

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XIX.]

TORONTO, JANUARY 28, 1899.

[No. 4.

The Silver Cup.

"What!" said the man of science, "tell you me
That at some great and general judgment-day
We shall be gathered, all men back again
Into the old, the original, worn-out clay!"

"When dust has scattered, bones have
chapeless worn,
And every vital element disappeared
That made life vivid, beautiful, and whole?
The doctrine is too wild, too rash, too
weird."

Just then a cup of carven silver fell
Into the luccant, seething acid near,
When, like a snow-wreath, all constituent
parts
Of the bright metal melt and disappear.

And starting back, "O Master!" loud he
cried,
"Your favourite cup you never more can
fill;

As soon restore the buried,
vanished dead,
As that white wonder of the
artist's skill."

The master smiled, and from a
vial forthwith
Poured amber drops that
clouded all the glass,
And the strange fluid throbbled
with life, and moved
Till at its base gleamed white
the molten mass,

Which, taken by the jeweller's
cunning hand,
Beaten and curved and
carved in beauty's lines,
Re-touched, re-polished, re-
illuminated,
The same fair cup, yet all
renewed, it shines.

"See," said the master, "I, a
weak, frail man,
Brought out of seeming
nothing, form and skill;
And cannot God the Lord my
ashes call
To newer, nobler manhood,
if he will?"

CHINESE PORTABLE KITCHEN.

This curious picture shows how the Chinese carry about a sort of portable kitchen with them. With a little lamp they will cook food and sell it in the street; and eat rice with chopsticks, which look like knitting-needles, only they are made of bone.

In our papers we shall have a good deal to say about China, because the Methodist Church has sent nine missionaries to that country, and they will write letters which will be very interesting to our young readers. About one-third of the population of the earth live in the great empire of China. It is sad to think that millions of them are dying every year without a knowledge of God! We hope our young friends will take a great interest in the reports of our Chinese Missions, and save their pence that they may contribute something towards the missions in China. The condition of Chinese children, many of whom are abandoned in infancy—if, indeed, they are not put to death to get rid of them—should make our readers in their happy homes very grateful for what God has done for them, and lead them to try to do something for the Chinese.

If all the people of all the world can be imagined as standing abreast, in a single line, so that they should just touch one another, that line would be about 500,000 miles long—long enough to reach around the earth twenty times. And if you could pass in front of that line, and look on each face, at least one man in every four you would see would be a Chinaman.

There are eighteen provinces in China proper, each one being about as large as Great Britain; and yet it is very doubtful if many of the boys and girls who have finished their geographies know so much as the name of any one of these provinces. We Canadians talk much of our vast country, yet China, with its dependencies, has more square miles than are found in the whole Dominion of Canada.

On each square mile in the United States there dwell, on an average, ten or eleven persons; while China has at least two hundred and fifty inhabitants for every one of her square miles.

HE WANTED TO KNOW.

The youngest of the flock in the Boys' Home is little Franz, aged four and one-half. But young as he is, he brought with him the swagger of the accomplished "tough," and drinking songs and the vile argot of the street fell from his

cowered back in his chair the man went on complacently:

"I allus brought up my young uns to mind. If they didn't start when I spoke to 'em they knew what they'd git. Their mother, when she was alive, use ter pet 'em an' make of 'em, but they never got nothin' like that from me," he said, while the deaconesses at the table exchanged glances of distress.

But Master Franz's turn was yet to come. That there was world-wide difference between the old regime and this new dispensation to which he had come he was feelingly conscious, and in his baby heart he determined to get at the cause of the difference. After dinner, when the deaconess was entertaining their guest in the little parlour, he crept 't'wix her lap, clasped his short arms tightly around her neck, and from this safe cogen of vantage he opened fire.

