

—the waters of affliction—into the red wine of joy.

"H'm! I don't think much of that story," said Jesse, with out-spoken candour. "I'd rather hear about Goliath, or the bears that ate up the forty children."

But Joel was in no mood for such stories, just then. On some slight pretext he escaped from his exacting audience, and went down to the sea-shore. Here, skipping stones across the water, or writing idly in the sand, he was free to go on with his fascinating day-dreams.

For the next two weeks the boy gave up work entirely. He haunted the toll-gates and public streets, hoping to hear some startling news from Jerusalem. He was so full of the thought that some great revolution was about to take place, that he could not understand how people could be so indifferent. All on fire with the belief that this man of Nazareth was the one in whom lay the nation's hope, he looked and longed for the return of Phineas, that he might learn more of him.

But Phineas had little to tell when he came back. He had met his friend twice in Jerusalem,—the same gentle, quiet man he had always known, making no claims, working no wonders. Phineas had heard of his driving the money-changers out of the Temple one day, and those who sold doves in its sacred courts, although he had not witnessed the scene. The carpenter was rather surprised that He should have made such a public disturbance.

"Rabbi Phineas," said Joel, with a trembling voice, "don't you think your friend is the prophet we are expecting?" Phineas shook his head. "No, my lad, I am sure of it now."

"But the herald angels and the star," insisted the boy.

"They must have proclaimed some one else. He is the best man I ever knew; but there is no more of the king in his nature than there is in mine."

The man's positive answer seemed to shatter Joel's last hope. Downcast and disappointed, he went back to his work. Only with money could he accomplish his life's object, and only by incessant work could he earn the shining shekels that he needed.

Phineas wondered sometimes at the dogged persistence with which the child stuck to his task, in spite of his tired, aching body.

He had learned to make sandal-wood jewel-boxes, and fancifully wrought cups to hold the various dyes and cosmetics used by the ladies of the court.

Several times, during the following months, he begged a sail in come of the fishing boats that landed at the town of Tiberias. Having gained the favour of the keeper of the gates, by various little gifts of his own manufacture, he always found a ready admittance to the palace.

To the ladies of the court, the sums they paid for his pretty wares seemed trifling; but to Joel the small bag of coin hidden in the folds of his clothes was a little fortune, daily growing larger.

(To be continued.)

### THE REAL WOMAN.

Some time ago one of our newspapers sent letters to several prominent people, asking them to define true womanhood. One of the best answers was sent by Mr. Jacob A. Riis, the author of a popular work on the poor of New York. He says:

"When I was a boy I thought that women were angels. Now that I have been married nineteen years, I know they are. That is the sum of my life's experience, and I ask of my boys no better assurance that they will never go far astray, than that they shall enter upon life with that conviction. Strong and beautiful angels they are to me; better, gentler, wiser in all their innocence of business and business ways than the rest of us. A woman wrote the story book I love the best of all I ever read—which I read yet whenever I can lay my hands upon it. Women undo with their hearts nine-tenths of the wrongs done in this world with the head. Woman knows how to comfort without a word where men waste—worse than waste—long sermons. A woman was my mother, is my sister, my wife. And two little women, as yet with baby bangles, are winding themselves about my heart roots closer every day."

### Old Dame Cricket.

Old Dame Cricket,  
Down in a thicket,  
Brought up her children nine—  
Queer little chaps,  
In glossy black caps,  
And brown little suits so fine.

"My children," she said,  
"The birds are abed;  
Go and make the dark earth glad;  
Chirp while you can!"  
And then she began,  
Till, oh, what a concert they had!

They hopped with delight,  
They chirped all night,  
Singing, "Cheer up! cheer up! cheer!"  
Old Dame Cricket,  
Down in the thicket,  
Sat awake till dawn to hear.

"Nice children," she said,  
"And very well bred;  
My darling have done their best;  
Their naps they must take;  
The birds are awake,  
And they can sing all the rest."

