

# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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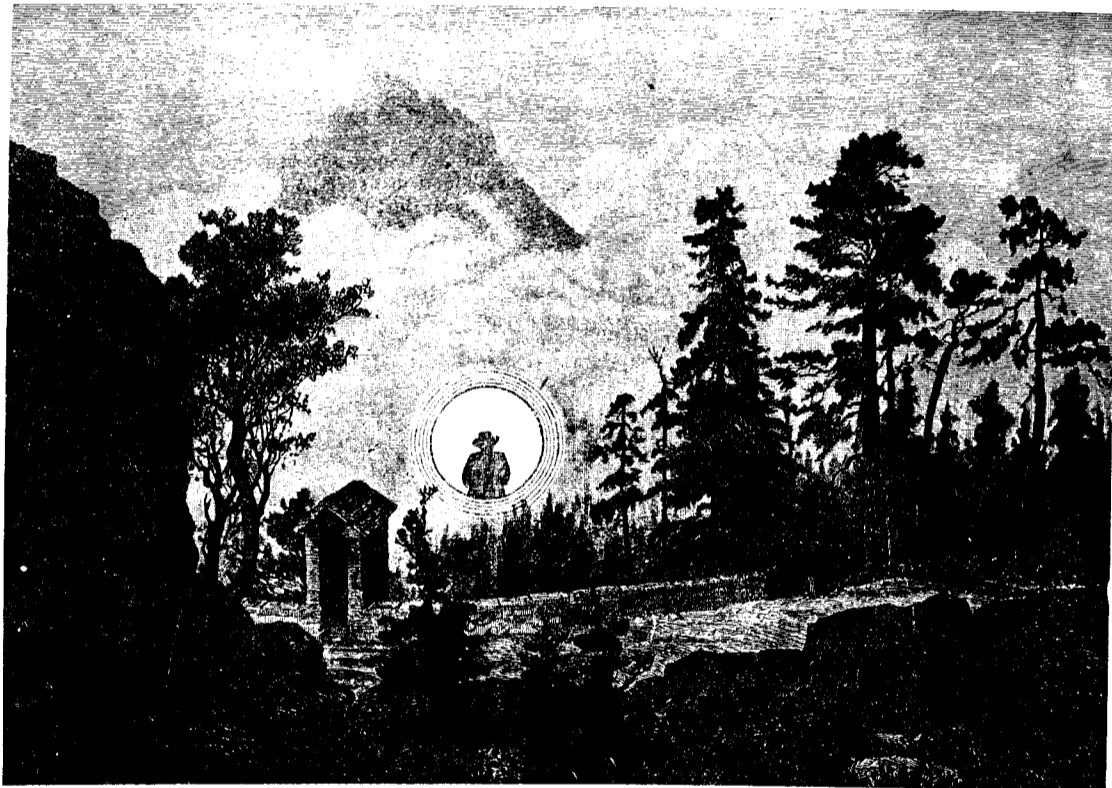
[No. 10.]

## THE MOCK SUN.

In the high Alps may sometimes be witnessed those peculiar atmospheric phenomena which, by a strange combination of light and mist, are often produced among the mountains of Europe. Such is the 'Spectre of the Brocken,' as shown in the above sketch. At sunrise, or shortly after, there is sometimes seen a strange, gigantic figure surrounded by a huge halo, which gesticulates and follows every gesture of the beholder as if mocking his movements. It is, in fact, his shadow thrown upon a curtain of cloud, the halo being a reflection of the sun itself.

Many of these effects, however, are due to the intense cold of the higher regions of the atmosphere and the presence in them of minute particles of ice; these are more common in the Arctic regions.

From the heights round Konigsfeld, the writer once witnessed a strange effect somewhat similar to those described. The night was extremely cold, and the whole forest with its thousand trees was swathed in a cold, damp mist which, condensing heavily on the branches, froze at once and gave to every twig a beautiful coating of clear, shining ice. The mist was not sufficiently dense to prevent the moon being dimly visible above and it was arranged round her struggling form that the phenomena was visible. At a considerable distance from her disc was seen a large ring of luminous mist very clearly defined, intersecting which at the four points of the compass were smaller rings equally well drawn; and further still, half lost in the dim ocean of moving mist, were visible portions of other rings, intersecting and crossing each other in all possible directions. The effect of the whole was weird in the extreme, and, had all the circles been equally visible and complete, the result would have been still finer because more symmetrical.



THE MOCK SUN.

## ONLY A LINE.

YOUNG beginners in wrongdoing never look at the end—as they might a thousand times in the example of others' ruin whose first step downward was the very one they are taking. The despair which inevitably closes the unchecked career of those who throw their talents and the promise of their youth away has seldom been more affectingly presented than we find it in the following little life-sketch:

Less than three months ago a wreck of a man staggered into the office of a weekly paper in East Michigan, and asked for money to buy whiskey. Strangely enough, the publisher was an old school-mate. They were apprentices in the same town. They worked side by side as finished compositors. One had sobriety and thrift; the other had a good heart and an open hand. Twenty years made the one rich and influential, the other a drunkard who often slept in the gutter. The one had made use of what God had given him, but the other had deliberately made himself a wreck.

