

# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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## What Guest?

BY VIOLET HASTINGS.

White is the wall, and white the floor,  
And bright the hearth, and wide the door;  
The chambers spotless, fair the beds,  
With pillows soft for weary heads:  
"Tell me, O woman, wise and fair,  
What guest comes in thy cheer to share?"

The table shines with silvery store,  
The pantry filled from roof to floor;  
The linen draping fair and white  
Where crystal glasses catch the light:  
"What guest comes by this way? What  
guest  
Within thy beautiful home shall rest?"

With tireless steps she goes her way,  
Still ordering well from day to day  
Her house, and making bright the shrine  
Where evening's cheery hearth-fires  
shine;  
Until there cometh to her door  
A traveller, weak, and sad, and poor.

Not he the guest to please her eye;  
She shuts the door—he passes by:  
Yet, wistful, still his gaze he turned  
Where bright the lovely home-lights  
burned.  
Alas! no eyes had she to know  
The likeness 'neath his garb of woe!

But to her home there came at last  
A guest with silent step, who passed  
Through open door, through stately hall;  
And waiting neither beck nor call,  
He drew her from her cares to rest;  
She went with him—her latest guest.

## ROBERTSON RYERSON, FATHER OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM OF ONTARIO.

To the memory of the late Dr. Ryerson a leading American paper pays the following tribute: "We believe Canada owes more to him than to any other man, living or dead. Men like Wellington and Washington 'save their countries,' but men like Ryerson make their countries worth saving. The death of such a man as Ryerson is a loss to the world greater than when the average president or king passes away."

Of this great man we wish the younger generation of Canadians to have some adequate conception.

No man ever passed away from among us in Canada whose true grandeur was so universally recognized. He lived in the hearts of his countrymen, and "Read his history in a nation's eyes."

Even envy and detraction could not lessen his grandeur nor tarnish the lustre of his name. And far beyond his own country his character was revered and his loss deplored.

Dr. Ryerson possessed in a marked degree the faculty of commanding the confidence and winning the friendship of distinguished men of every political party and religious denomination. He possessed the confidence and esteem of every Governor of Canada.



ROBERTSON RYERSON.

from Lord Sydenham to the Marquis of Lorne. No native Canadian ever had the "entree" to such distinguished society in Great Britain and in Europe as he. When making his educational tours, Dr. Ryerson was furnished by the Home Government with special introductions to the British Ambassadors of the countries he was about to visit, and was by them introduced to the leading statesmen and educational authorities of those countries.

### DR. RYERSON AND THE POPE.

The late Pius IX. having heard of his educational work in Canada, wished to see the man who had devised a system of such equal justice to all denominations. We once heard the Doctor describe this interview as he beguiled the tedium of a railway journey with his reminiscences of the past. Several foreign dignitaries were waiting in an ante-room an audience with the Pope, but the Methodist preacher received precedence of them all. "Are you a clergyman?" asked the chancellor, who conducted him to the Pope's presence; "I am a Wesleyan minister," he replied. "Ah! John Wesley. I've heard of him," said the chancellor, so he shrugged his shoulders in surprise that this heretic should be so honoured above orthodox sons of the church. After an interview of some length the Pope, addressing two young ladies by whom Dr. Ryerson was accompanied—his daughter, now Mrs. Harris, of London, and a daughter of Earl Gray—who had rolls of paper in their hands, said, "What have you there, my children?" They replied that they wished to procure his autograph, when the fatherly old man wrote in Latin the benediction: "Grace, mercy, and peace

from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord," and then kindly gave them also the pen with which it was written. Yet with all his catholicity of sentiment and charity of spirit, Dr. Ryerson was a man of strong convictions, and he always had the courage of his convictions as well. When it came to a question of principle he was rigid as iron. Then he planted himself on the solid ground of what he believed to be right and said like FitzJames:

"Come one, come all! this rock shall fly  
From its firm base, as soon as I."

Dr. Ryerson's controversies were for great principles, not for personal interests. Hence no rancour, no bitterness disturbed his relations with his antagonists. And even his old and conquered foe, Bishop Strachan, after the controversy was over, became his personal friend.

Such benefactors of his kind and of his country as Dr. Ryerson deserve to be held in lasting and grateful remembrance. His imperishable monument, it is true, is the school system which he devised. The bronze statue of Dr. Ryerson in the grounds of the Educational Buildings, where he so long administered the school system which he had devised, exhibits the noble presence, the benignant countenance, the dome-like and majestic brow of this great Canadian. Thus shall the future generations of the boys and girls in our schools, of the teachers who shall pass through those educational halls, and the foreign visitors to our land learn what manner of man was he whom Canada delights to honour.

To future generations of Canadian youth the career of Dr. Ryerson shall be an inspiration and encouragement. With early educational advantages far inferior to those which he has brought within the reach of every boy and girl in the land, what a noble life he lived, what grand results he achieved! One great secret of his success was his tireless industry. As a boy he learned to work—to work hard—the best lesson any boy can learn—and he worked to the end of his life. He could not spend an idle hour. The rule of his life was "no day without a line" without something attempted—something done. In the discharge of his official duties, the amount of work that he got through was an amazement to the clerks of the department. Over sixty distinct publications came from his busy pen. Over a score of times he crossed the Atlantic on official duties.

But again we remark his moral greatness was his noblest trait—his earnest piety, his child-like simplicity, his Christ-like charity, his fidelity to duty his unfaltering faith. Not his intellectual greatness, not his lofty statesmanship, not his noble achievements are his truest claim upon our love and veneration—but this—

"The Christian is the highest style of man"  
His labours for the church of his early choice were performed in every position from that of a missionary to the Indian tribes, to



ONTARIO EDUCATIONAL EXHIBIT, AMERICAN WORLD'S FAIR.