

# PLEASANT HOURS

PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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## BURIAL IN THE CATACOMBS.

Our picture gives us a vivid illustration of a scene which must have been very common in the early Christian centuries. Possibly the dead man may have been a Christian martyr whose body was brought by stealth, at dead of night, from the place of martyrdom to the quiet resting-place of the holy dead in the underground catacombs. These were vast excavations, consisting of long corridors and chambers, sometimes three or four stories, one beneath the other, and lined on either side with the graves of the dead in Christ. Here the early Christians gathered for worship and for prayer, and sometimes for refuge; but even here they were often followed by their persecutors, and their place of refuge became their sepulchre. The present writer has told the story of those early days in a couple of volumes to which he refers those who wish to know more about these strange structures. They are entitled "The Testimony of the Catacombs," and "Valeria, the Martyr of the Catacombs." Both are for sale at the Methodist Book Rooms, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax.

## A DAUGHTER WORTH HAVING.

Two gentlemen, friends who had been parted for years, met in a crowded city street. The one who lived in the city was on his way to meet a pressing business engagement. After a few expressions of delight he said:

"Well, I'm off. I'm sorry, but it can't be helped. I will look for you to-morrow at dinner. Remember, two o'clock sharp. I want you to see my wife and child."

"Only one child?" asked the other.

"Only one," came the answer tenderly; "a daughter. But she's a darling."

And then they parted, the stranger in the city getting into a street-car bound for the park. After a block or two a group of five girls entered the car. They evidently belong to families of wealth; they conversed well. Each carried a very elaborately decorated lunch-basket; each was well dressed. They too were going to the park for a picnic. They seemed happy and amiable until the car again stopped, this time letting in a pale-faced girl of about eleven and a sick boy of four. These children were shabbily dressed, and on their faces were looks of distress. They too were on their way to the park. The gentleman thought so, so did the group of girls, for he heard one of them say with a look of disdain: "I suppose those ragamuffins are on an excursion too!"

"I shouldn't want to leave home if I had to look like that! Would you?" This to another girl.

"No, indeed, but there is no accounting for taste. I think there ought to be a special line of cars for the lower classes."

All this was spoken in a low tone, but the gentleman heard it, and the child too. He glanced at the pale face and saw tears. He was angry. Just then the exclamation, "Why, there is Nettie! Wonder where

she is going?" caused him to look out upon the corner, where a sweet faced young girl stood beckoning to the car driver. When she entered the car she was warmly greeted by the five, and they made room for her beside them. They were profuse in exclamations and questions.

"Where are you going?" asked one. "Oh, what lovely flowers! Whom are they for?" said another.

"I am on my way to Bella Clark's. She

"I am glad you are going," the girl replied in a low voice, meant for no one's ears except those of the child. "I think it will do him good, it's lovely there, with the spring flowers all in bloom. But where is your lunch? You ought to have a lunch after so long a ride."

Over the little girl's face came a flush. "Yes, miss, we ought to for Freddie's sake, but, you see, we hadn't any to bring. Tim's his our brother he says

It's 'cause she's beautiful as well" as her clothes." The gentleman heard her whisper.

When the park was reached the five girls hurried out. Then the gentleman lifted the little boy in his arms and carried him out of the car, across the road, into the park, the sister, with a heart full of gratitude, following. He paid for a nice ride for them in the goat carriage, he treated them to oyster soup at the park restaurant

At two o'clock sharp the next day the two gentlemen, as agreed, met again.

"This is my wife," he said proudly introducing a lady, "and this," as a young lady of fifteen entered the parlour, "is my daughter."

"Ah," said the guest, as he extended his hand in cordial greeting, "this is the dear girl whom I saw yesterday in the street car. I don't wonder you call her a darling. She is a darling, and no mistake. God bless her!" And then he told his friend what he had heard in the street-car - *Young People's Paper.*

## "BRIAR ROSE."

We all love a bit of romance, especially when connected with the private lives of the great.

A very pretty story is told as to the first meeting of the imperial rulers of Germany. The duke, then a young man of twenty, was shooting at Prinkenuau.

One day he lost his way in the park, and came upon a rustic rose covered summer-house, where a pretty girl was sleeping in a hammock.

He did not disturb her, but went on his way, thinking of a little German poem known as the "Briar Rose." Later in the day he met the girl in the castle, and saying, "Here is my briar rose again," he introduced himself, and fell in love off hand. They were married on his twenty first birthday. Since that time she has set herself to realize the German ideal of a devoted hausfrau. She goes to bed at half past ten, and rises at six. She begins the day by making her husband's coffee. They dine at one and take a simple supper at eight. The Empress is now the mother of six boys and one girl, and looks after them assiduously both at work and at play. The

boys are passionately fond of pony racing. They ride ponies given them by the Sultan, and their mother officiates as judge, decorating the winner with a blue ribbon. The boys learned to fish when they were at Fehistowe, and pursue the sport of angling with great eagerness. They also like cycling, but their great delight at present is in a miniature fort which has been erected in the palace gardens for their amusement. They have many pets, the favourites, after the ponies, being small dogs, some of whom on one occasion entered the Emperor's study and tore to pieces the best part of a treaty, and rent a receipt which was wanting the imperial signature.

When God is satisfied with us we shall be satisfied with God.



EARLY CHRISTIAN BURIAL IN THE CATACOMBS.

is sick, you know, and the flowers are for her."

She answered both questions at once, and then glancing toward the door of the car saw the pale girl looking wistfully at her. She smiled at the child, a tender look beaming from her beautiful eyes, and then, forgetting she wore a handsome velvet skirt and costly jacket and that her shapely hands were covered with well fitted gloves, she left her seat and crossed over to the little one. She laid one hand on the boy's thin cheek as she asked his sister:

"This boy is sick, is he not? And he is your brother I am sure."

It seemed hard for the girl to answer, but finally she said:

"Yes, miss, he is sick. Freddie never has been well. Yes, miss, he is my brother. We're going to the park to see if it won't make Freddie better."

his ponies so as Freddie could ride to the park and back. I guess maybe Freddie will forget about being hungry when we get to the park."

There were tears in the lovely girl's eyes as she listened, and very soon she asked the little girl where she lived, and wrote the address down in a tablet which she took from a bag on her arm.

After riding a few blocks she left the car, but she had not left the little ones uncomfortable. Half the bouquet of violets and hyacinths was clasped in the sister's hand, while the sick boy, with radiant face, held in one hand a package, from which he helped himself now and then, saying to his sister in a jubilant whisper:

"She said we could eat 'em all—every one—when we got to the park. What made her so sweet and good to us?"

And the little girl whispered back: