

# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVII.]

TORONTO, MAY 1, 1897.

No. 18.

## If I Knew.

If I know the box where the smiles are kept

No matter how large the key  
Or strong the bolt, I would try so hard  
"I would open, I know, for me.  
Then over the land and the sea, broadcast,  
I'd scatter the smiles to play,  
That the children's faces might hold  
them fast  
For many and many a day.

If I knew a box that was large enough  
To hold all the frowns I meet,  
I would like to gather them, every one,  
From nursery, school, and street.  
Then, folding and holding, I'd pack them  
in,  
And, turning the monster key,  
I'd bid a giant to drop the box  
To the depths of the deep, deep sea.

## THE STORY OF A SUPPER.

I don't believe they have a whole suit between them—nor a whole home either. For that matter, if one cares to go into the family history of three incorrigible little Arabs, Greasy and Jim and Flute by name. But they have hearts tucked away somewhere. I doubted it sometimes myself until this incident happened; then I felt as I used to do when I found a glade up among the hills, and scraped and poked with my penknife until the gray crust crumbled away and a bit of the glistening garnet peeped out. There are jewels and jewels under the crust.

I did not know this story until long after it happened, or perhaps, it might never have been a story, after all, for the good boy did not get rewarded, as good boys always do in story-books, but ate his poor—There! I must begin at the right end of the telling.

There were tickets to be given out at the mission rooms for a supper, and big boys and little boys, poor and hungry, came in anxious crowds to obtain the coveted bit of pasteboard that meant to them, for once, the full satisfaction of a good meal. Greasy and Jim came too. Flute couldn't come, for he worked late that night, and knew nothing about the orange-red ticket that sent such a glow into Greasy's heart as he walked down the frozen street.

"No, sir!" answered Jim, with a grin of satisfaction at his own good fortune. "They're done givin' 'em out to-night, full up, seats taken. Old Flute's out this time."

"I say, Jim!" returned Greasy: "if that's so, you and me played a mean trick. Why didn't you speak for Flute when you got your own?"

"Why didn't you?" retorted Jim, turning an extravagant hand-spring on the flagstone pavement. "We're all right, anyhow. Come on, old boy!"

Greasy tried to forget. All night he hugged the bit of pasteboard tight, and woke once from a troubled dream muttering, "'Tain't yours at all, Flute, it's mine."

He tried to forget the next day when he went to duty down at the glass-works, but somehow Flute's hungry little face came between him and the chips of glass he sorted, and shone out haggard and beseeching from every reflected surface. Once he paused and wiped away a big tear that glistened white and pure on the grimy face.

It was late when he was through that night, and quick and fast his feet flew over the streets to the mission rooms. At a table where the lady who had given out the tickets the night before sat, he stopped.

"Say, missis!" Then he held his breath and gave one tight squeeze to the orange ticket. For a moment before she turned he thought he must run out again, but Flute's face seemed to look up at him once more. "'Tain't no use," he muttered. "Say, missis!"

"No, little boy," the lady said as she turned, misunderstanding his purpose. "I'm sorry, but all the tickets are given out."

All hope went then from Greasy's heart, but the rough little voice went on:

"It ain't that way, missis. This 'ere ticket was a mistake, it was made out in my name, and I"—a bit of a tremble in his tone, but only for a minute—"I allers has a square meal enough. There's another feller oughter have this; he's pretty poor."

Without further questions, Greasy's

## THE BUNDLE WAS ME.

This true incident was related to me by a friend, who was the small boy of the story:

"From my earliest recollections my father was fond of horses, and he usually kept from one to five in his stables. They were well cared for, and in return he expected good service and speed. We had one horse, Fan, who was the pet of the whole family, and was considered so safe that I, a little fellow in kilts, was allowed to play around her head and heels without restraint.

