

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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PREPARING FOR SEA.

These are strong, brave, stout-hearted men in the picture here, working away right willingly to get their good vessel ready for her long voyage on the sea. We know they must be strong, because none but strong men could do the heavy, rough work that sailors have to do, and we know too that they are brave, for it takes a great deal of courage to face the unknown dangers of the deep. Only those who have spent days and nights, and perhaps weeks and months away, far out of sight of land, with the boat sometimes tossing and reeling to and fro, now on the top of a huge wave, now down in the trough, with danger, it may be, of being dashed on the rocks or broken in two by the violence of the storm—only those know what stout hearts it needs to face it all. Ought we not to be thankful that we have a Father who is on the sea as well as on the land?

BRIDGET.

BY SYDNEY CLARK.

SHE was not a girl in the kitchen, but a calf on the farm. How she came by her name is not easy to tell. She was not Irish but Jersey. Perhaps as good a reason as any for her name was the fact that she thought a great deal of Patrick, one of the farm workmen. To her Pat was the best man in the world. She followed him about the farm, as though she were a dog, and when shut up in the pasture with the cows, Bridget would find some way to get through or over the fences, that she might be with her friend. She even followed him on the road when he went to visit his friends. Though she could not go with him into the house, she waited in the yard until he came out, and then walked quietly home with him.

Pat was a good-natured, kind-hearted fellow, who treated horses, cows and calves as though they were almost human, and only lacked the power of speech to make them worthy companions of himself. But Pat had one fault—he liked whiskey. He seldom became intoxicated, but when he did he was thoroughly drunk; and then the good-natured Pat was changed to a man of a very different character.

Patrick became very thirsty for liquor one Sunday, and, after doing up his morning work about the farm, he started for a saloon two or three miles away. Bridget saw him go and wished to follow. It made little difference to her that Pat took no notice of her call, and that he seemed determined to leave her behind. Bridget meant to go along whether he wanted her or not. Making her way through the fence the calf was soon on the road, running and bellowing after her friend. At first Pat tried to drive her back; but as thirst was great and Bridget was determined to follow, he gave up the attempt and she was allowed to go along to the saloon.

Of course, as the calf had no money and would not even drink beer, she was not allowed to enter the saloon. Patiently she waited outside, but no Pat came. He had

forgotten his sober companion without, in the company of the drunken ones inside the saloon.

Late in the afternoon Pat started for home. Bridget's patience was about exhausted, and she gladly welcomed his appearance. But the calf soon noticed something wrong about the man. His

a stranger, and that he was not fit company for her. While she appeared undecided the poor fellow stumbled and fell. As he lay almost helpless on the ground, the calf came up to smell of him as though to make sure that it was not her friend. Perhaps his stupidity, perhaps his strange movements, or it may have been the smell of

That was Bridget's first and last visit to the saloon. She never followed Pat after that when he went for whiskey; nor would she follow him along the road at all. She hardly cared to go with him even about the farm. Instead, she chose the cows as her companions, and remained with them in the pasture lot.

Bridget is a dignified cow now, and may have forgotten her fancy for Pat and her visit to the saloon; but could she speak of it, probably she would say that she was but a calf then, and that no respectable animal who knows what is proper will go to a saloon, or even keep company with a person who goes there to get drunk.

Though but a calf, Bridget was not a fool. When she learned what the saloon did to people she kept away from it. If even a calf can learn that much, surely a boy should learn more and have nothing whatever to do with saloons.



PREPARING FOR SEA.

walk was slow, and he staggered from side to side so that the calf could not follow. She could not understand what was the matter, and may have thought that the Pat who came out was an entirely different man than the Pat who went into the saloon. The clothes were Pat's, but the man who wore them was so unlike her friend that Bridget, after watching him awhile, seemed to get the idea that he was

whiskey about him, settled the matter. After an examination, Bridget walked away and then started homeward, first walking quietly and then beginning to run. She neither stopped nor looked back, but hurried on towards home.

When late in the day Pat staggered home and, slightly sobered, tried to do up his night work, Bridget took no more notice of him than if he had been a stranger.

water. Now watch its curious growth. See! the tail begins to grow smaller, little legs put out from the head, which grows longer and flatter; this goes on until there is no tail left and the legs are fully formed, and then the young toad leaves the water and spends the balance of his life on dry land. So, you see, the toad is very useful and curious, and deserves to be treated kindly.

TOADS.

THE warty body and great staring eyes of the toad are not pretty, that is certain; but often a mistake is made by judging from appearance, a thing which is most sure to be done when we meet with a toad. If this were all it would only be a mistake, but boys are apt to follow it by an act of thoughtless cruelty, which is really wicked. Ugly as the toad is, he is one of the most harmless and useful creatures found in our fields. In fact, he is one of our best friends, especially so to farmers and gardeners. He eats no grain, cuts down no plants, steals none of our fruit, nor mars our flower beds, but comes out in the night to prey upon the bugs, worms, and insects which do great injury to them all.

Toads are often tamed and kept in the kitchen to destroy flies, roaches, and moths, which are so troublesome and offensive. A toad will often catch a dozen flies in as many minutes, and it is curious to watch him as he does it. He creeps near his victim, and then darts out a long, spear-shaped tongue and impales the fly and throws it down his throat so quickly that the motion can scarcely be seen.

The life and growth of a toad is a most interesting study. In the spring we often see in the shallow pools of water a jelly like substance, full of little black spots like onion seed. This is the spawn and eggs of the toads and frogs. These are soon hatched by the warm sun, and then there will be a curious little creature, with a round, black head and a long, knife-like tail. The boys call it a "polliwog," but it is generally known as the tadpole, and is the young toad. In this shape it lives only in the