

Our Young Folks.

The Duty of To-day.

From the tomb where buried ages
Slumber on in calm repose,
Come the voices of the ages,
Freed from all their weight of woes.
There are no sad words of warning,
To our ears they seem to say,
"Hail the dawn!—another morning
Shiners in a brighter day!"

Hail the dawn! A glory rises
From the brow of sad and aar:
Still the world is full of prizes:
Life is still a thing most dear.
Let it not be clogged and fettered
By dead chronicles and creeds;
Waiting souls are only bettered
By high thoughts and noble deeds.

But high thoughts and deeds to measure,
Lower standards we must know,
Foulest, keenest, thrills of pleasure
Are akin to pain and woe.
Tears of joy and tears of sorrow,
From the self-same liquid eyes,
Flow as well; then who would borrow
Trouble from o'er clouded skies?

What though from the tree of knowledge,
Bitter fruit may sometimes fall,
Whose the teacher in his college
Who can promise good to all?
Good and evil grow together;
Virtue is only virtue's foil;
Stormy winds in wintry weather
Do not summer glories spoil.

Let us, then, with march progressive,
Bravely towards the goal advance—
Worthy toil is not oppressive,
Raise the banner! Poise the lance!
All around, the pregnant present
Calls us from our childish play—
Teacher! thinker, poor and peasant,
All! in our work to-day!

—N O Times

Words to the Young on Frost and Snow.

DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS, We have had during this winter such excellent specimens of frost and snow that I am induced to say a word or two about them. In reading the Bible, you must have noticed, that frost and snow are spoken of as appointed by God, like every other thing which he has made, to execute his will and show forth his glory. Read the following passages: Job xxxviii. 6: "He saith to the snow, be thou upon the earth." (10) "By the breath of God frost is given, and the breadth of the waters is straitened." Psalm cxvii. 16 and 17. "He giveth snow like wool; he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes; He casteth forth his ice like morsels; who can stand before his cold?" Psalm cxlviii. 8: "Fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind fulfilling his word!" Is. i. 18: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." Now when such notice is taken in the Bible of frost and snow, we may be sure that they serve some good ends in saturating the earth and preparing it for the reception of the seed in spring. We know also, that they serve a good purpose in purifying the atmosphere and preventing to some extent, at least, the spread of those diseases which in large and crowded cities, especially during damp and foggy weather, make such fearful havoc amongst men. Frost and snow are also useful in affording us at this season of the year an easier and more pleasant means of travelling, and doing such work as could not be so easily done any other way. Still they are sometimes injurious to the lives both of animals and human beings when exposed to them. There have been several instances of this during the present winter, some of them, I am sorry to say, arising from the use of spirituous liquors.

Several years ago, while I was minister in Cobourg, a carpenter belonging to my congregation was returning from his work on the Saturday afternoon. The snow was very deep and as might be expected, he was very tired, having travelled several miles. He came to a part of the road where he felt inclined to rest himself a little, but, in such circumstances, it is very dangerous. It brings on sleep which not unfrequently proves the sleep of death. It was so with this individual. No sooner had he seated himself upon a log than he got drowsy, then fell asleep, and without much pain or struggle expired. Next day he was found by some persons passing in a sleigh. He was perfectly stiff. One of my elders in that neighbourhood came into town and requested me to go with him to the poor man's wife and communicate to her the melancholy intelligence. It was sad news indeed to her, and so much did it overpower her at first, that she tore her hair and had we not prevented her, she would have gone to the place where his body was found. We managed, however, to keep her composed, prayed with her, and then went and gave orders for a plain coffin to be made without delay, that the body might be brought into her house. When the coffin was taken to the place, it was found that owing to the excessive rigidity of the limbs and the position in which they were when he died, the body could not be confined until it was thawed. They therefore brought it into town in a sleigh covered with a sheet, and (my very flesh yet creeps when I think of it) we had to lay the body before the fire and turn it over and over again until it was completely thawed. This being done, it was then put into the coffin and decently interred. It was no ordinary trial for the poor woman, but God gave her strength, and raised up many friends who liberally contributed for the support of herself and children.