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## Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, JUNE 6, 1896.

### "KEEP OFF THE DOWN GRADE."

Propriety and impropriety stand diametrically opposed the one to the other, to one of the twain all thought and its outcome, action, tends. We may, therefore, judge of the propriety or impropriety of the indulgence in tobacco, alcoholic drinks, dancing, card-playing, theatre going, etc.

The use of tobacco, especially in the young, exercises a disturbing, weakening influence. To whatever heights of excellence any one may attain, it will never be as high as it would have been without its use. The tendency of the continued use of tobacco is to enslave and weaken the will; self-control is frequently lost thereby, so that it becomes impossible to resist the temptation to indulgence if it is within reach, the craving therefor being painful to endure.

The smoker carries with him the consciousness that the habit renders him offensive, as revealed by the efforts made to sweeten his breath, to get out into the pure air to freshen his clothes and purge away his offensiveness. Railway companies build smoking cars to abate the nuisance, and street railways relegate the smokers to the back seats, or prohibit smoking because of its offensiveness, and even taverns provide smoking rooms to give the house an air of decency. Self-respect is lessened; no one but a smoker will entertain the same esteem for a man after he has discovered him to be the victim of the smoking or chewing habit. What respect is it possible to have for any man, woman, boy or girl whose

clothes, as they approach or pass you, exhale the stale, offensive fumes of tobacco; what right has any one who has rendered himself thus offensive to enter any place of public accommodation? If any one was to sprinkle himself with benzine or carbolic-acid, and then enter a street or railway car or public hall, the cry would go forth, Put him out! Put him out! The tobacco user should receive a like ovation, because he has wilfully rendered himself offensive and revealed no respect or consideration for the feelings of others. With a greater force do the preceding words apply to the use of alcoholic liquors. Wrecks! Wrecks! On! On! reeling along with accelerating speed, down, down, the down grade to the final plunge. Began in moderation, with the positive determination never to exceed that limit, and now hell opens wide its ponderous jaws to receive the victims. Yet men, women, boys and girls, thoughtlessly step on to the toboggan, alcohol, slow at the start; but wait a little, the smash will come, and who will be the victims?

The tendency of dancing is never towards increased morality, but, on the contrary, towards immorality. The whole history of the dance between the sexes reveals that tendency downwards, never upwards. In like manner the tendency of card-playing is not towards honesty and uprightness of character; no one would ever recommend card-playing to develop honesty and uprightness of character. "It won't work that way." Theatre going is most usually among the first steps of a downward course; no one ever ascends in the scale of morality by witnessing a play, a scene or recitation, of even a latent immoral character. What the minds or passions absorb they impart to their surroundings. "Plays" are usually more or less impregnated with vice, and gather together the vile of the earth. True, others may go there, and that tends to increase the evil, by giving it an air of respectability, enticing, inviting by their presence those who would shrink from the immodest aroma of the place.

The common expression is "tobacco," "drink," "cards," "dancing," and "theatres," wreck a man mighty quick.

What would you think of a man or woman who, if asked by any one, What must I do to attain to the highest degree of morality? (and no one should stop short of that) who would answer, Smoke, chew, drink a few glasses of wine, beer, brandy, or a little whiskey, turn about, take a hand at cards, attend "theatres," "balls," "dancing parties," and that will lead you out into and maintain you in the highest state of morality. Would any right-minded person tell any one who desired to retrace his steps from a downward path, to pursue the course just indicated? If not, why not? Would it not be equal to pouring oil on the fire of their inflamed appetites and passions? Would it not plunge them deeper and deeper into the mire and misery of mental and physical corruption?

There is startling impropriety in all these things, because the tendency of them is downward and never upward.—The Northerner.

### A SAD MOTHER.

Mrs. Lewis was a widow. Tom was her only boy, and he was twelve years old—a manly little fellow. How his mother loved him! And how she planned and worked, hoping all the time that in the future Tom would be her comfort and stay!

