

HAPPY DAYS

Vol. XXI.

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 24, 1906.

No. 4.

GRETCHEN'S PROMISE.

As little Gretchen was trotting home on her sturdy, fat legs, along the streets of Haarlem, she came to a full stop and gave a little cry of pleasure. Her noisy wooden shoes had stopped their clatter before a little old house whose upper story looked as if it had gone to sleep and was nodding over into the street. The sight that caught her eye was a little ruffled white pin cushion at the door. You, my dear little Canuck, would not know what that meant, but Gretchen knew well enough, and broke into a run, that she might get home quickly and tell her mother.

"Ah, mother dear," she cried, bounding into Madame Grosbeck's clean kitchen. "there is a new baby at Madame Van der Brock's—a girl, because the cushion is white. Do let me go and see the dear little thing, mother, at once."

"Very well," said Mother Grosbeck, smiling; then laying down her paring-knife, she prepared a dainty basket of bread and milk as a present to the mother of the new baby. "Now, Gretchen," she said gravely, taking the little daughter's hand, "I do not want you to stay but a quarter of an hour. When the great market-bell strikes twelve will you come away? And



GRETCHEN'S PROMISE.

little Gretchen promised that she would do so.

Madame Van der Brock's house might look old and dingy on the outside, but in-

side it shone like a piece of the sun. The china plates and bowls fastened against the wall, the pictured tiles, the kettles, churns, presses, moulds and furnaces, looked as if they had been thoroughly scoured with sandpaper every day.

And in a little wooden box built against the wall (you would never know it for a bed) was the new baby, another dear little Gretchen. Ah, how fast the minutes flew while our Gretchen played with the queer pink velvet fingers and toes! The bell struck twelve all too soon, and the madame begged her to stay longer. "I will explain to your mother, my child," she said coaxingly.

"That might do, mada me," answered the little maid resolutely, "if I had not promised; but one must never break a promise."

And when she was gone Madame Van der Brock said to the pink baby, "Dost hear, Gretchen? These must grow into just such a girl—one who cannot break a promise." But Gretchen only screwed up her short nose and winked.

Whenever you think a wrong thought or do a wrong act, remember that you are pleasing Satan, that wicked old spirit who is always making so much trouble in the world.

CHILDREN'S OFFERING.

O, we would bring our treasures
To offer to the King;
We have no wealth or learning,
What shall we children bring?

We'll bring the little duties
We have to do each day;
We'll try our best to please him
At home or school or play.

And these shall be the treasures
We offer to our King,
And these the gifts that even
The poorest child may bring.

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EXAGGERATION.

I hold in my hand a piece of India-rubber. It is very elastic. I can stretch it until it is many times as long as when lying on the table. We must be on our guard against speaking India-rubber words. Boys and girls who will not tell a lie will sometimes try to stretch the truth. I have known boys who, when they did not want to do as they were bidden, were always "so tired" or "so sick." They stretched a little ache into a severe sickness. The other day two girls were running together. When they stopped, one said, "Oh dear, I thought I should die!" while the other declared she was "almost dead." They rested about one minute, and ran again as fast as they could go. When I go into a shop I find that a salesman will sometimes say a little more than what is strictly true in order to sell his goods. I meet also some persons who like to tell stories, and who

always stretch the facts to make them more interesting. This careless way of talking is very wrong. We lose our love of truth when we begin to exaggerate. When I was a boy at school I sometimes had a sharp knife, and would sharpen my slate pencil with it, and would thus dull its edge. So our love of truth is blunted by sharpening the point of an excuse or of a story. There are no such things as "white lies." India-rubber words are falsehoods, and every falsehood is as black as a stove.

MRS. PUSSY'S DISOBEDIENT CHILD.

It is not only boys and girls that have to mind; there are animals, too, that have to obey their fathers and mothers. The following little story tells of a kitten who gave her mother not a little trouble:

"I called the kitten," says the writer, "who sprang from her basket, where she had been lying with her mother, and followed me into the next room. The cat followed, growling warningly, and, taking her up by the neck, replaced her in the basket. Again I called her, and again she came at my call. This time the mother, growling still more threateningly, followed us again; but this time she seized the kitten by the tail instead of by the neck, evidently as a punishment, and pulled her roughly along, the kitten meowing helplessly. For a third time I called, and once more she came to me; but this time the mother was silent. She came, took up the kitten, dragged her off, and then began to bite her again and again in order to secure her obedience. This method was successful, and the next time I called it was in vain."—*Animal Life*.

