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# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVI.]

TORONTO, AUGUST 15, 1896.

[No. 3.]

No! Never.

Take a drink? No, not I!  
Reason taught me better  
Than to bind my very soul  
With a galling fetter.  
Water, sweet and cool and free,  
Has no cruel chains for me.

Take a drink? No, not I!  
I have seen too many  
Taking drinks like that of yours,  
Stripped of every penny.  
Water, sweet and cool and clear,  
Costs me nothing all the year.

Take a drink? No, never!  
By God's blessing, never  
Will I touch, or taste, or smell,  
Henceforth and forever!  
Water, sweet and clear and cool,  
Makes no man a slave or fool.

## THE BOY DISCIPLE.

BY

ANNIE FELLOWS JOHNSTON.

### CHAPTER XVI.

Simon the leper sat at the door of his cave. He held a roll of vellum in his unslightly fingers; it was a copy of the Psalms that Lazarus had once made for him in happier days.

Many a time he had found comfort in these hope-inspiring songs of David; but to-day he was reading a wail that seemed to come from the depths of his own soul:

"Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves. Thou hast put mine acquaintance far from me. Thou hast made me an abomination unto them. I am shut up and I cannot come forth. Lord, I have called daily upon thee. I have stretched out my hand unto thee. Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise again and praise thee? Lord, why castest thou off my soul? Why hidest thou thy face from me?"

The roll dropped to the ground, and he hid his face in his hands, crying, "How long must I endure this? Oh, why was I not taken instead of Lazarus?"

The sound of some one scrambling over the rocks made him look up quickly.

Simon never made his visits at this time of the day, and strangers had never before found the path to this out-of-the-way place. Joel came on, and stopped by the rock where the water-jar stood.

Simon stood up, covering himself with his mantle, and crying out, warningly, "Beware! Unclean! Come no further!"

"I bring you news from the village," said Joel. The man threw out his hand with a gesture of

alarm. "Oh, not of my wife, Esther," he cried, imploringly, "or of my little Joseph! I could not bear to hear aught of ill from them. My heart is still sore for the death of my friend Lazarus. I went as near the village as I dared, and heard the dirge of the flutes and the wailing of the women, when they laid him in the tomb. I have sat here ever since in sackcloth and ashes."

"But Lazarus lives again!" exclaimed Joel, simply. He had seen so many miracles lately, that he forgot the startling effect such an announcement would have on one not accustomed to them.

The man stood petrified with astonishment. At last he said bitterly, "You but mock me, boy, at least leave me to my sorrow in peace."

"No!" cried Joel. "As the Lord liveth, I swear it is the truth. Have you not heard that Messiah has come? I have followed him up and down the country, and know whereof I speak. At a word from him the dumb sing, the blind see, and the lame walk. I was lame myself, and he made me as you see me now."

"Why did you take the trouble to come and tell me that,—a poor despised leper?" he finally asked.

"Because I want everybody else to be as happy as I am. He cured me. He gave me back my strength. Then why should not my feet be always swift to bring others to him for the same happy healing? He himself goes about all the time doing good. I know there is hope



MARY ANOINTING CHRIST'S FEET.

for you, for I have seen him cleanse lepers."

Simon trembled, as the full meaning of the hope held out to him began to make itself clear to his confused mind. Health, home, Esther, child, all restored to him. It was joy too great to be possible.

"Oh, if I could only believe it!" he cried.

"Lazarus was raised when he had been four days dead. All Bethany can bear witness to that," persisted Joel. The words poured out with such force and earnestness, as he described the scene, that Simon felt impelled to believe him.

"Where can I find this man?" he asked.

Joel pointed down the rocky slope. "Take that road that leads into Bethany. Come early in the morning, and as we all pass that way, call to him. He never refuses any who have faith to believe that he can grant what they ask."

When Joel was half-way down the hill, he turned back. "If he should not pass on the morrow," he said, "do not fail to be there on the second day. We will surely leave here soon."

Simon stood in bewilderment till the boy had passed down the hill; he began to fear that this messenger was only the creation of a dream. He climbed upon the cliff and peered down into the valley. No, he had not been deceived; the boy was no mirage of his thiraty soul, for there, he came out into full sight again, and now, he was climbing the opposite hillside.

"How beautiful upon the mountain are the feet of him who bringeth good tidings!" he murmured. "Oh, what a heaven opens up before me, if this lad's words are only true!"

Next morning, after they left Bethany, Joel looked anxiously behind every rock and tree that they passed; but Simon was not to be seen.

Presently Joel saw him waiting farther down the road; he was kneeling in the dust. The white mantle that in his sensitiveness was always used to hide himself from view, was cast aside, that the Great Healer might see his great need.

He scanned the approaching figures with imploring eyes. He was looking for the Messiah,—some one in kingly garments, whose jewelled sceptre's lightest touch would lay upon him the royal accolade of health.

