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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVIII.]

TORONTO, DECEMBER 3, 1898.

[No. 49.]

In Autumn Days.

BY L. D. PERKINS.

From hill and mount the forest lifts
Its gorgeous banners to the sky;
The sun of Indian summer sifts
Its softened splendour far and nigh.

Above the fertile harvest fields,
The cannonade of tempest rung,
But there, in grace surpassing fair,
The fleecy flags of truce are hung.

No breeze-kissed leaf or cloud is seen
In lower or in upper air—
The wooing zephyr cannot choose
Between the beauty here
and there.

A holy hush broods o'er the earth,
On mountain high, in valley deep,
Save when the blue jay screams like one
Aroused from conscience-troubled sleep.

Heaven grant it be that when
round us
Life's rich autumnal glories lie,
Through silences of peace we hear
No guilt-awakened mem-
ory's cry!

POPE PIUS VII. AND NAPOLEON I. AT FONTAINEBLEAU.

Pope Pius VII did more for Italy in some ways than many who have held the same office before or since his time. We are told that "he abolished every kind of torture and modified the powers of the Inquisition," besides doing "a great deal towards the suppression of banditti," or the highway robbers of Italy. He was a man of broad mind, great powers, active virtue, and of a peaceful disposition. Towards the end of 1807, he saw fit to refuse an important desire of Jerome, the brother of Napoleon I., and other things having increased the high tension then existing between Napoleon and the Pope, the former coolly annexed certain provinces of Italy, whereupon the Pope excommunicated him. There was no longer now any pretence of good feeling, and one of Napoleon's generals forced his way into the palace of the Pope and conveyed the Pontiff to Spain. From here he was taken in 1812 to Fontainebleau, where he was treated with scant courtesy. Early in the following year he was persuaded to sign a contract which virtually surrendered to Napoleon all the ecclesiastical states. This was all that was required of him and he was at once released. Soon afterwards the Pope saw the mistake he had made and wrote to Napoleon to say that he retracted his former concessions. Napoleon, however, took no notice of the letter. Our illustration shows the two great men discussing the contract probably just before the Pope signed it.

A man's conduct in his own home is the best indication of his character. If he is fault-finding, surly, and selfish there, no amount of prayer-meeting participation or polished manners in society can make a real gentleman of him. His actions toward his mother are a good gauge of his real worth. He who on every occasion honours his parents proves himself one of God's knights.

GOLDEN GOSSIP.

How easy it is to speak kindly of every one. If, during our conversation, a bitter thought comes in our heart, we can just hesitate a minute; we will be sure to change that hard word to something pleasant, and thus make life happier not only for the friend in question, but it will certainly make our hearts lighter to know that no hasty word of ours has been the means of making another sad. For cruel words, sometimes intentional, but more often uttered

him every day and every hour. Now if we must talk, let it be golden gossip. "Speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness to all men" (Titus 3. 2).

CHRIST IS ALL.

Gather off your beech trees, in the budding spring days, a little brown shell, in which lies tender green leafage, and if you will carefully strip it you will find, packed in a compass that might almost

CHILDREN IN CHINA.

BY MISS J. O. EVANS.

Some days ago as I went to my work almost across the city, the thermometer between 90 degrees and 100 degrees, I thought of you and wrote you a thought letter. I often write thought letters to shut out the outside world. Going along the bank of the canal, a little girl of some four or five years came from her play to meet me, with a pleasant smile—but, children, she was so dirty! I don't think you ever saw such a dirty half-dressed little girl. I did not know her at first, through all the dirt, and she could only have known me as a foreigner. She put her little hand up to take mine, and led me along to her home.

I wonder what you would have thought of 'hat for a home? Just one room is theirs—her father, mother, and little baby sister live there together, the fuel room and the pig pen in the front yard; not one blade of grass, no flowers, no pretty play things, and as I sat on the brick bed talking with and teaching her mother, some of her companions came and sat down close by me—they were all just as dirty as she was.

I think I pity the children of this land more than the grown-up people; none of the nice times and pleasant words you have in a Christian land, mothers here so often have no pleasant words for their little girls, only scolding and often blows; little girls are not loved as boys are.

In the same room where I taught I saw some years ago a sight which filled my heart with joy, a girl of some twelve or thirteen lay dying. She had learned to read and pray, and loved Jesus, she spoke to her mother just before she died, and told her she was going to be with Jesus, and was glad to go. Her father was and still is a heathen, but we hope her mother and brother love her Jesus.

Won't you pray for the little girls in China that they may know and love your Jesus?

RECKLESS PRESUMPTION.

A noble ship was bearing in 'o port'. It was the evening hour and too late to enter without a pilot. There were two passages into the harbour, one a dangerous, narrow channel, the other a wide and safer one. The captain determined to pilot himself by the narrow passage. A storm was coming up, and the passengers, with fear and consternation, begged him to take the wider channel. He laughed at their cowardice, and swore he would do as he pleased. As the night advanced, the gale increased. Soon arose a cry, "Breakers ahead, breakers ahead!" The captain flew to the wheel, sails were struck; the wind had the mastery; the captain found a will that could defy his own. The vessel made a fearful plunge, struck the foreship deep into the sand, to be shattered by the wild waves' pleasure. Few survived the terrors of that fearful night; but among the dead thrown up by the rising tide was the body of the wilful and presumptuous captain.

Just back of the darkest cloud the sun may be shining. In five minutes we shall see him again. Do not let us lose heart because of a gust of rain or a spell of gloom. Warp and wool, our days are blended of the sunshine and the rain.



