

Three Ships.

BY HARRIET F. BLODGETT.

Three ships there be a-sailing,
 Helixt the sea and sky,
 And one is Now, and one is Then,
 And one is By-and-Bye.

The first little ship is all for you -
 Its masts are gold, its sails are blue,
 And this is the cargo it brings:
 Joyful days with sunlight glowing,
 Nights where dreams like stars are grow-
 ing,
 Take them, sweet, or they'll be going!
 For they every one have wings.

The second ship is all for me—
 A-sailing on a misty sea,
 And out across the twilight gray.
 What it brought of gift and blessing,
 Would not stay for my caressing—
 Was too dear for my possessing—
 So it sails and sails away.

The last ship, riding fair and high,
 Upon the sea, is By-and-Bye,
 O Wind, be kind, and gently blow!
 Not too swiftly hasten hither.
 When she turns, sweet, you'll go with
 her—
 To what port I may not know.

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WILLIAM BRIGGS,

Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto.
 C. W. COATES, S. F. HURDIS,
 2176 St. Catherine St., Wesleyan Book Room,
 Montreal, Halifax, N.S.

Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, JULY 10, 1897.

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

JULY 18, 1897.

Prayer for pardon.—Psalm 51. 7-12.

BITTERNESS OF SPIRIT.

His prayer is continued by the use of the most severe deprecatory language that can be used. Hyssop was a bitter herb, which was used for medicinal purposes. Here it may be intended as a figure of speech, which may mean a process of cleansing of the soul from defilement. The verses 7 and 9 are all of the same import.

CLEANNES AND RENEWAL.

Verse 10. This means purity, removal of sin, and bringing the fruits of holiness. When the heart is made pure, the fountain is then clean, and the streams issuing forth will also be clean. Right words will be spoken, and righteous actions will be performed. A right spirit will pervade every part of our life, without which the heart cannot be kept clean. The Holy Spirit dwells in the heart of the believer, prompting the man to righteousness of deportment, and consistency of life.

A FURTHER PETITION.

Verse 11. David does not presume to say that he does not deserve to be cast away from divine presence. He knows all this to be true, and this is what he deprecates. "Cast me not away." The calamity would be so severe that he shudders at the very idea of it, and dreads its possibility. Then he goes a step further, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." This would be an overwhelming calamity. Any other bereavement he might endure, any other affliction he might bear, but the loss of

the Holy Spirit would be an irreparable loss. Do we all feel the invaluable character of the Holy Spirit as David did? How do we act? Do we never grieve nor quench the Holy Spirit?

A FURTHER REQUEST.

Verse 12. He once was joyful in the Lord, but that time has gone, and now, instead of being joyful, he is sad, and he mourns and deplores the loss he has sustained. "Restore unto me." This is but a continuance of the former petitions, for if the heart be clean, and the iniquity is blotted out, most assuredly the joy of salvation would be sure to follow. Good people have a right to be joyful. If they are not so they are living beneath their privilege. The whole prayer teaches us the earnestness and the importunity which he felt under the circumstances.

APPLICATION.

Let every member of our Leagues take care and do not fall into sin. If you fall, rise again. Pray earnestly for the restoration of the Divine favour. God is married unto the backslider, and he waits to be gracious.

A CHINESE IDOL SHOP.

Let us imagine ourselves this morning in a Chinese idol shop. The images are placed on counters or tables, the seated and kneeling figures in front of those in a standing position. Some of them represent men who were scholars and merchants, others princes and warriors, and some carry swords and some have tablets on which are painted Chinese characters.

The gods of China cannot be numbered, and their images are found in every town and village in the land. Odd stones, queerly shaped roots, and fantastic bits of wood are worshipped. A fisherman found a mass of oyster shells, brought in by the tide, the shape of which resembled a lion, and for generations that was worshipped in his family.

There are many gods worshipped in every household. Some are beautifully carved, many are gilded. Idol-making is a great industry in China, and idol shops are found in every city.

