

# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

## His Strong Arms.

BY WILLIAM LYLE.

A wee bit silly lammie  
Strayed far awa frae hame,  
It didna tell its mither—  
Nae ane kenned its name,  
The blast was sair an' snarlin',  
Snaw piled on ilka side,  
The day had gane tae gloamin'—  
The moor was cauld an' wide.

There was a kind, wee lassie,  
Wha missed that lammie sair :  
Oot she gaed tae the hillside,  
An' brocht it home wi' care,  
"Grandfather, here's the lammie,  
I got it doon the glen—  
I'll warm it weel an' kindly,  
An' lay it in the pen."

"Lassie, hear your grandfather,  
Preach a sermon true,  
As ye've dune for this lammie,  
Christ fain wad dae for you.  
He offers warmth an' shelter,  
Gin ye wud let him try—  
He wants a' little bairnies  
In his strong arms tae lie."

## RICHARD WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT.

BY HELEN MARSHALL NORTH.

By the time that Richard Whittington had lived seventy-three years, the greater part of them in London, it was not by the story of the cat and the beginning of his fortunes that English people knew him, but by those many acts of considerate generosity which have made his name blessed through all the centuries. Every one spoke well of him, from the king, whom he greatly assisted in a time of anxiety, down to the poor prisoner at Newgate, whose condition he made as comfortable as possible.

American young people think of Dick Whittington as the lonely little fellow on Highgate Hill, sorrowfully looking back to London, wondering if he ever could venture back to the persecutions of the cross cook, and we like to read about that pretty little cat which the boy, who had nothing else to send away for a venture on the merchant ship to distant lands, gave up with regret, and which distinguished herself in far Barbary by devouring the mice that plagued the king, and won for her master that wonderful rich cabinet of gold and pearls and diamonds.

"Not a penny of it will I take, Mr. Whittington," says the kind employer, in the story. "Here are three hundred thousand pounds, all your own. You are richer than I."

And the generous lad shares his wealth with all the poor people he knows, and gives a special portion of one hundred pounds to the cross cook.

Quite like a fairy story, is it not? but the best part of it is really true.

Dick Whittington, youngest son of a poor gentleman, was born at a tiny English village called Paultney, in the year 1350. His father died, probably, when the boy was an infant. The estate went to the eldest son, according to the English custom. The mother married again, and the new home among strangers may not have been a happy one for the little Richard. So, with his whole patrimony, not more than a few shillings, he set out to walk to London, a journey of four days.

Whether the lad really worked in a London kitchen, and was abused by a cross cook, we do not know. In those days apprentices had to perform the meanest tasks; and it is quite probable that Richard did the thing that he could, rather than the thing that he liked to do. All traditions tell how he ran away to a London suburb, and how the pleasant chiming of the Bow Church bells, which seemed to say,

"Turn again, Whittington,  
Thou shalt be Mayor of London,"

induced him to come and try the hard life again; and how he went into partnership with his employer, Mr. Fitzwarren, whose daughter, kind-hearted Lady Alice, he afterwards married.

Now, as to the cat. Was there ever such a cat, and did it bring good fortune to its master, as the pleasant old story tells us?

The oldest pictures of Whittington represent a little black and white cat, held comfortably by the Lord Mayor. On an old column of Newgate prison was a statue of Whittington with a cat. A stone found in the foundation of his old

did gaments. An old record tells how Whittington supplied the Princess Blanche, daughter of Henry IV., with material for wedding gowns, in cloth of gold, at a cost of two hundred and fifteen pounds.

Whittington acted as a banker, too, and lent large sums to famous people, especially to kings. At the time he was knighted, apparently in 1419, he made a grand entertainment, to which he invited Henry V. and his queen. Among other choice things prepared for the pleasure of the guests was a marvellous fire, burning with sweet-smelling woods mixed

sons whom the penury of this world insulteth, and to whom the power of seeking the necessities of this life by art or bodily labour is interdicted."

