

The Queen's Birthday.

The following song has been written and set to music by Mr. F. H. Torrington, of Toronto:

Old England calls upon her sons
To honour England's Queen;
Her sons respond, and daughters too,
To keep her memory green.
With loyal hearts and ready hands
The Empire's children stand,
Prepared to do, prepared to die,
For Queen and native land.

For fifty years our country's flag
Hath borne o'er earth and main
The name of Empress, Queen beloved,
With neither spot nor stain.
Long may it bear Victoria's name,
Long o'er us may she reign,
And for our Empire, broad and grand,
May she new honour gain.

Upon our Queen—our country—flag
God's blessing ever rest;
With peace and plenty everywhere
Her people's homes be blest.
God save the Queen, her people pray
From hearts sincere and free,
God save our loved Victoria
And crown her Jubilee.

CHORUS.

Victoria! our Queen beloved
With loyal heart and hand,
Thy colonies and fatherland
United by thee stand.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. L. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, MAY 21, 1892.

DO IT NOW.

BY W. C. WILKINSON, D.D.

THIS is for you, boys and girls. It is a bad habit—the habit of putting off. If you have something that you are to do, do it now. Then it will be done. That is one advantage. If you put it off very likely you will forget it, and not do it at all. Or else—what for you is almost as bad—you will not forget, but keeping thinking of it and dreading it, and so, as it were, be doing it all the time. "The valiant never taste death but once;" never but once do the alert and active have their work to do.

I once read of a boy who drooped so in health that his mother thought she must have the doctor to see him. The doctor could find nothing the matter with the boy. But there the fact was, he was pining away, losing his appetite, creeping about languidly, and his mother was distressed. The doctor was nonplussed.

"What does your son do? Has he any work?"

"No; he has only to bring a pail of water every day from the spring. But

that he dreads all the day long, and does not bring it until just before dark."

"Have him bring it the first thing in the morning," was the doctor's prescription.

The mother tried it, and the boy got well. Putting it off made his job prey on the boy's mind. "Doing it now" relieved him.

Boys and girls, do it now.

SCENES IN THE LIFE OF QUEEN VICTORIA.

THE EARLY TRAINING OF OUR QUEEN.

FROM the days when the infant daughter of Ernest, Duke of Kent, was dandled in her father's arms, with the proud parental cry: "Look at her well; she will yet be Queen of England!" her noble German mother seems to have cherished the idea of forming in her child, by careful training and restraining, under the Divine blessing, such a character as might pass unrebuked before her people, even in the "fierce light that beats upon a throne."

She was kept with jealous care from the evil influences of a corrupt court, and brought up, as only too small a portion of her subjects have been, in habits of simplicity, obedience, frugality and piety.

The following story shows that she was early made to bear the "discipline of consequences": "The Princess had her allowance, and was expected to make it suffice and never to overrun it. Once, at the bazaar at Tunbridge Wells, she had expended all her pocket-money in a number of presents for various relations and friends, when she remembered another cousin, and saw a box marked half-a-crown, which would be just the thing for him. The bazaar people wished to enclose it with the other articles purchased. But the governess said: 'No! You see the Princess has not the money, and so, of course, she cannot buy the box.' The offer was then made to lay it aside till purchased, and the Princess thankfully assented. As soon as quarter-day came, down she came to the bazaar on her donkey, before seven o'clock in the morning, and carried the box away with her."

The young Princess was kept—notwithstanding her child-like wonderment at the little attentions paid to her and not to her sister—in ignorance of her nearness to the throne until she had reached the age of twelve. Her comment, when the matter was explained to her, shows that her reflective powers were quite beyond her years: "Now, many a child," said the young Princess, "would boast; but they don't know the difficulty. There is much splendour, but there is much responsibility."

We pass over the six happy years of free, open-air life, spent, for the most part, in seclusion, until the death of her royal uncle placed Victoria on the throne.

THE MAIDEN QUEEN.

Most of us have read Miss Wynn's pleasant story of the manner in which, after much ringing and knocking at the gates of Kensington Palace, and many remonstrances on the part of the maid, who was reluctant to disturb the sweet sleep of her mistress, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chamberlain obtained access to her Majesty in the early dawn of morning; and how, "standing in a loose white night-gown and shawl, her night-cap thrown off and her hair flowing upon her shoulders, her feet in slippers, tears in her eyes, but perfectly collected and dignified," the young Queen opened her lips for the first time in her new character, saying simply to the Archbishop: "I beg your grace to pray for me." Then all three knelt down together. And thus the reign of Queen Victoria was inaugurated by a prayer-meeting! Surely a fitting beginning for fifty years of blessing!

The delicacy of feeling in which she had been trained is strikingly illustrated by her gentle refusal to observe the propriety of addressing her letter of condolence to the late Queen—to her Majesty the Queen Dowager, instead of to her Majesty the Queen. "I will not be the first," said Victoria, "to remind her of her altered position."

The touching incident of her proclamation, when the young Queen, overcome by

the enthusiasm of her subjects and the novelty of her situation, fell weeping on her mother's neck, has been exquisitely immortalized by Mrs. Browning:

"God bless thee, weeping Queen,
With blessings more divine,
And fill with better love than earth
That tender heart of thine;
That when the thrones of earth shall be
As low as graves brought down,
A pierced hand may give to thee
The crown which angels shout to see.
Thou wilt not weep
To wear that heavenly crown."

Victoria was soon to find a help-meet in the cares of State; but, during the brief period of her life as Maiden Queen, she gave evidence of great decision of character and firmness of principle, coupled with a most earnest desire to understand the duties of her high position.

