

Madeline and I.

MADLINE GREY has a red silk gown,
And a satin one of golden brown,
A velvet cloak, and such lovely furs;
But when I ask for things like hers,

Mamma says:
"No, Rosabel! I love you too well."

Madeline Grey has a string of pearls,
And a maid to brush her golden curls,
A diamond cross and three gold rings;
But when I wish for all these things,

Mamma says:
"No, Rosabel! I love you too well."

Madeline Grey has money to spend;
Nuts and bonbons she buys without end,
Lots of dolls, and one that sings;
But when I ask for all those things,

Mamma says:
"No, Rosabel! I love you too well."

Madeline has a pony to ride
(I wanted one so much that I cried),
A music-box, and everything new;
But when I ask for those things, too,

Mamma says:
"No, Rosabel! I love you too well."

Madeline never can run and play,
Or slide down the hill, or ride on the hay,
Or go for nuts—she would soil her clothes,
And dear mamma is right, I suppose,

When she says:
"No, Rosabel! I love you too well."

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, MAY 12, 1894.

GROWTH OF THE KINGDOM.

BY THE REV. T. B. BISHOP.

III.

FAILURE OF THE SEED.

ONE day during the last hot summer we had, you might have seen Farmer Giles walking over his turnip field with a very long face. He had sown the seed in good time, and had manured the ground well, and he quite expected by this time to have had plenty of turnips for his sheep. But he is dreadfully disappointed: hardly any of the seeds have come up, and he is actually talking to his men about ploughing the field up again. What can be the meaning of it? The fact is, turnips won't grow without plenty of moisture, and this has been a terribly dry season. The ground was good, and the seed was good, but there was no rain.

Is there a Sunday-school where teachers have long been sowing seed, and sowing it carefully and faithfully, and yet nothing appears—not even a single green blade, much less ripe corn? What is it that is wanting? Can the seed be better than it is? Can the sowers do more than they have done? It wants now the fertilizing rain of God's Holy Spirit.

Teachers and scholars, you must pray for this rain. "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty" (Isa. 44. 3.) is God's gracious promise. He tells you "there

shall be showers of blessing" (Ezek. 34. 26), and this will only come in answer to prayer. Your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him (Luke 11. 13).

THE SEED GROWING GRADUALLY.

But the corn does not grow up all at once: it will come on gradually, one step at a time. We are not to expect the ripe grain in a single day. There is "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear."

A little girl has to learn a text for her teacher, and the teacher explains it to her. Perhaps it is, "Suffer little children to come unto me;" or, "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me." Here is the good seed. She goes home, and the seed lies still for a day or two. But the teacher has been praying for her, and in answer to that prayer God sends his Holy Spirit to water the seed and make it grow in that little girl's heart. She could not tell you how it is, but presently something brings the text to her mind, and she begins to think: "Jesus loves me—loves a little child"—and she prays that she may love Jesus too. Thus it is the seed begins to shoot. But next day come lessons, and play, and young companions, and a host of things to take up her thoughts: the clouds are in the way of the little plant. However, it still pushes its way on. She prays again, but she feels she is a sinner and wants to have forgiveness, and she prays very earnestly. And then there are fresh hindrances: some favorite amusement comes in the way, or some temptation is yielded to; the text is forgotten; prayer is neglected—oh! will the little plant ever grow up? But then there are fresh tears and prayers; there is real repentance for sin, and the little girl finds Jesus as her Saviour. And now she is happy; and mother must know, and teacher must know that Jesus has really made her his; and so the little, tiny blade peeps above the ground: modestly and humbly it appears at first, but it cannot long remain unseen.

"First, the blade." But this must not be all. The seed must not only come up, it must grow. If there is no growth, can there be any life? At first you cannot tell the wheat from grass. That little blade is very pretty, but we are not quite sure yet whether it is true corn. The field looks beautiful and green, but these plants may, after all, turn out to be nothing but tares, or there may be a worm at the root that will kill them presently; but if we wait and watch the seed, we shall soon know. By-and-bye it will come into ear. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

When the fruit does come it is unripe at first. Some plants will be checked by blights, or cold winds, or storms, and will wither and be laid low, and so bear little corn. It is the same with the spiritual seed. Worldly companions, and business, and amusements, often hinder it: We cannot tell whether the yield will be little or much, until it reaches the third stage, and we see the "full corn in the ear."

