

PLEASANT HOURS.

True Beauty.

Which are the eyes most beautiful?
Are they blue, or black, or gray?
Are they drooping and pensive, and just a bit
sad?
Or sparkling and bright and gay?
The eyes that are fairest of all to me
Are lighted with kindness, and quick to
see
The sorrows of others, and ready to fill
For the weak and the helpless, the aged
and ill.

Which is the mouth most beautiful?
Is it pouting, or smiling and sweet?
Or gravely silent and serious,
With a smile that is faint and fleet?
The mouth that is fairest of all I know
Speaks kindly always to high and low;
No impure words find expression there,
And 'tis often used in hymn and prayer.

Which are the hands most beautiful?
Are they plump, and dimpled, and fair?
Or slim, and taper, and lily white?
Are they sparkling with rings, or bare?
The loveliest hands of all around
In charity's works are often found;
In helping mother they never shirk,
And are never ashamed of honest work.

Which are the feet most beautiful?
Wide, narrow, large or small?
Are they slim or dimpled, or richly clad,
Or poorly, or not at all?
The feet that are following paths of right
Are fairest of all in the Master's sight,
They are oft on errands of mercy sent,
And though thorny the path, they are
still content.

So all may still be beautiful,
Though Nature her gifts withhold.
There is a beauty for all, both great and small,
And alike for the young and old.
With kindness but fill thought, word and act,
Old time will a wonderful change transact,
And the plainest, the soonest may reach
The goal,
For the only true beauty is beauty of soul.

PUDDIN'

An Edinburgh Story.

BY

F. GRANT STEVENSON, A.R.S.A.

CHAPTER I.—(Continued.)

His mother saw that if she did not accept his gift she would deprive him of a pleasure, but made him feel of considerable importance by saying, "Ye've made mair than me the day, laddie."

As the picture advanced, Jo was asked to bring, one by one, the boys who had been playing at marbles, in order to finish the group; and the news spread through the school of the wonderful house where they could get their "pictur's ta'en an' a shillin' for standin'." And Jo got alarmed when several of the boys said they would go too; and when, in the middle of the sitting, the bell rang, Mr. Fraser was astonished at Jo exclaiming, "That's Wugsy Broom an' Flannel Harrison an' a lot o' thum."

Mr. Fraser laughed at the names, and asked Jo what he meant.

"It's a lot o' the laddies to see if ye want them to stand; but ye'll no' hae thum, wulln't ye no', Mr. Fraser?"

"No, I don't require any more."

"That's rare. Wull I gang oot an' wail them?"

"Wulln't you be afraid, if there are so many?"

"No," said Jo, in a tone of the greatest contempt; "there's no' yin o' them wad stand excep' it was Flannel. I've never tried him yet. But then," he added, by way of explanation, "he's only been a week at oor schule."

"If ye please, sir," said the girl, coming into the studio, "there's a lot o' laddies at the door asking if ye want them to stand."

"I telt ye," said Jo excitedly. "Wull I gang oot to thum?"

"No, no. Alice, just send them away; say I have got as many as I require."

Alice, or Alice, as she was generally called, was a type of a Scotch girl, honest in the extreme, brusque in her expressions, and with a constant anxiety to have her house—as she termed it—spotless; and as she was not in the best of tempers at the dirty foot-marks made by the boys on her doorsteps, it was not necessary for Jo to disperse them; Alice made short work with them.

"How do you know you can fight the boys?" said Mr. Fraser, rearing the con-

versation in order to see Jo's face light up again.

"Becus I've dune it. Haven't I, Tam?"

"Ay," replied the boy addressed; "ye mind when ye bluided my nose?"

"But why do you fight?" Mr. Fraser asked.

"Oh, I dinna ken. Sometimes the big yins sets us on, an' we wad be ca'ed 'coo'ardly' if we didna fecht, an' then we hev to ken wha's we didna fecht, an' I'm first the noo—un-

first cock o' the class. I think he's no' less Flannel beats me; but I think he's no' game. He's never offered to tak' me up, though he's bigger nor me. There's the bell again. If I kent wha was tormentin' ye!"

