

PLEASANT HOURS

PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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[No. 8.]

WHAT JIM FOUND IN HIS POCKET.

It was a great day for Jim Hagen when he went to be boy-of-all-work at the Mitchells', for it was the first time in his life that Jim had ever slept in a clean bed or had three square meals a day or spent twelve hours without getting a cuff from somebody. He was fast growing up into a wicked man, and seemed likely to end his days in the penitentiary, when God gave him a chance to do better.

Mr. Mitchell was crossing Fib's Alley, one day, hunting up some poor people he was trying to help, when he saw Jim fighting a boy bigger than himself to make him give a little child back a nickle he had seized. Mr. Mitchell went into that fight himself, drove off the bully, gave the sobbing child her nickle and another, and then turned his attention to Jim. For several days he inquired all around the neighbourhood about Jim, and everything he heard drew him to the boy. Not that Jim was anybody's good boy; he could not find that he was either honest or truthful, but he was brave and kind, and had a sort of dogged faithfulness to what was given him to do.

"The image of his Maker is not rubbed entirely out of that boy," said Mr. Mitchell to his wife; "let's give him a trial."

But the first thing they did was to give him a bath, which Jim did not like any more than a young rooster would; then he was fitted out in some odd garments of Carter's, and felt himself a dude, in spite of the fact that the three garments had belonged to three different suits, and were somewhat ragged about the knees. He was promised better clothes if he behaved well enough to keep his place. The first time he put his hand down into the pocket of his new-old trousers he felt something round and hard at the bottom. He had never owned a quarter in his life, but he knew the feel of it in a minute, and having learned to be sly, he said nothing to the lady, who was turning him around to see if the clothes were respectable. But the first minute he had to himself he tied that quarter up in an old dirty rag, and swung it by a string around his neck, under the new-fashioned shirt they had put on him.

"When they miss this here piece of money and come axin' me fer it, I won't know nothin' 'tall 'bout it," said Jim to the self he had brought with him from Fib's Alley. "Pockets don't tell no tales."

I have said that Jim was a brave boy; he had stood up against oaths and threats and blows, and cold and fatigue, but there was one force that had never been tried on him, and that he did not know anything about, that was loving-kindness. God and his servants were getting ready for that experiment now.

There were many things in the Mitchell house that surprised and delighted Jim, but the thing he had the most hankering after was a highly ornamented pistol, in one of the young gentlemen's drawers. The pistol ought not to have been there, but some young men don't cut their wisdom teeth very early, and there it was, bright and tempting.

Jim took a look at it every day, and presently began to handle and cock and aim it, and at last it went off in his right hand, shattering one of the fingers of his left. Poor Jim! The finger had to be cut off, and now he had his first taste of anguish.

Mrs. Mitchell sat by his couch, not only during the dreadful operation, not only during the long day of pain and nervousness, but straight through the night, for

fear he might sleep and tear the bandages off from his poor hand.

When the first daylight came in the window, Jim awoke and saw her sweet face, pale with sleepless watching; a big lump seemed to rise in his throat; he fumbled at the neck of his shirt until he managed to tear out the quarter, wrapped in its dirty rag. "If I had a known how good you was to me, I never would a took

THE JUNIOR SOCIALLY.

BY MRS. J. P. BRUSHINGHAM.

Our boys and girls of to-day are to be the men and women of the near future. Many of them are in our Junior Leagues. What we do for them must be done quickly, or while we are deliberating "what" and "how," they will be beyond our reach. Too many people forget that

place for such a child to develop his social nature is upon the street. I knew a mother who always said to her boy, "Now, Jimmie, whenever you want any company just ask me beforehand, and I will allow you to invite your boy friends home with you, and I will prepare the very best dinner I can for you." Children are fond of life's brightness, and if the attractive and cheerful homes of our Methodism had wide-open doors for the children's social enjoyment, the ball-room and the theatre would have little fascination as they grow up. The Junior League recognizes this fact and provides a social department.

Sometimes official boards look wise and say, "We cannot afford to buy carpets for the children to wear out." Dr. Harkness said recently at an Epworth League Convention that he "preferred a yard of boy to five hundred yards of carpet." Make the children feel their worth by allowing them the best of some things.

Jesus used to touch those whom he healed, and we cannot do very much for the children until we understand their social nature. Sometimes inviting them out to tea or to an evening entertainment, or managing to be invited to their homes to tea, will accomplish more than many sermons. To do this requires effort, tact, patience, and much more upon the part of the superintendent, but it will go a long way toward capturing those merry hearts for Christ and his Church.—Epworth Herald.

A CAT CLIMBS A CHURCH STEEPLE.

HOW IT WAS RESCUED.

