### A Queer Boy

He doesn't like to study, it [illegible] weakens his eyes,"
[illegible] of books" will [illegible] surprise,
Let it be about Indians, pirates or bears.
And he's lost for the day to all mundane affairs;
By sunlight or gaslight his vision is clear,
Now, isn't that queer?

At thought of an errand he's "tired as a hound"
Very weary of life, and of "tramping around!"
But if there's a band or a circus in sight,
He will follow it gladly from morning to night.
The show man will capture him some day, I fear,
He's so queer!

If there's work in the garden, his "head aches to split,"
And his back is so lame that he can't "dig a bit;"
But mention baseball, and he's cured very soon,
And he'll dig for a woodchuck the whole afternoon!
Do you think he prays possum? He seems quite sincere;
But isn't he queer?




# Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, MARCH 26, 1892.


### EXAMPLE BETTER THAN PRECEPT.

BY T. H. EVANS.

"If I caught a boy of mine smoking, I'd thrash him," said a sturdy mechanic once in our hearing; and he puffed the smoke from his mouth with all the virtuous indignation imaginable.

"Why would you thrash him?" we inquired, following the question by relating the street incident of a gentleman with a cigar in his mouth pointing out to his son a group of boys whom he saw smoking, remarking that it was very wrong for lads like these to smoke. To which the little fellow innocently replied, "If it is wrong for boys to smoke, isn't it worse for a man, father?"

Of course it is. If, with our judgment and superior knowledge, we do not know better, what can we expect from the inexperience of mere lads? They commence the habit in thoughtless imitation of those who are older than themselves, and we ought, therefore, to be much wiser; but length of years is not always a sure indication of wisdom. Even as the future possibilities of a great tree lie mysteriously folded up within the narrow confines of a tiny seed, so, in like manner, all great truths lie in a small compass. The whole question of how to deliver our country from this great curse has a nutshell for its hiding place. Train up the young in the path of total abstinence, and for their sake, if not for our own, let us walk the same pleasant road ourselves. Then will these pest-houses that disgrace our public streets die out, and become things of the past.

### A ST. LOUIS JUNIOR.

BY REV. D. F. STILES.

Our junior league numbers twenty members. The members hold the offices and do the business. We meet each Saturday, at four o'clock, p.m. Meetings are informally opened with singing, prayer; sometimes by the leader and sometimes by members of the league, or readings from the Church Catechism. At each meeting we give the league Bible history in story form. In this they are very much interested. At the next meeting I have the league give the same historical facts in response to questions I ask. They respond freely, and evince thoughtful hearing. As we go along I add them as I can, to see the moral and religious truths clustering about these stories. Occasionally we give temperance lessons, short and pointed; and at other times instruct them in the origin and polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and impress them with her missionary zeal. All the meetings are interspersed with lively singing. One night each month we give a public review, with stereopticon illustrations. And in response to questions, I ask the children to give the audience the meaning of the pictures. At this meeting we have the children sing, and will eventually connect with it the business of the league.—*Epworth Herald.*

### A STORY FOR BOYS.

Now, my boys, while you are holding your kites, suppose we hear this little story from *Wide Awake*, and see if you can make anything out of it:

"Two men stood at the same table in a large factory in Philadelphia, working at the same trade. Having an hour for their nooning every day, each undertook to use it in accomplishing a definite purpose; each persevered for about the same number of months, and each won success at last. One of these two mechanics used his daily leisure hours in working out the invention of a machine for sawing a block of wood into almost any desired shape. When his invention was complete, he sold the patent for a fortune, changed his workman's apron for a broadcloth suit, and moved out of a tenement-house into a brown-stone mansion.

"The other man—what did he do? Well, he spent an hour each day the most of the year in the very difficult undertaking of teaching a little dog to stand on his hind feet and dance a jig while he played a tune. At last accounts he was working ten hours a day at the same trade, and at his old wages, and finding fault with the fate that made his fellow-workman rich while leaving him poor.

"Leisure minutes may bring golden grain to mind as well as purse, if one harvests wheat instead of chaff."

