

PLEASANT HOURS

PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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What Rum Will Do.

RUM will scorch and scar the brain;
Rum will mad the heart with pain;
Rum will bloat the flesh with fire,
And internal thirst inspire.

Rum will clothe with rags your back,
Make you walk a crooked track;
Change your meat to naked bones,
And to wrath your gentle tones.

Rum will rob the head of sense;
Rum will rob the purse of pence;
Rum will rob the mouth of food,
And the soul of heavenly good.

Rum the gaols with men will fill,
And the dungeon's gloomy cell;
It rouses passion's deadly hate,
And pours its curses o'er the State.

Rum the Christian's love will cool,
Make him break the Golden Rule;
Bind his soul in error's bands,
And to evil turn his hands.

CACTI.

THERE is something weird about cacti, and they seem peculiarly adapted to the surroundings. As a rule, they frequent desert places—rearing their strange shapes where almost no animal life exists. The tall cacti are the sentinels of the desert, and thrive in a burning heat that is deadly to every other form of vegetation. The visitor to Arizona or California is attracted by these giants, and often at night or as evening approaches they present a weird and mystical appearance rising out of a lifeless plain. Curiously enough, this apparently inhospitable cactus forms the home of several birds. One species often becomes decayed where a branch breaks off, and the hollow interior is laid open; into this a bird makes its way, and the hollow is soon lined with bits of grass, feathers and other material, in which the eggs are in time deposited and a family of young birds reared, protected by a most remarkable defence of spines and needles.

Many of the cacti afford similar protection to birds. In Southern California, especially in the San Gabriel Valley, a little bird makes a bag-like nest among the leaves or branches of a cactus. The opening is concealed, and approached by a small platform, while the interior is lined with the softest grasses and down from seeds. There the young family is safe from hawks and other enemies.

Many of the cacti have a great indirect economic value; thus the cochineal insect is nurtured in a species of *Opuntia*. In some localities vast plantations of this cactus are kept up for the sole purpose of rearing this insect for the trade, and are known as nopaleries. In one, over fifty thousand plants can be seen covered with the richly-hued insect known to science as *Coccus Cacti*.—*Californian Magazine*.

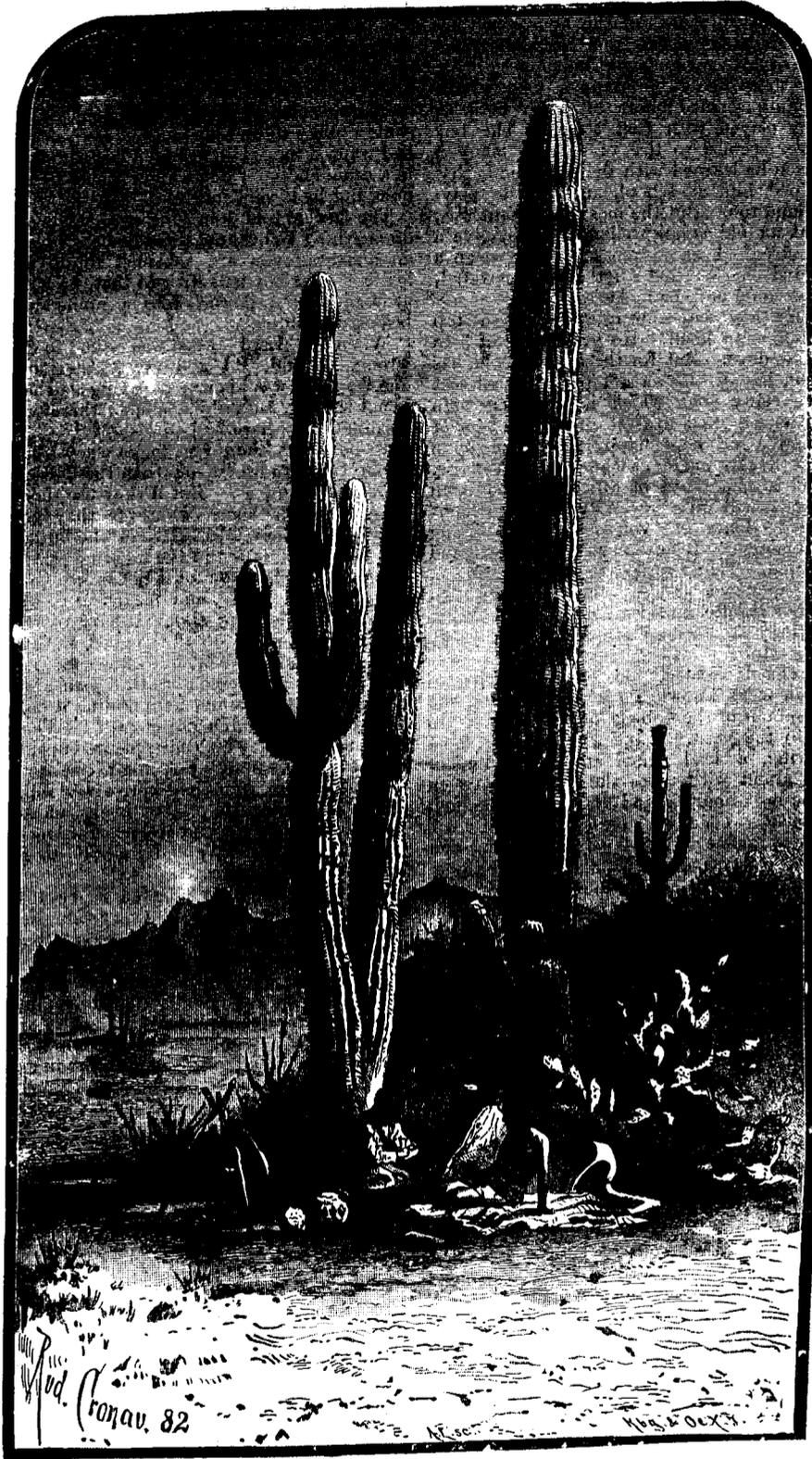
HOW MOLLIE LED HIM.

