

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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ROCKY MOUNTAIN SHEEP.

This splendid picture shows the magnificent sheep which abound in the more inaccessible regions of the far west of Canada. They are very wary, hard to approach, and so active that they can climb from crag to crag where the hunter's feet can hardly follow. They have majestic heads and huge curling horns which one would think would be greatly in their way in leaping from crag to crag. It is said that some of these sheep have horns so firm and elastic that they can fall over a precipice upon them without receiving injury. It is said to be great "sport" for hunters to follow these animals to their mountain solitude, but we fail to see the fun of doing to death these graceful creatures for mere sport. Of course if they are hunted for food that is another question and is quite legitimate.

We think hunting for sport's sake is an amusement which the higher civilization of the future will see done away with. Lady Florence Dixey, who has killed more game than any woman living, in a leading review deplotes her life-long addiction to such sport. She says her soul has often been wrung with anguish when she saw the eyes of these graceful creatures filled with agony or filmed with the approach of death. In this country we have little of coursing the deer or following the hare or fox. And yet refined and delicate ladies and gallant gentlemen will "ride to hounds," as the phrase goes, chasing the poor, timid hare, a frightened deer, or bedraggled fox for miles; when finally run down the poor creatures are almost torn to pieces by the hounds. Under the humanizing influences of Christian civilization these cruel practices are doomed to extinction. The standing joke about certain sporting circles used to be, "This is a fine day, let us kill something." We hope it will soon be inappropriate.

CHILD LIFE IN JAPAN.

One thing I noticed all the time I was in that country was how much the children lived out of doors. If they were poor, and had no gardens to their homes, they played in the streets; but if they belonged to well-to-do families, there was always a large garden at the rear of the house, where the children and women spend the most of their time. One thing that makes child life so charming is because the children are so well-mannered and polite. I never saw children quarrelling and fighting, even in the very poorest streets of Tokyo.

They always treat each other kindly, and are most deferential to their elders. Politeness and deference to old age is the underlying principle of their religion, and is taught a child from its earliest infancy.

Then, another thing that makes child-life in Japan so pleasant is that the parents so frequently share the children's pleasure. At their New Year, for two weeks the grown people seemingly devote themselves to seeing that the little ones have good times. They dress them in their best, and take them to call on their friends, where they are given sweetmeats and presents.

Then, to be sure, another event that the children all enjoy very much is the festival of the flowers. When the cherry trees blossom and the chrysanthemums and other flowers bloom, the Japanese always have some kind of a

celebration, and as the children are taught to love the blossoms, they enjoy these seasons, but the time you would like best of all is the feast of the dolls which occurs each spring. Every Japanese family of any pretension has a room in which are the family doll heirlooms—dolls which have been in the family for perhaps hundreds of years. Once a year they are brought out and placed on the beautiful lacquered shelves, which every house has made for them, with the doll furniture, which is also preserved. At such times the little girls have tea parties, and for three long, happy days entertain their friends continuously. Then the precious dolls are put away for another twelvemonth. Abbie G Baker, in *The Child's Gem*.

It is only now and then that you can find people who know how to rest.



ROCKY MOUNTAIN SHEEP.

"CAN THE LIKE OF US GET IN?"

Coming rather late, one stormy afternoon in November, to the place where a children's service was to be held, I was surprised to find a group of little ones standing outside the door in the heavy rain, apparently waiting for something. They were strangers to me, but as I came up three of them ran to me, asking eagerly, "Is there anything to pay to get in?"

"Nothing, dear children," I said, and in the three ran at once.

But two little ragged ones, with bare feet, still lingered outside, till one of them shyly asked me, "Can the like of us get in?"

Glad was I to be able to say, "Oh, yes, all are welcome," and we went in together.

But I had learned a lesson from the children which I hope I shall never forget. They have all been invited to come. They were cold and weary outside, and they wanted to get in. The door was open, and a kind welcome awaited them inside. They kept themselves out by thinking the invitation could not be meant for them—that they were not fit to come in. Here, then, is my lesson: God has, in his infinite love, provided a rich feast, to which he freely and fully invites all. Before God could give you and me—guilty sinners—this full and free invitation, his only begotten Son had to suffer and die in the sinner's stead, in order that he might take away the mighty barrier of guilt that blocked up our way to heaven. Be now there is "boldness to enter into the presence by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Heb. 10, 19, 20), and in every outcast who enters, Jesus sees of the travail of his soul and is satisfied.

Jesus, then, wants you to come. The Father is waiting to welcome you. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to him and live. The Holy Ghost saith, "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." And God's messengers are sent out to say, "All things are ready come." "Whosoever will let him come." "Whosoever that means you, you will never get a fuller invitation.

Do not think the invitation is not meant for the like of you. Do not let any thought, as that you are not fit to come in, keep you out. The like of you may come in. Jesus "came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance" (Matt. 9, 13) and he has declared "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6, 37).

Reader, will you accept the invitation and come just as you are? And come now.