

October.

Put on yellow, red, and green... The lathery pears and apples... Robin, robin redbreast...

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, OCTOBER 1, 1892.

"FIRST!"

A TALK WITH BOYS.

BY FRON. HENRY BRUMMOND, F.R.S.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

III.

GRAMMAR.

LASTLY, and very shortly. What was the third head? "Grammar." Right: Grammar. Now, I require a clever boy to answer the next question. What is the verb? "Seek." Very good: "Seek." What mood is it in? "Imperative mood." What does that mean? "Command." You boys of the Boys' Brigade know what commands are...

"God wants boys' lives, not only their souls. It is for active service soldiers are drilled and trained and fit for action. That is why you and I are in the world at all - not to prepare to go out of it some day; but to serve God actively in it now. It is monstrous and shameful and cowardly to

talk of waiting the 'good day.' It is not waiting, but a bold, confident, joyful... You are not where you are, in a particular sense, in a particular 'feeling,' to help us into the kingdom of God. You are not where you are old and ready to die. By that time your companions will have fought their fight, and lost or won. If they lose, will you not be sorry that you did not help them? Will you not regret that only at the last you helped the kingdom of God? Perhaps you will not be able to do it then. And your life has been lost indeed.

Very few people have the opportunity to enter the kingdom of God at the end. Christ, know me all! I know that religion was a thing for our life, not merely for our death bed. He laid this command upon us now. "Seek first the kingdom of God. I am going to leave you with this text itself. Every brigade boy in the world should obey it.

Boys, before you go to work to-morrow, before you go to sleep to-night, before you go to the Sunday school this afternoon, before you go out of the door of the City Hall, resolve that, God helping you, you are going to seek first the kingdom of God. Perhaps some boys here are deserters; they began once before to serve Christ, and they deserted. Come back again, come back again to-day. Others have never enlisted at all. Will you not do it now? You are old enough to decide. And the grandest moment of a boy's life is that moment when he decides to seek first the kingdom of God.

JEANIE'S FAITH.

BY M. E. KENNEY.

LITTLE Jeanie was a Scotch lassie. She lived on the edge of a wide moor, which stretched away in the distance like an unbroken sea of tall grass and purple heather. A splendid playground it made for the little girl, although a lonely one. She had no brothers or sisters, and no neighbours lived very near, so she had no companions to share her sports.

She never thought of being lonely in summer, when she made friends with the little birds, and listened to their sweet songs, but sometimes in winter she was tempted to wish that she did not live so far away from all neighbours.

One day, late in November, when the air began to grow cold with the breath of approaching winter, Jeanie's father fell ill. At first his wife did all she could to relieve him, but as his fever increased, and his cough became more incessant, she lost faith in the simple remedies she had been applying, and wished that she might consult the doctor.

How to send word to him was the question that perplexed her. She could not leave her husband, for he needed her too much, and she was afraid to let little Jeanie start out on such a long walk alone. "I am not afraid, mother," insisted the child. "Do let me go, and perhaps I can bring back some medicine that will make him better."

The mother hesitated. It was a long walk, but the sturdy little maiden had often walked four miles before without being over-wearied, and she could come back with the doctor.

The noonday sun swung high in the heavens, so she was sure that Jeanie would have time to go and return before night-fall, and so she gave her consent.

Proud of her responsibility, Jeanie bade her father and mother "Good-by" and hastened away, looking back to throw a kiss before her mother closed the door.

The air was clear and cold, but Jeanie was so warmly wrapped in her plaid that she did not heed it. The sky was becoming over-darker as she went on, but she did not mind it, until a snow-flake whirled before her eyes.

"Oh, the first snow has come!" she cried in delight; and soon the air was full of feathery, whirling snow-flakes.

"I am glad I am so near the doctor's house she thought, as they fell thicker and faster. "It would not be pleasant to walk all the way back in a storm."

She was very tired, though she would not admit it to herself, when at last she reached the doctor's house. A woman was sitting in the parlour, and she was looking at her with a kind of pity.

"The doctor's out," she said in answer to Jeanie's query: "he may not be back till evening. Who do you say is sick?"

Jeanie told her, and then, as the door closed, she turned away with a swelling heart. She was so tired that her feet fairly ached, and the long homeward journey was yet before her.

It never occurred to her to ask permission to rest till the doctor came, and so she set off at once on her return journey, while the snow-flakes whirled about her as if they were trying to have a game with her. Very slowly and wearily the little feet dragged themselves on, and poor Jeanie wondered whether they would be able to carry her home.

She toiled on until she accomplished about half her journey; then the short winter twilight closed around her, and she sank down on the snow-covered ground to rest for a little while. She was so cold that her feet and hands pained her, and the stinging sensation brought tears to her eyes.

With a little sob she gathered her plaid closer around her. She would never go home again; she would have to perish here alone, in the dark and the cold; there was no one to help her. Oh, but there was a friend near at hand! Suddenly she remembered who it was that is a refuge in time of trouble, and kneeling she clasped her hands and prayed, "O, God, please send some one to take me home, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

Then she waited and listened with a child's trusting faith that her prayer would be speedily answered. Not was her faith unrewarded, for in the distance she heard the sound of a horse's hoofs rapidly approaching, and as they drew near her she called loudly, lest they should pass her.