These were evidently not the ones he was waiting for. These were only simple wayfarers; most of them looked like Galileans.

He was about to rise up with his old warning cry of unclean, when he caught sight of Joel. But where was the princely Redeemer of prophecy?

Nearer and nearer they came, till he



CHRIST BLESSING THE CHILDREN.

could look full in their faces. No need now to ask on which one he should call for help. Indeed, he seemed to see but one face, it was so full of loving pity.

"O thou Messiah of Israel!" he prayed. "Thou didst call my friend Lazarus from the dead, O pass me not by! Call me from this living death! Make me clean!"

The eyes that looked down into his seemed to search his soul. "Believest thou that I can do this?"

The pleading faith in Simon's eyes could not be refused. "Yea, Lord," he cried, "thou hast but to speak the word!"

He waited, trembling, for the answer that meant life or death to him.

"I will. Be thou clean!" He put out his hand to raise the kneeling man to his feet. "Go and show thyself to the priests," he added.

The party passed on, and Simon stood looking after them. Was it the Christ who had passed by? Where were his dyed garments from Bozrah? The prophet foretold him as glorious in apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength. No scent of divine power had touched him; it was only the clasp of a warm human hand he had felt. He looked down at himself. Still a leper! His faith wavered; but he remembered he had not obeyed the command to show himself to the priests. Immediately he started across the fields on a run, towards the road leading into Jerusalem.

Far down the highway Joel heard a mighty shout; he turned and looked back. There on the brow of a hill, sharply outlined against the sky, stood Simon. His arms were lifted high up towards heaven; for, as he ran, in obedience to the command, the leprosy had gone from him. He was pouring out a flood of praise and thanksgiving, in the first ecstasy of his recovery, at the top of his voice.

Joel thought of the awesome ceremonies to be observed before the man could go home, and wished that the eight days of purification were over, that the little family might be immediately reunited.

Meanwhile, Seth, with his basket and water-bottle, was climbing the hill towards the cave. For the first time in seven years since he had commenced these daily visits, no expectant voice greeted him. He went quite close up to the little room under the cliff; he could see through the half-open door that it was empty. Then he cautiously approached the mouth of the cave, and called his master. A hundred echoes answered him, but no human voice responded. Call after call was sent ringing into the hollow darkness. The deep stillness weighed heavily upon him; he began to be afraid that somewhere in its mysterious depths lay a dead body.

The feat mastered him. Only stopping to put down the food and pour out the water, he started home at the top of his speed.

As he reached the road, a traveller going to Bethany hailed him. "What think you that I saw just now?" asked the stranger. "A man fighting with all his might towards Jerusalem. Tears of joy were streaming down his cheeks, and he was shouting as he ran, 'Cleansed! Cleansed! Cleansed!' He stopped me, and bade me say, if I met a man carrying a basket and water-skin, that Simon the leper had just been healed of the leprosy. He will be home as soon as the days of purification are over."

Seth gazed at him stupidly, feeling that he must be in a dream. Esther, too, heard the message unbelievably. Yet she walked the floor in a fever of excitement, at the bare possibility of such a thing being true.

The next morning, she sent Seth, as usual, with the provisions. But he brought them back, saying the place was still deserted.

Then she began to dare to hope; although she tried to steel herself against disappointment by whispering over and over that she could never see him again, she waited impatiently for the days to pass. At last they had all dragged by.

The now day would begin at sunset, the very earliest time that she might expect him. The house was swept and garnished as if a king were coming. The table was set with the choicest

delicacies Seth could find in the Jerusalem markets.

The earliest roses, his favourite red ones, were put in every room. In her restless excitement nothing in her wardrobe seemed rich enough to wear. She tried on one ornament after another before she was suited. Then, all in white, with jewels blazing in her ears on her throat, on her little white hands and her eyes shining like two glad stars, she sat down to wait for him.

But she could not keep still. This rug was turned up at the corner; that rose had dropped its petals on the floor. She would have another kind of wine on the table.

At last she stepped out of the door in her little silken-bound sandals, and climbed the outside stairs to the roof, to watch for him. The sun was entirely out of sight, but the west was glorious with the red gold of its afterglow. Looking up at the Mount of Olives, she could see the smoke of the evening sacrifice rising as the clouds of incense filled the Temple. Surely he must be far on the way by this time.

Her heart almost stopped beating as she saw a figure coming up the road, between the rows of palm-trees. She strained her eyes for a nearer view, then drew a long, tremulous breath. It was Lazarus; there went the two children and the lamb to meet him. All along the street, people were standing in the doors to see him go past; he was still a wonder to them.

She shaded her eyes with her hand, and looked again. But while her gaze searched the distant road, some one was passing just below, under the avenue of leafy trees, with quick, impatient tread; some one paused at the vine-covered door; some one was leaping up the stairs three steps at a time; some one was coming towards her with outstretched arms, crying, "Esther, little Esther. O my wife! My God-given one!"

