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# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Vol. XII.]

TORONTO, JANUARY 16, 1892.

[No. 3.]

## THE FLOWERY KINGDOM.

If all the people of all the world can be imagined standing abreast, in a single line, so that they should just touch one another, that line would be about 500,000 miles long—long enough to reach around the earth twenty times. And if you could pass in front of that line and look on each face, at least one man in every four you would see would be a Chinaman.

There are eighteen provinces in China proper, each one being about as large as Great Britain, and yet it is very doubtful whether many of the boys and girls who have finished their geographies know so much as the name of any one of these provinces. Americans talk much of their vast country, yet China, with her dependencies, has 300,000 more square miles than are found in all our States and Territories, including Alaska. In each square mile in the United States there are, on an average, ten or eleven persons, while China has at least two hundred and fifty inhabitants for every one of her square miles.

There are from three to four hundred millions of souls in the empire, and though we think a good beginning has been made towards giving them the gospel of Jesus, and many thousands have already learned to love him, there has not yet been sent from all

Christian lands so much as one minister for each million of people. If Christians know more about China and thought more about it, they would surely make more effort to give to its millions the gospel.

The Chinese have many names for the land they inhabit. It is from their name Tein or Chin, that

our word China comes. This is very like the name Sini, by which it is supposed China is referred to in the Bible (Isa. xlix. 12). They call it also "The Middle Kingdom," sometimes "The Central Flowery Kingdom," because they suppose it stands in the centre of the earth.

the process of winding silk from the cocoons. The Great Wall was built upon the northern boundaries of the empire two hundred years before the Saviour came to earth. It was designed as a defence against the warlike Tartars, but is now quite useless. It runs from the sea along the northern



CHINA.

Pekin, the capital of this great empire, is one of the largest cities in the world, having an estimated population of a million and a half. It is the seat of governmental administration, and of large commercial enterprises. The streets are generally unpaved, and, according to the state of the weather, are either knee-deep in mud or covered with dust. The houses are chiefly made of brick, one storey high, and often embellished with grotesque carving, and much brilliant painting and gilding.

The street scenes are generally of peculiar animation, from the number of stalls and street buyers and sellers. All manner of trades and industries are conducted in the open air, and the picturesque garb of the natives, which is fast becoming familiar in our Canadian cities, gives colour and variety to the scene.

The large picture on this page shows some of these strange open-air scenes. In the upper group a juggler is performing his conjuring tricks, and making his puppet figures dance. At his right his assistant is playing on a flute, and at the same time on a tambourine and cymbals with his feet, while a gaping crowd look on and admire.

The central part of the picture shows the process of drying and preparing tea over a slow fire, and on either side are Chinese officials. Below is shown

border of the empire for 1,300 miles (some authorities say 1,500), passing through the valleys and over lofty mountain ranges. The wall varies from fifteen to thirty feet in height, and is about as thick as it is high, while at intervals there are large square towers, some of them being fifty feet high. It is said that six horsemen could ride abreast on the top of the wall. What energy and patience the Chinese must have had to build this enormous structure, which has lasted now for over two thousand years!

There are said to be three religions in China. One originated with Confucius, a sage who lived about six hundred years before Christ. All the Chinese reverence him, and yet a large portion of them follow another religion than the one he taught. Some are Taoists, and some are Buddhists. But while these three forms of religion are professed, the people care little about any one of them. Once or twice a year each Chinaman bows and worships heaven and earth, but every day of the year and in every house in the land, worship is offered to departed ancestors. The universal religion of China is the worship of ancestors. Each family keeps what are called ancestral tablets. These are boards, usually about twelve inches long by three wide, on which are written the name, rank, titles, birth and death days of each deceased member of the household. Every day, morning and evening, incense is burned and worship offered before these tablets.

One of the saddest things about the religions of China is that none of them seem to have it for their object to make men better. A priest once said to a missionary, "Your religion does not give what the people want. When they worship they wish to know whether they can grow rich and recover from disease. In the case of believing in Jesus, there are no benefits of this kind." The people have no idea of a religion whose aim is to free from sin and make men pure.

