

# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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## Unto Me.

A poor, way-faring man of grief  
Had often passed me on my way,  
Who sighed so humbly for relief,  
That I could never answer nay.  
Once, when my scanty meal was spread,  
He entered—not a word he spake—  
Just perishing for want of bread.  
I gave him all. He blessed, and brake,  
And ate; but gave me part again.  
Mine was an angel's portion then;  
For, while I ate with eager haste,  
The crust was manna to my taste.  
Then in a moment to my view,  
The stranger started from disguise;  
The tokens in his hands I knew—  
My Saviour stood before my eyes.  
He spoke; and my poor name he named—  
"Of me thou hast not been ashamed;  
These deeds shall thy memorial be.  
Fear not; thou didst them unto me."  
—Montgomery.

## THE BOY DISCIPLE.

BY

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### CHAPTER XVII.

"I think there will be an unusual gathering of strangers at the Passover this year," said Rabbi Reuben to Lazarus, as they came out together from the city, one afternoon. "The number may even reach three millions. A travelling man from Rome was in my shop to-day. He says that in the remotest parts of the earth, wherever the Hebrew tongue is found, one may hear the name of the Messiah."

"People pacing the decks of the ships, crossing the deserts, or trading in the shops, talk only of him and his miracles; they have aroused the greatest interest even in Athens and the cities of the Nile. The very air seems full of expectancy. I cannot but think great things are about to come to pass. Surely the time is now ripe for Jesus to proclaim himself king. I cannot understand why he should hide himself away in the wilderness as if he feared for his safety."

Lazarus smiled at the old man, with a confident expression. "Be sure, my friend, it is only because the hour has not yet come. What a sight it will be when he does stand before the tomb of our long dead power, to call back the nation to its old-time life and grandeur. I can well believe that with him all things are possible."

"Would that this next Passover were the time!" responded Reuben. "How I would rejoice to see his enemies laid low in the dust!"

Already, on the borders of Galilee, the expected king had started toward his coronation. Many of the old friends and neighbours from Capernaum had joined their band, to go on to the Paschal feast.

They made slow progress, however, for at every turn in the road they were stopped by outstretched hands and cries

for help. Nearly every step was taken to the sound of some rejoicing cry from some one who had been blessed.

Joel could not crowd all the scenes into his memory; but some stood with clear-cut distinctness. There were the ten lepers who met him at the very outset; and there was blind Bartimeus begging by the wayside. He could never forget the expression of that man's face,

