

divine Redeemer, the Gospel of Luke, each of which we would sell them for a dudu, one of their coins worth about one cent, and asked if they would not like to obtain some of these and learn more about this Saviour, Jesus Christ, one after another took out his wallet and purchased, until every Gospel and tract that we had with us had been bought; and then they appointed five of their chief men to escort us politely to our tent, and begged our pardon for the indignities which "this graceless rabble" had put upon us. —Golden Rule.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, MARCH 27, 1897.

SKILFUL SAVAGES.

The Congo country is perhaps the most talked of country on the globe just now. We are looking toward it as the land of untold wealth and resource, and wonder what kind of a republic will be founded within its borders.

Not the least wonderful objects in this far-away land are the natives. Mr. Herbert Ward, in Scribner's, tells us that the villages are deserted almost every morning, as the people go out to their plantation to work, on which the women work as hard as the men. The natives of the Congo country are still in a savage condition, but Mr. Ward tells us some surprising things about them. He says that in their villages the centre of activity is the blacksmith shop. This shop is a roof of grass supported on poles. The bellows are of skin and wood; the tools, hammers that resemble doctor's pestles of varying weights, cups made of clay for melting ore, and an anvil. The workers take the ore as it is dug, and there, under the grass roof, with these rude tools the metal passes through every stage, and leaves in the worker's hands a finished tool, spear, knife, arrowhead, or any instrument designed by the worker. They work in clay with the same ease, and without tools that in civilized countries are supposed to be necessary to such manufacture. The lump of clay becomes in a short time a finished vessel; even decorative, so perfectly and neatly is it finished, they do not even have moulds to shape the clay.

Mr. Ward tells us that these people take no measurements, that they rely on their eye and hand. They have made guns, beginning with wood and metal in its original state in the tree and ore, and made their tools as they needed them, adapting the tool as they discovered its need.

Of the young people, Mr. Ward says that they engage in the same line of work as their parents or masters, and that they are cheerful and light-hearted entering with enthusiasm into their games, bird trapping and hunting. One of their amusements is playing at war. Some of the tribes make commercial contracts that might be called protective measures. One tribe makes a contract to engage in agricultural pursuits, while the other tribe, party to the contract, engages to confine its energies to pottery-making, and not to engage in agriculture in any form, and they keep these contracts honourably. A railroad is now being built through the Congo country, and this will in a few years stop slave-

FRESH BERRIES.

"Dear me!" said Miss Marshall, and she began to walk slower and slower. "What a low-looking hut that is; and what a low-looking man is sitting there! I wonder if I am afraid to pass him?" I am glad I haven't my pocket-book," and she felt in her pocket to be sure it wasn't there. "But then, I have my watch and chain, and my diamond ring. I don't know what to do. I am afraid to turn around, and I am afraid to go on. What made me wander away out here? Who would have supposed that such a low-looking set lived here. I may as well walk on, I suppose, for they will be sure to chase after me if I let them know that I am afraid. Oh, dear me! I wish I was safe at home again!"

She walked slower and slower, and kept looking at the ugly fellow outside the hut, and wondering how many more were inside, and whether they would let her go. He gave them her watch and ring. Just then a shrill voice from within the hut squealed out:

"Jake!"
"What!" said the man outside.
"Are there there berries in the yellow pall to go to the village this morning?"
"No!"
"Why not?"

"Cause they ain't fresh; they was left over; they was picked a Saturday, and this is a Monday morning. Stale berries ain't healthy, to say nothing of their not bein' honest. You don't catch Jake Flinn bein' mean enough to try to sell 'em for fresh, so near after the Sabbath day, too. We can eat 'em for dinner; they won't hurt us, I suppose; anyhow, they can't go to market!"

Miss Marshall heard every word of this, and, by the time Jake stopped talking, she had begun to walk fast again. She nodded a pleasant good-morning to him as she passed the hut. Every bit of fear was gone; she knew her watch and diamond ring were as safe as though she were at home. Why? Because she had sense enough to know that a man who wouldn't sell stale berries for fresh ones, wouldn't steal. Little bits of things tell what kind of lives people live. "He is not so bad-looking a man after all," said Miss Marshall as she passed him; even the look on his face seemed to have changed.

