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# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

RALPH SMITH & CO.

TORONTO, MAY 13, 1893.

[No. 19.]

Vol. XIII.]

## OUR PET PIGEONS.

WHAT boy—orgirl either—who does not love pigeons? Happy is the boy who has his pigeon-loft where he raises his little broods of pets, who become so tame that they will light upon his shoulder and peck grain from his hand. How proud he is to take his friends out to see his fan-tails strutting up and down, as proud as he, with their tails spread out like a peacock. He blows up his pouters till they look, for all the world, like worthy aldermen. High up in the air his tumblers can be seen rolling over and over again as they fall toward the ground. They catch their balance again, however, before they fall too far, and soar off again to repeat their gymnastic tumbling. How happy these gentle pigeons must be flying so high in the clear air, and looking down upon the village where is their home. And how faithful they are too, always returning to their own loft. Yet even these faithful pigeons, like some good boys, may fall into bad company. Unless they shun the company of these "coaxers," they are lead away by them to some treacherous neighbour's loft, where they may be secretly killed and made up into a stew or pigeon pie.

But the most useful of all are the faithful "homing" pigeons, which, though carried hundreds of miles away, when once set free will circle around once or twice, then fly straight and swiftly home again.

We read over and over again in history, how great cities have been besieged by hostile armies for many months, so that when people were starving and ready to give them to their cruel foes, news of relief has been brought in by "homing" pigeons, which had been taken out of the city before the siege began. A little piece of paper would be found fastened to the pigeon's neck, on which the poor starved people would read that a friendly army was coming to their relief, and that if they would hold out for a short while longer, they would be saved and have plenty to eat once more. How the thankful people must have loved and cared for the faithful pigeon that brought such good news.



OUR PET PIGEONS.

## LIFE ON A LIGHT-SHIP.

BY GUSTAV KOBBE.

THE routine of work on a light-ship is quite simple. At sunrise the watch lowers the lights. At 6 a. m., the captain or the mate stands in the doorway leading from the cabin into the berth deck, and shouts, "All hands!" The men tumble out of

their bunks and dress, breakfast being served at twenty minutes past six. At half-past seven the lamps are removed from the lanterns, and are taken below to be cleaned and filled. In smooth weather this duty can be performed in about two hours; but if the vessel is rolling and pitching, the task may be prolonged an hour or two. When the lamps have been

engaged. It has absolutely no respect for the statutes of the land, and none for its oath to obey them. Whenever it dares to do so it sells its death-dealing fluid to minors; it keeps open its doors—in front or rear—on the Lord's Day; and it "cuts" gambling-table annexes. To reason with it is an impossibility. There is nothing to do but to crush it.

returned to the lanterns there remains nothing for the crew to do except to clean the ship and to go on watch until sundown, when the lamps are lighted and the lanterns hoisted. The crew is divided into the captain's watch and the mate's watch of five each. Twice between spring and winter each watch goes ashore two months, so that each member of the crew is aboard the light-ship eight months in the year. It is not believed that they could stand the life longer than this. In fact, many men throw up their work as soon as they can get ashore. Three members of the "South Shoal" crew have, however, seen unusually long terms of service—twenty-one, nineteen, and seventeen years respectively; and others have served on her a remarkably long time when the desolate character of the service is considered. This is probably due to the fact that the dangers of this exposed station warn off all but those inured to the hardships of a seafaring life.

The pay aboard the "South Shoal" is somewhat higher than on other lightships. The captain receives \$1,000, the mate \$700, and the crew \$600. These sums may not seem large; but it must be borne in mind that even the prodigal son would have found it impossible to make away with his patrimony on the "South Shoal" light-ship, especially as the Government furnishes all supplies. Opportunities for extravagance are absolutely wanting. Occasionally a member of the crew may remark in a sadly jocose tone that he is going around the corner to order a case of wine, or to be measured for a dress suit; but there is no corner.

THE whiskey traffic shelters itself under the protection of law; and yet it is the most lawless business in which men ever

## Only One Mother.

You have only one mother, my boy,  
Whose heart you can gladden with joy,  
Or cause it to ache  
Till ready to break—  
So cherish that mother, my boy.

You have only one mother who will  
Stick to you through good and through ill,  
And love you, although  
The world is your foe—  
So care for that love ever still.

You have only one mother to pray  
That in the good path you may stay;  
Who for you won't spare  
Self-sacrifice rare—  
So worship the mother alway.

You have only one mother to make  
A home ever sweet for your sake,  
Who toils day and night  
For you with delight—  
To help her all pains ever take.

