

the Armenians numbered at least 25,000,000 population, but now it is estimated that not more than 5,000,000 remain in their native and well-beloved land, while 3,000,000 or 4,000,000 more are wanderers to and fro over the earth, sober, industrious, economical citizens of many lands, and well-to-do in every country but their own. They would do well there also were it not for the Turks. The Ottoman Empire has proved itself a national curse, a sore, an ulcer among nations.

## ADAM AN ARMENIAN

It is a land so old in history that the earliest legends of the human race point to it as the first home of mankind, that somewhere in the region now generally designated as Armenia, the human race first began. The Garden of Paradise was in Armenia. Adam was an Armenian; so was Noah, for his ark rested on Ararat, where, according to popular tradition, it remains to this day. From Armenia began the dispersion of the nations, and all the legends of the early days point the finger back toward that singular land at the head-waters of the Euphrates and Tigris as a home of every nation that preserved a memory of its own origin.

Under even a passable form of government Armenia would be a singularly prosperous country, but the curse of Turkish misrule has blighted every hope of the inhabitants.

## TAXATION

Industry is checked, for no one knows the amount of taxes that will be required of him, nor, indeed, can he be certain that the products of his field have been garnered, they will not all be eaten or carried off by bands of irregular Turkish troops, who will consider themselves singularly forbearing if they do not also take his life. Instances have been known of farmers who raised a hundred bushels of grain and saw eighty-five bushels carried off under the name of taxes, to feed a rapacious soldiery.

## LETTER FROM VAN.

Already the official report of one hundred and seventy-six ruined, plundered villages has been received. Rumours come of whole villages forcibly converted to Islam, of the murder of many helpless people, especially of priests and other ecclesiastics, and of wholesale pillaging.

The condition of this city, so far as the daily bread of the people is concerned, goes on bad to worse daily. Since the last of October, the shops and all business have been suspended. This throws nearly the entire population out of employment—a population already so poor that its utmost exertions barely sufficed to keep the wolf from the door in ordinary times.

The carnival of slaughter has been continued with tireless energy and terrible ferocity by the Turks and Kurds. From every side come reports of atrocities by Turks, Kurds, and Circassians—villages swept by fire, the men massacred, the women either slain or reserved for a fate worse than death. Thousands of women have been carried away captive to become inmates of some vile Moslem harem. An illustration of the Turkish method of extermination is found in the case of the village of Hoh, in the Sandjak district. At first the aghas (or local magistrates) promised to protect the Christians, but when they saw villages burning in every direction, they refused to keep their word. All the Christians were told that under the pain of death, they must accept Islam. They were assembled at the Mosque, and there eighty young men were picked out and led outside the village—for slaughter. Eight escaped, sixty-two were killed, and ten wounded. The young women of the village were taken to Turkish harems, and the survivors of the Christian population were scattered among other villages.

In every district there is the same tragic story of massacre, outrage, pillage, and abduction; monasteries sacked, and Christian pastors and people butchered. In many villages the Armenian priests were among the number who laid down their lives as a testimony to the faith. In almost every village the strong men and youths were killed, and in nearly every case they met death with the fer-

ocity of true martyrs. Many were killed with horrible tortures, because of their refusal to deny Christ.

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## Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, MARCH 7, 1896.

## A GIRL QUEEN AND A BOY KING.

BY RUTH ABBOTT.

The "first children of Europe," as I suppose they would generally be called, are the gentle, fair-haired girl who sits on the throne of the Netherlands, and the dark-eyed boy, half Austrian and half Spanish, who, though but ten years of age, is the lawful king of Spain.

Little Alfonso's mother, Maria Christina was an Austrian princess—archduchess is the proper title, I believe. By marrying King Alfonso XII. of Spain, she became a queen, and now that he is dead she is "regent," or acting queen until her little boy shall be sixteen years of age and wear his father's crown. The father came to the throne at the time of great excitement in the country, when the people were doubtful whether or not they wanted any more kings, and there are still a good many wise people in Spain who think that a republic with a president would be better than a throne with a king.

Little Alfonso never saw his father, who left this world some weeks before his only son was born. The health of the infant was very frail at first, but you can imagine how carefully the queen, his mother, and his nurses and teachers have watched over him, to keep him out of draughts, to see that he is properly clothed, and that he does not stuff his royal stomach too full of candy and cake. Maria Christina is a good mother, and has herself looked after his books and studies, and kept him with her as much as possible.

From his birth until he succeeds to the throne, the child of a king is the special object of interest to the subject people. Salutes of cannon are fired when he is born. His name is weighted and lengthened by honors and inherited titles, and his christening is the occasion of a national holiday. His childhood is hedged about with pomp and ceremony, and much of the freedom of happy hours of coveted play is spent in learning foreign languages and studying how to build forts and lead an army. The stern rigours of court etiquette cannot, however, entirely control the high spirits of the young king of Spain. Quite recently he has been placed under the especial care of an ambassador's son, as the result of his escapades with a squirtgun which some one sent him from Vienna. In his mischief costly paintings and rare old tapestries were stained with water, while ladies-in-waiting, and even a stately general, blazing in his gorgeous uniform

pranks of the fun-loving boy. His glee increased, so the story goes, the more mischief he did.

