
And said in a whisper, "I wish from my heart  
Those satins and laces were mine."

The lady looked out on the maid with her work,  
So fair with her calico dress,  
And said, "I'd relinquish position and wealth,  
Her beauty and youth to possess."

Thus it is in the world, whatever our lot,  
Our minds and our time we employ  
In longing and sighing for what we have not,  
Ungrateful for what we enjoy.

## Too Late.

To all who have ever felt remorse the mere thought of it should be caution enough against breaking the laws of duty and right conduct; but thousands who are uninfluenced by higher moral restraints rush into wrong-doing without thinking of self-reproach and punishment that are sure to come. The following contains a lesson to hot-headed youth who are in danger of

breaking their mothers' hearts by disobedience or hasty, unfilial words:

They were sitting in the waiting-room of the depot together—the dapper little man who looked as though he might be a commercial traveller, and the great, rough fellow whose cowhide boots, shaggy garments, and broad brown Mexican hat told that he was fresh from some semi-civilized region of the West. The Westerner sat looking out of the window upon the dreary confusion of tracks, switches, frogs, and snorting freight engines. Just at that moment he seemed like a man without a friend in the world, and out of pure sympathy the commercial traveller attempted to strike up a conversation: "Got long to wait?" he asked, in a friendly tone.

"Bout an hour," was the short answer.

"Going far?"

"Nigh onto a hundred miles back into the kentry."

"Yes, where?"

"Stranger, I'm going home. Home."

"So! Been away long?"

"'Bout ten years."

"Ten years, and now you are going home! Well, that's pleasant. I know I'm only away about a month at a time, yet when I come back I'm as happy as a gosling in a sun-shower. Fact; you wouldn't think I'm sentimental, yet when I'm on my way home the cars never seem to go fast enough, and I can't think of anything but home, home, all the time till I'm there. My! but I'd like to be in your shoes for a short time, just to feel how happy you must be! Folks all well, I suppose?"

"Stranger, I'm going back to my mother's funeral. It's ten year, ten long, long year, since I saw her last, and then I went away saying I never wanted to see her again. I did that to my mother. But I was not much more than a boy then, and I didn't know what I was doing. It was my mother, but I'm not to be blamed too harshly. And after I went away I never sent a letter home—not one, but I always meant to. She used to write me such heart-breaking letters that I, great, rough miur as I was, couldn't keep the tears back. You see, I didn't write because I was always a—thinking that I would strike rich, and then I would go home and just show the old folks what money and ease was; but—but—but, stranger, I put it off too long. I was going home next week. I was going to surprise 'em, and I had enough money to make their old age comfortable; but, stranger, she went home before I did."

And he wiped his horny, sun-browned hand across his eyes. There was silence for a few minutes, then he continued: "Don't think the worse of me for that, stranger; I may be a grown man, but somehow, I can't keep tears out of my eyes. They will come. You see, I was the youngest. I was the baby—her boy, she used to call me; and when I grew up I wanted to see the world, to see life. But she wanted me to stay at home, and I was hot-headed and—and I went away. But I always dreamed of coming back, and here when I was ready it was too late, too late. Ah, stranger! I can't help it."

But the other said nothing. There was a lump in his throat that prevented, and he looked toward the window under pretence of wiping his forehead with his handkerchief, but it was only to conceal the moisture that came unbidden to his eyes.—*Set.*