You have only one mother to miss  
When she has departed from this;  
So love and revere  
That mother while here;  
Some time you won't know her dear kiss.

You have only one mother—just now;  
Remember that always, my son,  
None can or will do  
What she has for you.  
What have you for her ever done?

—New York Evangelist.

## A SAD PICTURE.

A PROMINENT business man in B— had two sons, handsome, manly little fellows, three and five years of age. One day after starting for his place of business, this man was seen to return hurriedly to the home, which he entered and at once went up stairs to the room where these two boys were supposed to be innocently playing. Upon entering the room the father demanded the cigar which he had seen his five-year-old boy smoking at the window. With a ready falsehood the child sought to cover his act; but examination of a box of cigars left there by this father, not only one, but several cigars were found to be on fire, having caught from the lighted one thrust recklessly into the box by the detected young smoker.

Fourteen years later friends were called to the bedside of this son. Thin as a skeleton—with yellow skin—deep purple rings under the sunken eyes, lips parched and black, no food had passed his lips for days, no food could ever again reach the stomach, which was so drawn and puckered and rigid, that a common wash-board resembled it most, so stated the attending physician. But the most terrible trouble was the throat, completely closed to food.

Listen he speaks: "Oh! mother, mother, I am willing to die, if by my death Charlie can be saved. Tell him to come to me. Oh! Charlie, brother!" catching his brother's hand with a death grip, "promise me to quit cigarette smoking; look at me. I can't stop now, I will be dead in a short time, but you can save yourself. Will you promise me, Charlie?"

Charlie's fingers grew cold, while his entire frame shook with convulsive weeping. "I can't! I can't stop now," was the stifled agonizing cry of this slave—only sixteen years of age. A few days and Charlie's only brother was dead. The father, home from his business, the aged grandfather in his easy chair, and Charlie sat in the darkened rooms all through the civilized waiting days before the interment of the household—the eldest born. Where did these mourning ones turn for consolation? To the Lord, who gives and takes away? No, no, the air was blue and heavy with tobacco smoke. The dead boy was laid in the churchyard, and all sorrow was soon drowned in fumes of the pipe, cigar, and cigarette.

It would seem as though a civilized—say nothing of a Christian—man, having at heart the welfare of his only remaining boy, with the awful experience just past through from the effects of nicotine poison on the system of his eldest born, would have made every effort to save the other son. Only a befogged intellect, a heart with the wash-board ridges—brutalized, hardened by this mighty agent, tobacco poison—could have so transformed the father and given us this sad picture. Sad, but true. And it is by no means an isolated case. In every town—in many homes, might be found its counterpart. Mother's hearts heavy, eyes tear dimmed, and all because the husband and father is, by example—for most boys have the ambition to "be like papa when I grow up"—blighting the pure clean life of their boy. Fathers, can you read this "handwriting on the wall"? Boys, dare you "take the risk of becoming like Charlie's brother"? Yes, even like Charlie, who owned to the slavish chains of tobacco.

## LITTLE SAILOR JEM.

"How is it I don't hear you speak bad words?" asked an "old salt" of a boy on board a man-of-war as they were sitting together up on the rigging.

"Oh, because I don't forget my Captain's orders," answered the boy, brightly.

"Captain's orders!" cried the sailor; "I didn't know he gave any."

"He did," said Jem; "and I keep them safely right here," putting his hand on his breast. "Here they be," said Jem, slowly and distinctly: "But I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yes, yea;

Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

"Them's from the good old log book, I see," said the sailor, "which I don't know much about these days."

"Then I'm afraid you've lost your reckoning, sir," said Jem, "and are drifting on to the breakers."

"What then?" asked the old man.

"You'll be wrecked," answered Jem, "wrecked forever."

The old sailor had been wrecked. He knew what it was to be in a ship breaking up and going to pieces on a wintry coast. He knew what it was to be lashed to a spar, half naked, hungry, cold, benumbed, tempest-tossed. He had heard the shrieks of the perishing. Yes; he well knew what being wrecked was.

"Wrecked forever," said the old sailor slowly; "that's a long time, boy."

"Yes, sir," said Jem; "it is so."

Jem looked wistfully at him, and the old man turned away his head. "That wrecking forever is a bad business," said he.

"Yes, sir," said Jem, "it is so."

"And is there no way of escape?" asked the old man.

"Our minister who used to preach at the Bethel said the Admiralty of heaven has got out a lifeboat for poor souls. That lifeboat is Jesus Christ. It was launched on Calvary, and has been around picking up poor souls lost in the stormy waters of sin ever since; and he used to tell us, 'Stretch out your arms to get in; and pray, Lord, save me, or I perish.'"

