

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVII.]

TORONTO, APRIL 10, 1897.

No. 15.

The Song of Easter Day

BY MARY ELIZABETH BLAKE.

Fair is April sunshine; strong the March
wind's breath,
Calling all the little leaves from frozen
sleep of death;
Precious is the fragrance that scents the
locks of May;
But what is all their beauty to the
blessed Easter Day?

Still art thou the fairest. When thy feet
pass by,
Through God's silent acres, all the seeds
that lie
Waiting for his harvest, p'anted still and
deep,
Thrill beneath thy footsteps, waken from
their sleep,

Rise to joy and glory, rise to hope and
love;
Rise to bloom and burgeon in fairer
fields above;
Rise to lift and strengthen, with healing
touch and kind,
The hearts that else were broken, the
eyes that else were blind!

this day the Bible remains the only book which he reads without indifference. His early experiences of life were harsh but salutary. Poverty pinched the household closely, and all through, like a jarring string in an instrument, there went the fear and horror of the head of the house, who was addicted to drink. Through it all, too, went the harmonious faith of the mother, her Puritan ideal of the personal "walk with God," and the constant voluntary exercises of prayer and "expounding of the Word."

Meanwhile, this child in a dingy little Walworth shop was inspired, as spontaneously as if he had been the primitive first artist, with a craving for plastic expression of his ideas. His first attempts were made when he was a very little boy, and consisted of objects drawn upon transparent slates. A little later he began to colour engravings. At last he took to cutting butter-stamps out of wood, and even to carving timid little wooden figures. All this time he was completely ignorant of even the simple processes which are taught to children, and his father used to severely reprimand him for "wasting his time."

At a very early age he had begun to

mean, Mr. Sparkes took the youth by the arm, and said, "Come in and see what we're doing!" To discover that his native talent was extraordinary was the matter of a single evening, and Tinworth at once took his place as one of the most interesting students in the Lambeth Schools.

Here he worked away for many years, slowly acquiring the principles of the art of modelling, reaching the school at the end of a fatiguing day, and so much brightening up under the excitement of study, as hardly to be persuaded to go home when the class was over. The home-life was now growing harsher than ever, and the father resisted with all his might these attempts of the son to educate his hand and eye.

If the mother had not shielded him, and if the father's habits had not made it easy to evade detection, Tinworth could hardly have supported existence. In one of his humorous bits of realism, he has shown us himself as a boy of fifteen, furtively carving a head with a hammer and chisel in the little wheelwright's shop, with a boy on the watch at the door, ready to give him the signal when his father should be seen turning

washing his hands and attempting thereby to rid his soul of the guilt of that judicial murder, which "not all the rain in the sweet heavens, no, nor in the mighty deep," can wash away. To his left appears the coarse and brutal robber, Barabbas, receiving the congratulations of the rude soldiers, and to the right the meek Christ endures their gibes and scoffs. Mr. Ruskin speaks of this as follows:

"After all the labours of past art on the life of Christ, here is an English workman, fastening with more decision than I recollect in any of them, on the gist of the sin of the Jews and their rulers in the choice of Barabbas, and making the physical fact of contrast between the man released and the man condemned, clearly visible. We must receive it, I suppose, as a flash of really prophetic intelligence on the question of universal suffrage."

THE LORD IS RISEN INDEED.

This is the glad salutation with which we welcome the glorious Easter Day. What blessed truths are wrapped up in this the Church's watchword, which is



THE RELEASE OF BARABBAS.

O come thou in the dark time, or come
thou in the bright,
Thou art the chiefest treasure of all the
year's delight;
Of all its best and rarest the one divinest
thing,
Thou fadeless lily shining! thou crown
and soul of spring.
—Youth's Companion.

GEORGE TINWORTH AND HIS WORK.

George Tinworth was born on the 5th of November, 1843, in South London. He was the child of parents from whom, at first sight, nothing in the way of artistic proclivity could be expected. His father was a master wheelwright in a very small way of business. Mrs. Tinworth was a member of one of the smaller Nonconformist bodies, among which the study of the Bible is considered not only a duty but a delight. Tinworth grew up, therefore, in a Biblical atmosphere; the Scriptures were read to him and by him, from cover to cover, over and over, until they sank into his blood, and became part of his very nature.

For the religious lines upon which his talent has developed, his mother must be considered wholly responsible. To

work at his father's trade, and to help him in the shop. In 1861, he first heard that there was such a thing in Lambeth as a school of fine art. He persuaded a comrade of his to go with him to see what it was like. Peeping in, they saw such a blaze of light, and such a number of respectably-dressed persons, that their courage failed them and they fled. However, the scene presented itself to the young man's memory again and again, and he could not keep away. The comrades arrived a second night, and this time Tinworth climbed on the shoulders of his friend, and took a long look through the window. It happened to be a modelling class, and the room was not nearly full. The young fellows began to think that they might venture in, and yet they hardly dared to do so. Tinworth was putting his ear to the door, when his comrade suddenly gave him a push and precipitated him into the presence of Mr. Sparkes, who happened to be going out.

The boy was far too much frightened to say anything; but he held up a little head of Handel, in the round, copied from a small model, and knocked out of a lump of sandstone by means of a hammer and chisel. After glancing at it, and securing a reputation for boundless sagacity by knowing for whom it was

the corner after his mid-day visit to the public-house.

Meanwhile, the young sculptor was learning all that he could at the evening classes. He gained prize after prize in the schools. He and another young man, who has attained distinction since, Mr. Martin, the potter, could with difficulty be prevailed upon to leave at nights when the visits of the inspector were imminent, and would sit up working all night through. In 1864, Tinworth was admitted to the School of the Royal Academy, and his career as a student was sound and rapid.

In 1870, the art pottery, as it is now understood, began to be a staple at Lambeth, and from that time forward Mr. Tinworth's hands were always full of congenial work, and he found by degrees the work which he was really fitted to produce. In 1874 he exhibited three large terracotta panels at the Royal Academy, the "Gethsemane," the "Foot of the Cross," and the "Descent from the Cross."

THE RELEASE OF BARABBAS.

George Tinworth's "The Release of Barabbas" is a kind of triple picture. The architectural accessories are much more fully worked out than is usual with Mr. Tinworth. In the centre is Pilate

repeated all along the ages by the believing sons of men. He, the Lord of life, died once for us. He has thus transformed death. It is no longer, what before it seemed to be, the end of all life, the dark hopeless gulf into which our hopes, our labours, our loves descend, never more to return. Death is proved to be but an experience of life, a way from life to life.

He died once. He liveth ever. He is the living Christ. Do we really believe this? Has this truth taken possession of our hearts, dispelled our fears, inspired our work? What room is there for unbelief and despondency? Can he ever fail us? Is he not more than sufficient for our utmost need? Do we live in him? Oh, that we were lifted out of the cold, dead formalism in which we have been held; and that we felt the quickening power of the life of the living one. May he grant us all this Easter blessing. May we awake to a new hope and a new life, a life of unselfish devotion, a life of holiness and goodness, a life to which death will only come to usher into its glad fruition and completeness.

It is better to give a little more taffy during life than so much epitaphy after death.