For the first time in seven years, she turned to find herself in her husband's arms. Strong and well with the old light in his eyes, the old thrill in his voice, the glow of perfect health tingling through all his veins, he could only whisper tremulously, as he held her close, "Praise God! Praise God!"

No wonder he seemed like a stranger to Joseph. But the clasp of the strong arms, and the deep voice saying, "my son," so tenderly, were inexpressibly dear to the little fellow kept so long from his birthright of a father's love.

He was the first to break the happy silence that fell upon them. "What a good man Rabbi Jesus must be, to go about making people glad like this all the time!"

"It is he who shall redeem Israel!" exclaimed Simon. "To God be the glory, who hath sent him into this sin-cursed world! Henceforth all that I have, and all that I am, shall be dedicated to his service!"

Kneeling there in the dying daylight, with his arms around the wife and child so unexpectedly given back to him such a heart-felt prayer of gratitude went upward to the good Father that even the happiest angels must have paused to listen, more glad because of this great earthly gladness below.

(To be continued.)

### A BEAUTIFUL ACT.

The teacher of a girls' school, away in Africa, wished her scholars to learn to give. She paid them, therefore, for doing some work for her, so that each girl might have something of her own to give away for Jesus' sake. Among them was a new scholar, such a wild and ignorant little heathen that the teacher did not try to explain to her what the other little girls were doing. The day came when the gifts were handed in. Each pupil brought her piece of money and laid it down, and the teacher thought all the offerings were given. But there stood the new scholar hugging tightly in her arms a pitcher, the only thing she had in the world. She went to the table and put it among the other gifts, but before she turned away she kissed it! There is one who watched and still watches people casting gifts into his treasury. Would he not say of this African girl she hath cast in more than they all?—Mission Record.

### The Old Man at Commencement.

BY F. L. STANION.

Hitch up the ox team, Johnny, an' drive 'em to the gate,  
For me an' yer another's goin' to see Moll graduate;  
An' Jenny's a-bakin' biscuits, an' Se' a-slicin' ham,  
An' I'm huttin' grand o' Molly, I don't know where I am.

Yer mother raised the chickens that bought her books, an' s'cuse me to me was the lally labour in the summer's burnin' heat,  
When I thought of her bright eyes branlin' an' said to myself, "I'll starve!"  
Thar ain't no gal in the country so fit to graduate!"

So I ploughed in the summer sun hie, an' worked in the winter's cold,  
An' I've bought her the finest dresses that ever the store man sold,  
An' I'll see her there, with her bright, sweet eyes, like stars in the twilight late,  
An' maybe there'll be some tears in mine when I see her graduate.

I never was much on larnin', for lay means was mighty small,  
But I reckon when Molly comes back home she'll know enough for us all,  
An' thar ain't a gal in Georgy, though you hunt for 'em soon an' late,  
That'll look as sweet as Molly when she comes to graduate.

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### Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, AUGUST 15, 1896.

### "PUT YOUR HEART INTO IT."

Long, long ago, there lived in a German town an old man whose trade it was to make violins.

He was tall and thin, with a long white beard, and a grave, reserved face, which, however, was often lighted up by a singularly beautiful smile.

He was, indeed, much respected by the townsfolk, who were proud, too, of the fame he had acquired, for there were no violins like Gaspard's throughout the whole world.

There seemed, in truth, to be something about the construction of them which no one—not even his own apprentices—could succeed in imitating. Often one of the latter would finish a violin exactly after Gaspard's own model; nothing seemed wanting, to the eye; and heping, yet fearing, the youth would carry it to his master.

Then the old man would take the instrument with a kindly smile, and draw the bow lightly across the strings.

Alas! the sound was always thin, sharp, and grating, and Gaspard, picking up one of his own violins, would bid the

lad note the difference between the two. Full, clear, and melodious; now with a triumphant swell, now with a tender long-drawn note, like a sigh of the wind, the music would float out into the street, and the passers-by would be "listen, my boys! 'Hush! there is Gaspard tuning another violin!"

"What is the secret, master?" cried one of his cleverest workmen in despair. "The old man's answer was always the same: 'Put your heart into it, my lad—that is all.'"

Time passed, and at length there was mourning in the old German town, for Gaspard was dead! And then the secret was revealed for immediate sale, the violins lost that extraordinary sweetness and depth of tone which had so distinguished them. They were, of course, violins still, but a change had passed over them, and they would never recover their lost power.

Gaspard had put a little piece of his own heart into each instrument, and when he died the heart of the violin died also.—From Little Folks.

### JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

AUGUST 23, 1896.

River Jordan.—Joshua 3, 14, to 4, 18.

THE RIVER.

Rivers are of immense value to the world. They add variety to nature, and tend to increase the fruitfulness of the earth. They are of great variety, and are scattered up and down in all parts of the world. The river in our lesson was the largest of its kind in Canaan, and was the scene of many wonderful occurrences in connection with the history of the people to whom God gave the land of Canaan for an inheritance.