Is it not sad to think that the little children of China and other heathen lands are taught to bow down to idols of wood, stone, and metal? Isaiah says that a graven image is vain. It is worthless. Men should be ashamed to do so foolish a thing as to worship idols, but they did it when Isaiah lived, and many people in the world still do so. An idol is a lifeless thing. The carpenter makes it with tools. The smith fashions it with hammers. It is made into the form of man. Men select a tree out of a forest. They hew it down, and, strange to say, out of it they make an idol which they worship. They bow down before it. They say unto it: "Deliver me, for thou art my god." Is not this very foolish and wicked? Men are still making idols in some parts of the world, and worshipping them, because they have never been taught any better.

Should not we be thankful for the privilege of worshipping the true and living God? Shall we not send missionaries to teach these people about the true and living God?

WHAT IS SAID OF "ONWARD."

We receive many kind testimonials as to the work this paper is doing in promoting the interest of temperance, religion, and everything else that is good—often in regions where very little else in the way of religious reading or, indeed, reading of any sort, is received. One of our ministers says, "It has taken my people by storm." Others write to Dr. Briggs, publisher, expressing their high appreciation of it. Among the letters received is one from a subscriber in Muskoka, which says:

"After reading it myself, I lend it to another family living near who are thirsting for such reading matter as Onward contains. Thus two families have the benefit of its weekly visits, much to the delight and edification of nine persons. I can say with assurance that Onward and the other Sunday-school periodicals are doing a good work in Muskoka, where we have not such superior advantages as are found in our towns and cities. I believe eternity alone will reveal the good work that is being done by the dissemination of your Sabbath-school papers. Everybody says Onward is the best paper, and the most instructive and interesting and wholesome paper that can be met with anywhere. It sustains a good reputation in these outlying districts."

AS OTHERS SEE US.

It is very pleasant to read in our English exchanges the kind words which our visiting friends have to say about Canada and Canadian Methodism. The Rev. Mr. Curnock, the accomplished editor of The Methodist Recorder, pays a very high tribute to Canada, describes fully his visit to Toronto, and expresses his surprise, as does also "Sister Dora," the Rev. Bowman Stephenson's accomplished daughter, at the absence of visible poverty, and concludes his account of his visit as follows:

"In our drives and tramps about Toronto we saw abundant evidences of wealth, culture, comfort. Slum life is, apparently, unknown; ordinarily and in general there is no distressing poverty. If people choose to work, and if they do not drink or play the devil, there is, at least, a decent livelihood and a tolerable measure of comfort.

"The streets of the city are resplendent with architecture, and at night with electric light. Many of the streets are still disfigured by hideous telegraph poles and myriads of overhead wires. Gradually, however, these disfigurements are disappearing. The paving also is improving. It is curious in these Canadian cities to see miles of sidewalks planked with timber. The city gently slopes to the bay. Lake Ontario here is very beautiful, and adds greatly to the interest of the city.

"From morning to night Toronto enjoys its Sabbath. There is no trading and very little vehicular traffic. At church hours crowds of well-dressed people flock to and fro. A great peace—the peace of a God-fearing people—keeps the city as with a guard. We saw no trace of drunkenness or disorder. 'Happy are the people who are in such a case, yea, happy are the people who have the Lord for their God.'

"To preach to these people, to hear the hearty singing, to feel the grip of strong hands and gentle hands as the members file past the communion, to hear prayer and praise perfected, and a fellowship meeting equally good, to see the joy, to feel the glow to note in the announcements and in the talk of the evening numberless signs of vigorous life, and to detect nothing that offended taste, but everything to cheer and win—it was an inspiration. No one of us can ever forget the Sunday we spent in Toronto—the greatest Methodist city in the world."

STORY OF THE QUEEN'S LIFE.

VI.

HOW THEY BUILT THE CAIRN.

Do you know what a cairn is? It is a great heap or mound of stones. It is a Scotch custom to build a cairn. When anything pleasant happens, the Scotch Highlander likes to build a cairn.

It is a little like celebrating, you see. Every time he looks at his cairn he remembers the pleasant thing that happens.

So when the Queen and her family took possession of Balmoral, they built a cairn. The cairn was built on a fine day in October.

At eleven o'clock they all set out for Craig Cowan, on which the cairn was to be built.

In the party were the Queen, the Prince, the seven children, and many ladies and gentlemen. The servants too were there, and the tenants from the cottages.