"And does he?" asked the man.

"I know about myself," said the boy, humbly. "I was going down, and cried to the Lord. He had mercy on me, and took me in; and I have shipped with him ever since. He is a good Captain, the Captain of our salvation, sir. Won't you ship, too?"

"I should be a poor hand for that craft," said the old man, feelingly.

"Besides saving you, he'll fit you for his service," said Jem. "There's no difficulty on that account. He is good—very good."

"Thank ye, boy, a thousand times," said the old man, with a tear on his weather-beaten cheek. "I'm afraid we old sinners are too water-logged and sin-soaked to be worth saving; but you young ones jump into the life-boat before it is too late, and ship for the port of heaven. It is a blessed chance."

## GOD'S HELP IN SCHOOL.

"AUNTIE, were you ever tempted to copy in written examinations when you went to school?" asked Phoebe Magie, a bright young girl in her teens.

"Yes, often, my dear, and I am sorry I ever yielded, for it didn't do me a bit of good."

"O auntie, do tell me one of your rememberers."

"Well, in my last years of school life, I remember very well one of my teachers telling our class that we must have copied in our examination or we couldn't have reached his classes.

"Of course we were all indignant, though we knew it to be true in some cases.

"I made up my mind then and there, I never would copy in his class for examinations. It was well that I did, for of all the hard examinations I had gone through, those were the hardest.

"I remember often and often thinking I would hand in my paper and say I couldn't answer any of the questions, but then would come the thought of my rank. Not to write meant cross. That would never do; so I would sit and think until my thoughts seemed to have taken wings and flown away.

"Just as I was about to despair a thought flashed into my mind: Ask God to help you. I did ask him to help me answer the questions and to keep me from the temptation of copying.

"As I finished praying I paused, then read the questions over slowly, and if I ever had known anything about the subject, they seemed much easier to answer. I felt so relieved and glad when I had finished that I had accomplished my own work instead of copying someone else's, and besides, realizing as never before, that I had a friend who would help me at all times.

"Phoebe, dear, if you would only stop and think about the question instead of

giving it a hurried glance and saying, 'Oh, I don't know it,' and then trying the next, you would get along so much better.

"Just think how ready your teacher is to help you with some difficulty in your lessons. How much more ready is God, if we ask him with the same faith and feeling that we know it will be answered and explained!

"He does answer us. I remember often after that time I asked him to help me with my different lessons, which appeared very hard to me then.

"He did help me, and I only regret now that I didn't tell my schoolmates, so that their lessons might have been easier too.

"Tell your friends, Phoebe dear, and try my way and help in your times of temptation in the examinations of your school life."

## THE CANDLE-FISH.

OF course, whenever it is night people must have some sort of a light to see by. Among us lamps, gas, and so on, are used. But what do you suppose people do where there is nothing of this kind? Why, in some places they use one thing, in others another. In Alaska, says *Our Little Ones*, and other far away lands to the north, all they have to do is to set a candle-fish on fire, and they have a good clear light, which will last more than an hour.

The candle-fish is about ten inches long, and somewhat the shape of our slender smelt. It is very fat, and just the thing to make a lamp of. The natives fasten it in a rude kind of candle-stick made of strips of white oak, and set it on fire. They light it at the head, and it burns steadily down to the very tail.

Of all the queer ways of making a light to read or sew by, I think this is the queerest. Nature seems to provide almost everything needed by the people in the place where they live. The candle-fish is so oily that it cannot be preserved, even in alcohol. The nights at the far north are very long, and if it were not for this fish, the people would be most of their time in entire darkness.

## PROHIBITED PHRASES.

THE faculty of Wellesly College have promulgated a list of words, phrases, and expressions to be avoided by the girl collegians and it might be studied with profit by many girls outside of college.

"I guess so," for I suppose or think so. "Fix things," for arrange things or prepare things. The use of "ride" and "drive" interchangeably. "Real good" or "real nice," for very good or really nice. "I have studied some," for studied somewhat, or "I have not studied any," for not studied at all. "Try an experiment," for make an experiment. "Had rather," for would rather, and "had better," for would better. "Right away," for immediately now. "Well posted," for well informed. "Try and do," for try to do. "It looks good enough," for it looks well enough, or "does it look good enough?" for does it look well enough? "Somebody else's," for somebody's else.

## HOW TO MAKE LIFE HAPPY.

TAKE time; it is no use to fume or fret, or do as the angry housekeeper who has got hold of the wrong key, and pushes and rattles it about the lock until both are broken and the door remains unopened. The chief secret of comfort lies in not suffering trifles to vex us and in cultivating our undergrowth of small pleasures.