THE PASSAGE OVER.

There was a grand procession. The Almighty was the marshal. He gave the command respecting its order. How wonderful that, when the priests touched the water with their feet, there should be such a commotion, and a division which made a passage of some sixteen or eighteen miles wide, over which the people marched. The priests, you see, began the procession. They carried the ark of the covenant, and stood still in the midst, or about half-way across. Here they erected a memorial, consisting of twelve stones, being laid one upon the other, which could be seen from each side of the river, which would enable the people to remember the singular event which had now transpired.

MEMORIAL.

All the tribes were concerned, hence twelve men, one from each tribe, carried stones ashore also, for the same purpose as that for which they raised a monument in the river. When all had crossed, the priests came on shore, and the waters returned to their proper course. The more we contemplate this marvellous event, the greater will be our admiration of the greatness and goodness of God.

Jordan has always been regarded as an emblem of death. The particular spot where the passage was made, has been thus considered, and is called the swelling of Jordan, hence the question was asked of Jeremiah, "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" Do you ask yourselves this question? You should do so. You will not be likely to make needful preparation, if you do not.

On looking out of the window one evening, little May saw a star close to the moon; whereupon she exclaimed: "Oh, Tattie, the moon has a baby!"

This same little May said one day:

"I do not love God one bit."

Her elder sister was shocked at such a statement, and said: "Why, Mamie, you ought to love God."

"Well, why?"

"Why, because he made you."

This quieted May for only a moment, when she looked up with a knowing look on her little face and said:

"But I didn't want to be made, you know."

Little Tommy's Monday Morning

All was well on Sunday morning. All was quiet Sunday evening; But behold, quite early Monday, Came a queer, surprising weakness— Weakness seizing little Tommy! It came shortly after breakfast— Breakfast with wheateakes and honey Early devoured by Tommy. Who till then was well as could be. Then without a moment's warning, Like a sneeze, that awful Aw-choo! Came this Weakness on poor Tommy. "Mother dear," he whined, "dear mother,"

I am feeling father strangely— Don't know what's the matter with me— My right leg is out of kilter, While my ear, my left ear, itches. Don't you know that queerish feeling? "Not exactly," said his mother. "Does your head ache, Tommy, dearest?" Little Thomas, always truthful, Would not say his head was aching. For, you know, it really wasn't. "No, it doesn't ache," he answered, (Thinking of that noble story Of the Cherry-tree and Hatchet); "But I'm tired, and I'm sleepy, And my shoulder's rather achy. Don't you think perhaps I'd better Stay at home with you, dear mother?"

Thoughtfully his mother questioned, "How about your school, dear Tommy? Do you wish to miss your lessons?" "Well, you know," was Tommy's answer, "Saturday we played at football; I was tired in the evening, So I didn't learn my lessons, Left that all for Monday morning, Monday morning bright and early—" "And this morning you slept over?" So his mother interrupted. "Yes, mamma," admitted Tommy, "So I have not learned my lessons; And I'd better wait till Tuesday. Tuesday I can start in earnest— Tuesday when I'm feeling brighter!"

Stalling his mother eyed him, Then she said, "Go ask your father— You will find him in his study. Adding up the week's expenses. See what father says about it." Toward the door went Tommy slowly, Seized the knob as if to turn it. Did not turn it; but returning, Back he came unto his mother. "Mother," said he, very slowly, "Mother, I don't feel so badly; Maybe I'll get through my lessons. Anyway, I think I'll risk it. Have you seen my books, dear Mother— My Geography and Speller, History and Definitions, — Since I brought them home on Friday?"

No, his mother had not seen them. Then began a search by Tommy. Long he searched almost despairing. When the clock was striking loudly. And at length when Tommy found them— Found his books beneath the sofa— He'd forgotten all his weakness, Pains and aches were quite forgotten. At full speed he hastened schoolward. But in vain, for he was tardy. All because of that strange weakness He had felt on Monday morning. Would you know the name that's given, How they call that curious feeling? 'Tis the dreaded, "I don't want to"— Never fatal, but quite common To the tribe of Very Lazy. Would you know the charm that cures it— Cures the Weakness, "I don't want to"? It is known as "But you've got to," And no boy should be without it.

Now you know the curious legend, Of the pale faced little Tommy, Of his weakness and its curing By the great charm, "But you've got to." Think of it on Monday mornings— It will save you lots of trouble. —St. Nicholas.

Three little boys ask the blessing At the table when papa is away. One Sunday evening there was only a light supper, and Lot was to ask the blessing. He looked over the table, then closed his eyes and said: "God bless us to be good." Rolling his eyes up to his mamma, he said: "I thought I wouldn't ask God to bless our food; 's we haven't anything but crackers and milk."

ARCHIE'S VACATION.