POPE PIUS VII. AND NAPOLEON I. AT FONTAINEBLEAU.

thoughtlessly, can never be instrumental of good, and when once spoken can never be recalled. There is certainly something good to be found in every human soul, so we should try during our whole life to speak well of others.

It certainly is difficult sometimes to see the good in the midst of so much dross, but if we cannot speak well, do not speak ill. We must leave such unfortunates out of our conversation. There are so many pleasant truths to be uttered which will make life sweeter and more worth the living. We must ever try to put away all unfriendly thoughts and temptations, and remember the example we have to follow. Strive to be more like

go through the eye of a needle, the whole of that which afterward in the sunshine is to spread and grow as the yellow-green foliage which delights and freshens the eye. So in Christ, to be unfolded through slow generations, in accordance with human experience and wants, is all that men can know or need know concerning God and themselves and the relations of both—their duties, their hopes, their fears and their love.—Alexander MacLaren.

Bill—"Is your neighbourhood a quiet one?" Jill—"No; I can't say that it is. There are three 'painless' dentists on our block."

The Boy and the Sparrow.

Once a sweet boy sat and swung on a limb;
 On the ground stood a sparrow-bird looking at him;
 Now, the boy he was good, but the sparrow was bad,
 So he shied a big stone at the head of the lad,
 And it killed the poor boy, and the sparrow was glad.
 Then the little boy's mother flew over the trees—
 Tell me, where is my little boy, sparrow-bird, please?
 He is safe in my pocket," the sparrow bird said,
 And another stone shied at the fond mother's head,
 And she fell at the feet of the wicked bird, dead.
 You imagine, no doubt, that the tale I have mixed,
 But it wasn't by me that the story was fixed;
 'Twas a dream a boy had after killing a bird,
 And he dreamed it so loud that I heard every word,
 And I jotted it down as it really occurred.
 —Good Words.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, DECEMBER 3, 1898.

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

DECEMBER 11, 1898.

THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH.

ANNOUNCED BY THE PROPHETS.

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this."—Isa. 9. 6, 7.

I suppose many of you have heard the great oratorio of the Messiah, or at least have heard the glorious anthem in our topic text. After the sweetness of the promise, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given," repeated over and over again, comes that marvellous outburst of music when the whole strength of the organ and orchestra and chorus come down the words, "He shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." It is one of the most sublime announcements that ever was made, and the music that accompanies it is worthy of the theme.

Isaiah, to whom these words are attributed, has been called the greatest of the prophets—the fifth evangelist. It is as though he really saw the very things which he described. Many prophets and sages and seers announced the coming of the Messiah, but none so clearly and brightly and strongly as he.

How strange it seems that it was a Child upon whose shoulders the government of the world should be laid. It is

one of those things which no one could fully understand, but God in his own time and way made it plain. Milton, in his splendid ode on the Nativity of Jesus speaks of the "Blessed Babe" as overcoming all the gods of the heathen and destroying their power.

When I was in old Cairo, in Egypt, the porter of the city came to open its gate carrying on his shoulder a great key as big as a club. It instantly occurred to me that this was the meaning of this text. Upon the shoulders of the Son of God are placed the keys of the universe, the might, the power, the authority. But between the prophecy of Isaiah and its fulfillment in Christ more than four long centuries were to pass. Other prophets rose and foretold the coming of the Christ, but the world grew almost weary waiting till at length in the fulness of time God sent forth his Son to fulfil his ancient promise.

TOBY TOMPKINS IN THE PARSONAGE WELL.

BY REV. EDWARD A. RAND.

Poor Toby Tompkins! He had come out of a saloon in a bewildered state of mind, and staggering across the street, wandered up and down a lot owned by the town and known as the parsonage lot. Here had stood the parsonage in days when the town paid for the minister's support, and also owned the house in which he lived. Long ago the house had been taken down. The old parsonage well had not been "taken up," but remained neglected, and a menace to any one who might cross the lot in the night.

Into this old parsonage well, as no one had ever actually fallen, it seemed to be taken for granted that no one ever would tumble; and it was neglected. But how about Toby Tompkins, not only a Tompkins in the dark, but a Tompkins drunk? It was one of those nights when the moon is supposed to shine, and consequently small towns do not light their streets. This night, the sky was clouded. The moon was somewhere behind the clouds, playing "hide-and-seek" with the stars. If it had been openly shining, though, that would not have helped Toby.

He staggered about helplessly, as if lunging at an enemy that he never could reach. All the time he was coming nearer to the well, coming nearer, nearer. One moment he halted on the decayed boards that pretended to shut in the well; and then, with a crash, down he went. Fortunately, there was not much water in the old well; but there was very much more than he for years had cared to have anything to do with, and enough to chill the poor man through and through up to his shoulders.

"Hark, boys! What's that?" asked Harry Dame.

He, with John Tredick and Joe Capen, was going home from a meeting of the young folk's temperance society, the "Cold Water Cadets." The boys had just reached the parsonage lot, and heard a mixture of the strangest sounds,—groans, moans, outcries, dismal appeals, all coming out of the ground somewhere. "Put, boys, put!" shrieked John Tredick, a timid, nervous chap who had lately been reading about the witch of Endor.

He had sprung away about a dozen feet, when Joe Capen rushed after him, and, grabbing him, cried, "Hold on, John. Don't make a fool of yourself. There's trouble, and we may be wanted."

"Oh—oh—oh!" exclaimed John, ashamed to run further, and going with Joe, yet shivering like the dried leaves on the corn-stalk in a November wind.

"This way, boys! This way!" Harry was shouting. He had entered the lot, and was cautiously moving ahead, suspicious that the sounds came from the old well.

