

A Notable Play-ground.

WHILE I was in London recently I stood one day on a very large and fine play-ground. It was so large as to afford ample room for the free movement of hundreds of children. It was admirably fitted for the purpose designed, having swings and gymnastic apparatus, and one part being devoted to the boys and the other reserved for the use of the girls. As I stood there watching the gambols of the happy juveniles I could not help reflecting on the wonderful change which had been effected in that place, and how different the scenes then enacted to those once witnessed there. That play-ground was once the site of a grim prison—the old Horse-manger Lane Gaol. As I stood there a shudder passed through me as I thought that under that very ground over which the light and careless feet of the children were tripping was all that remained of the dust of some of the most notorious criminals of the 19th century. In that vicinity many a murderer had paid the penalty of his deed of blood. But, happily, the little ones knew nothing of the shameful and tragic associations of that spot. Old things had passed away; behold, all things had become new! Where misery once reigned, merriment now sways its sunny sceptre. Such a pleasing transformation set me reflecting. I remembered, sadly, that *sin has turned play-grounds into prisons*. Once no frowning walls shut in those who had forfeited their birth-right of liberty. No gloomy dungeons echoed the groans of wretched captives. The world was full of light, and resonant with joy. Man walked forth possessed of lordly freedom, enjoyed peace with his Maker, and exercised his heaven-given right as monarch of the lower creation. Alas, how soon he fell from his high estate!

"We tell with dimming eyes the story,
How discord on the music fell, and darkness on
the glory."

Through sin came guilt, misery, bondage, despair, and death. Man became a law-breaker, the creator became a Judge, and the world became a prison. And what far-reaching and long-continuing consequences have occurred from the primal transgression. Look abroad upon our penitentiaries with their shame-stained inmates, and mourn over the havoc wrought by sin.

Sin has brought many from the play-ground to the prison.

All those monsters of evil at whose dark deeds we tremble were once smiling infants nestling in a mother's arms. Those who are kept under lock and key, once roamed in all the sweet freedom of childhood. Those who wear the badge of dishonor and perform the menial task, once, with laughing faces, engaged in innocent play. It is enough to make the heart bleed to think how sin has led many a one away from scenes of joy to places of woe. Truly "the way of transgressors is hard." Let us hate sin, strive against it, and warn others of its deceitful nature and deadly effects. But I am eager to pass from these painful considerations to more hopeful and happier thoughts.

Scripture teaches us that *Christ came to turn prisons into play-grounds*.

It was His mission to destroy the works of the Devil, to counteract and overcome the dread results of sin, and, as the second Adam, to restore the ruins of the first. Is it not written of Him:—"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek. He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim

liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Yes, Jesus came to give physical-mental and spiritual liberty. Whom the Son makes free are free indeed. And those whom He liberates, He fills with joy. They have pleasures better than any known to natural childhood. They are made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The more the religion of Christ prevails the fewer prisons will there be and the more play-grounds. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Already, Christianity has produced glorious changes. It has swept away many abuses, it has rectified many wrongs, it has delivered mankind from many evils. The gospel is the true remedy for all the ills of humanity. It goes to the root of the matter and makes men new creatures. I heard Dr. Parker preach a sermon dealing with some pressing social problems. He said our cities needed rebuilding; but in order to rebuild the city you must rebuild the citizen. "Ye must be born again."

There is a world where there are no prisons. In the realms of bliss there are no law-breakers, and no need for places of incarceration. Of that city it is said: "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that doleth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

I would not like to say that there are no play-grounds in Heaven. I know there are many dear children there, and I know they are perfectly happy. The prophet describing the restored Jerusalem said: "And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." In Jerusalem the Golden, surely there will be multitudes of bright young forms animated with very joy in the fulness of a youth that never grows old, and a life that never ends! Some of them we sadly miss here; but they are "with Christ, which is far better."

"Around the throne of God in heaven

Thousands of children stand;

Children whose sins are all forgiven,

A holy, happy band."

"On earth they sought the Saviour's grace,

On earth they loved His name;

So now they see his blessed face,

And stand before the Lamb."

C. W. TOWNSEND.

Married.

COAKLEY-BANISTER—At Harvey, Albart county, N. B., May 31st, by Rev. M. E. Fletcher, David C. Coakley to Roena Banister, both of Harvey.