"Papa has come!" shouted Archie Conwood, as he rushed down-stairs two steps at a time, with his sisters Minnie and Katy following close behind, and mamma bringing up the rear. Papa had been to Cousin Faraton's to see if he could engage summer board for the family.

Cousin Faraton lived in a pleasant village about a hundred miles distant from the city in which Mr. and Mrs. Conwood were living. They had agreed that to board with him would insure a pleasant vacation for all.

Papa brought a good report. Everything had been favourably arranged. "And what do you think?" he asked, in concluding his narrative. "Cousin Faraton has persuaded me to buy a bicycle for you, Archie. He thought it would be quite delightful for you and your Cousin Samuel to ride about on their fine roads together. So I stopped and ordered one on my way home."

"Oh, you dear, good papa!" exclaimed Archie, "do let me give you a hug." "Are you sure it's healthful exercise?" asked Mrs. Conwood, rather timidly. After the way of mothers, she was anxious for the health of her son. "Nothing could be better, if taken in moderation," Mr. Conwood positively replied, thus setting his wife's fears at rest.

The order for the bicycle was promptly filled, and Archie had some opportunity of using it before going to the country. When the day for leaving town arrived, he was naturally more interested in the safe carrying of what he called his "machine" than in anything else connected with the journey.

He succeeded in taking it to Cousin Faraton's uninjured, and was much pleased to find that it met with the entire approbation of Samuel, whose opinion, as he was two years older than himself, was considered most important.

The two boys immediately planned a short excursion for the following day, and obtained the consent of their parents.

Breakfast next morning was scarcely over when they made their start. The sunshine was bright, the sky was cloudless; they were well and strong. Everything promised the pleasantest sort of a day. Yet, alas! for all human hopes. Who can tell what sudden disappointment a moment may bring.

The cousins had just disappeared from view of the group assembled on the piazza to see them start, when Samuel came back in breathless haste, exclaiming:

"Archie has fallen, and I think he's hurt!"

The two fathers ran at full speed to the spot where Archie was, and found him pale and almost fainting by the roadside. They picked him up and carried him tenderly back to the house, while Samuel hurried off for the village doctor. Fortunately he found him in his carriage about setting forth on his morning round and quite ready to drive at a rapid rate to the scene of the accident.

The first thing to be done was to administer a restorative, for Archie had had a severe shock. The next thing was an examination, which resulted in the announcement of a broken leg.

Surely there was an end to all plans for a pleasant vacation.

The doctor might be kind, sympathetic and skilful, as indeed he was. The other children might unite in trying to entertain their injured play-fellow. They might bring him flowers without number, and relate to him their various adventures, and read him their most interesting story-books—all this they did. Mother might be tireless in her devotion, trying day and night to make him forget the pain—what mother would not have done all in her power?

Still there was no escape from the actual suffering, no relief from the long six weeks' imprisonment; while outside the birds were singing and the summer breezes were playing in ever so many delightful places that might have been visited had it not been for that broken leg.

Archie tried to be brave and cheerful, and to conceal from everyone the tears

which would sometimes force their way to his eyes.

He endeavoured to interest himself in the amusements which were within his reach, and he succeeded admirably. Yet the fact remained that he was having a sadly tedious vacation.

The kind-hearted doctor often entertained him by telling of his experiences while serving in a hospital during the war.

"Do you know," he said one day, in the midst of a story, "that the men who had been bravest on the field of battle, were most patient in hearing suffering? They showed what we call fortitude, and bravery and fortitude go hand in hand."

This was an encouraging thought to Archie, for he resolved to show that he could endure suffering as well as any soldier. Another thing that helped him very much was the fact, of which his mother reminded him, that by trying to be patient he was doing what he could to please the Lord Jesus.

"It was He," she said, "who allowed this trial to come to you, because he saw that through it you might grow to be a better and nobler boy. And you will be growing better every day by simply trying to be patient, as I see you do."

"I want to be, mamma," Archie answered, "and there's another thing about this broken leg: I think it will teach me to care more when other people are sick."

"No doubt it will, Archie, and if you learn to exercise patience and sympathy your vacation will not be lost, after all." —The Christian Intelligencer.

EIGHT LIVES SAVED BY A DOG.

One of the most remarkable acts of intelligence ever recorded is related of a huge Newfoundland:

Some years ago a vessel was driven on the beach of Lydd, in Kent, England. The sea was rolling furiously. Eight poor fellows were crying for help; but a boat could not be got off, through the storm, to their assistance, and they were in constant peril, for any moment the ship was in danger of sinking. At length a gentleman came along the beach accompanied by his Newfoundland dog. He directed the animal's attention to the vessel, and put a short stick in his mouth. The intelligent and courageous dog at once understood his meaning, sprang into the sea, and fought his way through the angry waves towards the vessel. He could not, however, get close enough to deliver that with which he was charged; but the crew understood what was meant, and they made fast a rope to another piece of wood, and threw it towards him. The noble animal at once dropped his own piece of wood, and immediately seized that which had been thrown to him; and, then, with a degree of strength and determination scarcely credible—for he was again and again lost under the waves—he dragged it through the surge, and delivered it to his master. A line of communication was thus formed with the vessel, and every man on board was rescued.

