

PLEASANT HOURS

PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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HINDU IDOL MASK.

THE idols of India are generally very hideous. Does it not make your heart ache to think of the thousands of bright boys and girls taught to worship these awful carvings? How willing we, who are taught to worship the true God, who we know is our loving Father, should be to help send glad tidings to these poor children of the darkness!

We plead for the little children
Who have opened their baby eyes
In the far-off lands of darkness,
Where the shadow of death yet lies.

But not to be nurtured for heaven,
Not to be taught in the way,
Not to be watched o'er and guided,
Lest their tiny feet should stray.

Ah, no! it is idol worship
Their stammering lips are taught;
To cruel, false gods only
Are their gifts and offerings brought.

And what can we children offer,
Who dwell in this Christian land
Is there no work for the Master
In reach of each little hand?

Response.

O, surely a hundred tapers,
Which even small fingers can clasp,
May lighten as much of the darkness
As a lamp in a stronger grasp.

And then, as the line grows longer,
So many tapers, though small,
May kindle a brighter shining
Than a lamp would, after all.

Small hands may gather rich treasures,
And infant lips can pray;
Employ then the little fingers—
Let the children learn the way.

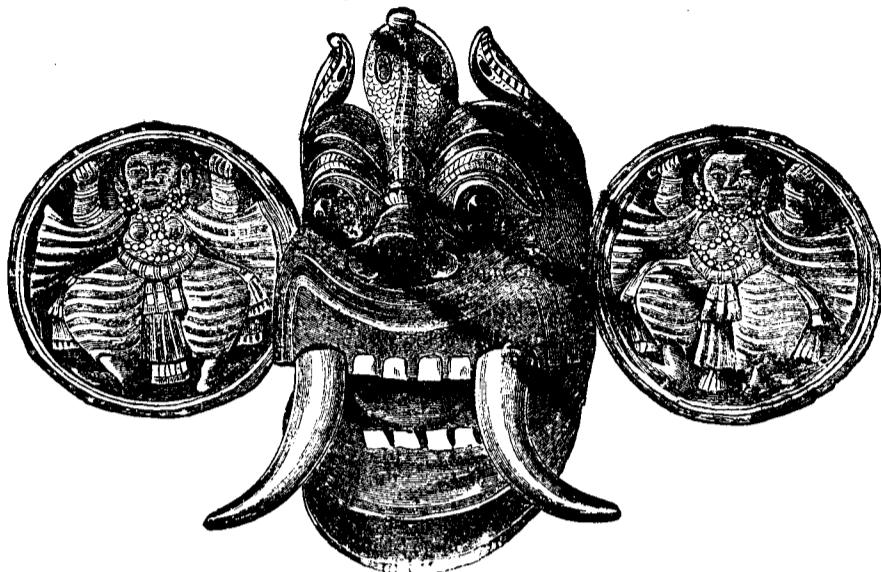
So the lights shall be quicker kindled,
And darkness the sooner shall flee;
Many "little ones" learn of the Saviour,
Both here and "far over the sea."

GOATS ON THE MOUNTAINS.

TOURING among the Alps one gets so many charming views of Swiss pastoral life. Here and there dotting the landscape are the summer chalets filled with quaintly dressed women and children. Further away are the goats grazing in



GOATS ON THE MOUNTAIN.



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small groups on the hillside or climbing dizzy heights with their sure-footed ease and dexterity. Nothing is prettier than to hear the tinkling of their tiny bells, or to watch them as they come pouring in from every direction in the evening by themselves, and always on time. Miss Havergal, writing from Bel Alp says: In the evenings we could hardly pay attention to anything but the goats; they came trooping down the rocks, generally gambolling, and most amusing in their ways. They are most inquisitive and very tame, always came up to look at us in the most comical way, and often let us pat and play with them. There were numbers of pretty little kids too.

SANDY BROOKS THE SHOE-BLACK.

BY B. V. CHISHOLM.

"He is only a shoe-black," said Dick Harlem, referring to one of the craft to whom his companion, Phil Garde, nodded familiarly.

"But he has such a pleasant face and is always so accommodating that one cannot help being interested in him," insisted Phil.

"I am not apt to become deeply interested in such grimy faces and black hands," retorted Dick.

