

Service.

Two angels, waiting, stood before the throne,
Summoned for service. "Go," the mandate
said,
"To you far world: find on his dying bed
A child; convey him hither. Overthrown
Through stress of war, a conquered king
makes moan
Gather the wasted people whom he led,
And rule and guide the kingdom in his stead.
Choose ye which service ye shall make your
own."

Then each made haste to answer: "When
God's voice
Utters the least command, or great or small,
Our eager wills can never know a choice,
Enough for us that we may serve at all;
Whether to soothe a child, or rule a state,
Only obedience makes the service great."

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 21, 1895.

LION-HUNTING.

BY REV. SAMUEL GREGORY.

"He went down also and slew a lion in the
midst of a pit in time of snow."—
2 Sam. xliii. 20.

Our Zoological Gardens contain a won-
derful collection of "wild animals." It is
a sort of living picture-book, where, in the
pleasantest way, boys and girls learn a
good deal about creatures that are fast
dying out of the world. The most popular
part of the Gardens is the lion-house, where
half a dozen lions are kept. They are en-
closed in great cages, and have grown so
used to captivity that the great king of the
forest looks quietly at children standing
before his cage, and allows his keeper to
pull his mane and stroke him. There the
lion is rarely a splendid picture, and does
no mischief.

In his native home it is different, and
hunters go out to kill him. As Africa (the
chief home for lions) becomes more and
more inhabited with people, the lions have to
be cleared out as wolves had to be cleared
out of England. Twenty years ago lions
in Algeria destroyed many horses, cattle,
sheep, and goats. Every lion devoured
£240 worth of cattle every year, and as a
lion lives about thirty-five years, each lion
cost £8,000. The people there called him
the tax collector, and said that for every
pound they paid to their government, they
paid fifty pounds to the lion. A country
cannot afford to keep lions, so it is a very
good work to hunt them down and destroy
them.

SAMSON AND DAVID.

Lions were in existence in the Bible
countries, and so lion-stories are to be
found in the Bible. Once when Samson was
beginning to feel his great strength, he was
walking along among some vineyards, and
a young lion roared against him. Samson
had no weapon, but with his naked hands
he seized the lion by the throat, and killed
it as easily as if it were a lamb. So David's

lion was attacked by a lion, and the bold
youth fought the lion, and killed it there
in the field.

BENAIAH AND THE LION.

Here again is a story of one of David's
mighty men, and his attack on a lion was
evidently thought to be one of his boldest
deeds. It was winter, and the land was
white with snow. Benaiah saw some foot-
prints in the snow, and knew they were
the track of a lion. He followed the foot-
prints until they came to the edge of a
pit. Deceived by the smooth surface of
snow, the lion had fallen in the drift, and
sunk into the pit. Benaiah sought no
help, but went down, attacked the lion,
and killed him. We are not told much,
but the people regarded it as one of the
most daring of actions for a solitary man
thus to face a lion.

"THE CHRISTIANS TO THE LIONS!"

We make a proverb about lions, and say
that any one determined to serve God and
do good must be ready to face a lion. Once
it was more than a proverb. Bad
people, who did not understand Christiani-
ty, often put the followers of Jesus
Christ into a pit among lions. St. Paul
says that he had fought with beasts at
Ephesus, and he says that God delivered
him out of the mouth of the lion. His
meaning is not clear, but some think that
(like many other Christians) St. Paul had
been thrown to lions in the theatre, and
that he had been delivered from death. One
of the amusements in great cities of
those days was to watch the struggle of
Christians with wild beasts. This was
especially so in Rome, where one of the
grandest buildings in the world is still
standing. It had a gallery that would seat
thousands of spectators. Lions' dens and
prisons were under the gallery, and there
was a large oval space for conflict. People
who go to Rome now see a cross fixed in
the middle of the ruin as a memorial of
those who died in that cruel way for the
sake of Christ their Saviour. For in those
days, when the town was excited about the
Christians, there rose the cry, not of
"Down with them!" but of "To the
lions! To the lions!"

Lions have been the destroyers of brave
Christians who have made a stand for
Christ, and they have given us proverbial
sayings about persecution. To-day there
are Christian people in Russia who are
suffering terribly for Christ's sake. We
should not have our quiet Sundays if men
like St. Paul and Martin Luther had not
dared everything to spread the teaching of
Jesus.