A cheery voice answered, and in a few moments more the doctor's strong arms had gathered up the little snow-covered figure and wrapped her in a warm robe.

"God sent you, didn't he?" said Jeanie, when she told him how tired and how cold she had grown, and how she had despaired of reaching home.

The doctor told her that when he had returned home, at an earlier hour than he had expected, his servant had told him of Jeanie's call.

"I was afraid you would get lost in the snow, so I hastened to overtake you; and I was not any too prompt, for you would soon have frozen to death, lying there in the snow. Yes, little one, God sent me to you, and you did well to trust him to care for you." - Occident.

MISSIONARY BIDS.

BY SOPHIE S. SMITH.

ANNIE—How much missionary money have you, Susie?

Susie—Twelve dollars.

Annie—How did you get so much? I suppose all your aunts, uncles, and cousins gave you, besides your papa and mamma.

Susie—No; not one penny gave me a penny. I earned it all myself, and I have Harry has ten dollars that he saved for himself.

Annie—How did you do it? I should be hard enough to earn five dollars.

Susie—I made it from my missionary box.

Annie—A missionary box? What is that? A box for missionary work?

Susie—No missionary ever came on the boat I made, and I don't think he could if he tried.

Annie—What is it then? It must be a strange kind of a box.

Susie—It was a very sweet and beautiful one, covered with flowers all the summer.

Annie—A garden box of flowers? You don't mean to say you earned twelve dollars by selling flowers this summer?

Susie—I did, and enjoyed it, too.

Annie—It must have been hard work.

Susie—It was tiresome sometimes, but the thought of doing good with the money helped me to go on, and now I am glad I did it. It makes me happy to know that somebody will be helped by money that I earned, instead of asking others for it.

PREPARATION FOR ACTIVE WORK.

The present is a time of great activity. It has become so much more active in every department of thought and action now judges are throbbing. The capacity of invention has almost changed the type of our civilization. In the church and in the Sunday-school, as well as in business affairs, the tide of a new life is felt. There has come within recent years a great expansion of the missionary and Sunday-school work. Young people's societies within a brief period have attained in the aggregate a prodigious growth. There are so many forms of associated Christian, humane, or benevolent work, as temperance societies, young men's Christian associations, women's Christian associations, and so on. In some of these every young person should find a place. And to fill such a place successfully, training and preparation are needed. Let it always be remembered that a careful study of the word of God and familiarity with its lines are among the foremost foundations of preparation. Quotations from the Bible always carry such authority as nothing else carries. Then there must be a true, good heart and unselfish purpose, no personal aims or ambitions to gratify, and a hearty entering into whatever is to be done.

THE CARRIER PIGEONS.

MARJORIE'S papa was a railroad conductor on a long "through" line.

Every morning Marjorie pinned a fresh flower in his button-hole, her mamma handed him his nickel ticket-punch, notebook, and a fresh handkerchief. Then he gave them both a kiss and started out. Ned, the little dog, going with him as far as the next corner and then turning around and trotting back alone.

Conductor Martin was fond of pets and had gathered a number around him. These pretty creatures very soon learned to know him, and when he came home at night there was always a general frolic.

One night he came home bringing a little covered wicker basket, and when Marjorie and Ned and Nick, the cat, were allowed to peep into it, they saw two beautiful carrier pigeons. The little girl and the little dog were delighted, but the handsome Arrogant cat put up his back and slowly walked away to his own particular corner.

The pigeons were wonderfully pretty and attractive little creatures, and as soon as they had become thoroughly acquainted with their new home, their master used to take them out with him in their basket on his trips and let them loose at some point on the line.

Nick always showed great delight when the pretty birds were placed in the covered basket to be carried out. But when they came tapping at the bay window near the mistress' chair to be let in on their return from their trip, he would march away to his cushion and curl up there in disgust.

One morning Marjorie was shut in with a cold, and the carrier pigeons were loose in the sitting room for company. Mamma was entertaining callers in the parlor, and in some way, the little girl could never tell how, Nick stole into the room and pounced upon one of the pigeons as he was daintily preening his feathers in the sunshine. He caught him with his sharp teeth, and holding up his head very high, to prevent the poor bird from trailing on the floor, hatched screw the room with his prey. Then, despite loud scolding, scolding, and cuffings, he held it fast until it was quite dead.

The other pigeon seemed to be frightened almost into convulsions over the shock. He began to droop from that very hour, and in spite of all little Marjorie's scudding and nursing he refused to be comforted, and soon died of grief for his loving, tender mate.

Marjorie was sad enough over the death of the pretty pet. It was painful to think of a creature so helpless as a little bird being capable of such deep and lasting love. And yet there was something so beautiful in such faithful affection that Marjorie learned a sweet lesson from it. Dear little she had always loved her own dear father and mother, her mother for them more strongly and more unselfishly than the little pigeon's death.