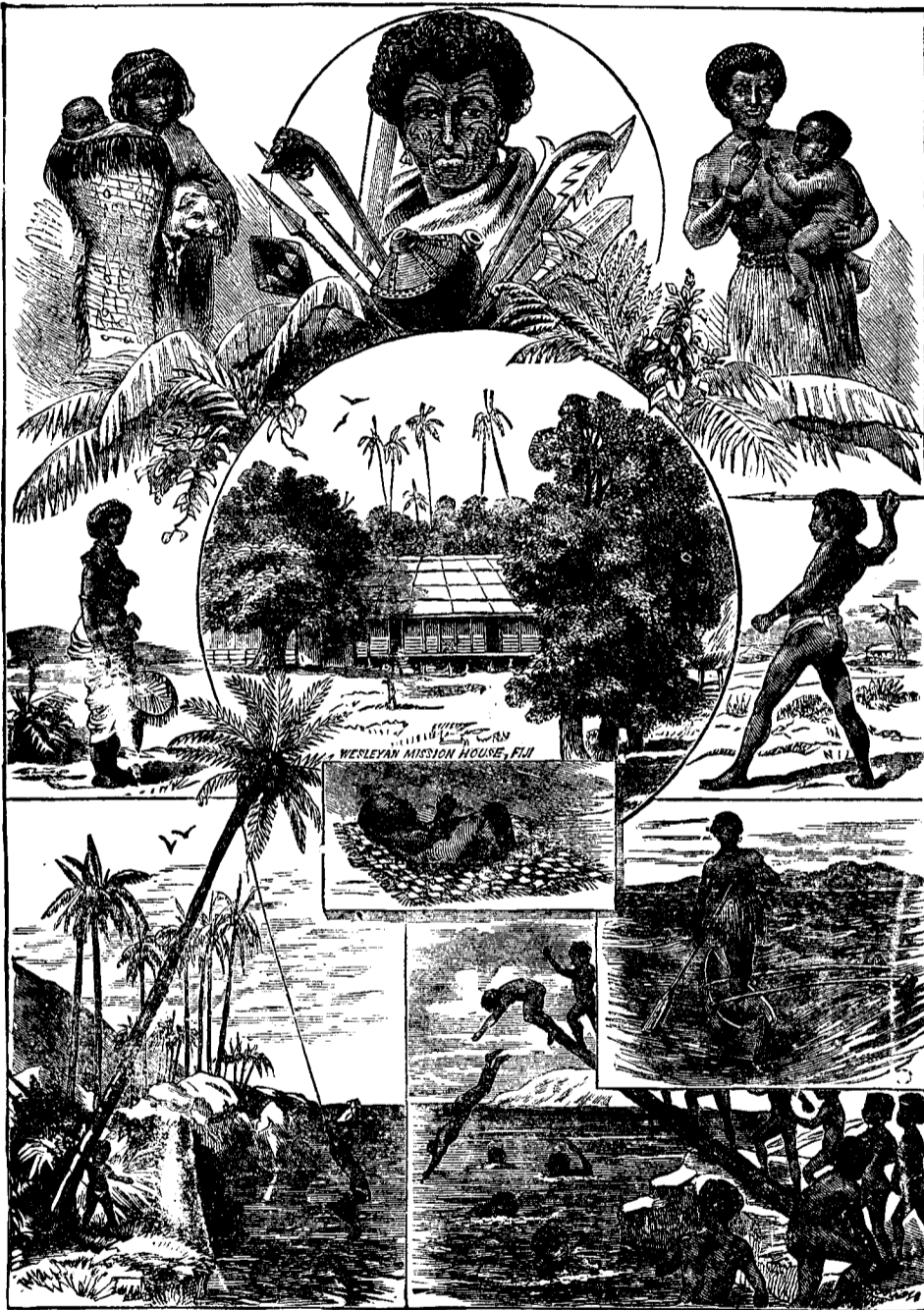
One beautiful summer evening the avenues were thronged with people on their way to church. At a corner several persons were standing, gazing apparently into the air. Others soon joined them, until so large a crowd was gathered that the way was blocked. Soon the windows along the street were thronged, and a number of persons were seen on the tops of the houses in the neighbourhood.

And what do you think they saw? Clinging for dear life to a jutting ornament, near the top of the tall church steeple that pointed straight up into the soft evening air, was a black cat. "How did it get there?" was the first question everyone asked, and "How will it get down?" was the next.

The poor thing was looking down, and at frequent intervals it uttered a pitiful cry, as if calling to the crowd below for help. Once it slipped and fell a short distance down the sloping side of the steeple, and an exclamation of pity came from the crowd, now intensely interested in its fate. Luckily the cat's paws caught on another projection, and for the moment it was safe.

Some looker-on suggested that it be shot in order to save it from the more dreadful death that seemed to await it; but no one was willing to fire the shot. Ere long a little window above the place where the cat was clinging was seen to open. Two boys had determined to save it; they had mounted the stairs to where the bell hung, and then by a ladder reached the window. The boys were seen to be lowering a basket down the side of the steeple.

Pussy watched it intently as it slowly came nearer and nearer. When it was within reach, she carefully put out one paw, and took hold of the side of the basket, then as carefully repeated the action with the other paw, then with a violent effort flung herself over the side into the bottom of the basket. She was safely drawn to the window, amid loud cheers from the spectators below.—St. Nicholas.



SCENES IN FIJI ISLANDS.

it," he said, putting it into the lady's hand and bursting into tears.

Mrs. Mitchell's tears fell, too. "My boy," she said, "if I tell you of One who loves you far better than I do, and who has done unspeakably more for you than I ever could, will you not feel that way about him too—that you never will grieve him because he is so good?" And then she spoke to Jim of the Saviour who had died for him and of the love that was now seeking him. And so by this loving-kindness of hers Jim learned to know the "Love divine, all love excelling."—E. P. A., in Morning Star.

"I fear you don't quite apprehend me," as the gaol-bird said to his pursuers.

they were ever children, and are indifferent to their happiness. Don't think an artificial and forced soberness will be agreeable to children—you might as well laugh at their nonsense now and then.

A boy once said to a Junior superintendent, who had recently been appointed, "I hope you'll be a little jolly. We always felt as though there was a coffin in the room when Miss S—— taught us, she was so awfully solemn." I believe that many who grow to be men and women hardened in sin, might have been gathered as lambs into the fold of the Good Shepherd but for parents and teachers and leaders forever saying, "Don't" do this, and "Don't" do that, and "Sit still and be good children," or "Keep out of the parlour," and "Keep off the polished kitchen floor." The only