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# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVII.]

TORONTO, DECEMBER 11, 1897.

No. 50.

## Winter Days.

Old Winter comes forth in his robe of white,  
He sends the sweet flowers far out of sight,  
He robs the trees of their green leaves quite,  
And freezes the pond and the river;  
He has spoiled the butterfly's pretty rest,  
And orders the birds not to build their nest,  
And banished the frogs to a four months' rest,  
And makes all the children shiver.

Yet he does some good with his icy thread,  
For he keeps the corn-seeds warm in their bed,  
He dries up the damp which the ruin has spread,  
And renders the air more healthy;  
He taught the boys to slide, and he flung  
Rich Christmas gifts o'er the old and the young,  
And when cries for food from the poor were wrung,  
He opened the purse of the wealthy.

We like the spring with its fresh, fresh air;  
We like the summer with flowers so fair;  
We like the fruits we in autumn share,  
And we like, too, old Winter's greeting;  
His touch is cold, but his heart is warm;  
So, though he brings to us snow and storm,  
We look with a smile on his well-known form,  
And ours is a gladsome meeting.

## BRAVE ENOUGH TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

BY BELLE V. CHEBOLM.

Philip Harding's father was superintendent of the Nelsonville mines, where Vernon Bret's father worked; but the difference in their social positions did not prevent the boys from forming a friendship in depth and constancy akin to that of David and Jonathan.

They belonged to the same classes in school, and, although they might have been called rivals in their studies, they were too loyal to each other to care for undivided honours, and were always best satisfied with their grades when they were exactly alike.

One winter, during a precious revival in the village where they lived, Vernon gave his heart to Jesus, but, though Philip attended the meetings occasionally, he strove against all serious thoughts, and more than once tried to persuade Vernon that religion was intended specially for the old and wretched, and not for the young and strong, who had many happy years before them.

Early in the spring of the same year Mr. Bret was prostrated by a low fever that promised to hold him a prisoner for many long, weary weeks. In the emergency, Vernon left school and begged to be allowed to take his father's place in the mines.

Superintendent Harding was a little dubious about a boy of fourteen being able to handle a pick and perform the work of a man underground; but he took him on trial, and he never had cause to regret the trust imposed in him.

This being shut away from the light of day interfered greatly in the companionship of the boys, but it increased rather than diminished their friendship. To make up in part for the week's separation, Philip was in the habit of spending an hour or two every Saturday afternoon in the mine, listening to Vernon's ex-

periences and giving him the news of the week.

One sunny day, when work in the mine was not pressing, the two boys spent the afternoon in sightseeing; going through the dark corridors, and peeping into secret chambers of whose existence they knew only from hearsay before. They had just finished their tour of inspection, when a low, rumbling sound, like the noise of distant thunder, almost paralyzed them with fear. This was followed by a crash resembling that of the fall of a heavy body, and almost immediately the air in the mine became stifling from the dust that filled it.

encourage Philip to save his strength for what might be a long imprisonment.

"There is no use, no use," moaned Philip. "There is no chance of escape. We can do nothing."

"Yes, we can; we can pray," comforted Vernon. "God is here, just the same as in the sunshine, and he is able to find a way of escape for us. Let us ask him," and kneeling down, he poured out his heart to the good Father with so much faith and earnestness that Philip's sinking heart revived, and he listened hopefully to Vernon's calculations of how long it would take their friends to reach them. Fortunately, the nice lunch that Philip

When their oil failed, leaving them in total darkness, it was Vernon's courage alone that kept Philip from giving up utterly.

"I can see now what need young people have of Christ," Philip said, in this extremity. "It is religion alone that makes them brave in times of danger; and if I live to see my comrades again I will tell them that it makes heroes of boys to follow Christ."

They did live to tell the story of their captivity. Two days later, when, amidst the rejoicing of friends, the two boys, more dead than alive, were drawn up into God's pure air and sunshine, he redeemed his promise by telling how, in his cowardice, he had been upheld and strengthened by the courage of his friend, who was brave enough to be a Christian.—Sunday-school Visitor.

## IN HIS NAME.

There are a few noteworthy action in life that are not heralded in the morning papers, and there are a good many people who do not telephone for the reporters when they do noble deeds. We give an instance.

It was a cold, dark evening, and the city lights only intensified by their sharp contrast the gloom of the storm. It was the time when wealthy shoppers are eating their hot dinners, when the stores are closing, and when the shop-girls plod home, many too poor to ride, tired with the long day's standing and work.

One of the shop-girls we have alluded to was hurrying home through the slush after a hard day's work. She was a delicate girl, poorly dressed, and wholly unable to keep out the winter's cold with a thin fall cloak. One person noticed her as she hurried along. She was evidently very timid and self-absorbed.

A blind man was sitting in an alley by the pavement, silently offering pencils for sale to the heedless crowd. The wind and sleet beat upon him. He had no overcoat. His thin hands clasped with purple fingers the wet, sleet-covered pencils. He looked as if the cold had congealed him.

The girl passed the man, and did the rest of the hurrying crowd. When she had walked half a block away she fumbled in her pocket, and turned and walked back.

For a moment she looked intently at the vendor of pencils, and when she saw that he gave no sign, she quietly dropped a ten-cent piece into his fingers, and walked on.

But she was evidently troubled, for her steps grew slower.

Then she stopped, turned, and walked rapidly back to the dark alley, and the man half rising in it. Bending over him she said softly, "Are you really blind?"

