

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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The Way That Jesus Grew.

BY ELEANOR A. HUNTER.

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man."

We marked one summer's morning
Their height upon the wall;
First Grace, then little Alice,
Next Hal, who stood so tall.
"We've all grown," said Hal, proudly,
His brown eyes bright and clear;
"If we keep on, I wonder
How tall we'll be next year."

Said little Alice gently—
Her eyes were soft and blue—
"I hope that we'll be growing
The way that Jesus grew."
It chanced at prayers that morning
This verse was hers to say:
"Jesus increased in wisdom
And stature day by day,

With God and man in favour."
Dear Lord, the lesson teach,
Thy meekness of behaviour,
The wisdom of thy speech;
Now as a child thou livedst,
Unselfish, gentle, true;
Till all earth's little children
Shall grow as Jesus grew.

THE BOY DISCIPLE.

BY

ANNIE FELLOWS JOHNSTON.

CHAPTER III.

Early in the morning after the Sabbath, Joel was in his accustomed place in the market, waiting for his friend Phineas. His uncle had given a gruff assent, when he timidly asked his approval of the plan.

The good Rabbi Amos was much pleased when he heard of the arrangement. "Thou hast been a faithful student," he said, kindly. "Thou knowest already more of the Law than many of thy elders. Now it will do thee good to learn the handicraft of Phineas. Remember, my son, 'the balm was created by God before the wound.' Work, that is as old as Eden, has been given us that we might forget the afflictions of this life that feeth like a shadow. May the God of thy fathers give thee peace!"

With the old man's benediction repeating itself like a solemn refrain in all his thoughts, Joel stood smoothing the pigeon in his arms, until Phineas had made his daily purchases. Then they walked on together in the cool of the morning, to the little white house under the fig-trees. Phineas was surprised at his pupil's progress. To be sure, the weak arms could lift little, the slender hands could attempt no large tasks. But the painstaking care he bestowed on everything he attempted, resulted in beautifully finished work. If there was an extra smooth polish to be put on some wood, or a delicate piece of joining to do, Joel's deft fingers seemed exactly suited to the task.

Before the winter was over, he had made many pretty little articles of furniture for Abigail's use.

"May I have these pieces of fine wood to use as I please?" he asked of Phineas, one day.

"All but that largest strip," he answered. "What are you going to make?"

"Something for Ruth's birthday. She will be three years old in a few weeks, Jesse says, and I want to make something for her to play with."

"What are you going to make her?" inquired Jesse, from under the work-bench. "Let me see too."

"Oh, I didn't know you were anywhere near," answered Joel, with a start of alarm.

"Tell me!" begged Jesse.

"Well, if you will promise to keep her out of the way while I am finishing it, and never say a word about it—"

"I'll promise," said the child, solemnly. He had to clap his hand over his mouth a great many times in the next few weeks, to keep his secret from telling it-

spends money like a lord. No price is too great for him to pay for anything that pleases his fancy. Why don't you take some up there, and offer them for sale?"

"I believe I will," said Joel, after considering the matter. "I'll go just as soon as I can get them made."

Ruth spread many a little feast under the fig-trees; but after the first birthday banquet, Jesse was her only guest. Joel was too busy making more dishes and another little table, to partake of them.

The whole family were interested in his success. The day he went up to the

them had white-kid faces, and were dressed as rich as queens. I wish Ruth had one."

"The little dolls!" exclaimed Phineas. "Have you forgotten that it is written, 'Thou shalt not make any likeness of anything in the heavens above or the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth?' She is happy with what she has, and needs no strange dolls of the heathen to play with."

Joel made no answer; but he thought of the merry group of Roman children seated around the little table he had made, and wished again that Ruth had one of those gorgeously dressed dolls.

Skill and strength were not all he gained by his winter's work; for some of the broad charity that made continual summer in the heart of Phineas crept into his own embittered nature. He grew less suspicious of those around him, and smiles came more easily now to his face than scowls.

But the strong ambition of his life never left him for an instant. To all the rest of the world he might be a friend, to Rehum he could only be the most unforgiving of enemies.

The thought that had given him most pleasure when the wealthy Roman had tossed him his first earnings, was not that his work could bring him money, but that the money could open the way for his revenge.

That thought, like a dark undercurrent, gained depth and force as the days went by. As he saw how much he could do in spite of his lameness, he thought of how much more he might have accomplished, if he had been like other boys. It was a constant spur to his desire for revenge.

One day Phineas laid aside his tools much earlier than usual, and without any explanation to his wondering pupil, went up into the town.

When he returned, he nodded to his wife, who sat in the doorway sunning, and who had looked up inquiringly as he approached.

"Yes it's all arranged," he said to her. Then he turned to Joel to ask, "Did you ever ride on a camel, my boy?"

"No Rabbi," answered the boy, in surprise, wondering what was coming next.

"Well I have a day's journey to make to the hills in Upper Galilee. A camel caravan passes near the place where my business calls me, as it goes to Damascus. I seek to accompany it for protection. I go on foot, but I have made arrangements for you to ride one of the camels."

"Oh, am I really to go, too?" gasped Joel, in delighted astonishment. "Oh, Rabbi Phineas! How did you ever think of asking me?"

"You have not seemed entirely well, of late," was the answer. "I thought the change would do you good. I said nothing about it before, for I had no opportunity to see your uncle until this afternoon; and I did not want to disappoint you, in case he refused his permission."

"And he really says I may go?" demanded the boy, eagerly.

"Yes, the caravan moves in the morning, and we will go with it."

There was little more work done that day. Joel was so full of anticipations of his journey that he scarcely knew what he was doing. Phineas was busy with preparations for the comfort of his little family during his absence, and went into town again.

On his return he seemed strangely excited. Abigail, seeing something was amiss, watched him carefully, but asked no questions. He took a piece of timber that had been laid away for some especial purpose, and began sawing it into small bits.



THE "SHIP OF THE DESERT."

self, and he watched admiringly while Joel carved and polished and cut.

One of the neighbors had come in to talk with Abigail the day he finished it, and as the children were down on the beach, playing in the sand, he took it in the house to show to the women. It was a little table set with toy dishes, that he had carved out of wood—plates and cups and platters, all complete.

The visitor held up her hands with an exclamation of delight. After taking up each little highly polished dish to admire it separately, she said, "I know where you might get a great deal of money for such work. There is a rich Roman living near the garrison, who

great house near the garrison to offer them for sale, they waited anxiously for his return.

"He's sold them! He's sold them!" cried Jesse, hopping from one foot to the other, as he saw Joel coming down the street empty-handed. Joel was hobbling along as fast as he could, his face beaming.

"See how much money!" he cried, as he opened his hand to show a shining coin, stamped with the head of Caesar. "And I have an order for two more. I'll soon have a fortune! The children liked the dishes so much although they had the most beautiful toys I ever saw. They had images they called dolls. Some of