

**The Open Door.**

WITHIN a town of Holland, once,  
A widow dwelt, 'tis said,  
So poor, alas! her children asked  
One night in vain for bread.  
But this poor woman loved the Lord,  
And knew that he was good;  
So, with her little ones around,  
She prayed to him for food.

When prayer was done, the eldest child,  
A boy of eight years old,  
Said softly, "In the Holy Book,  
Dear mother, we are told  
How God, with food by ravens brought,  
Supplied his prophet's need."  
"Yes," answered she, "but that, my son,  
Was long ago, indeed."

"But, mother, God may do again  
What he has done before;  
And so, to let the bird fly in,  
I will uncloze the door."  
Then little Dirk, in simple faith,  
Threw open the door full wide,  
So that the radiance of their lamp  
Fell on the path outside.

Ere long the burgomaster passed,  
And, noticing the light,  
Paused to inquire why thus the door  
Was open so at night.  
"My little Dirk has done it, sir,"  
The widow, smiling, said,  
"That ravens might fly in and bring  
My hungry children bread."

"Indeed!" the burgomaster cried,  
"Then here's a raven, lad;  
Come to my home, and you shall see  
Where bread may soon be had."  
Along the street to his own house  
He quickly led the boy,  
And sent him back with food that filled  
His humble home with joy.

The supper ended, little Dirk  
Went to the open door,  
Looked up, and said, "We thank thee, Lord,"  
Then shut it fast once more.  
For, though no bird had entered in,  
He knew that God on high  
Had hearkened to his mother's prayer,  
And sent this full supply.

**INDIAN SCHOOL LIFE IN PORT SIMPSON,  
BRITISH COLUMBIA.**

BY R. B. BEAVIS.

DEAR DR. WITHROW,—During the time I had charge of the school at Port Simpson, I often thought of writing a letter for the PLEASANT HOURS, and now that I am leaving I send you the following, hoping it will interest the many young people who read your paper:

When I entered upon my duties as teacher in October last, I found that a great many of the children were just returning from the different fishing stations where they had been with their parents during the summer months. The attendance steadily increased until November, when the register showed a roll of one hundred and fifty names.

To a stranger entering a large school of Indian boys and girls, the faces all seem alike, but he soon begins to distinguish them. Like the boys and girls at home, some are clever, some are dull. Some are like one thing, some another. Some are industrious, others are lazy. They soon become attached to their teacher, and they are delighted when he is pleased with their efforts to learn.

A good many learn very quickly. They have good memories, and they learn the meanings and spellings of long words as quickly as the cleverest boy or girl at home. Little Winnie, only four years of age, can recite the Ten Commandments.

It pleases them to hear the teacher talk their language, but they have many a laugh at his first attempts. On the other hand, if you laugh at them when they try to talk English, they are so shy they won't speak at all. They read and write well in English, but they are very timid about speaking it. They love to sing. They will sing hymn after hymn without seeming to grow tired. The school is always opened with singing, prayer and a Scripture lesson, and closed with singing and prayer. Like all children, they are fond of stories. They listen very attentively to Bible stories, and more especially to those about the Saviour who died for them. They also love to hear stories about the little boys and girls where the teacher comes from, about those little ones so far away who send them books and papers with such nice pictures and stories, and who save their pennies to spread the Gospel.

You will be glad to hear that these little children very seldom quarrel or get cross with one another. Some of them are very neat and tidy in their dress. The girls wear shawls and handkerchiefs instead of coats and hats. It pleases them very much if the teacher will only allow them to wear their handkerchiefs in school, especially when visitors are in, as they do not like to uncover their heads before strangers.

Then on Sunday afternoon we have our Sabbath-school. The children all join heartily in the singing. Each teacher has a class, and they talk about the lesson and recite verses just as you do.

