

Show Your Colours.

BY J. E. HANKIN.

Show your colours, little lad,  
Never mind the danger,  
Be your comrade good or bad,  
Be he friend or stranger.  
Never speak an idle word,  
Do a wrong deed never,  
Lest there be an echo stirred  
That shall sound forever.

You are making record now,  
And the angels hear you;  
O my boy with noble brow,  
Heaven is bending near you!  
Open be, and truthful too,  
Without fear or quailing;  
Never mind what others do,  
Never mind their railing.

Show your colours, little lad!  
Every meanness smother,  
That will make the angels glad,  
Father, too, and mother.  
Show your colours everywhere,  
Brave be your behaviour;  
True be to your daily prayer,  
True be to your Saviour.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, JANUARY 19, 1895.

A TALK TO POOR BOYS.

If a boy has good health and an intelligent mind, the best thing that can happen to him is to have to make his own way in life; for every struggle increases his strength and every success gives him fresh courage and confidence, and whatever he wishes to be he can be. In this land of cheap books and free schools, if he desires an education he can get it. If he has a real thirst for knowledge, he can work his way through college as many another boy has done before him, and enter any profession he chooses. So many of our distinguished men have fought this fight and have reached their present eminence entirely through their own exertions, that it seems sometimes as if that was the only path to fame and honour, and as if all one had to do was to start at the bottom to end at the top; but the fact is that all poor boys do not become successful men. As Mr. Howells puts it, "I have known too many men who had all the disadvantages and who never came to anything." Those are the men who have neither the industry nor the pluck to work and fight through long years, if need be, until the battle is won. The world is full of discontented and unhappy men, the cowards and deserters in the fight of life, lagging in the rear, hiding behind every shelter they can find, and grumbling because they cannot get somebody to fight and work for them. Envious of their neighbours who are better off, forgetting that other men have won their ease and comfort through their own industry and that they blame everybody

for their misfortunes except themselves. I do not know of what use such men are in this world, unless it be as warnings to the rising generation.

Never say you cannot do a thing because you have not the chance. If you really wish to do it and need to do it, the opportunity will come; and if you are swift to see it and quick to take it, it is yours.

But perhaps a boy who is reading this may say, "Ah, but I have more than myself to take care of. If I had only myself I could manage; but I have mother and the children, and I am the only man there is in the family." That is the best of all. A boy with such a trust never can nor will desert it; and he is learning daily such lessons of endurance, industry, and unselfishness as will be of priceless value to him during his whole life. Courage, my dear, brave fellow, for you are sure to win.

A poor boy learns to "endure hardships like a good soldier," and things which others could not bear he takes as easily as a trained athlete lifts a weight which untrained muscles could not stir. So be thankful if you have been sent to school to Mistress Poverty, for though she is the sternest, yet she is the wisest and most faithful teacher, and if you will learn the tasks she sets, you will surely become a brave and noble man.

"I PROMISE."

BY PANSY.

He was only ten years old, and this was his first long day away from his mother. The desire of his heart had been accomplished, and he was regularly entered as a scholar in the famous Eton school. But more than once that day his heart had failed him. Six hundred boys! Ever so many of them much older than he, and as large again, and many of them so rough in voice and manner that he felt half-afraid of them, not so much that they would hurt him in any way as that they would laugh at him. The truth is, this boy would rather be struck than be laughed at, and I suspect there are boys in this country that are in full sympathy with him.

More than once during the day the little fellow had heard a suppressed giggle over some awkwardness of his,—suppressed because a teacher happened to be near at hand; but this, and several whispered remarks about his being a "muff,"—what-  
ever that meant,—and the fact that he had been asked whether his mother knew that he was out, led him to understand what he might expect at their hands when the teachers were out of hearing.

Bedtime found him one of thirty boys shut into a large hall, or "dormitory," making ready for bed. In his mind was a great tumult. Certain home scenes were as vividly before him as if he had been looking at a photograph. Among them was this: his mother's room, the light burning low, his mother in her little rocking-chair, he standing by her side. That was only two nights ago; his last at home. What was that she was saying? He seemed to hear the words: "And another thing, my boy: I wish you would promise me that you will not under any circumstances neglect or omit kneeling down every night to pray. Boys at school are sometimes rude and disagreeable, and it may not always be an easy thing to do; but I know it will help you to keep this rule through life. I wonder whether you are willing to promise your mother."

There had been tears in her eyes when she spoke, and her voice had trembled. He knew it was hard for his mother to send him away to school; he had not then known how hard it would be for him to go. But with that tremble in her voice he was ready to promise her anything; so he had unhesitatingly said, "Yes, mother; I promise."

He was a boy to be trusted. But he had not thought of being in the room with more than two or three boys; and behold, here were thirty, all a good deal older than himself, all talking and laughing, some of them talking in a way that he was sure his mother would have called coarse. If she could see and hear them, would she want him to kneel down in such a presence? It would be more than he thought; he

could not possibly pray. Surely it would be much better to get quietly into bed, and cover his head with the bedclothes and there pray to the Father who seeth in secret. Yet there was his promise. Yes, but his mother did not know how it would be; besides, she meant that he was never to omit prayer; and he could pray much better in bed than out.

No, that would not do. His conscience was too well trained for such reasoning. Had she not said, "I wish you would promise me that you will not under any circumstances neglect or omit kneeling down every night to pray?" and he had said, "Mother, I promise." "And I'll keep my word," he said resolutely.

Down on his knees went the small boy, with his face buried in the pillow. There was an instant's astonished hush, then the babble of tongues commenced. They shouted, they cheered, they groaned, they roared. Finding him unmoved, they threw books at his head; and, gathering about him, shouted, "Hollo! Muffy has fainted; help! help! let's get him out of this."

