

A Roman Boy's Bravery.

BY MARGARET J. PRESTON.

"NAY, listen," the eager reporter said; "The ancient spirit is not all dead, though you still declare, as you watch the throng

That passes these modern streets along, There is not a remnant, 'mid great and small, Of the antique Roman among them all.

"Now hear me: 'twas only yesterday, In the early morn, as I took my way Through a yet unshadowed and silent street, In the Vatican shadow, I chanced to meet A bare-footed lad, with a load of straw On his donkey. He stopped,—for he suddenly saw

A package that startled him, thrown before The entrance that led to a massive door In the Vatican wall, with a burning fuse Such as he had seen the soldiers use, That smoked within touch of it.

"Ah!" cried he. "Some more of those villains' treachery." (For Rome, as you know, is racked with fear, Through dread of the Anarchist lurking near.)

"Now what did the boy? A pause would make The walls of the ancient palace shake, As others had done. With one swift bound, Just as the flame was curling round The deadly explosive, with a shout, He sprang on the fuse and stamped it out!

"The deed of the Roman, in Rome's best days (Whose heroes you love so well to praise), Who threw himself into a dark abyss, Was scarcely a braver deed than this!"

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

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POWER OVER EVIL SPIRITS.

BY REV. GEORGE G. PHIPPS, NEWTON, MASS.

And they come to Jesus and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind.—Mark 5. 15.

Did you ever see an insane asylum, boys and girls? It is a home for people that have become insane or crazy. That means that the mind is weak and sick, so that a man thinks and acts as if he did not really know what he was doing.

Now this man whom Jesus healed was much like a crazy man. An evil spirit had come into his mind, and his thoughts and actions all seemed insane. Nobody could safely live with him; and he no longer loved any one, nor cared where he went, even though he had to live off among the tombs, where it was lonesome and frightful. It was something dreadful even to see him. All were afraid of him. But there were no insane asylums in that country, or I think he would have been carried into one, and locked up in a cell by himself, where he could do no harm.

As it was, they had put chains on his hands and feet, so that he could do no mischief. But he had broken them off again—snap went the chains, he was so wild and strong!

But Jesus met him one day. And Jesus did not fear the wild man either. But when he saw him, he said, "Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit." And so the man was cured. He was no longer like a madman, frightful to see; but he grew calm and sat quietly down at Jesus' feet to hear his words, and felt grateful and happy that Christ had had mercy upon him.

Isn't it good to know that Jesus has such power over evil spirits? The bad things in our hearts and lives he can wholly take away.

Sometimes the spirit of cruelty gets into the heart; for instance, Jerry and Sam once met two little girls just turning down into a cross-street. "Take care!" said Jerry—making believe he was alarmed about something—"don't go down there, girls! Don't you know there is a big bulldog down there? He'll bite you."

The girls were very scared, just as cruel Jerry wanted to see them. One little girl said, and her lips quivered, "I want to go home to my mother." "Well you can't—that big dog!" Jerry said. Then he went along, leaving the girls to cry, and saying, "I only wanted a little fun with them."

Such "fun" is only what could please an evil spirit—giving pain and tears to innocent little children. And did you never see a boy or girl get so angry as to stamp and strike, or tear and break things, and act as if almost insane with being "so mad" as you call it? There is a whole troop of such bad spirits that get into the heart—their name is "Legion," as the wild man said. Don't let them come into you to stay, to make a home in your hearts, boys and girls. Ask Christ to use his wonderful power to cast all bad things off your lives.

If Christ will only live in your hearts—and he will if you love him—evil spirits will not stay with you. They cannot stay where Jesus is, any more than darkness can stay where the sun shines in. Christ is like light.

There is a bank in Boston (Dorchester), that is protected from thieves in the night, by keeping the gas-light always burning. Every one passing by the street can see through the large windows whatever is going on in the rooms in the bank. The police outside would know in a minute if anyone walked across the floor, or went up to the safes in the night. So the light helps to keep the bank from robbers, as well as the heavy bolts and iron doors.

Now keep the love of Jesus shining brightly in your hearts all the time, and bad wicked things, such as cruelty and unkindness, lying, disobedience, cheating, and quarrelling, and being ugly and cross, like thieves and wicked spirits, will be quite driven away from your lives and characters.

Jesus has power over evil things. He can say to whatever is wrong and sinful within you, "Come out of the heart, thou bad spirit," and it will obey him.

Then it will be as if you, too, like the man Jesus had healed, sat down in gentleness and love at Jesus' feet.

A FIT EPITAPH.

"THE minister's wife is dead!" The report circulated rapidly through the little village one black autumn morning. No one could tell exactly what was the cause of her death. She was yet young, and had hardly been what we call sick. She was as cheerful as usual on the few preceding days, fulfilling her duties as president of the Home Mission Society, which met at the parsonage every fortnight. To be sure, she had looked tired, but that was nothing uncommon of late.

The parsonage soon swarmed with kind, inquiring and sympathetic friends. But they could get nothing definite from the aged mother. She did not appear to know just what had caused her daughter's death. Nothing unusual had seemed to trouble her, so she said, with suppressed emotion.

The ladies of the church held a meeting the day before the funeral to consult about the service and talk it over. "Whatever shall we do without her in our W.O.T.U. work?" said one. "And who will lead our ladies' prayer-meeting?" said another.

"We were going to elect her president of the Foreign Missionary Society we are about to organize," remarked a third. "She was such a good member of the visiting committee!" commented a fourth. And so it went on.

