

Aunt Frances, he sent a big cheque to his sister and another to his niece, the latter so big that it almost took her breath away. "It's only a little gift," he wrote. "I can never thank you enough for letting me stay a month in the dear old home where there are no airs. And I found Christ there, too. Found him through Elizabeth. God bless her!"

"Well," commented Mrs. Danforth, "I'm glad I listened to you, my dear."
 "And I'm glad," said Elizabeth, with tears in her eyes, "that we were just ourselves and didn't try to be any one else."

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 28, 1895.

PLOUGHED UNDER.

BY KATE W. HAMILTON.

THAT old story of the Pilgrim Fathers in the terrible year when the ravages of deadly fever were added to all their hardships and warfare—when they dared not let the savage foes around them know how rapidly their ranks were thinning, and so were forced to bury their dead secretly and plough over their graves to hide them—is a pathetic page in history. Something reminded John Kent of it as he slowly followed the plough over the breaking ground. It seemed to him that in this world a good many precious things were ploughed over or under, and he eyed moodily the useful implement before him as it turned up the rich, dark earth. It was not at all the sort of work he wanted to be engaged in. He had planned something quite different, but his plans had come to nothing, he said to himself that day: they were dead, and there was nothing to be done but to plough over their graves and hide them as best he could.

He had never wanted to be a farmer, and all his tastes and inclinations lay in another direction. He had meant to be a physician, and his plans and studies—he had studied hard, too—had been with that end in view. He had thought his life-course lay straight before him when the letter came that called him home.

His father, so hale and hearty that no one had thought of his strength failing for many a year, had been suddenly stricken with paralysis. That changed everything. Some one must provide for the invalid, who might be helpless all his life, and for the dependent mother; some one must take charge of the old place.

"If I had only been a little farther along, I might have been able to do better for them in my own chosen work than in this that I never liked—that I am sure I shall hate if I have to give my life to it," John mused. It was hard, but he could see no way out of it.

"Turns up nice rich dirt, don't it?" said Uncle Sims as his oxen came around to where John had paused a minute to rest.

"Yes; but it turns under grass and

flowers and a good many bright things that might have liked to live," answered John rather bitterly. "The plough has to go on all the same."

"Well"—the keen eyes under the old straw hat turned a kindly look on the young fellow's troubled face: the old man knew the broken plans, and suspected what the words covered—"it does sort of seem so sometimes, but then we know what grows in the field after the ploughin' 'll be worth a deal more than what grewed before. And I'll tell you one thing sure, John: there ain't no mistake in the ploughin' Providence does; that's always to make way for something better that couldn't have grown without it. I s'pose, though, a body could insist on callin' the furrows nothin' but scars, and refuse to sow any seeds in 'em; then of course there'll be nothin' but a ruined field. But anybody that'll use the furrows to plant in will reap something better than all the plough turned under."

On went the oxen again, and John looked after his old friend with a smile and resolved to stop regrettings and watch his chances for sowing. It was wonderful how many opportunities there were when once he began to watch for them.

"John," said the old family doctor a week or two later, "I don't see why you should give up study because you have to look after things here. There are my books and my office, and you can be a great deal of help to me as well as to yourself in your spare hours; and you will have a good many of them, especially in winter."

So the study began again, more slowly in some ways, but more than compensating by the gain in others; and the seeds of patience, determination and faith grew, and brought so rich a harvest that long years afterward Dr. Kent, a successful physician, was wont to say to young aspirants who asked his counsel,

"One of the most valuable things that can be put into any young man's preparatory course is a year of obstacles, or something that will try his mettle, test his purpose and teach him reliance on a strength stronger than his own."

EARLY RISING.

BY CHARLES SHUPE.

Lost, yesterday, somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered, for they are gone forever.—H. Mann.

THERE is just as much truth as poetry in the old adage, "Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise."

The amount of sleep required by a healthy adult varies somewhat for different individuals, usually from six to eight hours. Seven hours are quite sufficient for most people.

Sleep, Nature's sweet restorer, through whose agency the wear and tear of the day's activities is recuperated at night, the soothing balm to the weary, the best friend of frail humanity, without which we could not live as long as without food and drink, like many other blessings becomes a curse when abused.

Many persons, by the pernicious habit of over-indulgence in sleep, rob them-selves of those qualities of body, mind and soul which are essential to the highest development of their being, the excess beyond the requirements of nature inducing torpidity of the functions of the body; hence also dulness spiritual apathy, idleness, careless habits, etc.

Then, there is the waste of time to be considered. Said the great Franklin: "Dost thou love life? then squander not time, for that is the stuff life is made of."

Now, the loss of time to the individual who wastes, say, two hours out of every twenty-four in bed, the difference only between rising at five and seven, or six and eight would be 730 hours per year. In ten years 7,300 hours, or 730 days of ten hours each. In forty-one years this would make exactly a difference of eleven years, reckoning the day at ten hours.

That is, the early riser who would appropriate those two precious, early hours to his own benefit would have the advantage in forty-one years' time only considered, of eleven years over his more sleepy cotem. whose every day is two hours shorter in consequence.

We will not attempt to estimate the commercial value of so much time, as indeed the task would be a difficult one, seeing that the early hours are the most precious of the day, and being lost in broken slumber entail evils that cannot be estimated.

"Few," says Dr. Todd, "ever live to a great age, and fewer still ever become distinguished, who are not in the habit of early rising."

Wesley repeatedly ascribes his health and prolonged life to his practice of rising at four. At the age of seventy-eight he writes, "By the blessing of God I am just the same as when I ended my twenty-eighth year."

Bowes informs us that "Dr. Clark's Comment" were chiefly prepared very early in the morning. So Barnes' popular and useful commentary has also been the fruit of early morning hours.

