

# PLEASANT HOURS

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## THE BOY WHO RESPECTED HIMSELF.

BY BELL CHISHOLM.

SQUIRE WARREN was the leading citizen in the flourishing town of Freeport. He owned the entire Opera Block of business houses on Market Street, and was sole proprietor of the largest dry-goods establishment in the country. Besides this, he was a member of the town council, president of the Board of Education, and for six successive terms had been elected squire of the borough. He was generous, too, in his way, and never refused to subscribe liberally to the popular benevolent schemes that were presented to him. To be sure, he did not take much stock in religion—in fact, he had not time to dabble in church affairs, he explained; yet he admitted that it was a very good thing for women and children, and, without a word, paid for a pew in the most aristocratic church in the town for the accommodation of his wife and daughters when they chose to occupy it.

People did say that he was a little tricky in trade, and that he would sometimes take advantage in making a bargain; but this they called shrewdness, and, on the whole, they liked to deal with the genial, good-natured squire.

One morning as he stepped from the train on returning from the city, where he had been to replenish his stock, he accosted a bright-looking boy who was standing on the platform with: "Hallo, Dick! bound for the city?"

"Yes, sir," answered the boy, respectfully. "Mother is not so well, and Madge has written for me to come up."

"Got your ticket yet?" queried the squire, with a glance at the boy's neat, but threadbare clothes.

"Not yet. I am waiting till the office is opened," was the reply.

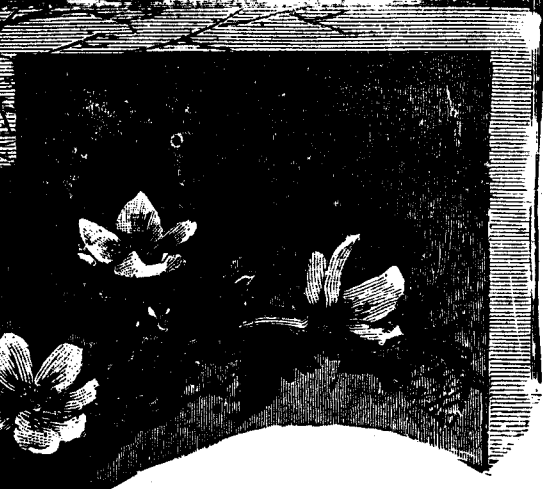
"Lucky you haven't," and down into his pocket went the squire's hand. The next moment he offered Dick a long blue ticket, saying, with much satisfaction, "Take this, bub, and save your money. It is a full-sized, round-trip ticket to the city and back. I have had the use of my money out of it, but that stupid conductor passed and re-passed me without offering to lift it. You can run up to Springfield, stay a few days, and come back without it costing you a cent."

"But that would not be honest," Dick returned, rather timidly.

"Honest! Why, my dear sir, I paid for as clean silver dollars as Uncle Sam makes for that ticket. It is no counterfeit, so assure you," replied the squire, emphatically.

"But, then, you got the worth of your money out of it, and it would be taking advantage of the railroad company to use it a second time," urged Dick, more boldly.

"Fiddlesticks! Advantage of the railroad company!" sneered the squire. "Now, I would like to know what a big incorporated body like the B. & O. Company cares for the small pittance of two dollars."



## Wintry Days Are Coming.

BY JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

The wintry days are drawing near;  
The chilly winds betoken  
The ship "Jack Frost," from Arctic seas,  
Already has been spoken,  
The summer gardens ceased to bloom;  
The bees no longer humming  
Above the rose, in busy cells  
Prepare for winter's coming.

Our fathered friends, their repertoire  
Of summer music ended,  
Forsake the haunts where voices sweet  
Harmoniously blended  
There is no bud upon the tree,  
No blossom on the clover;  
And by unnumbered signs we know  
The summer days are over.

The wintry days are drawing near,  
The skies are dull and dreary;  
And we must strive good lads to make  
The house a bit more cheery;  
Pile on the logs, and let the blaze  
Be like a signal burning,  
To welcome home the ship "Jack Frost,"  
Now on the waves returning.



"Very little, no doubt," assented Dick. "It is quite probable that it would never find out the deception, and would be very little poorer if it did; but that would not make it right on my part," he added, as he handed the ticket back to the squire. "I do not want it," said the gentleman, testily. "Use it or not, as you please; but you are very foolish to throw away such a chance, I do assure you. Don't you

know that a penny saved is a penny earned, and that two dollars would buy several delicacies for your poor, sick mother? It is not my lookout, or yours either, if the railroad officials do not attend to their business. If a man in my employ would be so stupid, I would deserve to suffer if I did not discharge him at once. Do what you choose with the ticket; but if you don't buy a little comfort for the needy ones at home with the price of your fare, it will not be my fault."

The squire had touched a sensitive spot in the boy's heart by the reference to the dear ones at home, and for an instant his courage faltered. He was almost on the point of yielding, when his eyes rested on a badge pinned to his coat—the symbol of the Y.P.S.C.E., to which he belonged. He was trying to live a Christian life, so that others could see Jesus in his daily walk; then how could he sin against his conscience by doing what he knew to be wrong? The next moment he tore the bit of pasteboard he held in his hands to fragments, and, throwing the pieces away, said, "Now, all temptation is out of the way. The railroad company could afford to lose two dollars, no doubt; but I cannot afford to lose my self-respect."

"It is mighty inconvenient to have such a touchy conscience when the pocketbook is empty," retorted the squire, impatiently. "You'll never make a business man if you go round the world looking up other people's mistakes after that fashion—never! If a fellow don't look out for himself, no other body will do it. You would not suit me by any means." And with this final thrust the baffled man turned on his heel and walked away. The boy's staunch principles annoyed him just then; but, on mature consideration, he concluded that a lad that would not cheat even a railroad company would be safe to have around where there was piles of money, and that was why Dick got a place of responsibility in his store.

## THE WHOLE HEART.

"I HAVE given my heart to Jesus, every bit of it," was the confession of a little girl of seven in a religious meeting where many persons arose to confess Christ. The words are striking in their simplicity, but full of important meaning. How many there are who give but a part of the heart to Jesus. The result to Ananias and Sapphira was most disastrous. They retained for a few brief hours a part of the treasure which they had secured, but through their falsehood, presently lost it all, and with it their lives and their souls.