"Ay—ay!" boldly sang out Joe Capen, pulling along his shivering ally, who was shaking almost as badly as poor Toby Tompkins.

"It's the well, boys, I know," cried Harry. "Look out!"

"No doubt of it," said Joe, coming up. Jest here, the moon sedately and complacently put her head out of a cloud, as if she had not been foolishly frolicking with the stars, and seemed to say, "Can I do anything?"

"Who—who's here?" shouted Harry, cautiously calling at something before him, something black in the moonlight, something uneven, a hole with edges all broken.

"Booh—booh—booh!" groaned the half-sober Toby down in the well.

"Boys, rouse the neighbourhood!" called Harry. "We want a ladder, ropes, lantern—" He did not stop to finish his sentence, and Joe Capen did not stop to hear him. Away they went to get help.

John was left by the well, trembling

less, but timid. Undecided, wishing he knew what he had better do, he finally concluded that Harry and Joe would get the help that would be needed, and he started for home, running by every dark recess as if expecting that it would turn into another well's mouth and discharge a dragon at him.

Harry and Joe were soon back at the well, and an abundance of help came with them. Toby must be taken from the well, of course, everybody warmly asserted, but everybody said it would be a "job." Yes, a hard job. It took Harry's father, and Joe's father, and Harry's "Uncle Henry," and Joe's "big brother Jim," and Farmer Trefethen and his three hired men, and a stout ladder, and Bartholomew Barry down in the well, and a rope under Toby Tompkins' arms, and one lantern hung down in the well, and one lantern at the top of the well.

"All ready!" shouted Bartholomew down in the well. "I've got the rope around him, and I'll stiddy him on the ladder if I can. H'ist now, all, h'ist!"

Didn't they pull? Farmer Trefethen and his three men pulled, and Jim Capen pulled, and Uncle Henry pulled, and— "Hold on, there!" shouted the sepulchral Bartholomew. "Don't pull so hard. You'll do more than the king's oxen, and pull this 'ere well up by the roots. Stiddy, now! H'ist! Up—she—rises." Up he rose; yes, up went Toby, urged by Bartholomew if he had "one grain of a sober idee" in his head to hold on "that ladder good."

It was considered to be a wonderful deliverance. Even the great Squire Manson, chairman of the board of "select-men," going home late from his office, dignified, tall, and stately, and not a man to speak about trifles, halted as he came up to the group of rescuers still lingering by the lot. He learned of their heroism, and made a long speech of thanks to them. Then he added, "And, fellow-citizens, I think the town ought to stop up that hole. I will see that the well is properly secured, and of no citizen of this town shall it be said that he was permitted to fall into such a trap." This was oracularly declared by the squire.

"Three cheers for the cheerman of our board of select-men!" shov ed Bartholomew, and amid the echo of this unsolicited ovation Squire Manson proudly walked home.

Joe Capen had heard every word uttered by the squire, and began to comment on the speech when Joe and Harry Dame were alone.

"Now, Harry, I've got an idee."

"What is it, Joe?"

Joe told Harry his idee.

"Now, Harry you want to go with me?"

"Certainly. You know the motto of our 'Cold Water Cadets' is, 'Always at it.' I'll go with you."

In about five minutes from that time Squire Manson heard steps, and looked up from the columns of The Weekly Busy Bee, from which hive he was getting stores of wisdom's honey. He saw Joe Capen and Harry Dame standing before him.

Joe was spokesman, a shade of fear and trembling clouding his face. "Squire Manson, we heard you say at the parsonage well that it ought to be closed up, and you would do it. Now—" Harry had told Joe to insert here the request, "Excuse the question," which Joe did insert. "Now—excuse the question—but don't you think the saloon where the man got his rum should be closed up? I mean the man who tumbled into the well."

The squire hemmed, blushed, wiped his forehead, and said, "Now, boys, I don't think the best way is to shut up the saloon. People will buy and sell, and all—all—all—"

"But there is a law against it, sir," said Harry, boldly.

"Oh—ahem—yes; but let us take a statesmanlike view of it." The squire rolled out "statesman" in ponderous tones. "The point is, what is good policy? Now, one of my fellow-citizens, who—who—is a drinking man, said he and a dozen others had agreed that if we did not shut up the saloon they would always conduct themselves temperately, and no harm would come. If we shut up the saloon, it would anger them, and—"

"May I ask the name of that man?" inquired with dignity one of the squire's fellow-citizens present, Joe Capen.

"Oh, it was Toby Tompkins."

"He's the man that has conducted himself temperately, and got into the well, squire."

"What, Toby? I didn't see the man who was taken out. They had taken him off when I came up. What, Toby?"

"Yes, sir," said Harry, "and when we spoke to him—we boys, cadet boys,—he told us he would sign our pledge, though it might not do any good if the saloon kept open."

"Then the saloon shall be shut," and the squire, as he spoke, banged the table with his big fist.

The saloon was shut up. Toby signed the pledge. He kept it.

None of Our Business.

(A little girl was heard to finish her evening prayer with these words: "And I saw a poor little girl on the street today, cold and barefooted: but it's none of our business,—is it, God?")

"None of our business!" wandering and sinful,
 All through the streets of the city they go,
 Hungry and homeless in the wild weather—

None of our business! Dare we say so?

"None of our business!" Children's wan faces,
 Haggard and old with their suffering and sin;
 Hold fast your darlings on tender, warm bosoms,
 Sorrow without, but the home light within.

What does it matter that some other woman—
 Some common mother—in bitter despair,
 Walls in a garret, or sits in a cellar,
 Too broken-hearted for weeping or prayer?

