

Keeping Step With Jesus.

Keeping step with Jesus,
Though the way be long,
We ne'er miss the pathway,
We can ne'er go wrong.
Keeping step with Jesus,
Straining every limb,
Onward, ever onward,
Keeping step with him.

Keeping step with Jesus,
Even in the dark,
We can hear his foot-step,
Though unseen its mark
Though we walk in shadow,
Treading pathways new,
Marking time with Jesus,
Step we ever true.

Keeping step with Jesus,
Nothing can alarm,
Foes will never hurt us,
Nought will do us harm,
Walking close beside him,
His strong arm our stay,
Oh, how safe our journey
O'er an untrod way!

Keeping step with Jesus,
Never on before,
Brighter grows the pathway,
Shining more and more,
Till by living fountains
Bathed in heaven's light,
We, through fields of glory,
Walk with him in white.

CHILDREN IN CHURCH.

In many city congregations the lambs of the flock are seldom seen. Here and there a few paws may show some fair young faces, but compared with the great bulk of the congregation, and the hundreds of children in the Sunday-school, the percentage of children in habitual attendance upon the church service is certainly small.

Upon whom rests the praise or the blame? Are the children of the present age born with an innate distaste for the services of the sanctuary, and is their absence at the church service to be accepted as a token of their own reluctance to attend, or is this weekly defection of the dear lambs of the flock to be charged to the unwise influence of the silly sheep who have them in care?

The little dears can attend school five hours five days in the week, and practice on the piano for an additional one half hour or so daily; they can take a music lesson Saturday morning, and may perhaps be found in the dancing school Saturday afternoon, but when Sunday comes, an hour, or at most an hour and a quarter of Sunday-school is quite sufficient to tax their small powers to their fullest extent, and the church service is accordingly decided to be by far too long and too laborious for the vigorous young bodies and bright young intellects. When children are well, the confinement of the church service can do them no harm, and they may readily be taught to love this gathering place of God's people. If a child understood that attendance at the church service had the same relative importance in the eyes of the parents as the regular daily attendance at school, and that an excuse for absence which was not valid week days would not be considered Sundays, the attitude of the child toward the church service would undergo a complete change. Attendance at the church service would become a matter of course, and the child would feel a wholesome sense of responsibility for such attendance which would be likely to follow him through life. The first suggestion to form the children into a stay-at-home club often comes from the parents. It is perhaps a trouble to prepare the little folks for church, or they do not sit quietly while there, and so the parents allow them to glide easily into the custom of remaining at home, forgetful that the habit thus acquired may not unnaturally create a prejudice which may persist in clinging through life.—*Our Young People.*

A Bible Puzzle.

God made Adam out of dust,
But thought it best to make me first;
So I was made before the man,
To answer God's most holy plan.

My body he did make complete,
But without legs or hands or feet;
My ways and actions did control,
And I was made without a soul.

A living thing I became,
'Twas Adam who gave me my name;
Then from his presence I withdrew,
Nor more of Adam ever knew.

I did my Maker's laws obey,
From them I never went astray;
Thousands of miles I run in fear,
But seldom on this earth appear.

But God in me did something see,
And put a living soul in me;
Again of me my God did claim,
And took from me that soul again.

And when from me that soul had fled,
I was the same as when first made;
And without legs or feet or soul
I travel now from pole to pole.

I labour hard both day and night,
To fallen man I give great light;
Thousands of people, young and old,
Will by my death great light behold.

No fear of death doth trouble me,
For happiness is not for me;
To heaven I shall never go,
Nor to the dismal hell below.

The Scriptures I cannot believe,
If right or wrong I can't conceive;
Although therein my name is found,
They are to me an empty sound.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, APRIL 2, 1892.

TO SCHOOLS OPENING IN THE SPRING.

CHANGES IN "PLEASANT HOURS"

BEGINNING with the month of May we propose to still further improve our weekly paper, PLEASANT HOURS, by printing it in a smaller sized type, which will enlarge its capacity one fourth, by enabling us to put one-fourth more matter in its pages. This will be equivalent to adding an entire page to the paper. We are determined to make this paper the best in the Dominion. At 24 cents a year—less than half a cent a number—we do not think this paper can be equalled anywhere. The serial stories alone are worth in many times the price of the paper. Many of the engravings are made especially for PLEASANT HOURS.

This paper can in no sense take the place of *Onward* for senior classes and young people's societies, but is designed especially for the intermediate classes of our schools, and is so cheap that it can be taken in large quantities, where *Onward* can only be taken in smaller quantities. This change involves much additional expense, but the publisher, with his characteristic enterprise, is determined that no effort shall be spared to make this paper the best in the world.

DID HE DIE FOR ME?

A CHILD sat on its mother's lap. Its soft blue eyes were looking earnestly into the face which was beaming with love and tenderness for the cherished darling. The maternal lips were busy with a story; but the tones of the voice were low and serious, for the tale was one of mingled joy and sadness. It was a tale concerning the death of the Saviour—how he so loved the people as to give his life a ransom for them to redeem them from a lost and ruined state. Sometimes her voice was scarcely heard above a whisper, but the listening child caught every sound. The crimson deepened on its little cheek, as the story went on increasing in interest. Tears gathered in its earnest eyes, and a long sob broke the stillness, as its mother concluded. A moment and its ruby lips parted, and in tones made tremulous by eagerness, the child inquired:

"Did he die for me, mamma?"

"Yes, my child; for you, for all."

"May I love him always, mamma, and dearly too?"

"Yes, my darling, it was to win your love that he left his bright and beautiful home."

"And he will love me, mamma, I know he will. He died for me. When may I see him in his other home?"

"When your spirit leaves this world, my darling, and goes to a better and happier one."

"My spirit?" murmured the child.

"Yes, your spirit; that part of you that thinks, and knows, and loves. If you love him here, you will go to live with him in heaven."

"And I may love him here! How glad you have made me, dear mamma!"

And the mother bowed her head, and silently and earnestly prayed that her child might grow up to love and revere the Saviour.

NELLY'S DARK DAYS

By the Author of "Lost in London."

CHAPTER VII.

THE ONLY REFUGE.

FOR a season, Rodney's mind was clouded and bewildered. It is probable that if he had been in ordinary health and strength, he could not have held to his resolution to keep within the walls, which were his only defence from overpowering temptation; but though his craving often amounted to intense agony, the weakness—which was the result of his long and dangerous illness—made him incapable of much exertion, and the little labour he was put to completely exhausted his powers. Day after day passed by, the hours dragging along heavily. In the midst of the miserable poor, who peopled the place, he lived alone, in a kind of dreary lethargy of body and soul, which rendered him almost unconscious of what was going on around him.

Gradually, however, the cloud which drunkenness had brought across his mind melted away, and his thoughts and memories grew clear. All his past life lay behind him, mapped out plainly and distinctly. His early manhood, his strength of muscle and nerve, his marriage, his children, and last of all his little Nelly—all sacrificed, all destroyed, all lost, by his fatal obedience to the sin which had possessed him. It had come to this, that he, who should have been a happy and useful man, respected and beloved, was a pauper, eating the begrudged bread of a workhouse table. He had been acting out the story told centuries ago by the Lord of truth and wisdom. He had left the Father's house, and wandered into a far country, where a sore famine had arisen; and, behold! he was eating the husks which the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him. That was his condition.

It was a long time before Rodney went any farther than that. Broken hearted and cast down in spirit, he thought he must resign himself to abide in his miserable condition. An importunate remorse was gnawing in his conscience, and he