"If ye please," said Alice, entering, "there's a letter, an' the laddie says he's to wait an' see if there's an answer."

Mr. Fraser opened the letter, and smiled as he read—

FOUNTAINBRIDGE SCHOOL.

DEAR SIR,—I should esteem it a favour if you would kindly refrain from encouraging my boys to play truant. About a third of the fourth class is absent, and I am informed that they are with you.—Yours respectfully,

JAMES GOURLAY, headmaster.

Mr. Fraser in reply briefly explained the circumstances, and arranged to have the few remaining sittings on Saturdays, so that Jo and his companions would not be kept from school.

During the sittings Mrs. Fraser occasionally sat in the studio to hear Jo's quaint, old-fashioned remarks, and hear him sing from a wonderfully extensive repertoire; for in this, as well as his conversation, he showed a natural freedom as far removed from forwardness as it was from awkward bashfulness; he never lost sight of the respect due, and sang never asked while the model was having a rest.

"Do you ever get palmies?" said Mrs. Fraser on one of these occasions.

"Ay, sometimes; I got thum twice this week, yince for haein' dirty hands."

"Can you not keep your hands out of sight when they're dirty?" Mrs. Fraser asked jocularly.

"Na," replied Jo in a serious tone: "he's aye on the lookout when ye hand up yer slate."

"And what was the other occasion?"

"I was awa' frae the school an' I hadna a line"; and Jo blushed and looked so sad, Mrs. Fraser saw there was some unhappy circumstance he did not wish to tell, and changed the subject, at the same time determining to call on his mother and see if she could do any-thing for one who occupied so much of his thoughts. Alice had told her that every time he had dinner he pretended he wasn't hungry, in order to take part of it home.

Jo's mother was a pale-faced, quiet woman, with a careworn expression beyond her years, and she was in a flutter of excitement when Mrs. Fraser called and explained who she was.

"I'm ashamed to ask ye in, mum; but, ye see, I've to tak' in washing an' work hard to mak' things meet."

"Have you not a husband? Jo talks a great deal about you, but never mentions his father."

"Ay, he's a guid laddie, Jo, an' I dinna ken what I wad dae without 'um; he's a great comfort and help to me. Yes, mum, I have a husband, but Jo maybe winna care to speak about 'um, for he spends maist o' his wages in the public-house, an' disna seem to think I need any siller; an' that's no' the worst o't, for when he is in the hoose he hardly ever speaks to me, and never wi' kind-

ness. It's an awfu' thing, mum, to live wihin' for a kind word an' never get it: I wad forgie him a' the misery he's caused me wad forgie him a' the misery he's caused me if he wad just speak kindly to me yince, as he used to dae when we were married. Na, Jo's ashamed to speak about him. There was just the other mornin', he wasna able to gang to the his wark wi' drink, an' Jo gaed doon to the stables an' telt the men. They yokit the horses for 'um an' filled the cairts along wi' their ain, an' Jo drave a' the day, an' if they hadna gien 'um a bit o' their piece he wad have had nae meat; an' the maister never kent, or my man wad have lost his situation. An' then puir Jo, when he gaed next day to the school, an' the maister asked him whaur he had been, he wadna tell, an' got his licks; but he said to me, 'Mother, I wad have had my hands blistered wi' palmies afore I wad let them ken my father was drunk.' Ay, let them ken my father was drunk. I wad mony a time I wadna ken what to dae if it wasna for Jo, an' the way he cheers me; an' I'm often sorry to see him keepin' Maggie when ither laddies are oot playin'. Ay, there never was such a thoughtful laddie, although I say't; he never gangs to your hoose without bringin' me a bit o' the dinner you're sae kind as gie 'um, an' I'm sure we're mair obleeged to you than I can tell."

