

A Christmas Hymn.

"What means this glory round our feet,"
The Magi sung, "more bright than morn
And voices chanted strong and sweet,
"To-day the Prince of Peace is born."

"What means this star," the shepherds said,
That brightens through the rocky glen?
And angels, answering overhead,
Sung, "Peace on earth, good will to men!"

Twelve hundred years and more
Since these sweet oracles were dumb;
We wait for him like them of yore;
Alas, he seems so long to come!

But it was said in words of gold
No time or sorrow e'er shall dim,
That little children might be bold
In perfect trust to come to him

All round about our feet shall shine
A light like that the wise men saw,
If we our loving wills incline
To that sweet life which is the law

So shall we learn to understand
The simple faith of shepherds then,
And kindly clasping hand in hand,
Sing, "Peace on earth, good-will to men!"

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, JUNE 30, 1894.

THE RICH YOUNG RULER.

BY REV. ANNA OLIVER.

Our subject is about a young ruler who lived when Jesus was on earth. He was what would be called "a good young man." He had kept God's commandments—always doing what he thought to be right. But still he felt in his heart that there was something else necessary before he could have eternal life.

So one day, seeing Jesus come out of a house, and believing that he was a great teacher, this young man ran up to Jesus and very earnestly asked our Lord, what he yet lacked, or what more he ought to do, that he might have eternal life. Now this young man was very beautiful and interesting, and when Jesus looked at him he loved him. And Jesus, who knows everything, knew that he was very rich. So our Lord told him to give all that he had to the poor, and to come and follow him. But this rich man thought so much of his large, beautiful house, and all the handsome things he had in it, that he felt very sorry to hear Jesus say that he must give them up. And he would not give them up. So we are told that he went away, and did not follow Jesus.

The Lord gives us a great many beautiful things to enjoy, and to use while we are in this world, but this account of the rich young man teaches us that if we are not willing to give them up, or spend what we have for the Lord's sake that we will never gain eternal life; that we cannot be followers of Christ, that we are not Christians.

When we love Jesus we are not only willing to give up everything to please him, but we are delighted to give him ourselves and all we have. It makes us glad to think that the Lord has given us the means to help the poor and sick, and to send the Bible and missionaries to the heathen, to tell them about the One whom we love with our whole hearts, and who died for them and for us. If we do not feel so it is a sign that we are not Christians.

I will tell you a little story that will show you how easy and natural it is to give up the very best things we have, for the sake of someone whom we love very much. It is a true story, for I saw and heard myself what I am going to tell you.

One time I was visiting where there was a little girl named Nellie, at play in the room. A set of bright, shining tin playthings had just been given her. She was perfectly delighted with them, and no wonder; for there were plates and dishes and knives and forks and little pans, as bright as though they had been made of silver. And in Nellie's eyes they were as precious as silver and gold and jewels would be to others.

Now, several of us in the room wanted Nellie to talk to us, or look up at us. You know everyone enjoys talking to good little children. But Nellie was seated on the floor, with a stick of candy in one hand and the other busy with her pretty playthings, and we could not get her attention at all.

I must tell you that Nellie's mother had been away from home for some time, and her little girl had not seen her. While we were talking among ourselves, and had quite forgotten Nellie, and while Nellie's eyes and thoughts were all engrossed with her bright toys, the door opened and her mamma entered. At once Nellie sprang up, left her pretty things, dropped her candy on the floor, and with her sticky hands was clinging round her mother's neck. You see she loved her mother more than her playthings, so she left them for her mother. She did not love us as much as she loved her toys, so we could not coax her to leave them. But when she saw her mother, she was glad to leave them. She forgot them. She had found what she cared more about, and her little heart was full of joy as she nestled in her mother's arms.

It was, perhaps, an hour before she remembered her playthings. And what do you suppose she did then? Why, she gathered them in her apron, as best she could, and poured them into her mother's lap, saying:

"O mamma, see! beautiful!
I dive 'em all to 'ou."

So, if the rich young man had loved Jesus, he would have found greater delight in following him, and even suffering for his sake, than in all his riches. If you are a true Christian you will never find it hard to spend your money for the poor, or in any way that will do good. To give the best you have and all you have to the blessed Lord will make you happy, just as little Nellie was delighted to pour all her playthings into her mother's lap.

Some persons think they cannot give up so much for Jesus; that they cannot live without their riches, or their pleasures, or without having their own way; and they go off sorrowful, like the young man, and never follow Jesus. But if they loved the Lord as Nellie loved her mother, they would find that they were happier with him as their Saviour, than any riches could make them. That is the reason that the poorest Christian is happier even in this world, than the richest man who has nothing but his houses and money to live for. And besides our satisfaction in religion here, if we follow Jesus, he will lead us at last to mansions in the heavens—those beautiful houses that he will give us there to live in forever, that shine brighter than the sun.

"MOTHERING SUNDAY."

BY MARY E. MERRILL.

"Mothering Sunday" is the fourth Sunday in Lent, and is often called "Mid-Lent Sunday." The custom which gave rise to the name, like many another delightful old custom, has passed away, and so the name has become almost forgotten also.

I suppose you all have read stories of apprentices, young lads who were "bound out," as they called it, to learn a trade, or to work for some farmer for a term of years.

How would you like it, my boy—just home from a spin on your new "safety"—to be tied down to work day after day, under a master who was not always easy to please, and who would allow you only Sundays and an occasional "day off" to go to see your mother.

