

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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In Autumn Days.

BY L. D. PERKINS.

From hill and mount the forest lifts
Its gorgeous banners to the sky;
The sun of Indian summer sifts
Its softened splendour far and nigh.

Above the fertile harvest fields,
The cannonade of tempest rung,
But there, in grace surpassing fair,
The fleecy flags of truce are hung.

No breeze-kissed leaf or cloud is seen
In lower or in upper air—
The wooing zephyr cannot choose
Between the beauty here
and there.

A holy hush broods o'er the earth,
On mountain high, in valley deep,
Save when the blue jay screams like one
Aroused from conscience-troubled sleep.

Heaven grant it be that when
round us
Life's rich autumnal glories lie,
Through silences of peace we hear
No guilt-awakened mem-
ory's cry!

POPE PIUS VII. AND NAPOLEON I. AT FONTAINEBLEAU.

Pope Pius VII did more for Italy in some ways than many who have held the same office before or since his time. We are told that "he abolished every kind of torture and modified the powers of the Inquisition," besides doing "a great deal towards the suppression of banditti," or the highway robbers of Italy. He was a man of broad mind, great powers, active virtue, and of a peaceful disposition. Towards the end of 1807, he saw fit to refuse an important desire of Jerome, the brother of Napoleon I., and other things having increased the high tension then existing between Napoleon and the Pope, the former coolly annexed certain provinces of Italy, whereupon the Pope excommunicated him. There was no longer now any pretence of good feeling, and one of Napoleon's generals forced his way into the palace of the Pope and conveyed the Pontiff to Spain. From here he was taken in 1812 to Fontainebleau, where he was treated with scant courtesy. Early in the following year he was persuaded to sign a contract which virtually surrendered to Napoleon all the ecclesiastical states. This was all that was required of him and he was at once released. Soon afterwards the Pope saw the mistake he had made and wrote to Napoleon to say that he retracted his former concessions. Napoleon, however, took no notice of the letter. Our illustration shows the two great men discussing the contract probably just before the Pope signed it.

A man's conduct in his own home is the best indication of his character. If he is fault-finding, surly, and selfish there, no amount of prayer-meeting participation or polished manners in society can make a real gentleman of him. His actions toward his mother are a good gauge of his real worth. He who on every occasion honours his parents proves himself one of God's knights.

GOLDEN GOSSIP.

How easy it is to speak kindly of every one. If, during our conversation, a bitter thought comes in our heart, we can just hesitate a minute; we will be sure to change that hard word to something pleasant, and thus make life happier not only for the friend in question, but it will certainly make our hearts lighter to know that no hasty word of ours has been the means of making another sad. For cruel words, sometimes intentional, but more often uttered

him every day and every hour. Now if we must talk, let it be golden gossip. "Speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness to all men" (Titus 3. 2).

CHRIST IS ALL.

Gather off your beech trees, in the budding spring days, a little brown shell, in which lies tender green leafage, and if you will carefully strip it you will find, packed in a compass that might almost

CHILDREN IN CHINA.

BY MISS J. O. EVANS.

Some days ago as I went to my work almost across the city, the thermometer between 90 degrees and 100 degrees, I thought of you and wrote you a thought letter. I often write thought letters to shut out the outside world. Going along the bank of the canal, a little girl of some four or five years came from her play to meet me, with a pleasant smile—but, children, she was so dirty! I don't think you ever saw such a dirty half-dressed little girl. I did not know her at first, through all the dirt, and she could only have known me as a foreigner. She put her little hand up to take mine, and led me along to her home.

I wonder what you would have thought of 'hat for a home? Just one room is theirs—her father, mother, and little baby sister live there together, the fuel room and the pig pen in the front yard; not one blade of grass, no flowers, no pretty play things, and as I sat on the brick bed talking with and teaching her mother, some of her companions came and sat down close by me—they were all just as dirty as she was.

I think I pity the children of this land more than the grown-up people; none of the nice times and pleasant words you have in a Christian land, mothers here so often have no pleasant words for their little girls, only scolding and often blows; little girls are not loved as boys are.

In the same room where I taught I saw some years ago a sight which filled my heart with joy, a girl of some twelve or thirteen lay dying. She had learned to read and pray, and loved Jesus, she spoke to her mother just before she died, and told her she was going to be with Jesus, and was glad to go. Her father was and still is a heathen, but we hope her mother and brother love her Jesus.

Won't you pray for the little girls in China that they may know and love your Jesus?

RECKLESS PRESUMPTION.

A noble ship was bearing in 'o port' It was the evening hour and too late to enter without a pilot. There were two passages into the harbour one a dangerous, narrow channel, the other a wide and safer one. The captain determined to pilot himself by the narrow passage. A storm was coming up, and the passengers, with fear and consternation, begged him to take the wider channel. He laughed at their cowardice, and swore he would do as he pleased. As the night advanced, the gale increased. Soon arose a cry, "Breakers ahead, breakers ahead!" The captain flew to the wheel, sails were struck; the wind had the mastery; the captain found a will that could defy his own. The vessel made a fearful plunge, struck the foreship deep into the sand, to be shattered by the wild waves' pleasure. Few survived the terrors of that fearful night; but among the dead thrown up by the rising tide was the body of the wilful and presumptuous captain.

Just back of the darkest cloud the sun may be shining. In five minutes we shall see him again. Do not let us lose heart because of a gust of rain or a spell of gloom. Warp and wool, our days are blended of the sunshine and the rain.



POPE PIUS VII. AND NAPOLEON I. AT FONTAINEBLEAU.

thoughtlessly, can never be instrumental of good, and when once spoken can never be recalled. There is certainly something good to be found in every human soul, so we should try during our whole life to speak well of others.

It certainly is difficult sometimes to see the good in the midst of so much dross, but if we cannot speak well, do not speak ill. We must leave such unfortunates out of our conversation. There are so many pleasant truths to be uttered which will make life sweeter and more worth the living. We must ever try to put away all unfriendly thoughts and temptations, and remember the example we have to follow. Strive to be more like

go through the eye of a needle, the whole of that which afterward in the sunshine is to spread and grow as the yellow-green foliage which delights and freshens the eye. So in Christ, to be unfolded through slow generations, in accordance with human experience and wants, is all that men can know or need know concerning God and themselves and the relations of both—their duties, their hopes, their fears and their love.—Alexander MacLaren.

Bill—"Is your neighbourhood a quiet one?" Jill—"No; I can't say that it is. There are three 'painless' dentists on our block."