Let me give you another instance. Many years ago, before the railway was made, and while the mail stage was passing from Toronto to Montreal, along the banks of the St. Lawrence River, the road being covered with ice and sloping, the horses were unable to prevent it from slipping into the river, which was at the place deep and rapid. All the passengers except one who were inside the stage managed to get out and jumped on shore, before the current carried away the stage and horses. The person, however, contrived to get on the top and take hold of the strap which fastens on the luggage. By this time the current was rapidly carrying the whole down the river, the water dashing over the stage and freezing instantly. No assistance could be

rendered, and the only hope was, that, at a bend of the river where a number of men were at work, some means might be used to drag him to the shore. This was done. The men seeing something on the top like luggage enquired all over with ice, took an axe, and were proceeding to strike when a feeble voice from beneath was heard "O take care!" On removing the crust of ice what was their astonishment when they found a human being almost frozen to death? On examination it was found that his hands and feet were frost bitten to such an extent that amputation was necessary. The individual lived several years, but suffered very severely till his death. His widow, I believe is still living, and his daughter is married to one of our ministers now retired from active labour.

During the present winter we have heard of several individuals, both old and young, being frozen to death; in some instances in consequence of want of sufficient fuel, clothing and food, and in others by reason of their intemperate habits. How careful then should you be not to expose yourselves needlessly to the storms of winter, and how thankful if you have hitherto been preserved from their bad effects.—I am, Dear young friends, Yours sincerely,

THOS. ALEXANDER.

The Little Substitute.

Several years ago, when I was a teacher in a school at —, I had occasion to reprove a pupil for his inattention and disobedience. My words failing to produce an effect upon him, I was obliged to resort to punishment, and accordingly I called him up, and commanded him to stand for a quarter of an hour in a corner of the school-room.

As he was going there, a little boy, much younger than the guilty one, came to me and requested that I would allow him to take the place of the lad who had offended. This request astonished me a good deal; however, I was not inclined to put any question to the child, and contented myself with observing to him, that if I granted his request, he should pass the whole of the time in the corner; and "and," I added, "a quarter of an hour is very long, when one must spend it in punishment." These words did not shake him. I then pointed out to him the disgrace which attached to a child who undergoes punishment, telling him that in the eyes of all the visitors who might enter the school he would appear a naughty, unruly child. Nothing, however, changed his purpose. He still persevered in his resolution. I then allowed him to take his companion's place in the corner.

I was deeply moved; and I silently prayed to the Lord to give me a little of that wisdom that cometh from above, in order to draw from this incident some instruction which might be profitable to the souls of the children who were confided to me.

When the quarter of an hour was expired, I released the little boy, and asked him if it was his companion who induced him to take his place.

"No, sir," he replied.

"Do you not think that he deserved to be punished?"

"Oh," he said, "he deserved it well."

"What, then, is the motive which has led you to bear this punishment in his place?"

"Sir, it is because I love him."

What a touching reply! The other children had listened with deep attention to this conversation. I then called the disobedient boy, and ordered him to go in his turn into the corner. At these words there was a clamour of protestations. A multitude of little voices cried out at the same time, "Oh, sir, that would not be right,"—"nor just, either," added one of the boldest.

"Why would it not be just?" replied I, thinking to disconcert the boy who had thus expressed himself. "Has not your school-fellow disobeyed?"

"Yes, sir; but you have allowed Joseph to be punished in his place; you should not then, on that account, punish him."

My prayer, thought I, was heard; and I continued in those words: "Does what has just happened recall anything to your minds?"

"Yes, sir," said several voices; "it reminds us that the Lord Jesus bore the punishment of our sins."

"What name would you give to Joseph now?"