"Fader, I like Jesus."
"That's right, Franz," said the father.
"Do you like Jesus, fader?"
"Why, yes; just the same as you do,"

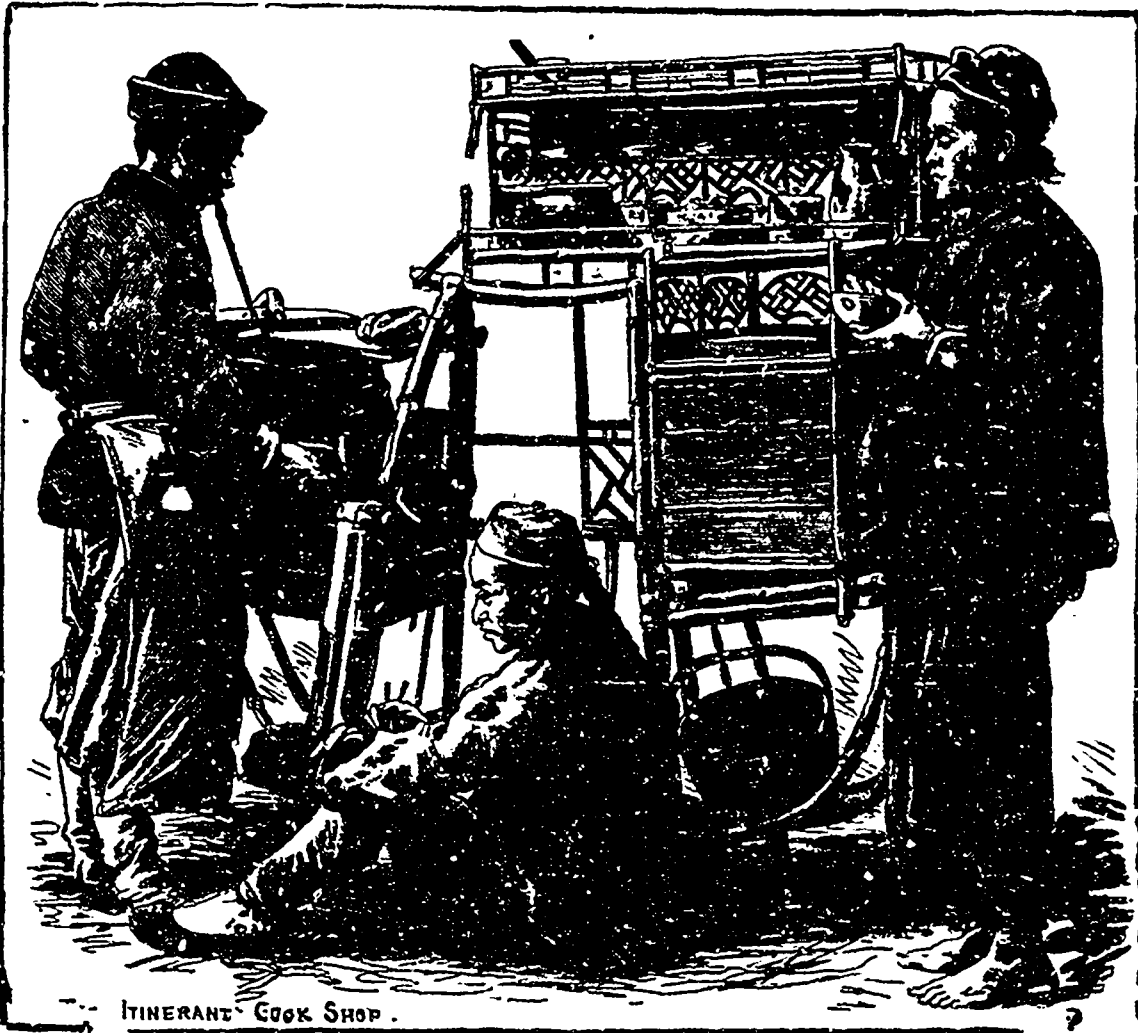
ently slipped to the floor and trotted out of the room, while the deaconess breathed a sigh of relief that a catastrophe had been averted even though the little philosopher had not reached to the bottom of his investigations.

