

# PLEASANT HOURS

PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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## THE TOBACCO NUISANCE.

BY THE EDITOR.

Nothing that we know of, unless it be the still worse drink habit, makes a man so selfish, so disregarding of the rights and comfort of others, as the tobacco habit. When I journey from home my life is often made a burden to me by reason of this almost universal habit. At home one can keep himself and person clear of the foul weed and its noxious emanations, but when travelling he is everywhere exposed to its poisonous fumes. Even in the elegant sleeping coach of the Canadian Pacific Railway which was my moving home for some days, upholstered as it was with all conceivable luxury, the most conspicuous article of furniture in each seat-section is an odious spittoon—"cuspidor" is, I believe, the polite word—with its hideous suggestions and associations. We have seen them even in pulpits in the South, and notwithstanding the presence of refined and delicate ladies, these abominations are in frequent use. Then, in each car the compartment commanding the best view of the magnificent scenery is dedicated to the smokers, and is furnished with more "cuspidors." From this den gentlemen emerge reeking with tobacco smoke, and sit down beside me to discuss politics, philosophy, religion, with tobacco-poisoned breath.

In Europe it frequently happens that attached to the very window out of which one looks on a lovely landscape is a receptacle for cigar ashes, whose stale contents almost make one sick with disgust.

In the ordinary passenger cars matters are still worse. In these there are no "cuspidors," and the filthy condition of the floor, after a three or four days' ride, can be more easily imagined than described.

In the emigrant car the condition of things is worst of all. Here unlimited smoking is permitted. To the reek of the foul tobacco and attendant nastiness of its own occupants, is added that contributed by passengers of the other cars, who come here to indulge their odious habit. And this, although the car is the travelling home, often for day after day, of women and children, sometimes wayworn and sick with a long sea-voyage, from whom there is no way of escape from these discomforts. Is it not then unmanly, is it not brutal to inflict them? I write thus strongly as I sweep along in just such a train as I describe amid the grand scenery of the north shore of Lake Superior.

This is not pleasant reading I admit; but the reality is far worse. I have often, while waiting for the train at a country station, stood outside half-frozen with the cold, rather than encounter the nastiness of the waiting-room crowded with smokers; and the worst of it is that the sensibilities of smokers become so blunted that they



SUMMER SCENE—HAYING TIME.

are unconscious of the nuisance they create. Have I and other non-smokers, especially women and children, not the right of protection from this nuisance?

I write on this unsavoury topic to urge boys never to acquire this odious habit. Keep your bodies clean and pure, and fit for the service of a pure and holy God; when you come to man's estate do not have to say in a literal sense, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips." I covet for my native land deliverance from this ugly habit. I rejoice that in the last three years over 80,000 of the young people of our Sunday-schools have signed a pledge against the twin evils of liquor and tobacco. I hope that every scholar will sign that pledge, and that soon we shall have a generation of men free from the thralldom of this vile habit.

A MINISTER startled his audience by saying, "I have forgotten my notes, and shall have to trust to Providence, but this evening I will come better prepared."

## HIS KINGDOM.

IN a military hospital a soldier lad lay dying. He had stood steadily on the battle-field only a few brief hours ago, yet he was a mere lad for all that. The bloom was still on his full young cheek, heightened a little by the intense fever of his gunshot wound; his eyes were innocent in their sweet expression, although they looked round restlessly at times in search of some relief from the agonizing pain—and closed again—finding none. There was a hush in the roughly improvised hospital ward; gentle whispers and quiet foot-falls—the inevitable appendages of sickness everywhere; and the rest—you know them all. The lad lay on a narrow stretcher—a frail storm-battered boat tossing amongst breakers, every plank creaking, every seam parting, beaten up and down on pillows of anguish, the final surge that was to sink it out of sight coming nearer and nearer!—it had almost come. The nurse, who watched by his bedside, realized how close death was coming, and with a tender pity in her heart for the soldier boy

who lay dying so far away from home and mother, laid her gentle hand upon his head, saying:

"William, if this should be death that is coming upon you, are you ready to meet God?"

The dark eyes opened slowly, and a sweet smile passed over his boyish face, as he answered feebly:

"I am ready, sister, for this has long been His Kingdom"—as he spoke he placed his hand over his heart.

The nursing sister looked down upon him as he lay, still smiling. "Do you mean," she questioned, "that God rules and reigns in your heart?"

"Yes, my heart is his Kingdom," he answered, but his voice sounded faint and far off, as though it came from a soul well on its way through the dark "valley of the shadow of death."

When they looked at him a few hours later, he lay with a light like the sunset at eventide upon his face, and his hand upon his heart—"His Kingdom;" the loyal heart had ceased to beat, and the soldier lad's soul had gone up to God. The King had come to "His Kingdom."

Is the Lord reigning in your soul? Can you pray "Thy Kingdom Come?" The hearts of his people are the palaces in which he delights to reign. Is your heart his Kingdom?

Beyond the grave there is no giving of the heart to God; there is no place to pray in the tomb. Those who founder here—founder forever; a blunder now is a blunder for eternity. I do not want you to make a mistake. I do not want you to fear death, but to be ready for its coming. Let the Lord have his way with you, and let him reign in your heart, dear young reader.

If Jehovah is King, are we giving him glory?

Our Royal Redeemer should reign on his throne;  
Are our lives the sweet echo of gospel-told story  
Lived out by the hearts that his sovereignty own;

## REER AND CHOLERA.

A DESPATCH from Hamburg says that the cholera there has been especially severe on beer drinkers and intemperate people generally. This is the case in all epidemics, not that beer is per se inducive of cholera or fever or contagion of any kind, but people who drink heavily of intoxicants have no stamina with which to resist disease. A drunkard is always at a disadvantage in an epidemic. His stomach is in bad condition and his organs are disturbed in their functions. He falls an early victim. Should cholera reach this city the habitual drunkards will fare badly. There is a little prohibition sermon in this text.—N. Y. Morning Advertiser.