

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. I.

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SELF-EXAMINATION.

BEFORE in sleep I close my eyes, These things I must remember thrice; What I've been doing all the day— What were my acts at work or play? What have I heard, what have I seen? What have I learned, where'er I've been? What have I learned that's worth the knowing? What have I done that's worth the doing? What have I done that I should not? What duty was this day forgot?

THE YEAR OF JUBILEE.

ONCE in every fifty years was the year of jubilee. It began at sunset of the day of atonement. Suddenly, after all the sadness of the day, came the sound of trumpets all over the land. Then everybody rejoiced, for the year of jubilee had come.

On that year all people who had been slaves became free of the rest of their lives. Nobody planted any fields, nor raised any crops, nor gathered in any harvests; but all lived upon what grew of itself, and trusted in God, for he had promised to care for them.

If any one had sold his house and land in the country, it was given back to him, or to his children, if he had died before the jubilee came. No one could sell land for a longer time than to the next jubilee, for then it must be given back. This was to keep the people from want, by giving them homes; and to keep each tribe and family in its own place, until Christ should come. It also taught them that God alone was the owner of the land, and that they were to keep it under his commands.

—“Pa,” said a little boy, five years old, “I saw a lion and a lamb lying side by side in the meadow this morning.” “Tut, tut, James; don't tell such stories,” said the father. “I tell you I did,” persisted the child; “but it was a dandelion.”

REQUIRED READING, S.S.R.U.

(Sundays' School Reading-Lit.)

MARY BOSANQUET FLETCHER.

BY THE EDITOR.

RARELY, if ever, have two more saintly lives been united in Christian wedlock than those of John Fletcher and Mary Bosanquet. The former was providentially called to be the expounder and defender of the theology of Methodism: the latter beautifully illustrated, throughout a long and useful life, its rich spiritual graces.

impression on her youthful heart. “About this time,” she writes, “there came a servant-maid to live with my father, who had heard and felt some little of the power of inward religion. It was among the people called Methodists she had received her instructions.” The conversations of this lowly and unlettered girl deepened her religious convictions, and she thought if she could only become a Methodist she would be sure of salvation. But she soon found that it was not being joined to any people that would save her, but being joined by a living faith to Christ. Still, this way of faith seemed dark

Miss Bosanquet's worldly-minded parents, as their strange, unworldly child grew up, instead of fostering her religious feelings, endeavoured to dissipate them by fashionable amusements. She was introduced to the gaieties of London society, and taken to the ball and playhouse and other resorts of folly and frivolity. But she found no pleasure in these dreary amusements. “If I know how to find the Methodists, or any who would show me how to please God,” she wrote, “I would tear off all my fine things and run through the fire to them.” “If ever I am my own mistress,” she prophetically exclaimed, “I will spend half the day in working for the poor, and the other half in prayer.”

In her fourteenth year, Miss Bosanquet received the rite of confirmation in the stately cathedral of St. Paul. The religious exercises preceding and accompanying this impressive ordinance were made to her devout spirit a great blessing. It was to her no idle form, but an intense reality—a solemn renewal of her covenant with God and consecration of her self to His service. She soon felt that she could no longer attend the theatre, a place of fashionable resort to which her parents were addicted.



THE YEAR OF JUBILEE.—SOUNDING THE TRUMPETS.—To Illustrate Lesson for Nov. 20.—Lev. 25: 3-7.

Mary Bosanquet was the daughter of wealthy and worldly parents. She was born in the year 1739, and in her youth was surrounded by associations very unfavourable to a religious life. Nevertheless, she very early became the subject of spiritual influence. When in her fifth year, she says, she began to have much concern about her eternal welfare. She was a backward child, she naively confesses, and not very well read in the Scriptures at that early age—it would be very remarkable if she were—yet certain passages of the Word of God frequently occurred to her mind, and made a deep

impression on her mind. When between seven and eight years old, as she mused on the question, “What can it be to know my sins forgiven and to have faith in Jesus?” she felt that if it were to die a martyr, she could do it, and she wished that the Papists would come and burn her, for then, she thought, she would be safe. But soon she was enabled to grasp the vital truth of salvation by faith, and exclaimed with joyful fervour, “I do, I do rely on Jesus; yes, I do rely on Jesus, and God counts me righteous for what He has done and suffered, and has forgiven me all my sins!”

in her seventeenth year, gives us a glimpse of the gay world in the middle of the last century. With her father and a numerous company, she visited the “Royal George” man-of-war, whose subsequent tragic fate was made the subject of Cowper's pathetic ballad.* When they got into the ship, “it

* It will be remembered that the vessel sank, in port, with all her crew, while screened for the purpose of cleaning her copper sheathing. As the ballad has it,—

“His sword was in its sheath,
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men.”

TEMPTATIONS.

One incident, recorded as occurring