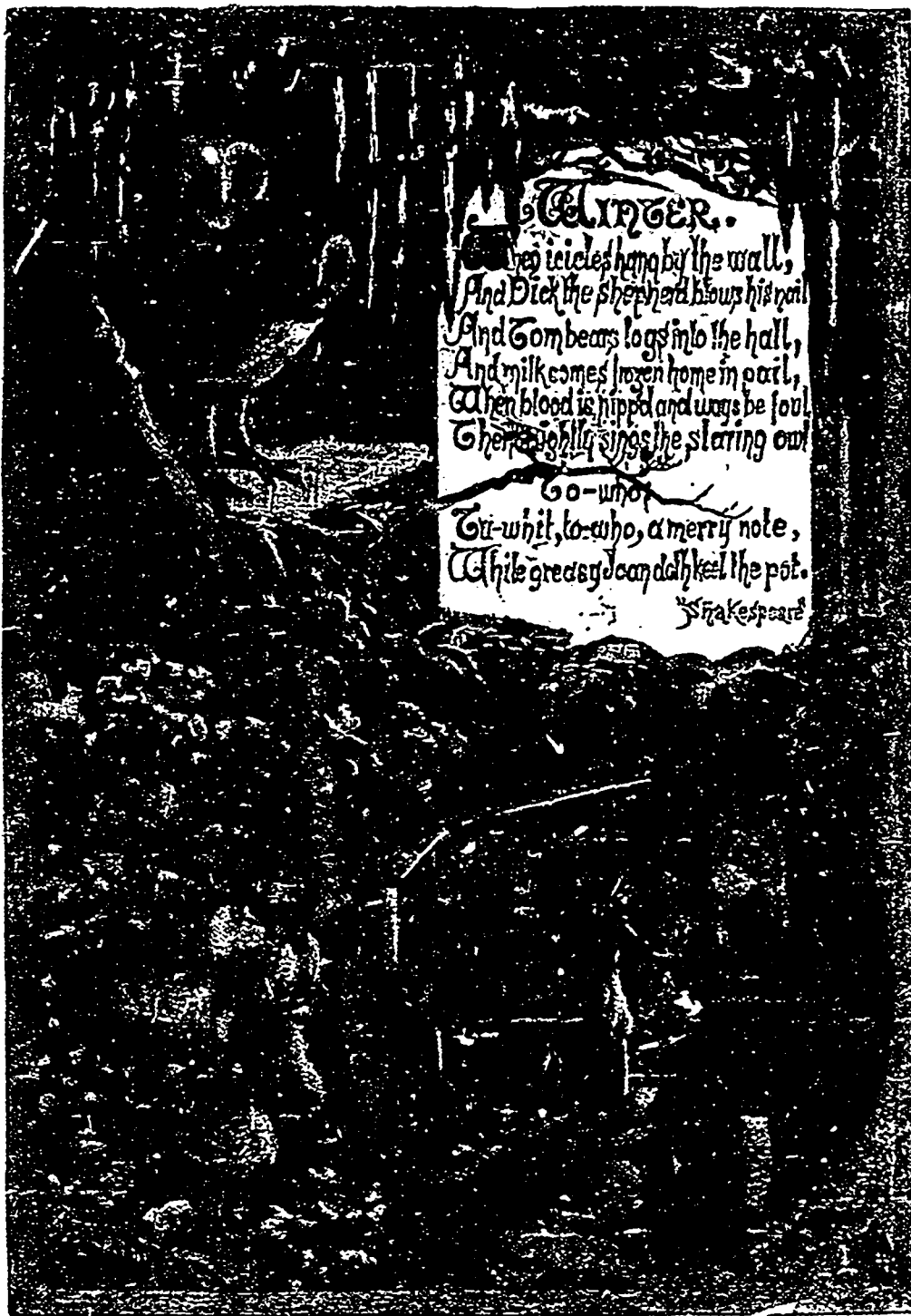
The man lifted his head and showed her his sightless eyes. Then with an indescribable gesture he pointed to his breast. There hung the J. C. badge of the Grand Army of the Republic.

"I beg you pardon, sir," she said humbly. "Please give me back my ten cents."

"Yes, ma'am," he answered. She took out her purse. It was a very thin one. It contained but two silver dollars, one-third of her week's hard earnings—all she had. She put one dollar of it into his hand with the words:

"Take this instead, for the dear Lord's sake, and go home now. You ought not to sit here in this bitter wind and sleet." Then she turned her steps homeward, thinking that no one had seen her.

Thinking no one had seen her? God had seen her, and one man, who to his dying day will never forget the act.—Youth's Companion.



At the time of the catastrophe Philip was standing, leaning on a pick, watching Vernon, who, on his knees by the lantern, was about to knock down some coal he had loosened in the morning. They realized at once that something dreadful had happened, and instinctively rushed toward the mouth of the mine. But before they had gone far they found the way blocked by a huge mass of fallen slate and timbers. They were shut off completely from the outside world—buried alive in the bowels of the earth, with scarcely a ray of hope left for their rescue.

Vernon gained control of himself first, and tried in every way imaginable to

had brought to share with his friend had left the substantial dinner of bread and meat which Vernon's mother had put up for him, untouched. They were too much excited that evening to even think of eating; but the next day, when nature began to assert its claims, they were very grateful for the thin slices of sweet rye bread and tender beef that were found in the dinner-pail. But though they could have devoured the whole at a single meal, they were wise enough to save a portion of it for the morrow; and, as they had access to a spring of clear water, they managed to pass the second day in the mine without suffering from hunger.

**Indian Cradle Song.**

Swing thee low in thy cradle soft,  
Deep in the dusky wood;  
Swing thee low and swing aloft—  
Sleep as a papoose should;  
For safe in your little birchen nest  
Quiet will come, and peace and rest,  
If the little papoose is good.

The coyote howls on the prairie cold,  
And the owlet hoots in the tree;  
And the big moon shines on the little child  
As it slumbers peacefully;  
So swing thee high in thy little nest,  
And swing thee low and take the rest  
That the night wind brings to thee

The father lies on the fragrant ground,  
Dreaming of hunt and flight,  
And the pine leaves rustle with mourn-  
ful sound  
All through the solemn night;  
But the little papoose in his birchen nest  
Is swinging low as he takes his rest,  
Till the sun brings the morning light.  
—Detroit Free Press.

