

OF CHILDREN'S SUNDAY.

HERE IS A LETTER FOR ORTHODOX PEOPLE TO READ.

A Return to Puritan Practices is Not Desirable, but if Faith is to be Preserved, is There Not Danger of Too Much Fastid?

[Special Correspondence.] NEW YORK, Aug. 18.—The boys and girls of this generation have little knowledge of the dismalness of the Sundays of thirty, forty and fifty years ago as recollected by their parents and grandparents. The rigid keeping of the holy day at that period has been described again and again, and the contrast drawn between the long, dull days that were spent in attendance at church, where one listened to interminable sermons, or in reading pious and dull books at home, and the pleasant observance of the Sabbath of the present, when attractive services and Sunday schools do their best to make religious duties a delight.

No one desires to return to the practice of the blue laws epoch, when it was esteemed a sin to be gay on the first day of the week and when any relaxation of an almost funereal solemnity was regarded as a proof of worldliness and carelessness. Yet is it not possible that in the reaction from that extreme the opposite has been too nearly approached and that it would be well to mingle a little of the old leaven with the bread prepared to nourish the children of today?

To begin with, have not many parents drifted into laxness concerning their children's presence at church? Doubtless the little ones are seldom able to digest the strong meat served in sermons. But they may at least acquire a habit of regular attendance upon such services, and may be encouraged to feel a personal interest in them by taking part in the hymns and responses. What matters it if the little voices are a trifle uncertain? The children's sense that they form an active portion of the congregation makes them enjoy the exercises.

Once a day for church is enough for young children, especially when this is supplemented by attendance at Sunday school. A little rest should, if possible, be interspersed between the two services.

A serious word concerning the Sunday school may not be amiss. Those best acquainted with the matter whereof they speak, aver that in at least seven cases out of ten the teachers in these schools are the only instructors the children have in Biblical topics. To them the parents seem to relegate the duty of imparting to the little ones all they know concerning the Bible and such stores of religious knowledge as young minds may grasp. Very rarely does the parent review the Scripture lesson before the child goes to school, and more than half the children in the classes seldom go through the form of looking at a lesson before entering the Sunday school room.

In these days the tendency to abjure creeds and arbitrary forms of belief has grown so fast that it seems as though the time were rapidly coming when it would be almost impossible to formulate one's faith. It may be an unprogressive spirit that clings to the catechism of the Westminster assembly or to that to which Heidelberg gave its name, but surely it is better to learn these old-fashioned things they be, than to be unable to give a reason for the hope that is in one or even to define that hope. How many twelve-year-old children of average intelligence can give a definition of a sacrament, tell what baptism means or explain what is comprehended in justification by faith? Nay, to go further still, how many of them can report without prompting the Apostle's Creed and the Ten Commandments?

These things are seldom taught in the Sabbath schools. There the study is usually confined to the international lesson. Upon the parents devolves the teaching of these other essentials. It will do the rising generation no harm to add to its virtue knowledge by acquiring once a week the answer to one or two of the successive questions propounded in the catechisms of the Presbyterian, the Episcopal or the Dutch Reformed communion.

The old practice of committing to memory texts of Scripture and stanzas of hymns has also fallen sadly into neglect. The "crumming" of whole chapters and the parrotlike acquisition of hymns is to be deprecated, but there are many beautiful portions of the Bible and much sacred verse that is readily comprehended and learned by little minds, and whose possession will prove a source of deep comfort in later life.

Sunday should belong eminently to the children. They should be taught to feel that it is indeed "a day of rest and gladness." To this end the parents must exert themselves a little. A trifle earlier rising than is practiced in the average household on Sunday mornings will not be much of a penance after the habit is once established. An 8 o'clock breakfast is not a very severe trial after all. This leaves plenty of time, in most homes, for the performance afterward of household duties, for family worship and for an unhurried preparation for church. At noon there is an interval that can be devoted to lunch, rest and a final looking over the Bible lessons that were studied Saturday night or before morning service.

But after the Sunday school should be the pleasant home time. This is the opportunity for the telling of Bible stories, for the pleasant talk over the doings of the day and the questions suggested by the sermon, the lesson or the readings; for the recitation of the catechism, the hymns and the Bible verses, and for cementing that oneness of heart and interest that makes of a congenial family such a blessed, beautiful union. The sweetness of an hour like this will last well into the following busy week.

For the lesser ones among the children one cannot make strict rules. They are too young to understand the difference between the Sabbath and other days. But at a quite early age they may begin to hear simplified versions of Bible

stories, and when they grow a little older they will enjoy listening to readings from a child's Bible or from one of those dear little classics, "Peep of Day," "Precept Upon Precept," "Line Upon Line" and "Here a Little and There a Little." Even while too young to hear much of this the babies will have happy associations with the day when papa is at home, and when he and mamma have leisure to play and talk with the children as they do at no other time.