But now Tom was growing bad very fast. Some bad boys had gained an influence over him, and his mother talked and reasoned with him in vain.

What did he do? Oh, he was learning to smoke, to break the Sabbath, to hang around street corners, and to disobey his mother!

Every one of them downward steps, you see. Poor Mrs. Lewis, how troubled she felt! One night she sat late over the fire, thinking and praying about it all. Tom was asleep upstairs. But he had bad dreams, and woke in a fright.

"Mother! Mother!" he called. But his mother did not hear. Then Tom hurried downstairs. But his mother was not in the room. Now he was frightened in earnest. Where could she

be? And suddenly the thought came. "What if I should lose my mother?" He pushed open the door of the sitting-room, and looked in. There she sat, her Bible in her lap, tears upon her white face.

"Mother! What is it?" cried Tom, in real distress. "What has happened?"

"Oh, it is my boy!" cried the sad woman. "It is my dear boy. I am losing him, and it breaks my heart!"

Tom never forgot that night. For the first time in his life he caught a glimpse of his mother's deep love, and kneeling by her side, he promised God and his mother that he would be a good son from that hour.

And he was! That was the turning-point in his young life. He saw that mother's love was better than fun, he it ever so funny, and he vowed that mother's wishes should be his law from that time.

Tom is a man now, and, boys, we wish you to know what a grand man he is! And his mother—what a happy woman she is!—Selected.

### THAT LITTLE FABLE.

BY MRS. JULIA M'NAIR WRIGHT.

"I saw a disgusting sight just now," said Mr. Lucas, as he entered the house. "I saw little Terry Smith marching along, cigar in mouth; and young Phil Tomkins, with his cheek stuck out with a quid. Don't let me see one of my boys at such work. Tobacco is ruinous to boys!"

"Oo 'mokes!" quoth little Neil, laying down her dolly.

"Oh!—why—I'm a man, pet. It's different."

Mrs. Lucas smiled to herself over her work. Fred was so busy studying, of course he had not heard a word. He looked up presently.

"Father, I'm coming on fine in Latin. I got this fable in ten minutes. Let me read it: Cancer dicebat filio—a crab said to his son, Mi fili, ne sic—my son, do not always walk with crooked steps, but walk straight. Cui ille, Mi pater, respondit—to whom he replied: My father, right gladly will I follow thy commands—si te prius idem facientem videro—if first I shall see you doing the same thing—"

"I know the rest," interrupted Mr. Lucas. "This fable teaches that youth is instructed by nothing so much as by example. Harriet, give me that pipe and tobacco-box, and we will have a little bonfire. Henceforth, I shall say to my boys not 'go,' but 'come.' I hope I know my duty as a father—and want to do it."

### JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

JUNE 14, 1896.

God on our side.—Psalm 27. 1-3.

Verse 1. The path of life is sometimes dark and obscure, and the traveller cannot see the way in which he should go, but God is the light of those who fear him. Christ says respecting himself, "I am the Light of the world." The sun, the orb of day, makes all darkness disappear, and so Jesus, the sun of righteousness, rises with healing in his wings, and disperses all the gloom which may enshroud our path, and give us to see more clearly the path we are to travel.

GOD IS ALSO SALVATION.

Salvation implies danger, from which the traveller has been rescued. When the Israelites were in fearful danger at the Red Sea, God commanded Moses what to do, and soon a way of safety appeared before them. So God always comes to the rescue of his people who are in trouble. The Psalmist asks a question. "Of whom shall I be afraid?" Why should we be afraid when he who is for us is more than all that can be against us.

EXULTATION.

Verses 2 and 3 are the language of triumph. Wicked men will always be the foes of good people, and are sometimes boastful as to what they intend to do, but the writer before us has no fear even though an host should combine for his destruction. Read the verses carefully.