"But he has such a white soul," replied Phil, growing enthusiastic in his defence of poor Sandy Brooks the shoe-black. "He takes such good care of the little cripple brother he is trying to support, and often goes hungry himself in order to carry home an orange or something dainty to little Carl."

"You take more trouble with such cases than I do, or you would not know so much about his circumstances," returned Dick carelessly.

"I want to see him prosper, and I know he will, for he does such good, honest work with his brush that he will soon work into a good custom," Phil said quietly. "He always does his very best, and that's the way to advertise one's work."

"The exact way," mused Mr. Brian, who, walking behind the boys, had heard all that passed between them. "I want to see boy with a white soul, and as

my shoes would not be the worse for a 'shine,' I'll walk back and interview the pleasant-faced boy who does such honest work."

He did so, and was so well pleased with the homely, smiling face and courteous manners of the little shoe-black, that he became a stated customer, and by recommending his work brought him much trade.

Sandy had a big heart, open to all unfortunates, and though his pocket-book was light, he often found ways of helping those in worse circumstances than himself. Mr. Brian agreed with Phil about his possessing a white soul, and finding him intelligent as well as honest and sunshiny, he asked him if he would not like to attend a night-school and try to prepare himself for something better and more remunerative than shining shoes.

"Indeed I would," exclaimed Sandy, "but I must take care of Carl; and then, who ever heard of a shoe-black rising to a place of eminence in the world?"

"Let me tell you the true story of a little boot-black who lived more than a hundred years ago," said Mr. Brian. "He lived in Oxford, and earned his bread by cleaning the boots of the students who attended the famous university there. He was very poor, but bright and industrious, and by his prompt, faithful work soon won the admiration of the students. They saw in him the promise of a noble man, and they proposed to teach him a little every day. Eager to learn, the boy, whose name was George, accepted their proposal, and soon surprised his teachers by his rapid progress."

"A boy who can blacken boots well can study well," said one of the students; "Keen as a brier," said another; "And with pluck enough to make a hero," added a third. But I cannot stop to tell of his patience. He went on step by step, just as the song goes—'One step and then another,' until he became a man—a learned and eloquent man, who preached the Gospel to admiring thousands. That little boot-black became the renowned pulpit orator, the wonderful revivalist, George Whitefield. So, you see, the mere fact of being a shoe-black need not stand in your way of becoming an honoured and useful member of society."

"I would like to make something of myself—something better than a shoe-black," returned Sandy; "and although I have fallen behind

in my studies, I am determined to begin again, and if hard study can accomplish anything, I will not always be Sandy Brooks the shoe-black."—*The Morning Star.*

HOW SHE SAID GRACE.

A good many of us who have sat at graceless tables know how this child felt:

"A dear little niece of mine was invited to lunch with a friend. As the meal began, she waited quietly for the blessing to be asked. But the gay talking did not cease, and the waiter began to pass the cold chicken. She watched each one help himself, and saw no heads bowed in thankfulness. As the plate was passed to her, she noticed a wing—the part she liked best. She looked timidly at the hostess, and then, before helping herself, bowed her head and said softly and reverently, 'Thank you, Jesus, for my wing, anyway.'"

A TREETOP TRAGEDY.

I was sitting under a beautiful elm tree on the banks of the Niagara River a few days ago, drinking in the delicious air and enjoying the exquisite view, when my attention was attracted by a strange noise in the branches of the tree. Looking up I saw a bright little squirrel, apparently trying to open a conversation. He was looking down at me with his twinkling eyes, his pretty tail was waving gracefully behind him, and he was chattering so fast I could not understand a word of his gibberish. But he was so friendly I smiled and nodded at him. Suddenly he seemed to think he had made a mistake—I was not after all the person he thought me—and away he whirled like an arrow.

Who could help loving these happy little fellows? But they have their work and their troubles too. In our country they have not so many enemies as the squirrels of lands further south. In our picture we see the terrible robber that sometimes steals into their nests. What horror to look up and find such wicked eyes gleaming so close to your head and to feel the cold fangs about you, knowing that you have no weapon of defence! Poor little fellows! They must leave their pretty home with all its winter store of nuts and run, run away swift as the swallow flies, if they would save their lives.



A TREETOP TRAGEDY.