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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, AUGUST 6, 1887.

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CHRIST A LAMB.

"Behold the Lamb of God."—John i. 29.

LET me give you some account of him who uttered these words, "Behold the Lamb of God." He was a good man. He was a very good man. At the time he lived, there was not such another man on the face of the earth. He loved Christ. You know all good men love Christ, and all who love Christ are good men. As this good man was very good, his love to Christ was very great. He loved Christ more than you love your parents; yea, more than your parents love you.

What was his name? His name was John. He was commonly called John the Baptist. The name John has a lovely meaning. It is, Beloved of the Lord.

John was a great minister, and a great prophet. He was called, by ancient prophets, the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts, to prepare the way before his face. He, therefore, began to preach before Christ entered on his public labours. His preaching prepared the way for the preaching of Christ: and when the preaching of Christ began, the preaching of John ceased. John was the herald or fore-runner of Christ. He appeared before Christ, to tell the world that Christ, the Saviour of men, was about to appear. He told this to thousands. The most astonishing multitudes came out to hear him. Many believed his sermons. All who believed, he baptized. It was on this account he was called John the Baptist, or John the Baptizer.

John was remarkable in his appearance, and in his manners. His rai-

ment was made of camel's hair, and he had a leathern girdle about his loins. His food was uncommon; it chiefly consisted of locusts and wild honey.

John was very generally admired. His sermons were so eloquent and powerful, that many began to think he could be no one else than Christ, the true Messiah. They put the question to him, whether he was the true Christ. He told them at once he was not. A few days after, John saw Jesus coming to him. John was attended by some who had mistaken him for Christ. He embraced the opportunity to undeceive them. As Jesus approached them, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" As if he had said, You foolishly and rashly imagined that I was the Christ. I certainly am not. I am only one sent before Christ, to tell you he is coming. He is here. The Saviour you expected has visited the earth. He is at present before your eyes. Behold him. Look upon him. Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world! There is the blessed Saviour before you, foretold by ancient prophets. Behold him, and love him. Behold him, and believe in him. Behold him, and receive him. Behold him, and serve him. Behold him, and adore him!

At present we shall only speak of Christ as a LAMB. We shall show in what respects Christ resembles a lamb.

A lamb is lovely, so is Christ. There are few creatures so lovely as a lamb. Little children delight to look on lambs! They are pleased when they see a picture of a lamb. There are few sights so animating and delightful as a flock of lambs feeding in a green meadow, beside a flowing crystal stream.

Christ is a lamb for loveliness. He is lovelier than any lamb. He is lovelier than any angel. There is no flower so lovely as Christ. The beauty of all the flowers that ever grew, cannot be compared with the beauty of Christ. The glory of all the stars which sparkle in the heavens, never can be compared with the glory of Christ. How lovely and glorious Christ appears in heaven. How lovely he appears to ten thousands of holy saints. How lovely he appears to millions of holy angels. When you die, my dear children, may you ascend to heaven! Then you shall see and admire, forever and ever, the Lamb of God in all his loveliness, and in all his glory.

A lamb is innocent, so is Christ. To be innocent is to be without sin. A lamb is innocent, it has no sin. The best child on earth has sin. You never saw a child without sin. We cannot call the babe innocent, who sweetly smiles upon its mother's knee. It is without actual sin, but it is not without original sin. True, there is no actual sin in its life. But true, there is original sin in its heart. There is no actual sin to be found in

the life of a lamb; and there is no original sin to be found in the heart of a lamb.

Christ is an innocent Lamb. He has no sin. Pollution never stained his holy nature. The angel Gabriel called him the Holy Thing. A being who is innocent has no sin in his heart, and no sin in his life. In this respect Christ is an innocent Lamb. Thus a lamb does no mischief. It does not bite like the dog, nor tear like the lion, nor devour like the wolf. Christ is the holy Lamb, therefore he is the harmless Lamb. Dear children, may the Holy Spirit make you like Christ the harmless lamb.

A lamb is gentle, so is Christ. "Learn of me," says Christ, "for I am meek and lowly of heart." The lamb is so gentle, that it is a fit emblem of Christ, the meek, the gentle Saviour. So gentle is the lamb, that when it is even led to the slaughter it is dumb, not opening its mouth. When a little child, upon his mother's breast, he was gentle and mild. When he was the age of some of you, he was gentle and mild. When he was a youth living with Joseph the carpenter, in Nazareth, he was gentle and mild. When he reached maturity of days, gentleness and mildness formed the comely garments which adorned his life.

He was gentle in his words. The words which some children speak are harsh, rude, unseemly. They resemble burning coals of fire. Christ's words flowed like the sweetness of oil, and the sweetness of honey. Let each one say, Holy Spirit, enable me to imitate Christ in his words! I wish you to learn a good lesson. What is it? It is gentleness. I wish you to learn under a good Master. Who is he? It is Christ. You ask, Is he willing to teach a child so corrupted, so vile, so guilty, and unworthy as me? He is. He has said, "Learn of me, for I am meek." He is a mild teacher. And he will teach lessons of the loveliest gentleness, meekness, and grace.

Finally, the lamb was useful for sacrifice. In former ages, lovely lambs were slain, their blood was shed, and they were stretched upon an altar, and consumed with fire. Thousands and thousands of lambs were sacrificed from the days of Moses, till the days of Christ. These lambs pointed out Christ. As they were sacrificed, so Christ was sacrificed. His blood was shed, his life was taken away. His humanity was laid on the altar of the divinity, and he was sacrificed for us. He did this for sinners. Little children, he did this for you. Behold the Lamb of God!

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."



HOW SOME LADIES TRY TO LOOK BEAUTIFUL.

The Legend of Robin Redbreast.

BY ANNA M. PRATT.

WHEN Jesus walked to Calvary,
'Tis said a little bird
Beheld him, and its gentle heart
With pitying love was stirred.

It flew and plucked a cruel thorn
From out the mocking crown.
While drops from Jesus' bleeding brow
Fell on its bosom brown.

They dyed the glossy plumage red—
And now all robins wear
A stain upon their breast to show
That deed of loving care.

Nor have they ever lacked a friend—
'Twas thus the legend read—
For Robin Redbreast when in need
By children has been fed.

SOWING AND REAPING.

You would think it a remarkable piece of idiocy if you should meet a farmer with a bag of sorrel-seed or thistle-seed on his shoulder, going out to sow it in his field. You never heard of a farmer who did so foolish a thing. Farmers, when they sow, have their minds fixed upon the harvest that will come from the seed they scatter. Nature will plant enough sorrel and thistle—indeed, more than enough.

What farmers are too sensible to do in their fields young men and women do all too frequently in the soil of their souls, and this largely because there is no thought of the law that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." After the seed has been dropped into the ground it passes out of your control. One thing may be predicted with absolute certainty: if the farmer has sown wheat, then, when the summer-time comes and he takes his scythe out to the field, the golden grain will fall before each steady swing. Tell me what seed has been sown, and I will tell you what will be the harvest. No young man ever yet in his youth "sowed his wild oats" who did not in after-years reap the same. Think seriously of what Paul meant when he said, "He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Do not let the after-years bring stinging regrets because you have sown the seeds of sin in your heart or in the hearts of your companions. Sow to the Spirit, not to the flesh.