

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 12, 1896.

No. 37.

Vol. XVI.]

The Land of Counterpane.

When I was sick and lay abed,
I had two pillows at my head,
And all my toys beside me lay
To keep me happy all the day.

And sometimes for an hour or so
I watched my leaden soldiers go,
With different uniforms and drills,
Among the bed-clothes, through the hills;
And sometimes sent my ships in fleets
All up and down among the sheets;
Or brought my trees and houses out,
And planted cities all about.

Was the giant great and still,
That sits upon the pillow-hill,
And sees before him, dale and plain,
The pleasant land of counterpane.

THE BOY DISCIPLE.

BY

ANNIE FELLOWS JOHNSTON.

CHAPTER XX.

Wake up, Joel! Wake up! I bring
You good tidings, my lad!"
It was Abigail's voice ring-
ing cheerily through the
court-yard, as she bent over
the boy, fast asleep on the
hard stones.

All the long Sabbath day
after the burial, he had sat
listlessly in the shady court-
yard, his blank gaze fixed on
the opposite wall. No one
seemed able to arouse him
from his apathy. He turned
away from the food they
brought him, and refused to
enter the house when night
came.

Towards morning he had
gone over to the fountain for
a long draught of its cool
water; then overcome by
weakness from his continued
fast, and exhausted by grief,
he fell asleep on the pave-
ment.

Abigail came in and found
him there, with the red
morning sun beating full in
his face. She had to shake
him several times before she
could make him open his
eyes.

He sat up dizzily, and tried
to collect his thoughts. Then
he remembered, and laid his
head wearily down again,
with a groan.

"Wake up! Wake up!"
she insisted, with such eager
gladness in her voice that
Joel opened his eyes again,
now fully aroused.

"What is it?" he asked
indifferently.

"He is risen!" she ex-
claimed, joyfully, clasping her hands
as she always did when much excited.
"I went to his tomb very early in the
morning, while it was yet dark, with
Mary and Salome and some other wo-
men. The stone had been rolled aside;
and while we wondered and wept, fear-
ing his enemies had stolen him away,
he stood before us, with his old greeting
on his lips,—'All hail!'"

Joel rubbed his eyes and looked at her.
"No, no!" he said wearily, "I am
dreaming again!"

He would have thrown himself on the
ground as before, his head pillowed on
his arm, but she would not let him. She
shook his hands with a persistence that

could not be refused, talking to him all
the while in such a glad eager voice that
he slowly began to realize that something
had made her very happy.

"What is it, Mother Abigail?" he
asked, much puzzled.

"I do not wonder you are bewildered,"
she cried. "It is such blessed, such
wonderful news. Why, he is alive, Joel,
he whom thou lovest! Try to under-
stand it, my boy! I have just now
come from the empty tomb. I saw him!
I spoke with him! I knelt at his feet
and worshipped!"

By this time all the family had come
out. Reuben looked at his daughter
pitiingly, as she repeated her news;
then he turned to Phineas.

"Poor thing!" he said, in a low tone.
"She has witnessed such terrible scenes
lately, and received such a severe shock,
that her mind is affected by it. She
does not know what she is saying. Did
not you yourself help prepare the body
for burial, and put it in the tomb?"

"Yes," answered Phineas, "and helped
close it with a great stone, which no
man could possibly move by himself.
And I saw it sealed with the seal of
Caesar; and when I left it was guarded

piped Jesse's shrill voice, quite unex-
pectedly, at his grandfather's elbow.
He had not lost a word of the conversa-
tion. "Why don't you go and see for
yourself if the tomb is empty?"

Abigail had gone into the house with
her mother, and now the summons to
breakfast greeted them. She saw she
could not convince them of the truth of
her story, so she said no more about it;
but her happy face was more eloquent
than words.

All day snatches of song kept rising to
her lips,—old psalms of thanksgiving,
and half whispered hallelujahs. At last
Joel and Phineas were both so much
affected by her continued cheerfulness,
that they began to believe there must be
some great cause for it.

Finally, in the waning afternoon, they
took the road that led from Bethany to
the garden where they firmly believed
that the Master still lay buried.

As they came in sight of the tomb, Joel
clutched Phineas by the arm, and point-
ed, with a shaking finger, to the dark
opening ahead of them.

"See!" he said, pointing into its yawning
darkness. "She was right! The
stone is gone!"

him. Hosanna to the Highest! He
walked along this road with us as we
went to Emmaus."

"Ah, how our hearts burned as he
talked with us by the way!" interrupted
the other man.

"Only this hour he sat at meat with
us," cried the first speaker. "He broke
bread with us, and blessed it as he al-
ways used to do. We are running back
to the city now to tell the other dis-
ciples."

Phineas would have laid a detaining
hand on them, but they hurried on, and
left him standing in the road, looking
wistfully after them.

"It must be true," said Joel, "or they
could not have been so nearly wild with
joy."

Phineas sadly shook his head. "I
wish I could think so," he sighed.

"Let us go home," urged Abigail, the
next day, "the Master has bidden his
brethren meet him in Galilee. Let us
go. There is hope of seeing him again
in our old home!"

Joel, now nearly convinced of the
truth of her belief, was also anxious to
go. But Phineas lingered; his plodding
mind was slower to grasp such thoughts

than the sensitive woman's
or the imaginative boy's.
One after another he sought
out Peter and James and
John, and the other disciples
who had seen the risen
Master, and questioned them
closely. Still he tarried for
another week.

One morning he met
Thomas, whose doubts all
along had strengthened his
own. He ran against him
in the crowded street in
Jerusalem. Thomas seized
his arm, and, turning, walked
beside him a few paces.