It is very well to read stories like that
of this Israelite, who followed the lion
through the snow and killed him in that
pit; but there are infinitely grander stories
of brave, good men and women whose bio-
ographies make our hearts leap as we read
them. Their lives help to stir ours, for
we need courage if we are to follow Christ
faithfully. Many people want to be good,
but they dare not.

A TIGER STORY.

Jt. Peter once spoke about temptation
as a lion. "Your adversary, the devil,
goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom
he may devour." I wish we could think
that sin is really terrible. People often think
there is no harm in doing wrong. Once a
tiger escaped from Jamrach's place (a dealer
in lions and tigers in Ratcliffe Highway),
and as the savage creature walked along, a
little boy went up to stroke it. The tiger
stunned the child with a blow of its paw,
and then took the little thing in his teeth,
and carried him along until some men came
with crowbars and other weapons and set
the child free. He was not hurt, but had
a narrow escape. People often stroke the
tiger—play with him. When Simon Peter
compared sin to a lion springing on its
prey, he thought of that night when he
himself was suddenly tempted to tell a lie
and deny Jesus. He was a brave man;
but he was off his guard, and did what he
was sorry for immediately.

AN ADVENTUROUS ARAB.

I have read about people in a Nile boat
with some Arabs. A lion was in the desert
by the river, and one Arab, who was very
bold, and a good shot with a rifle, stopped
on the bank to show what he could do.
He went near to the lion, attracted its at-
tention to make it turn, and then fired a
fatal shot. But the lion made one dying

spring, and struck the man on the shoulder
with his paw such a blow that the arm was
torn clean from the body. The man died
instantly from the shock, and the lion fell
dead close by him.

People are often as foolish in putting
themselves into dangerous company, and
in meddling with what is wrong. Jesus
taught us to say: "Lead us not into tempta-
tion." It is wise to be afraid of doing
wrong. The Bible compares sin to what
is terrible. The Bible calls sin a lion, a
wolf, a serpent, a fire, a flood—it is fear-
ful to do wrong—the most fearful of all
things.

Daniel faced the lion's den rather than
displease God. He was put into that den,
and there God took care of him, and saved
him from the mouth of the lion.

IMAGINARY LIONS.

Many people have more trouble with
imaginary lions than with real ones. Solo-
mon says that people who are lazy often
say: "There is a lion in the streets." About
three years ago a lion got out of a
travelling show in Lancashire, and for a
day or two was roaming the fields. One
evening I asked a little boy whom I know
down there to walk along with me a little
way, and he said he dare not because of
the lion. The lion, he said, was in a
field just behind the cemetery. Of course
the lion was not there at all. When peo-
ple don't want to go anywhere or to do
anything, they soon find out that there is
a lion in the way. This is what Solomon
meant. People with no spirit are checked
by fancies of a lion.

They say that a real lion will often re-
treat if you quietly let it see that you are
not afraid. Lions come out and roar on
dark nights, and on stormy nights. If it
is moonlight they are not very bold, and
in the day-time less bold. Dr. Living-
stone (who was once knocked down and
bitten through the arm by a lion) used to
say that if you meet an African lion, and
look at him steadily, he faces you a second
or two, then he turns and walks quietly on
for a few paces, and then trots away.
There are lions in the path of life that are
only pictures, and others that make way if
you are resolute. In study and work, and
in serving God, the great thing is to be
determined and not to fear difficulty.

"THE LION SERMON."

But if we trust God, we need not fear
even greater difficulties, and troubles, and
errors. In one of the London churches
there is (or there used to be until very
lately) a sermon preached every year called
"The Lion Sermon:" because long ago, a
city merchant, who was travelling in North-
ern Africa or Arabia, suddenly found him-
self face to face with a lion. The traveller
fell on his knees, and asked God to save
his life; and after the lion had walked
round him and looked at him, it went
away. When the good man came back,
he went to the church to give God
thanks for this salvation, and arranged
that every year some one should keep
this incident in mind, and tell people
about the God who watches over our lives,
and saves them that trust in him.

THE COURAGE OF "THE LAMB OF GOD."

