

## Hope's Quiet Hour.

### The Loss of Covetousness.

The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.—1 S. Tim. vi.: 10.

There was astonished grief in the camp of Israel one day. From morning until evening Joshua—the bold captain of the host—was lying on his face, with the chief men of Israel, before the ark of God. They put dust on their heads, and even lamented the progress that had been made in winning the Promised Land. Jericho had been conquered, and yet Joshua said that it would have been better to have settled down on the other side of Jordan; "for," he said despairingly, "the inhabitants of the land . . . shall compass us round, and cut off our name from the earth."

What was the cause of this despair? It was caused by the covetousness of one man. Jericho, being the first fruits of the land God had given to Israel, was devoted or consecrated to Him. The silver and gold, and the vessels of brass and iron, were publicly put into the treasury of the LORD, the rest of the spoil of the city was burnt. The people were solemnly warned that if they took any of the spoil of this first-conquered city for their own use, they would bring trouble and a curse on the whole camp. They were bound together by the closest ties, and the sin of one must affect the rest; as the disease which breaks out in one member of a body affects every other member.

Achan had seen among the spoil a rich cloak, a wedge of gold, and a quantity of silver. Covetousness sprang up in his heart. He watched for an opportunity, which soon came; and the rich treasure was his—or so he thought—safely buried in the ground under his tent. Covetousness had brought him riches—apparently—but a man who has dared to rob God is, in reality, desperately poor. The treasure could not be used, could not even be gloated over and admired. It must remain hidden, and the guilty conscience of the miserable man made him tremble with fear of discovery. Then loss came upon all the nation. Their warriors fled before the men of a little city. Plainly God was no longer fighting for and with His people. Only sin could have turned Him against them, so the lot was cast to discover the guilty one. How Achan must have feared as the circle was drawn closer and closer around him. First his own tribe of Judah was taken, then one family in that tribe, then a member of that family—the grandfather of Achan. By that time he must have felt hopeless of escape, and could hardly have been surprised when his father's name was called, and, after that, his own. Death was the swift result of his attempt to rob God. Yielding to covetousness he had not secured gain, but loss.

The prophet Malachi warned his people, many years later, that not only an individual here and there, but the "whole nation" had tried this dangerous sin of robbing God. They were keeping back the tithes and neglecting the free-will offerings. Those who did not dare to neglect the prescribed sacrifices entirely, considered it a weariness, a thing to be got over with as little sense of personal loss as possible. Unlike David, who had scorned to offer to the God he loved, a gift which cost him nothing, they picked out from their flocks the lame and the sick for sacrifice. They would give God what they did not want—anything would do for Him. So they chose terrible loss for themselves. There was outward loss, for God, Who only could give rain and fruitful seasons, refused to open the windows of heaven and pour down a blessing upon them. But, far worse than that, their own souls grew hard and degraded. God did not need their gifts, the cattle upon a thousand hills were His; but they needed to give. His punishments were sent in love, were intended to open their eyes to the cancerous disease of covetousness, before it had destroyed spiritual health

and beauty. We are told that God "loveth" a cheerful giver—is not His loving approval great gain?

Balaam coveted the great rewards promised by the King of Moab, if only he would curse Israel. He did his utmost to win the rewards—knowing that he was doing what God had forbidden—and through his wicked advice disaster came upon others, and a shameful death to himself.

Judas coveted the reward offered for a deed of awful infamy, and he did not even spend the thirty coins for which he had sold his Master. Despair drove him to commit suicide, and his name has been abhorred for nearly two thousand years. What advantage did he gain by his covetousness?

Don't you think St. Paul was right when he said that the love of money caused all kinds of evil in the world, and also pierced with many sorrows the people who reached after it as their greatest good?

How many people have been murdered because others coveted their money? Only God knows. So the love of money is the root of murder. How many thefts have been committed for the same cause? How many poor children are forced to grow up in hopeless ignorance because child labor is cheap? Uncounted millions of lives have been stunted and degraded because employers—in their determined effort to "get rich quick"—grind as much work as possible out of their employees, paying the lowest possible wages.

God knows how many men and women in the jails (and other refuges crowded with those who have sunk into vice and shame) have come there because men who coveted the position of millionaires trampled on their chances of earning a reasonable livelihood.



Vegetables from Lillian Garland's 1912 Garden.

Some families are forced to live and sleep in such overcrowded rooms that the babies lose their innocence, and the boys and girls their modesty.

In the tenth Psalm we read of a covetous man who oppresses the poor, thinking that it is quite safe to get rich swiftly at the expense of the helpless. He says in his heart that God has forgotten, He hideth His face and will never see it. But the cause of the helplessness is championed by the King of kings, and covetousness is a sure road to misery and loss. The man whose way is happy and safe is the man who considers the poor and needy.—Ps. xli.: 1-3.

