

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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He Came.

The Spirit came in childhood,
And pleaded, "Let me in."
But ah! the door was bolted
And barred by childish sin!
The child said, "I'm too little;
There's time enough—to-day
I cannot open;" sadly
The Spirit went his way.

Again he came and pleaded,
In youth's bright, happy hour;
He called, but heard no answer;
For, fettered in sin's power,
The youth lay dreaming idly,
And crying, "Not to-day;
For I must have some pleasure."
Again he turned away.

Again he came in mercy,
In manhood's vigorous prime;
But still could find no welcome—
The merchant had "no time"
To spare for true repentance,
No time to praise and pray;
And thus repulsed and saddened,
The Spirit turned away.

Once more he called and waited—
The man was old and sad,
He scarcely heard the whisper,
His heart was seared and sad.
"Go leave me. When I need thee
I'll call for thee," he cried,
Then, sinking on his pillow—
Without a God—he died!
—Word and Work.

JOHN HOWARD, THE PHILANTHROPIST.

Do you see the name "Howard" in black letters behind the benevolent-looking gentleman pictured in the corner of the illustration on this page? Who was Howard? and what does this whole picture mean? That is just what I think you would like to know, and what I mean to try to tell you. In the title to this article I have called him "the philanthropist." The word philanthropist means "one who loves mankind," and surely few have deserved the name better than John Howard. He was born in England in 1726, and his father intended him for a grocer; but upon that gentleman's death, in 1742, young Howard found himself quite a rich man, left the grocer's shop, and went abroad for a year of travel. I cannot tell you in detail the events of this early part of his life—how he read and studied; how he married a landlady twenty-seven years older than himself, because she nursed him through a fit of sickness; how, after her death, he married again, and lived for eight or ten years quietly on his own estates; how he studied medicine and surgery a little, and dabbled in all sorts of investigations. However, all the time he was trying to do good. He built model cottages on his estates, and saw that the children had the privilege of attending good schools. After the great earthquake at Lisbon, Portugal, he started to go there to see if he could not do something for the sufferers. It was on this journey that something very important happened to him. The vessel in which he sailed was captured by a French privateer, and he and the other unfortunate prisoners were carried to Brest, where they were treated with great harshness and almost starved. I think this must have made him think a great deal about the people in prison all over the world; and after he and his friends were set free, and he was made high sheriff of Bedford, in his own county, he determined to look into the condition of the Bedford gaol (where John Bunyan wrote the

"Pilgrim's Progress," you remember)—to look into it with his own eyes. Perhaps this is the scene represented in the picture. Certain it is that he found a dreadful state of things there.

In those days people could be put in gaol for debt, and he found that debtors were in that Bedford gaol who ought to have been set free months and years before, but the gaoler would not let them go because they could not pay him so much money as he demanded. He found that nobody paid the gaoler to take care of the prisoners; so the poor prisoners were entirely at the mercy of the officers. Some

of them had gone mad from distress of mind, poor food, and long confinement. He could not even imagine; yet many of these he visited over and over again—all because he was a lover of his fellow-men.

When in 1789 he started on what proved to be his last extended tour, he wrote to his friends: "I am not insensible to the dangers that must attend such a journey." (He was going at this time to make a special study of that dreadful disease, the plague.) "Should it please God to cut off my life, let not my conduct be imputed to rashness or enthusiasm, but to a serious, deliberate conviction that I am pursuing the path of duty, and to a sincere desire to

One morning in June Mrs. Danforth received a letter from her brother, who lived in a distant city, asking if it was convenient to have himself and his wife to spend a month with her. He was "tired out," he wrote, "and the doctor had ordered complete rest." He thought he could find it in the old home, to which he longed to come.

Mrs. Danforth was quite excited over this letter.

"We'll have to look around for a servant," she said to her daughter, "and it will be hard to find one."

"Why must we look for a servant?" questioned Elizabeth, in surprise.

"Your Uncle Roger is a millionaire, and his wife is a woman of fashion. They live elegantly. I was there once, years ago—they have a half-dozen or more servants. Roger hasn't been here for ten years. I wonder that he wants to come; still I'd like to see him very much and Frances too. But we'll have to fix things up, and, as I said, get a girl somewhere."

"Couldn't we just take Uncle Roger and Aunt Frances in like old friends instead of strangers? Just have things simple and natural as we do when we are alone?"

"Didn't I tell you that your uncle is a millionaire?"

"Yes, but we are not millionaires, and of course he would not expect that he would live here as he does at home. Let's be ourselves, mamma, and not put on airs."

Mrs. Danforth laughed, and with the laugh her fears and worries seemed to vanish.

"Well," said she, "it will be an immense relief to follow your advice, my dear, for try as we might we could not live as Uncle Roger's folks do."

It was a lovely evening when they came. The scent of the sweet June roses filled the air with fragrance. Elizabeth and her mother met the guests at the gate, with smiles and words of welcome. Mrs. Danforth felt shocked at the change in her brother's face. He looked thin and worn—his step was feeble. But a glad light came into his weary eyes as he sat down in a big soft-cushioned rocking-chair on the shady piazza.

