

CHERRIES ARE RIPE.

"You are a little thief," I said
To Robin Redbreast blithe and fat,
"You stole my cherries ripe and red,
Now what have you to say to that?"

In songful speech he sweetly said,
His bosom glowing like the morn,
"I take my pay in cherries red,
For working in your vines and corn.
"My sweetest strains I sing for you,"
He said in music low and soft,
And then his brown wings shook the dew
In showers from his green organ loft.

Like tears the dew fell, and I said,
When came the pauses of his strain,
"Sweet robin, eat my cherries red,
I will not call you thief again."

Now every year, when spring returns
He perches on the topmost spray,
And there his tinted bosom burns
With songs of cheer at dawn of day.

The robin is my choice of pets,
I wish him joy and length of days;
He pays me well for all he gets,
In skillful toil and songs of praise.
—George W. Bungray in *Youth's Companion*.

A BRAVE LITTLE TRIO.

Hanse, Dimmy and Pam had been planting beans all the morning—four in a hill no more, no less—out back of the barn. They had helped their father about the crops every year almost ever since they could walk.

It was a warm day in May. The swallows were flirting about under the brown eaves of the barn, the bluebirds were clearing out their last year's boxes, and the old pee-wee was building her big nest on a rafter in the open shed. The frogs had been clearing their throats all the morning, and Bounce, the dog, with his head in the stone wall, was barking at a woodchuck that every now and then chick-err-red defiance at all his efforts.

Hanse cast his big black eyes all about the blue sky, and sighed. Dimmy looked into the leather bag of beans which she was to plant, and drew a long breath, and little Pam leaned on her short hoe and sighed in sympathy.

"Too bad, ain't it?" said Hanse, in an aggrieved voice. "The birds don't have to plant beans!"

"Nor the woodchucks, nor—" said Dimmy.

"They have to build nests and lay eggs and—"

"Woodchucks lay eggs! No, no, Pam!" shouted Hanse, mockingly, cutting off a whole hill of new corn in his inattention, and bringing a hot flush of anger to little Pam's face.

"They dig holes, anyway!" she shouted back, flinging a handful of dirt at Hanse, "an' eats pa's beans!"

"I wish that one 'ud come out o' the wall an' eat the whole of these, bags an' all!" retorted Hanse.

"So do I! I hate to plant 'em!" cried Dimmy, throwing her big sunbonnet back from her sweaty face, and stamping her little bare, brown foot to emphasize the assertion.

"I don't like it, neither!" whimpered Pam.

"Well, let's not then!" said Hanse, boldly.

"Oh, we must!" cried the little girls. "We won't have any baked beans next winter."

"Who wants 'em?" sniffed Hanse. "I don't!" at which Dimmy and Pam mocked him.

By this time the three little planters were in high temper and felt very wicked, but at last Hanse, with a good deal of argument, won over his companions in distress, and they did a very sad thing. They emptied their bags of beans into a post-hole back of the barn, and put a stone on them. At dinner-time their father praised their swiftness, and gave them the afternoon for a holiday, and, forgetting for the time their reckless act, the children hied away up the river-bank, Hanse with a dog-wood fish-pole over his shoulder, Dimmy carrying a lunch, and Pam the box of angle-worms.

Hanse played his hook a long time, but the fish would not bite and the children wandered on till they came within sight of the railway bridge. They had been told not to go upon it, but this day seemed full of a desire for disobedience and rebellion.

They wanted to look down through the bridge into the rushing river. On they went at a run. But when they came to it a sorrowful sight met their eyes. There was "Africa", their father's old black horse, on the bridge, with his foot caught so that he could not get away.

Hanse shouted and Dimmy and Pam screamed with all their might; but it was of no use. Wouldn't Africa have been glad to have got off the terrible spot if he could? But he couldn't. Then the children began to think. The passenger train came by their home at three o'clock, and it seemed as late as that now to the terrified children.

What could they do? Poor old Africa! And the train!

"Run, Dimmy—Pam—quick!" cried Hanse, white with fear. "Gather brush—lots of it! Bonfire on the track!" And away he fled to a near woods, followed by the little girls. Armful after armful of dry brush they brought, running with all speed till quite a heap lay ready for lighting, some distance below the bridge. Then Hanse hunted out a match from his ragged pocket—what boy does not have a match?—and

TIME.

BY W. P. DRAPER.

[This was, says the *Golden Rule*, one of the brightest of many bright papers at the last Massachusetts Christian Endeavor Convention.]

Lost: Somewhere between sunrise and sunset, one golden hour, set with sixty diamond minutes!

Did you lose it?

Who has lost it?

Did you find it?

Did you ever think that one thing in this world is equally divided? I mean time as we divide it into twenty-four hours for a day. Each person, rich or poor, has twenty-four hours, a day and night. Let us ask ourselves to-day these questions:

Do I make the best use of the time I have, and am I using my moments to glorify God and to advance the interests of Christ and the Church?

For Christ and the Church; this is the watchword for Christian Endeavor.

Let us take each letter in this watchword to give us a line of thought as to the way in which we can use our time. And with

child, and the answer come, "Yes! in just a minute"?