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**Pleasant Hours:**

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, DECEMBER 11, 1897.

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

DECEMBER 19, 1897.

Hark, what mean those holy voices.  
—Methodist Hymn-Book, 143. Luke 2: 14.

MEMORABLE SEASON.

Persons who are abroad in the night season, when the stars are shining, have frequent opportunities to behold beautiful sights, but these shepherds never saw such a sight before as that which they now behold. The glory of the Lord shone around them, far more brilliant than the light of the sun, when shining on a meridian splendour. The light of the sun dazzles the beholder, so that we can hardly understand how the shepherds would be overpowered.

THE HYMN

The poet in this beautiful hymn has caught the spirit of the inspired record, and has beautifully set forth all the incidents thereof in most appropriate language. The hymn is worthy of being committed to memory. Its sentiments will always afford a profitable theme for meditation.

THE ANGELS' WORDS.

Verse 10 The shepherds would be consoled when they heard the sweet words which the angels spoke "Fear not." Do not be afraid. We have joyful tidings to bring to your ears. Suppose you are full of fear, and you hear some cheerful voice speaking, does not all your fear immediately leave you. No doubt it was so here.

THE TIDINGS.

Verse 10. Tidings of great joy. What pleases most. Some are most pleased with tidings of wealth. See how many have gone to Alaska and the Klondike, because they have heard of the wonderful treasures of gold that are there to be secured. And with a view to obtain a portion, they have left their

homes, and will endure the most fearful sufferings, both in travelling and perhaps from the want of suitable food. But the tidings which the angels brought was more precious than gold, which perisheth.

A SAVIOUR.

The Jews were now an enslaved people, and to be told of a Saviour they would suppose that meant an emancipator, who would soon liberate them from bondage. But the Saviour now announced was not for the Jews alone, but for all mankind. Christ came the world to save.

THE ANTHEM.

Verse 14. No sooner were the tidings made known than there was a multitude of the heavenly host who burst into the loud and rapturous song of "Glory to God in the highest," etc. Christ's coming is twofold. It brings glory to God and peace to mankind. Thus unites heaven and earth, and joins angels and men into one grand, holy, happy association.

CONFIRMATION.

Verse 15. After the first display of majestic power and glory the shepherds were left alone, and the conceived the idea of going to Bethlehem to see the wondrous things of which they had now heard, and away they went, and they found exactly those things of which they had heard. There was the child Jesus and Joseph and Mary.

APPLICATION.

We rejoice at this season, but why do we do so? Are we glad that Christmas has come again, but should we not more especially rejoice because of what Christmas is associated with? Is Christ your Saviour?

DREAMS.

There are dreams and dreams. There are dreams that come of laziness, idleness, selfishness and overfeeding; gross nightmares fit for swine; dreams coming of self-indulgence and worldliness, poor grovelling things; a man's mind is not much better for them. There are dreams that are born of a backboneless sentimentality, of sweet mock chivalry, that loves to represent itself in pretty pictures; not much good comes out of them. But there are other dreams that come out of a man's wideawake activity; dreams that are the vapour rising from a fervent spirit, from the cooling of the machinery. They work out the character that God is weaving in that lad or in that young girl. These dreams are prophetic, they have something of heaven in them; they are something higher than the common; from God they come; they are the threads and fibres by which he would lead us on to do great deeds on earth, and at last receive us as faithful and good servants of our Master. I do believe in the dreams of youth, that come in at that window which is open heavenward to every young soul, until the dust and dirt of youth cloud it over; the dreams of romance that stupid old people try to crush and drive out, and that the world puts its heel upon; those dreams of friendship and honour, of truth and purity, to be chosen rather than worldly gain; those dreams of love, generous and tender, that shall make two lives knit together into one of exceptional tenderness and goodness. There is the breath of heaven here; these are the golden glows in the mists of life's morning that come from God, and are the guarantees of a splendid sunset on earth, and beyond, a brighter dawn in heaven.

Would to God that all of us when we are old men and women, may be able to think without shame and remorse about the dreams of our youth; that the woman has been true to her dreams, and has fulfilled the sweet, unselfish ideals of her girlhood, and been a noble, loving wife and mother; that the lad has come through this world at least comparatively unspotted, with a heart fresh and tender, not eaten by selfishness and greed, with a clean conscience, with the benediction in his old age of having made other men happy and good. Oh! the worst enemies of your dying bed that will come to mock you, will be the dreams of your youth, or your boyhood and girlhood, should they be unfulfilled! But if you can only in part realize them in your life they will be angels that will come to comfort you.

TAKE 'EM, JACK.

The following incident occurred on one of our busy streets during the heated term, and is told by The Temple Magazine as an illustration of the fact that princely generosity is not confined to those who give by the millions:  
"It was a fatiguingly hot day, and only those whose business was urgent were found upon the scorching streets.

Presently a little newsboy appeared in sight. He was not alert and bustling as is the ideal newsboy, on the contrary, he moved along as if each step he took was painful to him. Meeting an acquaintance, he stopped to exchange greetings under the friendly shade of an awning.

"What's the matter, Jack? You get along 'bout as fast as a snail."

"So would you, I guess, Tim Ragan, if your feet were full of blisters walking on the hot sidewalk. Every time I put my foot down it's like to set me a-cryin'," the other answered.

"Tim looked down at the bare feet in question and glanced at his own, encased in a pair of shoes that had certainly seen duty, but which still afforded protection from the heat of the dazzling pavements. Quick as a flash he dropped down on a step, and the next moment was holding out his shoes to Jack.

"Here, you can wear them till tomorrow. My feet ain't blistered. Take 'em, Jack, it's all right." And away he went crying, "Three o'clock edition of The Post" at the top of his voice, seemingly unconscious that he had just performed a praiseworthy deed."

"I CAN, I WILL."