Let young Alfonso squirt while he may. Already the people of Spain have the right to vote on some questions, and some fine day the dark-eyed lad may wake up to find that they have voted him out and decided to choose their own ruler, instead of taking the one who happened to be born in a palace.

On the throne of brave little sea-threatened Holland, with its 27,000,000 colonial subjects, sits another child ruler, whose full name is Wilhelmina Helena Paulina Marie, the sweet Queen Wilhelmina. Born at the Hague in 1880, the young queen will be sixteen the thirty-first of next August.

Her father, William III., was one of an illustrious line which includes such names of historic interest as that of William the Silent, Maurice and Frederick Henry, both famous military commanders, and William II., who was also England's king. Her mother is a princess of the German reigning family, and, as queen dowager and regent, Emma is greatly beloved by the people she governs during the minority of Queen Wilhelmina.

The young queen mastered both English and French, besides her native Dutch, before she was eleven years old, and has been carefully trained for the arduous duties that rest heavily on crowned heads.

Her life has been simple. Rising at seven, she was in the habit of breakfasting at eight with her parents, previous to the death of her father in 1890. After breakfast came lessons in Dutch and arithmetic until 9.30. At 10.30 she went to her mother's room, where together they learned new lessons from the Bible. As she turned the pages of the sacred book, charmed by the beautiful pictures, her mother read the Bible stories and explained the deep truths contained therein. Then together they knelt while the queenly mother prayed for her queen daughter that God would fit her for the work she had to do in life. At 6.30 p.m. came dinner, and at 8 p.m. the little queen's day was done. With a youth so simple, yet so carefully ordered, it is little wonder that the people of Holland love their young queen, and look with eager interest to the time when she will reign in her own right.

## The Burial of Sir John Moore at Corunna.

BY G. WOLFE.

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,

As his corse to the rampart we hurried;

Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot  
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,

The sods with our bayonets turning;  
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,

And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,

Nor in sheet nor in shroud we wound him;

But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,  
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the words we said

And we spoke not a word of sorrow,  
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that  
was dead,

And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought as we hollow'd his narrow bed,

And smoothed down his lonely pillow,  
That the foe and the stranger would tread  
o'er his head,

And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,

And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,—  
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep  
on

In the grave where a Briton has laid  
him.

But half of our heavy task was done  
When the clock struck the hour for re-  
tiring:

And we heard the distant and random  
gun

That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,  
From the field of his fame fresh and  
gory;

We carved not a line, and we raised not  
a stone—

But we left him alone with his glory.



## JUNIOR LEAGUE.

## PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

March 8, 1896.

The little maid of Naaman's wife.—2  
Kings 5. 2, 3. (Missionary.)

This little maid was a slave. People often complain when they are asked to do anything for God, that their position in life is such that it is impossible for them to do as requested. Surely none of us can be in a position more unlikely for doing good than that which this poor little girl occupied,— a slave, taken from home, no mother near to whom she could relate her tale of sorrow.

See her situation! She was servant in the house of a great man who stood high in the estimation of the king of Syria. She possessed one thing which her master did not, viz., health. Which of us value health as we ought to do? Take care of your health, use the kind of food which is most conducive to health. Never use tobacco, nor intoxicating liquors, for both are injurious as well as filthy and debasing.

The master was a leper, afflicted with that loathsome disease which, thank God, is seldom seen in our country, though exceedingly prevalent in the East. Her heart was affected as she looked upon her master from day to day. Do our readers always feel sorry when they see others suffer? I know some good people who, when they meet any of their fellowmen who are either wholly or partially blind, or who have lost one of their limbs, always thank God that they are not afflicted as those poor objects of humanity are.

Listen to what she said, verse 3. Piteous words may be very good, even if no deeds accompany them, but deeds are more acceptable when they can be performed. Kind words proceed from a sympathetic heart. We sometimes sing, "Kind words can never die." Those who have been benefited should always seek to benefit others. How inspiring are these words.

"Oh that the world might taste and see,  
The riches of his grace,  
The arms of love that compass me,  
Would all mankind embrace."

The leprosy of sin has affected mankind. Men, women, and children are suffering from it by millions. We possess the only remedy for this fearful malady, viz., the Gospel. Every Christian should either carry the Gospel to the perishing or send it to them. It will not do to merely sing, "Rescue the perishing," we must use means to rescue them. An infidel once said, that if he believed God had given his Son to die for the world, and that people should know this, he would go around the world and tell it. Read John 3. 16. We believe this verse, now our duty is to make it known.

All are not called to go to the ends of the earth to publish this grand doctrine, but such as are called should be willing to go, even if they should suffer hardships, and persecutions, and even death itself. Soldiers are not to be afraid, nor run away in the time of danger, they are to stand fast and conquer or die. Soldiers of the cross must do the same.

We must support those who thus go forth. Sunday-school children have done noble deeds in connection with Missions. The first missionary ship, that was known by the name of John Williams, the "Martyr of Erromanga," was paid for by money collected by Sunday-school children. Last year the juvenile offerings of the Methodist Missionary Society in Canada amounted to \$23,929.76. How much of this did you give?