

to equal lengths, I'll show you how to make a box."

Joel bent over his work with almost painful intensity. He firmly held his breath, as he made the measurements. He gripped the saw as if his life depended on the strength of his hold. Phineas smiled at his earnestness.

"Be careful, my lad," he said. "You will soon wear out at that rate."

It seemed to Joel that there never had been such a short afternoon. He had stopped to rest several times when Phineas had had to stop. But this new work had all the fascination of an interesting game. The trees threw plant shadows across the grass when he finally laid his tool aside. His back ached with so much unusual exercise, and he was very tired.

"Rabbi Phineas," he asked gently after a long pause, "what makes you so good to me? What makes you so different from other people? While I am with you, I feel like I want to be good. Other people seem to rub me the wrong way, and make me cross and hateful; then I feel like I'd rather be wicked than not. Why this afternoon I've scarcely thought of Rehum at all. I forgot at times that I am lame. When you talk to me, I feel like I did that day Dan took me out on the lake. It seemed a different kind of a world,—all blue sky and smooth water. I felt if I could stay out there all the time, where it was so quiet and comforting, that I could not even hate Rehum as much as I do."

A surprised, pleased look passed over the man's face. "Do I really make you feel that way, little one? Then I am indeed glad. One when I was a young boy living in Nazareth, I had a playmate who had that influence over me and all the boys he played with. I never could be selfish and impatient when he was with me. His very presence calmed such thoughts,—when we were children playing together, like my own two little ones there, and when we were older grown, working at the same bench. It has been many a long year since I left Nazareth, but I think of him daily. Even now, after our long separation, the thought of his blameless life inspires me to a higher living. Yes," he went on musingly, more to himself than the boy, "it was like music. Surely no whit-robed priest in the holy temple ever offered up more acceptable praise than the perfect harmony of his daily life."

Joel's lips trembled. "If I had ever had one real friend to care for me—not just pity me, you know, maybe I would have been different. But I have never had a single one since my father died."

Phineas smiled, and held out his hand. "You have one now, my lad, never forget that."

The strong brown hand closed in a warm grasp, and Joel drew it, with a grateful tremor, to his lips. Ruth came up with wondering eyes. She could not understand what had passed, but Joel's eyes were full of tears, and she vaguely felt that he needed comfort. She had a pet pigeon in her arms, that she carried everywhere with her.

"Here," she hissed, holding out the snowy winged bird. "Boy, take it! Boy, keep it!"

Joel look up inquiringly at Phineas. "Take it," he said, in a low tone. "Let it be the omen of a happier life commencing for you."

"I never had a pet of any kind before," said Joel, in delight, smoothing the white wings folded contentedly against his breast. "But she loves it so I dislike to take it from her. How beautiful it is!"

"My little Ruth is a born comforter," said Phineas, tucking her up in his arms. "Shall Joel take the pigeon home with him, little daughter?"

"Yes," she answered, nodding her head. "Boy, cry."

"I'll name it 'Little Friend,'" said Joel, rising with it in his arms. "I'll take it home with me, and keep it until after the Sabbath, to make me feel sure that this day has not been just a dream, but I will bring it back next time I come. I can see it here every day and it will be happier here. Oh Rabbi Phineas, I can never thank you enough for this day!"

It was a pitiful little figure that limped away homeward in the fading light, with the white pigeon in his arms.

Looking anxiously up in the sky, Joel saw one star come twinkling out. The Sabbath would soon begin, and then he must not be found carrying even so much as this one poor little pigeon. The slightest burden would be unlawful.

As he hurried on, the loud blast of a trumpet, blown from the roof of the synagogue, signalled the labourers in the field to stop all work. He knew that very soon it would sound again, to call the town people from their tasks; and at the third blast, the Sabbath lamp would be lighted in every home.

Fearful of his uncle's displeasure at his tardiness, he hurried painfully onward, to provide food and a resting-place for his "little friend" before the second sounding of the trumpet.

(To be continued.)

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, MAY 9, 1890.

THE MURDERER TREE OF BRAZIL.

There is a species of tree growing in Brazil which has the unhappy name of the Murderer Tree. It spreads its creepers along the ground till it comes to some giant of the forest, then the creepers twine around the trunk till they reach the top of the tree. When the creepers blossom, the seeds fall into the ground and produce other creepers, and soon the great trunk is covered with the branches of the creepers, and in time the tree gives way to the enemy and becomes nothing but a dead trunk.

How like the murderer tree is the habit of drinking intoxicating drinks! Who could suppose that a few single creepers would have the power to kill a giant tree? Who could foretell that in the future these creepers would increase so greatly that they would have the power to do so great a harm?

The single glass of beer at dinner, the apparently innocent glass of wine at the party, who could imagine that these would bring about ruin to the body and soul of a human being?

And yet it is a solemn fact that must be borne in mind, that all drunkenness has its origin in the first drinking of a glass of alcoholic liquors, and that the taste thus created grows and grows till the drinker is unable to master the habit.

A story is told of a father who was in the habit of taking every night a glass of whiskey and water. Sometimes he took a piece of sugar out of the liquor and gave it to his little son with the words: "Here, Jack, here a bit of sugar, boy." The boy took it willingly, and though at first the taste of the whiskey was unpleasant, he soon overcame this and began to like its flavour, till at last the father was persuaded by the boy to give him a sip out of the glass. One evening a sister of the boy was standing by when

the father offered her a piece of sugar from his glass. Fortunately at this moment the mother entered and said: "No; stop; whatever you give to the boy, I cannot allow you to give it to the girl; she shall not learn the taste of intoxicating drinks."

