

Curly-Head.

BY B. F. BROOKS.

WHAT are yer nskin', stranger, about that lock o' har That's kep' so nice and keeful in the family Bible thar?

Wal, then, I don't mind tellin', seein' as yer wants ter know; It's from the head of our baby. Yes, that's him; stand up, Joe'

Joe is our only baby, nigh on ter six foot tall; And he'll be one-and-twenty comin' this next fall.

But he can't yet beat his daddy in the hay-field or the swales, A-pitchin' on the waggon or splittin' up the rails.

For I was a famous chopper, jest eighteen years ago, When this strange thing happened that came to me and Joe.

Curly-head we called him then, sir; his har is curly yet; But them long silky ringlets I never can forget.

Them was tough times, stranger, when all around was now, And all the country forests with only "blazes" through.

We lived in the old log house then, Sally and me and Joe, In the old Black River country, whar we made our clearin' show.

Wal, one day, I was choppin' nigh to our cabin door—

A day that I'll remember till kingdom come, and more—

And Curly-head was playin' around among the chips—

A beauty, if I do say it, with rosy cheeks and lips.

I don't know how it happened; but quick-er'n I can tell,

Our Curly-head had stumbled and lay thar whar he fell

On the log that I was choppin', with his yellow curls outspread;

And the heavy axe was fallin' right on his precious head.

The next thing I knew nothin', and all was dark around.

When I came to, I was lyin' stretched out thar on the ground;

And Curly-head was callin': "O daddy, don't do so!"

I caught him to my bosom,—my own dear little Joe.

All safe, sir. Not a sliver had touched his little head;

But one of his curls was lyin' thar on the log outspread.

It lay whar the axe was strikin', cut close by its sharpened edge;

Aud what then was my feelin's, per'aps, sir, yer can judge.

I took the little ringlet and pressed it to my lips;

Then I kneeled down and prayed, sir, right thar, on the chips.

We put it in the Bible, whar I often read to Joe,

"The hairs of your head are numbered;" and, sir, I believe it's so.

—Selected.

Band of Hope Work.

THERE is no branch of temperance work that yields so much of valuable result, proportionately to the time and labor invested in it, as does the conservative work of training our girls and boys in correct habits, imparting to them sound information and inspiring them with moral enthusiasm. This is a work that ought not to be left solely to any one of the great agencies that make and mould the sentiment of our country, the temperance training of our rising generation ought to be shared in by the home, the school, and the Church.

Canadians are an eminently religious people, and when our young people have learned to look upon temperance as really a part of their religion, they will be temperance men and women of the stamp we need to-day. We have

much inculcation of temperance principles and influence of good example in God-fearing homes. Our public school authorities are awakening to their duty in regard to this matter, but as yet we have too little of juvenile temperance church work, and we are pleased to be able to inform our readers of what is being done on this line in one Canadian town. For this information we are indebted to Mr. A. Barber, who is, if we mistake not, the planner of the system he describes.

In Bowmanville, Ont., there is an Association that has been in existence for five years. It has at present about seven hundred members, girls and boys, all pledged teetotalers, and the following is the plan of its working: In each of the two Methodist, the Presbyterian, the Congregational and the Disciple Sabbath-schools, there is a branch of the Association. The president and secretary of each branch are looked upon and appointed as regular officers of the school. Each branch has a pledge-book and membership roll, and by signing them a scholar becomes a member without any fee or any further ceremony. *The temperance society branch is a part of the Sabbath-school.* The pledge is against intoxicating liquors and tobacco. The officers named, of these branches, jointly constitute the Executive Committee of the General Association, for the meetings of which they arrange. These union meetings are held quarterly or oftener, and collections at these are the whole special revenue of the Association. The meetings take the round of the different Churches. They are not held too frequently, and are always large, interesting and very beneficial. The plan of conducting them varies, and is entirely in the hands of the Executive Committee. Thus far the success of the Association has been great; an immense amount of good has been done among the girls and boys, and the united work has promoted sympathy and harmony between the Churches as well. One great advantage of the scheme is that it has in its identification with the Sabbath-school, a guarantee for permanence, the want of which has proved a serious drawback to many of our attempts at juvenile temperance work.

We shall be much pleased to learn of and notice any similar work to which our friends may kindly call our attention, and we cordially invite those who are working in this important field to send us for publication notes of what is being done by their organizations. —*Canadian Citizen.*

Honour Bright.

FARMER PRITCHARD took little Tommy, four years old, no father or mother, from the poor-house on trial. "He's bright," said the farmer, "but I don't know whether he's honest. That's the thing on my mind."

Tommy had been there a week—one week of sunshine—when the black cloud came.

Farmer Pritchard had a cough at night, and on the bureau, near the head of his bed he kept a few gumdrops, which he could reach out and get to soothe his throat.

One forenoon, chancing to go into the bedroom, his eye fell on the little paper bag and he saw there was not a gumdrop left.

"Tommy has been here," he said. "I know there were five or six there when I went to bed last night, and I

did not take one. Tommy! Look here! Have you been getting my gumdrops?"

Tommy who was playing in the door, looked up brightly and said:

"No; I did not."

