

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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THE TWO PATHS.

Look at the picture very closely and you will see the two paths of life faithfully portrayed. See what a lovely boy at the top of the picture, then look at the different periods of life as they are portrayed on the right hand. What manly faces, showing temperance and purity of life. Then look down the left side of the cut. You see wickedness portrayed in every face, and at the last a miserable old age. Look at the picture and then decide to live right and do right. Take God's word as your guide, and the pathway of life will be bright, but if you take the downward road, it will be dark and miserable.

WHY A BOY SHOULD BE A CHRISTIAN.

BY REV. H. W. POPE.

"A boy will hunt, and a boy will fish,
Or play baseball all day;
But a boy won't think, and a boy won't
work,
Because he ain't made that way."

WHOEVER wrote that did not really understand boys, for I know and you know that a boy does think, and I am going to ask you to do a little thinking right here now, as you and I consider some reasons why a boy should be a Christian.

Now, when people think over a thing in good shape they put their reasons in order, and we will do the same, making the reasons "one," "two," "three," and so on.

Reason one.—You need the help of Christ. You are in the world and you must pass through it. You will have questions to settle which you won't quite know how to decide if you are left alone to yourself. You will be tempted to do wrong. You will have more or less trouble, and no one can help you in all these things so well as Jesus Christ.

Besides this, you have a character to form. Life is not all for fun, even for boys. Jesus is the only one who ever lived a perfect life. He is, therefore, the best teacher you can have. But more than that, he will come into your heart and live with you if you will let him, for he says, "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man (or boy) hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him." You know how it is when you are with a very good man. You come to think as he thinks, and do as he does, and it is easy to be good in his presence. Much more will you find it easy to be good if you will let Christ come into your heart, and direct your life.

Then, too, Jesus is the only one who can forgive sin, and, my dear boy, you are a sinner, for the Bible says so, and you know it. Do you not therefore need a Saviour?

Reason two.—Jesus needs your help. He has a place for you in his kingdom and a work for you to do. He needs you in your school and on the playground to show how brave and manly and true a Christian boy can be. He needs you in your home to brighten it by a happy life, as he brightened his home when a boy. He needs you everywhere to live for him and talk for him, and to win other boys to himself, for God wants the boys.

And what a grand thing it is that Jesus does need you. You would be sorry to think that he had no use for you, and that the world would go along just as well with-

out you. You need not think so, for there is plenty of work that will not be done unless you do it. Respond to his call. Come up to his help, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Reason three.—His requirements are reasonable. All that he asks of you is to do right. He does not expect you to be a Christian man, but a Christian boy, with all a boy's love of fun and frolic. He expects you to run and romp, and shout as loud as ever, but never to forget that you are one

God has said "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Reason four.—As we think about the future, the outlook is very bright for a Christian boy. The same Jesus whom he has loved and served in life will be with him in the hour of death, and will usher him into the gates of the Eternal City. Eternity is a long time, my boy, an awful long time if spent apart from Jesus, but a blessed long time if spent in his company. He who can say, "For me to

p'an was to spend the night on the mountain. Seated around the camp fire, they sang college songs and told stories all the evening. At length young Garfield took a Testament out of his pocket and said, "Boys, it is my custom to read a chapter in the Bible and have a prayer before going to bed. Shall we have it all together?" And they did. That is the kind of a boy that you and I admire; one who serves the Lord, and isn't afraid to say so. That is the kind of a boy I hope that you will be; a boy who can say from his heart,

"I will go where you want me to go,
Lord,
Over mountain or valley or sea;
I will say what you want me to say,
Lord,
I will be what you want me to be."

JACK TAR.

BY J. M'NAIR WRIGHT.

"WELL, well! Who'd have thought ever to see you in such a state as this! Rags, dirt, pale, thin; why, you used to be as trim and ship-shape a salt as ever trod a United States vessel! Here, let me add you up. Pockets empty, health gone, courage gone, nothing to do; self-respect gone. What did it? Whiskey! You needn't tell me. I know all about it; you have taken to drink, and the drink has taken the man out of you."

"And what is left isn't worth saving," said Ben Hicks. "I was just on my way to pitch myself over into the river, and end my miseries."

"Or begin them—which? You can't drown in the East River, Ben. Your body may, but somewhere else the you must live on, and how? Tell me that."

Ben Hicks shook his head. "It's a bad lookout for me, Jack. You can't understand it, because you have had luck. That's a boatswain's whistle I see around your neck; you are spick and span; you're rising; I'm down."

"But I can feel for you, for all that. Don't I know that only for the grace of God I'd be down with the lowest myself. Yes, this is a boatswain's whistle; temperance got it for me. Cast out the whiskey devil, Ben, and come, rise."

"I can't cast him out, Jack, he's too strong for me."

"Get the good Lord to do it for you then, my hearty. Do you mind the man he found running naked among the tombs, with devils in him called Legion? He cast them out, and what do you find next? Why, that same man, sitting clothed and in his right mind at the good Master's feet."

"But nowadays when a man's down it is so hard to get a start. Why, look at me! I have not a dime; I haven't a place to sleep to-night, or a penny to buy me a loaf of bread. Even the liquor men who have my last cent kick me out."

"Oh, that of course! That is to be expected. The wages of sin is death; the devil is a proper hard taskmaster, and when he has ruined a man he scorns him. But look you, Ben, my Master bids me lend a hand for his sake; so come along. I'll fill you with supper, and then I'll get you a bath and a shave, and a suit of clothes, and I'll take you to my lieutenant, and ask him to give you a try. What say? I'll stand



THE TWO PATHS.—(SEE LESSON FOR MARCH 18.)

of Christ's boys. Christianity does not consist of sermons and prayer-meetings, but of "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." It is doing right because it pleases Jesus, being happy because you are doing right, and living at peace with all around you. Boys sometimes think that they can "sow wild oats," as they call it, for a few years, and repent later on, but they forget that a life once stained with sin can never be just the same again. The sin may be forgiven, but the scar will remain forever. Whoever sows wild oats must reap his own harvest, for

live is Christ," can also say, "To die is gain."

Reason five.—You ought to be a Christian and you know it. Christ died for you. He loves you and he longs for your love, and it is a burning shame for you not to love him and try to please him. Won't you begin to-day, my boy, by asking him to forgive your sins and enroll you as one of his followers? The manliest thing a boy can do is to stand up for Jesus. When President Garfield was a boy at Williams College, he climbed Mount Greylock one day with a lot of his companions. Their