

The Restless Boy in Church.

How he turns and twists
And how he persists
In rattling his heels.
How uneasy he feels.
Our wide awake boy in church

Then earnest and still
He attends with a will,
While the story is told
Of some hero bold,
Our dear, thoughtful boy in church

But our glad surprise
As his thoughtful eyes
Are turned in despair
As he twitches the hair
Of his little sister in church.

Still each naughty trick flies
At a look from the eyes
Of his mother so dear,
Who thinks best to sit near
Her mischievous boy in church

Another trick comes
Yes, his finger he drums,
Or his 'korchief' is spread
All over his head—
And still we take him to church

He's troublesome? Yes,
I'm bound to confess,
But God made the boys,
With their fun and their noise,
And he surely wants them in church

Such children you know,
Long, long years ago,
Did not trouble the Lord,
Though his disciples were bored.
So we'll keep them near him in church

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A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, JANUARY 9, 1897.

RUTH'S FIDELITY AND REWARD.

BY G. H. ARMSTRONG, B.A.

Ruth Craig was the only child of James and Mary Craig. Their home was in the quaint English village of M—. Happy, indeed, were they until Ruth's third birthday. The first shadow entered the home when the husband and father came in on the evening of that day under the influence of strong drink. The young wife loved her husband with all the strength of a true and tender woman. Her nature was gentle and mild. The bitter pang of sorrow and shame that entered her life found no expression in words. Her only rebuke was the mingled expression of pity and grief which rested upon her countenance when she said "good-bye" to James on the following morning as he set out on his daily toil.

James felt the reproach keenly and promised himself many times that day that he would never merit it again. He failed in the struggle with evil as many another has done. He soon ceased attending the village church on Sunday with his family. The day was now spent in the fields or in one of the village inns. His descent was rapid, and in five years Mary died of a broken heart.

When the mother found her earthly life drawing near an end, she called Ruth, now a bright, loving child of eight years, to her bedside, kissed her a last farewell, and said, "My dear, dear girl,

mamma can stay with you no longer. I have asked God to be a father and a mother to you. Always be kind to papa, pray for him every day, and bring him home at night. Some time he will be good to us again."

These words sank deep into Ruth's young heart. As the years passed, she forgot them not. She lived to save. She found a friend to comfort and sustain. Her Sunday-school teacher led her into close communion with the One who is acquainted with grief, and she learned how true is the promise, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee."

When Ruth was sixteen years of age, her father fell ill. His constitution was shattered and for some time there was little hope of his recovery. At last he began to amend. He had now time to look at his past life soberly. He saw how unkind and unfaithful he had been to his wife and child. He was wretched.

While in this condition of mind, Ruth entered the room, and asked if she might read to him the old, old story of Christ and his love for a sinful world. Her sweet voice and blessed message soothed his troubled spirit, and at the same time deepened his disgust with his former life. Ruth continued to read to, and pray for, her father, until he beheld "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world." James Craig arose from his sick-bed a new man in Christ Jesus. Henceforth his watchword was, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

Once again the home of James Craig is a happy one—as happy as it can be without Mary. Often in the twilight they sit and talk of her who died when Ruth was a little girl. With moistened eyes they say "good-night," and Ruth retires to her room, on the walls of which hangs this motto, which she is weaving into her new life, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
Toronto.

HOW TOM WON A SOUL.

Tom said, "It won't do to keep all this blessed news to myself," so he thought how he could bless others with it. His bed stood close by the window sill, which was low, and somehow he got pencil and paper, and wrote out different texts which he would fold and pray over, and then drop into the noisy street below, directed: "To the passer-by—please read." He hoped that by this means some might hear of Jesus and his salvation. This service of love faithfully rendered went on for several weeks, when one evening he heard a strange footstep, and immediately afterwards a tall, well-dressed gentleman entered the room and took his seat by the lad's bedside. "So you are the lad who drops texts from the window, are you?" he asked kindly.

"Yes," said Tom, brightening up. "Have you heard as some one has got hold of one?"

"Plenty, lad, plenty! Would you believe it if I told you that I picked up one last evening, and God blessed it to my soul?"