Did you ever hear in your own heart the whisper, "Yes, I'll speak in just a minute"?

How many valuable moments are lost in this evening hour, and if we are never to find them, it behooves us to be very careful of them. In Ecclesiastes 3 we read: "There is a time for every purpose." Now, then, let us have a purpose for every time, and especially for the prayer-meeting hour.

The purpose of the leader should be to start on time.

Not to take up too much time.

Watch the moments, let none be lost.

Have plenty of time for prayer,—silent prayer, sentence prayer, united prayer,—time for testimonies and experience, time for requests.

Close on time.

All of us who unite in worship in this hour should purpose to bring something to it; then we surely can get something from it.

Let your individual purpose be to testify in every way to the helpfulness of the Christian religion.

Don't lose any of the early moments of the hour by being late.

Have time to sing, and sing in time. Be attentive and use your time. Don't take up too much time, remember others are anxious to speak or pray.

It is a peculiar task in five minutes to suggest how a day of 1440 minutes can best be used; yet we can in closing turn our thoughts to Buckminster's words:

"Believe me! Your time is not your own, it belongs to God, to religion and to mankind."

THE BLIND BASKET-GIRL.

A poor blind girl once brought to a clergyman thirty shillings for a missionary society. He, surprised that she should offer him so large a sum, said, "You, a poor blind girl! you can not afford to give so much as this."

"I am, indeed, sir, as you say, a blind girl, but not so poor, perhaps, as you may suppose me to be; and I can prove to you that I can better afford to give these thirty shillings than those girls who have eyes."

The clergyman was, of course, deeply interested, and said, "I shall be glad to know how you make it out."

"Sir, I am a basket-maker, and, being blind, I can make as well in the dark as in the light. Now, I am sure that during last winter, when it was so dark, it must have cost those girls that have eyes more than thirty shillings to buy candles; and so I can well afford to give that sum for the missionaries, and I hope you will take it all."
—*Sunday-School Messenger*.

HOW SLEIGH-BELLS ARE MADE.

It has, no doubt, been a mystery to many how the iron ball inside of sleigh-bells got there, and it is said to have taken considerable thought on the part of the discoverer before the idea struck him. In making sleigh-bells the iron ball is put inside a sand core, just the shape of the inside of the bell. Then a mould is made just the shape of the outside of the bell. This sand core with the jinglet inside is placed in the mould of the outside, and the melted metal is poured in, which fills up the space between the core and the mould. The hot metal burns the core so that it can be all shaken out, leaving the ball within the shell. Ball valves, swivel joints, and many other articles are cast in the same manner.—*Exchange*.

FAITHFUL IN THE PANTRY.

After breakfast one morning, the waiter-girl who had charge of the pantry of a large farm-house in England, locked it up for the rest of the day. In doing this, without knowing it, she had locked up in that pantry a great mastiff dog, belonging to the farm. On opening the pantry door, at the close of the day, she was frightened when she saw the dog come out. She expected to find that great mischief had been done by the dog. There were pans of milk, and loaves of bread, and joints of meat there. But the dog knew that he had no right to use these until they were offered to him. And so, hungry and thirsty as he was, he spent the whole day without touching one of those tempting things. What a lesson of faithfulness we have here!—*Rev. Richard Newton*.



A BRAVE LITTLE TRIO.

touched it off. Away leaped the flames into the air just as a distant rumble of the train came up the valley.

Fearful that the driver would not see the fire, the children tied their aprons and jackets on branches and ran toward the train waving them and shouting with all their might. He did see it, and stopped in time, and Africa was rescued, and the train was saved from a terrible accident.

Well, the children took Africa and went home with the praises and cheers of the happy passengers ringing after them.

How proud their father was of this act of courage and forethought!

But the children were not quite easy in their minds, and the more he praised them the worse they felt; and three heavy little hearts beat beneath two little patchwork quilts that night, and three pairs of eyes kept wide awake, thinking what could be done.

Early next morning, right away after prayers, three guilty-looking little culprits stole out back of the barn and, scooping the beans from the post-hole, planted them every one as quickly as they could, each hill in its proper place. It gave them all a backache, but it eased their hearts.—*Youth's Companion*.

the first letter, F, comes the thought that we can spend our time in

Forgiveness—We shall have opportunities all day long.

Organized effort—A source of success.

Reverence—A great need to-day.

Consecration—Brings us near to God.

Holy thoughts—Lead to pure lives.

Reflection—Helps us to appreciate blessings.

Individuality—Yet copy Christ.

Self-sacrifice—Out of selfishness.

True Principles—The foundation in true life.

Anxiety—For souls.

Naturalness—Grows out of individuality and self-sacrifice.

Devotion—No success without it.

Temperance—Help the weak.

Heavenly Aspirations—Look upward.

Enthusiasm—Gives power.

Charity—Blessing to others.

Hopefulness—Brings bright rays of light.

Usefulness—Brings happiness.

Recreation—All work and no play.

Contentment—With godliness great gain.

Helpfulness—Christ gives us example.

One golden hour I desire to speak about,

that is, the prayer-meeting hour.

Did you ever hear a mother call her