"O MISS WINSLOW, I do wish that I could help someone to be a Christian! It must be beautiful; but I never shall, I know," and Mollie sighed despondently.

"Why not?" asked Miss Winslow.

"Why, because I couldn't. I never could say anything, and what could I do to help anyone that way?"

"I do not know, Mollie. Perhaps none of us know just which acts of ours may help. We can only do 'ye next thyng' faithfully, and leave the results to Him. It may be we should help all others more if we thought less of doing them good and more of being found faithful in that which is least as well as great. Strive earnestly



CACTI.

to do just as you think Christ would want you to do in everything, Mollie, and I feel sure some day you will find that you have helped someone."

"Mollie's merry face was unwontedly grave as she bade her Sunday-school teacher good-bye and went her own way alone. There were so many she wanted to help—her brother Tom particularly. She knew mamma and papa were anxious about him; he was beginning to like to go down the street evenings, and be round with fellows they did not like. O if she could only help him! But she couldn't; he would never pay any attention to her, she knew.

"Well," she thought rather sadly, "if I cannot help anyone, I will try to do as Miss Winslow said, though I think she is

mistaken. I could not possibly help anyone that way."

Just behind Mollie, unknown to her, was Tom.

"I wonder what the midget is thinking of," he said to himself. "She looks as sober as a deacon. Something to do with the silver cross business, I presume. It won't last long probably; still, the little puss is so sweet and earnest about it now, that it makes me feel ashamed of myself. I shouldn't like to have mother or her hear the boys talk sometimes," and Tom sighed more gloomily than Mollie had.

She had very little idea how closely her brother was watching her; she never dreamed that he saw her efforts to do every little duty faithfully. He was in the kitchen eating apples when she put

the oatmeal pail up only half clean, because she was in a hurry to get out with Annie Smith. He gave a little low whistle when he saw her hesitate, and then take it out and wash it clean. He knew in some way that she gave up going on a little picnic with the girls because she found mamma had planned to go away that day, and could not unless she stayed at home with Robby.

One afternoon when Tom and Mollie happened to be at home alone, Will and Clara Marshall, who lived across the street, came over to call. Will was at home from the city on his vacation, and both Tom and Mollie felt rather in awe of him.

"Tell you what it is," he said, presently, "let's have a game of cards to pass away the time. Play, don't you, Tom?"

Tom coloured and hesitated.

"I—know how a little," he said.

"All right! Come on, Mollie! We can show you how in a trice. I've some cards in my pocket."

Poor little Mollie! How her heart beat, and how she did wish that they had not wanted her to play. For one instant she hesitated. What harm could it do to play just once? Will would be sure to make fun of her if she did not, and it was so hard for her to be laughed at. Then she remembered her talk with Miss Winslow. She was to do everything just as she thought Christ would have her. That settled it. He would never have her do what she knew mamma would disapprove.

"I'm sorry, but I can't play cards, Will," she said, bravely. "Mamma does not like them."

Will looked up with a half laugh, but Tom stopped him.

"It is so, Will, and I ought to have been man enough to have said so myself; but if my little sister will brace me up, I'll try to be more courageous hereafter."

"I say, Mollie," said Tom when they were alone, "I want to try with you. Couldn't you take hold of my hands and help a fellow along a little?"

"O Tom!" sobbed Mollie. "I am so glad, but I couldn't help you. I would if I could."

"Well, you have, and just keep on, please," answered Tom rather huskily.

"You have made me ashamed of myself forty times a day. I haven't been just the kind of fellow I ought to be lately, but I'll turn over a new leaf if I can."

"I'm so thankful," said Mollie again; "but, Tom, you must ask God to help you, won't you?"

"Yes," whispered Tom, as he kissed Mollie and then ran off upstairs to his own room.

"O Miss Winslow," said Mollie next Sunday, "it don't seem possible, but Tom says I did really help him just by trying to do everything, even the little bits of things, faithfully, as you said. He says he wouldn't have paid any attention if I had tried to talk to him; but he watched me, and those things made him think I was really in earnest, and now he is trying. Oh, I just can't tell you how happy I am!"—*Zion's Herald*.

HOW MUCH FOR GOD.

A CITY missionary in Boston met a prominent business man on the streets who stopped him, saying: "I looked over my cash accounts and found this entry, 'pug terrier, \$10,' and in the next line, 'City Missions, \$5.' I haven't felt quite easy about the matter ever since, and hence give you \$5 more." It is well to review our personal expenditures and consider how they must look in the eye of God.