

Recessional.

BY RUDYARD KIPLING.

God of our fathers, known of old—
Lord of our far-flung battle line—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies—
The captains and the kings depart—
Still stands thine ancient Sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Far-called our navies melt away—
On dune and headland sinks the fire—
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not been
awe—
Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In recking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not thee to guard—
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy mercy on thy people, Lord!
Amen.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, MAY 13, 1899.

LIFE UNDER AN AVALANCHE.

The people who build their houses on the slopes of Vesuvius do not seem to care for the danger which is always imminent from the great volcano; and the inhabitants of the Alpine valleys are equally careless about building where snow-slides may overwhelm their dwellings.

One of the most remarkable incidents in the history of Alpine snowslides is the following, which took place at Bergoletto, in Piedmont, over a century ago. Two avalanches descended upon the village, so the story goes, burying some thirty houses and a score of their inhabitants. A man named Roccia, with his son, just escaped being overwhelmed by the snow, but, to their horror, saw their home, in which were Mrs. Roccia, with her sister and the rest of the children, completely smothered.

The news of the catastrophe brought hundreds of men from the neighbouring villages, who, led by the relatives of those entombed, set to work with a will digging down to the houses that lay forty feet below them. Though they made superhuman exertions, they could not reach any of the habitations, for heavy falls of snow came on and filled in the places that they had laboriously excavated. Spring was at hand, with its warm winds, and as it was evident that there was no possibility of their being able to get down to the unhappy victims without the help of milder weather, they desisted from their efforts, firmly persuaded that no one could be living under the enormous mass of snow

that completely obliterated all traces of the houses.

After a month the melting of the snow covering had proceeded so far that they were encouraged to continue their work, and a few days' digging exposed Roccia's house. It was, however, quite empty. The unhappy father and son broke their way in through the roof, expecting to see their dear ones stretched lifeless, but no one was there. They at once jumped to the conclusion that refuge had been found in the stable, and, renewing their exertions, soon effected an entrance there. To their amazement, they found Mrs. Roccia, her sister, and the eldest daughter alive after an incarceration of five weeks. They looked almost like skeletons, and were unable to move, but still they were alive. Tender hands removed them to the nearest habitable house, and there they slowly recovered—the daughter first, Mrs. Roccia's sister next, and last his wife, who had during her long imprisonment been in a more cramped position than either of the others.

They had been quite close to the stable when they heard the avalanches approaching, and with a little son of Roccia's managed to get under shelter there before their fall. In the stable were some fowls, a donkey, and two goats, with kids. They killed the kids, and as there was a plentiful supply of fodder within reach, the goats continued to yield them milk until the day of their deliverance. The boy died at the end of the first week, but the other three lived on until they were rescued, long after they had entirely given up all hopes of ever seeing the light of day again.—S. S. Visitor.

DICK AND HIS PRINCIPLES.

BY L. PENNY.

There had been great anxiety in the Brass family Dick's regiment had been called into service when war was declared; it went into camp, and after several weeks of drilling and waiting was ordered to the front.

Dick was in the battle before Santiago, but was not hurt in the least. He said it was almost a miracle, because the bullets fell like hailstones all around, and he believed he escaped because of the prayers that he knew were offered up for him at home. After the battle he fell ill with a low fever and was sent home to recuperate. Then his family and friends showed how they loved him. The neighbours sent jellies and other dainties to tempt his appetite, and seemed to vie with each other in attentions to the boy. Any one who had fought in Cuba and had come home to "tell the tale" was a hero in their estimation. Nothing was too good for him.

Dick received the best of care, and tender nursing from his mother and sister Grace. The latter often read aloud to him. Said Grace one day, "Dick, I wondered what you would do when I learned that canteens were established in camp. I knew very well that you would never willingly patronize one, but I wondered if they could make you take your turn at selling the drink. Were you ever detailed for that purpose?"