Try to regard present vexations as you will a month hence.

Since we cannot get what we like, let us like what we can get.

It is not riches, it is not poverty, it is human nature that is the trouble.

The world is like a looking-glass. Laugh at it and it laughs back; frown at it and it frowns back.

Angry thoughts canker the mind and dispose it to the worst temper in the world—that of fixed malice and revenge. It is while in this temper that most men become criminals. Therefore if you would escape the criminal's sad fate, try to avoid angry thoughts and words.

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## Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, MAY 13, 1893.

## FRIENDLY APPRECIATION.

THE Toronto *Week*, the leading literary journal of Canada, speaks in the following kindly terms of our connectional *Magazine*. We suppress, however, the flattering adjectives applied to its editor:

The *Methodist Magazine* is one which we always take up with interest and put down with reluctance. The Methodist body have reason to be grateful to Dr. Withrow, its editor, for the monthly literary feast which he provides for them, and for many others as well, within the pages of this excellent and instructive periodical. The author of "The Catacombs" continues his series of descriptive papers on the subject, "What Egypt can teach us." Mrs. H. L. Platt has an excellent illustrated paper on the late Bishop Crowther. The Rev. Dr. Dewar writes with his usual thoughtfulness and vigour under the caption, "From Malachi to Christ." The Rev. J. L. Dawson discusses "The Value of Entire Prohibition," and the serials, "The Life Cruise of Captain Bess Adams," and "The Squire of Sandal Side," are well sustained by their respective authors, Julia McNair Wright, and Amelia E. Barr. Well-selected articles and appropriate poems, reviews, editorials, etc., complete an attractive and finely illustrated number.



# A Modern Prodigal,

BY

Mrs. Julia McNair Wright.

Author of "The Captain's Bargain," "Freddy's Son," "The Story of Rasmus," "A Made Man," etc.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE SENTENCE PRONOUNCED.

The trial was ended. Mid-afternoon had passed. The jury by their foreman had returned their verdict. The judge, with slow emphasis, pronounced the sentence—"Ten years in the penitentiary." Standing, his eyes fixed upon the judge, the prisoner, Thomas Stanhope, heard.

During the weeks of his imprisonment the ominous red flush had faded from his face, his big figure had lost its tremulousness, his eyes their wavering lurid light. Exorcised for the time of his demon drunkenness by the firm hand of the law, clothed and in his right mind, he heard his doom, which every one of his fellow townsmen, standing in the Ladbury court-room, received as just and merited.

The sheriff approached to lead away the prisoner. Then Thomas Stanhope, for the first time during the trial, spoke: "Judge, I want to say something." As the judge did not reply, and the sheriff laid his hand on his arm, Stanhope cried out in an agony of entreaty: "Judge! Harry Noble! let me speak!"

It may have been among the dreams of Harry Noble's early ambition that he should reach the bench, one of the youngest judges in the country, but nothing had foreshadowed to him that almost his first official act must be to pronounce so hard a sentence on a companion of his boyhood, or that a prisoner at the bar should entreat him as "Harry Noble."

The words were as a spell to conjure with. Swifter than light, memory carried him back to those early days when a young student from the Latin school, or from college, he came back to this, his native place, greeted by none with more enthusiastic devotion than by Thomas Stanhope, a little little lad, who looked up to him as to a demi-god. On what fishing or hunting excursions had this faithful henchman carried his bag or his gun! How had he built the fire for their noon-day bivouac, and listened with admiring awe to his tales of college life!

This vision of the past was instantaneous; the judge bent his head, the prisoner swept one look about the thronged court-room and spoke:

"I don't find fault with my sentence, judge, it is just. I have heard all that the witnesses said, I know them, they are not men to lie. No doubt they told the truth, and if they did tell the truth, all I can say is the sentence should have been for life; I am not fit to be free!"

At these words a little stir, a deep drawn breath, passed through the court-room, and then a profound silence, as the prisoner went on.

"You know me, you know my family before me, most of you—we were as good a family and creditable as any in Ladbury. Who would have thought when I was a little boy playing in these streets, that I, Thomas Stanhope, would become a house-breaker; that I would break into my neighbor's house, plunder his goods, fire on him with intent to kill—as far as I had any intent at all, for I did not know what I was doing? I have no recollection of what I did. It was not I, but the devil to which I have given room. I am like that man I used to read about in the Bible, exceeding fierce and living among the tombs, that none could bind, even with chains, and the devils in him were legion. He, as I recollect, found Some One to cast out his devils; I never did. I have wanted to reform! I have hated myself, I have cursed my folly, I have tried, I have vowed on my knees, but wherever I went there the demon was free. I saw it, I smelled it, I always fell before it. You know me—I have been more demon than man. The law, judge, gives me only one safe place—a prison. Because a prison is the only place the law keeps free and clear of that whiskey drink. I tell you, now that I am

sober and have been sober for weeks, I had rather spend all the rest of my days a prisoner, but in possession of myself, than free and in possession of a demon!