THE SEED RIPENING.

And what is it that ripens the seed? Is it not the glorious summer sun? A wet summer spoils the harvest, for when wheat is growing it cannot have too much sunshine. And it is when the plant of grace is freely exposed to the beams of the Sun of Righteousness that it quickly ripens for heaven. The Christian that lives much under the shining of God's countenance is the one that will bear much fruit.

The green ears of corn are very upright, but as they gradually fill and ripen they begin to hang down. And so it is with the Christian: he gets humbler as he gets nearer heaven. At last the harvest comes, the reapers put in the sickle, and the corn is gathered in (Matt. 13. 30; Rev. 14. 15); and the husbandman rests not until the last sheaf is safely housed, amid the glad cry of "Harvest home!" And so the Christian, like a shock of corn fully ripe, is gathered at length into the heavenly garner (Job 5. 26). Some there are who ripen for heaven in early life; some seem to live always in the sunshine; and we shall be saved from many a chilling blast, if we love to bask in the rays of the Sun of Righteousness.

On a large farm you may often see the fields, as they stand thick with corn,

divided by tall hedges, and sometimes separated by roads, or other fields. But at harvest time the grain is all taken to the same stack, and as the sheaves are mingled together there, you cannot tell which field they came from; in fact they must be very much puzzled themselves among so many strangers, who are just like their own brothers and sisters. It is just like this with the Church. Here below there are many sects and denominations, like so many fields divided by the hedges and walls of outward modes and forms; but when the harvest comes all God's wheat shall be gathered into the garner, and there shall not be a single mark to show how widely it once grew apart.

JIMMIE'S ANSWER.

LITTLE Jimmie was a thorough-going Christian lad of some twelve or thirteen summers. A good clergyman, being one day on a visit to the family, said to him, "Jimmie, do you never get tired praying?" "No, sir, I think not," modestly replied Jimmie.

"But," said the minister, wishing to try him, "perhaps you don't pray enough to make yourself tired."

"Ah! sir," replied Jimmie, earnestly, "the less I pray the more tired I become."

I have often thought of Jimmie's answer. Was it not a good one? How true it is that the less we pray the less inclination we have for prayer; while, on the other hand, the oftener we are found in the attitude of faithful prayer, the stronger our desire will become for communion with God. Of what paramount importance to the Christian is faithful prayer! It is the key with which we unlock the unlimited treasuries of God's grace; it is the sword with which we put to flight the strongest of spiritual foes; it is the pitcher with which we dip abundant supplies from the boundless ocean of his love. Dear reader, do not neglect this glorious privilege of prayer. If you would become spiritually strong, be often found at the throne of grace; if you would conquer bad habits, if you would overcome evil desires, if you would grow nobler, purer, more useful in the world, be often found in secret with your God. If we pray but seldom, our progress in divine life will be slow; our pathway will become hedged about with difficulties; we will begin to weary of Christian warfare, and, like little Jimmie, we will find that "the less we pray, the more weary we will become."

FRED AND COUSIN LACY.

BY J. M'NAIR WRIGHT.

COUSIN LACY had come to Fred's house for a visit. Fred's mamma was obliged to go to a meeting of the temperance society, and when she left home she said to Fred: "You must entertain Lacy."

"Come here, and let us talk," said Cousin Lacy.

"What shall we talk about?" asked Fred.

"Tell me some things that you have seen."

"Good things or sorry things?"

"A little of both—life is made up in that way."

"Last month," said Fred, "grandma and I took a trip on the Sound; we were on the *Pilgrim*. At supper two young, very young men sat opposite us, and they had a tall bottle from which the waiter poured red stuff into glasses for them. As soon as the glasses were empty he filled them up. I whispered to grandma what it was, and she said 'wine.' Cousin Lacy, that was the first time I ever saw anyone taking wine! At our house we don't consider it good form. Well, those young men were very rude to the waiter. They scolded him roughly for not bringing their supper quicker. They made him carry back the potatoes, and told him some of the things were not fit to eat. I thought their manners very bad. I'd be sent from the table if I acted like that! Grandma said, 'Well, what could you expect from such fellows?' I found out from their talk, that they were whiskey and wine drinkers—lived, you see, by selling such bad stuff as that!"

