

"When are we going back to our other home?" asked Ruth, one day.

"Why, are you not happy here, little daughter?" said Abigail. "I thought you had forgotten all about the old place."

"I want my white pigeons," she said, with a quivering lip, as if she had suddenly remembered them. "I don't want my father not to be here!" she sobbed, "and I want my white pigeons!"

Abigail picked her up and comforted her. "Wait just a little while. I think father will surely come soon. I will get my embroidery, and you may go with me across the street."

Ruth had been shy at first about going to see her mother's friends; but Martha coaxed her in with honey cakes she baked for that express purpose, and Mary told her stories and taught her little games.

After a while she began to fit in and out of the house as fearlessly as a bright-winged butterfly.

One day her mother was sitting with the sisters in a shady corner of their court-yard, where a climbing honeysuckle made a cool sweet arbour. Ruth was going from one to the other, watching the bright embroidery threads take the shape of flowers under their skilful fingers. Suddenly she heard the faint tinkle of a silver bell. While she stood with one finger on her lip to listen, Lazarus came into the court-yard.

"See what I have brought you, little one," he said. "It is to take the place of the pigeons you are always mourning for."

It was a snow-white lamb, around which he had twined a garland of many coloured flowers, and from whose neck hung the little silver bell she had heard.

At first the child was so delighted she could only bury her dimpled fingers in the soft fleece, and look at it in speechless wonder. Then she caught his hand, and left a shy little kiss on it, as she lisped, "Oh, you're so good! You're so good!"

After that day Ruth followed Lazarus as the white lamb followed Ruth; and the sisters hardly knew which sounded sweeter in their quiet home, the tinkling of the silver bell, or the happy prattle of the baby voice.

Abigail spent many happy hours with her friends. One day as they sat in the honeysuckle arbour, busily sewing, Ruth and Jesse came running towards them.

"I see my father coming, and another man," cried the boy. "I'm going to meet them."

They all hastened to the door, just as the tired, dusty travellers reached it.

"Peace be to this house, and all who dwell therein," said the stranger, before Phineas could give his wife and friends a warmer greeting.

"We went first to your father's house, but, finding no one at home, came here," said Phineas.

"Come in!" insisted Martha. "You look sorely in need of rest and refreshment."

But they had a message to deliver before they could be persuaded to eat or wash.

"The Master is coming," said Phineas. "He has sent out seventy of his followers, to go by twos into every town, and herald his approach, and proclaim that the day of the Lord is at hand. We have gone even into Samaria to carry the tidings there."

"At last, at last!" cried Mary, clasping her hands. "Oh, to think that I have lived to see this day of Israel's glory!"

"Tell us what the Master has been doing," urged Abigail, after the men had been refreshed by food and water.

First one and then the other told of miracles they had seen, and repeated what he had taught. Even the children crept close to listen, leaning against their father's knees.

"There has been much discussion about the kingdom that is to be formed. While we were in Peter's house in Capernaum, some of the disciples came quarrelling around him, to ask who should have the highest positions. I suppose those who have followed him longest think they have claim to the best offices."

"What did he say?" asked Abigail, eagerly.

Phineas laid his hand on Ruth's soft curls. "He took a little child like this, and set it in our midst, and said that he who would be greatest in his kingdom, must become even like unto it!"

"Faith and love and purity on the throne of the Herods," cried Martha. "Ah, only Jehovah can bring such a thing as that to pass!"

"Are you going to stay at home now, father?" asked Jesse, anxiously.

"No, my son. I must go on the morrow to carry my report to the Master, of the reception we have had in every town. But I will soon be back again to the Feast of Tabernacles."

"Carry with you our earnest prayer that the Master will abide with us when he comes again to Bethany," said Martha, as her guests departed. "No one is so welcome in our home, as the friend of our brother Lazarus."

The preparation for the Feast of the Tabernacles had begun. "I am going to take the children to the city with me to-day!" said Reuben, one morning, "to see the big booth I am having built. It will hold all our family, and as many friends as may care to share it with us."

Jesse was charmed with the great tent of green boughs.

"I wish I could have been one of the children that Moses led up out of Egypt," he said, with a sigh.

"Why, my son?" asked Reuben.

"So's I could have wandered around for forty years, living in a tent like this. How good it smells, and how pretty it is! I wish you and grandmother would live here all the time!"

The next day Phineas joined them. It was a happy family that gathered in the leafy booth for a week of out-door rejoicing in the cool autumn time.

"Where is the Master?" asked Abigail.

"I know not," answered her husband. "He sent us on before."

"Will he be here, I wonder?" she asked, and that question was on nearly every lip in Jerusalem.

"Will he be here?" asked the throngs of pilgrims who had heard of his miracles, and longed to see the man who could do such marvellous things.

"Will he be here?" whispered the scribes to the Pharisees. "Let him beware!"

"Will he be here?" muttered Caiaphas, the High Priest. "Then better one man should die, than that the whole community perish."

The sight that dazzled the eyes of the children that first evening of the week was like fairyland; a blaze of lanterns and torches lit up the whole city.

In the Court of the Women, in the Temple, all the golden lamps were lit, twinkling and burning like countless stars.

On the steps that separated this court from the next one, stood three thousand singers, the sons and daughters of the tribe of Levi. Two priests stood at the top of the steps, and as each gave the signal on a great silver trumpet, the burst of song that went up from the vast choir seemed to shake the very heavens. Harps and psalters and flutes swelled with the rolling waves of the organ's melody. To the sound of this music, men marched with flaming torches in their hands, and the marching and a weird torch-dance were kept up until the gates of the Temple closed.