"Did you take them, Lucy?" asked the farmer, turning to his wife.

Mrs. Pritchard had not touched them, and her heart sank as she said so; for who was there left to do it but little Tommy? Her husband's face grew grave.

"Tommy," said he, "you need not be afraid of the truth. Didn't you take the gumdrops?"

"No; I didn't," replied Tommy.

"Oh! yes you did, Tommy. Now tell the truth."

"No, I didn't."

"This is bad, very bad indeed," said Mr. Pritchard, sternly. "This is what I have been afraid of."

"Oh, Tommy!" pleaded Mrs. Pritchard, "if you took them, do say so."

"If he took them!" repeated her husband. "Why, it is clear as daylight."

Tommy had been running in and out of the room all the morning.

But Tommy denied, though the farmer commanded and his wife implored. Mr. Pritchard's face grew ominous.

"I'll give you till noon to tell the truth," he said; "and then if you don't confess, why, I'll have nothing to do with a boy who lies. We'll ride back to the poor farm this afternoon."

"O, Joseph!" said Mrs. Pritchard, following her husband into the entry. "He is little! Give him one more trial."

"Lucy," he said firmly, "when a youngster tells a falsehood like that with so calm a face, he is ready to tell a dozen. I tell you it's in the blood. I'll have nothing to do with a boy that lies."

He went out to his work, and Mrs. Pritchard returned to Tommy and talked with him a long while, very kindly and persuasively, but all to no effect. He replied as often as she asked him that he had not touched the gumdrops.

At noon Farmer Pritchard went into the house and they had dinner. After dinner he called Tommy.

"Tommy," he asked, "did you take the gumdrops?"

"No, I didn't," said Tommy.

"Very well," said the farmer, "my horse is harnessed. Lucy, put the boy's cap on. I shall carry him back to the poor-house, because he will not tell the truth."

"I don't want to go back," he said. But still he denied the gumdrops.

Mr. Pritchard told his wife to get the boy ready. She cried as she brought out his little coat, and cap and put them on.

But Tommy did not cry. He comprehended that an injustice was done, and he knit his baby brow and held his little lips tight.

The horse was brought round. Mr. Pritchard came in for the boy. I think he believed up to the last that Tommy would confess, but the little fellow stood steadfast.

He was lifted into the waggon. Such a little boy he looked as they drove away. He thought of the cold house to which he was returning. The helpless old woman, the jeering boys, the nights of terror—all these he thought of, when, with pale face and blue lips, he was taken down from the waggon and sent up to the poor-house.

Farmer Pritchard watched him as he went up the steps. He went in.

The master came out for explanation. It was given and the farmer drove away.

The farmer laid a fresh stock of gumdrops on the bureau at night and thought grimly that these were safe. He retired early, but his sleep was broken.

Mrs. Pritchard could not sleep at all. The tears stole through her eyelids long after the candle went out. She was thinking of the little boy, perhaps cowering in his cold bed with terror.

Suddenly a curious, small sound attracted her attention. It was repeated again and again, and now and then there was a tiny rustle of the paper. The sound came from the bureau. She listened and her heart beat with excitement. She knew the sound.

"Joseph," she whispered. "Joseph!"

"What, Lucy?" said her husband. He too, had been lying awake.

"Did you hear that noise, Joseph? It's mice!"

"I know it."

"It's nice, Joseph, and they're after your gumdrops."

"Good gracious, Lucy!" groaned Farmer Pritchard upon his pillow.

It flashed upon him instantly. He and not Tommy, was the sinner. The noise stopped. The little depredators were frightened, but soon began again. And a rare feast they made.

It seemed as if that night never would end. The farmer heard every hour the clock struck, and at five he got up and made a fire in the kitchen. His wife arose at the same time and began to get breakfast.

"I won't wait for breakfast," he said. "You can have it ready when we come back. I'll harness and start now."

In a few moments the wheels rolled over the frozen ground, and away drove Mr. Pritchard in the morning starlight.

Mrs. Pritchard brought out the child's top and primer, and made the kitchen look its cheerfulest. Then she got breakfast. She baked potatoes and fried chicken, and made fritters. She put the nicest syrup on the table, and a plate of jellies and tarts. She laid Tommy's knife and fork in their place and set up his chair.

The sun had risen and the bright beams fell across the table.

As they drove into the yard they stopped at the door, and the wondering, smiling little Tommy was lifted down into Mrs. Pritchard's eager arms. She held him very tight.

"Lucy, let's have breakfast now," said the farmer. He's our boy, now, Lucy. He's never going away again."

Do not be too ready to distrust or disbelieve children. Remember this story and the little mice who took the gumdrops.

PROBABLY the largest attendance in any Sunday-school in the world is at Lockport, England. The school there was founded in 1784. It has four branches. The parent school includes about 3,600 scholars, and the four branches about 1,200; about 4,800 in all. There are more than 400 teachers. Probably the largest single school in the United States is the Bethel Mission at Cincinnati, with a membership of about 3,000. In the various Sunday-schools under the direction of Trinity Church, New York, there are more than 4,200 scholars and nearly 300 teachers.