And you, my dear girl, with your happy home and days brimful of enjoyment, what would you think of a life exactly opposite to yours?

For in the days of long ago, as well as in our own time, there were many young girls who found it best to leave their homes and make their own way in the world.

Would you not be glad of an occasional Sunday when you could array yourself in all your best finery, and go to see your mother, taking care that you wrapped your little present up very carefully, so that you could watch her evident pleasure and surprise as she untied the string, took off the wrapper, and brought to light the treasure which you had bought for her with your "very own earnings"?

That was "Mothering Sunday," the fourth Sunday in Lent, when absent sons and daughters—particularly the young apprentices—would return to their homes with some little present for both parents, but more especially for the mother. An ancient custom, and a delightful one it seems to me.

Imagine the joy of Peggy or Thomas, the pride of the mother in the simple gift, and the admiration of the small brothers and sisters who gathered around and longed for the time when they also would be out in the great unknown world and could come "a-mothering."

Perhaps it was not an apprentice or a serving maid, but some young housekeeper who would come from her own home, and with a most important air would present her mother with some pasties or a "simnel" of her own making. The simnel, or simnel, was a kind of rich, sweet cake offered as a gift at Christmas or Easter and especially on "Mothering Sunday."

We may be sure that it was a happy time, and that the mother admired the gift and praised the giver, and rejoiced that her Thomas was such a fine, steady lad, or that Peggy was so strong and rosy and loving.

In one of his poems, Robert Herrick, the early English poet, says:

I'll to thee a simnel bring,
'Gainst thou go a-mothering;
So that, when she blesses thee,
Half that blessing thou'lt give me.

A DUTIFUL SON.

GENERAL GRANT, as a youth, honoured his parents, and his days, in the language of Scripture, have been "prolonged," and so in truth were theirs. Forty-four years ago he wrote to his mother from West Point: "Your kind words of admonition are ever present with me. How well do they strengthen me in every good word and work! Should I become a soldier for my country, I look forward with hope to have you spared to share with me in any advancement I may gain, and I trust my future conduct will prove me worthy of the patriotic instruction you and father have given me."

His written desire was realized in a wonderful manner.

TEMPERANCE IN THE SCHOOLS.

THERE is no more important work than the education of the young in the principles of temperance. In a few years the drinkers of to-day will have passed from the stage of life, and if the saloon is unable to recruit patrons from among the rising generation its occupation will be gone. There are now in the public schools of Ontario, 488,809 pupils registered, and the report of the Minister of Education shows that temperance and hygiene are taught to 151,817 of these. The separate schools have 36,168 pupils, of whom 13,351 are given instruction in temperance and hygiene. Thus it will be seen that 165,000 children are having their feet set upon the

right road, but why is not the number larger? The matter receives now considerable attention, but it is worthy of more. Every child attending school should be warned by its teachers of the pitfalls set by the liquor traffic to accomplish its run.—Citizen.

Dominion Hymn.

BY GEORGE W. ARMSTRONG.

Tune: National Anthem.

LORD, our Dominion bless,
With peace and plenteousness
From shore to shore;
Let truth and virtue reign,
Mercy's fair fame sustain,
And equal rights maintain,
For evermore.

Our provinces unite,
In federation's might,
In union strong;
Let every discord cease,
Strife's bitterness decrease,
Just laws uphold in peace,
With pen and tongue.

Concord and love bestow,
Let goodness ever grow,
Keep honour bright
Our freedom strong and sure,
Our patriotism pure,
Our heritage secure,
Founded on right.

Let neighbouring nations be,
Friendly in rivalry,
In trade and art;
O'er this terrestrial sphere,
Let mankind far and near,
As brethren appear,
In mind and heart.

Canada first desire,
Loyal to old empire,
No feuds between;
Unitedly our race,
Implore thee, God of grace,
To guard our foremost place;
God save our Queen.

London, Ont.

WORLD'S TEMPERANCE TOUR.

DURING the last seven years, the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union has been preparing for presentation to all the governments of the world, a monster polyglot petition against the traffic in alcohol and opium, and against legalized vice.

Lady Henry Somerset and Miss Willard have been appointed as the deputation to convey the petition to the different governments. The petition itself now bears the unprecedented number of over 2,000,000 individual signatures, and with the attestation of certain great societies, not less than 3,000,000.

With this purpose in view, a first-class steamer is immediately to be chartered, and a party of one hundred persons will be organized to accompany Lady Henry Somerset and Miss Willard in this remarkable crusade. Leaving the United States next October, the delegation will join the British contingent at Exeter Hall, London. It will visit Naples and Rome, Athens, Jerusalem, and other places, and return via the Pacific.

AN ITEM FOR BOYS.

It is not necessary that a boy who learns a trade should follow it all his life. Governor Palmer, of Illinois, was a country blacksmith once, and began his political career in Macoupin county. A circuit judge in the central part of Illinois was once a tailor. Thomas Hoynes, a rich and eminent lawyer of Illinois, was once a book-binder.

"Erasmus Corning, of New York, to-lame to do hard labour, commenced as a shop boy in Albany. When he applied for employment first he was asked, "Why, my little boy, what can you do?" "Can do what I'm bid," was the answer, which secured him a place.

Senator Wilson, of Massachusetts, was a shoemaker. Thurlow Weed was a canal driver. Ex-governor Stone, of Iowa, was a cabinet-maker, at which trade Hon. Stephen A. Douglas worked in his youth.

It does not depend upon the kind of work you have whether you rise or not; it depends upon how you do it.