

## The Voice of the Grass

HERE I come creeping! Smiling every where;  
All round the open door,  
Where sit the aged play;  
Here where two children play,  
In the bright and merry day,  
I come creeping, creeping everywhere!

Here I come creeping! Creeping everywhere;  
My humble song of praise  
Most joyfully I raise  
To him at whose command  
I beautify the land,  
Creeping, silently creeping everywhere.

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## Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, APRIL 23, 1892.

## A GLASS OF LIQUOR.

BY J. B. GOUGH.

WHERE is the liquor which God the eternal brows for all his children? Not in the simmering still, over smoky fires choked with poisonous gases, and surrounded with the stench of sickening odours, and rank corruptions, doth your Father in heaven prepare the precious essence of life, the pure cold water. But in the green glade and grassy dell, where the deer wanders, and the child loves to play; there God brows it. And down, low down in the lowest valleys, where the fountains murmur, and the rills sing, and high upon the tall mountain tops, where the naked granite glitters like gold in the sun, where the storm-cloud broods, and the thunder-storms crash, and away far out on the wild sea, where the hurricane howls music, and the big waves roar, the chorus sweeping the march of God; there he brows it—the beverage of life and health-giving water. And everywhere it is a thing of beauty, gleaming in the dew-drop, singing in the summer rain; shining in the ice gem, till the leaves all seem to turn to living jewels, spreading a golden veil over the setting sun; or a white gauze around the midnight moon.

Sporting in the cataract; sleeping in the glacier; dancing in the hail shower; folding its bright snow curtains softly about the wintry world; and weaving the many coloured irides, that seraph's zone of the sky whose warp is the raindrop of earth, whose woof is the sunbeam of heaven, all checkered over with spectral flowers, by the mystic hand of refraction.

Still always it is beautiful, that life-giving water; no poison bubbles on its brink; its foam brings not madness and murder, no blood stains its liquid glass; pale widows and starving orphans weep no burning tears in its depth; no drunken, shrieking giant from the grave arises in the words of eternal despair; speak on, my friends, would you exchange for it demon's drink, alcohol?

## GRATEFUL HEATHEN CHILDREN.

BY SOPHIE E. SMITH.

ANNIE—Tommy, it is Missionary Sunday. Have you any money?

Tommy—Missionary Sunday! Why, I gave money only two Sundays ago! It is missionary money all the time.

Annie—It was four weeks ago that you gave the last money, and this is the time for the monthly meeting.

Tommy—Well! I can't get money for anything else. It takes all I can scrape together for the missionary collections, and I want a top and marbles and lots of things.

Annie—Tommy Sims, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. You have had a new top this month, and ever so many marbles; besides other things. And what is a few playthings compared to the good the money will do to some poor heathen child who has no such blessings as you have.

Tommy—It may do them some good, but I don't believe any of them would do as much for us.

Mother—You are mistaken, my son, in thinking they would not do as much for us. I heard of some little heathen boys and girls who wanted the missionary to take them to his own country that they might thank the dear white children for sending some one to tell them about Jesus.

Tommy—Did he take them?

Mother—No. He lived in England and they on the New Hebrides Islands, and he could not take them so far.

Annie—What did they say when he refused them?

Mother—They begged very hard, and offered to live on one biscuit a day; and if they got too hungry they would tie a cord tightly around their bodies so that they might not feel their hunger. They felt sure that the white children would take care of them after they reached there, for, they said, if the white children came to see them, they would rather die than see them suffer.

Tommy—Didn't the missionary take them after that? Why, I would have done it.

Mother—It was impossible for him to take them such a long way off, but he told them what they could do. If they could not go to thank the white children, they could pray for them, and ask the dear Lord to bless them. So they all knelt down and prayed in a very earnest and touching manner.

Tommy—Well, I think I won't say anything more about giving too much, for they certainly were willing to do more than I have done.

## A MOTHER'S LAST LESSON.

A MOTHER lay dying. Her little son, not knowing of the sorrow coming to him, went, as was his custom, to the chamber door, saying:

"Please to teach me, my verse, mamma, and then kiss me, and bid me good night! I am very sleepy, but no one has heard me say my prayers."

"Hush!" said a lady, who was watching beside her; "your dear mother is too ill to hear your prayers to-night," and, coming forward, she sought to gently lead him from the room. Roger began to sob, as if his heart would break.

"I cannot go to bed without saying my prayer—indeed I cannot."

The ear of the dying woman caught the sound. Although she had been insensible to everything around her, the sob of her darling aroused her from her stupor, and, turning to her friend, she desired her to bring her little son to her. Her request was granted; and her child's golden hair and rosy cheeks nestled beside the cold face of his dying mother.

"My son," she said, "repeat this verse after me, and never forget it. 'When my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up.'" The child repeated it two or three times, and then said his little prayer. Then he kissed the cold face, and quietly went to his bed.

In the morning he came as usual to his mother, but found her still and cold.

This was her last lesson. He has never forgotten it, and probably never will as long as he lives.—*The Christian Woman.*

## The Slave's Dream.

BY LONGFELLOW.

BESIDE the ungathered rice he lay,  
His sickle in his hand;  
His breast was bare, his matted hair  
Was buried in the sand.  
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,  
He saw his native land.

Wile through the landscape of his dreams  
The lovely Niger flowed;  
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain,  
Once more a king he strode;  
And heard the tinkling caravans  
Descend the mountain road.

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen  
Among her children stand;  
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,  
They held him by the hand!—  
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids  
And fell into the sand.

And then at furious speed he rode  
Along the Niger's bank;  
His bridle-reins were golden chains,  
And, with a martial clank,  
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel,  
Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag,  
The bright flamingoes flew;  
From morn till night he followed their flight,  
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,  
Till he saw the roofs of Caltra huts,  
And the Ocean rose to view.

At night he heard the lion roar,  
And the hyena scream;  
And the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds  
Beside some hidden stream;  
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,  
Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,  
Shouted of liberty;  
And the blast of the desert cried aloud,  
With a voice so wild and free,  
That he started in his sleep and smiled  
At their tempestuous glee.

He did not feel the driver's whip,  
Nor the burning heat of day;  
For death had illumined the land of sleep,  
And his lifeless body lay  
A worn-out fetter, that the soul  
Had broken and thrown away!

## THE SLAVE CHASE.

BY SYDNEY WATSON.

Author of "Wops the Waif," "Run Down," etc.

## CHAPTER III.

THE STORY OF A CRUEL WRONG.

"HARD a starboard! Put your helm hard over, quartermaster," cried the officer of the watch, as H.M.S. *Bluster* entered Sierra Leone.

"Ay, ay, sir, it is hard over; but the side has got hold of her, and is swinging her off, sir."

Then the officer's voice was heard shouting, "Forward there! All ready with the anchor?"

"All ready, sir."

"Very well, stand by: one—two—three—let go!" and away went the anchor into the depths below, and in a moment or two the vessel was riding safely.

What a scene ensued! scores of canoes surrounded the vessel, laden with bananas, mangoes, plantains, limes, yams, sweet potatoes, jaggery, and all sorts of strange things—at least, strange to the eyes of the crew, the majority of whom were taking their first sight of a foreign land. Then there were the native washerwomen, all clamoring for precedence for the washing of the different messes; the boat, with the doctor from the chase; and a white face or two from the "mission"; a boat with a messenger laden with mail bags; and last, but not least (because it has much to do with our story), a long canoe, paddled by twelve semi-naked blacks, with an intelligent-looking Krooman seated in the stern, who, with a paddle, steered the boat.

This man, in accordance with west-coast custom,