BEGIN RIGHT.

"My dear little girl, you must not be so impatient; I heard you throwing blocks, and stamping in a very naughty way. What is the matter?"

"Why, mother, I've tried and tried to build a house with my blocks, and when I have it almost finished and it looks so pretty, down it tumbles, and I just can't make it."

"I think I know why you cannot do it, Janet. You did not begin right; you should put those large, heavy blocks on the floor first, and build the smaller ones on top. You cannot build your house unless you make the beginning, or foundation, strong; if you do not, it will surely fall."

That afternoon a letter came from Aunt Sue, saying she was coming to make them a visit. "Oh! I am so glad," cried Janet; "I love Aunt Sue, because she is always sweet and never gets cross or tells me to go away and not bother her."

"I will tell you why she is so sweet, dear," said mother, "she started right when she was a little girl. She, too, was

like your pretty block house; she grew up sweet and good because she was kind to her mother and brothers and sisters, and tried to be sweet even when she could not do as she wanted to. This, like the big, strong blocks, made a good beginning or foundation, for her after-life, and she has become the sweet Aunt Sue that you love so much.

MARY'S BUSY DAY.

"Oh dear! Oh dear!" said Mary. "I have so much to do to-day, for Hildrith's new dress must be finished, and Fluff must have her bells sewn on a new ribbon—for to-morrow is my birthday."

Mary's mother had told her that on the fourth day of October, she would be five years old, and had promised her a party.

You may be sure she was pleased, and every evening she climbed up on a chair, and, with father's blue pencil, marked one more day off the calendar, until there was only one left.

She had gone out into the shade of the garden that morning to finish her sewing, and when she had bathed Hildrith (for she was a china baby—not wax), she put on her thimble and kept on saying, "Small stitches—small stitches—small stitches," as she hemmed the new dress.

But Fluff must have her fun, and while her little mistress was busy stitching, the mischievous kitten was also busy tangling the spool of thread.

"Fluff, what do you mean by d'laying me on this important morning? Are you not ashamed of yourself?"

Fluff seemed to understand, for she crept slyly over and lay down with one eye closed and the other peeping.

Then Mary ran back to the house and brought an empty spool for the kitten to play with—and they were all so busy and happy that day that Mary said it was very nearly as nice as the party day.

Do you not think it is the busy children who are the happiest? I do.

THINE IS THE POWER.

Merton was struggling over an addition sum which would not come right. His slate was smudged, so was his face, with the hot tears falling. "I can't do it, indeed I can't; it won't come right." "Put away your slate, Merton," said mother, "sit on my lap and shut your eyes. Now, did you say, 'Our Father' this morning?" "Yes, mother; why?" "Was there anything in it to help you do your sum?"

He repeated it softly. "I know, 'Thine is the power.' He could show me how to do the sum, couldn't he, mother?" He slipped off mother's knee, cleaned his slate, brushed away his tears, and in a few minutes produced the sum triumphantly, saying, "Thank you, God, thine is the power."

OVER THE WIRES.

Over the wires a message is flying;
On a white cot a dear child is dying
Whose father is miles away.
Fly, message fly!
Or the baby may die
Ere papa her white lips can kiss.

Up to the skies a prayer is ascending
From low o'er the cot where the mother is
bending.

Oh, whispered prayer,
Speed through the air
To the ear of the Infinite One.

Swifter than wind the lightnings race;
Swifter than lightning the prayers pace.
God knows best;
The sufferer rests,
And her father finds her restored.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

WORDS AND WORKS OF JESUS AS RECORDED
IN THE GOSPELS.

LESSON IX.—MARCH 4.

JESUS TELLS WHO ARE BLESSED.

Matt. 5. 1-16. Memorize verses 3-6.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they
shall see God.—Matt. 5. 8.

THE LESSON STORY.

We often find Jesus off on the mountain side alone. He felt the need of talking with his heavenly Father a very great deal. He knew that God his Father had sent him to this sinful world to do a great work. He knew what a great work it was, and how discouraging oftentimes. But these quiet communings with God gave him strength, and he returned to the people with such beautiful messages. This in to-day's lesson is one of the most beautiful. It is called the Beatitudes, because it tells how each one of us can be blessed. Here are some of the ways:

1. By being willing to learn right ways.
2. By being sorry for wrongdoing.
3. By being patient and gentle.
4. By being anxious to do right.
5. By being always ready to help others.
6. By being pure in mind and heart.
7. By being kind to those who spitefully use us.

