

GOOD FRIDAY.

WAS the day when God's anointed
Died for us the death appointed,
Bleeding on the guilty cross;
Day of darkness, day of terror,
Deadly fruit of ancient error,
Nature's fall and Eden's loss.

Haste, prepare the bitter chalice!
Gentle hate and Jewish malice,
Lift the royal victim high,—
Like the serpent, wonder-gifted,
Which the prophet once uplifted,—
For a sinful world to die!

Conscious of the deed unholy,
Nature's pulses beat more slowly,
And the sun his light denied:
Darkness wrapped the sacred city,
And the earth with fear and pity
Trembled when the Just One died.

It is finished, man of sorrows!
From thy cross our nature borrows
Strength to bear and conquer thus;
While exalted there we view Thee,
Mighty sufferer, draw us to Thee,
Sufferer, victorious!

Not in vain for us uplifted,
Man of sorrows, wonder-gifted!
May the sacred symbol be.
Eminent amid the ages,
Guide of heroes and of sages,
May it guide us still to Thee.

Still to Thee, whose love unbounded,
Sorrows deep for us hath sounded,
Perfected by conflicts sore,
Glory to Thy cross for ever!
Star that points our high endeavour,
Whither Thou hast gone before.
—Frederic Henry Hedge.

HABIT.

BOYS and girls, you can obey
the text, "Learn to do well
to-day and to-morrow, and the
next day. It is the same as
learning to skate. You fall, and rise
again. You fall but try again. After
a little you can stand, and then can
push out out one foot, and by-and-bye
the other, until at last away you go,
gliding over the ice like the wind.

Learning to do well is like learning
to swim. You wade into the water,
but not very far, for fear you will
drown. You try to swim, but sink.
You try again and do a little better.
You swallow a good deal of water; it
gets into your ears and eyes and nose,
but you keep on splashing, and finally
can swim. So you must keep on doing
well until you learn how, and it has
become a habit. A habit is something
which we have. That is what the
word means. It often becomes some-
thing which has us.

A habit is formed in the same way
that paths on roads are. You often
see people "cutting across lots." Where
they do this a narrow strip of
grass about a foot or fourteen inches
wide will soon be trodden to death,
and a narrow strip of ground, about
the same width beneath it, will be
trodden hard, and that is a path. It
is made by being walked over again,
and again, and again. You can soon
get into the habit of doing a thing if
you will do it over and over many
times. The more you do it the easier
it will become, just as a path grows
wider and plainer the more it is trav-
elled. It is hard to keep people from
going across lots after a path is once
made; and so it is hard to stop doing
what we have fallen into the habit of
doing. It will not be easy for you to
"do well" after you have once learned
to do wrong. Bad habits are like ruts
made by carriage wheels in country
roads; they hold people fast. I once
read of an old man who had crooked
fingers. When a boy his hand was as

limber as yours. He could open it
easily, but for fifty years he drove a
stage and his fingers got so in the
habit of shutting down on the lines
and whip, that they finally shut. The
old man can never open his hand
again.

Boys, if you do not wish to fall into
the habit of swearing, refuse to swear
at all. If you do not wish to become
the slaves of tobacco, let cigarettes
alone. If you do not wish to die
drunkards, never begin to tinkle. If
you do these things even a few times,
they may become habits and hold you
fast. You would then smoke and
swear and drink almost without know-
ing it, or knowing why. "Learn to
do well," but "Abhor that which is
evil."

WONDERFUL ANSWERS
TO PRAYER.

TWENTY-six years since on
the 14th day of February,
1859, in answer to prayer
I was savingly converted to God. A
wonderful transformation in my life
took place. I could tell the readers of
PLEASANT HOURS of many wonderful
answers to prayer in the intervening
years, but what I wish to say now is
what has occurred during the last two
or three years.

Nearly three years ago I was a
comparative stranger in this country,
and, being out of employment, I was
compelled to take work in a factory
that I had never in my life touched
before; it was some miles from Toronto,
and I felt the separation from my
family very much.

One day in ascending on the elevator
I had the narrowest escape from
instant death—about two seconds and
I should have lost my life. After I
got back to my work I was so im-
pressed with the goodness of my
Heavenly Father's providential care
and mercy that I began to pray as I
had not prayed for some years before
—not only for myself, but for the
salvation of my own children and the
children of God's people in every place.
Day and night for some weeks I cried
to God that my children might be
saved.

Answers from the good Lord of
Heaven.—One night in less than one
year from this time my eldest daughter
came home and said she had been to a
prayer-meeting—was invited to the
penitent form to seek salvation—she
went forward and obtained it. During
the last 12 or 15 months she has by
the grace of God been instrumental in
leading hundreds of precious souls to
the Saviour.

Then, about the same time, another
daughter, whose heart, like Lydia's,
was gently opened, got salvation,
and is now faithfully working in two
Sabbath-schools every Sunday, teaching
and training the young for God. And
yet another whose heart the Lord has
touched got saved, and is girding on
the armour and getting ready for the
conflict. "Oh wondrous power of
faithful prayer."

And so in response to these "Wonder-
ful Answers to Prayer" I have laid four
more of my children on the altar,
praying that early in life they may
become God's children and faithful
workers and successful labourers in
the Lord's vineyard.

Let them go, my Lord, singing,
teaching, or preaching for Christ, so

that they may extend the Redeemer's
kingdom and win souls to God.