"None of our business!" Sinful and fallen,
 How they may jostle us close on the street!
 Hold back your garment! Scorn? They are used to it;
 Pass on the other side lest you should meet.

"None of our business!" Oh, then, the music;
 On with the feasting, though hearts break forlorn;
 Somebody's hungry, somebody's freezing,
 Somebody's soul will be lost ere the morn.

Somebody's dying (on with the dancing);
 One for earth's pottage is selling his soul;
 One for a bauble has bartered his birth-right,
 Selling his all for a pitiful dole.

Ah, but One goeth abroad on the mountain,
 Over lone deserts, with burning deep sands!
 Seeking the lost ones (it is His business);
 Bruised thought his feet are, and torn though his hands.

Thorn-crowned his head and his soul scrow-stricken,
 (Saving men's souls at such infinite cost),
 Broken his heart for the grief of the nations;
 It is his business saving the lost!
 —Exchange.

A PUZZLED PROFESSOR.

The tale of the astronomer, says The Christian Endeavour World, whose waggish student pated a firefly on the lens of his telescope, is equalled by that of the entomologist whose tricky class presented him with a composite bug for classification, made of the body, legs, and wings of different insects stuck together, and which he unhesitatingly pronounced a "humbug." The third story of the trio has been found.

Professor Zanker, the famous orientalist, one day received a copy of an inscription which a friend and admirer of his declared he had found in a mediæval tomb. The sender asked him to decipher the mysterious extract, promising to forward the valuable old MS. as soon as he got it from its owner, a relative of his. The inscription ran as follows:

FUOY ERA WOH, ROSSFORP ONINROM DOOG

For three days the professor puzzled his brains without making any sense of it. Then his little son, a fourth-form boy, came into his father's study and spied the strange writing on the desk. After looking at it for a while, he asked his father since when he had taken to writing backwards.

"What do you mean?" asked the astonished professor.

"Why," replied the lad, "if you read this from right to left, it runs thus, 'Good morning, professor, how are you?'"

Mrs. Murray—"Give me tin-cents worth av ham." Grocer—"Sugar cured, madam?" Mrs. Murray—"No! I want some that has niver bin dizzed."

The New Testament.

Matthew begins the inspired story Of the Saviour's life and glory! Mark follows him with eager pen, Adding his memories for men! Luke, the beloved physician, now Crowns anew the sacred brow; And John, who leaned on Jesus' breast, Writes more of love than all the rest. With Christ's history thus ended, His Apostles' Acts are blended: And Paul, whom we account the chief, Adds Romans to the sacred sheaf. Corinthians First and Second then Come with Galatians from his pen; Ephesians and Philippians now His loving care for churches show; Colossians, too, have many a rule Sent them from Christ's own perfect school. Thessalonians First and Second With the others now are reckoned; To Timothy two letters find Full of counsels, loving, kind; In one to Titus we are shown, That none are saved by works alone. He writes Philemon now and sends The slave he to his care commends. Then to the Hebrews, Paul doth bring New proofs that Christ's their Priest and King. James, of the Twelve, adds here his word, He urges prayer and trust in God. Two letters Peter writes; give heed, Him Jesus bade his flock to feed. Now John, whose words before we've heard, In letters, First, Second and Third, Begs us while here we live to love, That we may grow like God above; Then Jude with all the rest unites, Of judgment and of mercy writes. Last, we to Revelation come, A view revealed of heaven, the home Of all who love their Saviour Lord, Omnipotent, Incarnate Word, Whom ancient writers dimly saw Through Jewish ritual and law; This light, God's love to all then lent Who read the ancient Testament. Thank God, we've both books, old and new. Read, study both, and love them, too; Learn Christ, and trusting in his grace, We soon shall see his glorious face, And, with apostles, prophet, priest, We'll meet him at his marriage feast.

THE CONSECRATED SNOW-MAN.

What a glorious afternoon it had been—bright, clear and cold! Just cold enough to make the cheeks glow, and to send the blood dancing through the veins. And then, such a hill! Not for miles around was there one to be compared with that down which the girls and boys of this quaint old town had for generations coasted. And after generations it was still unchanged, so that those who had left it boys were able when they returned as grandfathers to find the exact spot where "Billy Winthrop came to grief in '20," or "Jack Smith smashed his new sled to splinters, fighting that rebel Ray during the winter of '12." And the bump, half-way down, which had caused shouts of laughter from the boys and cries of dread anticipation from the timid girls of '76, was still there to perform the same service for those of a century later. And, on this particular afternoon of which I write, the coasting itself was simply perfect—the last fall of snow, only the night before, having been of that peculiar quality known as "packing," so that, in a very short time, the hill was like a beaten path. All the afternoon, sleds of every sort and description, carrying passengers of all ages and conditions, were flying down, and being dragged up again by their rosy, puffing owners. Jack Alden could not have counted the trips he had made on "The Wild Ranger," with Rob Roy bounding, barking beside him, waving his splendid, plummy tail like a banner of victory. It never occurred to him to try to count the small people of both sexes who had made these journeys with him, much less to estimate the number of times he had stood, with his hands tucked beneath his "sweater," hopping from one foot to the other to keep up the circulation, while some less fortunate young person, to whom the ownership of such as "The Wild Ranger" was about as likely as the discovery of Captain Kidd's treasure, had a ride. A fortunate boy was this same Jack Alden, for, when one is the popular captain of a football team, with a successful season safely behind him and the joyful anticipation of an equally successful one in the future; when one has health and plenty and love beyond words to measure lavished upon him—why, what is there left for him to wish? And yet, after the glorious afternoon I have described, which had ended beneath a sky glowing with crimson and gold, after a delicious supper, to which

