

# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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## A MONKEY BRIDGE.

THERE is a funny story in one of C. H. Holder's books on natural history, in which he describes a little bridge across one of the little streams which empty into the river Amazon. He had fallen asleep in his chair on the vessel's deck, but was awakened by a violent blow on his face. Looking up, he saw in the dim light of early dawn, what appeared like

a gigantic rope suspended from the trees and moving away into the gloom. He continues: "As morning was approaching, I could soon observe their every motion. Their plan was to have three or four of the strongest and stoutest monkeys at the end, just as you have these firm granite pillars here. These fellows grasp the branches of the palm with their feet, tails, and hands, then the two others grasped them in the same way and lowered themselves down, receiving in a similar manner several more, and they in turn others, until finally a rope or swinging column of monkeys hung from the branch.

"Others now attached themselves here and there, until they were perhaps three or four feet deep, and the column thirty feet long. It then hung against the trunk of the tree, but as it became complete, the last monkey, who was held by the others and had his arms free, began to push against the tree, and to move the living rope a little. Another push was followed by others until the column finally began to swing with a long sweep, and it was during one of these movements that I had evidently been struck.

"But the monkeys apparently knew what they were doing, and seemed to rely entirely on the end one, who did all the pushing; and every time they gained a little, the pendulum swinging farther and farther over the water, until finally it went so near a branch on the other side that the leader grasped it, and the bridge was completed.

"That this was eminently satisfactory was evident from the chattering that came all along the line; but there was no undue haste, and as soon as the end monkey had obtained a good hold, two others from the other side crossed over quickly, and placed themselves by him to help secure the hold.

"Then the word was evidently given that the bridge was open, for over rushed a chattering, screaming troop—some on all fours, others standing upright, waving long tails, while the mother carried

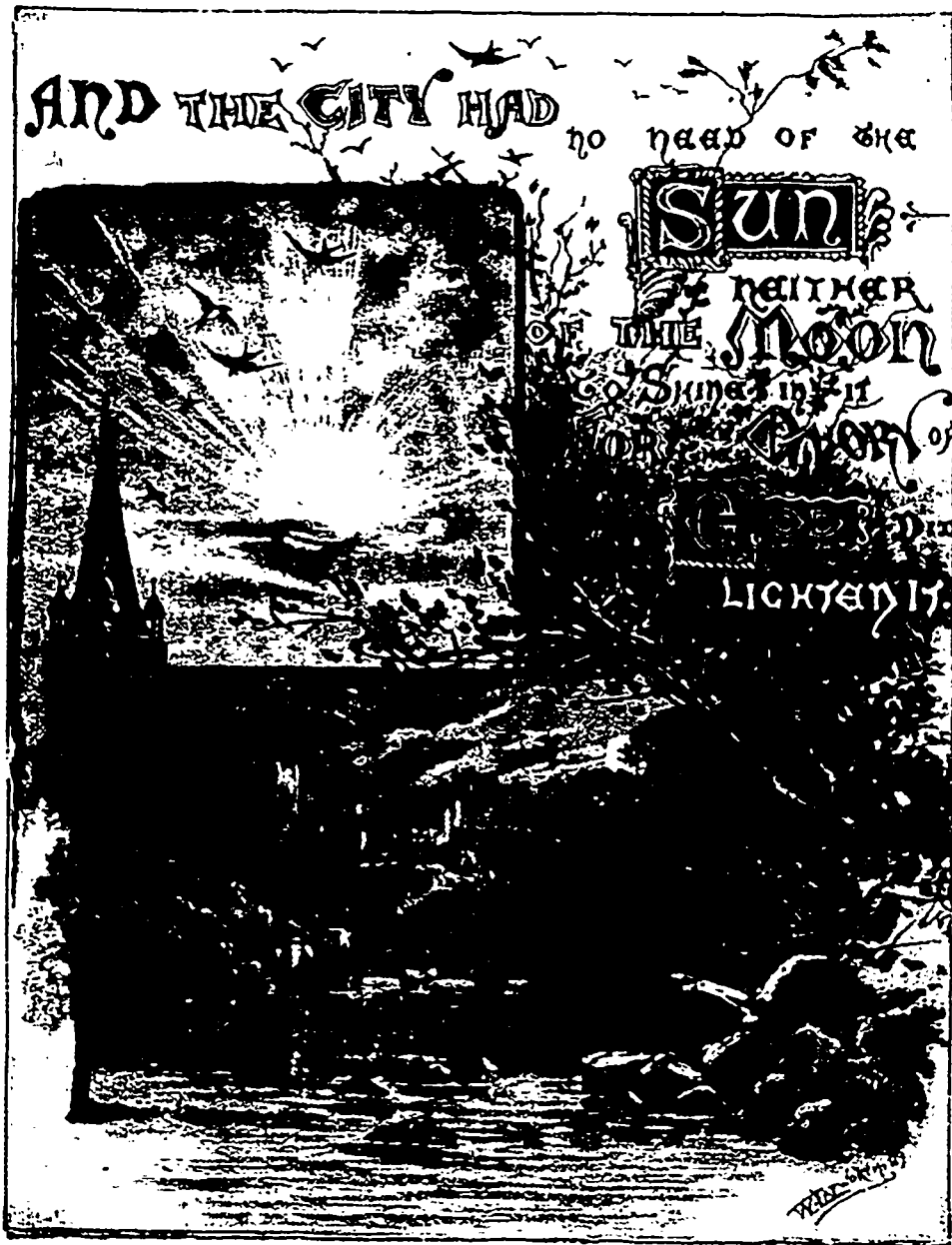
the little ones—all in a hurry now to get over and relieve the bridge.

"A very ancient looking monkey was the last to cross, and he picked his way over in such a deliberate manner that I laughed aloud, whereupon ensued a curious scene. The old fellow nearly lost his balance, for the monkeys at the end released their hold, and the entire bridge swung over. The mo-

## THE BABY ON THE PRISON STEPS.

OVER two hundred years ago, people passing by one of the prisons in England might have seen on any warm, sunny day a woman seated on the stone steps with a baby in her arms. It was a poor, feeble little thing, and those who looked attentively at it used to think that it would never live to grow up to repay the care its mother bestowed upon it.

Her heart was very sad as she sat there rocking her baby in her arms, trying to still its feeble cry, for her husband was shut up within those gloomy walls, and it was but seldom that the keeper of the prison would allow her to see him. But you must not think that he was a wicked man because he was a prisoner, for in those days people were put in prison as often for loving the truth as for committing crimes. The King of England and his Parliament had passed a law that persons must not meet together to worship God in any other place than the churches which they had established, and that no one should preach unless they gave him permission. This baby's father was one of those who had been found at these meetings, and so he was in prison with many others. After months of imprisonment, during which time the baby and his mother were constant in their visits to the prison, the father was released, but he was obliged to leave the country, and for many years was separated from his family. Still the little puny baby lived and grew, though very slowly. Almost as soon as he could speak, he would go to his mother with any money which had been given him, and say, "A book I buy me a book!" His mother taught him from the Bible, and he early learned to love the Saviour. When he was only seven years old he commenced to write verses. His mother had some doubts whether some verses which she found in his handwriting were really his; so to prove that he could write them, he composed an acrostic on his name. I will give you



the last verse, that you may know of whom you have been reading.

.. Wash me in thy blood, O, Christ!  
And grace divine impart;  
Then search and try the corners of my heart,  
That I, in all things, may be fit to do  
Service to thee, and sing thy praises too."

Not very good poetry, you will say, but now you will know his name. It is the same Isaac Watts who has written so many of the hymns you sing.

THE Sabbath school is God's school.