"I can believe in God's word doing anything, sir," said the lad humbly.

"And I am come," said the gentleman, "to thank you personally."

"Not me, sir! I only does the writin'; he does the blessin'."

"And you are happy in this work for Christ?"

"Couldn't be happier, sir. I don't think nothin' of the pain in my back, for shan't I be glad when I see him, to tell him that as soon as I knowed about him I did all that I could to serve him? I suppose you gets lots o' chances, don't yer, sir?"

"Ah, lad, but I have neglected them; but, God helping me, I mean to begin afresh. At home in the country I have a sick lad dying. I had to come to town on pressing business. When I kissed him good-bye, he said, 'Father, I wish that I had done some good for Jesus, I cannot bear to meet him empty-handed,' and the words stuck to me all day long, and the next day, too, until the evening when as I was passing down the street your little paper fell on my hat. I opened it and read, 'I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day. the night cometh, when no man can work.' (John 9. 4.) It seemed like a command from heaven. I have professed to be a Christian for twenty-two years, my lad, and when I made inquiries and found out who dropped these tracts into the street, and why it was done, it so shamed and humbled me that I determined to go home and work for the same Master that you are serving so faithfully."

Tears of joy were rolling down the lad's face. "It's too much, sir," he said, "altogether too much."

"Tell me how you managed to get the paper to start it, my lad."

"That warn't hard, sir. I jest had a talk with granny, and offered to give up my ha'porth o' milk that she gives me most days, if she would buy me paper instead. You know, sir, I can't last long. The parish doctor says that a few months of cold weather may finish me off, and a drop of milk ain't much to give up for my blessed Jesus. Are people happy as have lots to give him, sir?"

The visitor sighed a deep sigh. "Ah, lad, you are a great deal happier in this wretched room, making sacrifices for Jesus, than thousands who profess to belong to him, and who have time, talents, and money, and do little or nothing for him."

"They don't know him, sir. Knowin' is lovin', and lovin' is doin'. It ain't love without."

"You are right, Tom. But how about yourself? I must begin by making your life brighter. How would you like to end your days in one of those homes for cripple lads, where you would be nursed and cared for, and where you would see the trees and flowers, and hear the birds sing? I could get you into one of them not very far from my home if you liked it, Tom."

The weary lad looked wistfully into the man's kindly face, and after a few moments' silence answered: "Thank'ee sir, I've heard tell of 'em afore, but I ain't anxious to die easy when he died hard. I might get taken up with them things a bit too much, and I'd rather be lookin' at him, and carryin' on this 'ere work till he comes to fetch me. Plenty of joy for a boy like me to have a mansion with him up there through eternity."

SAVED BY A SHEEP.

On the 4th of May, in the year 1795, when George the Third was king, there was at Portsmouth a man-of-war called the Boyne, a vessel of ninety-eight guns. Persons engaged on the shore were that day startled by a terrible report, and looking out toward the Boyne they could see that an explosion had occurred on board. The powder magazine had exploded! In a few minutes the ship was enveloped in flames, and the people on board seeking the best means of escape. A large number of persons lost their lives—some by drowning, in attempting to swim ashore. At the moment of the explosion a marine on board was seated in his berth with his wife and child—a dear little baby-boy, a year and eight months old. Finding all hopes of escape to be in vain, the marine went to the pens where were kept the cattle for the food of the crew. The animals were, of course, in a state of wild excitement and fear, but seizing a full-grown sheep, the man tied his little boy to the creature's back, and dropped them both overboard, saying, "There, turn to the land, and God be with you."

The wife now leaped into the sea, and the husband followed and supported her. At length they were picked up by a boat that had been sent out to rescue the sufferers. At the same time the sheep struck out for land with its precious burden, and was rescued by the spectators on shore, who rushed forward to meet it, and released the child. The little fellow was very soon restored to his parents, little the worse for his strange experiences and narrow escape from death.

A LOVE LETTER.

He hurried up to the office as soon as he entered the hotel, and without waiting to register, inquired eagerly:

"Any letter for me?"