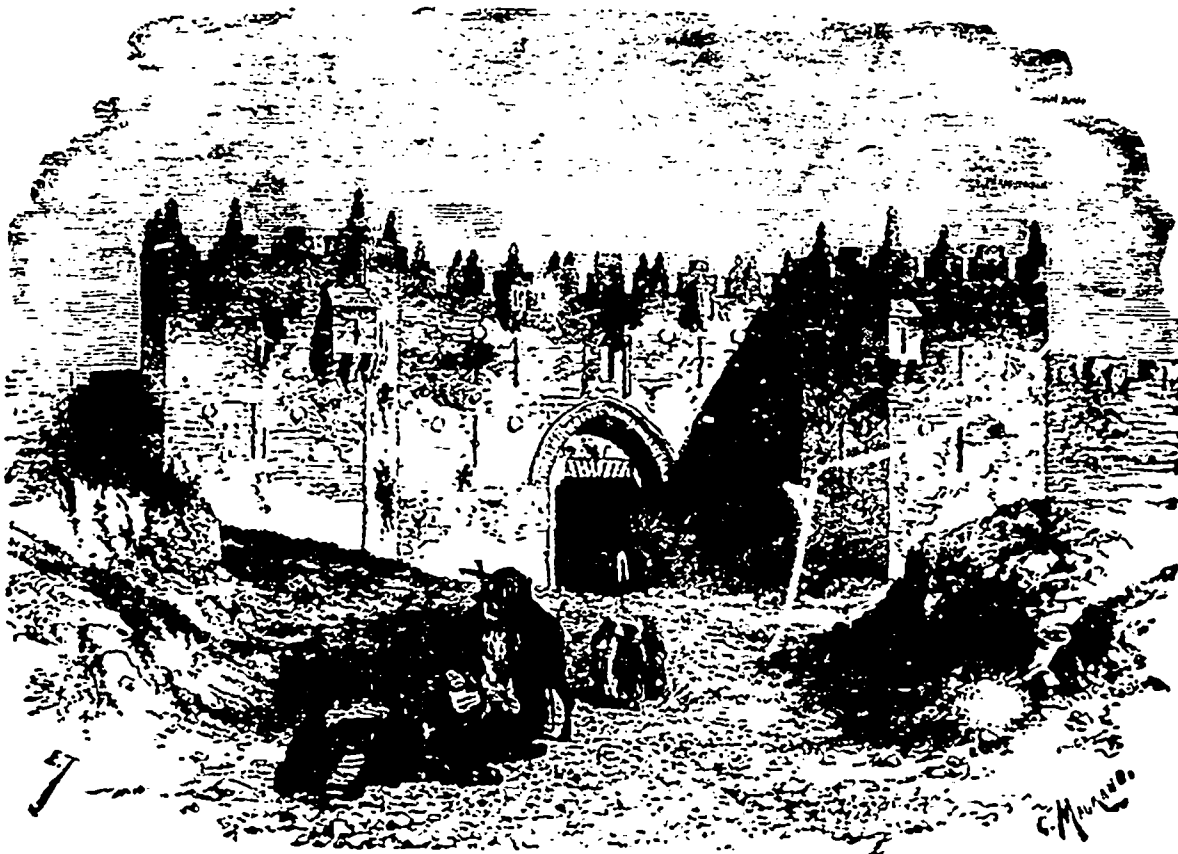
when his eyes were opened, and for the first time he looked out on the glory of the morning sunshine.

Joel quivered all over with a thrill of sympathy, remembering his own healing, and realizing more than the others what had been done for the blind beggar.

Then there was Zaccheus, climbing up to look down through the sycamore boughs that he might see the Master



THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.



DAMASCUS GATE, JERUSALEM.

passing into Jericho, and Zaccheus scrambling down again in haste to provide entertainment for his honoured guest.

There was the young ruler going away sorrowful because the sacrifice asked of him was more than he was willing to make. But there was one scene that his memory held in unfading colours:

Roses and wild honeysuckle climbing over a bank by the road-side. Orange-trees dropping a heavy fragrance with the falling petals of their white blossoms. In the midst of the shade and the bloom the mothers from the village near by, gathering with their children, all freshly washed and dressed to find favour in the eyes of the passing Prophet.

Babies cooed in their mothers' arms. Bright little faces smiled out from behind protecting skirts, to which timid fingers clung. As they waited for the coming procession, and little bare feet chased each other up and down the bank, the happy laughter of the older children filled all the sunny air.

As the travellers came on, the women caught up their children and crowded forward. It was a sight that would have made almost any one pause,—those innocent-eyed little ones waiting for the touch that would keep them always pure in heart,—that blessing their mothers coveted for them.

But some of the disciples, impatient at the many delays, seeing in the rosy faces and dimpled limbs nothing that seemed to claim help or attention, spoke to the women impatiently. "Why trouble ye the Master?" they said. "Would ye stop the great work he has come to do for matters of such little importance?"

Repelled by the rebuke, they fell back. But there was a look of displeasure on his face, such as they had never seen before, as Jesus turned toward them.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me," he said, sternly, "and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Then holding out his hands he took them up in his arms and blessed them, every one, even the youngest baby, that blinked up at him unknowingly with its big dark eyes, received its separate blessing.

So fearlessly they came to him, so lovingly they nestled in his arms, and with such perfect confidence they clung to him, that he turned again to his disciples. "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

Met at all points as he had been by loathsome sights, ragged beggars, and diseases of all kinds, this group of happy-faced children must have remained long in his memory, as sweet as the unexpected blossoming of a rose in a dreary desert.

At last the slow journey drew towards a close. The Friday afternoon before the Passover found the tired travellers once more in Bethany. News of their coming had been brought several hours before by a man riding down from Jericho. His swift-footed beast had over-