"There was no need of doubt as to what I would do, Sis. I never stepped inside of a canteen, and I did all I could to persuade other boys from going in. Each company furnished a man each day to deal out the lager, and once my name was called. I did not hesitate a minute, but went right to our captain and told him I could not think of doing such mean work, for it was against my principles and against my bringing up; that I had never drank a glass of beer and would not now, neither would I serve a glass of beer to any one else to drink. I expected surely he would send me to the guard house for disobeying orders, but he simply said, 'I'll excuse you, Bros. I don't like such doings myself, and am glad you came right to me.' I heard that he went to headquarters and said that he was proud of having one man in his company who could stand up for his principles. The next day I was ordered to report at headquarters. I did not know what would be said to me there, but instead of a reprimand I got praise from the Major-General, who shook hands with me and said he was proud of having a man in camp who was not afraid to speak up for what he thought was right. He made me feel glad, and I went back to my company a happy fellow. I tell you, Sis, it pays to do right."

"I am proud of you, Dick," said Grace. "It must have taken considerable nerve to do what you did."

"That is what the Major declared. He said I had shown that I not only had bravery to fight the enemy, to face the flying bullets, but I had proved that I

had moral courage sufficient to speak out for principle before a crowd of men."

"Now, you have talked enough; I will give you your tonics when you must close your eyes about a nap," said Grace, who left the room but soon returned carrying a cup of hot milk. As she handed it to him she laughed and said, "Oh, Dick, I am afraid I have mortally offended old Mrs. Bates, who called here last week and brought a bottle of currant wine for you. She said, 'Dick need not be at all afraid to drink this, because it is home-made wine. I made it myself and there isn't a drop of alcohol in it. He needs a tonic and it will do him good!'"

Dick smiled. "What did you say to her, Sis?"

"I thanked her, of course, and told her the very best tonics in the world for you are hot milk and beef tea; that you could not think of taking any wine, and when you got well we would show her by your teading apparatus how much alcohol there really is in her home-made wine, or if she would go to the meeting of the Loyal Temperance Legion she could witness the experiment by the superintendent. Now shut your 'peepers' and I will darken the room and leave you for a nap." And Dick obeyed like the good, as well as brave, boy that he really is.

A GIRL EX-QUEEN.

Americans who have lived in Madrid describe the little ex-Queen Mercedes as the most picturesque figure in the Spanish court. She became the reigning, but not ruling queen when her father died, but lost her shadow of a crown at the birth of her brother six months later. In the case of his death she would again become the sovereign of Spain.

She is described as a slight, homely young girl, with singularly modest, sincere bearing. She has shown, too, it is said, a womanly sympathy with the poorer class of her people.

Upon her seventeenth birthday it was proposed that a magnificent state ball should be given at the Escorial in celebration of the event; but the princess refused, saying that rejoicing and dancing were out of place in the present condition of her country.

She asked instead that her birthday should only be marked by her appointment to the presidency of the Red Cross Society in Spain.

This was done, and she then received the directors of the society, women belonging to every class, and afterward drove with her mother and the little king to a hospital near Madrid and gave a great dinner to scores of wounded Spanish soldiers returned from Cuba and the Philippine Islands.

BEAR NATURE.

A little Tam O'Shanter cap afforded the text for a discourse which interested a number of visitors to Forest Park the other afternoon. It belonged to a golden-haired little girl, who rushed up to the bear cage after a romp through the autumn leaves. With the buoyancy of childhood she twirled the cap about her fingers, and laughed gleefully at the antics of the bears until, in her excitement, the Tam O'Shanter escaped her, and went flying into the cage. A black paw was upon it the instant it struck the stone floor of the pit. Two black eyes surveyed it critically, and then the owner of the paws and eyes rolled over it like a football player scoring a touchdown. Miss Columbia lay in a corner of the pit, and let Uncle Sam have all the fun. Suddenly the little black ball of fur unfolded. One black paw grasped the cap, and Bruin advanced to the iron bars, outside of which many grown persons and children, one of them a crying little girl, stood watching him. His next move was surprising. He threw the cap through the bars at the very feet of its golden-haired owner.