Though the Chinese are good scholars and have many books, they are as superstitious as the lowest savages. They believe in ghosts and evil spirits, and one of their singular notions is that these evil spirits go in straight lines, and hence they make their streets crooked, so as to confuse and keep off the bad spirits. They also believe in an oracle by which they can foretell their fate. While incense is burning and crackers are fired off, to keep god awake and attentive, the inquirer shakes a cup in which are placed strips of wood with some written words upon them, and from the strips that fall upon the ground he learns his fate.

Another singular notion of the Chinese is that they can convey to any spirit, whether human or divine, whatever they please, by simply burning the article, or an image of it, in the flames. Hence as they think that a friend, after his spirit leaves the body, will need just what he needed here, they burn paper images of these subjects, and so fancy that they reach the departed soul. A missionary describes a paper house which he once saw built for a person who had died. "It was about ten feet high and twelve deep. It contained a sleeping room, library, reception-room, hall, and treasury. It was furnished with paper chairs and tables. Boxes of paper money were carried in. There was a sedan-chair, with bearers, and also a boat and boatman, for the use of the deceased in the unseen world. A table spread with food was placed in front of the house." This whole paper establishment was suddenly set fire to, and in the midst of a fusillade of crackers it quickly vanished in the flames. What a pitiable notion this is as to what human souls will need in the future!

This idea that whatever is burned in the sacred flame is thus conveyed to unseen spirits is applied to prayers. The Chinaman always writes his prayers and then burns them. So he fancies they go up to the god or spirit he would address. The priests fill up blank prayers, according to the wishes of their customers who come with their various wants. People come to buy prayers for themselves and for others, and having had them filled out, they go away to burn them.

### The Mission of Boys.

BY L. A. OBEAL.

From out the ranks of noble men,  
Who firm for Truth and Right have stood,  
They are being called, as years go by,  
To "come up higher" and dwell with God.

Their vacant places who shall fill?  
With wealth, and tongue, and pen, who'll stand,  
And bid the tides of ill roll back,  
That hasten to engulf the land?

We are pressing on to fill the ranks,  
The world needs brave men for the fight  
That is waging still from age to age,  
For evermore 'twixt Wrong and Right.

With purpose true and courage high,  
Where they have fallen we will stand,  
Till Righteousness and Truth prevail,  
And earth become Immanuel's land.

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## Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, JANUARY 16, 1892.

### LETTER FROM A JUNIOR LEAGUER.

The following communication is from a member of one of our junior leagues. The young writer says:—"This is my first attempt at anything of this kind, and I do not suppose it will be fit for publication, but I thought I would send it. We have quite a flourishing junior league in our church. I will send you a report soon if you care to have it."

By all means send the report; we want to hear from every league in the Conference.

Dear Sir,—No church should be without an Epworth League, for the young need special care to train them spiritually and bind them to the Church.

Will not the girls and boys of to-day become, in the future, our leading men and women? Will not the boys become the leading statesmen of our country, and fill other positions of honour? It is therefore necessary that they should be so trained that their unfolding from boyhood to manhood, and from girlhood to womanhood, will find them with sanguine hopes, high inspirations, and lofty ideas. The world is at best full of sorrow and sin, but a brave heart can do a great deal.

There is so much to do, so much good seed to sow, and ill weeds to root up, that it is impossible for the present generation to accomplish all, and it must be left to the coming men and women.

It is the Epworth League that will train them to perform their duty faithfully, and teach them the higher lessons of life.

Pastors, see that you organize a league immediately, if one has not already been formed. It will arouse the church, it will set the young people to work, make them sociable, and teach them to lead noble and true lives. Do so at once, and you will never regret having taken the step. It may give

you extra work, but then remember you are the "Shepherd of your flock."

Now, a word to the young Epworth Leaguer. Do you, my dear young friend, look out upon the world as it is, and not as it should be? Are you satisfied that greed, and hunger, want and despair, sin and sorrow are everywhere? "No," you reply. Well then, if you desire to do your share in the great work that remains to be done, first yield your heart to God, and with his help overcome yourself. This is of prime importance. "He who overcometh himself, is greater than he who taketh a city." Then having done this and putting on the whole armour of God, you will be equipped for life's journey in every way. You will be sure to succeed if the Lord is on your side, for success always crowns the efforts of those who live life as it should be lived.

Tennyson very beautifully says:

"'Tis only noble to be good,  
True hearts are more than coronets."