A professor of mathematics in one of our largest colleges, whose reputation as a mathematician is very high, began his career under the inspiration of "I can and I will." A writer in an exchange tells the story:

"I knew a boy who was preparing to enter the junior class of the New York University. He was studying trigonometry, and I gave him three examples for his next lesson. The following day he came into my room to demonstrate his problems. Two of them he understood, but the third—a very difficult one—he had not performed. I said to him, 'Shall I help you?'"

"No, sir; I can and will do it if you give me time."

"I said, 'I will give you all the time you wish.'"

"The next day he came into my room to recite another lesson in the same study."

"Well, Simon, have you worked that example?"

"No, sir," he answered; "but I will do it if you will give me a little more time."

"I always like those boys who are determined to do their own work, for they make our best scholars and men, too."

"The third morning you should have seen Simon enter my room. I knew he had it, for his whole face told the story of his success."

"Yes, he had it, notwithstanding it had cost him many hours of hard work. Not only had he solved the problem, but what was of much greater importance, he had begun to develop mathematical power."

A WISE BIRD.

Many years ago, when our navy had a station on the African Coast, the natives were in the habit of bringing off parrots for sale. They were very pretty birds, of a soft gray colour, enlivened by touches of red, and their price was a bit of tobacco, a piece of soap, or half a dozen brass rings—any trifle, in fact. The sailors bought a lot of them and taught them nautical terms.

On morning inspections, while the men were at the guns, the parrots in their cages were on the gun-deck. The captain had a habit of clearing his throat before he gave an order, "Ahem! Starboard, fire!—Port, fire!"

Before he could fairly deliver it, the parrot would call out:

"Ahem! Starboard, fire!—Port, fire!"

And so it went on with other orders; the birds took them up instantly, to the great amusement of the captain, officers and men.

I was one day performing some duty on deck, when one of the parrots lighted on my hand. Intent on my affairs I threw it off more roughly than I was aware, and it fell rather heavily on the deck. The owner picked it up and caressed it, saying, "The master doesn't like parrots, does he?" After that the bird always called me "master" whenever he saw me.

We brought the ship into Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on our return home. Not long after I was walking down Tremont Street, Boston, at an hour when it was filled with people, and heard a cry, "Master! Master!" and turning in the direction of the voice I found myself opposite a bird-shop, in the doorway of which hung an African parrot. I went over and asked the proprietor where he found it. He told me he had bought it about three months before of a sailor just returned from the coast of Africa.

By this I recognized my old acquaintance and stopped some time, going over the "talkee-talkie" it had been familiar with on board ship, and apparently making it very happy.

The bird had known me from the thousands passing the door.

**A PERSONAL TESTIMONY.**

BY REV. GEO. BOND.

I had been told that one could not travel in Egypt or Palestine and drink only water, that it would be necessary to take spirits of some sort, or wine, to qualify water. I drank the water freely, as it was furnished to us at meals, and I never touched one drop of spirits or wine, and I never suffered to the smallest extent from dysentery or any of those ills which it was threatened would overtake one who drank the water unqualified. I had the most perfect health, strength and spirits amid all the fatigue and excitement, amid all the heat and unrest of our journeyings. And, further, we were a large party; some were accustomed to stimulants and, of course, took them with them; some were habitual abstainers, but thought it necessary to use the spirits and wine, according to the notion I have referred to; two or three of us determined not only that we would not use them, but that we would not take any with us even for medicine. Some of those who used them suffered from dysentery; some admitted at the close that they believed they would have been better without them, and those of us who did not use them at all, had perfect health all the way through. My experience is, therefore, this, that a man may make an Eastern tour on total abstinence principles, not only with impunity, but with very great advantage, so far as health is concerned.

DECISION.

In a recent address to young men, Mr. Spurgeon said:

"Let there be no half-heartedness about your religion. Avoid it. Do not be like church mice that come out once a week and nibble a service book, or like rats who come out when nobody is looking, and run in so fast that no one can see so much as their tails. There is nothing in Christianity to be ashamed of. Do not trouble Christ at all if you cannot take up your cross and follow him. There are those who say, 'I don't believe in denominational religion.' Well, I do not want to decide the question for you—you must do that for yourself; but join some church, and whatever branch you join stick to it, work for it with all your heart. You know the story of the little lad who was asked, 'Is your father a Christian?' He said, 'Yes, but he has not been working at it much lately.' Do you know the fate of salt that has lost its flavour? It will not do for the land; no, nor is it even fit for the dunghill. Why, men must cast it out, and what then will God do with it? Decision is demanded of us by our Lord. Does Jesus Christ deserve lukewarm service? Make up your mind. If God be God, serve him, if Saal be God, serve him, but do not sit on the rail all your life, not knowing on which side to alight."

The Rev. Charles Garrett, a Wesleyan minister, tells us this story. "We have lately been doing a blessed work amongst the cabmen of Manchester, many of whom have signed the pledge. I heard the other night that one of them had broken his pledge, and I went to the cab-rooms to look after him. I saw him there, but he tried to avoid me. He was ashamed to face me. I followed him up, and at last he presented himself before me, wearing a most dejected look. I said to him: 'When you are driving your cab, and your horse falls down, what do you do?' 'I jumps off the box and tries to help him up again.' 'That is it, my friend,' I replied. 'I heard you had fallen, and so I got off the box to help you up. Will you get up? There is my hand.' He caught hold of it with a grip like a vice, and said: 'I will, sir! before God, and under his own blue heavens, I promise you that I will not touch a drop of strong drink again; and you will never have to regret the trouble you have taken with me.'"

Did you ever hear of a saloon-keeper who strictly regarded all the laws touching his traffic—such, for example, as those forbidding the sale of liquor to children, to habitual drunkards, on Sundays and election days, and after certain hours at night?



**Six Little Turkeys.**

Six little turkeys, all in a row!  
Now what they were hatched for, they didn't know  
Our grandma did, but she would not tell:  
She watered and fed them every day well.  
But not one of the six heard her say  
She was fattening them for Thanksgiving Day.