"But I didn't get up to speak about myself, I have a word to say about them—my family—up on the mountain there—Mercy and the children. You think I do not care for them. I have acted as if I did not. I have neglected them, abused them, robbed them, left them to starve—they would not have a roof over their heads today, if I could have either sold or mortgaged that place up there! No one knows better than I do how bad I've been to them—a demon instead of husband and father, but—I do care for them when I am in my right mind. Now I am going away, forever I suppose, and what I want to say is—don't hate and despise Mercy and the children. Give them a fair chance, as I never did. Don't be hard on them because Thomas Stanhope is a miserable drunkard, housebreaker, felon! There's good stuff in those children, they take after Mercy, and the Stanhopes that were my forebears. Forget that those children belong to Thomas Stanhope, the convict—remember that they are good old Deacon Stanhope's grandchildren! They are well off, rid of me, but oh, neighbours—you I played with as a boy—lend a hand to Mercy and the children!"

He turned, and stepped from the prisoner's box beside the sheriff. The crowd in the court-room openly wiped their eyes, and blew sonorous blasts through their noses. One and another, as the convict came down the aisle, held out a hand to clasp his, or touched him on the shoulder, saying, "Bear up," "It might have been worse," "You might have killed Andrew," "Don't fret for the folks," "They'll get on," "We'll do well by them."

At the court-house door the prisoner for the first time lifted his eyes. Towering above Ladbury was the mountain, now, in the early spring, covered with a red and purple mist of the budding maple and larch. There on one of the level reaches was the home he had destroyed—were Mercy and the children! There on that mountain he had spent his boyish holidays in innocent sport. O Nature! mother Nature, why had he wandered from thy side? O hard and shameful years, down which he had come, recreant to every duty and every vow, since on that mountain one summer evening, long ago, he had asked Mercy to be his wife! He gave one deep sob. The sheriff looked keenly at him as he led him into the corridor where was the cell, where only he had had opportunity to come to himself.

Perhaps it was as well that the prisoner could not see what was enacting up on the mountain. His heart was full, his burden like Cain's was already greater than he could bear. True, like Cain, he had made his own burden, but, oh, sirs, that does not make it the lighter!

Up on the mountain was a house, with three rooms below, and two under the eaves in the attic. It had been built with a good old-fashioned honest workmanship, which caused it still to stand squarely erect with a solid roof and level floors, through years of shameful neglect. There had been a porch once, looking toward the town and the sunset; it had been torn away. Most of the fence pickets had been also used for firewood. When on winter nights a woman hears her children cry with cold, she may make a raid, in their behalf, on her own fence pickets or front porch, although by nature a thrifty housewife. The windows of this house were badly broken. Some of the damaged panes had been pasted up, some empty spaces had been filled with shingle or pasteboard.

Around the house certain apple, cherry, and pear trees, which had survived the general misfortunes of the place, were breaking into a flourish of white and pink bloom. Paint was wanting to the house, and weeds contended with the grass in the yard. Dock and plattain striving with unaided grass have about the same fortunes as evil habits warring with native good instincts unassisted in a soul. In this fallen world the weed, vegetable and moral, has much the better chance.

This house on the mountain had long been uninhabited; the door swung open, the windows were curtainless, not a hen clucked

and scratched, not a bee boomed in the sunshine about it.

Still, lending a careful ear in the spring stillness of the mountain side, now and then a sound might be caught as coming from behind a broken-down barn at some distance from the house, and a little higher up. Following this hint of life we pass behind the barn, and there, in a little yard with an unused water-trough fed by a hill-side spring, a yard bare and desolate, and partly surrounded by a broken-down rail fence, we find four children. On the end of the trough, idly plashing the water with her hand, sits Letitia, her perplexed and melancholy face belying the name given by an over-sanguine mother. Letitia is twelve, neatly combed, clean, and patched, and barefooted, her uncovered feet and ankles ever trying to hide themselves under her woefully short and scanty skirts. Perched on the fence is Samuel, aged six. Samuel of old, we are informed, had a new coat every year. This Samuel, though his mother's will was good enough, had never had a new coat. At present its place was supplied by a shirt-waist with only one sleeve and rent down the back, and a pair of trousers with very little material left in either knees or seat. Samuel's head, above this assemblage of rags, showed the brow of a philosopher and the smile of a saint.