The poor woman was on her weak side when talking of Jo, and as her voice was trembling, Mrs. Fraser with womanly tact changed the subject by arranging to give her work which would pay her better than washing, and at

the same time allow her more leisure, and left with a shower of blessings, which would be heard if earnestness could carry them.

CHAPTER II.

On the Saturday after Joe had driven the cart, he was surprised when his father gave him a sixpence, and though he only said "Here," both Joe and his mother knew what it was for, and the latter felt that he did not say because he was ashamed that he did not say because he was ashamed that he did not say because he was ashamed that he did not say

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with the white bread, and said apologetically, and at the same time with an evident pride in being able to use the word "business."

"Excuse my hands, mum, but when folk's in business they canna be aye washin' theirsel'."

Jo asked and obtained permission to call back to see if more were required; and Mrs. Fraser was surprised when a few weeks had elapsed that she had not heard of him, and the solution was only arrived at when one morning Alice went to her mistress in tears, and on being asked what was wrong, said, sobbing, "It's that laddie Puddin'."

"What has he been doing?"

"He hasna been daein' naething—it's me; an' I didna mean to be ill to 'um, either, if he wadna dirty my door, but I gaed along the noo to the dairy, an' he was just gaun in afore me, an' when he saw me he turned about an' hurried awa', an' the look he gie'd me gaed to my very heart, an' I couldna gang into the shop. I wish he would come back the noo, an' he could dirty my doorstep if he liked."

Alice was consoled when Mrs. Fraser said she would call at Jo's home and arrange for him to come in the mornings before the steps were washed; and Jo and Alice again became the best of friends now that the only object of enmity between them was removed, and knowing that a boy working in the open air is always hungry she invariably had a tasty bit for him.

(To be continued.)

Worth While.

'Tis easy enough to be pleasant
When life flows along like a song,
But the man worth while is the one who will
smile

When everything goes dead wrong;
For the test of the heart is trouble,
And it always comes with the years,
And the smile that is worth the praises of
earth,

Is the smile that shines through tears.

It is easy enough to be prudent
When nothing tempts you to stray;
When without or within no voice of sin
Is luring your soul away;

But it's only a negative virtue
Until it is tried with fire,
And the life that is worth the honour of earth,
Is the one that resists desire.

By the cynic, the sad, the fallen,
Who had no strength for the strife
The world's highway is cumbered to-day;
They make up the item of life.

But the virtue that conquers passion,
And the sorrow that hides in a smile,
It is these that are worth the homage of
earth

For we find them both once in a while.

PRAYER HINTS.

HAVE something special to pray for each day.

Pray as though you meant to have an answer, no matter what may happen.

Think before you pray, what you mean to ask for. You would not ask a favour of any one until you thought beforehand what you needed. So study first your needs; then pray God to supply them.

You may pass a day comfortably without prayer, but a day begun with prayer will prove a far better one. God will make up to you in the same way before the day ends the time spent in prayer at the beginning.

Prayer in the morning fastens the whole day to God. To start a day without prayer is to begin it without God. In doing that you take upon yourself a most fearful responsibility.—*Sunday-School Visitor.*

A CHRISTIAN Hindu was dying, and his heathen comrades came around him and tried to comfort him by reading some of the pages of their theology, but he waved his hand as much as to say, "I don't want to hear it." Then they called in a heathen priest, and he said, "If you will only recite the Numtra, it will deliver you from recite the Numtra, it will deliver you from hell." He waved his hand as much as to say, "I don't want to hear that." Then they said, "Call on Juggernaut." He shook his head as much as to say, "I can't do that." Then they thought perhaps he was too weary to speak, and they said, "Now, if you can't say 'Juggernaut,' think of that god. He shook his head again, as much as to say, "No, no, no." Then they bent down to his pillow, and they said, "In what will you trust?" His face lighted up with the very glories of the celestial sphere as he cried out, rallying all his energies, "Jesus!"