Six little turkeys! From morning till night  
They would run away and hide out of sight.  
Grandma's sun-bonnet scarcely at all  
Found time to hang on its peg on the wall;  
For they kept her all summer watching about  
The by-ways and hedges, calling them out.

Six large, fat turkeys, and all in a row  
On Thanksgiving morn! One to go  
To Sam, one to Tom, another to Lu,  
(Dear little grandchildren, loving and true);  
One was to be sent to poor Widow Gray,  
With six helpless children to feed that day.

Out Betty cocked one for lame little Joe—  
His mother is sick and feeble, you know.  
Grandma was so happy, she didn't mind  
Running all summer the turkeys to find;  
She knew when Thanksgiving Day came 'round,  
The very best place for each would be found.

**PLAIN TALKS TO BIG BOYS.**

BY ARCHER BROWN.

Every boy who has any stuff in him wants to succeed. By success he means high position, big salary or income, reputation, influence, power. Seldom is the higher success, that results from lofty character, irrespective of wealth or fame, taken into account. So I will deal with pure worldly success, the kind that men are recklessly struggling for the world over.

If the average boy approaching manhood were to analyze his ambition and define his goal twenty years ahead, it would be the presidency of a bank or great corporation, the head of a rich firm, the foremost place in the chosen profession of law, medicine, or the ministry, a seat in Congress, or perhaps the mayoralty of his town.

And here comes the surprising and encouraging truth that these great prizes of a life are not hard for the well-equipped man to attain. The competitor for them is not severe. Indeed, strange as it may seem, the big place is usually hunting for the man. There is room at the top. The bottom is crowded with those struggling fiercely for the small prizes. The top has ample elbow-room for the few who are up there.

To explain a little. Every corporation or firm that employs men knows how hard it is to find just the right material for responsible positions. It is easy enough to fill the routine places where brains and character are not essential; but commence to look for a man above the ordinary, and the trouble begins. One man available is honest, industrious, faithful, but lacks a trained mind. Another is capable, energetic, hard working, but there is a shadow of doubt about his moral strength under temptation. Another is honest, bright, true, but lacks industry or the power of application. Still another seems to possess every needed thing, but is without health and endurance. And so on through the list. It is next to impossible to find one who combines in himself the necessary qualities for a high and responsible position, unless there is mixed up with them some shortcoming or failure. The well-rounded man, morally, intellectually, physically, is a prize in the business world, and those controlling great interests are grabbing for him. He commands the highest pay while he serves others, and in due time you find him at the head of his own great interests.

Now turn from the top downward. With each descending step in the scale the number of those competing for place increases in geometrical ratio, until at the very bottom you find the greatest crowd of all. The lower the pay, the more menial the work, the greater is the scramble for it. For example, take a great manufacturing corporation. Its president dies or retires. The salary is perhaps \$25,000 a year. The directors begin the search for a successor, and if they find two or three broad, able, and forceful men from whom to make a selection, and who have not already better positions, they will be fortunate. But suppose the vacancy is that of an assistant bookkeeper or bill clerk at \$40 a

month. A hundred men—yes, a thousand, if it is in a great city—can be had in a day's time. And the \$25,000 man is cheaper than the \$40-a-month man. I was told the other day of a Vice-President of a great corporation in New York who had by a timely, sagacious stroke made his company \$600,000 in a single year. It was enough to pay his salary of \$30,000 a year for twenty years in advance. The President of the Pennsylvania Railroad died recently, leaving a \$50,000 position to be filled. There was no scramble for the office. One man was available who had mounted every successive round of the ladder, but he practically had no competitors. I know a man who started as a poor German boy in the night schools of a Western city, working step by step through the mechanical departments of a large manufacturing business, proving himself master in each place, until the management of a great enterprise came to him unsought at \$25,000 a year. I know a railroad president who, coming from a small town in Maine, by sheer force of brains and character reached a commanding position. To one high office was added another, until his combined salaries equal that of the President of the United States.

Let us ask a few questions. Is it natural brilliancy or luck that puts one man so far ahead of his fellows? It is neither. Analyze the character of the men in highest places. You will find they attained their positions by preparation, mental, moral, physical, technical; brains well trained, energy well directed, work well sustained. Study the steps in the character of Gladstone, of Carnegie, of Rockefeller, of Wanamaker, of P. D. Armour, and prove the statement.

Are the qualities of success attainable by a man of ordinary natural abilities? Unquestionably, yes. First the character; then the preparation; then the opportunity. The latter comes to most men sooner or later, but rare is the man who is ready to seize it. Here are a few of the essential qualities which will win against all the powers of so-called ill-luck:

1. Absolute, unswerving integrity. Is that unattainable?
2. Brains, mental grasp. Given a fair mind, what is that but education and discipline?
3. Energy and force of character. This is a question of exercise of will to overcome laziness and love of ease.
4. Capacity for work, executive power, the ability to bring things to pass. This is the product of industry by system or method. It is energy conserved and well directed. It is the art of making every stroke count.
5. Personal manners, engaging address. What is this but the result of close, unselfish adherence to the rules for making a gentleman?

All these qualifications are not easy, it is true, but they are not impossible. It is really your own choosing whether you will be among the richly rewarded few at the top, or the hungry multitude at the bottom.—New York Christian Advocate.

**A REMARKABLE PLANT.**

Among the plants which grow spontaneously on the surface of the moors of Portugal, of Spain, of Sicily, and in all the north of Africa, there is found a long-lived graminæ, the products of which, scarcely known in France, except perhaps in the south, are, on the contrary, greatly appreciated in other countries. In Spain they give it the name of Spanish grass, but it is more frequently designated by that of halfa, from the Arabian term. Not only is the leaf of this plant transformed, by processes comparatively simple, into a paste for paper of superior quality, but it is also employed in a number of uses, either in domestic economy or in navigation. There are made from it corage, nets, artificial horsehair, sacks, mats, or rush matting, objects of the basket trade, and even stuffs and tapestries for rooms. In considering it alone from the point of view of the production of paper, this textile plant can be the source of considerable profit for those who undertake its cultivation.

