

THE LAST ROLL-CALL.

THROUGH the crowded ranks of the hospital,
Where the sick and the wounded lay,
Slowly, at night-fall, the surgeon
Made his last slow round for the day

And he paused a moment in silence
By a bed where a boy's face,
With a death white look, said plainly,
Here will soon be an empty place.

Poor boy! how fast he is going!
He thought as he turned, when a cry,
Or faltering voice, through the stillness,
Ringing out like a bell, called, "Here!"

"Ah, my boy, what is it you wish for?"
"Nothing, faintly the answer came,
But with eyes all aight with glory,
"I was answering to my name"

In the tranquil face of the soldier
There was never a doubt or a fear—
"They were calling the roll in heaven,
I was only answering 'Here!'"

The soft, dim rays of the lamp-light
Fell down on the dead boy's face;
In the morning the ranks were unbroken,
For another had taken his place.

Far away in God's beautiful heaven,
They are calling the roll each day;
And some one slips into the places
Of the ones who are summoned away.

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Pleasant Hours:

A TALKER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 18, 1886.

WAITING TO FEEL.

"I tried to pray when I feel like it," said a boy to his Sunday-school teacher, "but I don't like to feel that I must pray at set times. Why should I, every night and morning, the first thing on getting up or the last thing on going to bed, kneel down and say my prayers?"

It's a pretty serious question, boys, and girls, too; one that is really worth a moment's consideration. You would not wish to live in a kind father's house, and eat of his food and wear his clothes and accept his shelter and care, and never thank him or tell him of your needs, would you? "O no," you say, "but that is different!" So it is; but there's many a child so careless and ungrateful that so long as his wants were supplied he would take it as a matter of course, and if he waited till he "felt like it," his father and mother would never hear a word of grateful love and thanks.

Many, many hearts are in just that attitude toward the good heavenly Father, whose tender care supplies all our needs. If we wait till we "feel like it," we shall do very little praying or praising. The feeling will be slow to prompt the prayer, but often the prayer will bring the feeling that we want. If we pray for the thing we want, instead of that which we think we ought to want, we shall certainly ask first for the desire to pray. The faculties of the soul are like the untired wings of the young birds. They need training. The birdlings flutter and fall often, and cling to the nests, the places where they "feel at home," and though God's sunshine and breezes call them to the pure upper air, they do not feel like flying, they have to be taught to fly.

And we do not know what sweetness and beauty and strength and grace God has to show the young soul that tries to lift itself up to him. His spirit broods over the young like the mother-bird over her nestlings. He will carry the lambs in his bosom, but they must be glad to be lifted there.

The boys and girls who read the PLEASANT HOURS know what it means to have a friend. Think of what it must be to have the Lord Jesus for the most intimate, the closest friend of the soul. You tell your friend everything, too much oftentimes, and you do not wait to "feel like it." You feel like it as soon as you know he is your friend, and you know only after you trusted and found him true and helpful and loving to you. Try Christ that way. Tell him everything, every day, regularly, whether you feel like it or not; only tell him quicker if you do not feel like it; and see how soon it comes true that you cannot live without telling him, or wait till the hour of prayer draws near. Try it, boys and girls. It is the great secret of the Christian's peace.

ON WHICH SIDE?

HERE is a story of the great President Lincoln. Young and old may learn from it a valuable lesson. One day during the great war some gentlemen called to see him. After a little time spent in conversation, one of them referred to the progress of the war, and added, "I trust that God will be on our side." "There is something else," replied Mr. Lincoln, "that gives me much more concern than that." "What can that be?" asked two or three of his visitors at once. "It is," answered Mr. Lincoln, "that we shall be on God's side."

That is the important thing, my young readers. God is always on the right side, and if we are on his side, we cannot be on the wrong side.

BE MERCIFUL.

A CRIPPLED beggar was trying to pick up some old clothes that had been thrown from a window, when a crowd of rude boys gathered about him, mimicking his awkward movements, and hooting at his helplessness and rage. Presently a noble little fellow came up, and pushing through the crowd, helped the poor crippled man to pick up his gifts, and place them in a bundle. Then, slipping a piece of silver into his hand, he was running away, when a voice far above him said, "Little boy with a straw hat, look up." A lady, leaning from an



BOUNTY BAY, PITCAIRN'S ISLAND.

upper window said eagerly, "God bless you, my little fellow; God will bless you for that."

As he walked along he thought how glad he had made his own heart by doing good. He thought of the poor beggar's grateful look; of the lady's smile and her approval; and last, and better than all, he could almost hear his heavenly Father whispering, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

BOUNTY BAY, PITCAIRN'S ISLAND.

IN 1780 a party of the officers and crew of the British ship *Bounty* mutinied near the Friendly Islands, in the South Pacific, and turned the captain and loyal sailors adrift in an open boat. This boat and all on board made a safe voyage of three thousand miles, and landed at Timor in the East Indian Archipelago. The mutineers made for Tahiti. Nine of them took Tahitian wives, and with nine other Tahitians sailed the *Bounty* to Pitcairn's Island.

Here the mutineers landed, and broke up their ship to avoid discovery. Safe from punishment, free from restraint, they may have expected to be happy in that lovely isle. But sin brings misery everywhere, and only two of the men died a natural death. They fought and killed each other till, in ten years after their landing, only one remained alive! This was John Adams, a sailor who had never been to school. He found himself with the Tahitian women and twenty fatherless children dependent on him alone for guidance. He had seen the awful consequences of sin, and now felt the responsibility of these souls. Only one book had been saved from the ship: the Bible and English Prayer-book bound together. Adams began to pray and to study the Bible, and was soon able to read easily, then he taught the children reading and writing, with the law of God and the blessed Gospel of Christ. The children all loved him and called him father, and learned readily what he could teach them. Peace now began her reign upon the island. Adams had morning and evening prayers and held Sunday services, aided by the English Prayer-book.

No ship touched at the island until 1814, when the colony was found to

contain forty-six persons, mostly grown up young people, who were honest and religious, industrious and affectionate.

John Adams died in 1829, but the good work he carried on was continued by Mr. George Nobbs. In 1856 the population had increased to 194, and it was thought the island was too small for them. It is, in fact, only two and a quarter miles long and a mile broad, and a portion is too rocky for cultivation. The English Government therefore transferred the people to Norfolk Island. Six families of forty persons who became homesick for Pitcairn, have returned thither, and have now increased to 103, while the Norfolk Islanders number 476. Mr. Nobbs remained with the latter. They continued the same kind, contented, God-fearing race. Many gifts find their way from England to Pitcairn, and Queen Victoria herself has sent them a church organ, of which they speak with great pride and delight.

THE CHILDREN OF WANT.

Probably few of my young readers ever know what real want is. They hear older people talk of poverty; they hear some complain of being poor, perhaps their own parents sometimes speak of hard times, and how carefully they must practise economy in order to live. But there are depths of poverty that go deeper than most of my young friends have any idea of. There are nakedness, and hunger, and destitution in every form. In many instances the father or mother is dead, or both the parents are gone. Oftentimes drunkenness of one or both of the parents brings a worse condition than their death could have brought. Many of these children of misfortune lead but a wretched street-life by day, and at night their shelter is a box, a barrel, an empty car, or a door-way. Such poverty can be found only in the large cities. The country and the villages have people who are called poor, but their poverty is never so utter and absolute as that which abounds in the great cities. There the greatest wealth and the deepest poverty are close neighbours.

THERE is a terrible evil in England—the number, to wit, of tipping-houses, where the labourer, as a matter of course, spends the overplus of his earnings.—*Sir Walter Scott.*