It seemed she was an active member of everything. There was the Tuesday night "home" prayer-meeting, the regular church prayer-meeting, the sewing society, and the Royal Temperance Legion to look after. Her Sunday-school pupils mourned for her, the children missed her from their weekly meeting, and, last but by no means least, her home missed her sorely. Her husband now had no one to cheer him when he felt despondent. The mother missed her daughter's loving hand and presence. Her little child missed a mother's watchfulness and care and sympathy in her childish joys and sorrows.

After the last sad rites were over, the ladies held another meeting and voted to procure a handsome monument to mark the last resting-place of their beloved friend and leader. When they called at the parsonage to consult about an epitaph that the bereaved would be pleased to have placed on the marble, the mother said: "Let it be simply her name and age, with these words in plain letters: killed by societies."

And the sisters sorrowfully went away. Too late it had dawned upon them that a minister's wife cannot do everything and live to be old.—The Central Advocate.

PLANS FOR JUNIOR LOOKOUT COMMITTEES.

BY FLORA B. BERRY.

It has often been said that the duty of the lookout committee is to furnish eyes for the society, whether it be the Young People's or Junior. And it is certainly necessary that the members of this committee should keep their eyes wide open, that they may see all the opportunities for usefulness which present themselves. But it is also necessary that the Junior lookouts should be taught how to use their eyes to the best advantage; and for this reason they should be under the direction of the superintendent, or some member of the Young People's Society, who will meet with them, help them plan their work, and then leave the responsibility of doing it with the boys and girls themselves.

This committee will plan its work with reference to two classes of children: those who ought to be members of the society, but are not, and those who are members, but are indifferent to their duties. Many of the former class may be found in the Sunday-school, and so it is perhaps a good idea for the lookout committees of the Young People's Society and the Junior Society to have a joint meeting. The list of scholars in the various classes can then be examined, and the members of each committee obtain the names of those who are eligible to membership in their respective societies.

Doubtless some of these boys and girls need only a cordial invitation from the committee to induce them to join the Junior ranks. A personal invitation to a sociable, arranged with this end in view, may be the means of interesting others, and the names of any who are still indifferent may be divided among the members of the society, with the request that they unite with the lookout committee in trying to influence them to attend the meetings and join the society. It will be helpful for the superintendent, or some member of the Junior committee, to supplement this work by calling upon the parents and asking them to encourage their children to become members of the society.

In the work of looking after the indifferent members, care must be taken not to cultivate a habit of criticising and judging others. The children should be made to feel that their duty is not to reprove the unfaithful ones, but rather to help them to be faithful; and that one way to do this is to keep their own eyes free from all notes of neglected duty.

In order that they may know whom to help, the list of members may be divided among the lookout committee, each of whom enters the names assigned in a little book, and marks the attendance of these at each meeting. Just before the roll-call meeting, the members of the committee

may remind those who are likely to forget of the time when that meeting occurs, and ask them to obtain a verse of Scripture to be read in response to their names if they must necessarily be absent.

In addition to these duties the lookout committee may help the social committee in welcoming the new members to the society. A brief note of greeting, signed by the lookout committee and given by them to the new members, is sometimes helpful.

Short letters containing a New Year's greeting may also be prepared by the superintendent or lookout committee, and given to all members of the society at the beginning of the year.

All Junior work, and especially the committee work, is valuable not only because of the immediate results accomplished, but also because it furnishes an opportunity for teaching the children how to do Christian work, and thus training them to become active workers in the church and Young People's Society as they grow older. The lookout committee seems particularly important as a means of training them to do personal work, a kind of service which many older Christians of to-day shrink from doing because they did not form the habit of doing it when they were young.—Golden Rule.

FIREWORKS IN THE OCEAN.

The ocean, too, has its living lanterns, or phosphorescent animals, and among these the jelly-fish and sea-anemone are very numerous. Sometimes they look like pillars of fire, sometimes like stars, and sometimes like fiery serpents flashing out red, green, yellow and lilac rays. Many luminous sea creatures are very small, not larger than a spark, but these gather in such masses that in the Indian Ocean the water often looks like a great sea of molten metal; and a naturalist who bathed among them in the Pacific said that he found himself illuminated for hours afterwards, while the sands on which the insects were stranded at low tide gleamed like grains of gold. The bottom of the ocean is magnificent with star-fish and sea pads, some rich purple and shedding a soft, golden-green light, while others send out silver flashes, and the lamp-fish carries on its head at night a golden light. Another fish seems to be decorated with pearls; and it is evidently the fashion there to be brilliant in some way. Even crabs, in hot climates, seem to set themselves on fire, and when captured and teased they blaze all over with indignation. A species of shark, too, is intensely brilliant at night; and one that was drawn up shone like a splendid lamp for some hours after it was dead. Naturalists have long been at work on this curious subject, and the source of the illuminating power is supposed to be contained in the little sacs or cells in the body of the animal.—Harper's Young People.

US BOYS.

SOMETIMES a thoughtless speech will bring up before us, like a flash, something that we have never realized before. This was the case when a temperance lecturer, speaking on his favorite theme, said:

"Now, boys, when I ask you a question you must not be afraid to speak out and answer me. When you look around and see all those fine houses, farms and cattle, do you ever think who owns them now? Your fathers own them, do they not?"

"Yes, sir," shouted a hundred voices.

"Well, where will your fathers be thirty or forty years from now?"

"Dead," replied the boys.

"That is right. And who will own all this property then?"

"Some of us boys," shouted the urchins.

"Right." Now tell me, did you ever, going along the streets, notice the drunkards lounging around the public-house doors, and waiting for some one to treat?"

"Yes, sir, lots of them."

"Well, where will they be, in thirty or forty years from now?"

"Dead," exclaimed the boys.

"And who will be drunkards then?"

"Some of us boys," was the reply that slipped from a little lad.

Everybody was thunderstruck. Could it be true? Let the boys think of this when next they look upon the idle round a saloon door.