A BRIGHT BOY AND WHAT HE ACCOMPLISHED BY READING.

BY CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER.

I do not think it is very serviceable to make a list of books for children to read. No two have exactly the same aptitudes, tastes, or kinds of curiosity about the world. And one story or bit of information may excite the interest of a class in one school, or the children in one family, which will not take at all with others. The only thing is to take hold somewhere, and to begin to use the art of reading to find out about things as you use your eyes and ears. I knew a boy, a scrap of a lad, who almost needed a high chair to bring him up to the

general level of the dining-table, who liked to read the encyclopedia. He was always hunting round in the big books of the encyclopedia—books about his own size—for what he wanted to know. He dug in it as another boy would dig in the woods for sassafras root. It appeared that he was interested in natural history and natural phenomena. He asked questions of these books, exactly as he would ask a living authority, and kept at it till he got answers. He knew how to read. Soon that boy was an authority on earthquakes. He liked to have the conversation at table turn to earthquakes, for then he seemed to be the tallest person at the table. I suppose there was no earthquake anywhere of any importance but that he could tell where it occurred and what damage it did, how many houses it buried, and how many people it killed, and in what shape it left the country it had shaken. From that he went on to try to discover what caused these disturbances, and this led him into other investigations, and at last into the study of electricity, practical as well as theoretical. He examined machines and invented them, and kept on reading, and presently he was an expert in electricity. He knew how to put in wires, and signals, and bells, and to do a number of practical and useful things, and almost before he was able to enter into the high-school, he had a great deal of work to do in the city, and three or four men under him. These men under him had not read as much about electricity as he had.



ITINERANT COOK SHOP.

CHINESE PORTABLE KITCHEN.

lips in the lisping tones of babyhood. In a few weeks, however, under the sweet compelling influence of loving kindness these things were falling from him like a filthy garment.

One day Franz's father came to pay a visit to his son. It was the first time they had met since the child had been given up, but he looked at his father with frightened eyes, and only when prompted by the deaconess did he advance gingerly and reach out his little hand at arm's length to greet him. The father was a coarse, thick-set man, with heavy jaw, narrow forehead, fiery red hair and small, brutish-looking eyes.

At dinner, seated beside his father, Franz felt that he was somewhat responsible for his manners and watched him cautiously until he saw him beginning to gulp down his food without waiting for ceremony; then, pushing his napkin where it would attract his father's attention, he began: "Fader, why don't—"

But he got no farther, for a harsh, "Shut up!" burst like a bomb from the father's lips, and while the child

said the man, growing red and uncomfortable.

"All the boys here like God, too," pursued Franz, watching the effect of his words, but the father continued to look uncomfortable and said nothing.

"The boys here don't like saloons," went on the little inquisitor. "Do you like saloons?"

"No," shortly, "if nobody didn't do no more for saloons than I do, they wouldn't git on very well."

"Fader, do you like drunk men?"

"No," but the man's face was blazing now.

"I don't like drunk men. They fight." Then solemnly, "One time you fight Fred. Do you like Fred?"

But the man's face was becoming fairly livid with smothered passion and the veins stood out on his forehead.

"Franz, dear," said the deaconess hastily, "you'd better run into the kitchen and wash your face. I'm sure it's sticky."

"Yes, go and wash your face," thundered the father; and Franz obediently

Prohibition is coming very fast with either plebiscite or measures passed through Parliament. Wise business houses will not have anything to do with employes who drink. The Michigan Central Railway has several lines in Canada, and has issued a proclamation forbidding any of its hands from drinking, either on or off duty. The whiskey sellers of St. Thomas and Elgin county, Ontario (calling themselves licensed victuallers), held a meeting and passed a motion, threatening a system of reprisals. They would withdraw their freight from that road, would seek to influence politicians against it, etc. They sent a letter to this effect to President Ledyard to which he replied that an experience of twenty years had fully satisfied him that the liquor business was no advantage to railroading, and that his company intended to enforce the rule against drinking by every legitimate means in its power.—Templar