DUFFY—At Lubec, Me., Dr. N. P. Duffy, in the 48th year of his age, after a brief illness of five days. Dr. Duffy was a native of Coverdale, N. B., and was highly respected in Lubec, where he practiced his profession.

WARD-STOREY—At Donkton, June 4th, by Pastor M. P. King, Walter Ward, Ida Storey, both of Blissfield, North Co., N. B.

BUBAR DICKINSON—At Coldstream, Car. Co., June 5th, by Rev. J. D. Wetmore, Merrill T. Bubar to Etta Dickinson, of Lower Eription.

DYKEMAN-PURDY—At the home of the bride's parents Upper Jemseg, Queens Co., N. B., June 5th, by Rev. W. J. Gordon, Ethelbert P. Dykeman to Laura Purdy, both of Jemseg.

SHARP BATES—At the Baptist parsonage, Upper Jemseg, Queens Co., N. B., June 4th by Rev. W. J. Gordon, William Sharp to Sarah Bates, both of Lower Jemseg.

STEEVES MILLER—At the parsonage, Dawson Settlement, Albert Co., May 17, by Pastor A. A. Rutledge, Roland Steeves of Hillsboro and Louise Miller of Baltimore, Albert county, N. B.

STEEVES COLLINS—At the parsonage, Dawson Settlement, Albert county, June 10, by A. A. Rutledge, L. B. F. Steeves of Dawson Settlement and Maud Collins of St. John, N. B.

FERRIS HUESTIS—At Cambridge, Queens county, on the 5th June, by the Rev. A. B. MacDonald, Judson B. Ferris and Ava J. Huestis, all of Cambridge.

Died.

WARD—A. Blissfield, June 1st, George Ward, in the 92nd year of his age.

BROWN—At Chipman, N. B. on 5th inst. Andrew Brown, aged 73 years. Three sons and two daughters are left to revere his memory. He was a member of First Chipman church.

MEHWINNIE—At Marysville, York county May 18th Mrs Sarah A. Metwinnie, aged 76 years, leaving two sons and four daughters. Sister Mehwinnie, was a member of the Musquash church, having united with it many years ago, and although having to endure many adverse influences and solicitations stood firm to her religious convictions and died in the triumph of faith.

WANAMAKER—On July 7th, 1902, from the Lome of her mother, Hillsdale, N. B., to her heavenly home, departed Sister Jennie Wanamaker, aged 18. She suffered very much, but when asked, "Does the Father's dealings seem hard," she replied, "I love Jesus and I know he loves me. He cannot make any mistake." Thus ever faithful to Him and His church she lived, she died loving and beloved by Him and His.

HARDING—At her late residence, Charlotte St., St. John, June 7, Susan E., widow of the late Charles E. Harding, in the 82nd year of her age. Mr and Mrs Harding were permitted to spend a long married life together and to raise a large family of four sons and seven daughters, all of whom live to cherish and revere the memory of their parents. Mrs Harding was a valued member of the Gervain Street church. In quite early life she united with the church and preserved her membership in it unbroken for more than fifty years. The funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Rev. J. D. Freeman on Tuesday afternoon and the remains were laid away in Fern Hill Cemetery beside those of her husband who was taken from her side about eighteen months ago.

VAUGHAN—On June 6th, at St. Martins, N. B., Benjamin Vaughan, aged 89 years and 7 months. Our beloved brother was one of the oldest and most respected residents of this place. He was baptized by Rev Benjamin Coy nearly sixty years ago. Some twenty-five years of his life was spent in Liverpool, England, where he attended for a time the ministry of the famous Hugh Stewart Brown, and afterwards became an ardent supporter of Princes Street church under the pastorate of the late G. W. Carey. He met with great reverses in business life, but sustained them all with Christian fortitude. His closing years passed in his native place, were calm and brightened with glorious hope. The present writer saw him the day before he died, and bending over him said "Christ is all," to which he immediately responded "and in all." In that blessed assurance he lived and died.

Courtesy

The grace of courtesy is not the least of life's charms. Nowhere should it grow richer than in the Church of Christ. A smile, a hand shake, a kindly spoken greeting, the sharing of a hymn book, invitation to a seat, such little things as these have often gladdened an overburdened heart, led a life nearer to Christ and been the "cup of cold water," delighting the heart of the Master, brightening the life of the recipient and making the soul of the giver glow with a consciousness of having helped the Christ in his ministry of love to men.—Charles H. Moss.