The meeting called up a host of recollections, and the contrast between their situations was so great that the old drunkard was sobered as he realized it. He was

offered work, but he had become too broken. The stick and the rule were no longer for him. He was offered a temporary home, but he looked at his rags and felt his shame for the first time in months. When money was handed him he waved it back, and said, "I shall not want it. I ask in the name of olden days and as a fellow-craftsman, one little favour."

"It shall be granted."

"When you know that I am dead, then turn a rule for me and give me a single line."

"The promise was made, and the old wreck floated out again on the current of life, borne here and there, and feeling that death was to be the end. Yesterday a copy of the weekly reached the *Free Press* with proof that the editor had fulfilled his promise. He had turned a rule for the poor wreck, and had given him a line: "Died, September 27, 1882, George White."

The tobacco slave is like him; he cannot dispense with his "smoke" or his "chew" without suffering from the want of it. Why does he not remain at home, then, until his craving for tobacco should be satisfied for the time, so as not to annoy others with the stench of it. One reason is that he cannot afford to sacrifice so much time as this would require; and another reason is, the tobacco slave becomes indifferent to the comforts or the rights of others. He poisons the air that others must breathe, and "if they don't like it, let them move away." The tobacco slave always comes to that; his moral sense is lost or dulled.

## HOW IT BEGINS.

"GIVE me a halfpenny, and you may pitch one of these rings, and if it catches over a nail I'll give you threepence." That

He had hung down his head, but raised it very quickly, and his bright, open look, as he said, "I'll do it," will not soon be forgotten. He ran back, and soon emerged from the ring looking happier than ever. He touched his cap and bowed pleasantly, as he ran away to join his companions. This was an honest boy, and doubtless made an honourable man.—*Morning Star.*

## CLINGING TO JESUS.

ONE bright summer day I was standing on the sea-shore. Behind me were the great white cliffs, and before me was the beautiful sea, with the big waves dashing their snow-white foam almost to where I stood. All around me were pretty shells and pebbles, and large, round pieces of chalk, covered over with green moss and loveliest seaweed. And peeping in and out of the sandy puddles which lay between were curious little crabs looking after their seaside meal, and burying themselves in the sand every time I moved. On a very large white boulder or piece of rock, near where I stood, were a number of limpets in their prettily marked shells clinging to the rocks. At the seaside I have often seen boys and girls trying to get them off; but they stick so fast that they cannot move them.

Having a walking stick in my hand, I determined that I would have one of these limpet shells. So choosing a very pretty one, I tried at first to pull it off with my hand. But no, it clung to the rock so tightly that I could not move it.

"What!" thought I, "a little thing like you be stronger than I! I'll try my walking stick."

And so I did. Putting one end of it against the side of the limpet, I tried with all my weight and strength to pull it off.

But no, not a hairbreadth could I move that tiny little limpet, for it was clinging to the rock. Indeed, so tightly did it cling that I could no more move the limpet than I could the rock to which it clung. Though so weak a little thing it stuck so fast that it seemed as strong as the rock itself; just as little children, clinging to Jesus, the Rock of Ages, have almighty strength, and cannot be moved.

"Well, my little friend," thought I, "I'll see whether I cannot have you yet; as one way won't do, I'll try another." So, having plenty of time to spare, I sat down very quietly upon another rock close by and watched, scarcely moving my eyes off the limpet for one moment. For a long time I watched in vain; there stuck the little limpet.

But presently I thought I saw it move a little. Oh, how eagerly I watched then! Another minute, and—yes, there it was actually moving off the rock.

"Ah," thought I, "I'll have you now." And with one grasp I had it in my hand, because it was not clinging to the rock.

Dear young friend, whenever Satan tempts you to get away from Jesus and wander into sin, cling fast to the rock—cling to Jesus.

That was all, but in that line was such a sermon as no man on earth could deliver. For every word there was a year of woe and degradation. For every letter there were tears and heart-aches and promises and failure.—*Detroit Free Press.*

## THE TOBACCO SLAVE.

THERE is absolutely no gratification whatever coming from the use of tobacco, except this; it relieves the victim from the misery which attacks him from the lack of it. Many years ago I saw a lunatic who had become so much accustomed to a billet of wood that had been chained to one of his legs when he was troublesome and dangerous, that afterwards, when he was quiet and harmless, he could not be easy without that "clog," and always carried it about with him on his shoulder, though the chain was no longer fastened to him.

The tobacco slave reminds me of that poor lunatic; he carries about with him his offensive burden, by which he often makes himself odious to the persons whom he annoys with the stench of his presence.

seems fair enough; so the boy handed him a halfpenny and took the ring. He stepped back to the stake, tossed the ring, and it caught on one of the nails.

"Will you take six rings to pitch again, or threepence?"

"Threepence," was the answer, and the money was put in his hand. He stepped off, well satisfied with what he had done, and probably not having an idea that he had done wrong. A gentleman standing near him watched him, and now, before he had time to look about and rejoin his companions, laid his hand on his shoulder:

"My lad this is your first lesson in gambling."

"Gambling, sir?"

"You staked your halfpenny and won six halfpence, did you not?"

"Yes, I did."

"You did not earn them, and they were not given to you; you won them just as gamblers win money. You have taken the first step in the path; that man has gone through it, and you can see the end. Now, I advise you to go and give him his threepence and ask for your halfpenny, and then stand square with the world."