BIRDS AT SEA.

Sir Edwin Arnold, in an account of his voyage to America, which appeared in the London Daily Telegraph, says: "Every day we see playing round the ship and skimming up and down the wave-hollows, companies of lovely little terns and sea swallows, the latter no larger than thrushes. These fearless people of the waste have not by any means followed us from the land, living, as gulls often will, on the waste thrown from the vessel. They are vague and casual roamers of the ocean, who spying the great steamship from afar, have sailed close up, to see if we are a rock or an island, and will then skim away again on their own free and boundless business. Yonder tiny bird with purple and green plumage, his little breast and neck laced with silver, is distant one thousand miles at this moment from a drop of fresh water, and yet cares no more for that fact than did the Irish rquire who had walked miles from a lemon." If his wings ever grow weary, he is but to settle on the bosom of a great billow and suffer it for a time to

rock and roll him amid the hissing spindrift, the milky, dying foam, and the broken sea-lace which forms, and gleams, and disappears again upon the dark slopes. When he pleases, a stroke of the small red foot and a beat of the wonderful wing launch him off from the jagged edge of his billow, and he flies past us at one hundred knots an hour, laughing steam and canvas to scorn, and steering for some nameless crag in Labrador or Fundy, or bound, it may be, homeward for some island or marsh of the far away Irish coast. Marvellously expressive of power as is our untiring engine, which all day and all night throbs and pants and pulses in noisy rhythm under the deck, what a clumsy, imperfect affair it is compared to the dainty plumes and delicate muscles which will carry that pretty, fearless sea-swallow back to his roost!

LESSON NOTES.

THIRD QUARTER.

STUDIES IN OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.

LESSON VIII—AUGUST 23.

ABSALOM'S REBELLION.

2 Sam. 15. 1-12. Memory Verses, 4-6.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.—Exod. 20. 12.

Time.—B.C. 1024 and 1025.

Places.—Hebron and Jerusalem.

DAY BY DAY WORK.

Monday.—Read the Lesson (2 Sam. 15. 1-12). Answer the questions. Tell the Lesson Story.

Tuesday.—Read David's flight (2 Sam. 15. 13-23). Fix in your mind Time and Places.

Wednesday.—Read David's submission (2 Sam. 15. 24-31). Learn the Golden Text.

Thursday.—Read Shimei's curse (2 Sam. 16. 5-14). Learn the Memory Verses.

Friday.—Read Absalom's wicked intent (2 Sam. 17. 1-14).

Saturday.—Read about causing sorrow to parents (Prov. 15. 20-29). Study the Teachings of the Lesson.

Sunday.—Read what is said about rebellious children (Esa. 1. 1-9).

QUESTIONS.

- I. The Little Prince, verses 1-6.
  1. Where are horses first mentioned as in use by the Israelites? How did Absalom make himself conspicuous?
  2. Where were Eastern courts held? Why had David neglected to deal justly? How did Absalom seek to win favour with the people?
  3. What effect would his favourable decisions have? What caused the people to say him respect? What mark of condescension did he show? Why did people follow him?
- II. The Unnatural Son, verses 7-12.
  7. Where did he wish to pay his vow? What advantage would he have there?
  8. Where was Geshur? How did Absalom propose to serve the Lord?
  9. Why did David give his consent?
  10. For what were the spies sent out? How was the news conveyed through the land? What two classes favoured Absalom's cause?
  11. How many people went with him? Would their presence have any influence? Why was Absalom invited? Explain why many were ready to forsake David?

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

To be good where we are is better than to pretend how good we would be in some other place. Those who have most for high position are usually least fitted for it. Parents are willing to believe the best about their children. Good people are often imposed upon. Wrongdoing may lead to a kind of temporary success. There is trouble in store for every one who sins against kind parents. To be in the majority is no proof that we are right.



## My Playmates.

BY EUGENE FIELD.

The wind comes whispering to me of the country green and cool,  
Of redwing blackbirds chattering beside a reedy pool;  
It brings me soothing fancies of the homestead on the hill,  
And I hear the thrush's evening song, and the robin's morning trill;  
So I fall to thinking tenderly of those I used to know,  
Where the saffraas and snakeroot and checkerberries grow.

What has become of Ezra Marsh, who lived on Baker's hill?  
And what has become of Noble Pratt, whose father kept the mill?  
And what's become of Lizzie Crum, and Anastasia Snell,  
And of Roxie Root, who 'tended school in Boston for a spell?  
They were the boys, and they the girls who shared my youthful play;  
They do not answer to my call. My playmates, where are they?

