

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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THE BOYS AND GIRLS.

GOD wants the boys, the merry, merry boys,
The noisy boys, the funny boys,
The thoughtless boys—
God wants the boys, with all their joys,
That he as gold may make them pure,
And teach them trials to endure;
His heroes brave
He'll have them be,
Fighting for truth
And purity.
GOD WANTS THE BOYS.

Gods wants the happy-hearted girls,
The loving girls, the best of girls,
The worst of girls—
God wants to make the girls his pearls,
And so reflect his holy face,
And bring to mind his wondrous grace,
That beautiful
The world may be,
And filled with love
And purity.
GOD WANTS THE GIRLS.

—Sunday-School Times.

JAPANESE TEMPLE.

THE REV. GEORGE COCHRAN, for five years missionary of the Methodist Church of Canada, in Japan, thus describes some of the Temples which he visited:

About half-way down the slope lie the temple and grounds of Chionin, founded in the twelfth century by the Jodo sect of Buddhists. It is an imposing structure, standing in the centre of a large square. Long avenues lead up to the main building from three gates—one on the southern and two on the western borders of the square—and along these are built the houses of the priests, each cultivating his own little garden in front of his dwelling. In the rear of the great temple are suites of splendid rooms, built for the accommodation of the priests and people of rank who come from a distance to worship at this far-famed shrine. The guide who conducted me through the spacious apartments and wide corridors, called my attention to the massive planks of highly-polished timber with which the porches and halls were floored. Underneath some of these, springs were placed, which caused them to yield to the tread, and by some sort of singular device tinkling musical sounds were emitted as the planks rose from the pressure of the foot. This is a conceit which I have not noticed in any other building in Japan. Sometimes worshippers, especially those of the labouring class, who have but little time, do not enter the temple, but stand before it, bow the head, and repeat the prayer formulas, as represented in the engraving. On special days of worship, however, this is not considered proper, and

all enter and prostrate themselves before the idols.

Hard by in a corner of the enclosure hangs the great bell of Chionin, which is fourteen feet in height, nine feet in diameter, and the metal is nine inches thick. The campanile is a heavy wooden structure, so low that I could touch the bell with my umbrella. Like all Japanese temple bells, it has no iron clapper, but is struck on the outside by

figures—around each of these is grouped a company of smaller idols, also gilt, the whole collection being supposed to number 33,333. The largest idol is a sitting statue of Kuanon, which measures eight feet from the knees to the head. The other idols are arranged in tiers on each side of this larger one, and represent gods and goddesses, each with its own particular legend, the whole wrought into a complete narra-

pieces, and must be seen to be appreciated. Taking the temples and their surroundings together, they are worthy of being classed with the chief objects of interest in this ancient capital, if not in the whole of Japan.

REQUIRED READING, S.S.R.U.

(Society of Sunday-School Reading Union.)

STORIES OF EARLY METHODISTS.

GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

GEORGE, the sixth son of Thomas and Elizabeth Whitefield, was born on the 27th December, 1714, and it was in the "Old Bell Inn," which is still standing, that George Whitefield drew his first breath. After his father's death, which happened when George was about two years of age, the business of the inn was continued by his mother, and it was here that his early days were spent.

In speaking of this era of his young life he says, with characteristic simplicity, "I began to assist my mother in various ways, till at length I put on my blue apron and washed mops, cleaned rooms, and, in a word, became a professed and common drafter for near a year and a half."

How strange that he who rose to the highest pinnacle of earthly fame, that he who astonished the world with his great oratorical powers, should have been in early life employed in waiting on customers in a bar-room!

"His descent augured no brilliant future; but if Virgil was the son of a potter, Demosthenes of a smith, Columbus of a cloth weaver, Ben Jonson of a bricklayer, Burns of a poor peasant, and Luther of a miner, it is not incredible that this preacher should have sprung from an inn-keeper."

Beneath the blue apron of the tavern-boy drawing ale for the guests, lay a troubled conscience, and with the strange proclivity that often in boyhood hints at peculiar fitness for some great calling, young Whitefield would imitate clergymen, read prayers, and, as he grew older, compose sermons. Deeper went the sounding-line into his evil heart, higher rose his breathings after a purer life; and often late into the night, when the inn at Gloucester was dark and still, the candle yet burned at the window where sat the tavern-keeper's boy reading the Bible, that blessed book whose truths he was afterward to wield so effectually as a weapon of divine power.

WHITEFIELD AND HIS MOTHER.

Whitefield's mother early told him that she expected more from him than



JAPANESE TEMPLE.

a heavy beam of wood, swung against it like a battering ram. This bell is famed above all others for its pure liquid tones, which, on a calm day, may be heard all over the city, and many miles beyond.

The San-ju-san-gen-do—thirty-three fold temple—built in honour of the thousand-handed Kuanon—goddess of mercy, contains one thousand gilt idols, each in the form of a full grown human

figure, abounding in touching incident, and all to the glory of the goddess of mercy.

These temples are built of the finest timber, and the most skilful workmen were employed in their construction. The shrines and pillars are covered with heavy gilding, seemingly regardless of cost, and have the appearance of massive gold. The carvings and paintings on the walls and ceilings are master-