Rags becoming more and more rare, the use of this paste for paper becomes more extended every day. In a financial statement made not long ago in the House of Commons in England, Gladstone spoke of it as follows: "No one can form any idea of the multiple usages to which this paste lends itself. It is, so to say, under all forms possible. With it anatomists make artificial limbs; other artisans use it to make telescopes; it is employed in making dolls and combs."

At the universal exposition in 1875 there were seen door panels in paper of halfa, and even carriage wheels. Who, then, can place limits to the industry of this plant, when we see the India

rubber, so supple and variable by nature, becomes after several preparations harder than wood? On the high plateaus of Algeria, and in Sicily and Tunis, halfa is being cultivated after fixed methods. Two and a half acres produce a ton of leaves, which are sold for \$22 at the port of embarkment.

L. botany halfa is known by the name of *Lignum spartum*.—Chicago Inter-Ocean.

**AN HEROIC RIDE.**

It has often been shown that girls possess great courage in times of danger, and the story of a little Kentucky girl, as given by the New York Recorder, proves it anew. The heroine's name is Kate Morgan, and she is only thirteen years old. She and an invalid sister live with their father in a farmhouse, ten miles from Augusta.

Late one Saturday night the father accidentally discharged a gun and inflicted a flesh-wound, by which a vein was severed, and the man was in danger of bleeding to death. Neighbours were not near, and the nearest doctor was in Augusta.

The invalid sister was assisted to her father's side, and undertook to stay the flow of blood while Kate went for the doctor. The night was dark, and it rained, a heavy, drenching rain, and the little girl on horseback was wet to the skin. But she kept the beast at a gallop, and rode into town at one o'clock. She hunted up a doctor, and while he prepared to go, she was dressed in dry clothing belonging to a daughter of a physician. Then away they went back into the hills in the storm.

They were just in time. The girl, Susie, could not have held out a half-hour longer. Kate's brave ride saved her father's life.

**"THE PINT OF ALE, JOHN."**

It is a difficult matter to one accustomed to small daily indulgences to realize the expense thus incurred.

A Manchester (England) calico printer was asked on his wedding day by his shrewd wife to allow her two half-pints of ale a day as her share of home comforts. John made the bargain cheerfully, feeling it hardly became him to do otherwise, inasmuch as he drank two or three quarts a day. The wife kept the home tidy, and all went well with them, but as she took the small allowance each week for household expenses, she never forgot the "pint of ale, John."

When the first anniversary of their wedding came, and John looked around on his neat home and comely wife, a longing to do something to celebrate the day took possession of him.

"Mary, we've had no holiday since we were wed, and only that I haven't a penny in the world, we'd take a jaunt to the village and see the mother."

"Would thee like to go, John?" she asked.

There was a tear with her smile, for it touched her heart to hear him speak tenderly, as in the olden times.

"If thee'd like to go, John, I'll stand treat."

"Thou stand treat, Mary! Hast got a fortin left thee?"

"Nay, but I've got the pint of ale," said she.

"Got what, wife?"

"The pint of ale," she replied.

Whereupon she went to the hearth, and from beneath one of the stone flags, drew out a stocking, from which she poured upon the table the sum of three hundred and sixty-five threepences (\$22.81), exclaiming,

"See, John, thee can have the holiday."

"What is this?" he asked in amaze.

"It is my daily pint of ale, John."

He was conscience-stricken as well as amazed and charmed.

"Mary, hasn't thee had thy share? Then I'll have no more from this day."

And he was as good as his word. They had the holiday with the old mother, and Mary's little capital, saved from "the pint of ale," was the seed from which, as the years rolled on, grew shop, factory, warehouse, country seat and carriage with health, happiness, peace and honour.

Charitable Young Lady—"Mrs. Brannigan, I heard that your husband had been out of work for a long time and that you were greatly in need of the necessities of life, so I took the liberty of bringing you this basket of food."

Mrs. Brannigan—"Sure, mum, it's little food we hav, but phwat it is we gits along on. That's not worryin' at us. Th' wakey; installments on our bicycles bees t'ree wakes overdue, an' we do be afeard that the dealer will saze them. That's our throuble, mum!"

**THE FRENCH PEDDLER.**

Not long ago, in the great city of Paris, a lame peddler entered a Protestant Tract and Bible store to buy some almanacs, which he meant to sell again. The agent spoke to him about God, and his Son, Jesus Christ, but the man would not listen. "God does not trouble himself about me any more than men do," he said. "I've got to look out for myself."

The Bible-man then made him a present of a French New Testament, and asked him to read it; and the lame peddler, who lived in a little cart drawn by a dog, went away.

They did not see the peddler in that Bible house again for a long time; but many months afterwards, perhaps a year, he came back in his cart, bringing some silver pieces in his hand, to buy Bibles for those who had none. He had become a Christian from reading the New Testament, and now he wanted other poor, sad people to know his dear Saviour.

Remember when you give a Bible to a person who hasn't one, and especially when you persuade that person to read it, you are throwing a life preserver to a drowning creature. You have good reason to hope that he will lay hold of it and be saved.

**HECTOR'S FAREWELL.**

Hector was a long-tryed and trusted dog, he was an old hound, and the leader of a pack of hounds. His owner, writing of him in *The Animal World*, gives the following affecting account of Hector's death:

The old dog became too infirm for the field, and was left at home when the pack went out. Year by year his feebleness grew upon him, but he was well cared for and passed his time mainly in sleeping beside the fire. His long absence from the hunting-field caused his fine, deep-toned note to be almost forgotten.

