

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.



ELIZABETH FRY.

A Gentlemanly Boy.

A gentle boy, a manly boy,
Is the boy I love to see;
An honest boy, an upright boy,
Is the boy of boys for me.

The gentle boy guards well his lips,
Lest words that fall may grieve,
The manly boy will never stoop
To meanness, nor deceive.

An honest boy clings to the right,
Through seasons foul and fair,
An upright boy will faithful be,
When trusted anywhere.

The gentle boy, the manly boy,
Upright and honest, too,
Will always find a host of friends
Among the good and true.

He reaps reward in doing good,
Finds joy in giving joy,
And earns the right to bear the name—
"A gentlemanly boy."

ELIZABETH FRY AND PRISON REFORM.

Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, the third daughter of John Gurney, of Earlham, was born in Norwich, in 1780, under the shadow of its noble old cathedral. The death of her mother deprived the daughter of the counsel most needed, and for a while Elizabeth seems to have preferred a life of gaiety to the sober line of conduct required of those who embrace the teachings of the Society of Friends. After events, however, led to a decided change of choice, in consequence of which Miss Gurney became a most exemplary Christian, and, as the world knows, a faithful toiler on behalf of the unfortunate and fallen.

The first record of a visit to Newgate appears in her journal under the date of February 16, 1813, but it was not until some four years after that she entered upon the great work of her life. About this time she was induced, in consequence of the representations of William Foster, a member of the Society of Friends, to personally inspect the state of women prisoners. Destitute of sufficient clothing, for which there was no provision; in

ragged and dirt, without bedding, they slept on the floor, the boards of which were in part raised to supply a sort of pillow. In the same rooms they lived, cooked and washed. With the proceeds of their clamorous begging, the prisoners secured liquor, which was freely offered for sale in the prison. It was to the aiding and uplifting of these unfortunate members of her sex that Mrs. Fry devoted her life.

Stimulated by her example, many ladies, some of them of high rank, gave attention to the condition of women convicts. Societies were formed, one of the chief being the "Ladies' Newgate Association." The members became greatly interested in the well-being of female convicts sentenced to transportation. These were conveyed to the waterside in open waggons, and generally celebrated their departure from Newgate by a riot, in which windows, furniture, and aught else that was breakable and within their reach, was injured or destroyed. Through the intervention of Mrs. Fry, the mode of conveyance to the transport ship was changed to hackney coaches, and the

solemnity of the scene, leaned over the ships on either side, and listened apparently with great attention. She closed the Bible, and after a short pause knelt down on the deck, and implored a blessing on the work of Christian charity from that God, who, though one may 'sow and another water,' can alone 'give the increase.' Many of the women wept bitterly, all seemed touched; when she left the ship they followed her with their eyes and their blessings, until, her boat having passed within another tier of vessels, they could see her no more.

Having obtained authority for her visit, and being accompanied by prison officers and any magistrates or private individuals desiring to go with her, Mrs. Fry would go from yard to yard, from one ward to another, addressing the most minute inquiries to the gaoler or turnkey, and calculating the capabilities of the building for the greatest degree of improvement.

Miss Edgeworth speaks with much gratification of the work accomplishing in Newgate. "Of all the prisoners," she says, "one only—a dirty, depraved old Jewess—seemed beyond the reach of Mrs. Fry's influence for good."

Sir James Mackintosh, quoted by his wife in a letter to Mrs. Fry, referred to an exhortation by the latter to forty-five



NORWICH CATHEDRAL.

and do the work of our heavenly Saviour, Jesus, among the guilty, among the broken-hearted and the sick, and to labour in the deepest and darkest wretchedness of life!"

HOW WILL WAS CURED.

"I don't know what to do with my little boy," said Willie's mother. "He hasn't been well, and the doctor told me to take him to the seashore and let him play all day in the sand. But how am I going to make him play when he does not like it?"

"I know a prescription much better than your doctor's," said a strange lady sitting by.

"What is it?" asked Will's mother. "Call him, and let me tell him," said the stranger.

"Will! O Will! come here a minute, my son," called his mother.

Will got up slowly, leaving his bucket and spade in the sand. "They are just going to tease me about not playing," he grumbled to himself. "I wish everybody would let me alone."

But they didn't say a word to him about playing. "Will," said the strange lady, brightly, "if you are not too busy, I wish you would help me a little."

Will pricked up his ears. It had been a long time since he had been allowed to help anybody but himself.

"Do you see that little yellow cottage away off there?" asked the lady. "It is about a mile up the beach. There is a lame boy in that cottage, and I want to send him an orange. Will you take it?"

"Yes, ma'am, certainly," said the small boy.

"And, Will," she continued, "if you can do anything to amuse or cheer him, it would be a good thing, you know. He can't get out of the house by himself, but he might wish you to help him."

Will was done moping now. He forgot all about himself in doing things for lame Lucien. The strange lady's prescription worked wonders. If you ever feel dull, little readers, I advise you to try it.



NORWICH CATHEDRAL FROM THE EAST.

quiet and orderly conduct of the prisoners was secured by their being accompanied by ladies, Mrs. Fry and others, to the convict ship.

With what skill and success Mrs. Fry toiled may be gathered from the following:

The last time that Mrs. Fry was on board the Maria, which lay at Deptford, was a solemn and interesting occasion. There was great uncertainty whether the poor convicts would see their benefactress again. She stood at the door of the cabin, attended by her friends and the captain, the women on the quarter-deck facing them. The sailors, anxious to see what was going on, clambered into the rigging, upon the capstan, or mingled in the outskirts of the group. The silence was profound when Mrs. Fry opened her Bible, and in a clear, audible voice read a portion from it; whilst the crews of the other vessels in the tier, attracted by the

female convicts, as "the deepest tragedy he had ever witnessed. What she read and expounded to the convicts, with almost miraculous effect, was the fourth chapter to the Ephesians."

Sydney Smith was not accustomed to praise indiscriminately, as the world knows. And yet he found it in his heart to write after this fashion:

To see that holy woman in the midst of the wretched prisoners, to see them all calling earnestly upon God, soothed by her voice, animated by her look, clinging to the hem of her garment, and worshipping her as the only being who has ever loved them, or taught them, or noticed them, or spoke to them of God, this is the sight which breaks down the pageant of the world, which tells us that the short hour of life is passing away, and that we must prepare shortly to meet God; that it is time to give, to pray, to comfort, to go, like the blessed woman,



EARLHAM HOUSE, HOME OF MRS. FRY.



IN NEWGATE PRISON.