THEY SURPRISED QUEEN VICTORIA

The Queen is very fond of children. One day she was out driving in Scotland, when she saw three little girls who lived at the same manse thoroughly enjoying themselves at a good game.

She sent a messenger to make inquiries about them, and desired that they might come and visit her at the castle.

It so happened that their parents were not at home at the time, and although they were in high glee, the children did not quite know what to do.

One point which troubled them very much was how they should address the Queen. However, after a little talk, they decided they could not do better than address her as the kings of old were addressed in Bible history.

When they were taken into her Majesty's presence, to the Queen's great amusement they fell immediately down before her and very solemnly exclaimed: "O Queen, live forever!"

They spent a delightful afternoon, and all too soon the time arrived for them to go home.

Imagine the Queen's surprise and amusement when, on leaving, they again fell down together and said this time:

"O Queen, live forever! And please may we come again another day?"

A QUAKER'S DREAM.

It is not our criticism but our example, not our preaching but our practice, that does most toward getting things right in this crooked world. A trite enough truth, but one that needs frequent repetition.

"Friends," said an old Quaker, "I have had a dream which I would like to tell you." They agreed to hear him, and the old gentleman proceeded:

"I dreamed that the whole Society of Friends were collected in our great meeting-house, and attending to the business of the church. The subject under discussion was the filthy condition of the meeting-house, and the means of cleansing it. Many plans were proposed and discussed by the prominent members, who sat in the upper seats, but none seemed likely to answer the purpose, until one little man who occupied a seat on the floor of the house, and had not taken part in the discussion, got up and said: 'Friends, I think that if each one of us would take a broom and sweep immediately around his own seat, the meeting-house would be cleaned.'"

AN AUDIENCE OF MONKEYS.

By Rev. JACOB CHAMBERLAIN, M.D., D.D.

The most singular audience that I ever saw gathered to listen to preaching was an audience of monkeys. When I commenced work in the region which I have now occupied for more than thirty years, I asked two fellow missionaries to join me in a preaching tour in the adjacent taluk, or county. We first went with three native assistants to the taluk town, or county-seat. Our tents were pitched in a grove adjoining the town. We usually on our tours went two and two to preach in the villages, but this being the taluk town, and the first of our preaching the Gospel in that region, we went in a body into the native city.

Walking through the cloth, spice, grain, and iron merchants' bazaar streets, and then through the goldsmiths and silversmiths' street, around through the temple street, and then through the street of Brahman residences, to advertise our presence, and incite curiosity to know what we were about, we finally took our stand in the Brahman street, and all joined in singing one of the beautiful Telugu Christian lyrics, and gathered an audience of interested listeners.

We stood upon a little raised platform on one side of the street against the house walls. The houses were all of one story, joined together like a city block, with flat roofs, and a low parapet along the front of the roof. One of our native assistants read a portion from the Gospels, and another preached briefly, then one of my fellow missionaries followed, preaching more at length, while I watched the audience, to study the countenances of the people among whom I expected to work.

I had noticed that behind the houses on the opposite side of the street there was a long row of trees growing in their back yards, the branches of which stretched out over the flat roofs.

Chancing to raise my eyes, I noticed many branches of these trees beginning to bend downward toward the roofs, and saw the face of some old jack monkeys peering out through the foliage. Soon some of them jumped down and came forward to see what their "big brothers" in the street were about, as they stood gazing so intently at these white men standing on the platform. Springing upon the parapet they seated themselves, with their hind feet hanging over in front, and gazing with fixedness at the preacher, as they saw the people in the street doing.

Other monkeys followed, until there was a long row of them thus seated on the parapet. The late-comers I could see walking along behind the parapet, looking for a place wide enough to get a seat. Failing to find a wide enough place between two already seated monkeys, they would put up their hands, and, pushing each one sidewise, would seem to be saying, "Sit along a bit, please, and give a fellow a seat," until the "bench" was crowded.

The audience in the street, standing with their backs toward that row of houses, did not notice the monkeys, and so their attention was not distracted by them.