Several of the larger ones, seizing him by the shoulders, began pulling him across the room toward the window.

Suddenly the uproar about him ceased. He was in the middle of the long hall, and still on his knees; but the boys had dodged, each toward his own bed; for one of the teachers had unceremoniously opened the door and looked in. Not a word was said, but the face of the teacher was enough without words. Every boy there knew that it would be for his advantage to go to bed as quickly as possible. There was no more trouble about praying that night. But other nights were to come. Could the little fellow endure such an ordeal again? He says that it gave him a thrill of joy to discover that he was even more firmly resolved to do it than he had been before. He was not to be bullied out of what he had promised his mother.

But there was no more "bullying." The next morning, after prayers, the attention of the entire school was called to the head-master arose. After a moment of ominous silence he said: Every boy listen. Hereafter, when the second bell sounds at night, every boy in this school is to kneel by his bedside, and to remain there in utter silence for five minutes. Whether you pray or not, depends upon your own hearts and consciences. But you are to take this attitude, and thus show outward respect for the boys that have moral principle enough to desire to pray. Remember, this is a law. You are dismissed.

All that was years ago. The little ten-year-old Eton boy has been preaching the Gospel in England for several years; but he tells this story now, on occasion, and speaks of the experience as one that has been helpful to him all his life, because it increased his determination to show his colours in uncomfortable as well as in safe places.

We need more boys to-day who, while they are not afraid of a knock, or a tumble, or any such thing, are also not afraid of a laugh or a sneer.

GOD WILL GUIDE.

THE fishermen of Brittany, so the story goes, are wont to utter this simple prayer when they launch their boats upon the deep: "Keep me, my God; my boat is so small and thy ocean is so wide."

How touchingly beautiful the words and the thought. Might not the same petition be uttered with as much directness every morning and evening in our daily life: "Keep me, my God; for my boat is small and thy ocean so wide!" Keep me, my God, keep me from the perils and temptations that throng around me as I go about my daily duties, "My boat is so small"—I am so weak, so helpless, so prone to wander, so forgetful of thy loving kindness! I am tossed to and fro at the mercy of the world; I am buffeted about by sharp adversity and driven before the storms of grief and sorrow. Except thou dost keep me I must perish. Keep me, my God, for "Thy ocean is so wide"—the journey is so long, and the days and years are many. "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust. Deliver me in thy mercy."

TOBACCO SMOKING.

THERE is no need of learned disquisition to prove that tobacco-smoking is physically and mentally injurious. Smokers are in this dilemma: they either swallow or eject their saliva. If the former, they imbibe the deadly nicotine; if the latter, they seriously weaken the constitution, by losing a secretion indispensable to digestion. An inveterate defender of smoking admitted that spitting was fatal, and said emphatically: "A man who cannot smoke without spitting should abandon the pipe at once." He evidently did not know that to swallow smoke-impregnated saliva is even worse than spitting. Tobacco, smoked or chewed, increases the secretion of saliva. Most smokers spit. Those who do not, swallow their saliva. Both practices directly injure health.

And most pitiable is the slavish condition of him who indulges in frequent smoking, conscious that it injures, yet without resolution enough to restrain his inordinate love of the weed. Those of a nervous temperament ought to abstain. With such, even if accustomed to smoke for years, a single pipe or cigar of stronger tobacco than usual, will frequently render them incapable of holding their hands steady for half an hour. Mr. G. Butler, M.R.C.S., says in the *Lancet*: "Excess in smoking is even more dangerous in some respects than excess in drinking. Evils resulting from it are not so obvious. The smoker is not denounced by society. The drunkard feels at once the effects of his mode of life. Not so with the smoker. Mental and bodily energy are more gradually weakened; the constitution is sapped more insidiously, and while suffering from excessive indulgence in tobacco, friends and neighbours attribute it to other causes." I knew a smoker who suffered from nervous headaches. He knew the cause well. I have often heard him say, while charging his pipe, "Let me take a little more poison." Lamb wrote to Wordsworth: "Tobacco has been my evening comfort and morning curse for five years. I had to in my head to write this poem for two years; but tobacco stood in its own light when it gave me headaches that prevented me singing its praises."

Many foolish boys, aping their seniors, are beginning to smoke cigarettes. Let me tell them that an eminent oculist has discovered a disease of the eye, which he traces directly to cigarette smoking. My last words to the many youths who read this paper is: "Don't begin this pernicious practice of smoking! Be faithful to your Band of Hope pledge against the twin evils of Drink and Tobacco! God help you and bless you."

Brought to Book.

GRANDPA sat in his high-backed chair;  
"When I was a boy," quoth he,  
"When I was a boy" (he smoothed the hair  
Of the laddie upon his knee,  
"I was fond of play, but I loved my work,  
And lessons to me were more;  
For my parents taught me never to shirk  
The duty that lay before.

"When I was a boy," (his eye grew dim  
Trembled his wrinkled hand),  
"Life was reality stern and grim;  
My laddie, you understand?  
I was always found in my place at school,  
Ready my task to con;  
They never stood me on the dunce's stool,  
Like my little grandson John!"

And the laddie smiled, with the youthful  
bloom  
On his face so fair and round;  
That morning, up in the lumber-room  
A wonderful thing he'd found,  
In a store-chest, stiff with the ages' rust  
(Seventy years I wis!),  
Grandad's copy-books under the dust,  
And in one of them there was this:

"For playing truant for three whole days,  
A-fishing with Master Grimes,  
'An Idle Scholar must mend his Ways,'  
'To be writ a thousand times.'  
And the laddie pondered and thought it  
strange,  
Perched on his grandpa's knee,  
That seventy years wrought such a change  
In an old man's memory."