"That of substitute."

"What is a substitute?"

"One who takes the place of another."

"What place has Jesus taken?"

"That of sinners."

"Joseph has told us that he wished to take his school-fellow's place, and be punished instead of him, because he loved him. Can you tell me why Jesus wished to die in the place of sinners?"

"It was also because he loved us."

"Repeat a passage from the Bible which proves that."

"The Son of man who loved me, and gave himself for me."—(Gal. ii. 20.)

"You told me just now that it would not be right, nor even just, to let the naughty boy in the corner, after having punished Joseph in his place; what instruction can we draw from this?"

"We learn from it the assurance that God can never punish any sinner who believes in Jesus Christ as his Saviour."

"And," added quite a little boy, "He will never do so; for the Bible tells us that 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son,' in order that 'whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' (John iii. 16.)"

The Christian.

A Good Idea.

"My daughter keeps my farm accounts, sir; and she is as systematic and particular as over my son was, who kept them before he left home. I tell you it does girls" (and he might have added boys also) "good to give them some responsibility, and set them watching things about the farm and household. They learn, I find, economy by it, and soon discover that their old father is not, necessarily, a crabbled old curmudgeon, because he does not loosen his purse-string whenever they see some thing they happen to fancy; for they discover the reason why the purse should not be opened."—Church Union.

Wallie's Fable.

Little Wallace was put to bed upstairs. His mother told him she would come and sit by him after a little while. Very soon he called for her. His father heard him and he went up. He did not know that Wallace's mother had promised she would come, so he just told Wallace to keep still, and not call again. He was turning away to go down when Wallace said:

"Papa!"

"What, my son," said his father.

"Did you see the old cat to-day, papa?"

"No, Wallie. Why, what did she do?"

"Why, papa, the little kitten cried, and the old cat came."

This was little Wallace's fable. His father knew what it meant, and he said:

"Well, Wallie, lie still. I will go down and tell the old cat her kitten wants her."

"Better Take a Sheep Too."

A valued friend and able farmer, about the time the temperance reform was beginning to exert a healthful influence, said to his newly hired man:

"Jonathan, I did not think to mention to you when I hired you that I shall try and have my work done this year without rum. How much must I give you to do without it?"

"O," said Jonathan, "I don't care much about it. You may give what you please."

"Well," said the farmer, "in the fall I will give you a sheep if you do without rum."

"Agreed."

"Father, will you give me a sheep too if I do without rum?" asked the elder son.

"Yes, you shall have a sheep to if you do without."

The youngest son then said, "If I do without, father, will you give me a sheep?"

"Yes, Chandler, you shall have a sheep, too."

Presently Chandler speaks once more.

"Father, hadn't you better take a sheep, too?"

The farmer shook his head; he hardly thought that he could give up the "critter" yet; but the appeal came from a source not easily to be disregarded, and the result was that the demon rum was thenceforth banished from the premises, to the great joy and ultimate happiness of all concerned. —Richmond Christian Advocate.

The Hopeless Side of Helping.

If you have ever tried with all your might and main to help somebody who needed help, but who would not be helped in any reasonable way, you know how Sisypheus felt when the stone he was trying to roll up hill kept forever rolling down again. We used to know an old lady called Miss Margaret. She was a beneficiary of our church. Promptly on the Monday morning after each communion Miss Margaret used to present herself at the pastor's door. She was a long, narrow woman, dressed in rusty black, with a poke bonnet, a faded umbrella, and a satchel or her arm. If the contribution to the deacon's fund had been generous, and her share had been proportionately large, Miss Margaret's thin old face would be brightened up by a transient and wintry smile. If it had rained, or folks were out of town, or for any reason there was not much to give her, she was not slow to utter her opinions concerning those who stunted their gifts to the Lord's poor.