During the winter months the cold winds and storms come, and then we need a fire, but we have no men to come with big horses and sleighs and bring great loads of wood and pile it up in the shed as you have. Now, how do you think we get our wood? The men and big boys go away out on the mountain-side, and they cut down big trees and slide them into the water. These they make into a raft, and then if there is a good wind they put up a big sail, and the wind and the tide bring them home. They tie up their raft to the land so that when the tide has gone out again it lies dry on the beach. Then they set to work with saws and axes and cut it up, and the boys and girls "pack" it up to the school-house on their backs. They enjoy the fun, but they must hurry, for the tide will be back again in a few hours, and if they have not carried away all the men have cut it will be taken away out to sea. When it is all "packed" and piled nicely in the shed they are tired, but it pleases them to know they have done something useful. Thus the time goes on. It is pleasing to see how these boys and girls are trying to learn and to make their lives more useful and happy.

Twenty of the girls live in the "Home." There they are trained to be useful. They make their own dresses, do the cooking, baking, cleaning, washing, ironing, scrubbing, and all the other little things that have to be done in and around a household. Besides this, they receive Scripture lessons, learn hymns and verses, and I am sure you will be glad to know that the older girls have a Bible-class of their own. They meet every Wednesday evening in their class-room, where they read and study the Scripture with singing and prayer.

But it is not all work and lessons here. These boys and girls like fun and a holiday as well as you do. So when the warm days are here and the beautiful sun comes from behind the mountains, they go for a picnic on the beach. Their teachers go along with them. Sometimes they walk a mile and a half to Long Beach, where they play about on the white sands or climb the hills in the wood to look for flowers, moss and salmon-berries until they are tired out. Then they have tea, singing and

prayers, after which they go home feeling just as you do after you have had that long ramble in the fields.

Once this summer we went in a big canoe. Some of you never saw a big canoe, did you? Well, they are hewn out of large cedar trees. A good one will carry easily thirty men. We were twenty-eight in all. With Sarah for a captain and Hannah and Betsey and Jane and about a dozen others paddling, away we went over the bay to the white beach beyond. We had a delightful time, and we all came home refreshed with new vigour for our work.

It is encouraging to know that a number of these children have given their hearts to Jesus and are trying to live Christian lives. It is a blessed thought that wherever the Gospel goes the people are lifted up and the children made happy. Though you may not be called to leave home as a missionary you can help the work by saving your pennies for the missionary box, and the little you do in the name of Jesus will not lose its reward.

**The Waning Year.**

BY REV. A. B. RUSSELL.

THE year has passed its middle life,  
Its locks are getting thin,  
For it has reached the mystic bound,  
Where sombre days begin.

The little birds which sang so sweet  
Are hushed to silence now;  
They've left their nests which empty swing  
Upon the yielding bough.

On every tree we see the march  
Of the relentless thief,  
Which steals the beauty June bestowed,  
And leaves the yellow leaf.

October wears a mottled coat,  
November sheds a tear;  
And winds which sweep the hill and plain  
Will rock the waning year.

Thus year by year, with breathless haste,  
Swift time speeds nimbly by;  
The ages creep, the centuries walk,  
While years take wings and fly.

We look around, and lo! we see  
Our kin bowed down with grief;  
Springtime and summer are no more,  
Life's in the yellow leaf.

We raise our eyes and look aloft  
Above the din of strife,  
To him who tides his loved ones o'er,  
To an eternal life.

Then let old Time speed on the wing,  
Roll round the hastening year,  
Till God shall take his ransomed home,  
And dry the falling tear.

**THE LITTLE CHAP'S HYMN.**

THE following testimony was given by a working-man, and it may cheer those who labour among the young:

"I've heard tell how teachers don't see much fruit of their trouble. I think the lady that teaches our little chap would like to know what good he has done me with one of his hymns. I'd an anxious load. I was carrying it on my mind day and night, never thinking about the Lord who could have given me rest; but I became so worried that one night I lay tossing about and couldn't get a bit of sleep. Our little boy was ill, and he woke up restless, too. But what does he do in the dark but break out into singing; and it seemed like a message right into my heart. It was only a child's hymn, learned among the infants; but it was just what I wanted. My little chap sung on about him I had forgotten, and then and there I was able to gather up my trouble every bit, and I took it to my Father."