"All our little friends were there," says the Queen. "Mary Symms and Lizzie Stewart and the four Grants"—Highland laddies and lassies.

The cairn was built on the highest part of Craig Cowan. The Queen placed the first stone, Prince Albert placed the second. Then each of their children added a stone, according to their ages, beginning with the Princess Royal. It was in 1852 that the cairn was built, and the Princess Royal was then nearly twelve years old.

After these, the ladies and gentlemen each placed a stone; and then they all came up together, each bringing a stone. So they built and built till the cairn was eight feet high, when Prince Albert climbed up to the top of it, and placed the last stone, and it was finished.

While they were building it, the Highlanders, both the old people and children, danced reels, and the "dear old dog Monk" sat and gravely watched proceedings.

After the cairn was finished they gave three cheers. I suppose they were Highland cheers.

It was all "So gay, and pretty, and touching," the Queen says, that she felt like "crying!" For droll as it may seem, it is true that when people are very, very happy, they often feel like crying.

Well, after it was all over, the Prince, and the Queen, and "Vicky" went through the woods searching for deer, and poor "Vicky" sat down on a wasp's nest and was badly stung.

In 1855 the new castle was built, as the old one was too small. When the Queen and Prince Albert entered it for the first time, an old shoe was thrown after them for good luck.

When the Queen is at Balmoral she is always awakened in the morning by the playing of the bagpipes under her window.

A company from some Highland regiment is always on guard at Balmoral when she is there.

That's Tommy.

BY MABELLE G. OLAPP.

If you meet a little barefooted lad,
 Whistling a tune that is merry and glad,
 With an old straw hat pushed back on his head,
 With his lips all stained with the strawberries red,
 That grow on the five-acre lot, with eyes
 That are blue as the bluest of April skies,
 With a mite of a nose that is upward turned,
 And cheeks by the sun's fierce kisses burned—

That's Tommy.

If you want to know where the May-flowers hide,
 'Neath the dry, dead leaves in the glad spring-tide,
 Where the violets dance 'neath the pine-tree brown,
 Or Jack Frost shakes the first chestnuts down,
 Where the trout bite best, or the wild grapes grow,
 In purple clusters hanging low,
 Where the coast is longest, the ice most clear,
 When the happy holiday time draws near—

Ask Tommy.

With hands thrust deep in his pockets small,
 He trudges away, when the cow-bells call;
 Father's "right-hand man" he is called at home,
 Though he'll not be eight till the snow-flakes come,
 And mother smiles over the work that would be
 Both hard and wearisome were not he
 Ready and willing on errands to run,
 From the peep of the dawn to the set of the sun—

Dear Tommy.

When the wood-birds are crooning a low good-night,
 And the hay-cocks have put on their night-caps white,
 When the purple shadows enfold the hills,
 And down in the meadows the whippoor-wills
 Lift up their voices, a tired boy
 Creeps into the arms that know no joy
 Like holding him, and fond lips press
 The tangled curls, as they say "God bless Our Tommy."

Mr. Hugh Price Hughes identifies himself very intimately with American and Canadian Methodism. Instead of saying "yours" or "theirs," he says "our," as if he were, as indeed he is, one of the family. "Our greatest success has been in the west." "In Canada we have made wonderful progress," and so on. We rather like this. It shows the solidarity of Methodism throughout the world. When we visit the old land we feel that we are not aliens and strangers, but that we share the glorious inheritance of English thought and English Methodism, and we are glad when our English friends, in like manner, claim their share in all the glories of Methodists in this new land.

The oldest book in the world, to which a positive date can be assigned, is an assortment of proverbs somewhat after the style of the proverbs collected by Solomon. The work is accredited to Ptahhotep, an Egyptian king, and Egyptologists assign to it an antiquity of at least three thousand years B.C. Abraham was called to leave his home in Ur of the Chaldees, 1921 B.C., so that this volume was written eleven hundred years before the beginning of Jewish history. The Deluge is placed by most chronologists at B.C. 2348, so the book, if its dating is correct, must have been written before the flood. Methuselah was born B.C. 3317, so that this papyrus was prepared and these proverbs were collected when the oldest man on record was a lively young fellow of three hundred years.