### SAVING HER BOYS.

I THINK when a boy has become an habitual loafer he is then ready for something worse, and I was greatly worried to find my boys come slipping in very quietly about the time the stores closed for the night, so I just resolved to try and make a pleasanter place to spend the evening than the aforesaid stores.

Our best room had hitherto been kept sacred to the use of visitors and for Sunday; but, after thinking the matter over very seriously, I started the fire, arranged everything as nicely as though I were looking for company, and then just let the boys have it. So far the plan has been a great success; for, although I never said a word to them about it, they took right up with it, and now spend their evenings at home, reading, playing—for they are all three musical; and besides being better for the boys, it is better for us.

Now, sisters—just between ourselves—of course they'll spoil the carpet, and it's a real pretty carpet too, and I have been so careful of it; but I mean, through God's help, to have my boys grow up to become good men, and if it's going to take a pretty room and pretty carpets to help do it, why I am very glad to have them, that's all.—*Exchange.*

### The March Wind.

We can make no mistake, though you bluster and blow,
For we've been to the spots where the violets grow;

And the tiny green leaves are just showing their head
Where the sunbeams have played on their soft mossy bed,

And the catkins are out in their velvety gowns;
The brave little darlings care not for your frowns.

Blow away! blow away! you only blow gold;
And while you are waiting to storm and to scold,

The daffodils gather and deck themselves fine,
For they know when you come it is surely a sign

That the winter is gone, and the bluebird is near.
Blow away! blow away! 'tis a sound full of cheer.

And so we forgive you your boisterous ways,
Because you bring news of sweet summer days.

# NELLY'S DARK DAYS

*By the Author of "Lost in London."*

## CHAPTER VI.

### FOUND DROWNED.

THREE days after Rodney's disappearance, Bessie was sitting at an apple stall in her old place by the landing-stages, when the news ran along the line of basket-women that the body of a drowned man had just been brought ashore at one of the wharves near at hand. Bessie's heart sank within her. There had been no tidings of Rodney since the evening she had first missed him, though she had sought everywhere for him; and she recollected too well the threat he had often made of putting an end to his life. She felt sick and giddy at the mere thought of recognizing him in this drowned man; yet she left her basket and stall in charge of a neighbour, and ran in search of the crowd which would be sure to gather about the ghastly object.

Bessie pushed through the circle of bystanders, and looked down on the dripping form lying upon the stones. The face was livid and disfigured, and the scanty hair was smooth and dark; yet it was like him—so like him that Bessie fell upon her knees beside him, sobbing passionately.

"Oh, I know him!" she cried. "He saved me from being drowned once, and now he's gone and drowned himself. Oh, I wish he could be brought to life again! Is he quite dead? Are you sure he's quite dead?"

"He's been in the water two or three days," said one of the lookers-on, speaking to another who stood near.

"Oh, then, it must be him!" sobbed Bessie: "it must be him! It's three days since little Nelly set herself on fire while he was drunk, and he went and drowned himself. He used to say he'll do it, and I hindered him. Why wasn't I there to hinder him again?"

"Are you his daughter?" asked a policeman.

"No, I was nothing to him," answered Bessie; "only he saved me from being drowned when I was a little girl. He ought never to have come to this—he oughtn't. He was a good man, and as kind as kind could be when he was himself. Oh! why wasn't I here, Mr. Rodney, when you came to drown yourself?"

"Do you know where his family lives?" asked the policeman again.

"He hasn't got any family now," said Bessie, with fresh tears. "His wife died at Easter, and little Nelly is dying in the hospital. They say they think she'll die to-day, but I'm to go again this evening. He's got nobody but a mother down in the country, thirty miles away; and as soon as I can walk it I was going to tell her about Nelly; and now there'll be this to tell her as well. And he was such a good man once!"

"You must tell me where you live," said the policeman. "We shall want you on the inquest, you know."

"Oh, yes!" she answered; "but I haven't got any more to tell. Only I was very fond of him and Nelly, I was."