

# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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## He's the Hired Hand.

Jim Thompson, he's the hired hand,  
He's with us clean from spring to fall,  
And through the winter, understand,  
Them cold days when the wood's to  
haul;  
He rousts out early, hitches up  
The clay-bank mules an' makes 'em  
stand  
Till he climbs in an' hollera "Hup!"—  
Jim Thompson he's the hired hand.

Jim Thompson he don't say much  
As some folks do—he's sorter slow—  
An' yit he's got an awful clutch  
In them air hands o' his, you know;  
'Pears like they're iron, say, er steel,  
An' come right down on  
you kerslap!  
An' when they grip you,  
seems they feel  
Some tighter than a musk-  
rat trap.

Jim Thompson's this way—  
can't be drove,  
An' don't set much on  
clothes or style;  
He gits round by the kitchen  
stove  
An' smokes his old cob  
pipe a pile;  
When anyone talks politica,  
Or how the 'lection's goin'  
to go,  
An' how the country's in a  
fix,  
Jim Thompson says: "D'ye  
reckon so?"

Jim Thompson he's the hired  
hand,  
An' he can husk an' pitch  
an' plough,  
Er tell you what's the best  
of land,  
Er drive a team or milk a  
cow;  
And ef you'd ast him here  
some day,  
Jist keerless-like, you un-  
derstand,  
'Bout who he was, he'd up  
and say,  
"Jim Thompson, I'm the  
hired hand."

## A LITTLE GIRL AND HER BIBLE.

When the Boston train came steaming into the depot, the crowd rushed for seats. As a band of recruits mounted the platform they shouted back to their friends who had accompanied them to the train the various slang phrases they could command, interspersed with an oath now and then. As the train moved on they pushed one another into the car where many ladies were seated, including Mrs. B— and her two boys.

Then the oaths came thick and fast, each one evidently trying to outdo the other in profanity. Mrs. B— shuddered for herself and her boys, for she could not bear to have their young minds contaminated with such language. If the train had not been so crowded she would have looked for seats elsewhere, but under the circumstances she was compelled to remain where she was.

Finally, after the coarse jesting had continued nearly an hour, a little girl, who with her mother sat in front of the party, stepped out timidly from her seat and going up to the ringleader of the group, a young man whose countenance indicated considerable intelligence, gave him a small Bible.

She was a little, delicate-looking creature, only seven or eight years old; and as she laid the book in his hands, she raised her eyes appealingly to his, but without saying a word went back to her seat.

The party could not have been more completely hushed if an angel had

silenced them. Not another oath was heard and scarcely a word was spoken by any of them during the remainder of the journey.

The young man who had received the book seemed particularly impressed. He got out of the car at the next station and purchased a paper of candy for his little friend, which he presented to her. He then stooped down and kissed her and said he would always keep the Bible for her sake.

The little girl's mother afterward said that her child had been so troubled by the wickedness of those young men that she could not rest until she had given her little Bible, which she valued so highly herself.—Christian Intelligencer.

## A BENGALI PARABLE.

BY ROBERT SPURGEON.

There are 41,000,000 of people in India who speak Bengali, and I suppose all are fond of stories, anecdotes, or parables. In nearly every tale a king or a god is the chief figure. The parable given below was used by a native evangelist the other day in Barisal.

"A rich man opened a market near his splendid house, and proclaimed that whatever was brought for sale would be bought. If customers did not buy, his servants were to purchase everything. Of course, wicked people soon began to take advantage of such a fact, and all sort of useless and worthless articles

omed thing was bought and stowed away. One day the master heard a wall outside, and went to inquire its origin. To his surprise he found the goddess of Luck lying without and saying, 'I may not stay. I am driven away.' With a heavy sigh the poor man went back into the house.

"Soon another cry of distress was heard. On going to see what it was he heard these words from out the darkness: 'I am Fortune. I never live with Bad Luck. By receiving her you drive me away. But I weep to go.' Once more the rich man sighed and tried to rest. But soon a louder wail than before was heard that drew him instantly from his couch. This time it was Righteousness itself that wopt. 'Why, it was because of my love for you that I kept my promise,' he began to plead. 'Will you forsake me? Shall Righteousness flee because I keep the Truth? Come back! There is no Bad Luck where Righteousness and Truth dwell!' So the god returned, and all went well again. The image rotted away and no Bad Luck remained."

"Now," said the preacher, "where Jesus, the perfectly righteous one, dwells, all virtue, grace, blessing, and good remain. Do not let him stay outside while evil remains within."

And the people listened attentively to the parable.

## "PRAYER STICKS."

How many of my young countrymen who have read of the "prayer wheels" of Burma, and the paper prayers of the Chinese, know that there is a mechanical prayer used by thousands of people in the United States? The Pueblo "prayer stick" is quite as curious a device as those of the heathen Orient; and the feather is the chief part of it.

Prowling in sheltered ravines about any Pueblo town the curiosity seeker will find, stuck in the ground, carefully whittled sticks, each with a tuft of down feathers (generally white) bound at the top.

Each of these sticks is a prayer—and none the less earnest and sincere because so misguided. Around the remote pueblo of Zuni I have counted over three thousand of these strange invocations in one day's ramble; but never a tithe as many by any other pueblo.

According to the nature of the prayer, the stick, the feathers and the manner of trying them, vary. The Indian who has a favour to ask of the Trues, prepares his feather prayer with great solemnity and secrecy, takes it to a proper spot, prays to all those above, and plants the prayer stick, that it may continue his petition after he has gone home.—C. F. Lummis.

## INGENUITY OF BOYS.

In physics and natural history there are opportunities to direct and control the out of school activities of young people of which the enthusiastic teacher of science is not slow to avail himself, says D. S. Sanford in the June Atlantic. One of the most astonishing facts of the time is the ingenuity of boys in constructing electrical apparatus, with but a few hints and out of the most meagre materials. I know boys who have bell-lines of electric tramways circulating in their garrets; and a boy who, last year, was the despair of his teachers won deserved recognition in the manual training exhibit as the clever inventor of a most ingenious electrical box. An invitation to boys to bring to school products of their own ingenuity, or the natural history specimens that they have collected, will result in an exhibition which in variety and quality will be a revelation to one who is not used to following them in these interests.

So general and so wholesome a tendency is too significant to be ignored, and yet one almost hesitates to meddle with it lest official recognition may rob it of its independence and spontaneity. With sympathy from the school, however, it may be directed and made more intelligent. Interest in nature, for instance, may help to fill profitably the long summer vacations.



A SCHOOL TREAT.

## A SCHOOL TREAT.

How happy all the little people look in our picture, with their hands and baskets full of flowers, and their hats decorated. They have been spending the day in the country, running in and out of the bright fields, gathering nose-gays, singing and laughing, and enjoying to the full the fresh air and warm sunlight. How nice it must be, too, after the streets of a busy city. These little boys and girls belong to some Christian school, probably a Sunday-school, and once or twice in the summer they all go off together to the country and have a good picnic. Here we see them when all is over and they are waiting for the train to carry them

were heaped up in the market place. No matter, all was purchased and taken into the palace. At last one wretched man, more wicked than the rest, thought he would bring matters to a crisis. So he had an image of Bad Luck made similar to the gorgeous images of Boorja and Kall. This he took to the market for sale.

"Of course, no one bought it; and even the rich man's servants refused. But the master of the house insisted that his promise should not be broken. They must purchase the image. 'But, sir,' they argued, 'all your good fortune and wealth will flee away if Bad Luck enters.' It was of no avail; he persisted in his orders being fulfilled. So the ill-