

In the Printing Office.

"I cannot read it, father—father, see!
I cannot read it, spell it out for me.
It is right that surely I my letters know,
But this, I find, I really cannot do."

Thus spake the child who, at his father's side,
Waited through a printing room and vainly tried
To read the type. The printer, smiling, laid
Upon the press a sheet, and kindly said,
"Come, little one, and try to read once more
These letters; for they were reversed before,
But now they're plain. The clouds from that fair brow
Have passed away; for he can read it now."

So with our Father's dealings. Day by day
We try to read, and puzzled, turn away.
We do not understand; we cannot see
Why this was done or that allowed to be.
But in the world to come, through his clear light,
We, too, shall read the mystery aright.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 13, 1892.

GOOD BUSINESS IN THE WRONG PLACE.

BY N. M. WILLIAMS.

A YOUNG Jew is travelling in company, or perhaps alone, over the public road from Galilee to Judea. He is going to the great centre of social aristocracy, ecclesiastical power, and Rabbinical learning. He is going for the purpose of attending a great annual festival. He has never been admitted to the society of the wealthy, cultivated metropolitans. He goes with literally no hold upon the ruling classes of the city; and, coming from the rougher, coarser society of Galilee, it seems improbable that it will soon be otherwise. On his arrival in the city he enters into the temple. He passes through the gate of the outer court, when he beholds a disgraceful sight. Here are oxen, sheep, and doves, with buyers and sellers, here are tables, with piles of Jewish and foreign coins, and there, behind the tables, are the brokers. Doves are cooing, sheep are bleating, oxen are lowing, coins are rattling, buyers and sellers are jibbering.

Some kinds of business are essentially bad. The business which these men are driving is not in itself bad. These animals are needed for sacrifices, and even this money changing—how convenient for those who have come from distant parts of the Roman Empire, with Roman coin, to be able to exchange it at once for the Jewish half-shekel, with which to pay the temple due! The business is both lawful and honourable. What is it, then, which so awakens the holy indignation of Jesus?

These men are driving their business in the wrong place. This building was not erected for brokerage and cattle selling. "My Father's house," says Jesus. How criminal are the men who are desecrating and polluting this consecrated spot! "But are not my oxen," says one, "needed for the divinely appointed

sacrifices!" "My doves," says another, "are they not needed for those who are too poor to make the more costly offering?" What satisfaction sits upon this broker's face! How confident that he is a very necessary agent in helping God's people, who have come from foreign countries and want to get their money changed!

Oh, ye brokers and dealers in cattle, why do ye not speak the truth, and honestly own that ye are in the court of the temple, with your oxen and your tables, not from pious regard to the wants of others, but from shameful love of gain! You are doing a good business in the wrong place. Let the reader make his own application.—*Forward.*

WHAT AN AMERICAN EDITOR SAYS OF "ONWARD."

We take special delight in noting the success that has attended that excellent Canadian illustrated weekly publication called *Onward*, a paper for young people, which is just rounding out the first year of its existence, with a circulation of 27,000. We congratulate the editor on his ability to get up a paper for young people that is unsurpassed by any other publication in the world. Each number is profusely and beautifully illustrated, and its eight pages are brimful of the most interesting reading matter. It is recognized as the exponent of Canadian Methodism among the young people, devoting considerable space to Epworth League work; but our young folks, regardless of church relation, will find it exceedingly attractive and helpful. At the price (only 60 cents per year) the paper ought to have a circulation of over 100,000 in the United States alone.—*Phillipsburg Journal.*

CANADIAN LEAGUES.

HAPPY conversions in the league at Lyn. The Georgetown league is holding special revival services. Bright outlook.

Onward, the good Epworth paper, promises to be better this year than ever.

Active league at Hampton. Sixty members. League rooms nicely carpeted, decorated and furnished.

Conversions in the Galt league every little while. Members are looking after strangers and visiting the sick.

The league at New Westminster, British Columbia, gives special attention to mercy and help work. Splendid practical results reported.

Lively league at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. One hundred persons have been led into inquiry room. They have a "welcome committee" which sends invitations to guests at hotels, visits ships in port, and invites all to the church services. They show strangers to seats in the church, and supply them with hymn-books. They call on sick and absent members, and try to induce non-attendants to come to church. Cottage services are held three times weekly. Poorhouse visited weekly; hospital occasionally. Tracts are distributed—11,000 tract calls and visits being made last year. A night-school for men is conducted weekly. Good report.—*Epworth Herald.*

A FRENCHMAN'S TWO SAVIOURS.