Or in prose it would be: Goodness is true nobility; faithful hearts are greater than crowns or sceptres.

Show all your golden shield of life, and like the ripple of an ever widening circle, it will bless and hallow all the world.—Wesleyan.

### LISTEN!

BY J. B. DOUGLASS.

An English gentleman in New York said to me, "You can't do anything in England. Look at the immense amount of money invested in breweries!" "Look at the immense wealth of the brewers!" I said to him. "My friend, do you forget what God has done for our country? There was more money invested in slaves here than there is in beer there. There were one thousand million pounds sterling invested in the United States in slaves; and you have not as much as that invested in beer, that I know of. But when God saw fit to move, what were millions to him!

"At the loss of 300,000 lives, and at the sacrifice of hundreds of millions of treasure—in blood, and fire, and smoke, he swept away the awful degradation.

"And I tell you as I look upon the slaves of drink, I feel sometimes as if American slavery could only be exceeded by the voluntary slavery of the votaries of drink. Why, £140,000,000 they tell us are annually spent in Great Britain for drink. For what? Not for bread, but for that which makes every loaf of bread dearer to every consumer. Not for meat, but for that which decreases the business in all healthful food. Not for that which prolongs life, but for that which notoriously shortens it. Not for that which supports schools and colleges, but for that which cripples them. Not for that which lessens taxation, but for that which disheartening result, the enlargement of prisons and reformatories, and lunatic asylums, and places for the helplessness and the sickness that might be prevented, and for the abominable vagrancy and brutal crime: all the property you possess is levied on to pay for these.

"Drink scatters no beauty or blessing in a single home, for it menaces and blights all things lovely and beautiful that it touches. It gives no cool brain or just judgment, but is an admitted foe to all this. It remedies no legislative wrongs, but is a factor in most of them. It holds back no murderer's hand, but nerves it. It helps no one in paying honest debts, but everywhere is a hindrance to all upright endeavour.

"Fancy the building of gaols, and lunatic asylums, and reformatories, for the results of any other business in the world but this! Fancy keeping a staff of men at the public expense to take care of the refuse of any other business than this! And I do look with pity at your policemen. Oh, what a work, poor fellows, they have to do—bruised, and battered, and cut, and maimed; and in every case it is drink! drink!

Mrs. Jason—"When they tie up a railroad they don't actually use a rope, do they?" Mr. Jason—"No; it is generally done with a string of resolutions."

**The Secret of the Sea.**

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

As I what pleasant visions haunt me  
As I gaze upon the sea,  
All the old romantic legends,  
All my dreams come back to me.

Sails of silk and robes of scandal,  
Such a gleam in ancient lore;  
And the singing of the sailors,  
And the answer from the shore!

Most of all the Spanish ballad  
Haunts me oft and latches long,  
Of the noble Count Arnolde  
And the sailor's mystic song.

Like the long waves on a sea-beach  
Where the sand as silver shines,  
With a soft, monotonous cadence,  
Flow its unrhymed lyric lines;—

Telling how the Count Arnolde,  
With his hawk upon his hand,  
Saw a fair and stately galley,  
Steering onward to the land;—

How he heard the ancient helmsman  
Chant a song so wild and clear,  
That the sailing sea-bird slowly  
Poised upon the mast to hear,

Till his soul was full of longing,  
And he cried with impulse strong,—  
"Helmsman! for the love of heaven,  
Teach me too, that wondrous song."

"Nay, thou,"—as the helmsman answered,  
"Learn the secret of the sea!  
Only those who brave its dangers  
Comprehend its mystery!"

In each sail that skirts the horizon,  
In each landward blowing breeze,  
I behold that stately galley,  
Hear those mournful melodies.

Till my soul is full of longing  
For the secret of the sea,  
And the heart of the great ocean  
Sends a thrilling pulse through me.

**LOST IN A MINE.**

BY HESBA STRETTON.