Jack had brought a magnificent appetite, after the steel runners of "The Wild Ranger" had been, as in duty bound, carefully wiped and polished—Jack's expressions, as he sat dangling his legs from the newel—where doubtless his grandfather and great-grandfather before him had dangled theirs in times of perplexity—was not one of unalloyed satisfaction. Now it was no uncommon thing for Jack to mount that newel; but it was quite out of the ordinary for him to sit there without speaking for fifteen consecutive minutes, and Rob felt it to be so. And, finally, unable to endure the unusual condition of affairs longer, he demolished the fuzzy ball which for that length of time he had been pleased to form, and, sitting up on his haunches, looked straight up into his young master's face, his beautiful head a little on one side, with eyes which said as plainly as words: "What is it? Why have you not spoken to me all this long time? Are you in trouble? Surely, you know how gladly I would help you, if I can!" And Jack, awakened from his brown study by the dog's movement, first laughed at his questioning attitude, then, growing serious again, though with traces of the smile still lingering about his lips, said, as he clasped his hands around his knee and looked back into the eyes raised so lovingly to his: "It's that little sick chap that's bothering me, Rob. You know him. He lives in the cottage just this side of the hill, and he sits always by the window watching us as we go by to coast; but he never, never goes to coast himself. He never, never goes anywhere, or does anything but sit there always, seeing other fellows having a good time. It doesn't seem quite square, does it, Rob, old fellow? Just suppose it was you—no, suppose it was I—who sat there always; for that would hurt you a lot more, you fine old fellow! Yes, suppose I had to sit there always, and see other fellows go coasting, and never go myself! Why, it would be awful, Rob—awful! But, if I did have to sit like that, wishing and wishing, and half wild to be well and strong, and to go, too, don't you think that I should like it if, some day, instead of going by, one of the boys stopped and tried to make it up to me, somehow? Ah, I was sure you would think so!" as Rob gave his tall a resounding thump on the hardwood floor. "And I know you wouldn't kick if you didn't go to the hill for that one afternoon, would you? Well, that's all right, then," as another vigorous thump and a little whine answered the appeal. "And now get out of the way, please, for I'm going to practice falling, and I might hurt you; for you know well enough, Rob, that I mustn't let myself grow soft this winter." The minister lifted his eyes, and glanced from his window. He was busy with his sermon; but, as he remarked to his wife over his shoulder, the sight of those healthy, hearty, happy boys on their way to the hill was like a breath of the cold, fresh air to him. Then he turned quite round, and asked her, with a twinkle in his eyes—the minister's eyes had a way of twinkling—if she remembered the day that he and she had run into a great drift—just below the "bump," and had to be dug out. And she answered, trying hard to look severe, that she most certainly did; and that, moreover, she had always believed, and always would believe, that it was through no accident on his part; and she advised him to return to his sermon. This advice he took; but, as he lifted his pen, he glanced again through the window. And this time there was no twinkle in his eyes, but something quite different; and he said, half sadly: "Sometimes I think that I shall have to move my desk from here, Alice, the sight of that little chap yonder makes my heart ache so. But, then, again, I feel that I cannot afford to lose the beautiful lesson of gentleness and patience which he is constantly teaching me. Poor little hero! See how he smiles back at those boys!"—as his wife came and stood behind him, looking over his shoulder—"while all the time you can catch that longing look in his eyes, as he watches them running off so strong and well and hearty! But it will all be made up to you some day, my little lad! That blessed assurance has kept other hearts than mine from breaking when thinking of such as you!" But, after the minister had finally gone back to his sermon, his wife still stood there with her hand upon his shoulder, looking over at the sad, pale face; for, now that the boys were all out of sight, it was very, very sad indeed. But she did not see the little cottage, or the pale, sad face for very long, for great, burning tears rose into her eyes, and blotted them quite away, as she thought of her own strong, healthy boy, fast asleep in the