At one of Mr. McAll's meetings in Paris a rough-looking working-man, who had been converted at the mission and is now a devoted and active Christian, told a most pointed story of his own life. "I have had two Saviours," he said; "the first was after the commune. I was taken and accused as a communist, and, without any form of trial, was marched to instant death. In my own eyes I was a dead man. Marching across the Champ de Mars, we met an officer, who touched me and said to the soldiers, 'What are you doing with that man there? I answer for him; he is an honest man; let him go.' They let me go. This man was my saviour. I did not then know that I was in danger of another death, that my sin had condemned me before God. Years after I found it out, and I was in despair. I could see no way to be saved. Then Jesus Christ came along and said: 'This man—I answer for him.' And a second time I was saved.

YOUR RECORD.

BY J. B. GOUGH.

A MAN in Hartford, Connecticut, came home drunk. His little boy, from three and a-half to four years of age, ran to meet his father. Had that father been sober, the boy would have been nestling in his bosom; but he was drunk, and seizing the little fellow by the shoulder, he lifted him right over his head, and dashed him out of the second storey window, through sash, glass, and all; and on the pavement below they picked up the poor boy, with both thighs broken.

Here is one case that I knew; and many of my friends were at the wedding—a gorgeous wedding, a grand wedding. Fifteen hundred dollars was the price paid for the flowers, sent expressly from New York. The house had been enlarged for the dancing. A fast young man and a beautiful young girl were united. It was a gorgeous wedding, very merry and jolly, plenty of wine; but the bridegroom got drunk, and with his clenched fist, two hours after they had been married, he struck his bride in the mouth. "Hush! hush! don't say anything about it, don't let it get abroad. Hush! hush! it is only known to those here. He was drunk and did not know what he was doing; cover it up." So they did. He went on his wedding excursion. Six weeks afterwards he got drunk again, and drew a pistol on the wife that loved him. She felt her life was not safe, and went back to her father's house. He went directly to Toronto, in Canada. He got drunk again, killed a policeman, was tried, convicted, and sentenced to be hanged, in less than ninety days after his wedding. Some friends of mine interceded with the Government, and he is now in Kingston penitentiary for life. Three drunks! Three times intoxicated! Oh, young men, if God has spared you, and you have ever been drunk in your life, down on your knees, and in the gratitude of your souls, declare that you will never again touch that which dethrones reason!

There are those of us who have come out of the fire, those of us who are scarred and bruised, those who will never be what we might have been because of the accursed drink. As year after year rolls on, and brings us nearer and nearer to the end, who would we not give, brethren, could we wipe out our record! Oh, that awful record, young man! You are writing your record now, every day. You begin in the morning with a clean page, perfectly clean, and at night it is smeared and smudged, and blotted, when you hastily turn it over and think it is gone. No! You never can wipe out a word of your record. You never can blot out a stain nor erase one. No, sir! You are making your record.

What a grand thing it is to be a young man, sent out with life all before you, to make of it what you choose, just as you choose—to mould it as you will—to make your life just what you please to make it!

How many of you, young men, are going wrong! And you know you are going wrong. I never knew a man going wrong who was not aware of it. Going wrong! You do not hear them defend it, never—but excuse it. "Oh, it will all come right in the end." What will? "Oh, young men must sow their wild oats." Yes, they must reap, too. "It will be all the same a hundred years hence." What will? Two diverging lines go on widening to all eternity. There is no cross-cut. If you begin wrong, young man, you never can get right till you come back with bleeding feet, and torn flesh, and streaming tears, and broken heart. And many a man has died in the effort to get back. Oh, the beginning!

You are like a switchman, as we call him on the railway. Here come the locomotive and the train of cars freighted with human life, hopes, and happiness; and your hand is on that switch. You can turn that train on to the main track; you can turn it on to the siding; you can turn it down the bank; but, when it has passed by, your control over it is gone for ever. Never will you have another such opportunity; and opportunities are passing you day by day—day by day. By-and-bye some will say, as poor Churchill did on his death-bed, "All gone! every opportunity lost! What a fool I have been!"

Young man, is that to be the end of your life, with all its prospects and all its bright hopes?