**CHAPTER III.**

THE pit was more familiar to Reuben Hameldine than the woods and lanes of the country over-  
ground. It was a very ancient one; how long it  
had been worked nobody could tell, but for genera-  
tions back there had been a small though regular  
output of coal, which had been just worth digging  
along the winding and narrow veins of the  
general. There had been no more money spent  
on it than the absolutely necessary outlay; and  
most of the old disused footways had been allowed  
to sink in, making little dells and dimples in the  
roofs overhead, where the earliest primroses and  
violets were blooming, as Reuben threaded his  
darksome way underground. He found himself  
bally more at home in these black and winding  
galleries than in the green tangle of the brook-  
wood above ground, for whilst he was a mere  
child his father had often taken him down the pit,  
to accustom him to its darkness and its perils.  
He could recollect strolling about it, holding his  
father's hand, and lighted by his lamp, whilst he  
learned every footway and siding, as if they had  
been the streets and thoroughfares of some town.  
He could remember, too, how his father had told  
him stories of men whose sense of comradeship  
had been so strong in them that they had their  
lives cheap in comparison with the shame of leav-  
ing their fellow-workmen or their kinsfolk in peril.  
One miserable man had been pointed out to him as  
having saved his own life at the sacrifice of  
another's; and Reuben still felt the shuddering  
horror and aversion with which he had regarded  
him when he was himself a boy. As he hurried  
along his rough, dark road as swiftly as possible, the  
tones of his father's voice seemed to be sounding  
plainly in his ears, saying ever and over again the

familiar words: "He laid down his life for us, and  
we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."  
Once Reuben paused for a single instant, and said  
half aloud: "Yes, father! I'll do it."

Before many minutes had passed he reached that  
dip in the narrow roadway which must be passed  
through before he could gain the Long Spinnny  
siding. For the last hundred yards or so the  
water had been up to his knees, and at every step  
now he felt himself sinking into it more deeply;  
but, whether because the flood was rising or the  
path was sloping, he could hardly tell. Yet his  
safety—his return to light and life—depended  
almost utterly on this. In no part of his course  
had the current been so strong as to show that the  
breach through which it had broken was very large.  
He recollected only a few days ago listening to the  
sullen murmur and gurgle of imprisoned waters,  
which had never sparkled in the sunlight, beating  
a thin wall of rock left between them and the spot  
where he was at work. A single blow of the pick-  
axe would have released them. The question was,  
whether it had been some small darksome tank,  
that would soon be exhausted, or some immense  
and hidden reservoir of a hundred subterranean  
springs, which must break down the frail barrier  
and pour itself in resistless force along the winding  
level of the pit. He could not solve this question;  
but there was not an instant to lose. The dipping  
footpath must be trodden; even if he could lead  
his friends back to the shaft by that other way of  
which he had spoken.

His safety-lamp—which he had fastened securely  
in the front of his cap—cast a pale glimmer of  
light upon the slowly whirling water into which he  
plunged; and the tremulous gleam which quivered  
before him, and upon the low roof above him, ap-  
peared almost more terrible than utter darkness  
would have been. As he moved on through the  
deepening stream he could hear, louder and louder,  
the gloomy sound of a torrent surging through a  
narrow outlet, as if the sluices of some great water-  
course had been opened. It was an inexpressibly  
mournful and threatening sound. His heart failed  
him, and he stood still for a few seconds thinking.

The flood was swirling around him, and the pale,  
gloomy light of his lamp fell on the eddying water  
before him. The roof was low; and not far from  
where he stood the reflection of his light seemed  
to show that the flood already touched it, cutting  
off his access to his friends. The chance of saving  
them was so small, would it not be wiser—was it  
not his duty—to retrace his steps whilst there was  
yet time? There were Abby and his mother to  
think of. Behind lay the daylight, and his plea-  
sant home, and Abby, so unutterably precious to  
him; whilst before him there was a deadly risk  
and a mere chance of making his way to his com-  
rades. Even if he should succeed in joining them,  
it might be only to share their fate and die slowly  
of hunger, should the flood cut them off from the  
shaft, and yet not reach their higher place of miser-  
able and fatal refuge. Surely it was his duty to go  
back while going back was possible.