Accommodated on a little box for a stool was Patty—abbreviated from Patience—who had spent three years in this wicked world, looked frightened nearly out of her wits, and had found already ample opportunity for the exercise of the quality suggested by her name.

These three children were gravely looking at an exhibition. The exhibitor was their eldest brother, age thirteen—Achilles, called Kill for short. Nature had sent two more children to occupy the place between Letitia and Samuel, but fate had proved too hard for them, and two little graves without stones were now all that suggested their existence; thus Achilles was robbed of two more admiring spectators of his exhibition. He was walking around on one leg and one arm, and carrying the other leg and arm aloft, like the antennae of an insect.

Suddenly he stopped to rest and besought Letitia to look down the road and see if anything was coming. Letitia looked and reported the road vacant as far as she could see it.

"Don't you s'pose they're done long ago?" demanded Achilles, "He did it, and they know he did it. They won't let him off, will they? If I see him coming up the road I'll run, and never, never come back!"

"And leave mother?" said Letitia reproachfully.

"No, I can't leave mother. I say, Letitia, they won't let him out, will they? They can't! Why they ought to give him a life! If I was Judge Noble I'd shut him up in the jug for life, so I would!"

"O Kill, don't!" said Letitia. "He's your father."

"And I wish he wasn't my father! I don't want such a father! What kind of a father has he been? Did he ever give us clothes or presents or good things? Didn't he swear and rage and kick and cuff? Didn't he hunt us out of the house up into the mountain, night after night? I say, Tish, how often did mother and we all huddle here in the barn freezing last winter, while he was ripping and tearing and breaking things in the house? Do you want to try that again? I don't."

"Maybe he'd be good—now he's been to jail," vouchsafed the philosophic Samuel.

"Maybe he wouldn't," retorted the wrathful Achilles, "he don't know how to be good. He'd need more'n six weeks in jail to settle him."

"I think mother'd feel awful if he went to the penitentiary," suggested Letitia, with womanly instinct.

"Mother wouldn't be so foolish," declared her brother. "What good does he do mother? Hasn't he said he'd kill us all? Won't he do it some time? If Judge Noble lets him off, I mean to go down there and tell him we'll all be murdered up here, and it will be his fault. I say, what good did he ever do mother? Didn't he sell every nice thing she ever had? Don't he take away all she earns? Wouldn't she have me part of her life if he was gone for good? If he comes back I'll get a lag rope the first time he gets dead drunk, and

I'll pull him out here to the barn, and tie him hand and foot, and keep him here tied forever."

"He'd holler," said Samuel, the practical. "I'd gag him so he couldn't. I'd give him a blanket, and I'd feed him—some."

"He won't come back. Folks say he's sure of the penitentiary," said Letitia, in a dull, despairing tone.

"If they'll only keep him there till I grow to be a man," said Achilles, "it would be all right. I'll be strong and big as he is, and I'd see to it that he behaves. He shouldn't hurt a hair of any one of us. I'd take care of you all. You should have shoes, Tish; I'd buy you breeches, Samuel."

"It must be awful to be in the penitentiary, though," said Letitia, with a woman's relunctings.

"Not half so awful as he deserves," said her brother stoutly. "Didn't he break up our bedstead, and sell our cow, and give our pig to the saloon man, and carry off all the hens to trade for rum; and he sold my steer that I earned my own self and took care of, and was going to buy us clothes and a blanket with him, and he sold him for rum, and came home and turned us all out. He ought to go to the penitentiary forever; he sold my steer!"

Now this steer was the Patroclus of the modern Achilles. Letitia was silent, evidently not fully approving; Samuel looked like a pitying angel; the exhibition failed to attract, and Achilles sought for an ally. Little Patience had sat silent, to her he appealed. "You don't want father to come, do you, Patty?"

Patience lifted up her voice and wept. "Never mind," said Achilles, "he shan't come, he shall go to jail. He shan't scare you any more, Patty!"

As Patience caught her breath and relapsed into her usual silence, the strained ears of the children caught the sound of a horse's feet coming up the road. The horseman, a rough mountaineer, did not see the four anxious child-faces peering around the corner of the old barn. "Hi there! Mis Stanhope!" shouted the rider, stopping by the crazy stile that gave entrance to the yard. "Hullo! the house!" There was no answer. Not that the house was empty. Within, in that desolation which should have been a happy home, sat Mercy Stanhope, rocking herself to and fro in wordless anguish, her old blue check apron flung over her head. A ripple of wind through the house whisked forth one corner of the apron, and waved it as a flag of distress. The man on horseback, grating his neck to look in at the open door, saw the fluttering rag; from that apron corner he divined Mercy within earshot. "Hullo there, Mis Stanhope!" he howled. "Trial's over, an' your man's got ten years!"

