

**The Restless Boy in Church.**

How he turns and twine,  
And how he persists  
In rattling his heels;  
How uneasy he feels,  
Our wide awake boy in church!

Then earnest and still,  
He attends with a will,  
While the story is told  
Of some old hero bold,  
Our dear, thoughtful boy in church!

But our glad surprise  
At his thoughtful eyes  
Is turned to despair,  
As he twitches the hair  
Of his little sister in church!

Still, each naughty trick flies  
At a look from the eyes  
Of his mother so dear,  
Who thinks best to sit near  
Her mischievous boy in church!

Another trick comes?  
Yes! His finger he drums,  
Or his kerchief is spread  
All over his head,  
And still we take him to church!

He's troublesome? Yes!  
That I'm bound to confess;  
But God made the boys,  
With their fun and their noise,  
And he surely wants them in church!

Such children, you know,  
Long, long years ago,  
Did not trouble the Lord,  
Though disciples were bored;  
So we'll still keep them near him in church.  
—Lutheran.

**THE OLD PENSIONER.**

ALL civilized nations make provision for the old age of their worn out soldiers and sailors. In Greenwich and Chelsea Hospitals the veterans of the army and navy of Great Britain find a quiet haven where they may rest awhile after a stormy voyage and warfare. And the brave old fellows often fight their battles o'er again, and shoulder a crutch and show how fields were won. In Paris the French have a magnificent home for worn out soldiers, the Hotel des Invalides; and here, beneath its gilded dome, sleeps in his stone sarcophagus the dust of the great warrior, Napoleon, while around his tomb linger a few of his old companions in arms whose hearts still thrill at the mention of the mighty name, which was once a terror to all Europe.

The old pensioner in the picture looks peaceful enough now. He may have seen hard fighting in his day. Indeed the cross he wears upon his breast is proof of that. But his fighting days are over. He dozes in the sun, sitting beneath one of the bridges beside the Seine, and doubtless boasts, even when he returns with empty basket, that he has had at least "a glorious nibble." The friendly looking dog at his side seems to take as intelligent an interest in the sport as his master. I wonder is he expecting a fish to eat. It seems to me that about the worst use you can make of a man is to make him food for powder. It is her millions of idle soldiers that keep Europe so poor. Thank God that we have so little need for them in this favoured land. And may the time soon come

when, the wide world over, they shall bent their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks, and learn war no more.

**CHERISH YOUR GIRLHOOD.**

DEAR girls, don't be so often wishing you were grown-up women that you will neglect your girlhood. In the rush and hurry of these fast times there is danger that you will reach and strain after "young ladyhood" too much. Be girls a while yet. Be tender, joyous, loving, obedient and industrious. Womanhood, with its privileges and powers, its burdens and trials, will come soon enough.

On this point one has wisely said: "Wait patiently, my children, through the whole limit of your girlhood. Go not after womanhood; let it come to you. Keep out of public view. Cultivate refinement and modesty. The cares and responsibilities of life will come soon enough. When they come you will meet them, I trust, as true women should. But oh! be not so unwise as to throw away your girlhood. Rob not yourself of this beautiful season, which, wisely spent, will brighten all your future life."

**LETTER FROM PORT SIMPSON, B.C.**

MY DEAR MRS. STRACHAN,—The first of the year has come and reminds me that friends far away will wish to hear how we are getting on in our work. During the last quarter of the year everything went on very quietly in the home, no one left us and none have been admitted as inmates. The health of all the children has been very good, and our heavenly Father's loving care has been over us every day. Since the end of September the great source of pleasure and interest among the girls was that of preparing their Christmas gifts. Many were the consultations over the all-important subject; plans were made and talked over, while happy anticipations brightened many hours. Perhaps an account of our Christmas pleasures will be as interesting to the friends as anything I can write. Some of the girls did real pretty work, and took great pains with it. Thanks to the kind friends who responded to my appeal, I had a good supply of fancy-work material, and when on Saturday night, 23rd of December, all the articles were marked ready for the tree, they filled quite a large box.