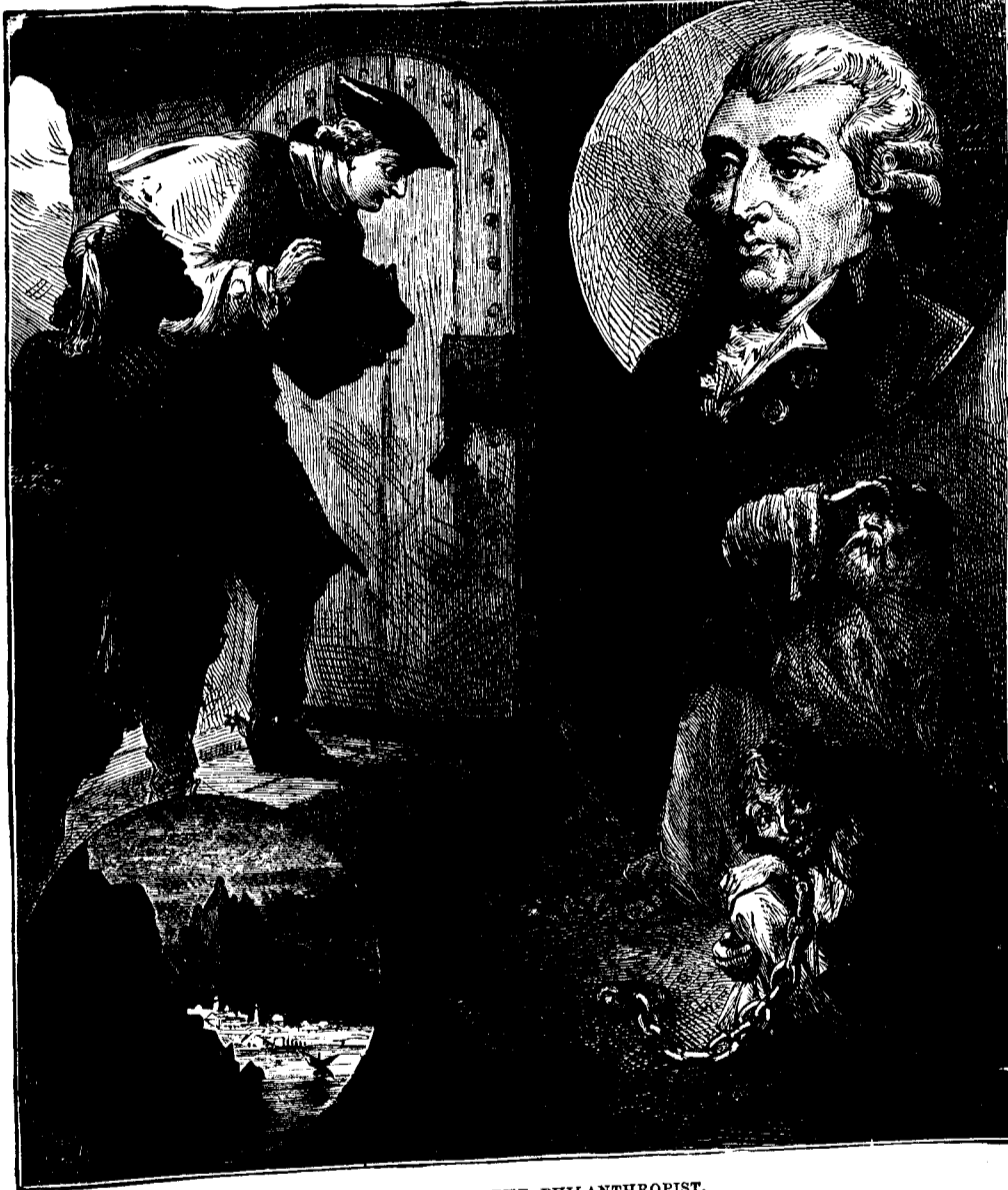
"How restful it is here!" he said, with a sigh of relief; "how restful!"

Very soon supper was served in the cool, bright dining-room. Just outside of the window a wild bird was singing a glad song. The breath of honeysuckles was wafted in. The table was spread neatly with simple snow-white linen, and laden with good substantial food—fresh biscuit and sweet butter, brown bread, cold sliced ham, poached eggs, sponge cake, and great luscious strawberries of their own growing, and a pitcher of cream. A bowl of old-fashioned roses was in the centre. Uncle Roger smiled as he looked around—he had not smiled in this way for years—he felt happy. There was no butler, no servant, they were alone, he and his wife, his sister and her daughter.

The truth was that the sweet, quiet home life just suited the weary man. Had there been a servant around, or an attempt at "style," it would have spoiled all.

The days and weeks passed on, each and every one bringing health and strength to the world-weary man. All God's universe seemed to be at his disposal, and yet only in this quiet nook—the old home of childhood—he found rest and peace.

When he went back to the city with



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of them had gone mad from distress of mind, poor food, and long confinement.

Howard was greatly shocked by all this, and went to the county judges to demand that a regular salary be paid to the gaoler. They said no such thing was done in any county. "I'll see whether it is or not," said this energetic and kind-hearted man; and he set out to visit every gaol and prison in England. He found, alas! that what the judges had said was only too true; and he saw such terrible distresses and abuses that he resolved to give all the rest of his life to the effort of improving prisons and making better the condition of prisoners. To do this he had to find out how prisons at that time were cared for all over the world. He went not only to Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, but to France, to Germany, to Holland, to Italy—even to Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Poland, Spain, and Portugal. What he saw in all these places—the damp, dark dungeons, the filth,

be made an instrument of more extensive usefulness to my fellow-creatures than could be expected in the narrower circle of a retired life." Soon after reaching Russia he took the camp-fever from a patient he was attending, and died January 20, 1790. "Give me no monument," he said, "but lay me quietly in the earth." But though his body lies there in a Russian grave, a grateful country has erected a marble statue to his memory—which we saw last summer in St. Paul's Cathedral, in London.—S. S. Gem.

"NO AIRS."

BY ERNEST GILMORE.

ELIZABETH DANFORTH lived with her widowed mother in a pretty, old-fashioned house in the suburbs of the village of Benton. They lived very quietly and plainly as suited their purses and tastes.