

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XIV.]

TORONTO, JANUARY 6, 1894.

[No. 1.

FAITHFUL CAPTAIN.

MARY BRUCE was a Scotch lassie who lived with her Uncle Robert, in a little cottage almost hidden by the rugged hills that surrounded it. For years he had been gardener for the gentleman at the castle, and, though his wages were not large, he was thrifty and industrious, and earned a very fair living for himself and wife.

In his way he was kind enough to Mary, but he was not fond of children, and the poor orphan sadly missed the love and tenderness that had been lavished upon her in the little shepherd's tent, where she and her father had spent so many happy days together.

But his lack of affection for herself did not wound her half so much as his unkindness to her faithful Captain, who for years had tended her father's flock on the far-away mountain side.

Though her aunt was not very fond of dogs herself, she sympathized with Mary, and once when her uncle kicked Captain out of the door, she remonstrated with him and reminded him that it was not good policy to make an enemy, even of a dog.

People called Robert Bruce a moderate drinker, and usually he did manage to keep a level head; but there had been times when he had taken a drop too much, and disgraced himself and wife by coming home from the inn with an unsteady step.

The day before Christmas was cold and stormy, and after dinner Mr. Bruce started to the village for the weekly mail, taking with him the little brown jug that had been his companion on so many trips before. He lingered longer at the "Red Cloud" than he intended, and the "good cheer" in which he had indulged so freely was beginning to tell on him, even before he took the homeward road.

The storm increased with the evening, and before he was half-way home, one of those fierce blizzards peculiar to mountainous regions was full upon him. Had his brain been clear, he might have managed to keep in the bridle-path along the mountain ridge; but with his head swimming round and round, as it was, it was a very easy matter for his staggering steps to fall out of the beaten way. For an hour or more, blinded by the sharp pricks of the fast-falling snow, he wandered back and forth in sight of the old castle on the hill, and then, not knowing that the numbness creeping into his veins meant death, he lay down in the snow-drifts right across the path, and here half an hour later faithful Captain found him fast asleep.

Mary had her sleeves rolled up, washing the supper-dishes, when the dog bounded into the kitchen, and catching her by her dress, tried to pull her towards the door. She knew from his manner that something was wrong, and without waiting even to snatch up her hood, she followed her favourite out into the snow. Soon the dog stopped by the side of a prostrate figure, and Mary was horrified to find in the half-frozen man her Uncle Robert.

Captain seemed to think that his duty was finished now, and slunk away with a look which seemed to say "Get him home

the best way you can. He is no friend of mine."

Mary tried to coax him to assist her in arousing the sleeper, but the dog was obdurate, and it was not until her aunt arrived that they succeeded in getting the man on his feet.

After Mr. Bruce was himself again, and had listened to his wife's story about the dog's reluctant kindness, he said with much feeling, "You were right, Susan;

mouth went all the bits that had formerly found their way into the inn-keeper's pocket.

HUMOUR IN THE SCHOOLROOM.

J. L. HUGHES, Public School Inspector, Toronto, tells a number of stories of Canadian school life:

"Who were the foolish virgins?" brought

wrote: "Titus was a Roman Emperor—supposed to have written the epistle to the Hebrews; his other name was Oates."

Here are a few answers culled at random:

"A circle is a round straight line with a hole in the middle." "Things which are equal to each other are equal to anything else." "In Austria the principal occupation is gathering Austrian feathers." "The two most famous volcanoes in Europe are Sodom and Gomorrah." "Climate lasts all the time, weather only a few days." "Mrs. Browning wrote poetry to the pottery gesse." This was not complimentary the Portuguese nor to the teacher's method of teaching literature. "The blood is putrefied in the lungs by inspired air."

A poor boy was asked, "What is a gentleman?" "A fellow that has a watch and chain," he replied. "A demagogue is a vessel containing beer and other liquids,—not far astray. "Tom, use a sentence with responsibility in it." Tom said: "When one suspender button is gone there is a great deal of responsibility on the other one." "Give me the future of drink." "Present, he drinks; future, he will be drunk." "The plural for pillow?" "Bolster." "Compare ill." "Ill, worse, dead." This recalls the answer of the boy who said: "Masculine, man; feminine, woman; neuter, corpse."

"Who was the first man?" asked a Chicago teacher. "Washington," promptly answered the young American. "No," said the teacher, "Adam was the first man." "Oh, well, I suppose you are right," replied the undaunted patriot, "if you refer to furiners." "How did that blot come on your copy-book, Sam?" "I think it is a tear, Miss Wallace. It must have been a coloured boy who dropped it," suggested the reflective Samuel. "What made the Tower of Pisa lean?" "The famine in the land." "Now, children," said the teacher, "we have gone through the history of England. Tell me in whose reign would you live if you could choose for yourself." "In the reign of King James," said philosophic Alec, "because I read that education was very much neglected in his time." "If you wish to be good looking when you grow up you should go to bed early," was the advice of a lady teacher to her class in hygiene. Isabel rather rudely ventured to say in reply: "I 'spect you sat up late when you was a girl."

Mr. Hughes concludes his paper by the following suggestion:

The humour of the schoolroom is too valuable to be lost. Every teacher should record the humorous answers and amusing incidents in connection with her class.

Teachers' Associations should appoint recorders of humour, to whom all teachers should send the merry sketches of their schoolrooms.

A JUDGE, in crossing the Irish Channel one stormy night, knocked against a well-known witty lawyer, who was suffering from sea-sickness. "Can I do anything for you?" said the judge. "Yes," gasped the sea-sick lawyer. "I wish your lordship would over-rule this motion."



A NEW YEAR'S MOTTO.

it is not good policy to make an enemy, even of a dog."

After that day, both Mary and the Captain found a true friend in Robert Bruce, and nothing that he could do for the comfort of either was ever forgotten or left undone. He learned another lesson, too, from that night's experience, and that was, that a man cannot be a moderate drinker always, and satisfied with the failure he had made, the little brown jug was thoroughly cleansed and labelled "Missionary Jug," and into its small round

the answer from a wise little girl—"Them as didn't get married."

"Boys," said a teacher, "can any of you quote a verse of scripture to prove that it is wrong for a man to have two wives?" He paused, and after a moment a bright boy raised his hand. "Well, Thomas," said the teacher encouragingly. Thomas stood up and said solemnly: "No man can serve two masters." The questioning ended there.

History and scripture were never more thoroughly mixed than by the boy who