

"Keep to the Right,"

BY CHARLES W. HODGKIN.

Keep to the right, is the law of the road... Make a law of your moral code... In whatsoever you determine to do, know the road of the Good and the True...

Keep to the right, in the Journey of life... There is crowding and jostling, trouble and strife... The weak will succumb to the bold and the strong...

"Keep to the right," and the Right will keep you... In fellowship and accord with the Good and the True... And Death has no terrors, when he comes in slight...

The Atlanta Constitution.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUTHFUL. Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, MAY 12, 1900.

A CHAMPION OF THE CROSS.

It was in the year 1212, when the people of all Europe were sad and discouraged over the results of the many efforts which had been put forth to rescue the holy city of Jerusalem... The Lord and Saviour was crucified and buried from the hands of the heathen Saracens...

cloak, announcing himself to be Jesus Christ, saying he had come to commission Stephen to preach a crusade among the children of men... He declared that the boys and girls should do what their elders had left undone, and that Stephen should be their prophet and leader...

The news spread like wildfire, and crowds gathered about the young crusader... Family after family gave up its quota to swell the ranks of the youthful army... The enthusiasm of the young crusader knelt while the bishop of the diocese knelt in prayer...

At last, after days and days of marching in the rain, they reached the blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea... They knocked at the gates of the city of Marcellus and asked for supper and shelter... God had made the way for them...

The gates of the city being opened, the youths and the sailors were welcomed... Food was prepared for the hungry little soldiers and soft couches were made ready for the weary... When morning dawned hundreds of the crusaders were seen in the crowd...

Against the rocks lay out a terrible gale arose, and two of the young crusaders on the shores of the Island of Falcons... The other five passed the dangerous rocks in safety, but ere long the young crusaders discovered that they were victims of a vile plot...

"You speakest truth, most noble brother... Thou wouldst better buy the maiden... Two hours afterwards Marguerite de Bessenet, only child and heiress of Claude de Bessenet, was taken to the harem of the rich emir Raschid...

The emir's youngest child, a beautiful, dark-eyed little girl of seven years, soon became the only friend of the young French maiden... During the day the two girls walked in the beautiful gardens or gathered huge bouquets of the flowers that grew in such profusion...

watching the fountain throwing up its wreaths of spray in the moonlight... Marguerite told a beautiful story of the Babe in the Manger, and long before she came to the end, the older children and women of the harem gathered about her and stood listening to her sweet tale...

Five years passed, and then the Reaping Angel came and the overlying gates were opened and Marguerite de Bessenet was borne into the presence of the King of glory... Her illness was short... A faint gleam of light shined forth from fever...

A BUNCH OF MAY-FLOWERS.

II.

Miss Brown hurried towards the home still thinking of the strange boy she had been to see, who had such an aversion to preaching and praying that she would not let him touch his head...

She paused and looked into the child's basket. They were dainty, fragrant little beauties, which the April showers had awakened after their long winter sleep... She placed the flowers in water to keep them fresh, and the next day when she started on her labour of love she took them with her...

"Well, my boy, how is the sick ankle?" she asked, in a cheery voice... "You look hospitable," said she... "I am real glad you are better," said she... "And I have brought you some flowers to cheer you up a bit..."

"The boy's face brightened like a sunbeam... "I should say they are!" said he, and he reached his hand out eagerly for them... "You like flowers?" said she... "You just bet I do!" said he, with boyish enthusiasm...

"Indeed I do," she replied, heartily... "And I am so glad. A boy who loves flowers can never turn out to be a very bad boy, I am sure... "I have never had a miss," said he, thoughtfully... "But it's a good one, and then flowers make me think of that time when me and mother used to go into the woods and gather 'em..."

"And you are your mother's boy-all right," she had inherited her love of the flowers... "Wouldn't you like to work among them, and help take care of them, if that I could find you a place?"... "I think I would," said he, his eyes dancing like stars... "It would be better than thrashing that poor boy you threatened yesterday... "Yes, it'd be," said she, with an amused smile... "Yes, it would," said he, with a good-natured laugh... "I've tried to get work at some of the greenhouses, but they won't have me... "I don't know how to take care of flowers... "If they did, they would try you, I'm sure," said Miss Brown... "I heard a..."

flourish I know asking where he could get a boy to help him the other day. I shall see him at once, and recommend you... "Oh, thank you!" said the boy—the first word of thanks that had yet fallen from his lips... "And now, before I go, won't you please listen while I read to you what the Bible says about flowers?"... "Does it say anything about flowers?" asked she, hesitatingly... "Yes," said she... "Well, then, I'd like first-rate to hear it," said he, as he settled himself back comfortably in his place... "The flowers which Miss Brown had placed in a glass of water near by... "Turning the leaves of her Bible quickly she found the beautiful lesson on the lilies, and read to him, while he listened intently...

"That's first rate," said he... "I didn't know the Bible had anything like that in it... "Would you mind marking the place for me, and I'll read it again for myself? A feller gets lonely here all alone..."

"I'm fully complied with his request... And she nodded, too, that the Bible was just the kind for him to read—it was well marked in many places, and one could almost fancy they could see the tender prey that they had just taken over it... "My mother was a good woman," said he, as he took her well-worn Bible in his hand almost reverently... "I'm sure she was," answered Miss Brown... "I'm sure that the other boy will turn out to be a good man... What do you think about it?"... "I am going to try," said he, in a low, earnest tone... "I'll do my best to help you and bless you," said she, while her eyes filled with thankful tears...

Very soon after this Miss Brown went to see the forist, and he said, "If the boy really loves flowers, I will let him give him a trial... They are the kind to make a success of the work..."

So, as soon as the lame ankle was well again, he found steady employment... "Miss Brown looked after him now and then, and always heard that he was giving satisfaction, and leading a steady life... As time wore on, she had so many other matters to look after that she forgot almost all about him... One afternoon, a few years later, a gentleman called at the Deaconess Home and asked to see her... He was cultured and refined in his appearance... She had not for a moment believed that she had ever seen him before...

"Don't you remember me?" he said, "I'm the boy with the lame ankle you were so kind to?"... "Oh, yes, I do now," said she... "You have changed a good deal since then, but with a bright smile she held out her hand to him..."

"Well," said he, "I came to tell you that that bunch of May-flowers you brought me that day was instrumental in saving my soul and making a man of me... I have been industrious, and I now have a good house of my own... I can't say I was a very good boy, but I kept it beautiful for me... And I have brought you this basket of flowers to use as a link to the boy of old... I intend to bring you a basket of them every week, as it is now my privilege to help on the blessed Master's work in that way..."

"And opening his basket he displayed a number of his favourite varieties of flowers, tastefully arranged... "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and it shall return unto you after many days," said Miss Brown to his reverent friend... "I cannot begin to tell you how glad we are to get these, and how much good they do to these. They often touch people's hearts when all else fails..."

"It was a bunch of flowers that saved me," said Port Stanley, Oct.

"Oh, dear, I wish I didn't get angry so quickly, and say things I'm sorry for afterwards," wailed a boy with a quick temper... "Have you tried counting one hundred before you speak?" asked a friend... "I can't get it down, and it goes back backwards?"... "Yes, there are a delusion and an snare. I can't think of anything so inanimate as an alphabet when I'm all here inside... Nothing can help me but the year of grace... As it you ask him, he will... "It's queer I didn't think of that," said the boy, "I'll try it." He did try it and with success... "I wish I hadn't fooled round with the alphabet... "I don't know how to take care of flowers... "Whereupon a body wonders why people are so foolish as to ask God's help only after they have tried everything else—Forward..."