"But, Miss Margaret," said a lady, one day, "there is no earthly reason why you should continue to be so very poor. There is a place for you where you can help somebody else along, and earn your own living besides. I have a friend who lives in Delaware, in the peach country, you know, in a place like the Garden of Eden for delight, and she is sick, and wants an efficient somebody like you for housekeeper."

We sugar-plumed and coaxed and softly entreated Miss Margaret, and at last we saw her—satchel, umbrella, pokebonnet and all—fairly on the way to nonstopkeeping and independence. We breathed freer than we had for a long time. But in vain were our hopes. In three months our old friend was back. The air was too strong for her, the invalid was too fretful, and the country too lonesome. She really preferred being a respectable pauper to being a self-supporting member of society.

There is where the hopelessness of helping comes in. The more you do the more you may do. The timid hand that will hardly accept your gift at first, through sensitive pride and decent self-respect, grows grasping and avaricious. The thought of the heart, not often spoken out as it was to us the other day, seems to be this: "There is plenty of money in the world, and we have a right to our share." With this feeling on the part of one who receives alms, there is little gratitude.

The true way would seem to be to aid people to help themselves. Find out what they can do, and get them a place to do it in. Every day our souls are pained and our eyes are dimmed by the dreadful pressure of sin and want of misery that there is in the world. So much is being done all the while, and yet it is like a breakwater of pebbles against the infinite sea. Men and women want work, and cannot get it. Other men and women need workers, and cannot get them. But to bring the two classes together in any really permanent way is as difficult as it was in our school days to make a link-chain. The connection is sure to break off somewhere. So, this winter, as in every winter since we can remember, the sewing society will meet, and the ladies will make flannel petticoats and calico gowns; the soup kitchen will open, and beef tea will be made for the sick, and the poor will be helped up; some will be helped down. Only the Master's words will abide in truth: "The poor ye have always with you."

Hopeless or otherwise, however, we must not weary in well doing, but we must try, so far as in us lies, to cease doing our helping in the lump. Personal interest, personal looking after, individual responsibility, must underlie all alms giving that is worth anything to the recipient. And we need not expect much gratitude. Is there not reward enough in that sweet word, low whispered in the ear, that sings with a gush of bird-music to the understanding soul: "Inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me?"—Christian at Work.

"The Black Dog on the Back."

This is an old English proverb for a man or woman in a bad temper. And it is a very forcible expression, for such a reality as great nuisance to society as if they actual y led about with them an animal subject to indiscriminate biting. Still you will see that generally they are rather proud than otherwise of their failing, apt to plume themselves on their "quick temper," and to expect innumerable impertinences and impositions will be forgiven them in consideration of it. "They lose their tempers so easily." That is true enough, but if their friends will observe, they will see that they do not so much lose their temper as exchange it for whatever at the time they practically happen to want. Are they at home, and desire to have everything ordered to their special likings and habits? Then they lose their temper in order that they may gain every other person's rights and peculiar comforts and fancies. In the world, too, if they lose their temper, they contrive to gain far more than its equivalent. It is the good natured man, not the bad one, who is imposed upon and has to do all the disagreeable things. If a bitter north is blowing, and the temperature below zero, the good natured man of the firm will rather face the elements than the development of latent heat in his partner, which a change from the cosy office to the freezing street would occasion.

The extra hours the disagreeable dumping, the humiliating asking for favors, are never assigned to the bad tempered man. It may of course be his duty, but he has only to look black and mutter something about "seeing everybody blessed first," and he may go wherever and do whatever he chooses. It is the prerogative of such tempers not only to do ill-natured, selfish things, but also to scatter importunesses wherever they think it safe to do so. They are the *hommes terribles* of the social existence. It is their delight, if they do not like a thing, to say so in the most decided manner; to tell unpleasant truths that do no good, simply because they desire to do so, to send week and offensive people out of their presence depressed and uncomfortable. The essential meanness of this disposition may be traced to the fact that it rarely or never shows itself to a superior. The hasty tempered man knows very well how to control his temper in the presence of a man richer, or physically stronger than himself.