The question of what reading should be permitted on Sunday and what taboos is a matter upon which good people differ widely. One holds that story books and other so-called secular reading do no harm. Another draws the line more sharply and frowns upon all but devotional literature. There appears little reason for clashing upon this point. There are plenty of interesting books whose reading can lead only to good. Many of Mrs. Whitney's works, everything from Mrs. Prentiss' pen or from that of Edward Garrett, much of George MacDonald, nearly all of Miss Yonge's books and many, many more might be named. As a general thing it is wise to set aside from Sabbath perusal all books that do not incite to higher thoughts and aspirations in the religious life. With a little skill the mother and father can select an attractive Sunday library for the children. Every family should take at least one religious paper.

The mother who bestows time and thought upon rendering Sunday a festa to her brood will have many small, helpful items suggest themselves to her. It may seem trivial to affirm that an especially dainty, though simple supper, the use of the prettiest china, the wearing of the best clothes, the half hour's later bedtime, bear an influence in sanctifying the Sabbath to childish minds. But all these apparent trifles add to the distinctive and pleasant character of the day and give it that aroma of being set apart and different from working days that goes far toward constituting sacredness.

CHRISTINE TERRUNE HERRICK.

A Bear Hunt in the Rockies.

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 8.—"I've done some b'ar hunting in my time, I reckon," said Grizzly Bill, pulling his shaggy red beard meditatively, "and I've laid out about as many of em as most; but the b'ar hunt that we had right here, less'n five years ago, 'ud lay over any show as I ever seen in the theater at Frisco, and this was how it was.

"We'd got a young Britisher just cum to the valley that time who war death on shootin, and carried nuff guns and pistols with him to kill every critter as cum out o' the ark. He had good stuff in him somewheres, I reckon, for he giv a heap o' dollars to them sick folks down Fever Hollow way, and he could rounk it without gruntin and growlin at suthin every minute, like some on em. But he did put on airs, that's a fact. To hear him talk you'd hev thought the tallest shootin in the Rockies warn't in it along o' his'n; and at last the boys got mad at his crown, and me and two or three more 'lowed we'd show him some sport, and see what he war made of.

"One night Breakneck Ben cum in and said he'd sighted a b'ar trail on the hill above our gulch, so we sent off Scalpin Sam full split to tell the Britisher.

"Wal, I reckon that tenderfoot had grit in him, though he war sich an et'nal fool. Sam 'lowed the b'ar war bigger'n a bufler, but the Britisher warn't skeered a bit. He jist whipped up his rifle and came runnin up the gulch for all he war worth, and him and me and Ben and Sam we all sot off together to find the b'ar.

"As we went along I says to Ben thoughtfully:

"Ben, warn't it right here as we found that half eaten feller whose name nobody ever knowed?"

"You bet," says Ben. 'He'd slipped down atwixt two rocks and stuck fast so as he couldn't git out agin, and the wolves they cum around and gobblid up all the top half of him, chunk by chunk, and when we found him there warn't nuthin left but his legs, cause they couldn't git at them."

"And up yander, by that white stone, chips in Sam, 'was whar the Dutchman fit the grizzly. He'd let drop his gun down the canyon and had only his bowie to fight with; so the b'ar got a hold of him and giv him a hug that bruck his back jist as he run the bowie plumb into the b'ar's heart. It war an even game atwixt 'em, I reckon, and the honors war easy.

"And so we went, one worse'n t'other; but, say what we liked, we didn't skeer the tenderfoot worth a cent—he'd got grit in him, make no mistake.

"Wal, pretty soon we got into jist as mean a place as you could think of to meet a b'ar in—a long, straight canyon, as deep as a mine, with rocks on each side that a catamount couldn't climb—and whatever you met, no room to dodge or run, you'd got to stand squarely up and fight it out.

"I was jist sayin to Ben, 'Par'd, if the b'ar catches us here it'll be mighty rough on some of us,' when there cum a snort and a growl overhead, and a big b'ar cum tearin down the gully full gal-low right at us.

"We boys let strip, but we must ha been kind o' nervous, for we all missed, and 'fore the Britisher could fire I gripped his arm and said, 'Hold in till I giv the word, for if you miss he'll lay out the hull lot of us!'

"The tenderfoot clinched his teeth and stood ready, and down cum the b'ar! But jist as he got within ten yards I held out my hand and hollered, 'Up!' and up got the b'ar on his hind legs, and begun to dance a hornpipe. You see, it war a tame b'ar, as we'd got from French Pete, of Dogtown, to git the laugh of that Britisher, and Pete himself cum along with it and let it loose down the gully jist at the right minute.

"Wal, if ever I seen a fellow look sick it was that Britisher jist then. Fact, he felt so bad that we were kind o' sorr, for him a'ter all, but 'fore he quit he killed three genuine b'ar himself, and could laugh at that trick same as we did."



How to Captain a Ball Team.