next room. As she brushed them away, and was about to turn back to her work, something made her pause, and kept her standing there; and, after I should not dare say how long—remembering the minister's neglected stockings—she leaned down over her husband's shoulder, and whispered, because she could not speak out loud: "Hubert, remember the splendid coasting on the hill, and then—look!" Jack had come tramping up the street beneath the lacey branches of the bared elms which formed a lovely arch above his head, with Rob capering about his heels. But where, with the hill straight before him, was "The Wild Ranger"? Could it be that Jack had forgotten that enterprising deed, and in a fit of absent-mindedness picked up instead that little shovel which he carried over his shoulder? He reached the cottage, and there, pausing, swung his "tam" about his head; and, instantly, the lost smile came back to the white, thin face, and, as Rob, with his forefeet on the gate, barked out his greeting, the child laughed almost merrily, and waved his hand. But then, when he expected Jack, as all the others had done, to pass by, the boy stopped, and, lifting the latch, entered the little garden. But he did not go up to the house. With a returning wave of his hand toward the now expectant face at the window, he bounded on to the little lawn, and fell to digging in the snow with that same shovel which he had carried over his shoulder, piling, rounding, moulding it till a beautiful pedestal was formed, Rob in the meantime dashing and circling round him, bounding through the drifts, and otherwise conducting himself, in the evident endeavour to add his share to the entertainment—and succeeding admirably, judging from the beaming face which kept turning from him to Jack. And as the snowman began to rise on his own feet, the interest and delight in it increased. Never artist worked with greater zeal or in a better cause. Never was one watched with keener appreciation. And, oh, the change which had come to the pale, sad face was beautiful to behold. Beaming with eager interest, the dull eyes shining, the faintest of colours—but still a colour—creeping into the bloodless cheeks, and the little hands clasped in a perfect ecstasy of enchantment, the child watched the work proceed, the wonderful image grow, nodding now and then, or waving his hand in response to the laughing glance from the busy worker, or tapping on the pane to attract his attention to some antic of the ever-restless Rob. Inch by inch the great man went up—hands, arms, shoulders, and then his head! Jack ran into the house, and borrowed a hat and cane; and then, hurrah! he was complete! The shadows had grown long and deep, and finally the sun had dropped behind the hill. The last touch was added; and, as Jack, with a wave of his cap presented his work, and it with a laughing bow was accepted, a great flood of colour fell over everything, deepening that in Jack's bright cheeks, casting a rosy light over the whiteness of the snow, and playing, like a halo, about the head of the sick boy. Jack—happy little Jack! in spite of that unvisited coasting-land beyond the glory-flooded hill—having, with Rob, said farewell to the other happy boy, was starting down to the little gate, walking backward, that he might wave his "tam" till the last minute, when suddenly he was brought to a stand by landing directly in somebody's arms—somebody who caught and held him fast, quite as if there for that express purpose. With a little exclamation of astonishment, Jack tilted back his head till he could look into the minister's face—for it was the minister, and laughing a little, said: "I beg your pardon, sir! I did not mean to bump into you." "You needn't beg my pardon, Jack. I like to get a boy into my arms now and then. I am going in to see Bobby, after I have had a nearer view of this—this—consecrated snow-man!" And then the hands which had been about the boy were suddenly laid lightly upon the little red "tam." But Jack did not hear the softly breathed blessing; nor did it till long afterward occur to him to wonder at the meaning of the minister's strange words. "I used to ask myself," said a resident of New York city a few years ago, "why a certain church was full of all sorts and conditions of people, listening earnestly to the Gospel preached by a plain, unremarkable speaker. I learned afterward that this preacher had made it a rule for twenty-five years never to let a day pass without speaking to at least one unconverted soul on the subject of salvation by Jesus Christ." Think of that record—one a day for twenty-five years!

His Mother's Song.
Beneath the hot midsummer sun,
The men had marched all day,
And now beside a rippling stream,
Upon the grass they lay.
Tiring of games and idle jests,
As swept the hours along,
They called to one who mused apart,
"Come, friend, give us a song."
"I fear I cannot please," he said;
"The only songs I know
Are those my mother used to sing
For me long years ago."
"Sing one of those," a rough voice cried,
"There's none but true men here;
To every mother's son of us
A mother's songs are dear."
Then sweetly rose the singer's voice,
Amid unwonted calm,
"Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb?
"And shall I fear to own his cause?"—
The very stream was stilled,
And hearts that never throbbled with fear
With tender thoughts were filled.
Ended the song; the singer said,
As to his feet he rose,
"Thanks to you all, my friends; good-
night,
God grant us sweet repose."

"POURING OIL ON TROUBLED WATERS."

Lieut. Charles M. McCartney, describing the great hurricane off Nova Scotia on August 29, 1891, says: "The Indiana was kept dry by the dripping of oil from both bows; and although tremendous seas were running and breaking, they could not come on board. "This was certainly a most practical illustration of the old saying as to the "pouring of oil on troubled waters,"—a proverb as old as the Bible, but only very recently applied, thanks to the Hydrographic Office of the United States, and now very generally followed by seamen the world over. It was an American also (Redfield) who first thoroughly found out and explained the true character of these revolving storms, and to him all seamen are forever indebted. "In using oil, it is astonishing how small a quantity will suffice—just a quart or two, in a bag stuffed with oakum, hung over the bows, and allowed to drip, drop by drop, on the sea, where it spreads out in a thin, greasy film over the surface of the water. Over the film the wind slips, as it were, and has no power to bank the water up into waves which would break over the ship. Hundreds of reports are on file in the office, attesting the marvellous results of this simple agent of safety."

WHAT THE WORD "GROG" CAME FROM

Miss E. F. Andrews writes on "Some Vagabond Words," for St. Nicholas. Miss Andrews writes: "The word 'grog' has a curious history. It comes in a roundabout way from the French gros-grain, of which our English 'groggram' is a corruption, meaning a stuff of coarse and heavy texture. Bluff old Admiral Vernon who commanded the English navy just before our war of independence, wore breeches made of this material, and was nicknamed from that circumstance 'Old Grog.' He used to have his men mix water with the rum that was always served to English sailors as part of their rations, and hence any dram mixed with water came to be called 'grog,' and the place where such things are sold a 'groggery.'"

SHE PREFERRED IT IN HEBREW.

A lady, riding in a car on the New York Central Railway, was disturbed in her reading by the conversation of two gentlemen occupying the seat just before her. One of them seemed to be a student of some college, and on his way for a vacation. He used very profane language, greatly to the lady's annoyance. She thought she would rebuke him, and after begging pardon for interrupting, asked the young student if he had studied the languages. "Yes, madam, I have mastered the languages quite well." "Do you read and speak Hebrew?" "Quite fluently." "Will you be so kind as to do me a small favour?" "With great pleasure. I am at your service." "Will you be so kind as to do your swearing in Hebrew?" The lady was not annoyed any more by the ungentlemanly language of her neighbour.

Book Life.

BY ANNIE L. HANNAH.

I wish that I lived in a book,
Where everything's cheerful and nice!
Had I but Aladdin's old lamp,
I would put myself there in a trice!

The fire's always bright—in a book;
The milk's never watery and thin;
The ice on the pond is just right;
In a ball game your side's sure to win.