And so I think of the "Great Day"
when I shall stand before the "Great
White Throne" and shall say "Here
am I and the children thou hast given
me," and all the hundreds or thousands
of other precious souls won by thy
grace and through their instrumen-
tality to thee.

THE CROOKED TREE.

SUCH a cross old woman as
Mrs. Barnes is! I never
would send her jelly or any-
thing else again," said Molly
Clapp, setting her basket down hard
on the table. "She never even said
'Thank you!' but 'Set the cup on the
table, child, and don't knock over the
bottles. Why don't your mother come
herself instead of sending you? I'll
be dead one of these days, and then
she'll wish she had been a little more
neighbourly.' I never want to go
there again, and I shouldn't think you
would."

"Molly! Molly! come quick and
see Mr. Daws straighten the old cherry-
tree!" called Tom through the window;
and old Mrs. Barnes was forgotten as
Molly flew out over the green to the
next yard.

Her mother watched with a good
deal of interest the efforts of two stout
men as, with strong ropes, they strove
to pull the crooked tree this way and
that. But it was of no use.

"'Tis as crooked as the letter S, and
has been for twenty years. You're
just twenty years too late, Mr. Daws,"
said Joe, as he dropped the rope and
wiped the sweat from his face.

"Are you sure you haven't begun
twenty years too late on tobacco and
rum, Joe?" asked Mr. Daws.

"That's a true word, master, and
it's as hard to break off with them as
to make this old tree straight. But I
signed the pledge last night, and with
God's help I mean to keep it."

"With God's help you may hope to
keep it, Joe," responded his master.
"Our religion gives every man a
chance to reform. No one need despair
so long as we have such promises of
grace to help."

"That's my comfort, sir," said the
man, humbly; "but I shall tell the
boys to try and not grow crooked at
the beginning."

"Mother," said Molly, as she stood
by the window again at her mother's
side, "I know now what is the matter
with old Mrs. Barnes. She needn't
try to be pleasant and kind now; for
she's like the old tree—it's twenty
years too late."

"It's never too late, with God's help,
to try to do better; but my little girl
must begin now to keep back harsh
words and unkind thoughts. Then
she will never have to say, as Joe said
about the tree, 'It is twenty years
too late.'"—*Child's World.*

A CONFIRMED old bachelor was out
at a social gathering the other evening,
where he was so unfortunate as to
become seated behind a party of
vivacious young ladies. Conversation
turned upon athletic subjects, when
one pert young miss inquired: "Mr.
Brown, what is your favourite exer-
cise?" "Oh! I have no preference;
but just at present I should prefer
dumb belles," was his rather curt
reply.

THE SPIRIT OF DISCONTENT.

THE other day we stood by a
cooper who was playing a
merry tune with his adz round
a cask.

"Ah!" said he, "mine is a hard
lot—driving a hoop."

"Heigho!" sighed the blacksmith
on a hot summer day, as he wiped the
perspiration from his brow, while the
red iron glowed on the anvil; "this
is life with a vengeance, melting and
frying one's self over a hot fire."

"O that I were a carpenter!" ejacu-
lated the shoemaker as he bent over
his lapstone. "Here I am, day after
day, wearing my soul away making
soles for others—cooped up in this
little seven-by-nine room. Hi-ho-hum!"

"I'm sick of this outdoor work!"
exclaimed the bricklayer—"broiling
under the sweltering sun or exposed
to the inclemency of the weather. I
wish I were a tailor!"

"This is too bad!" petulantly cried
the tailor—"to be compelled to sit
perched up here, plying the needle all
the time. Would that mine were a
more active life!"

"Last day of grace; banks won't
discount; customers won't pay; what
shall I do?" grumbles the merchant.
"I had rather be a truck, a dog, or
anything else."

"Happy fellows!" groans the law-
yer, as he scratches his head over some
dry, musty records; "happy fellows!
I had rather hammer stones all day
than puzzle my head over these tedious,
vexatious questions."—*Selected.*

"MOTHER'S TURN."

IT is mother's turn to be taken
care of now," said a winsome
young girl, whose bright eyes,
fresh colour, and eager looks
told of light-hearted happiness. Just
out of school she had the air of culture
which is an added attraction to a blithe
young face. It was mother's turn
now. Did she know how my heart
went out to her for her unselfish words?

Too many mothers in the love of
their daughters entirely overlook the
idea that they themselves need recrea-
tion. They do without all the easy,
pretty and charming things and say
nothing about it; and the daughters
do not think there is any self-denial
involved. Jenny gets the new dress
and the mother wears the old one
turned upside down and wrong-side
out. Lucy goes on the mountain trip,
and mother stays at home and keeps
house. Emily is tired of study and
must lie down in the afternoon; but
mother, though her back aches, has no
time for such an indulgence.

Dear girls, take good care of your
mothers. Coax them to let you relieve
them of some of the harder duties
which for years they have patiently
borne.—*Intelligencer.*

THREE Western country people—an
old man and two daughters—happen-
ing to be in the city, entered a store
in idle curiosity. The first object to
attract their attention was the elevator
silently moving up and down with its
cargoes of passengers. "What's that,
pa! that thing going up and down,
with sofas in it!" asked one of the
daughters. The old man gave the
elevator a long, calm, deliberate stare,
and exclaimed with awe-struck voice;
"It's a telephone! The first I ever
see!"