During our walks for weeks before, the children were looking out for a good tree, and as we were surrounded by forests, there was not much difficulty in this; but how it was to be cut down and carried home was the hard question to answer. However, on the Friday before Christmas Day, Mr. Miller kindly came to our aid by going with several of the elder girls to help them cut the trees; we needed some also for our annual Sunday-school festival. In a short time they returned with a nice

large tree which we left in a spare room, as we decided not to trim it before Monday morning, lest it might be a snare to the little folks in drawing away their thoughts too much from good things on Sunday. Early Monday morning Mr. Miller came in and fixed up the tree in my sitting-room, and some of the elder girls helped me to place the gifts upon it. This occupied us till dinner time, so you may judge that it was well filled. It looked very pretty, for there was a great variety of colours, and the branches looked as if they would all most break beneath their load.

After dinner, the family from the Mission House honoured us with their company, and we all gathered to admire the wonderful work of Santa Claus, and to receive the gifts prepared for us. After all had been admired, I selected two of the older girls to distribute the presents. It would make my letter too long if I were to tell you all the things which the children made, it seemed as if their best efforts had been for Mrs. Crosby and myself. My sitting-room walls are adorned with articles that are not only useful but very pretty and well made. Last year the ladies of the North Auxiliary of Halifax sent me a box for the girls, containing many useful little presents, such as collarettes, fancy boxes, aprons, pin and needle cases, with many other things too numerous to mention. Other friends had kindly remembered them also, so they were well taken care of.

On Wednesday following we had the usual Sunday-school treat, about one hundred and fifty children were present. As our girls are the most regular, both on week-days and Sunday, they shared this pleasure also. Each child received a gift and a bag of candies; games were played, speeches made, hymns sung, and a very happy time was spent. Mrs. Crosby has had a Band of Hope among the children for some years. Last year she made banners and badges for them, and on Monday after New Year's day they marched through the village with the adult Temperance Society. My girls were in such a state of excitement over the unusual honour, that I was greatly relieved when they were really off and the house comparatively quiet. Headed by the brass band they marched through the streets, visited the Fort, and after shaking hands came back to the mission house and went through the same ceremony there. During the holidays we have had more time for walking out. Many bright days we walked some miles; when the snow is on the ground and the sun shining, everything around looks so beautiful, and the young folks had a thoroughly happy time. School has commenced, so the children are settling down to work again, all the better, I trust, for the season of pleasure.

I am always thankful when the Christmas season is over, as it is so trying in many ways; though, of course, it is a real pleasure to see the children so happy and to add to their joy, yet the

strain is very great and the reins have to be tightly held. By the time Christmas was fairly here I was almost too tired to keep up, and began to feel as if very little would make me break down entirely, but strength was given according to my need. As the friends have so kindly granted me a helper, I trust the most trying time is over for me, as I shall soon have some one to share the burden with me. My earnest desire is that we may do so much good for these children, that they may feel the benefit of being with us as long as they live, and be found at last among God's jewels. I long to see some fruit of my labour, and I am daily sowing the seed in these young hearts knowing that God has said, "My word shall not return unto me void," so there is no real cause or room for discouragement. Pray for us that we may be faithful even in the least things.

With kind wishes for the New Year to all the dear friends who are interested in our work,

I remain, yours sincerely,  
AGNES KNIGHT.

**"IF I CAN, I WILL."**

I KNEW a boy who was preparing to enter the junior class of New York University. He was studying trigonometry, and I gave him three examples for his next lesson. The following day he came into my room to demonstrate his problems. Two of them he understood; but the third—a very difficult one—he had not performed. I said to him, "Shall I help you?"

"No, sir. I can and will do it, if you give me time."

I said, "I will give you all the time you wish."

The next day he came into my room to recite another lesson in the same study.

"Well, Simon, have you worked that example?"

"No, sir," he answered; "but I can and will do it, if you will give me a little more time."

"Certainly, you shall have all the time you desire."

I always like those boys who are determined to do their own work, for they make our best scholars and men too. The third morning you should have seen Simon enter my room. I know he had it; for his whole face told the story of his success. Yes, he had it, notwithstanding it cost him many hours of severest mental labour. Not only had he solved the problem, but what was of infinitely greater importance to him, he had begun to develop mathematical powers which, under the inspiration of "I can and will," he has continued to cultivate, until to-day, he is professor of mathematics in one of our largest colleges, and one of the ablest mathematicians of his years in our country.

My young friends, let your motto ever be, "If I can, I will."—The Well-Spring.