Such aunts as you have—in a book!
Such uncles, and grandfathers, too!
They think that in all the wide world,
There is not such a fellow as you!

And then the adventures you have!
You'd hardly believe they could be,
Unless you had read for yourself,
Of those exploits by land and by sea!

Yes, it must be fine in a book!
I wish I could go there to stay!
Where everything's cosy and nice,
And there's never one commonplace day!

THE BRAVE WOMEN OF KENTUCKY.

Bryant's Station was one of the most celebrated spots in the annals of the "Dark and Bloody Ground." The stockade fort that once stood there was frequently a refuge from the savages in the early settlement of the country, and its gallant defence by a handful of pioneers against the Indians of Ohio was one of the most desperate affairs of the Indian wars of the West.

The Indians having failed in surprising the Kentuckians, attempted to decoy them from their fastness by presenting themselves in small bodies before it. The whites were too wise to risk a battle, but the fort was unhappily not supplied with water. They were aware that the enemy knew this. They knew, also, that their real force lay in ambush near a neighbouring spring, with the hope of cutting off those who should come to remedy the deficiency. But the heroism of a woman may baffle the address of a warrior. The females of the station determined to supply it with water from this very spring! But how? They reasoned thus: The water must be had. The women are in the habit of going for it every morning. If armed men now take that duty upon them, the Indians will think that their ambushade is discovered, and instantly commence the assault. If women draw the water as usual, the Indians will not unmask their concealed force, but will persevere in attempting to decoy the defenders of the station without its pickets. The feint succeeded. The shots of the decoy party were returned from one side of the fort, while the women issued from the other as if they apprehended no enemy in that quarter. They advanced with composure in a body to the spring, till they were within point-blank shot of five hundred warriors. The slightest trepidation would have betrayed them; but their nerves did not shrink, and they waited calmly for each other to fill their pithers. The Indians were completely deceived, and not a shot was fired. . . . The only water split was as they crowded together in passing the gate. The Indians were eventually beaten back, and, succour arriving, were compelled to retire to the woods once more.

Thus much we learn from "Hoffman's Travels," a work not much known to the present generation of young readers. But the annals of the New World, as well as those of the Old, afford many similar proofs that courage in the hour of peril is not confined to what we are so accustomed to call "the stronger sex." Women can not only endure nobly and patiently, she can also dare and do when the hour of action comes.

When we are young, trials are hard to bear. We have had, on the whole, so much sunshine, so much gladness, that we are surprised at the appearance of sorrow, and it steals on us like a thief in the night. As we grow older, we learn that,

"Sorrow, touched by thee, grows bright,
With more than rapture's ray,
As darkness shows us worlds of light
We never saw by day."

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF JUDAH.

LESSON XI.—DECEMBER 11.

TRYING TO DESTROY GOD'S WORD.

Jer. 36. 20-32. Memory verse, 32.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The word of our God shall stand forever.—Isa. 40. 8.

OUTLINE.

1. Jehoiakim's Crime, v. 20-26.
 2. Jehoiakim's Sentence, v. 27-32.
- Time.—About December, B.C. 605 or 604.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Writing the prophecy.—Jer. 36. 1-10.
- Tu. Reading the word.—Jer. 36. 11-19.
- W. Trying to destroy God's Word.—Jer. 36. 20-32.
- Th. Despising the word.—Jer. 11. 1-10.
- F. Rejecting God's word.—Isa. 30. 8-17.
- S. Christ's reproof of rejecters.—John 5. 36-47.
- Su. Rejecting and receiving.—Acts 17. 1-11.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Jehoiakim's Crime, v. 20-26. What king is here referred to?

What evil would come upon Judah? What is the Golden Text?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- Where in this lesson are we taught—
1. To revere God's law?
 2. To obey God's commandments?
 3. To fear God's judgments on sin?

JESUS A CONSTANT COMPANION.

Make Christ your constant companion. Be more under his influence than under any other influence. Ten minutes spent in his society every day—aye, two minutes, if it be face to face and heart to heart—will make the whole day different. Every character has an inward spring; let Christ be it. Every action has a key-note; let Christ set it. Yesterday you got a certain letter. You sat down and wrote a reply which almost scorched the paper. You picked up the cruellest adjectives you knew and sent it forth, without a pang, to do its ruthless work. You did that because your life was set in the wrong key. You began the day with the mirror placed at the wrong angle. To-morrow at daybreak turn it toward him and, even to your enemy, the fashion of your countenance will be changed. Whatever you then do, one thing you will find you could not do—you could not write that letter. Your first impulse may be the same, your judgment may be unchanged; you will rise from

Cigarette-Smoking.

(A Dialogue.)

BY ELIZABETH T. LARKIN.

John.

What is't you say there, little Nett, "Tis wrong to smoke a cigarette?" How is it you're so wondrous wise, And why that sparkle in your eyes?

Nettle.

Yes, 'tis, 'tis wrong, I dare to say; Papa said so the other day. He says there's poison in them all, Although they are so very small.

He says they're made of poison stuff, And I believe him, sure enough. And boys and men who smoke them, too, Some day the act will surely rue.

My father says they hurt the mind, And make some people colour-blind, He says that they affect the heart, And do no good to any part.

He is a doctor, John, you know; And when a doctor says 'tis so, It surely somehow seems to me, It ought to be believed, you see.