"One day I was playing in the yard as usual while old Fan was being hitched up. When all was ready, father jumped into the waggon, gathered up the reins, and gave the word to go. But the horse moved not a muscle. He then lightly touched her with the whip; old Fan merely pricked up her ears, but would not budge. Just then my father, a little out of patience, gave the horse a sharper stroke. What was his amazement to see Fan lower her head, carefully seize with her teeth a small bundle

how soon they are rated by other people. Every boy in the neighbourhood is known, and opinions formed of him; he who has a character, of whom the matter can say, "I can trust him; he never failed me," will never want employment.

## A GIRL'S TONGUE.

At the time of the terrible accident at the coal-mines near Scranton, Pa., several men were buried for three days, and all efforts to rescue them proved unsuccessful. A spectator wrote:

"The majority of the miners were Germans. They were in a state of intense excitement, caused by sympathy for the wives and children of the buried men and despair at their own balked efforts.

"A great mob of ignorant men and women assembled at the mouth of the mine on the evening of the third day, in a condition of high nervous tension, which fitted them for any mad act. A sullen murmur arose that it was folly to dig farther, that the men were dead, and this was followed by cries of rage at the rich mine owners, who were in no way responsible for the accident.

"A hasty word or gesture might have produced an outbreak of fury. Standing near me was a little German girl, perhaps eleven years old. Her pale face and frightened glances from side to side showed that she fully understood the danger of the moment. Suddenly, with a great effort, she began to sing in a hoarse whisper, which could not be heard. Then she gained courage, and her sweet, childish voice rang out in Luther's grand old hymn, familiar to every German from his cradle

"A mighty fortress is our God."

"There was silence like death. Then one voice joined the girl's, and presently another and another, until from the whole great multitude rose the solemn cry:

"With forcing of arms we nothing can,  
Full soon are we o'erridden,  
But for us fights the godly man,  
Whom God himself hath bidden;  
Ask ye his name?  
Christ Jesus is his name."

"A great quiet seemed to fall upon their hearts. They resumed their work with fresh zeal, and before morning the joyful cry came up from the pit that the men were found—alive.

"Never was a word more in season than that child's hymn."

## ARE YOU KIND TO YOUR MOTHER?

Who guarded you in health, and comforted you when ill? Who hung over your little bed when you were fretful, and put the cooling draught to your parched lips? Who taught you how to pray, and gently helped you learn to read? Who has borne with your faults, and been kind and patient in your childish ways? Who loves you still, and who contrives and works and prays for you every day you live? Is it not your mother—your own mother? Now let me ask you, "Are you kind to your mother?"

The value of a man's shot is not determined by the thing he aimed at, but by the game he bagged.



THE THREE ARABS.

ticket was made out in Flute's name. The lady, satisfied that the "mistake" had been satisfactorily rectified, and with a smile for the boy's honest statement, turned to other work.

Greasy went out to meet Flute down by the old mill.

"By the way, old fellow," said he, "there's your ticket fur the supper. Jim said I couldn't get yer one, but I did."

Flute's eager grasp of the ticket spoke volumes.

"I ain't ter a-goin' myself that day; I'm to take dinner somewheres else."

And Flute never questioned where Greasy's "somewheres else" was, but ate his supper at the mission rooms with satisfied delight.

Greasy took his "somewheres else" down on an old wharf by the river with his feet dangling over the edge, and his supper was just one cold potato and a bit of a half-stale bun.

Let a man define life, and he tells how much he lives.

which was directly in front of her, gently toss it to one side, then start off on a brisk trot. As the bundle proved to be me, it is needless to say that after that old Fan was more petted than ever before.—Our Dumb Animals.

## THERE IS A BOY I CAN TRUST.

We once visited a public school. At recess a little fellow came up and spoke to the teacher. As he turned to go down the platform, the master said: "That boy is a boy I can trust. He never failed me." We followed him with our eyes and looked at him when he took his seat after recess. He had a fine, open, manly face. We thought a great deal about the master's remark. What a character the boy had earned! He had already got what could be worth more to him than a fortune. It would be a passport into the best store in the city, and, what is better, into the confidence and respect of the whole community. We wonder if the boys know