"One afternoon," says the owner, "I was writing in my room when suddenly I heard the splendid note—as I thought at the moment—of a strange hound, and listened to hear it again, when, instead of its being repeated, the whole pack, in the kennel near my house, gave one burst as if in full cry, and as the sounds died away, and all was again hushed in stillness, my huntsman rushed into the room, saying in an agitated voice:

"Hector is dead, sir!"  
"That splendid note of what I had thought a strange hound had been the old dog's farewell call to the pack. They had heard and answered."

**THE FORGOTTEN ONE.**

"To think that my brother could forget me," cried Charlotte, tears coursing down her cheeks, "when I loved him so, and longed for our meeting again!"

"It is because you are so changed that he does not remember you; you were so little when you parted," replied her mamma. "You will always be together now, and know and love each other as before."

"But it will always grieve me to think that he forgot me," sobbed Charlotte.

"Did you ever forget a friend?"

"I think not, mamma."

"Who is your best friend?"

"Jesus Christ, the Saviour."

"Did you never forget him?"

"Oh, yes! Often, often."

"And yet he loves you far more than you love your brother. How your forgetfulness must grieve him! Did you ever think of this? Before the throne of glory Christ remembers us. Shall we, then, forget him?"

**The Snow.**

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Out of the bosom of the air,  
Out of the cloud-folds of her garments shaken,  
Over the woodlands brown and bare,  
Over the harvest-fields forsaken,  
Silent and soft and slow  
Descends the snow.

Even as our cloudy fancies take  
Suddenly shape in some divine expression,

Even as the troubled heart doth make  
In the white countenance confession,  
The troubled sky reveals  
The grief it feels.

This is the poem of the air,  
Slowly in silent syllables recorded,  
This is the secret of despair,  
Long in its cloudy bosom hoarded,  
Now whispered and revealed  
To wood and field.

**Accomplishments.**

A girl should learn to make a bed,  
To bake good biscuits, cake, and bread,  
To handle deftly brush and broom,  
And neatly tidy up a room.

A girl should learn to darn and mend,  
To watch the sick, the baby tend,  
To have enough of style and taste  
To trim a hat or fit a waist.

A girl should learn to value time,  
A picture hang, a ladder climb;  
And not to almost raise the house  
At sight of a wee harmless mouse.

A girl should learn to dress with speed,  
And hold tight-lacing 'gainst her creed;  
To buy her shoes to fit her feet—  
To be above all vain deceit.

A girl should learn to keep her word,  
To spread no further gossip heard.  
Home or abroad, to be at ease,  
And try her best to cheer and please.

A girl should learn to sympathize,  
To be reliant, strong, and wise,  
To all the helpless gentle be,  
And always truly womanly.

A girl should learn to fondly hold  
True worth of value more than gold,  
Accomplished thus, with tender mien,  
Keen, crowned with love, home a queen.

**LESSON NOTES.**

**FOURTH QUARTER.**

STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

**LESSON XII.—DECEMBER 19.**

**JOHN'S MESSAGE ABOUT SIN AND SALVATION.**

1 John 1. 5 to 2. 6. Memory verses, 8-10.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins—1 John 1. 9.

**OUTLINE.**

1. Light and Darkness, v. 5, 6.
2. Sin and Forgiveness, v. 7-10, 1, 2.
3. Love and Obedience, v. 3-6.

The First Epistle of John was probably written about 68 A.D., from Ephesus in Asia Minor, by the apostle John, and in all probability contains the last exhortation of that apostle to the Church of Christ.

**HOME READINGS.**

- M. John's message about sin and salvation.—1 John 1. 5 to 2. 6.
11. All have sinned.—Rom. 3. 19-26.
  - W. Consequences of sin.—Isa. 59. 1-9.
  11. Returning unto the Lord.—Hosea 14. 1.
  1. Life by Christ.—Rom. 5. 12-21.
  5. Perfect sacrifice.—Hob. 10. 12-23.
  5. Able to save.—Hob. 7. 19-25.

**QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.**

1. Light and Darkness, v. 5, 6.  
From whom had a message been sent?  
What was the message?  
What does Jesus say of himself in John 8. 12?  
How many men have light? John 12. 36.  
What are believers called in 1 Thess. 5?  
What does their walking in darkness prove?
2. Sin and Forgiveness, v. 7-10, 1, 2.  
What are we exhorted to do in Eph. 5. 8?  
What are the results of walking in the light?  
What is the danger of denying our sinfulness?  
What is secured by confession? Golden Text.  
Whom do we dishonour by denial?  
Who is the sinner's advocate?  
For whose sin is he the propitiation?  
What is shown in this propitiation? 1 John 4. 10.
3. Love and Obedience, v. 3-6.  
How many men have a knowledge of God's love? See John 14. 23.  
What does neglect of his commands prove?  
How is the love of God perfected in us?  
What is the proof of our abiding in Christ? John 15. 5.  
What is the duty of every professed Christian?  
Who is our example of godly walk? Matt. 11. 29.

**PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.**

- Where in this lesson are we shown—
1. Christ as our light?
  2. Christ as our deliverance?
  3. Christ as our example?

**THE WESLEYS.**

BY REV. W. R. HALSTRAD, D.D.

In the time when Methodism had its beginnings, the methods of the Wesleys were as radical to the Church of England people as are the ways of the Salvation Army people to us to-day. Yet their work has gone outside of the denomination which they founded.

By the reflex of the revival they awakened, all religious bodies in England were quickened. Professor Lecky says the Wesleys saved England from a French revolution. But the Wesleys did not start out to do that particular thing. They perhaps never thought of their work as having that sort of broad national outcome.

They did not know themselves to be practical social philosophers. They were unconscious statesmen. They accomplished by indirection what no mortal could have accomplished directly. It is not to their discredit that they did not at first detect and proclaim the secondary consequences of their work. That would have made them prophetic statesmen instead of simple Gospel preachers.

