

THE LILY.

LILY of the valley
In outline frail and dim,
Leans from the water over
A goblet's fragile rim,—
Pure as the prayer of childhood,
Sweet as an evening hymn.

The slender stalk is swinging
Its seven tiny bells,
Like fairy chorus singing
And from the crystal cells
We fancy—faint and tender—
Aerial music wells.

Amid the vexing problems,
And codes of men abroad,
The tiresome creeds and systems
Through which we toil and plod,
How sweet and simple blossoms
A perfect thought of God!

Myra Pollard.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLKS:

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

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 22, 1883.

THE WINNOWED LIST.

THE Publishing Department of the Methodist Church of Canada, has now a very large "winnowed list" of Sunday-school books, amounting to about 1,600 in all, which have been carefully read by ministers of the Church. It was not considered advisable by the Sunday-school Board to divert any of its receipts from the fund for the assistance of needy schools, for the purpose of extending the winnowed list; but the Secretary of the Board applied to publishers inviting them to submit specimens of their books for examination. Several of the leading houses have done so, and the following are some of the opinions expressed on the books by the ministers to whom they were sent for examination. Others will be published as received. All these books will be included in next winnowed list and may be ordered through the Methodist Book Rooms of Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax.

"Out of the Fire," Chellis, National Temperance Publication Society, New York. A story founded on life in the country, exhibiting in true colours the great evils of intemperance, and the possibility of a complete reformation of life and character through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. It

is calculated to lead the mind to a sweet trust in God, and submission to His will as the remedy for the ills of life.

E. A. STAFFORD,
Winnipeg.

The Temperance Doctor, National Temperance Publication Society, New York. This book, in a masterly and fascinating way, deals with the question of total abstinence, and very effectually disposes of the usual arguments from the so called moderation stand-point. It should be in every Sabbath-school library in the land. I have read it through without resting.

JOHN SHAW,
Peterboro'.

Home Stories, John B. Anderson, New York. Mr. T. S. Arthur has placed in his book entitled *Home Stories*, ten very interesting views of life incidents. The book takes rank among the works of fiction, yet the pictures are so well drawn that they seem to rest on fact. In each there is a profitable lesson, and in some the heart is drawn out after the things which are above.

E. S. RUPERT,
Invermay.

"*The Wicket Gate*," by W. W. Newton, Robert Carter & Brothers. I have read every word in this book. I found nothing objectionable. The anecdotes and illustrations are adapted to do good. It is a safe book to put into the hands of any young person, and I think one that will be read.

A. LANGFORD,
Hamilton.

AN ACT OF SELF-DENIAL.

BY REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE.

IT was a great mystery to many people why Governor Briggs, of Massachusetts, wore a cravat, but no collar. Some people thought it was an absurd eccentricity. Ah! no. This was the secret: Many years before he was talking with an inebriate and telling him that his habit was unnecessary, and the inebriate retorted upon him and said: "We do a great many things that are not necessary. It is not necessary for you to wear that collar." "Well," said Governor Briggs, "I never will wear a collar again if you won't drink." "Agreed," said the inebriate. Governor Briggs never wore a collar. They both kept their bargain for twenty years. They kept it to the death. That is the reason Governor Briggs did not wear a collar. That is simply magnificent. That is the Gospel of the Son of God—self denial for the good and the rescue of others.

PROVIDENCE AND THE WOOD PILE.

ONE snowy Saturday night, years ago, when the wood-pile of the Alcott household was very low, a neighbour's child came to beg a little wood, as "the baby was very sick, and the father off on a spree with his wages."

There was a baby, too, in the Alcott household; and the storm was wild, and the Sabbath was coming between that night and the chance of more wood. For once Mrs. Alcott hesitated; but the serene Sage of Concord looked out undismayed into the wild and wintry storm.

"Give half our stock," said he resolutely, "and trust to Providence. Wood will come, or the weather will moderate."

His wife laughed and answered cheerfully: "Well at any rate, their need is greater than ours, and if our half gives out, we can go to bed and tell stories."

So a good half of the wood went to the poor neighbour. Later on in the evening the storm increased, and the family council decided to cover up the fire to keep it, and go to bed. Just then came a knock at the door, and lo! it was the farmer who usually supplied Mr. Alcott with wood.

He had started to go into Boston with his load, but the storm so drove in his face, and the snow so drifted in his path, that it had driven him back; and now, if he might unload his load there, it would save him taking it home again, and he "s'posed" they'd be wanting some soon.

Of course his proposition was gladly accepted, and as the farmer went off to the woodshed, the triumphant Sage of Concord turned to his wife with a wise look which much impressed his children, and said—

"Didn't I tell you wood would come, if the weather did not moderate?"

"HOW CAN I BE USEFUL."

BY THE REV. PETER STRYKER.

LITTLE Mary was only eleven years old. But she was old enough to know that she was a sinner; and she had gone to Christ, and taken Him in her heart as her Saviour. Soon after doing this, when feeling very happy as a young Christian, Mary went to her pastor, and asked him the question, "How can I be useful?"

Very often it happens that people have just what they are seeking for. This was the case with this dear little girl. The very knowledge she wished to obtain was hers.

"Mary have you not already tried to do something good?" inquired her pastor, who was very much interested in her case.

"Yes," she replied; "I have been praying to God for my dear father, that he may become a sober man, and go to church with mother and the rest of us."

"Well have you only prayed, Mary? You know we must use the means if we want to obtain any great end."

"I have tried to do this, too," timidly said the child; "but fear I do not speak just as I should to him."

This little girl only needed a little encouragement. She was full of faith and hope. The truth sparkled in her eye and sprung from her lips. She continued to pray and labour with her poor father until he could no longer resist her persuasions. He had driven others away but he could not speak harshly to his gentle little Mary. She fully conquered him.

Shortly after this interview, she planned it to have her pastor visit their house; and after a few kind words from him, the father signed the temperance pledge, and to encourage him the mother and children added their names,



THE CUP OF DEATH.

and thus a family temperance society was formed.

Don't you think Mary learned how to be useful? Dear children, how many of you will try in some way to do good? God will help you.—*Band of Hope Review.*

THE CUP OF DEATH.

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Prov. 23. 31-32.

LOOK not thou upon the wine when it is red within the cup! Stay not for pleasure when she fills Her tempting beaker up! Though clear its depths, and rich its glow, A spell of madness lurks below.

They say tis pleasant on the lip, And merry on the brain, They say it stirs the sluggish blood, And dulls the tooth of pain. Ay, but within its glowing deeps A stinging serpent, unseen, sleeps.

Its rosy lights will turn to fire, Its coolness turn to thirst, And by its mirth within the brain, A sleepless worm is nursed. There's not a bubble at the brim, That does not carry food for him.

Then dash the brimming cup aside, And spill its purple wine, Take not its madness to thy lip, Let not its curse be thine. 'Tis red and rich—but grief and woe Are hid those rosy depths below.

—N. P. Willis.

If persons desiring to organizing new Sunday-schools, or to bring schools already existing into harmony with the Discipline of our Church, will write to the Editor of PLEASANT HOURS, he will be happy to forward a printed constitution and other information on the subject.

We all of us complain of the shortness of time, and yet have much more than we know what to do with. Our lives are spent either in doing nothing at all, or in doing nothing to the purpose, or in doing nothing that we ought to do. We are always complaining our days are few, and acting as though there would be no end of them.—*Seneca.*