

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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Things in the Bottom Drawer.

There are whips and tops and pieces of strings,
There are shoes which no little feet wear;
There are bits of ribbon and broken rings,
And tresses of golden hair;
There are little dresses folded away
Out of the light of the sunny day.

There are dainty jackets that never are worn,
There are toys and models of ships;
There are books and pictures, all faded and torn,
And marked by the finger-tips
Of dimpled hands that have fallen to dust,
Yet I strive to think that the Lord is just.

But a feeling of bitterness fills my soul
Sometimes when I try to pray,
That the Reaper has spared so many flowers
And taken mine away;
And I almost doubt that the Lord can know
That the mother's heart can love them so.

Then I think of the many weary ones
Who are waiting and watching to-night
For the slow return of the faltering feet
That have strayed from the paths of right;
Who have darkened their lives by shame and sin,
Whom the snares of the tempter have gathered in.

They wander far in distant climes,
They perish by fire and flood,
And their hands are black with the direst crimes
That kindle the wrath of God.
Yet a mother's song hath soothed them to rest,
She hath lulled them to slumber upon her breast.

And then I think of my children three,
My babies that never grow old,
And know they are waiting and watching for me
In the city with streets of gold.
Safe, safe from the cares of the weary years,
From sorrow and sin and war,
And I thank my God with falling tears
For the things in the bottom drawer.

"ON THE BANKS OF THE BLUE MOSELLE."

"On the banks of the Blue Moselle" depicts a scene on the lovely Moselle river, at the picturesque old German



"ON THE BANKS OF THE BLUE MOSELLE."

town of Kochem. The priest and party in the boat in the foreground are evidently engaged in some religious ceremony, probably carrying the Sacrament to the sick in the Roman manner in which, in Catholic countries, this service is usually performed. The letters I. H. S. on the banner stand for Jesus Hominum Salvator—Jesus, Saviour of Men. The beauty of the Moselle river and surrounding scenery is widely famed in both story and song.

It is like a chapter out of the middle ages to visit one of those old towns on the Moselle. It is much more out of the rush of traffic than the Rhine, which has a railway on each side and a hundred steamboats on the river, and is being fast modernized. The Moselle valley, on the contrary, retains many of its old features. The scenery is, at places, remarkably picturesque, the wooded and

vine-clad hills rise steeply on either side, and the valley is enlivened by smiling villages and ruined castles. The prevailing stillness affords a pleasant contrast to the noise and bustle of the Rhine. The region is rich in historical associations, going back to the time of the Romans. The city of Treves, on this river, is claimed to be older than Rome from a tradition that it was founded by the Assyrian king, Ninus. It has many fine old Roman ruins.

A peculiar feature of the river towns is the timbered fronts as shown in our engraving. The old castles were placed, for purpose of defence, on lofty and almost inaccessible heights. The steep road to the castle in our picture will be noticed, also the wayside chapels on the road up where pilgrims to the shrine on top of the hill stopped to rest and pray. When one thinks of the amount of

to the beauty of their country, wherever there is a point from which a picturesque view may be obtained the Japanese will build a pavilion, or a tea-house, or some similar place of repose, from which the eyes may feast on the lovely landscape. In the family picnics or excursions, which are frequent, some place of beautiful situation from which there is a good view either of land or sea is always selected.

These expeditions are not discontinued even when the cold of winter comes. Snow scenes are greatly enjoyed, and when the freshly fallen snow is lying on the ground numerous parties are seen at points commanding a fine view. The children are never excluded, but accompany their elders on all such occasions.

It goes against the grain—the scythe.

human toil which has been incurred in conveying the heavy building material for these massive castles up these steep hills, and conveying the supplies of food and munitions of war during the medieval centuries, one is amazed at the domination of the old feudal lords and robber barons who terrorized the peasant people of the village at their feet.

FLOWER-VIEWING IN JAPAN.

Miss Ida Tigner Hodnett writes of "The Little Japanese at Home" in the April St. Nicholas. Miss Hodnett says:

It is one of the national customs to go out on excursions, in parties of two or three families, to view the flowering trees and plants in their season. The Japanese love all flowers, but prefer those to which they look up—the flowers of trees. They visit the plum blossoms in February or early March; the cherry, especially beloved, in April; the lotus in July; azaleas during the summer; chrysanthemums in the autumn; and camellias in December. In the pleasure-grounds connected with every temple there are always magnificent collections of flowers. An expedition especially to see the flowers is called a "hanami," or flower view. The bank of the Sumida River, which crosses the city of Tokyo, is covered with cherry trees. These give a pleasant shade, and the spot is a favourite promenade for the citizens all the year round, but in time of "cherry bloom" the crowds that throng the avenue are larger than ever. It is crowded on moonlight nights, and also when the snow lies freshly fallen.

Being fully alive