What has become of Levi and his little brother Joe,  
Who lived next door to where we lived some forty years ago?  
I'd like to see the Newton boys, and Quincy Adams Brown,  
And Hepsey Hall, and Ella Cowles, who spelled the whole school down!  
And Gracie Smith, the Cutler boys, Leander Snow, and all  
Who, I am sure, would answer could they only hear my call.

I'd like to see Bill Warner, and the Conkey boys again,  
And talk about the times we used to wish that we were men!  
And one—I shall not name her—could I see her gentle face,  
And hear her girlish treble in this distant, lonely place!  
The flowers and hopes of springtime, they perished long ago,  
And the garden where they blossomed is white with winter snow.

Oh, cottage 'neath the maples, have you seen those girls and boys,  
That but a little while ago made, oh, such pleasant noise?  
O trees, and hills, and brooks, and lanes, and meadows, do you know  
Where I shall find my little friends of forty years ago?  
You see, I'm old and weary, and I've travelled long and far;  
I am looking for my playmates—I wonder where they are?

—Chicago Record.

## THE BOTTLE-TREE.

There is a tree in Australia which grows in the shape of a bottle, and puts out its branches broadly from the part which seems like the neck. This tree would appear very curious to our American children, as we have nothing like it in this country. God has made each land to differ from every other, and each has beauties and dangers peculiar to itself; yet over them all he watches as Father and Friend, and his children have his loving care in whatever land their lot may have fallen.

"Cousin Annie" sends us an interesting story about another curious tree, and we will give it place just here, where it seems to belong:

## THE RAINING-TREE.

At first thought it really did seem quite impossible. There must surely be some mistake. But then Uncle Colin had said he had seen it—yes, really and truly seen it with his own eyes; and whatever Uncle Colin said he had seen, that had he seen beyond a doubt. Why, this little niece and nephew of his, Charlotte and Wilbur Hayes, would as soon have disbelieved the preacher as Uncle Colin.

But what could it all be about? Why, simply that Uncle Colin had told them that on his recent trip to Africa, he had seen a tree that rained water.

"Oh, uncle!" exclaimed Wilbur. "Where could that have been?" and "Oh, uncle, dear," chimed in Charlotte, "how could such a thing be?"

"One question at a time," warned

Uncle Colin, shaking his finger vigorously at each in turn.

"Now, which one of you," he continued, "can tell me where the Canary Islands are?"

"On the north-west coast of Africa," came the answer from both simultaneously.

"Quite correctly replied to, geography class of two," declared Uncle Colin, with one of his funniest looks. "Well," he went on, "if you have heard of the Canary Islands, and can locate them so readily, you must have heard something, too, of the famous Peak of Teneriffe."

"That we have, uncle!" declared Miss Charlotte, ere Wilbur could open his lips. "It is the great mountain peak of the Canary Islands, and towers over twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea. What makes it all the more conspicuous still, is that it seems to rise right out of

not last long. If the people had to depend upon these pools entirely they would surely perish of thirst. But there is another source to which they can go—a source that is all the more wonderful, as it seems to have been placed there by God's own hand. There is really no natural law governing it after all, if we look at it in one way.

"Near the centre of the Ferro there grows a large and magnificently proportioned tree. Just to what species this tree belongs, the natives have never been able to discover. It seems of its own particular variety, and stands alone into the air, the branches being most luxuriant, while the leaves are long, narrow, and pointed. They remain green all the year round.

"The strangest part of this wonderful tree is that its branches, even those

law, but all have alike failed. It is true that the clouds drop moisture down upon the leaves—that is all clear enough, and quite natural, too. But how do the clouds get there? and why do they stay there so constantly? and why is it, also, that they hover over no other part of the island as they do over this?"—S. S. Visitor.

## THE EXACT TRUTH.

Two young masons were building a brick wall—the front wall of a high house. One of them, in placing a brick, discovered that it was a little thicker on one side than on the other.

His companion advised him to throw it out. "It will make your wall untrue," Ben," said he.

"Pooh!" answered Ben; "what difference will such a trifle as that make? You're too particular."

"My mother," replied he, "taught me that 'truth is truth,' and ever so little an untruth is a lie, and a lie is no trifle."

"Oh," said Ben, "that's all very well; but I am not lying, and have no intention of doing so."

"Very true, but you make your wall tell a lie; and I have somewhere read that a lie in one's work is like a lie in his character, it will show itself sooner or later, and bring harm, if not ruin."

"I'll risk it, in this case," answered Ben; and he worked away, laying more bricks, and carrying the wall up higher, till the close of the day, when they quit work and went home.

The next morning they went to resume their work, when, behold, the lie had wrought out the result of all lies! The wall getting a little slant from the untrue brick, had got more and more untrue as it got higher, and at last, in the night, had toppled over, obliging the masons to do all their work over again.

