

PLEASANT HOURS

PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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LAKE GENNESARET

This is the well-known sea of Tiberias or Sea of Galilee, on whose shores Jesus spent so much of his life going from place to place and preaching. In reality, the lake is nothing more than a simple enlargement of the River Jordan, which flows in very muddy at one end and flows out very clear at the other. But it has at the same time all the features of a large lake. It is in the shape of a huge pear and in the middle at its widest part is about six or seven miles across. There are several salt springs in the lake, but otherwise the water is very pure and sweet. There are also springs in the deeper parts where warm water bubbles up and in the year 1837, when there was a violent earthquake which destroyed more than one town on its shores, these springs increased both in temperature and volume. Many of the places on the shores of the Sea of Galilee are familiar to us as having been visited by our Lord when on earth, such as Tiberias, Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida.

THE SKIP'S STORY.

BY W. E. MACLELLAN.

DANNIE McLEAN, known to his intimates of the curling-club of Bytown, Nova Scotia, as "Dannie the Skip," is a Scotchman by birth, a mason by trade, and by choice a devotee of the game called "curling," which is played on ice. The fountain of gladness for him freezes up with the thawing out of the ponds, and thaws with their freezing.

The game is in itself an excellent one, but it too often leads the players into Scotch "conviviality," and possibly Dannie, who is "skip" or captain of a "rink" or side, became confirmed in drinking habits by sedulously attending all the feasts of the Bytown club. Be that as it may, he no longer drinks intoxicants, and I think many people will be interested in an account of the occurrence that made him an abstainer.

Last summer, he said to me,—for I shall try to tell his story in his own words,—I took a contract to build a tall chimney for the fanning company at Millville. It was to be eighty-two feet high, and they wanted the job hurried through. The bricks were on the ground, and we ran the thing up at a great rate.

The foundation and lower part were plain sailing; but as we got higher I had trouble with my help. The local men became frightened, and left one after another.

At last I had to send back home here for Charley French. Charley and I got on pretty fast, and one Saturday afternoon we were putting on the finishing touches, over eighty feet above the ground, when the thing happened I'm going to tell you about.

You see, at that height, hod-carrying was out of the question, so we had a block and tackle rigged, and lifted all our stuff by horse-power. The upper block was

fastened to one of the upright posts of the staging; the lower one to a post sunk in the ground.

It was not a very safe arrangement, as we could not make the staging very secure. But we got a quiet, steady horse, and a cautious chap for driver, and didn't feel as though there was much danger.

There were six uprights in the staging. Of course, each of them was not all one stick. They had to be spliced about every twenty feet. This made three joints in each upright, and they were far from being firm.

Down nearer the ground, where the brick-work had hardened, and the staging was well fastened to the chimney, it was all right, but the upper part of it was decidedly unsteady. The posts creaked and vibrated more or less every time a tubful of brick or mortar came up.

We laughed and let him stay. He moved around the staging, not in the least disturbed by the elevation. Finally, when he got tired looking, he picked up a hatchet which had been in use for driving nails, and began chipping at one of the posts.

In the meantime the last brick was laid. We finished the brandy, and gave three cheers, while the boy stood watching us with anything but respectful eyes. Charley French was leaning against the chimney with the empty flask in his hand, looking somewhat tipsy.

"See here, Dannie," said he, solemnly, "there's the old horse down yonder, and we've forgotten all about him. He's seen us right through this job, and he hasn't been offered so much as a smell of it.

"Hello, old chap! Here's the flask for you, anyway," he suddenly shouted, as he gave it a toss.

had now a direct purchase on the upper corner of the staging.

The only thing that saved it from being torn away at the first tug, was the horse being unable to bring his full strength to bear. The rope ascended at an angle which lifted the traces above his back, and shifted the strain from his shoulders to his neck. He was half choked and thrown to the ground.

The staging groaned and reeled as he struggled to get on his feet again. His driver stood stupidly looking up at us without moving a step. The whole thing happened in so few seconds, that it is not much wonder the man's presence of mind left him. The horse scrambled to his knees,—then to his feet, and pulled frantically. The strain at the top of the chimney became frightful. It seemed as though not only the staging, but the whole upper part of the chimney would be pulled away and fall at the next plunge.

Neither Charley nor I had spoken a word. We just held on, and gasped and wondered how it would feel when every thing gave way. And we forgot all about the manager's son until he spoke up behind us.

"Say, it's about time to cut this rope, ain't it?"

Before we could turn our heads there was a sharp click on the block. The clean cut end of the rope shot downward.

The boy stood with the hatchet in his hand watching the horse. Of course the moment the rope was cut the straining animal pitched forward. Then taking fresh alarm he ran from the place with the ungainly movement of a runaway truck-horse.

"It'd be a good thing for you two men if you were just as frightened of rum bottles as old Dobbin down there seems to be," remarked the boy, calmly, as the horse disappeared round a corner, while the rope trailed behind him like a long snake.

Charley and I were both sober enough by that time, and we wanted to shake hands with the manager's son, but he refused.

"No use making a fuss," he said. "I happened to have your hatchet in my hand, and I cut the rope. That's all. Another yank from Dobbin would have brought the whole thing down, and that'd have been about as rough on 'us as you."

So you see, I came near not curling any this winter," concluded Dannie, "but as it is, I'll just quit the 'conviviality' o' the game.—*Youth's Companion.*

"Oh, mamma, to-morrow we're going to study dismal fractions!" exclaimed a small boy, to whom decimal fractions were unknown.

Mr. D.—"If you'll get my coat done by Saturday, I shall be forever indebted to you." "If that's the case, it won't be done," replied the tailor.



LAKE GENNESARET.

We had made a bet of a bottle of brandy with the manager of the company that we would finish the work by Saturday evening. At dinner-time that day it was so certain we were going to win easily that Charley suggested to the manager that he had better pay off half the bet in advance, in the shape of a flask of brandy. He agreed, and we took the flask up to finish off on.

We had drunk most of it, and had only one more course of brick to lay, when the son of the manager made his way up beside us. He was a wide-awake, independent-looking youngster, fourteen or fifteen years of age, but he had no right to be there. He would have been sent down in a hurry, if the brandy hadn't made us a little too easy-going.

As it was, we both had sense enough to order him to leave at once. Instead of obeying, he put his hands into his pockets, eyed us knowingly for a moment, and remarked.

"Say, aren't you two a little high, for eighty feet above ground?"

It went flashing and circling through the air, and fell with a crash on a big stone just behind the horse, whose driver was with a crowd of loafers some twenty or thirty yards away.

The horse gave a frightened leap, and galloped off at a speed that I hadn't thought was in him. The rope whizzed over the pulleys, and the half-filled tub shot up towards us like a rocket.

It came against the upper block with a crash that threatened the overthrow of the whole staging. Posts awayed and bent at their joints; boards, loose bricks and tools slipped from their places and went rattling down below.

We clutched at the top of the chimney as the steadiest object within reach. But the newly laid brick moved under our hands, and gave little promise of holding us up.

The horse was checked for a moment when the tub came against the upper block; but he bent wildly to his traces, and the fastening of the lower block gave way. He