Now it must be admitted that the great misery of such tempers is the domestic hearth. How overbearing brothers are to sisters! How provoking sisters are to brothers! They do not consider that the laws of polite restraint which govern them pre-empt in the world are necessary there. Each indulges his or her particular temper, until the disagreeable habit becomes "natural." The world has no just reason to excuse any man's injustice or intemperate speech because he has an uncontrollable temper. Such tempers are very much rarer than is imagined. The average hasty-tempered man never allows his temper to interfere with his pecuniary interests or his personal comforts; nor, however much he longs to do it, does he usually permit himself to strike the object of his anger, because blows are actionable, and he might be made to suffer. Therefore, if for his own sake he can control his hands, he ought to be made to feel it a necessity, for others' sakes, to control his tongue, and his temper also.—Christian at Work.

The Value of Christianity.

"The value of Christianity has never been fairly estimated by mere philosophers. There is grandeur in its principles, fully perceptible to the humblest being who feels their influence, but hidden from him who knows them only speculatively. The religion of Christ develops the only true principle of association, that can exist among mankind. Reviving in each individual principles tending to harmonious action, it gives all the elements necessary to form a perfect community. Its action is wholly integral. Perceiving the errors and follies incident to the present order of society, philosophers have devised various modes as substitutes for it, but in these modes one great principle has invariably been overlooked. The attempt has always been to modify the passions and actions of men by different methods of combining them together, making good qualities of one to neutralize the bad of another, thus forming a compact whole. How far superior is the gospel plan! It takes each individual, purifies him of his faults, bestows upon him gentleness, charity, and true motives to act justly, and by the association of such as these, creates an order of society perfectly adapted to the wants of man."

Men's laws and systems seek to secure to mankind their rights, but say but very little about their duties. The consequence is, men often do wrong to gain their rights. Christ says very little about our rights, but a great deal about our duties. And yet, somehow, it comes to pass, that when all do their duties all seem to have their rights.

Two great commands are cited by Christ as embodying the substance of divine teaching as contained both in the law and in the prophets. And whatever we may say of the practical bearing of the requirement, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," there can be no doubt but the universal observance of the second commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," would revolutionize the face and character of all human society, and the reign of cruelty, hatred, strife, and violence, cease the cessations of wars, revolutions, convulsions, rebellions, and disorders, and bring to the world that harmony and peace.

Which kings and prophets waited for,
And sought but never found."

And if the observance of a single precept of the gospel could regulate the whole system of human affairs, and bring order out of the moral chaos that submerges all things here, can we doubt that this precept came from the Creator Himself? And that the value of Christianity to the world, even so far as it has now been diffused, is beyond all human thought or computation. —St. Louis Presbyterian.

Open Fires and Mantel Pieces.

Says the wise man. A pleasant thing it is for the eyes to look upon the sun. And the next pleasant thing is to look at an open wood fire, with ample hearth, brass andirons, fender, shovel and tongs to match, a bellows, hearth-brush, and the whole surmounted by a handsome mantel-piece. We ought to find a more of sunshine in our houses, all the year round, and having trapped every sunbeam, at least in the winter months, consider next the fire-place with its radiant heat and social glow as the best adjunct to our homes is cheer. In the first place for its history and its poetry. Registers and radiators have no such quality. Our ancestors, whether of the New England or the Old, never fought for any such cast iron inventions, but for their health, bones and their fire sides. What painter or poet could ever work up any "fine frenzy," in elaborating the conception of an air-tight stove, or Webster furnace, or even a "Morning Glory"? Think of an old interior, whether of cottage, or farm-house, or mansion, without back log, crane, or mantle, no ruddy glow, nor quivering lights, nor dancing shadows! Sentiment is quenched, good cheer grows dull, and the poetry of hospitality is gone.