Just so with ever so little an untruth in your character; it grows more and more untrue if you permit it to remain, till it brings sorrow and ruin. Tell, act, and live the exact truth always.

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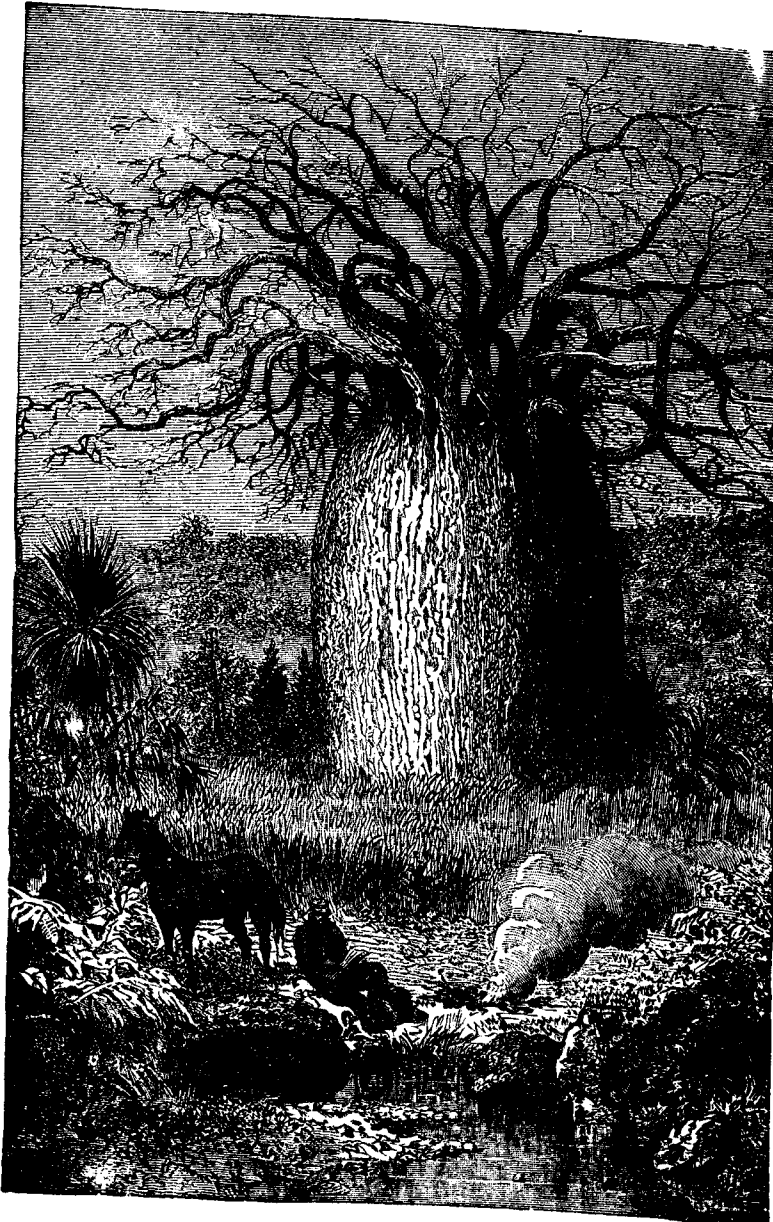
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THE BOTTLE-TREE.

the ocean when viewed by approaching vessels."

"It is truly a wonderful mountain in more respects than one," added Uncle Colin. "The name Teneriffe means in the native language tender, snow, effe, a hill; hence, in full, snow-hill. It is most appropriately named, as its summit is covered with snow nearly all the year round. This is all the more noticeable, as the climate of the islands is quite tropical. But as wonderful as this mountain is, there is something more wonderful still among the group of islands. One of these islands is called the Ferro Island, which means the Iron Island. It is so called because it has a soil so hard that it is almost impossible to dig any distance into it. As might be supposed, there are no channels through it, not even a tiny stream trickling its way along; yet there are a few wells, or rather shallow cisterns, which have at length been hollowed in the earth only by the most persistent effort of the natives. When it rains the water collects in these depressions, but as they are so shallow the supply does

nearer the earth, are constantly enveloped in clouds, which drip moisture down upon the leaves. The leaves in turn let the drops of water, which are as clear as crystal, glide undisturbed along the smooth and satin-like surface, when arriving at the pointed ends the globules drop one by one into the shallow pools the natives have dug all about the tree. Although these pools are, as I have already intimated, necessarily shallow on account of the hardness of the soil, yet it is said they are never empty, for as fast as the natives relieve them of their contents more is dropped into them by the leaves of the wonderful tree which go on dripping, dripping, day and night.

"Now, mark the incomprehensible power of God and his all-wise provision for his people. But for this wonderful raining-tree the Island of Ferro would be rendered uninhabitable, and man and beast would alike perish if forced to remain on it.

"Naturalists have tried again and again to solve the mystery of the raining-tree, and to assign to it some natural