"It is dreadful, sure enough," said Cousin Lacy.

"Last Sunday I saw another sorry thing

the papa and I came from church. 'We met a man named Tom Bunner. He is a very big, handsome man. He had by the hand his little boy, four years old. He is a beautiful boy, just like a picture, and he was all dressed up like Bunner is so proud of the boy, and was so pleased when papa said he was a fine child. But let me tell you, Lacy, Bunner is a bar-tender, and sometimes he gets drunk, and papa said to me: 'It is terrible to think that in twelve or fifteen years that lovely, innocent boy will be a miserable, idle, degraded, drunken lad about our streets!' I said: 'How do you know that he will?' Papa said: 'He has had example, bad inheritance, bad associations, and, besides all that, it seldom happens that the children of liquor-sellers are sober. Curses and chickens go home to roost.'

"But, Cousin Lacy, to-day I saw the Thorne brothers, just the very best boys in our town, everyone says; and their father drinks! But their mother is just fine! Oh, she is so good and nice, and people say she has been the making of her boys. So you see that mothers can hope for pretty good things sometimes, even if the boys' fathers don't do just right."

SEVENTY YEARS AGO.

IN the memoirs of the veteran *litterateur*, S. C. Hall, recently published, the early chapters are devoted to sketches of the "good old times" in England as he knew them in his youth. The tinder-box and the tallow-candle were household gods; extinguishers for the use of the link-boys who lighted pedestrians home at night, were fastened to the house-railings; the oil-lamps in the streets only made the darkness visible, and such men as Scott were making public speeches against gas-lighting. The King's lieges travelled in mail-coaches, under the protection of armed guards, and a pace of four miles an hour was not considered slow. Envelopes were not. Postage cost anywhere from a shilling to half-a-crown, but then, everyone begged franks or smuggled his letters by carriers and friends. Newspapers cost sevenpence each, but there was not much profit on them even at that price, since the tax on every paper was fourpence, with no deduction for copies unsold or returned, and the duty on advertisements was three shillings and sixpence each. The only use known for India rubber was the erasure of pencil marks; no one had yet been so visionary as to advertise ice for sale; elections were literally "fought out" by bands of hired roughs; slavery had but recently been abolished, prize-fighting was a national institution, and dog-fighting, cock-fighting, and bull-baiting were not yet illegal pastimes. Passing Old Bailey in 1810, young Hall saw sixteen men and a woman hanging on the same gallows, and no wonder, for there were two hundred and twenty-three capital offences on the statute-book, and some ninety culprits were hanged annually, some in chains, to feed the crows and fester slowly away. The pillory and the stocks were still in vogue; vagrant men and women were whipped "through the town" at the cart's tail, and the ducking stool for scolds had not gone out of fashion. Debtors rotted in prison, while criminals could buy every luxury except libe y. Men of all ranks swore, even in the presence of ladies, and intemperance was scarcely less prevalent than profanity. Smuggling was carried on on a gigantic scale, and gentlemen of rank and station thought it no degradation, much less a crime, to engage in it. The hatred of France was at its worst, and Mr. Hall's earliest lesson from his father was, "Be a good boy; love your mother and hat the French." Mr. Hall's brother was an officer in his father's regiment, wore the uniform, and drew pay at eight, no discredit attaching to such an appointment, which was one of the Colonel's perquisites, and the familiar story of the major "gettin' by one of a baby commissioned before its birth, and as it turned out a girl, given a boy's name to save the appointment. The press-gang roamed the streets at night, often under the command of boy midshipmen, to steal men for the navy, or even raided hamlets remote from the shore. Privateers swarmed the seas on enterprises not materially differing from piracy. Altogether, the civilization of the first quarter of the century left much to be desired.