The change would have been of doubtful additional honour. These plain and hard-worked preachers of Jesus and his love to sinful men were greater forces toward completing the reformation in England, and they had more to do with the real constructive life of the nation, than those who have since come to fame on the crested waves of the nation's concurrent social movements. The time will come when John Wesley will stand ahead of Gladstone in English history.

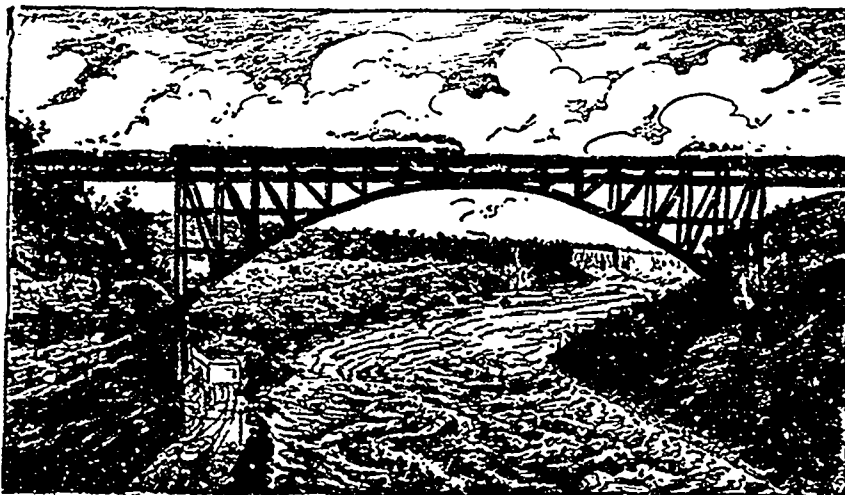
To work away on the foundations is to work below the surface. Down there it

most of the hours on the roof of his house, studying the stars. He secured, second-hand, the tube of a large spy-glass, into which he fitted an eye-piece, and sent to Philadelphia for an object glass. By-and-bye he obtained a five-inch glass, which, as you know, is an instrument of considerable size.

Meanwhile he worked faithfully in the shop of the photographer, but his nights brought him rare delight; for he never wearied of tracing out the wonders and marvels of the worlds around us. With the aid of his large spy-glass he discovered two comets before they were seen by any of the professional astronomers, whose superior instruments were continually roaming the heavens in search of the celestial wanderers. This exploit, you may well suppose, made the boy famous. He was invited by the professors in Vanderbilt University to go there and see what he could do with their six-inch telescope. In the course of the following four years he discovered six comets.

He was next engaged by the Lick Observatory in California. With the aid of that magnificent thirty-six-inch refracting telescope, the largest ever made, he discovered eight comets, and last summer astonished the world by discovering the fifth satellite of Jupiter. He invented a new method of photographing the nebulae in the milky way, and has shown an originally approaching genius in his work in star photography.

Perhaps you have already guessed the name of this famous astronomer, which is President E. E. Barnard, of the Lick Observatory, and this is the story of how he worked up.—Chicago Record.



THE NEW NIAGARA BRIDGE.

is often cold and dark and damp. The workmen come out each day begrimed and muddy. They do not make any show like the man with the weathercock for the steeple. But down there, common honesty brings a higher price than at any other place on the building.

These men were concerned with the saving of souls. Like Paul, they had no time to tinker with and modify secondary forms. They were not reformers—they were regenerators. They worked away on the bottom things with all their might, and lived to see the nation transformed. They were wiser than all their critics, for they had the true philosophy of live and history. Away with the man who comes with a cocksure scheme to declare that the plain Gospel does not count. If the world to-day ever gets away from what these men preached and sang it will go mad.

**A BOY WHO WORKED UP.**

One day many years ago a bright boy found employment in a photograph gallery in Nashville, Tenn. His wages were small, but he took good care of them, and in course of time he had saved up a snug little sum of money. One day a friend, less thrifty than he, came to him with a long face and asked for a loan of money, offering a book for security. Although the other knew there was little probability of his ever being repaid, he could not refuse the request.

Here is the money, keep your book, and repay me when you can." The grateful lad went away in such haste that he left the book behind. The kind youth with curiosity examined the volume. It was a work on astronomy, by Dick, and it so fascinated him that he sat up all night studying it. He had never seen anything which so filled him with delight. He determined to learn all that he could about the wonders of the heavens. He began thenceforth to read everything he could obtain relating to astronomy.

The next step was to buy a small spy-glass, and night after night he spent

**THE NEW NIAGARA BRIDGE.**

The old Railway Suspension Bridge across Niagara River below the Falls has been replaced by a beautiful single steel arch, as shown in the above illustration. The new structure is said to be the largest single arch steel railway bridge in the world. The old bridge was completed in 1855, and has passed into history as a remarkable engineering work. It has now disappeared, and exactly upon the same spot stands the new structure. This work was done without the interruption of traffic, and must be regarded as a remarkable achievement of engineering skill. The new bridge, erected for the Grand Trunk Railway, is a single steel arch of 550 feet in length, supplemented by a trussed span, at either end, of 115 feet in length. This, with the approaches, makes the total length of the bridge slightly over 1,100 feet. The railway tracks surmounting the bridge are 252 feet above the water. The bridge has two decks or floors. On the upper floor there are two tracks for railway purposes exclusively, while the lower floor contains a wide central carriage-way, double electric railway tracks, and on either side passages for pedestrians. The new bridge is calculated to sustain a weight of something over six times the sustaining capacity of the historic Suspension Bridge which it replaces.

While regretting the disappearance of so historic a landmark as the famous Suspension Bridge, one may rejoice that the Grand Trunk Railway system, yielding to the demands of a large and ever-increasing international traffic, has replaced it with so substantial, and at the same time, so beautiful a structure, and one well worthy its situation, in sight and sound of the most wonderful of God's creations—Niagara Falls.

N. Peck—"The doctor says that my trouble is only rheumatism in the lumbar region."

Mrs. N. Peck—"In the lumber region? Does he mean to say there is something the matter with your head?"

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