What a royal element is fire, emblem of life, power, aspiration, purity,—terrible, beautiful,—the worst master, the best servant! What a part it plays in old mythologies, in legends of the fire worshippers, in illustrations of sacred truths, in the useful arts! What a place for air-castles and reveries in the bed of glowing coals and leaping tongues of flame!

And then the mantle piece—not a meagre, narrow shelf nor scumpling bracket, but a mantle-piece indeed, with depth and breadth, and room for shells and hyacinths, and bronzes and photographs of good friends, and auffal birds, and bits of porcelain, or whatever oddities, and curiosities of the mantle piece kind that have pleasant associations belonging to them, and that your purse or fancy can afford.

But there's the trouble. We can't afford it. Hard times and household economy forbid. Let us think that over twice. There are luxuries, and there are reasonable luxuries. Candles, prize candies, cigars, fine-cut, and such like, we will say nothing about them except that the list is long, and they absorb a great deal of money. But health and domestic cheer are reasonable luxuries. Good ventilation and well oxygenated air are their prime conditions. Nothing will secure these conditions like an open fire place. It is beyond all comparison the best ventilator. It warms the lower part of the room, creating a current where impurities are most likely to accumulate, and whisking them up the chimney. It sucks in the pure air from every outside crevice and creates an invigorating flow and change. Better still it sends out radiant heat, which is quite a different thing from heated air from cast iron or sheet iron surfaces. It has a penetrating and stimulating influence peculiar to itself, and oxygenates the blood in a way altogether more healthful to the brain and nervous system generally, than the heated air of furnaces or stoves. Registers and radiators are well, especially when supplying a large volume of moderately heated air drawn from without, rather than a small volume of over heated air, but they are not well enough, till the fire place or open grate supplements them with its perfect ventilation and its radiant heat. Even a little fire on the hearth will suffice, for its various benefits of health and comfort, and if the argument of economy be very cogent, the occasional luxury, when the day is dark and dreary, or when the wind is wrong and the furnace sullen, or when the friend arrives, and your hospitality craves its best expression, it is, to say the least, a reasonable luxury. Why, the very look of an open fire place with the wood laid and the kindlings under, all ready for the match, is suggestive of an open heart, a kindly welcome, and a cheery home.

For the sick room there is no question about it. It is a hygienic necessity. And what is a necessity for the sick room should set the well man a thinking. If you have much brain work to do, your head hot and feet cold, your nerves tired and a sense of gloom, dissatisfaction, and futility mingling with your best work, reflect on the above. Economy is sometimes double-edged. It may be that you cannot afford not to have an open fire. And by all means if you contemplate building a house, provide for it, as we that "lovely life and would see many days."—Springfield Republican.

Miscellaneous.

BEARS, continue, and end the year, as you will wish you had done when years are not the measure of existence.

GORTON says: "I will listen to any man's convictions, but pray keep your doubts to yourself, I have enough of my own."

"PENNY" hearts to sympathy, but close them to dissipation. The flower which opens to receive the light of day shuts against rain.

THANKS is a purple half to the grape, a meadow half to the peach, a sunny half to the globe, and the better half to the man who is so fortunate as to get a good wife.

DOES thou pray with all thy might? Then, though thy might be weak in itself it shall be accepted; for God accepteth according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not.

"HEAVEN BELOW."—A little boy was walking in the fields with his mother one day. He looked up to the sky, and said, "O, mother, heaven is so far off, I am afraid I shall never get there." "Al, dear," said his mother, "heaven must come to us before we can go to it." Wise mother! Jesus in the heart is heaven below; to die and go to Jesus, is heaven above.

LONDON capitalists and philanthropists have formed a stock company with a capital of about \$5,000,000, for the purpose of building a city to accommodate 16,000 working men on a plot of eighty acres they have purchased in the West End. It is to contain a park of four acres, streets and gardens tastefully laid out, and houses arranged for comfort, but with no beer or whisky shops in the place.