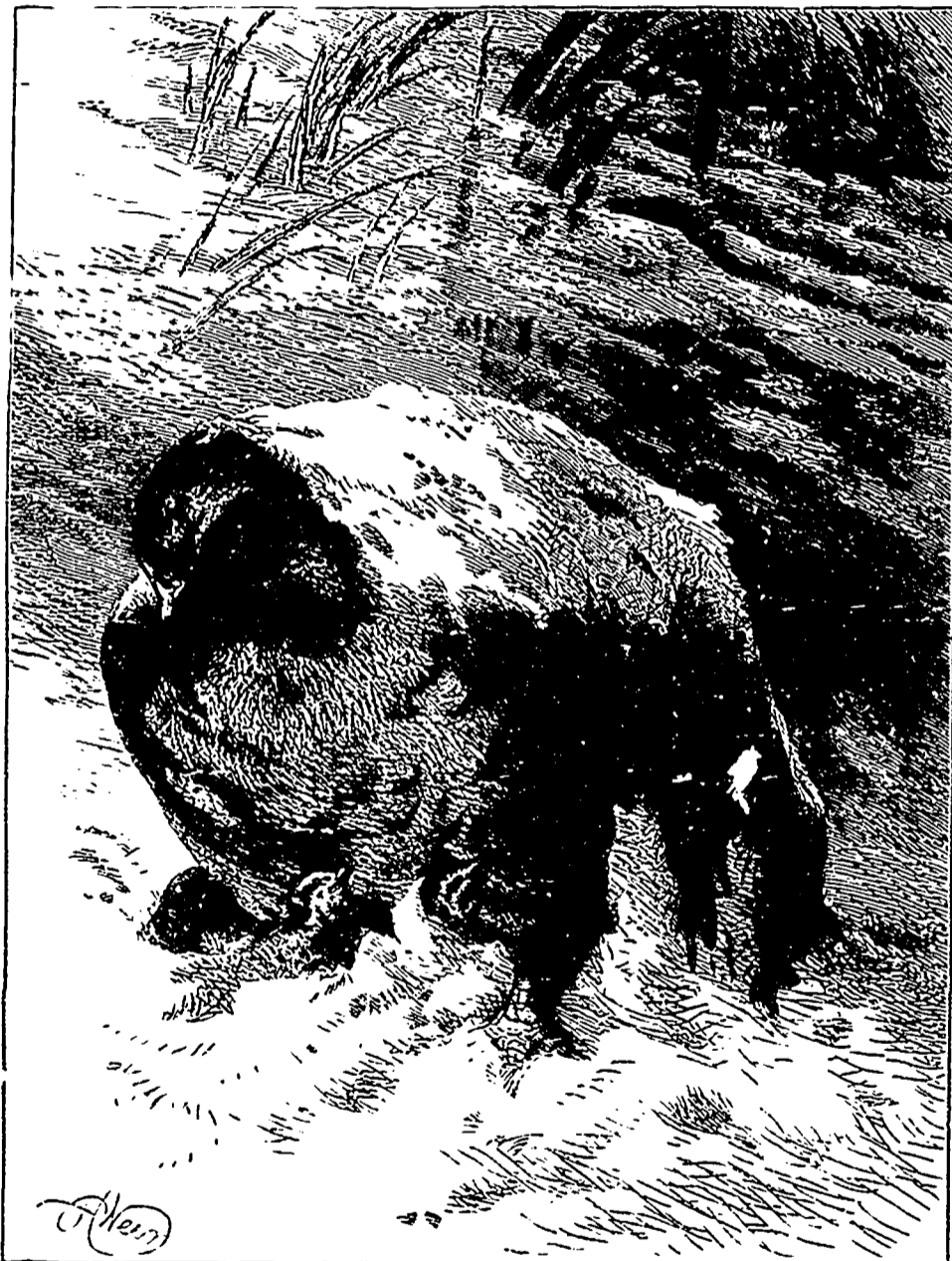
John.

And so you think, my little Nett, I'd better drop the cigarette? If what your father says is true, Why, that is just the thing I'll do.

If I were lying sick in bed, And sent for him, what'er he said I should believe, I'm very sure, And should expect he'd work a cure.

So here it goes. No more I'll smoke, No, child, believe it is no joke, I mean the very words I say, I've smoked for the last time to-day.

—The Banner.



PARTRIDGE AND YOUNG.

What did the princes do with the prophet's roll?
What did they tell the king?
What did the king do?
Where did this interview occur?
As Jehudi read what did the king do to the roll?
How did the act affect the king and his servants?
Who remonstrated against burning the roll?
What command did the king give?
Why was not the command executed?
What was the king's crime?

2. Jehoiakim's Sentence, v. 27-32.
To whom did the Lord send a message?
What was Jeremiah bidden to do?
What had the king said to him? Verse 29.
What was Jeremiah to say to the king about his crime?
What was the king's sentence?
Who also were to be punished with him?

your desk an unavenged, but a greater and more Christian man.—Prof. Henry Drummond.

PARTRIDGE AND YOUNG.

Look at the poor little partridges nestling under their mother's big feathers, to keep as much out of the cold as possible. She has turned her back to the driving snow, and feels the cold very little. But she well knows that her little ones have not got half such warm feathers as she has, so she makes a cosy hole for them in the snow, and they tuck themselves away inside, and are as warm and happy as can be, in spite of the weather.

Lawyer (speaking technically)—"What you want to do is to meet your creditors." Client—"No, I don't. They're the very people I want to avoid."

Fathers and Mothers

Have you watched the faces of the children at Christmas, as you handed them a "right new book"? If so, why not see that face brightened oftener by an occasional presentation of one of the many beautiful volumes that are now being issued. Do not wait until the child has a liking for pernicious literature; commence with good picture-books, read them the stories, and as they grow up they will appreciate and thank you for your efforts. Peruse carefully the subjoined list.

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