

# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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## The Wonders of Creation.

There's not a tint that paints the rose,  
Or decks the lily fair,  
Or streaks the humblest flower that  
blows,  
But God has placed it there.

There's not of grass a single blade,  
Or leaf of loveliest green,  
Where heavenly skill is not displayed,  
And heavenly wisdom seen.

There's not a star whose twinkling light  
Shines on the distant earth,  
And cheers the silent gloom of night,  
But God has given it birth.

There's not a place on earth's  
vast round,  
In ocean deep, or air,  
Where skill and wisdom are  
not found,  
For God is everywhere.

Around, beneath, below, above,  
Wherever space extends,  
There he displays his bound-  
less love,  
And power with mercy  
blends.

## SEAGULLS.

As one of the great ocean steamers was rushing along on her way across the broad Atlantic Ocean and was already some hundreds of miles out at sea, a little boy ran up to his mother and cried:

"O mother, give me some biscuits too."

"Why, Freddie," replied his mother, "what do you want the biscuits for?"

"To throw out to the pretty birds," Freddie said. "Oh, come, mother dear, and see the pretty white birds flying after us. See how they dip down and pick up the biscuits on the water. What kind of birds are they, mother, and where do they sleep away out here so far from land?"

"They are seagulls, my child," replied the mother. "They just sleep floating on the water—no matter how rough it is. They sometimes follow ships hundreds of miles, picking up anything that the cook throws overboard. They are found on all large bodies of water—on the big fresh-water lakes as well as on the ocean—but they are thickest around the fishing banks. They gather in hundreds about the vessels where the fish are being cleaned. As the waste parts of the fish are thrown overboard the seagulls dash down with hoarse cries and great flapping of wings, tearing at the pieces and fighting over them, but the fishermen pay no attention to them.

We show one of these fishing schooners that has been disabled in a storm and is left to her fate. The seagulls can be seen flocking around by hundreds, darting down upon the pieces of fish that have been washed out of the sinking vessel.

If our picture could make you hear them as well as you can see them, you would want to close your ears and run away.

## OYSTERS ON TREES.

The other day I heard somebody speak of "oysters hanging upon the branches of trees on the borders of the Chesapeake Bay."

"That sounds like a fairy tale," thought I to myself.

I determined to investigate. So I said: "I always supposed oysters grew under the water. I never knew they

hung in clusters on tree branches like apples. Curious sort of oysters those must be which grow on trees along the Chesapeake!"

"Chesapeake Bay has the best kind of oyster," said the Talking Man. "The reason they are sometimes found growing on tree branches is this: The spawn of the oyster floats about in the water, tossed by wind and waves. It has the quality of attaching itself firmly to any solid substance it touches. Sometimes it might be the bottom of a ship, a rock, or a tree branch. You know the bottom of a ship often needs scraping on account of the shell-fish adhering to it.

small oysters. It looks very odd, of course, but it's a common enough sight down there.

"Grow? They don't grow very large, to be sure. To attain perfection an oyster must be always under water, and these hang half the time out of it. When they are exposed too long to the hot sun, they die. Their weight often causes them to fall off.

"Little oysters are sometimes transplanted. Not off tree branches, but from the beds at the bottom of the bay. They are planted in oyster beds in other places, where, in a couple of years, they grow to maturity."

## A WORD TO BOYS.

If we are to have drunkards in the future, some of them are to come from the boys to whom I am now writing, and I ask you if you want to become one of them? No, of course you don't! Well, I have a plan that is sure to save you from such a fate.

Never touch liquor in any form. That is the plan, and it is worth putting into practice. I know you don't drink now, and it seems to you as if you never would. But your temptation will come, and it will probably come this way. You will find yourself sometime with a number of companions, and they will have a bottle of wine on the table. They will drink and offer it to you. They will regard it as a manly practice, and very likely they will look upon you as a milkop if you don't indulge with them.

Then what will you do? Will you say, "No, no! none of that stuff for me!" or will you take the glass with your common sense protesting, and your conscience making the whole draught bitter, and then go off with a hot head and skulking soul that at once begins to make apologies for itself and will keep doing so all its life? Boys, do not become drunkards.

## AN HONEST BOOT-BLACK.

One evening a gentleman, who gave his name as Harrison, of Freeport, Ill., was hurrying down Broadway, it about five o'clock, carrying a valise, and when on the Canal Street crossing, a large, well-filled envelope fell from his coat. A lame bootblack, named Daniel McCarthy, better known in the neighbourhood as "Limping Dan," picked it up, and running as best he could after the loser, cried, "Say, mister!" The man glanced in the direction of the call, and seeing the boy's blacking kit, gruffly said, "I don't want a shine." The boy, however, exerted himself, and stopping in front of the envelope, said, "Mister, you dropped this."

Recognizing his property, a change immediately spread over his countenance as he gazed upon the shivering cripple before him and asked his name. He then took him to a clothing store near by, and paid for a coat and vest for the boy, after which he handed the grateful boy a \$20 bill, saying, "My boy, that envelope contained a large amount of money. When I come to the city again I shall be glad to see you."

To the officer he said he had sold some property on Long Island, and that the envelope contained the proceeds—\$1,600 in cheques and \$600 in bills—which he had just drawn from the bank, and in his haste to get to Jersey City, where he was to take the train, he must have placed the envelope between his inside coat and overcoat instead of in his pocket.

Dean Farrar, of Canterbury, recently said that "England, just and generous as ever, stands to-day amid the jealousy of nations and the hubbub of lies. Nothing is sadder than the proofs of lying fury and frantic jealousy with which the foreign press, almost without exception, daily voids its poisonous rhusm upon our native land." The overwhelming majority of English papers applaud this as an expression of the thoughts of England, and sound a note of defiance.

"It sounds funny to talk of picking oysters off trees," said I, "or even seeing them grow there."

"Funny enough. But they do grow there. I've see it lots of times," said the Talking Man. "That's the way queer stories get about. Somebody hears of a thing and doesn't understand the sense of it. And most people never stop to ask what it means. They either repeat the story for a marvel, or say they don't believe it."—Harper's Young People.

A good conscience is to the soul, what health is to the body.—Joseph Addison.



SEAGULLS.

"Now, the branches of trees often droop into the water. They do it along the borders of the Chesapeake the same as on the banks of any other river or bay. At high tide such branches will be covered with water, and when the tide goes back, the branches come to the surface again.

"The spawn sticks to those boughs when they are beneath the waves. In a few days the tiny oysters begin to develop, and before long, at every low tide, the branches can be seen hanging out, with little oysters growing all over them.

"Sometimes a branch which is often under water will be nearly covered with