

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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God Bless the Boys.

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God bless the boys—yes, all the boys,
Wherever they may be;
The boy with noble thoughts and clean,
The boy with manly form and mien,
The boy whose mother is his queen—
His future we can see.
God bless the boys, the mothers' joys,
Wherever they may be.

God bless the boys, the worthy boys,
Whoever they may be;
The boys who dwell in marble halls,
The boys whose lives in tottering walls
Are darkened oft by drunken brawls—
Oh, fervently pray we,
God bless the boys whom sin decoys,
Whoever they may be.

God bless the boys, the noble boys,
Wherever they may be;
Tho' human nature in them dwell,
Yet search reveals a heart, as well,
A heart that noble deeds could tell,
Of love and sympathy.
God bless the boys, the noble boys,
Wherever they may be.

God bless the boys, the jolly boys,
Whoever they may be;
How dull would be this mundane sphere
Without the boys that we have here;
We all should die of blues, I fear,
For want of fun and glee;
God bless the boys with all their noise,
Whoever they may be.

SCENES IN CAIRO.

As we draw near to Cairo, the sand-hills begin to show themselves in the distance, and the fertile portion narrows very much. We have still twenty miles to travel, when the cry, "The Pyramids," thrills us, and turns the heads of all to the window. Such a thrill we have felt before, as when the noble dome of St. Peter's, at Rome, came in sight, or the smoke-capped Vesuvius first showed itself, and we shall feel it again when the Holy City comes into view and the Acropolis is seen from afar. Yes, there they are, far off in the purple distance, small but clear, the two great monuments which always come up when we think of Egypt. As we dash along, trees and gardens and villas multiply. Soon the minarets of a great city appear, and about three o'clock we arrive at our destination. Another omnibus, and another ride through scenes that amuse and astonish, and then we descend at a long covered way that leads to the finest hotel in the city. We were fortunate



STREET SCENE IN CAIRO.

in having had our places engaged beforehand, as every hotel was full to overflowing. Here I first tasted the sweet Nile water, which, standing in porous earthenware jars, is ever cool and refreshing. A Moslem says, "If you once drink of the Nile water, you will want no other until you drink of the water of Paradise."

Our hotel is in the handsome Frank quarter called Esbekieh. The streets are wide, and lined here and there with trees, while gardens are found on all sides. Just in front of the hotel is an extensive public garden or park, enclosed by an expensive iron railing. Here a military band plays nearly every afternoon, sometimes the gayest of French opera airs, and again the strange, monotonous repetitions, and without-beginning-or-end airs of the East. There is in it a great variety of shrubs and bushes, and it is diversified by a small lake. Scattered here and there are places of refreshment.

There were but few women in the park, and all were closely veiled. Look at these three, robed in black silk from head to foot. Naught is to be seen but flashing eyes and white hands and dainty red high-heeled shoes. As we draw nigh, one of them carelessly lets drop her "yashmak," and we catch a passing glimpse of a face bright and handsome, and of eyes large and lustrous. How much rouge and Kohl had to do with its beauty, deponent saith not. Occasionally, while resting in the portico of the hotel, some juggler would make his appearance and perform his feats, or some snake-charmer would bring out two or three serpents from a bag, and coil them about his person. Sitting here, too, we could get a good idea of some of the novelties of Eastern life—novelties as old at least as the good old days of Haroun al Raschid. By the roadside stand a group of donkey boys,

holding their little patient beasts. The latter are well cared for, good-looking with their hair trimmed and coloured, so as to be quite picturesque. No sooner do you set foot on the street than you are assailed by the cry, "Donkey, sir?" "Me good donkey!" "Me donkey George Washington!" "Me donkey Ab. Linkum!" The names seem to be varied according to the supposed nationality of the tourist. "Yankee Doodle," "Ginger Bob," and other familiar names were heard. To ride one of these donkeys becomes the tourist's great ambition. Life is worth nothing until this ambition is satisfied. Certainly the little beasts are a great help in seeing the city. One of the comical sights of the place is to see a very corpulent Turk riding to his place of business. His feet nearly touch the ground, and his extensive corporation almost hides the little creature from sight. The ladies ride in the same way as the men do, but with their knees drawn up nearly to the chin. The boys always run behind their donkeys, and occasionally stimulate their flagging energies with the prod of a goad.

While we are resting, three or four carriages pass by at a moderate speed. Through the open windows we can see ladies within, whose thin veils merely heighten the charms they pretend to conceal. Certainly they seem to be beautiful enough to soften the hard heart of the most determined of anchorites. Each carriage is preceded by two fleet-footed runners, nimble black fellows, dressed in white, with embroidered jacket, gay girdle, bare legs, wearing a light fez, and bearing long wands. They run for hours with but little apparent fatigue. Occasionally they cry out to clear the way.

An Egyptian crowd is always full of interest to a stranger. It is always laughing and good-humoured. A great

variety of dress and feature is scarcely ever seen. The mildness of the climate renders necessary merely the scantiest raiment. Then again there is a taste for colour, and the richest hues vie with one another in splendour. Rags and silk stand side by side. Some of the people were handsome enough, but others were scrawny and unpleasant to look upon. One cannot help noticing in Cairo the large number of men that are blind of one or both eyes. It is attributed to the blinding sun and drifting sand, and also to the vapour from the watered streets of the bazaars. The whole city is a museum of national, religious, social, and industrial peculiarities, ever full of entertainment and instruction for the stranger.

BE FAITHFUL.

A good many years ago there was a boy growing up in a home of poverty, with no advantages. He was long and lank and awkward, a most ungainly boy. He would lie on the earthen floor at night, when the day's work was done, reading by the dim firelight. There seemed little hope that the boy would ever be a man of power. But the years pass, and we see him President of the United States. One day we see him taking a pen and signing a paper, which sets free three millions of slaves, and writes the name of Lincoln among the immortal names.

Just go on with your daily tasks, doing the best you can, and wait for God's time. It takes months for the apple to grow mellow and sweet on the tree. If you are a disciple of Christ, God is going to make something beautiful and noble out of your life when his work on it is finished. You will not always be struggling with faults, bowing beneath burdens, striving in vain against difficulties. It doth not yet appear what you will be, but there is glory in reserve for you if only you are faithful.

DARING TO SPEAK THE TRUTH.

A boy was found hid away in a steamer. "How came you here?" asked the captain. He replied, "My step-father put me on; he could not afford to keep me, or to pay my passage to my aunt in Halifax." The captain had often been deceived by boys stealing rides on his ship, so he said roughly, "Unless you tell the truth in ten minutes I will hang you to the yard arm." The boy stood bravely, but with tears in his eyes. "Speak the truth, and save your life, boy," said the captain. "May I pray?" asked the boy. "Yes," was the reply. He knelt, and with his eyes raised to heaven, repeated the Lord's prayer. He could die, but could not lie. The captain could hold out no longer. He took the boy in his arms, and told him he believed his story.



MOORE'S GENTLEMAN.



TURKISH LADY.