I had noticed that many mother monkeys had brought their babies to church with them. These little baby monkeys sat upon the thigh of the mother, while her hand was placed around them in a very human fashion, but the sermon was evidently too high for these little folks to comprehend. Glancing up, I saw one of the little monkeys cautiously reach his hand around, and, catching hold of another baby monkey's tail, give it a pull. The other little monkey struck back, but each mother monkey evidently disapproved of this levity in church, and each gave its own baby a box on the ears, as though saying: "Sit still! Don't you know how to behave in church?" The little monkeys, thus reprimanded, turned the most solemn faces toward the preacher, and seemed to listen intently to what he was saying.

With the exception of a monkey now and then trying to catch a flea that was biting him in some tender spot, they thus sat demurely, until the preacher finished his sermon, and until we had distributed Gospels and tracts among the audience, and had started for our tents.

Our "celestial audience" seeing our "terrestrial audience" dispersing, then, and not until then, left their seats and demurely walked back and sprang upon the branches again. There were no "monkey capers" as they went; they were as serious as a congregation leaving a church, and sat upon the branches in a meditative mood as though thinking over what they had heard the preacher say. And thus we left our unique monkey audience. —Golden Rule.

"Chickadee."

The winter day was near its close;
The white wings of the storm arose;
And flung against my window-pane
Its whirling snow and frozen rain.
But when, at last, morn's tardy light
Had filled the darkness of the night,
From icy perch on leafless tree
A little bird said—"chickadee."

O reader, could I send to thee
This bird-voice from the leafless tree—
Could I repeat the simple strain,
Thy heart would find its hope again;
The world would bless my little rhyme,
And read it many and many a time,
But God gave not such gift to me—
He gave it to the chickadee.

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

APRIL 4, 1897.

The women to the empty sepulchre.—
Mark 16, 1-8.

EASTER SUNDAY.

The great event of which Easter reminds us, is the greatest fact revealed in the Bible. It is the foundation on which, as upon an immovable basis, the whole superstructure of Christianity resteth. Destroy this foundation, then all our preaching is in vain, and religion is nothing but a myth. It is recorded that two men once undertook to destroy the evidence of Christ's resurrection, and the evidence of Paul's conversion, as they esteemed these the two greatest foundations of the Gospel, but the evidence of these two great fundamental truths destroyed the infidelity of those men, who became, like Paul himself, defenders of the truth which they sought to destroy.

CHRIST'S DEATH.

Nobody ever disputed the fact of Christ's death. He really died, and seeing that he died, he must be buried. Of these two truths, the Bible is explicit. The place of burial is named, which the women visited.

THE WOMEN.

All honour to the women, who were the last at the cross, and the first at the sepulchre. The men had lost all hope, or were afraid, but the women were heroic, for they went before daylight to the sacred spot, where the remains of their Lord had been laid. Their object was to put spices, or unguents, on the body. All this was in proof of their gratitude and love to him. They conversed respecting the difficulties they would meet with.

Verse 3. "Who will roll away the stone?" This was the huge stone which had been placed at the door of the sepulchre, and stamped with the seal of the Governor, Pilate, to break which would incur a serious penalty. Perhaps they did not know what Pilate had done to secure the body.

THEIR SURPRISE.

The stone was rolled away, so that they had no difficulty of entrance. Difficulties are generally greatest at a distance. An angel had acted as though he had anticipated his visitors. When they entered the sacred enclosure, they were startled to see the angelic visitants, who addressed them in the most tender and kind manner, "Ye seek Jesus, which was crucified." Their conversation filled the women with surprise, "He is not here," etc.

THE COMMAND.

Verse 7. "Go tell the disciples and Peter." Why should Peter be mentioned by name, and the others included in the common word, "disciples"? This is a remarkable exhibition of divine goodness. Peter had denied the Saviour three times, and yet, notwithstanding this, he is mentioned as one to whom the fact of the Saviour's resurrection must be made known.

They were further told that their Lord was going before them into Galilee. They were full of wonderment, and hardly knew what they were doing. Never were such glad tidings made known to men before. Women were the first preachers after the resurrection. Well might they feel honoured in making known this glorious embassy. They frequently saw Jesus during the next forty days. The angels first told of Christ's resurrection, the women next repeated the fact, the disciples who saw the empty sepulchre rehearsed the same, and even the enemies of Christ were among the witnesses, for they said that the body was stolen while they slept. All this is the clearest possible evidence.