He did not linger more than a few seconds.  
"He laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay  
down our lives for the brethren," came to him  
again, as if spoken by one who had a right to de-  
mand the sacrifice. With a deep-drawn breath he  
marched forward into the black stream. A swift  
current of air, sweeping along the surface of the  
water, blew his hair into his eyes, and made the  
flame of his lamp quiver. If that went out he  
would be left in utter darkness. He felt a little be-  
wildered, too. The long galleries and sidings, per-  
fectly familiar as they were to him, seemed strange  
now that they were flooded, and there was only a  
low archway of a foot or so visible above the water.  
He could scarcely tell whereabouts he was. The  
path was still tending downward, and the flood  
rising higher about him. Now it was breast-high.  
A few steps further on and he could only keep his  
mouth above it by stretching himself as upright as  
possible. If his feet did not touch rising ground  
in half-a-dozen paces, his lamp must be put out,  
even if he struggled through himself in safety. To  
go back now was as difficult as to go forward. But  
there was now no longer any question in his mind  
as to going back. He knew that the end was  
near at hand, and a few seconds only would de-

cide it. They were a few seconds of intense anxiety;  
but his feet soon felt the ground rising beneath  
them, and he knew that the victory was his own.  
A rapture of joy, such as he had never felt before,  
rushed through him. In another five minutes he  
would reach the siding, where his lost comrades  
were waiting in despair for their inevitable fate.  
He fancied he could see their faces, lit up by the  
light of their safety lamps, turning towards him as  
he drew near to save them from death. They were  
all very dear to him; but they had never seemed  
so dear to him as at this moment. The peril he  
had come through was so great, and he had so fully  
conquered the temptation to leave them in their  
woe, that his own love for them had deepened a  
hundredfold. In another minute or two he would  
hear their voices, and feel their hands clasping his,  
and he would lead them by a safe way to the day-  
light, and the safety, and the life above.

He was hurrying on breathlessly, for there was  
even now no time to lose. But presently he hesi-  
tated, and looked around him with a gesture of be-  
wilderedness and an air of anxious inspection. The  
water was still knee-deep, and the rough walls of  
rock and the low roof which hemmed him in would  
have appeared, to any other eyes, exactly the same  
as the other galleries and passages of the old mine.  
But the difference was plain to him. He had, in  
his hurry and perplexity, missed his way! This  
was not the Long Spinnny siding, where his young  
brother and his comrades had been at work, and  
from which a circuitous route might yet lead to the  
foot of the shaft, where his mother and Abby were  
waiting and praying for them. It was a blind cut-  
ting, long ago deserted, far away from the shaft,  
and with the flood already filling up and surging  
through the roadway by which alone he could have  
returned. He was lost and he had saved no one!

(To be continued.)

**SIGN THE PLEDGE.**

HERE is something from the *Christian Observer*  
that may be of interest and use to some boys and  
girls who read this paper in the course of a few  
years. Cut it out and keep it till you get old  
enough to understand it, and then try to profit by it.

"I wish boys and girls could sign a pledge to me  
only friends," said a bright and sensible girl to me.  
"I think more than half the pleasure of association  
is spoiled by the prevalent idea that there can be  
no interest in each other that does not mean love."

"If my brothers show to girls such kindly atten-  
tion as brothers might, the girls at once begin to act  
as if they thought the boys in love with them, and  
so they do not dare to be even kind; and they say  
the other young men have the same experience, and  
are afraid to be genuinely friendly unless they are  
willingly supposed to be lovers. On the other hand,  
if I like a young man, and treat him in a frank and  
friendly way, he at once imagines I am 'setting  
my cap' for him, and either 'lights shy' or begins  
to treat me with a love-like familiarity which is not  
pleasant."

This voices the experiences of many a young  
woman, whose sincere friendship might be the sal-  
vation of many a young man, and who would be  
glad to be a genuine helpful comrade, but who  
hesitates for fear of being misunderstood.

**COME TO JESUS.**

Two little girls came home from Sunday-school,  
saying, "Mamma, our teacher said to us to-day  
that we must come to Jesus if we want to be  
saved; but how can I come to him when I cannot  
see him?"

"Did you not ask me to get you a drink last  
night?" replied the mother.

"Yes, mamma."

"Did you see me when you asked me?"

"No; but I knew that you would hear me, and  
get it for me," said the little girl.

"Well, that is just the way to come to Jesus. We  
cannot see him, but we know that he is near us and  
hears every word we say, and that he will get us  
what we need."





PRAIRIE DOG TOWN.