Let us look at Achan again. He grasped for himself that which was devoted to God, the first fruits of God's own gifts to His people. The Israelites served God as His subjects. The tithes were required of them, and the temple tax was demanded as a right. But we serve God as His children. We should rejoice to give Him outward proofs of our loyal affection, we should not "pay," but "give" the tenth and the first fruits—whenever possible. He is our Father, and knows that it is not always possible. The poor who are nearest of kin must be considered first, as St. Paul says: "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

But when we are covetous, making worldly prosperity our chief aim in life, and giving as little as we decently can to the cause of Christ, and to the poor,

who are His brethren and ours, what then?

Such a course means that we are choosing loss of the worst kind, we are crushing down our own souls in degrading poverty, we are becoming hard and cold and selfish as a result of trying to rob God of our consecrated free-will offerings.

National life is in many ways becoming wiser. We have learned that to heap up riches through the unpaid labor of slaves means deadly loss to any nation. We have learned that money paid out freely for the education of the poor and ignorant means in the end national gain. We have learned that it is false economy and loss to be stingy in public grants to hospitals and refuges for the sick and helpless. We have learned that it pays to spend money lavishly in fighting diseases, such as tuberculosis. We are learning the value to the community of each human life. I have read that an investigation in Berlin some years ago revealed these facts: When whole families were forced to live in one-roomed homes, the death rate was about 163 per thousand, when a family occupied two rooms it was about 22 per thousand, while four or more rooms for each family brought down the death rate to about 5 per thousand. Unhealthy overcrowding is, therefore, national murder, and indecent overcrowding degrades the nation, spreading vice from class to class. A good kindergarten for the poorest children costs money, but it pays; a free education in vice on the streets may be cheap in the beginning, but it costs far more to the nation in the end (even in dollars), for it results in more criminals and greater destruction of property.

As it is in national life, so it is in individual life, for individuals make the nation. Our Lord warns us to beware

## The Beaver Circle

### OUR SENIOR BEAVERS

[For all pupils from Senior Third to Continuation Classes, inclusive.]

#### When Peggy Plays.

Peggy's just the gardener's child.  
Lives down in our lane.  
Once I went to play with her.  
Want to go again.

Peggy hasn't any toys,  
'Cause her father's poor;  
Peggy always makes her toys.  
My, they're jolly, sure.

Tea sets out of acorn cups,  
Apple seeds her mice,  
Wrinkled nuts for dollies' heads,  
Round, and hard, and nice.

Flower girls with poppy skirts  
Ready for a ball,  
Burdock men, and pumpkin carts,  
Peggy makes them all.

Peggy's dress is old and torn,  
Peggy doesn't care,  
All the woods are full, she says,  
Of pretty things to wear.

Down her ragged gown she hangs  
Trailing, golden leaves.  
For her throat, a necklace green  
Of grasses Peggy weaves.

On her tangled, yellow curls  
Peggy twines a crown,  
Barberries like rubies red  
Set in russet brown.

Peggy's house is very small,  
Just two rooms all told;  
Peggy has another house,  
Big, and wide, and old.  
Velvet moss the carpet is,  
Roof of azure sky,  
Painted on the spreading walls,  
Flowers and sunsets lie.

Field and forest are the rooms,  
Full of treasure stores.  
Peggy's just the gardener's child,  
Owns the whole outdoors.

—Little Folks.

### Senior Beavers' Letter Box

Dear Puck and Beavers.—As this year is the centenary of the birth of David Livingstone, I thought I would write and tell you something about this wonderful man.

He was born on March 19th, 1813, (being the second child of Nell Livingstone and Agnes Hunter) in Blantyre, Lanarkshire, Scotland. His parents were very pious and God-fearing, but they were very poor, so poor that they had to practice the strictest economy. It was for this reason that David left school at ten years of age, and began to work in a factory. But he studied himself, often sitting up till after twelve o'clock at night, although he had to be at the factory at six in the morning.

He worked himself through college taking a medical course at the same time, and was sent as a missionary to Africa, that dark continent of which so little was known then. He found the people very, very ignorant; they had no idea of God, except that a spirit existed who ruled everything, and who would punish them if they displeased him. At first they were suspicious of him, but as he dealt very honestly with them, besides having a wonderfully attractive personality, he gradually won all hearts to him.

But it was hard work, and he endured many hardships which would daunt another man. This he did because he believed it to be his duty, and he trusted in God to take care of him. He once had a terrible encounter with a lion, which all the world knows about. The infuriated beast sprang at him, crunching his arm, and, but for the interference of Mabalwe, his servant, he would have been killed.

Besides preaching the gospel Livingstone discovered lake Ngami, the Zambezi river, and many small rivers and lakes. He also took astronomical observations, drew maps of the country

### Save Sewing and Washing.

You will be interested, we are sure, in the pictures of the house-dress appearing with the advertisement of the Baldwin Garment Co., London, elsewhere in this issue. This dress slips on like a coat, two fastenings, one at back, one at throat, and the dress is on. It takes the place of both dress and apron; when one side of front is a little soiled reverse the front lap. Don't sew in hot weather when you can buy such a convenience ready-made. Good material, reasonable price.