That is the real secret of courage. Even
timid people learn to be strong and con-
fident through faith in God. Jesus was so
gentle that he was called "The Lamb of
God." No one was so kind and gentle as
Jesus, yet he knew no fear. Pilate won-
dered that Jesus was not afraid of him,
and asked why, for he said, "Knowest
thou not that I have power to crucify
thee?" But Jesus was the Son of God,
and did not fear Pilate or the cross. If we
follow Jesus, and become God's true chil-
dren, we may have the same happy con-
fidence. The sweetest and most loving of
all Christ's disciples said that "perfect
love casteth out fear." If we love God,
and have good, kind hearts, we need not
fear, for God will guide and save us. "The
wicked flesh when no man pursueth; but
the righteous are bold as a lion."

INDELICATE AND DANGEROUS.

In New York great numbers of cigars
are made in cheap tenement houses. In
one small room the poor cigar maker and
his family live, sleep and work. The leaf

tobacco is spread and moistened on the fil-
thy floor, walked on by the women, chil-
dren, cats and dogs. Then it is made into
cigars. These are finally varnished, given
a popular Spanish brand, and sold at ex-
travagant prices as a first-class luxury.
Those who chew fine-cut occasionally find
in it old dried-up quids which have been
worn out by some careless or covetous
chewer. Some kinds of smoking tobacco
are made wholly or in part of refuse tobac-
co quids and stumps of cigars which have
been gathered by children from sidewalks,
gutters and spittoons. Cigarettes are also
made of this tobacco garbage, tobacco
stems, opium and paper containing a large
percentage of arsenic or other deadly
poison. In San Francisco hundreds of
boys are breaking out in and about the
month with leprosy from smoking cigar-
ettes made by Chinese lepers. Smoking
is most injurious to the young; often its
worst effects do not appear until late in
life. Smoking produces dyspepsia, dis-
eases of the liver, pulmonia, salivary
weakness, inability to procreation, indolence,
paralysis, congestion of the brain,
blindness, cancer of the mouth, tongue
and lips, and early death. Dr. Pidduck
says, "In no instance is the sin of the
father more strikingly visited upon the
children than in the sin of tobacco smok-
ing; the enervation, the hysteria, the in-
sanity, the dwarfish deformities, the con-
sumption, the suffering lives and early
deaths of the children of inveterate
smokers bear ample testimony to the
feebleness and unsoundness of the con-
stitution transmitted by this pernicious
habit.

Smoking is far below beasthood. The
lamb or pig that smoked would be treated
as a nuisance. Could dogs be induced to
imitate their masters, smoke and chew at
home, in the streets, stores, saloons, etc.,
flavouring everything with tobacco filth,
what a shocking exhibition it would be of
cruelty to animals, but if mankind would
only imitate the dogs in their disuse of to-
bacco and intoxicants, to what sublime
height our race would be elevated, what
measureless happiness and prosperity
would follow such a glorious reform. How
holy angels must wonder at the folly of
those fiendish smokestacks who court dis-
ease, while they glory in their shame,
fancying their superior manhood because
they smoke a filthy poison.



JUNIOR LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

September 29, 1895.

BOWING DOWN.—Exodus 20. 4-6.

If we compare some of the images which
have been made in various countries and have
been worshipped as so many deities, with the
prohibition contained in these words, we will
see how the makers of idols have done the
very things which the Jews were commanded
not to do.

God reveals himself as "a jealous God." This
is a strong expression intended to convey the
idea that he will not be content to place him-
self in competition with any being or object
which may be set up as an object of worship.
All these beings, no matter by what high-
sounding names they may be known among
men, are created objects, the work of men's
hands.

God is the High and the Holy One who in-
habiteth eternity. He never was created but
was always in being. From everlasting to
everlasting he is God. He is the first eternal
cause. He holds the winds and the waves in
his fist, and the waters in the hollow of his
hand; he even taketh up the isles as a very
little thing and the nations are but as grass-
hoppers in his sight. He speaks and it is
done. He commands and it standeth fast.

See his power to punish and reward, verse 6.
The meaning of this is that those who do well
sow the seeds of truth in the hearts of their
offspring which bring forth the fruits of love
and righteousness. And those who do evil by
worshipping other gods entail upon others
those principles the development of which are
evil, only evil, and that continually. This is
seen in all heathen nations.