A captain should be well posted in all the rules of the game and understand perfectly every point of play. He should be one of the best players in the team, since respect for his authority will increase if he is able to do what he expects of his players. He should have supreme control on the field and his players should obey him implicitly. He should study the strong and weak points of all the opposing players in batting, fielding and running, so as to take immediate advantage of any weak points in their play. It is his duty to have every player try for a "sacrifice hit" when necessary, and if he does not the player should be fined or disciplined in some way. The captain should be supported in his authority in all respects by the management of a club.

How to Test Diamonds.

Put the doubtful stone into a leaden or platinum cup with some powdered fluor-spar and a little oil of vitriol. Warm the vessel over some lighted charcoal in a fireplace, or wherever there is a strong draft to carry away the noxious vapors that will arise. When these vapors cease rising let the whole cool and then stir the mixture with a glass rod to fish out the diamond. If you find it intact it is a genuine stone; if false it will be corroded. Paste diamonds will disappear altogether.

How to Clean Engravings.

Soak in a very weak, clear solution of chloride of lime until white, then soak in running water, afterward steeping for half an hour in water containing a little of hyposulphite of soda to neutralize any trace of adhering bleach. Dry between clean blotters under pressure.

How to Tell Whether a Fabric is "All Wool."

Put a piece of the cloth into a solution of caustic soda in a glass vessel and boil it. The wool will dissolve. If cotton is a part of the structure it will remain undissolved. If a woolen and cotton fabric be dipped in bleaching liquor the former will turn yellow after awhile and the cotton will remain white. In a fabric composed of wool, silk and cotton the threads of the last burn freely and leave little charcoal, while those of the first two shrivel, leave a black charcoal and give a strong smell when burned.

How to Cure Stings of Insects.

When stung by a bee, wasp or mosquito immediately plunge the affected part into or bathe with salt and water. If this is not available make a paste of some clay and water and apply it to the sting. Bathing with lard, harts-horn or camphorated spirits is also useful. Should a bee or wasp be swallowed dissolve a teaspoonful of table salt in water and drink it. This will immediately kill the insect and prevent the sting inflaming your throat. Should a sting become very painful and inflamed the blood must be in a bad state; and it is well to take a strong purgative and refrain from animal food for a few days.

How to Blow Out a Candle.

When a candle is blown out a very disagreeable odor fills the room. This is very easily prevented. If you blow upward the wick will not smolder, the bad smell is avoided and when you want to ignite it again the wick will be found sufficiently long.

How to Prepare Bird Skeletons.

Perfect skeletons of birds and small animals may be obtained by placing them singly in a wooden box, just large enough to receive the animal fixed in the position desired. Perforate the box with numerous small holes and place it on an ant-hill. In an incredibly short time the ants will have performed the required operation. They will leave the bones beautifully polished and the joints and sinews untouched, as they feed only upon the flesh. In this way an excellent miniature museum of natural history can be formed at a very little cost.

How to Prevent Worms in Books.

There is a little insect called aglossa pinguinalis which deposits its larvae in books in the autumn. These produce a mite which does a great deal of mischief. Small wood boring beetles also cause a good deal of destruction among the covers and binding. The best preventive is the use of mineral salts in the binding. Where this is not done sprinkle the book shelves with powdered alum and pepper and rub the books once or twice a year with a piece of cloth that has been steeped in a solution of alum and dried. This will effectually prevent the ravages of the aglossa pinguinalis.

How to Make Vegetables Tender.

When peas, beans and similar products do not boil easily it is usually attributed to "the coldness of the season," "the rain" or some such impossible circumstance. The difficulty of making them soft arises from their having imbibed too much gypsum during their growth. To prevent or correct this throw some subcarbonate of soda into the pot with the vegetables. This will seize upon the lime in the gypsum and free the legumes from its influence.

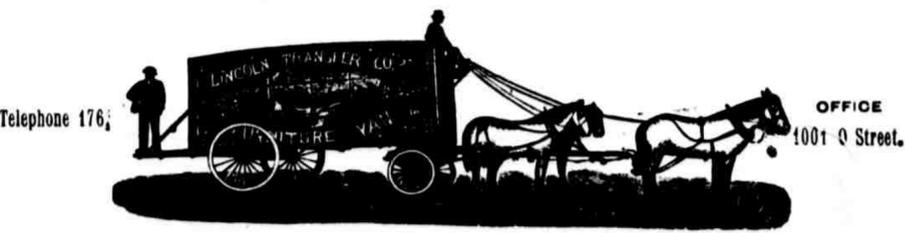
How to Measure a Cistern.

A good rule is to square the diameter, and multiply that product by the decimal .7854, then this product by 1.728—number of cubic inches in a foot—and divide the product by the number of inches to a gallon (231), and this will give the capacity of the cistern in gallons to each foot in depth. Multiply by depth in feet to get the whole measure. If the diameter is not even feet, reduce to inches and omit multiplying by 1.728, or, if the cistern has a slope, average the diameter.

LOVE'S GOLDEN DREAM.

Words and Music by LINDSAY LENNOX.

Musical score for 'Love's Golden Dream' with lyrics: Love's golden dream is past, hidden by mists of pain, yet we shall meet at last, never to part again.



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