Ten years fell the knell on Mercy Stanhope's heart. She need not tremble now at his home-coming. She need not cover under fear of a maniac with murder in his soul. Ten years, ten years of silence, of calm, of safety—at what a price! Ten years in the penitentiary, ten years a prisoner! The woman and the wife in her forgot her wrongs, thought only of his shame, his misery, his doom. Ten years! the playmate of her childhood, the lover of her youth, the husband of her choice—ten years in the penitentiary! Mercy rocked to and fro, and wrung her hands, and wept aloud.

The delegation at the barn corner heard the news. Achilles caught up Patty and hugged her.

"He'll never scare you again, Patty. No more father, no more father for you, Patty. Do you hear, Samuel? Ten years! We've got our chance! I'll be a man when he comes back, big enough to stand up for you." And the four barefooted ones rushed off to congratulate mother. But Letitia's steps were slowest—she dimly guessed that congratulations were not in order.

(To be continued.)

Is it not strange that beautiful little boys and girls will use so much slang, and so many rough, unchaste expressions, while our language contains so many nice, refined words? Also, that parents, while very careful as to how their children use their feet and hands, frequently neglect seeing to the use of the unruly member, the tongue?



KING AHASUERUS AND QUEEN ESTHER.

### KING AHASUERUS AND QUEEN ESTHER.

Those who enjoy reading thrilling stories can never find one in all the thousands of books printed in modern times that will surpass in interest the old Bible story of the beautiful Jewess, Queen Esther, who saved the life of her uncle, Mordecai, and the lives of all her people, and exposed the jealous and wicked plotting of the too ambitious Haman. Our imaginations carry us back to the strange customs and scenes of Persia of that period so many ages ago, and we see the magnificence of Shushan, the palace, and picture to ourselves Queen Esther in all her loveliness.

In our cut we see King Ahasuerus and Queen Esther seated on their thrones. The King's cup-bearer kneels before him bearing in his hands the King's golden cup. This cut illustrates the Sunday-school lessons we have been having.

### LESSON NOTES.

#### SECOND QUARTER.

#### OLD TESTAMENT TEACHINGS.

B.C. 1000.] LESSON VIII. [May 21.]

#### AGAINST INTEMPERANCE.

Prov. 23. 29-35.] [Memory verses, 29-32.]

#### GOLDEN TEXT.

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.—Prov. 20. 1.

#### OUTLINE.

1. The woes of wine, v. 29, 30.
2. The warning against wine, v. 31-35.

TYPE.—About B.C. 1000.

#### EXPLANATIONS.

"Who hath woe"—There were drunkards in Solomon's time, and their vice had the same effects as the same vice has to-day. "Sorrow"—Nothing else brings into the world as much sorrow and as many contentions as strong drink. "Wounds without cause"—The drunkard is likely unintelli-

gently to harm others, and to be thus harmed by others. "Redness of eyes"—Bloodshot, from drink. "Mixed wine"—The oriental nations drank their wine mixed with water, and often with aromatic spices to make it stronger. "Moveth itself"—With sparkle and bead. "Biteth like a serpent"—In the want, misery, loss of character and of reputation which it brings here, and in eternal death hereafter. "Strange women"—The wickedest passions are excited by strong drink. "Perverse things"—The vile utterances of an intoxicated man. "Lieth down"—This describes the sickness which follows drinking. "Stricken me"—An allusion to the stupidity of intoxication. "I will seek it"—Will seek once more the cup which brings him such evil. The appetite for liquor becomes a master passion.

#### PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

What are here shown—

1. As the danger from strong drink?
2. As the safety from strong drink?
3. As the evidence of the power of habit?

#### THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Who hath woe, sorrow, and contentions? "They that tarry long at the wine." 2. Against what are we cautioned? "Looking upon wine to drink it." 3. What does wine do in the end? "Biteth like a serpent." 4. What do men do when filled with wine? "Utter perverse things." 5. What is the natural result of once drinking? "A desire to drink again." 6. What does the Golden Text say? "Wine is a mocker," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The power of evil habit.

#### CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

What is the catechism?

A book which teaches by question and answer, according to the ancient method of the Christian Church.—Luke 1. 4; Proverbs 22. 6, 21.

What does the Catechism teach?