Says Buffon, the great French naturalist, "Yes, I am indebted to poor Joseph for ten or a dozen of the volumes of my works." Buffon in earlier life, being too fond of sleep, promised his servant Joseph a crown for every morning that he would get him up at six. Joseph secured the daily crown.

International Bridge, Ont.

GOD'S LOVE AND CARE.

BY W. R. SMITH,

THE bright, full Lammas moon is casting a flood of soft, silvery light around me to-night, making the dark hours glorious with beauty. The glittering host of shining orbs in the celestial canopy above truly declares the glory of God as we behold their number and magnitude, and as I contemplate with wonder and awe the divine power of the great Creator, who has swung out into the realms of immensity, and directs and sustains these countless worlds of flashing light, I cannot help but exclaim with one of old, "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?" And yet, it is a blessed fact that the great Father of all is not forgetful of any of his creatures, or any part of his divine creation. From the smallest insect that creeps over the earth, whose span of life is pressed into a few brief hours, to the brightest archangel that stands before the eternal throne, with a life as lasting as eternity, a divine, fatherly care is over all to bless and sustain. No life is crushed out of the vilest worm, and no single sparrow falls to the ground, without an all-observing eye beholding it.

All that breathe the breath of life have their various needs provided for in nature by the loving Creator of all things. Not one is forgotten day or night; and through all the past centuries from the dawn of time down to the present, a divine watch-care has been exercised by an unwearied One. The hand that lights up the lamps of night in the dome of heaven with glowing brilliancy, is the same one that safely leads the Christian and cares for him as he journeys on across the hills and vales of life. The great Being who spoke, and yonder sun behind the distant horizon flashed forth its light and heat, is the same one who now sends the blessed Spirit to cheer the hearts of the children of men. The divine Father who has so richly provided for the material wants of all his creation is the same loving One who has so graciously brought salvation to this sinful world in the person of Jesus, the precious Redeemer. Think not that God, who has ever been so mindful of his creatures and their needs along the past ages, will fail a single soul that trusts him. I tell you nay; for his promise stands as sure as his eternal throne, that he will never forsake his faithful ones.

Truly God has been good to me, ten thousand times better than I have deserved; for I have often forgotten him, but he has never left me. And I rejoice that he has not, for to me it is a sweet token that I am divinely kept, and, though unseen, his blessed presence is a real and soul-satisfying one. And to-night I would kneel low at the cross of the blessed Christ, and return thanks of praise to God for all of his wonderful mercies bestowed on me in the past. As the days and years come and go I find the divine favours un-failing, and becoming more precious to

me; and often, like the happy old ex-slave, I wonder, if the joys that God gives us here on earth are so sweet and precious, what will they be on the evergreen shore in his own dear presence.

To-night I would place my hand in my heavenly Father's, knowing that he is fully able to lead and care for me the rest of my journey home. Yes, I expect to arrive safely there, and would like to meet in my Father's house above every soul that reads those lines, with the countless hosts of others who love God, from all the nations of earth. What a meeting that will be, praising God for all of his loving mercies and tender care over us during life's weary march through the wilderness of this world!

The Good Time Coming.

BY GERALD MASSEY.

'Tis coming up the steep of time,
 And this old world is growing brighter;
 We may not see its dawn sublime,
 Yet high hopes make the heart thro' lighter;
 We may be sleeping in the ground,
 When it awakes the world in wonder;
 But we have felt it gathering round,
 And heard its voice of living thunder.
 'Tis coming! yes, 'tis coming!

'Tis coming now, the glorious time,
 Foretold by seers, and sung in story;
 For which, when thinking was a crime,
 Souls leapt to heaven from scaffolds gory;
 They pass'd, nor saw the work they wrought,
 Now the crown'd hopes of centuries blossom!
 But the live lightning of their thought
 And daring deeds, doth pulse earth's bosom.
 'Tis coming! yes, 'tis coming.

Freedom! the tyrants kill the braves,
 Yet in our memories live the sleepers;
 And, though doom'd millions feed the graves,
 Dug by death's fierce, red-handed reapers,
 The world shall not forever bow
 To things which mock God's own endeavour;
 'Tis nearer than they wot of now,
 When flowers shall wreath the sword
 forever.
 'Tis coming! yes, 'tis coming.

Fraternity! love's other name!
 Dear, heaven-connecting link of being!
 Then shall we grasp thy golden dream,
 As souls, full-statured, grow far-seeing.
 Thou shalt unfold our better part,
 And in our life-cup yield more honey;
 Light up with joy the poor man's heart
 And love's own world with smiles more sunny.
 'Tis coming! yes, 'tis coming.



JUNIOR LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

October 6, 1895.

HIS NAME HOLY.—Exodus 20. 7.

This commandment prohibits the improper use of the name of God. Profane swearing is taking God's name in vain. Swearing is the language of the bottomless pit, and from the manner in which many people act one might suppose that they had been educated in the regions of darkness. What awful consequences would follow if the swearer's prayer was answered? Such language does no good. Nobody thinks more highly of the swearer because of the oaths which he uses. Profane language never excites pleasant emotions; on the contrary, onlookers shudder and stand in awe as they hear the horrid imprecations which fall from the lips of the profane person. It never does any good to those who use such language, and above all it is offensive to God. The Almighty will not hold such persons guiltless. Guilt uncancelled will be sure to bring punishment. Upon the wicked—and all swearers are wicked persons—"He will rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup." Psalm 11. 6. The habit of swearing is easily acquired. Boys imagine that they become men when they can belch forth their horrid oaths. But they degrade themselves. Let all who have learned to swear ask forgiveness of God and forsake the company of the ungodly.