**PRAIRIE DOG TOWN.**

QUEER looking dogs, you say! and well you may, for they are not a bit like dogs. They are more like small woodhucks, and are called dogs probably from the little yelping noise they make when talking to each other. They are about thirteen inches long, and of a reddish brown colour. They are very sociable little creatures, hundreds of them living in the same district with their burrows close together; these districts are called towns or villages. Around the mouth of each burrow they pile the earth to a height of about eighteen inches, and from the top of these they see what is going on in the community, as one or two consequential looking little fellows are doing in the picture. This attitude is one of the most amusing things in the world. In Lincoln Park, Chicago, is quite a colony of prairie dogs, whose antics are an endless source of fun. Burrowing owls and rattlesnakes often live in the same holes with the prairie dogs. There is one of each here, you see. They seem to be having a sparring match, and are evidently making such a clatter as to alarm the little papa dog, who is coming down to see what all the noise is about.

The skill of the parent is shown in making the child do of his own accord what the parent wants him to do, and in making him refrain of his own will from doing what is unwise and injurious.

**LESSON NOTES.**

**FIRST QUARTER.**

STUDIES IN ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, AND EZEKIEL.

B.C. 701.] **LESSON IV.** [Jan. 24.

HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER AND DELIVERANCE.

Isa. 37. 14-21, 33-38. Mem. verses, 15-17.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**

The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them.—Ps. 34. 17.

**CENTRAL TRUTH.**

God is the hearer and answerer of prayer.

**HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.**

Sennacherib, with a great army, attacked the cities on the coast of Palestine, destroyed, he says, forty-six cities of Judah, and while he was at Lachish, thirty miles from Jerusalem, sent an army corps under the Rabshaketh, or chief officer, to demand the surrender of Jerusalem. They said that no one had withstood their army, and none could. To yield meant captivity, loss of the kingdom, all manner of sorrows, and the destruction of the nation as the people of God and the upholders of the true religion. At Isaiah's word, Hezekiah refused to surrender. Then Sennacherib sent the letter again demanding the city. *Messengers*—Of Sennacherib. *Hezekiah prayed*—And so did Isaiah. (2 Chron. 32. 20.) *Lord*—Jehovah, as this word always means when printed in small capitals in our Bibles. *Of hosts*—Organized forces—angels, worlds, powers of nature—ready to do God's will. *Dweller between the cherubim*—Which are upon the mercy seat over the ark. Here God often appeared in glory. (Exod. 25. 22.) *Reproach*—See verses 1-13. *They were no gods*—Sennacherib had destroyed other nations, and their gods had not saved them, for they were mere idols. But Hezekiah pleads that God be not classed with

such idols, for he is really God, and would prove it to all nations by giving his people deliverance. *The angel of the Lord*—A spirit from heaven; or some natural force, as a penitence, which is called God's angel or messenger. (See Ps. 104. 4; 2 Sam. 24. 13 16.) *And it came to pass*—About twenty years later.

**Find in this lesson—**

1. A great need.
2. The true source of help.
3. An earnest prayer.
4. The answer.
5. Some things about God.

**REVIEW EXERCISE.**

1. What great trouble came upon the Jews in Jerusalem? "The Assyrians besieged them with an immense army." 2. What did Hezekiah do in his trouble? "He went into the temple and prayed." 3. By what prophet did the answer come? "By the prophet Isaiah."

**CATECHISM QUESTIONS.**

5. What does the Gospel promise?

The Gospel is the promise of God to pardon, sanctify, and save from eternal destruction all who, according to his commands, repent and believe on his Son.

**God Bless the Farm.**

God bless the farm—the dear old farm,  
God bless its every rood!  
Where willing hearts and sturdy arms  
Can earn an honest livelihood—  
Can from the coarse and fertile soil  
Win back a recompense for toil!

God bless each meadow, field and nook,  
Begemmed with fairest flowers;  
And every leaf that's gently shook  
By evening breeze or morning showers;  
God bless them all—each leaf's a gem  
In Nature's gorgeous diadem.

The orchard that, in early spring,  
Blush rich in fragrant flowers,  
And with each autumn surely bring,  
Their wealth of fruit in golden showers,  
Like pomegranates on Aaron's rod—  
A miracle from Nature's God.