In the midst of all the feasting and the gaieties that followed, the long-expected Voice was heard in the arcades of the Temple.

The Child of Nazareth was once more in his Father's house about his Father's business.

On the last great day of the feast, Joel went up at daybreak, ready to follow the older members of the family as soon as the first trumpet-blast should sound.

In his right hand he carried a citron, as did all the others; in his left was a palm-branch, the emblem of joy. An immense multitude gathered at the spring of Siloam. Water was drawn in a golden pitcher, and carried back to be poured on the great altar, while the choir sang with its thousands of voices, and all the people shouted, Amen and Amen!

When the days had gone by in which the seventy bullocks had been sacrificed, and when the ceremonies were all over,

then the leaves were stripped from the green booths, and the people scattered to their homes.

Long afterward, Jesse remembered only the torch-light dances, the silver trumpets and the crowds, and the faint ringing of the fringe of bells on the priest's robes as he carried the fire on the golden shovel to burn the sweet-smelling incense.

Joel's memory rang often with two cries that had startled the people. One when the water was poured from the golden pitcher. It was the Master's voice: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me." The other was when all eyes were turned on the blazing lamps. "I am the Light of the World!"

Reuben thought oftenest of the blind man to whom he had seen sight restored. But Lazarus was filled with anxiety and foreboding; through his office of scribe, he had come in close contact with the men who were plotting against his friend. Dark rumours were afloat. The air was hot with whisperings of hate.

He had overheard a conversation between the Temple police, and some of the chief priests and Pharisees.

"Why did ye not take him, as ye were ordered?" they demanded angrily.

"We could not," was the response; "for never man spake like this man."

He had seen the mob searching for stones to throw at him. Though he had disappeared out of their midst unhurt, still Lazarus felt that some terrible disaster was hanging threateningly over the head of his beloved friend.

(To be continued.)

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, JULY 25, 1896.

RAMBLES AMONG THE STARS.

Last night there was a festival in heaven. The sky burned with a most mystic light.

Orion, Lyra, and the mighty Seven flamed like the banners of some awful fight;

The stars hung clustering like white ivy round

The oriel window of the curtained sky. As though God had with festoons gaily bound

The cloud-draped arch through which the angels fly.

So wrote an English poet many years ago, after looking up to the splendid skies that shine over us on a winter night. Orion is now flaming in the southeast; low down in the northwest is Lyra, early after twilight; and in the northeast the bright Seven Stars, in the Great Dipper, are rising. The two upper ones in the Dipper are the Pointers, so called because they always point nearly

toward the North Star. English boys sometimes call the Dipper stars Charles's Wagon, or Wain, the four stars being the wagon, and the handle of the Dipper serving for the three horses to the wagon. The new year evenings show a "festival" of brilliancy to all who have eyes to see.

Ralph's Opinion of Grandmothers.

Grandmothers are very nice folks;
They beat all the aunts in creation;
They let a chap do as he likes,
And don't worry about education.

I'm sure I can't see at all
What a poor fellow ever could do
For apples and pennies and cakes
Without a grandmother or two.

Grandmothers have muffins for tea,
And pies a whole row in the cellar;
And they're apt, if they know it in time,
To make chicken pie for a "feller."

And if he is bad now and then,
And makes a racketing noise,
They only look over their spees,
And say: "Ah, those boys will be boys!"

"Life is only so short at the best;
Let the children be happy to-day."
Then they look for awhile at the sky
And the hills that are far, far away.

Quite often, as twilight comes on,
Grandmothers sing hymns very low,
To themselves, as they rock by the fire,
About heaven, and when they shall go.

And then a boy, stopping to think,
Will find a hot tear in his eye.
To know what will come at the last;
For grandmothers all have to die.

I wish they could stay here and pray,
For a boy needs their prayers every night;
Some boys more than others, I s'pose;
Such as I need a wonderful sight.
—The Christian Advocate.

"THANK YOU" WITH THAT.

People generally are only glad when they have things given them, and that is quite different from being thankful. A poor converted African I have heard of would set an example to many in Christian lands. He had been very sick, but he came one day after his recovery to the missionary and laid down the sum of two pounds for the Lord.

"I want," he said, very earnestly, "to tell God 'Thank you' with that." He had expected his yams to turn out very poorly, he had been able to give them so little care, but God had taken care of them for him, and he had an excellent crop. It had yielded him fully two pounds more than he expected, and so he brought that as a thank-offering to the Lord. It was not a common thing to do, but it was a right thing. People would prosper more in riches of the soul, and in earthly riches, too, if they would oftener bring in their thank-offerings.—Children's Record.

WORK IF YOU WOULD RISE.

Soon after the great Edmund Burke had been making one of his powerful speeches in Parliament, his brother Richard was found sitting silent in reverie, and when asked by a friend what he was thinking about, he replied: "I have been wondering how Ned has contrived to monopolize all the talents of our family. But then I remember that when we were doing nothing or at play, he was always at work." And the force of this anecdote is increased by the fact that Richard Burke was always considered by those who knew him best to be superior in natural talent to his brother; yet the one rose to greatness, while the other lived and died in comparative obscurity. The lesson to all is, if you would succeed in life, be diligent; improve your time; work. "Seest thou a man," says Solomon, "diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before"—that is, shall not be ranked with—mean men."