He had rebuilt Newgate prison, which had been "a most ugly and loathsome prison;" also, the church of St. Michael's, adding an almshouse, called God's House, for thirteen poor men who were to have each sixteen pence a week; he founded libraries; he caused a tap of water to be made in a church wall, nearly five centuries before modern drinking fountains had been thought of, and he repaired the hospital of St. Bartholomew's.

He worked bravely in all good ways until the very last of his life, and left large sums of money by his will to complete his unfinished projects. He died in March, 1423, surrounded by his four executors, his physician, and his thirteen poor almsmen. A quaint old picture is supposed to represent the scene faithfully.

Sir Richard was buried in his own church of St. Michael's, and a splendid tomb was erected to his memory. Church and tomb were destroyed in the great fire, but the name of Richard Whittington will never be forgotten.



"A WEE BIT SILLY LAMMIE."—(See Lesson Notes.)

home in Gloucester shows a figure of a boy carrying a cat; and though various people have tried to chase the cat out of the story of Whittington's life, some saying that certain coal ships of the time were called "cats," others referring the words to the achats, or purchases made by traders, yet these explanations have themselves been explained away, and still the cat remains. And I am fully persuaded in my own mind that in some way a little cat had something to do with the good fortunes of Dick Whittington.

Whittington was, in turn, Sheriff, Alderman, Lord Mayor, and member of Parliament. He was evidently the court mercer, and dealt in pearls and jewels, rich embroideries, and fine stuffs. The court of his time clothed itself in splen-

with cinnamon and other costly spices. While the king was admiring the fire, Whittington took out a bundle of bonds valued at nearly a million pounds of modern money, which he had bought of various merchants and money lenders, to whom they had been given by the king, showed them to Henry, and then tossed them into the fire.

"Never had prince such a subject," exclaimed Henry.

"And never had subject such a prince," exclaimed Whittington.

Not long before his death, Sir Richard said: "The fervent desire and busy intention of a prudent, wise and devout man shall be to cast before and especially to provide for those miserable per-

## WHAT BECOMES OF OLD BANK NOTES.

A writer in a recent daily paper gives an interesting account of a visit to the vault-room of the sub-treasury, in Boston, wherein are built the great safes containing wealth untold. Stepping into one of these safes, which in size equals that of a single state-room on board a European steamer, the visitor comes upon new scenes that awaken new interest and wonder. The small lockers extending on all sides, reaching from ceiling to floor, are stacked with notes of all kinds and denominations. The one and two-dollar bills, slipped into neat white paper bands of fifties and hundreds, are placed distinctly in an individual locker, the fives and tens made up into packages respectively of five hundreds and thousands in another, and the twenties, fifties and hundred-dollar bills in another. So that should a demand for a million dollars be made, the vault keeper could at a moment's notice pass out the amount in bills of any denomination required.

The good bills being thus sorted out and stored away, ragged and mutilated bills of all denominations, discarded and picked up through the day, undergo a rigorous examination, and are then sent to Washington, where they are macerated in the presence of four witnesses—one appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury, one by the Comptroller of the Currency, one by the Treasurer of the United States, and one by the association. Being examined and checked through by the comptroller, and the signatures of president and cashier at the bottom cut off, they are placed in a small urn, or tank, saturated with water and ground into pulp. This pulp is afterwards made into pieces of statuary and novelty souvenirs and sold to visitors at the National Capitol.

One million, eight hundred thousand dollars taken from the workingmen by the saloons in South Boston in one year! Enough to build anew every church and every church institution in that section of the city! This is the startling statement we heard Judge Fallon—a devout Roman Catholic—make in a terrific indictment of the rum traffic recently. What enormous waste! What frightful ruin! This is only one of many instances. The local option contests are now on in many parts of New England. Every Leaguer will know that his duty is, whenever the saloon monster shows his head, to hit him hard!