

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Vol. XII.]

TORONTO, JULY 23, 1892.

[No. 30]

THE KITE.

THAT looks like a very fine kite, and evidently the boys think so. That is Jimmy sitting with the paint-brush in his hand. He has been trying his skill as an artist, to the satisfaction and delight of himself and his friends—the bird in the centre, his latest effort, calling forth a special amount of admiration. This kite is a joint stock affair, each of the boys having contributed some portion of it. Harry is so busy getting the string ready he has no time for anything else just now. Pretty soon their kite will be ready, and will be sailing like a bird itself away over the houses and trees; then, boys, you had better take a firm grip of that string.

THE SQUIRE'S OFFER.

A RICH man who lived in the country had his house often full of visitors, and everybody flattered him and said how good he was. He had a kind heart, but was frequently so foolish and wicked as to drink so much wine and brandy that his senses were of no more use to him than if he had been born without that great gift of reason which God has given to every human creature.

One day he had been hunting with several of his friends, and they stopped for refreshments at a little inn. On entering the parlour, the gentleman was much struck with the beauty of a little boy who was playing there. He asked him several questions, and found that his name was George, which happened to be the same as his own. The friends stayed some time, and when they were going, the gentleman, who was called the Squire, asked the landlord if he could speak to George's mother. A gentle looking woman soon entered the room, and heard with surprise that this man, of whose riches everybody spoke, wished to adopt her little George.

There was no doubt that it would be a pleasant thing for her boy to be brought up like a gentleman's son and live in ease and wealth, and she and her husband could only get for him just the necessaries of life; but yet, with many thanks for the offered kindness, she refused.

The Squire could not believe what he heard, and her friends begged her to think of what she said; yet, without the slightest hesitation, she repeated her decision. Then he asked in a passion, what could be her reason for refusing his offer.

She hesitated; but, when he angrily insisted upon an answer, she said, "I know, sir, that I can never give our boy any advantages for this world, but when he was born, his father and I promised each other that he should always have the best example we could get for him."

"And do you think," asked the gentleman, "that he will see better manners in your poor hut than in my house?"

"I would rather see Georgie grow up to work hard, than to live in riches and learn to be a drunkard," answered the mother.

The Squire was very angry and went away. But still he often thought of little Georgie with his blue eyes and golden hair; and when his anger was over, he admired the mother who was so willing

SHOEBLACK JIM.

In a small, crowded room in one of the rear tenement houses of our great city, where the sun's rays were never known to shine, or fresh air allowed to penetrate, our little Jim lay dying.

Months before I one morning saw him standing on the street corner, with his shoes

nothing but a cold tater since day 'fore yesterday."

"And who is granny?"

"She lives in the rear alley on Mott. My own mother died over on the island, so granny says, and guess I never had any father."

"Did you ever go to a Sunday school or Band of Hope meeting?"

"Laws, no, miss! I've no time. I has to stan' around all day, and then sometimes gets only a couple of shimes. Them fellers with the big chairs takes all the profit of us chaps. Granny says 'tis a hard world."

I handed the child a dime, and told him to get a warm cup of coffee and a roll; then got from him a promise to attend the Band of Hope meeting that afternoon at four o'clock. I hardly expected to meet him again, but was happily surprised to see him walk in—shoebox on his back—while we were singing, "Fold me to thy bosom." I shall never forget the expression that was on his face as he stood spell-bound in the middle of the floor, and stared at me and the organ. I motioned him to a seat, but he did not move till the music had ceased, and the other children were all seated.

My lesson that day was about the great shepherd that goes out upon the hills and the mountains of sin and gathers in the little lambs that wander away from the sheepfold. I did not know that day that the dear Saviour's hand was already stretched out to receive this little lamb that had many times been found tipsy and also smoking cigarettes that he had stolen from somebody's street stand.

He was a regular attendant at Sunday-school and Band of Hope, and no one joined more heartily in the singing than Jim. One day, in our children's prayer meeting, he gave his heart to Jesus. No one could doubt the conversion of that little heart when they looked into the bright eyes and beaming face that continually shone with heavenly light.

One day a messenger came to me in haste, and said, "Jim is dying. Hurry, please, miss, he wants to see you agin afore he dies."

I hurried, and as I groped my way along the dark alley and up the rickety stairs, I caught the sound of the sweet voice singing, "Fold me, fold me, precious Saviour." I entered quietly, so as not to disturb the singer, but his bright eyes saw me; and he said, "Sing it with me once more, teacher." We sang it through together, then he said, "The next time I sing will be when Jesus folds me in his arms. I'll never forget the hymn, but will remember it till you come up there too, then we'll sing it again."

The little lamp of life went out. The Great Shepherd had called his little lamb home. There was

Another gem in the Saviour's crown,
Another soul in heaven."



THE KITE.

to give up all the advantages of wealth rather than run the risk of spoiling her boy's character.

And soon it began to be rumoured that the master of the Hall had changed. As time passed this was known to be true, and then Georgie was sent to school by him, and at last adopted as his son, for he would often say that he owed to the boy's mother more than any one in the world, because she was the first person who had told him the truth about himself.

box strapped to his back, calling out in tremulous tones, "Shine, sir!" But the hurrying business men paid little or no attention to the pleading voice or frail form which was swayed to and fro by the bitter, biting, December wind. As I handed him a picture paper, I asked, "Are you hungry, my boy?" I noticed the pale, pinched cheeks and the large brown eyes fast filling with tears, as he replied: "Yes, miss, I've had nothing to eat since yesterday morning, but granny is worse than me, for she's had

nothing but a cold tater since day 'fore yesterday."