"Rejoice and be exceeding glad," Jesus said, "if you do these things, for great is your reward in heaven."

Not only does it make one happy here, if one is trying to do right, but it will ensure happiness for ever.

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGEST.

1. Where did Jesus often go? To the mountain alone.
2. Why did he go? To pray to God.
3. What was the result? He was strengthened to say and do helpful things.
4. What are the teachings in to-day's lesson called? The Beatitudes.
5. Why are they called Beatitudes? Because they tell us what will make us blessed.
6. What are these called who do these things? The salt of the earth, or light of the world.
7. What does that mean? That they are the helpers of their fellows.

LESSON X.—MARCH 11.

THE TONGUE AND THE TEMPTER.

Matt. 5. 33-48. Memorize verses 44, 45.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Keep the door of my lips.—Psa. 141. 3.

THE LESSON STORY.

"Keep the door of my lips" is a golden text, indeed, and if we pray it often we will be kept from saying many an unkind and wrong thing. Sometimes we hear people say, "Think before you speak." It is a very good thing to do. If when we are angry we would stop to think how foolish it is to answer back with ugly words. It never does any good and, indeed, always does harm. So also with swearing. That is very wicked and is sure to have a very harmful effect. It is a great sin to use swear-words, and God has said it is very wrong to take his name in vain. It is also wrong to feel bitter and ugly toward our neighbor, even though he has not treated us well. It is so much better to forgive than to hold a grudge. Jesus has told us to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them who "despitefully use and persecute us." That is what he did, and that is what every Christian should try to do. It is oftentimes hard, but with Christ's help we can do it, and if we let him keep the door of our lips we will be helped to leave unsaid many unkind words and cruel actions.

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGEST.

1. Who speaks in the lesson? Jesus Christ.
2. What does he say? That we must not swear.
3. What does "an eye for an eye" mean? To have revenge.
4. Are we to take revenge? No; we are to forgive.
5. Are we to help our enemies? Yes, and to do to them as we would that they should do to us.

MARION'S EXTRACT.

Everything had gone wrong with Marion Douglas that Monday morning. In the first place, breakfast was late, and

been reproved by her mother. Then her little sister, Alice, had actually upset her cup of coffee, and spilled it all over her new plaid merino. She rose from the table very angry and rushed upstairs to change her dress. Some word her Sunday-school teacher had said to her only the morning before crossed her memory.

"It is no use," she said aloud, "for me to try to be a Christian. I might as well give up."

As she stood, a few minutes later, with her hat and coat on, ready for school, she remembered that it was her turn to learn and repeat four lines of a poem from some author. She caught up her book of extracts and opened it. What was it that caused the tears to flow from her eyes and her lips to move in prayer?

She stood a moment committing the lines to memory, then went down and spoke pleasantly to the cook, and kissed her mother and Alice good-bye, and went away to school. And when it was her turn to give an extract she rose with a bright, unclouded face and repeated slowly:

"The little worries which we meet each day
May lie as stumbling-blocks across our way,
Or we may make them stepping-stones
to be
Of grace, O Christ, to thee."

HOW COAL IS MADE.

Thousands of years ago much of the earth was covered with forests. These died and made great beds of decayed wood and leaves. Rain soaked them, and they sank into the ground. Dust and earth covered them very deeply, and the heat of the earth baked them, so that they turned hard and black, and finally became mines of coal, both bituminous and anthracite.

MY FINE GENTLEMAN.

I know a fine gentleman, careful and neat,
He is dainty and dignified, handsome and sweet,

As trim as a grenadier in his gray clothes,
And these are of fur from his head to his toes,

He keeps sharp little pins that can scratch
if you tease,

But in little fur pockets he hides away
these

And beside me sits down, looking
friendly and wise,

Gazing hard at my milk with his steady,
round eyes,

He has lots of connections; perhaps it
may be

That one of his cousins joins you at your
tea.

If you have such a friend, my fine gentleman, please,

Would present his regards to his cousin
Maltese.



JAPANESE CHILDREN.

If you could leave your pleasant homes to-day without the long journey by sea and land, and find yourselves in far-away Japan, how many strange sights and sounds you would see and hear!

Of course you would be interested in the children, who look so different from the boys and girls of Canada. Their skin is much darker and their hair black. Then, instead of little girls with short dresses and boys with knee pants, both boys and girls wear a dress made something like a coat, coming almost to the ground.