"Well, that beats anything I ever saw!" exclaimed a young man, who had witnessed the whole performance.

"That observation, my boy, shows how little you know about bear nature." It was a gray-bearded man, bent with age and leaning on a cane, who spoke.

"If you knew bears as I do," he continued, "you would not marvel. The black bear is the best-natured fellow on earth. He is mean only when self-preservation demands it. Now, if that little girl's cap had fallen in the cage of that old grizzly over there, there would not be enough of it left to cover a safe-cracker's conscience. The grizzly is a confirmed pessimist. He would have taken that cap as a personal insult. He would have jumped to the conclusion that that little girl was trying to worry him, and he'd have got even good and

strong. The black bear, on the other hand, is a sunny-natured optimist. He was sorry for the little girl, and when he saw her crying he just couldn't help handing back the cap. Now watch this."

The old man picked up a piece of paper, rolled it into a wad, and threw it into the cage containing the black bears. It was Miss Columbia who came to the front this time. She seemed delighted beyond expression, and played with the piece of paper, knocking it about from one end of the cage to the other. The gray-whiskered man had meantime prepared another paper-ball. This he tossed into the grizzly's pit. The big fellow hit it viciously as it flew past him. With grunts of rage he pursued it, and tore it into a thousand fragments. Then he leaped toward the bars, saying plainly in bear language that he could lick the fellow who had insulted him.

EDWARD THRING—HEAD-MASTER.

Soon after the death of Edward Thring, thirty-four years head-master of Uppingham School, a member of Parliament said to his biographer:

"Thring was the most remarkable Christian man of this generation. Because he was the first man in England to assert openly that in the economy of God's world a dull boy had as much right to have his power, such as it is, fully trained as a boy of talent, and that no school did honest work which did not recognize this truth as the basis of its working arrangements."

When Thring became head-master of Uppingham, a "faire, free grammar school," founded in 1584, it had twenty-seven pupils. On his departure from his life-work the school numbered over four hundred pupils. The schoolmaster, as he called himself, had a passionate conviction that education was, in a special sense, a work of God. That conviction was his starting-point for school work.

One night he had the gratification of hearing a statement that cheered him greatly because it disclosed the formative influence of his teachings. A gentleman, lecturing in the school-room on "Education," told an anecdote illustrative of the value of a teacher's influence.

A boy, travelling on foot in France, full of spirit and life, had been asked by his companions to start early on Sunday to have a long day. The boy refused. Being pressed, he said:

"No, I will not do it; the head-master will not like it."

The other boys laughed, and said that the head-master was five hundred miles away; his excuse was nonsense.

But their jeering did not change his purpose. Then the lecturer turned round toward Mr. Thring, and said:

"That boy was from Uppingham; that head-master was you, sir."

The school cheered. The head-master, greatly moved, rose and said, "I am sure you will all thank the lecturer; you must feel what I feel deeply. I thank the school for giving one such boy. I think there are many such boys among you."

THE RAIN TREE OF FERRO ISLAND.

The island of Ferro is one of the largest in the Canary group, and it has received its name on account of its iron-bound soil, through which no river nor stream flows. In the midst of the island there grows a tree known as the raining tree, the leaves of which are long and narrow. It continues in constant verdure winter and summer, and the branches are covered with a cloud which is never dispelled, but, resolving itself into a moisture, causes to fall from its leaves a very clear water in such abundance that cisterns placed at its foot to receive it are never empty.—April Ladies' Home Journal.

THE LARGEST TREE IN THE WORLD.

The largest tree in the world is to be seen at Mascall, near the foot of Mount Etna, and is called "The Chestnut Tree of a Hundred Horses." Its name rose from the report that Queen Jane, of Aragon, with her principal nobility, took refuge from a violent storm under its branches. The trunk is two hundred and four feet in circumference. The largest tree in the United States, it is said, stands near Bear Creek, on the north fork of the Tule River, in California. It measures one hundred and forty feet in circumference. The giant redwood tree in Nevada is one hundred and nineteen feet in circumference.—April Ladies' Home Journal.