"It is clear," says Dr. Arnold, "that those matters in which it is our duty to act, it is also our duty to study." Acting on this principle, the young Queen was each morning in consultation with her ministers, and was soon initiated into the details of State affairs.

In these days of lax Sabbath-keeping, it is well to remember the practical lesson taught by the Queen to one of her noble ministers who desired to transact with her on Sunday morning affairs of high importance. The nobleman was somewhat surprised that the subject of the sermon the next day turned out to be the duties and obligations of the Christian Sabbath.

"How did your Lordship like the sermon?" asked the Queen.

"Very much indeed, your Majesty," was the reply.

"Well, then," said the Queen, "I will not conceal from you that last night I sent the clergyman the text from which he preached. I hope we shall all be improved by the sermon."

The nobleman suggested an early meeting on the morrow, at nine o'clock.

"As early as seven, my Lord," said the Queen, "if you like, we will look into the papers."

THE ROYAL WIFE AND MOTHER.

The Queen's marriage with her cousin, Prince Albert, of Saxe-Coburg, took place on February 10th, 1840. It is well-known that love dictated and ruled the union of the royal pair. "Father, brother, friends, country," writes her Majesty, with that simplicity and absence of assumption which charms the hearts of her people; "all has he left, and all for me. What is in my power to make him happy I will do."

"Her Majesty's tender regard for her husband made her very sensitive to the unjust aspersions to which he was occasionally subject, and correspondingly delighted when his merits were duly appreciated. Every true wife will appreciate the Queen's letter to Lord John Russell, when he had expressed himself very warmly concerning the Prince Consort's speech on the Jubilee of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in 1851:

"The Queen felt sure that the Prince would say the right thing, from her entire confidence in his great tact and judgment. The Queen at the risk of not appearing sufficiently modest—and yet, why should a wife ever be modest about her husband's merit?—must say that she thinks Lord John Russell will admit now that the Prince is possessed of very extraordinary powers of mind and heart. She feels so proud of being his wife, that she cannot refrain from herself paying a tribute to his noble character."

Her Majesty's sacrifice of personal feelings in laying before her people so many of the sacred details of her family life, renders it superfluous for us to do more than refer to the pages of her published Journals in proof of the fact that her own mother's lessons were thoroughly carried out in the royal nursery. As they grew older, her Majesty's children learned—by unconscious imitation of their mother—to take the warmest and most sympathetic interest in the lives of the poor.

One specimen must suffice. "I walked out with the two girls," writes her Majesty, in her Highland Journal; "stopped at

the shop, and made some purchases for poor people and others. Really the affection of these poor people, who are so hearty and happy to see you taking an interest in everything, is very touching and gratifying."

THE WIDOWED QUEEN.

Many of our readers remember that terrible December night, when the light of the royal home was quenched. Even in that "first lone hour of widowhood," the Queen writes: "I can see the mercy and love which are mingled with my trial." She was much affected by the present of a richly-bound Bible—an offering from "many widows of England." In that graceful, sympathetic style, which is peculiarly her own, the Queen wrote her thanks to her kind sister-widows, gratefully acknowledging "the consolations of God," adding, "that our heavenly Father may impart to many widows those sources of consolation and support, is their broken-hearted Queen's earnest prayer."

In the many sorrows which have fallen upon the Queen since the sunshine of her life was shaded by that first terrible storm-cloud, her Majesty has always responded sensitively to the touch of sympathy, though since that sad event her public appearances have been comparatively rare. She has never been careless of her people's love. When the nation watched with her in trembling hope round the sick-bed of her first-born, and rejoiced with her on his marvellous restoration in answer to prayer, her Majesty was deeply touched: not less so when that fated December day deprived her of the daughter who had been her husband's chosen companion, and hence specially dear to herself—the lamented Princess Alice; nor yet again, when the son, who more than his brothers, seemed to inherit his father's literary tastes, was stricken down.

In all her sorrows—and in all their sorrows—ever the first to send a sympathetic message in any national calamity, our widowed Queen has "dwelt among her people."

No empty exclamations greeted her jubilee, but heartfelt gratitude to God rose from the nation, as with one voice, that he has so long spared to it a Queen whom it can love and reverence without stint. Her name is worthily linked with that of her noble husband, who did so much for his adopted country.

FAST LIVING.

We live very fast now. Events rush upon us with increasing rapidity. The rapid growth of the country, the increase of business which outruns population, the development of material resources, the building up of great cities, the increasing use of the railway and telegraph, the multiplication of mechanical arts and inventions, crowd our days with activities and anxieties and excitements our fathers knew nothing of. The use of the telegraph alone is revolutionizing our life. Every day we share the life of the whole world. Is there a great fire in London, a battle in Egypt, an inundation of the Rhine or Seine, a famine in Ireland, a conviction of two murderers in Brussels, a defeat of a pretended prophet in Soudan, an epidemic in China, or arrest of peace negotiations between China and the States—if anything happens anywhere on the globe we are made spectators of it, as it were, or participants in it, by the instantaneous communication of intelligence. Every morning we have the history of the globe for the whole day laid on our plate at the breakfast table. We are in the surges of an ocean life, while our fathers sat quietly by the brink of a pool. To live to-day, with all the vast interests of the globe palpitating about us and reporting themselves in our ears, to do business in the tremendous rush of our great cities, to belong to a family whose members are separated by thousands of miles and can communicate in a day, is a vastly more intense and wearing thing than it was a century ago. People complain of being tired. They are weary without knowing why. The wear and tear of modern life on the nerves and sympathies and anxieties, on brain and heart and soul, are incalculable, and thousands break and go down under the strain.