"It is true!" he said, in a
low, intense tone, with his
lips close to his ear. "I
saw him myself last night;
I held his hand in mine. I
touched the side the spear
had pierced. He called me
by name; and I know now
beyond all doubt that the
Master has risen from the
dead, and that he is the Son
of God!"

After that, Phineas no
longer objected when it was
proposed that they should
go back to Galilee. The
story of the resurrection
was too great for him to
grasp entirely, still he could
not put aside such a weight
of evidence that came to him
from friends whose word he
had always implicitly trusted.

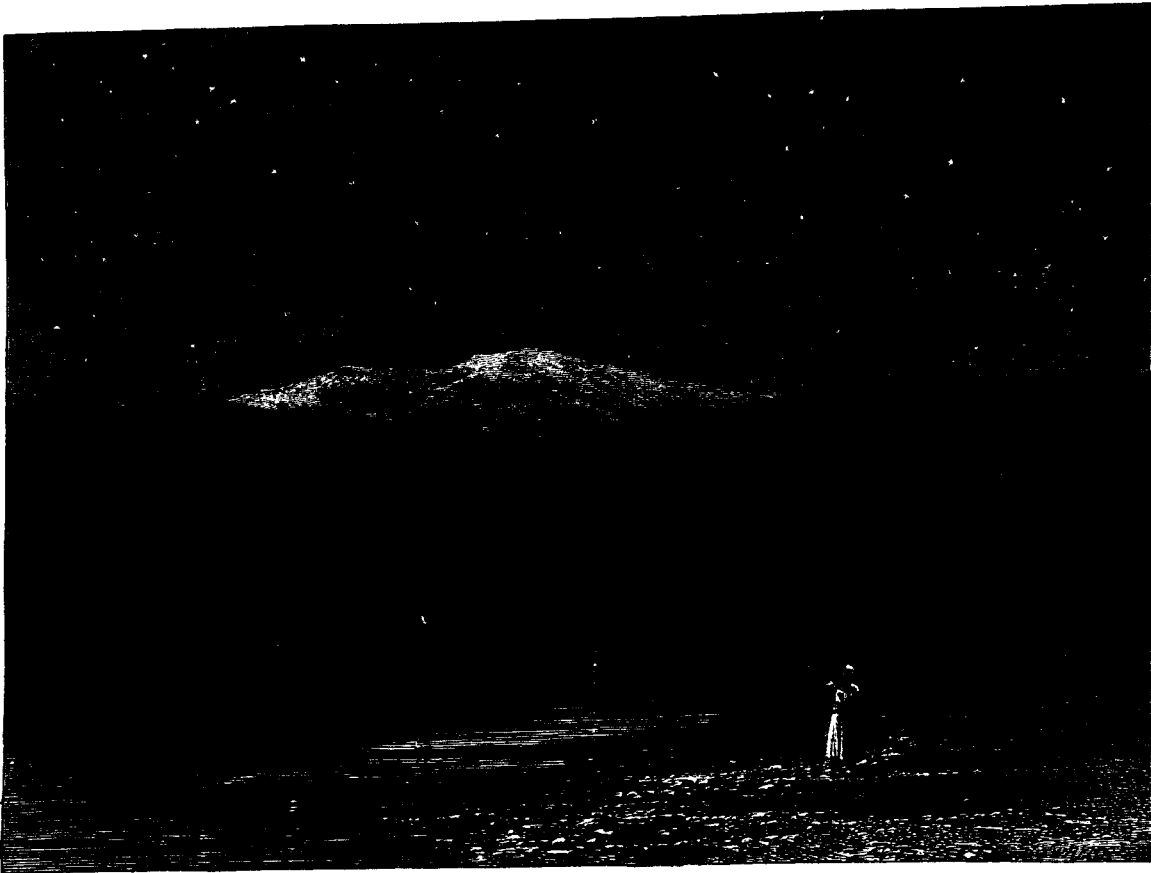
The roads were still full of
pilgrims returning from the
Passover. As Phineas jour-
neyed on with his little
family, he fell in with the
sons of Jonah and Zebedee, going back
to their nets and their fishing-boats.

The order of procession was constantly
shifting, and one morning Joel found
himself walking beside John, one of the
chosen twelve, who seemed to have un-
derstood his Master better than any of
the others.

The man seemed wrapped in deep
thought, and took no notice of his com-
panion, till Joel timidly touched his
sleeve.

"Do you believe it is true?" the boy
asked.

There was no surprise in the man's
face at the abrupt question, he felt, with-
out asking, what Joel meant. A re-



"WHEN THE BLUE WAVES ROLL NIGHTLY ON DEEP GALILEE."—HERMON IN THE DISTANCE.

by Roman sentinels in armour. No man
could have opened it."

"But Abigail talks of angels who sat
in the empty tomb, and who told them
he had risen," replied her father.

Joel, who had overheard this low-toned
conversation, got up and stood close be-
side them. He had begun to tremble
from weakness and excitement.

"Father Phineas, do you remember the
story we heard from the old shepherd,
Heber? The angels told of his birth;
maybe she did see them in his tomb?"

"How can such things be?" queried
Reuben, stroking his beard in perplexity.
"That's just what you said when
Rabbi Lazarus was brought back to life,"

It was some time before they could
muster up courage to go nearer and look
into the sepulchre. When at last they
did so, neither spoke a word, but, after
one startled look into each other's eyes,
turned and left the garden.

It was growing dark as they hurried
along the highway homeward. Two
men came half running towards the
city, in great haste to reach the gates
before they should be closed for the
night. They were two disciples well
known to Phineas.

He stopped them with the question
that was uppermost in their mind.

"Yes, he is risen," answered one of
the men, breathlessly. "We have seen