And may he bless the farmer's home,  
Where peace and plenty reign;  
No happier spot 'neath heaven's high dome  
Does this broad, beautiful earth contain,  
Than where, secure from care or strife,  
The farmer spends his peaceful life.

Unvexed by toil and tricks for gain,  
He turns the fertile mould;  
Then scatters on the golden grain,  
And reaps reward an hundred fold—  
He dwells where grace and beauty charm,  
For God hath blessed his home and farm!

**LETTER TO OUR BOYS.**

MY DEAR BOYS,—There are so many boys who are just crossing the threshold of that corner saloon that I must unburden my mind. If I could only make you and them believe that there is nothing smart or manly about this sping of the vices of grown-up people, but that it is altogether contemptible, something would be gained. To be a vicious boy is not to be a man. You might just as well try to grow up by mounting a pair of stilts and stuffing a pillow under your vest, and donning a long-tailed coat. People would only laugh at you for your pains, and you would be the guy of all the town, while you would remain just as much a boy as ever. So it is with your cigarettes and your lager-beer, and even with the "whiskey straight," that you called for so manishly at the saloon last week.

Let me tell you that the saloon, instead of making a man of you, ruins all your chances of manhood. Men do not grow on a diet of cigarettes and lager beer and "whiskey straight." To speak with all seriousness there is no manliness, honour, respectability, wealth or fame in a whiskey-barrel; but this is what a barrel of whiskey

does contain, as some one has put it in rhyme:

- A barrel of headaches, of heartaches,  
woes;
- A barrel of curses, a barrel of blows;
- A barrel of tears from a world-weary wife;
- A barrel of sorrow, a barrel of strife;
- A barrel of all unavailing regret;
- A barrel of cares and a barrel of debt;
- A barrel of crime and a barrel of pain;
- A barrel of hope ever blasted and vain;
- A barrel of falsehood, a barrel of cries  
That fall from the maniac's lips as he dies;
- A barrel of agony heavy and dull;
- A barrel of poison—of this nearly full;
- A barrel of liquid damnation that fires  
The brain of the fool who believes it inspired;
- A barrel of poverty, ruin, and blight;
- A barrel of terrors that grow with the  
night;
- A barrel of hunger, a barrel of groans;
- A barrel of orphans' most pitiful moans;
- A barrel of serpents that hiss as they pass  
From the bead on the liquor that glows in  
the glass.

Believe me, dear boys, this awful barrel in which you are trying to find the elixir of manliness, contains only these ingredients. Is it worth while for any bright boy to meddle with them. Your friend,

AN OLD MAN.

**BOUND ANNUALS**

1891.

Adviser .....	30
Babyland (Boards) .....	0 7
" (Cloth) .....	0 8
Band of Hope .....	0 2
Band of Mercy (Boards) .....	0 2
" (Cloth) .....	0 2
" (Cloth Gilt) .....	0 7
Boys' Own Paper .....	2 0
" (Gilt) .....	2 4
Bo-Peep (Boards) .....	0 2
" (Cloth) .....	1 0
British Workman .....	0 2
British Workwoman .....	0 2
Cassell's Magazine .....	2 7
Chatterbox .....	1 0
Children's Friend .....	0 2
" (Cloth) .....	0 2
Children's Treasury .....	0 2
Child's Companion .....	0 2
" (Cloth) .....	0 2
Child's Own .....	0 2
" (Cloth) .....	0 2
Cottage and Artisan .....	0 2
Family Friend .....	0 2
" (Cloth) .....	0 2
Friendly Visitor .....	0 2
" (Cloth) .....	0 2
Girls' Own Paper .....	2 0
" (Gilt) .....	2 4
Good Words .....	2 2
Infants' Magazine .....	0 2
" (Cloth) .....	0 2
" (Gilt) .....	0 2
Leisure Hour .....	2 2
" (Gilt) .....	2 2
Little Folks .....	1 1
" (Cloth Gilt) .....	1 1
Little Wide Awake .....	1 1
" (Cloth Gilt) .....	1 1
Mother's Companion (Boards) .....	0 2
Our Darlings .....	1 1
Prize .....	0 2
" (Cloth) .....	0 2
Quiver .....	2 2
Sunday .....	1 1
Sunday at Home .....	2 2
" (Gilt) .....	2 2
Sunday Magazine .....	2 2
Young England .....	2 2

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