How you would laugh at the queer wooden shoes which they put on so easily. They step from one shoe into another without touching either with the hand! Shoes worn out of doors are not used in the house. When we go down town the noise in some places of the clatter, clatter of the shoes seems odd to a new-comer.

Some of you, I am sure, are always ready and willing to help in the care of your younger brothers and sisters, but I am sure none of you carry them as the babies are carried here. The little ones are fastened on the backs of their sisters, who often have to bring them to school when they come to study.

Suppose we go out in the street and follow, in imagination, some children who are going toward a temple. We pass through narrow streets with low houses and shops on either side. The houses have no windows and doors in front, as in Canada, but are entirely open, and if we

want to buy anything at the shops we sit on the floor while the goods are brought to us for our selection. We have loving missionaries in Japan who are teaching these children the Way of Life.

A CHILD'S PRAYER.

Little Johnnie lay burning with fever, and, becoming very hungry, said: Aunt Kate, can I have a piece of bread? I am so hungry."

His aunt said: "No, darling, the doctor says it will make you worse."

Then another aunt came in, and was met with the same plaintive cry: "Aunt Alice, give me a piece of bread."

Tears came into the eyes of both ladies as Aunt Alice, said "No."

In a little while some one else came—probably the mother—only to hear the same pitiful cry. The little boy, finding that his case was hopeless, went to another source of comfort. He, like many boys and girls of larger growth,

found that "man's extremity is God's opportunity." Like grown people, when human help failed, he turned to God. His parents and teachers had taught him to pray, and the evening incense of prayer and praise went up nightly from the little boy's heart. Now, in his hunger, he remembered the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread." With hungry lips and sweet voice, laying his little hands on his breast, he said earnestly: "Dear Jesus, your poor little boy is starving for a piece of bread. Please give it to him; he is so hungry."

Of course mother and aunts all began to cry; but wonderful to relate, grandma came in, and seeing the state of affairs, said, "Girls, don't you remember the doctor said if Johnnie wanted to eat we could give him some milk?"

Every one ran to get it. Tender hands raised Johnnie's head and held the cup to his lips, and never did milk go gurgling down a more grateful throat.

Instead of lying down immediately, the child raised his beautiful eyes and said, "Thank you, dear Jesus; it went to the part what hurted."

HOMESICK FOR A CHICKEN.

Ophelia May is a very small and very black little girl. When she was nine years old, her father sent her away to a boarding school in the sunny Southland where she lives. Her little black skin covers a heart as white and pure as a little girl's heart can be; but at school she

was lonely and, oh, so homesick! She longed for her little speckled chicken. It seemed to Ophelia May that she could have stood everything if she could only have had her pet chicken.

One evening there was an entertainment at the school, and Ophelia May was to recite. Before the entertainment began all the little girls on the programme met, except Ophelia May. Where was she? Not in her room, nor the dining-room; she had not been at supper, the girls then said.

They began to search for her, and at last some one said, "She was so homesick, maybe she has started to walk home."

Suddenly George Washington, who does all the outdoor work, said, "Here she is!"

By the corner of the house, close up to the gray stone, lay Ophelia May, tear-stained, dirty and sound asleep, with a speckled chicken clutched in her arms, and around the chicken's neck the best hair ribbon of Ophelia May, a new red one!

After that Ophelia May was always allowed to feed the chickens, and grew quite contented and happy.

TRAINING PENNY.

Our little Skye terrier, Penny, will jump to four or five times his height, and delights in doing so. The other day, as I was holding a stick for him to jump over to please the children, a lady who came up said, amid the children's shouts of delight:

"I can't bear to see him! I only can think how you must have whipped him in order to make him do it."

"Why," I cried in astonishment, "Penny was never whipped in his life! He would be heart-broken and never hold up his head again, for he is very sensitive. He learned to jump over my hands in five minutes, and has gradually jumped higher and higher. He learned to beg and shake hands in the same way. He will do almost anything for praise, caresses and candy."

A great many things he took up himself. For instance, when his master winds his watch in the evening, Penny goes to bed. If he is in the midst of a frolic, it doesn't matter; if his master takes his watch from his pocket and begins to wind it, Penny starts, and he does not walk, but runs.

He knows a surprising number of things. If you say, "Penny, I wonder if it's raining," he runs to the chair by the window, jumps up, and poking his head through the curtains looks up and down the street. He goes to a neighbor's house and jumps up and looks through a window in the top of the door to see if the one for whom he is hunting is inside. He jumps up and touches the bell in another house when his mistress is inside.