Many years had passed away, and the father had grown old and bent, when he was called upon to perform a most unpleasant duty.

He had to visit his son in prison. How changed was the once bright, happy boy; his face haggard, his eyes sunken, dressed in the meagre dress of the convict, he was led out to see his father. He did not welcome him, but looked at him angrily. "Ah," he said, "you see me in my shame and punishment; you think me a bad son, but remember it was your fault that I am thus placed. The slip out of your glass led me to love drink, and that love has been the cause of my crime; I am here because I was taught by you to become a drunkard." The father felt the truth of what the son said; it was an arrow that pierced his heart; he hung his head in sorrow; he had no reply. Surely, we should take warning and shun the beginning of evil.

DEADLY WEAPONS.

Hundreds and thousands of our young men carry weapons of death—pistols and sword canes. Many of our young men think it ineffably smart to throw back the lapel of the coat, as by accident, until you see the glitter of the death weapon, or turn down the head of the cane so that you can discover the keen edge underneath the knob of the cane. If a man is going out among Bedouin savages, or is to be on police duty in some low ward of the city, let him have club, knife, derringer, but you have no right with firearms, or other weapons of death, to be moving amid the peaceful society of our Eastern cities. Beside that, it is a mark of a contemptible coward. What a chicken liver, instead of a heart you must have, that you have to be armed in order to walk through our peaceful streets. There is a certain kind of man who ought never to have a pistol in his pocket, or under his pillow, or anywhere in the house from garret to cellar, and that is the young man or the old man who has a violent temper. To say nothing of a revolver, it seems to me it is dangerous for you to have so much as a percussion cap or a ramrod! You carry a pistol, when suddenly, in a moment of insane fury, you may do something that you will be sorry for through time and through eternity. With such a temper as you have, to carry a weapon of death is as unwise as to put gun-powder and lucifer matches in the same vest pocket. The ordinary citizen in the next one hundred years, will need no firearms. Ten lives are lost every year through the accidental discharge of firearms where there is one life saved by being armed. Away with your pistols and guns and sword-canes! If you are afraid to go down the street without them, ask your grandmother to go with you! She will conquer all your assailants with scissors and knitting needles. This complete nihilism that cannot live in our Eastern cities without being armed with deadly weapons ought to be spanked and sent to bed before sundown! It is an awful thing to take human life. Have nothing about you that in a moment of altercation, may become, under the impulse of sudden temper, set on fire of the devil, the means of appalling crime.—Talmage.

THE DOCTOR'S REPLY.

Dr. Chalmers, the eminent divine, was fond of telling the following story: Lady Betty Cunningham, having had some difference of opinion with the parish minister, instead of putting her usual contribution in the collecting plate, merely gave a stately bow. This having occurred several Sundays in succession, the elder in charge of the plate at last lost patience, and blurted out: "We cud dae wi' less o' yer manners, and mair o' yer siller, ma leddy." Dining on one occasion at the house of a nobleman, he happened to repeat the anecdote, whereupon the host, in a not over well pleased tone, said:

"Are you aware, Dr. Chalmers, that Lady Betty is a relative of mine?"

"I was not aware, my lord," replied the doctor; "but, with your permission, shall mention the fact the next time I tell the story."

The Way of Luck.

It was certainly strange, and Pamela MacQuills

Found her life interspersed with a great many ills.

Her needles, whenever she wanted to sew Had a queer way of straying—O where did they go?

In vain she would search carpet, table and bed,

And in searching lost scissors and thimble and thread.

When knitting she dropped almost half of her stitches

(In olden times folks might have blamed it on witches);

Her buttons fell off, and her clothes worked awry,

And stray motes of dust found their way to her eye;

And not the least one of her many distresses

Was the way it would rain when she wore her best dresses.

When she knew all her lessons, save only some shy

Little fine-printed note that seemed pointless and dry,

The teacher would turn to that note, and our lass

Would be asked to recite it before the whole class.

It was all very strange, and 'twas sometimes provoking—

Was it fortune or luck or fate's cruel joking?

But at last, after years of mishaps and unrest,

This maiden resolved to do always her best.

And never trust anything, little or great,

That she should do herself, to tricky old Fate.

And now I've just heard that with genuine fervour,

Pamela finds luck always waiting to serve her.

—Wide Awake.

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

MAY 17, 1896.

The heavens which God made.—Psalm 19, 1-6.

This is a sublime psalm, and we could wish that every member of both Senior and Junior Leagues would commit it to memory. The heavens are the most beautiful part of God's creative work and consist of the watery, aerial, and solar heavens; the latter especially reveal to us the glories of day and the splendours of night.

EVIDENCE OF CREATIVE POWER.

Can man gaze upon the starry heavens, can he contemplate all the wonders which they contain, and then dare to say that there is no evidence that they are the productions of a Being superior to man? The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork.

THEIR USE.

Verse 2. What do all these teach us? They speak to us in clear, unmistakable language that they are the handiwork of the Maker, the sun, moon, and stars are "Forever singing as they shine."

The hand that made us is divine."

THE UNIVERSALITY.

The works of God are not merely what we can see with our eyes, and Jehovah is not to be known merely by such marvellous works as we can behold in our own immediate locality. In all lands, in every part of the boundless universe, there are manifestations of his wisdom and goodness, which leave the sons of men without excuse, if they refuse to acknowledge him as their Creator.

THE GREATNESS OF GOD.

He spake and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast. Who can contemplate His power? He is truly omnipotent, or all-powerful, and His wisdom is beyond our comprehension.