The clerk sorted out a package with a negligent attention, that comes with practice, then slipped one—a very small one—on the counter. The travelling man took it with a curious smile. He smiled more as he read it. Then, oblivious of the other travellers, who jostled him, he laid it gently against his lips and actually kissed it. A loud laugh startled him.

"Now, look here, old fellow," said a loud voice, "that won't do, you know. Too spoony for anything."

Said the travelling man, "That letter is from my best girl."

The admission was so unexpected that they said no more until they had eaten a good dinner, and were seated together in a chum's room. Then they began to badger him.

"It's no use, you have got to read it to us," said one of them; "we want to know all about your best girl."

"So you shall," said the one addressed, with great coolness. "I'll give you the letter, and you can read it for yourselves. There it is," and he laid it on the table.

"I guess not," said one who had been the loudest in demanding it; "we like

to chaff a little, but we hope we are gentlemen."

"But I insist upon it," was the answer; "there is nothing to be ashamed of—except the spelling: that's a little shaky, I'll admit; but she won't care in the least. Read it, Hardy, and judge for yourself."

Thus urged, Hardy took it, shamefacedly enough, and read it. First he laughed, then swallowed suspiciously; and as he finished, threw it upon the table again, and rubbed the back of his hand across his eyes, as if troubled with dimness of vision.

"Pshaw! If I had a love-letter like that,"—and then was silent.

"Fair play!" cried one of the others with an uneasy laugh.

"I'll read it to you, boys," said their friend, "and I think you'll agree with me that it's a model love-letter."

"'Ml oween dear Papa,—"

"'I sa mi Prahrs every nite and Wen I kis yure Pictshure I Ask god to bless you. good bl Papa yure best gurl.'"

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

JANUARY 17, 1897.

Jesus in the temple.—Luke 2. 40-52.

A babe is always an interesting little creature. Jesus Christ was a babe, in appearance like all other babes. His growth excited the admiration of all beholders. As the law of Moses required all parents to present their children in the temple at a certain age, so the parents of Jesus attended to the requirements of the law, and having done this they returned home to Nazareth. There were several interesting incidents which are recorded in our lesson to which we must refer. Our young friends cannot be too familiar with these incidents.

Verse 40 tells of his growth. When children do not grow in strength their parents are greatly concerned. Christ grew in wisdom. We should all become wiser every day. The grace of God was upon him. Child piety was developed in him. When a child is capable of loving his parents, he is capable of loving God.

AN EVENT.

The Feast of the Passover was instituted to keep in mind the deliverance of the people from the bondage of Egypt. The feast was celebrated at Jerusalem. Those who lived a distance from the city journeyed thither in companies, both going and returning. When Christ was twelve years old, they went up as usual, and when they returned their son was lost. His parents could not conceive what had become of him, and those who are parents can understand their anxiety. They sought him, but did not find him until they had sought him three days.

WHERE HE WAS FOUND.

He was in the temple. It was a custom of the people to consult their rulers, or those who were supposed to understand the various matters pertaining to the affairs of every-day life, more especially such as pertained to their spiritual welfare. He was not disputing, only hearing questions and their answers. He took part in the conversation, and displayed such good sense in the part which he took, that all present were astonished at the wisdom which he displayed. His course of conduct was so unusual, and his knowledge so far superior to that of others of similar age that wonder was excited.

SUBJECT TO HIS PARENTS.

Verse 49. He does not blame them for seeking him, but he asks why they did so, as though they might have known that he would be properly employed. Let our young friends remember that at the age of twelve Jesus was intent about his Father's business. This is an example for all, both young and old. Not too young to love God, not too young to do good. There are more promises in favour of early piety than is generally believed, until the Scriptures are examined. Persons may do good, and thus be like Jesus, in a variety of ways.

HIS RESIDENCE IN NAZARETH.

He fulfilled the law in every particular. He did not forget the first commandment with promise, which you will remember reads, "Honour thy father and thy mother." Hope all our readers will remember this commandment.

Verse 52 is remarkable for its comprehensive character. We do not know of another that may be considered its equal. This verse gives us all the knowledge we can obtain of Jesus Christ from his twelfth year until his thirtieth. While it is brief, how important it is. "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." If we can all do this, we shall answer the great end of life.