

Are You Happy?

(‘Light in the Home.’)

‘I do pity poor James; how wretched he must be!’ said my young friend Harry, who was staying with me, when he heard about the sufferings of a boy I had been visiting.

‘Wretched, do you think, Harry? You must go with me to-morrow and see for yourself,’ I said.

Harry had been brought up in a large town, and had a beautiful home and everything to make him happy, but he did not seem satisfied, he was ever craving for some new pleasure.

On the next day, as we walked along to the little cottage, Harry said, ‘Do you know I am sure I couldn’t be happy if I had to live in a poor home without enough to eat and wear, and was obliged to work hard or to bear pain.’

‘But, Harry,’ I said, ‘happiness does not depend on outside things—you may be rich, yet miserable, and poor, though very happy. God alone can give true happiness, and nothing can take it away.’

We reached the pretty little garden with its blooming geraniums and sweet lavender, and I thought, as I passed through its fragrance, it seemed sad a life should be in pain there, and unable to enjoy the summer beauty.

‘Please, ma’am, come in,’ said Mrs. Russel; ‘my boy is so bad, and he keeps talking about you!’

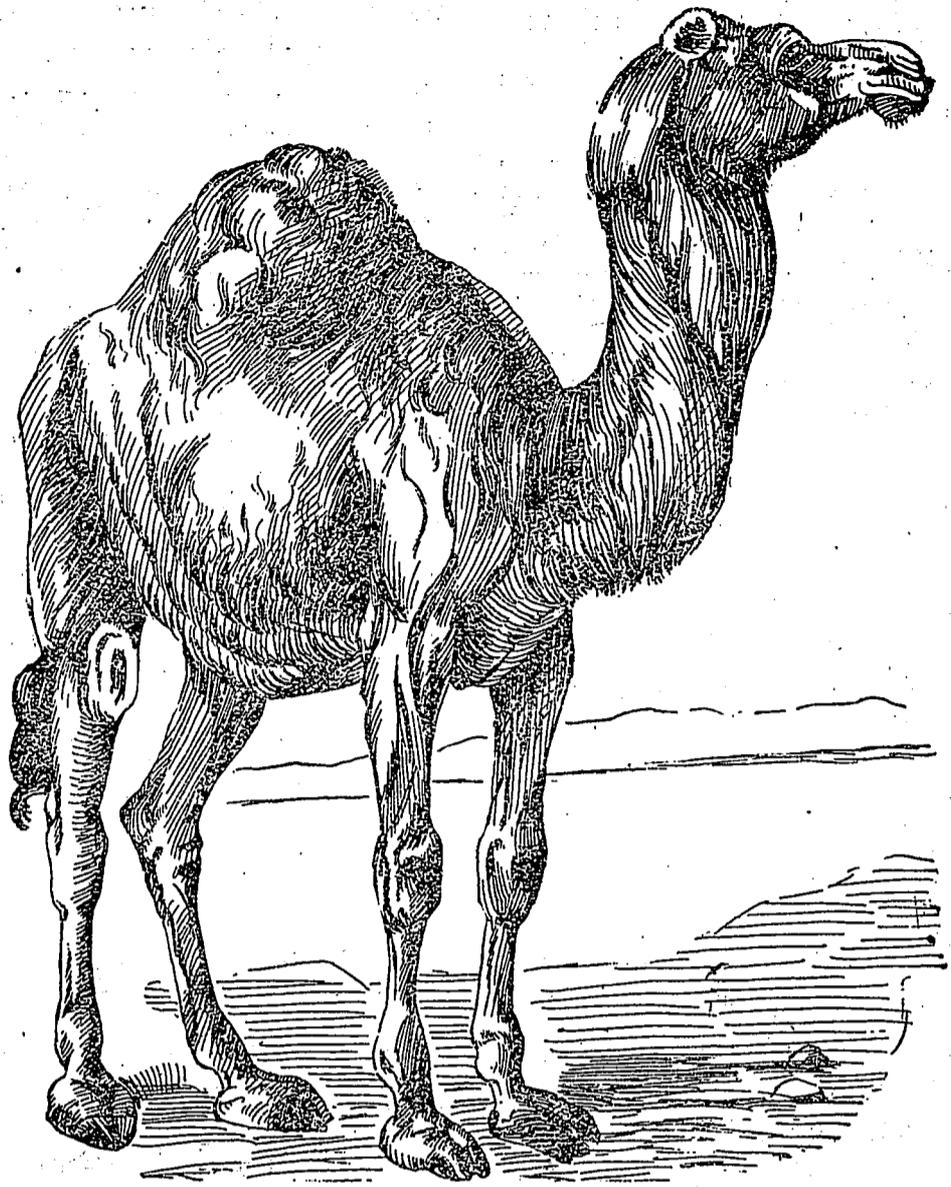
We went into the clean room where poor James lay; he had been ill for nearly two years. Harry sat near, evidently interested in the contented-looking boy.

‘Well, James,’ I said, taking the thin white hand, ‘do you feel very dull at being shut in here and in such pain, while the sun shines so brightly, and flowers are so lovely outside?’

It seemed as though a sudden flash of sunlight had streamed through the window on to James’s face, so beaming was his countenance as he quickly looked up and answered, ‘Dull, ma’am! How can I be dull while I have got such joyful feelings in my heart?’

‘Then you don’t fret about your suffering lot?’

‘Fret, ma’am! Why should I be fretting when I’ve far more reason



THE CAMEL.

The camel is not very pretty, but it is very useful. It can carry men and heavy loads across sandy deserts where no horse could live.

The camel’s foot is soft, and spreads out on the sand as it

walks, but a horse’s hard hoof would sink in.

We cannot all be pretty, but we can all do what we can to help our parents and friends.—‘Our Little Dots.’

to be singing? True, my poor back is in dreadful pain often enough, and weary nights I have of it, and I know I must tire mother out, watching and waiting on me, but when I remember Jesus knows all about it, and think of His love to poor me, I know He is letting me bear this pain to make me fit to wear a crown in that beautiful heaven soon, and if the pain helps to make me ready for that, how can I fret against it?’

‘No, James, indeed you cannot but rejoice.’

Harry listened eagerly to all that was said, and was very quiet on the way home.

‘I never could have thought a boy of fifteen years could be happy in such a home, and suffering like that,’ he said.

‘Ah, Harry,’ I answered, ‘he has

learned what the joy of being a Christian means; he early gave his heart to Jesus, and the Saviour helps him bear his pain, and whispers to him of heaven and joys to come.’

The visit impressed Harry; he thought much about it, and after he left me and went back to his own home he used to think of that happy boy, and wondered how it was that he, with all his amusements and books, was not as contented as James.

Some months later Harry’s father brought him again to see me, and one day he went off for a walk alone, and wandered round by James’s cottage, and on a seat under a shady tree he saw the poor boy sitting in the garden, for he had suffered much of late, and the doctor ordered him to be carried in-