The main doctrines and duties of religion, set in order, and proved by texts of Scripture.

"Yes, indeed," said little Amy's aunt, "you shall come to the country and see us milk the cows." "What's that, auntie?" "Why that's how we get milk for our coffee at breakfast." "Oh," said Amy, knowingly, "we do it with a can-opener."

### What a Boy Can Do.

These are some of the things that a boy can do:

He can whistle so loud, the air turns blue;  
He can make all sounds of beast or bird,  
And a thousand noises never heard.

He can crow or cackle, or he can cluck  
As well as a rooster, hen, or duck;  
He can bark like a dog, he can low like a cow;  
And a cat itself can't beat his "meow."

He has sounds that are ruffled, striped, and plain;

He can thunder by as a railway train,  
Stop at the stations a breath, and then  
Apply the steam, and be off again.

He has all his powers in such command  
He can turn right into a full brass band,  
With all the instruments ever played,  
As he makes of himself a street parade.

You can tell that a boy is very ill  
If he's wide awake and keeping still;  
But earth would be—God bless their noise!—  
A dull old place if there were no boys.

### WHAT ONE BOY DID IN ONE YEAR.

He begged the office of sexton in the little Western church, and earned seventy-five cents a week.

He picked one hundred quarts of fruit for a neighbour.

He bought and sold eleven dozen chickens, and cleared five dollars on them.

When he could get no other work, a neighbour's wood pile was always ready, at a dollar a cord for sawing and splitting. He earned thirteen dollars and seventy-five cents on his wood piles.

For doing chores, cleaning yards, doing errands, etc., he received ten dollars.

For milking cows, taking care of horses, etc., for neighbours, twenty dollars.

At the end of the year this fourteen-year-old boy had earned a little more than one hundred dollars, and never missed a day at school. It was a busy year, yet play-hours were scattered all along; swimming, fishing, hunting, skating and coasting, each found its place. The old adage proved true in his case, "Where there's a will there's a way." He never missed a job; when other boys were idle he was busy, and the best of all that I can tell you about him is this, he was a King's son.

### AN ANT FUNERAL.

A LADY gives this account of some ants which she saw in Sydney. Having killed a number of soldier ants, she returned in a half hour to the spot where she had left their dead bodies, and in reference to what she then observed she says:

"I saw a large number of ants surrounding the dead ones, and determined to watch their proceedings closely. I followed four or five that started from the rest toward a hillock a short distance off, in which was an ant's nest. This they entered, and in about five minutes they reappeared, followed by others.

"All fell into rank, walking regularly and slowly, two by two, until they arrived at the spot where lay the dead bodies of the soldier ants. In a few minutes two of the ants advanced and took up the dead body of one of their comrades; then two others, and so on until all were ready to march.

"First walked two ants bearing a body, then two without a burden, then two others with another dead ant, and so on until the line extended to about forty pairs; and the procession now moved slowly onward, followed by an irregular body of about two hundred ants.

"Occasionally the two leader ants stopped, and laying down the dead ant, it was taken up by the two walking unburdened behind them, and thus by occasionally relieving each other, they arrived at a sandy point near the sea.

"The body of ants now commenced digging with their jaws a number of holes in the ground, into each of which a dead ant was laid. They now laboured on until they had filled up the ants' graves. This did not quite finish the remarkable circumstances attending their funeral.

"Six or seven of the ants had attempted to run off without performing their share of the digging. These were caught and brought back, when they were at once attacked by the body of the ants and killed upon the spot."

### YOUNG EBONY'S ESSAY ON CORK.

CORK am de bark of a tree. It makes no noise. De bark dat comes from a dog does. Cork had a lazy time of it before bottles were thought of. Cork don't like bottles. It won't go into one without a deal of pressin'.

Cork am used to stop holes in casks. It makes a bungling job of it.

Legs are sometimes made of cork, but dey hab no feelin'. So I guess people who will do wrong and hab no care for other people have their hearts made of cork, too.

Many a man couldn't have kep' his head above water but for cork. It am a handy thing to have about.

Hats are made of cork, but cork-screws are made of somethin' else. So there's nothing in a name. Some old gentleman who lived a long way back said that. It's true, too. A bath-bun am not to wash with; an' sponge-cake am made by leavin' all de sponge out.

Dis am all I know about cork; only I should like to say dare ought to be some of it livin' in every house, 'cos it am de only cure for a bottle dat won't keep its mouth shut.

### BURNING AND SHINING LIGHTS.

MR. MOODY tells us of a blind beggar sitting by the sidewalk on a dark night with a bright lantern by his side; whereas a passer-by was so puzzled that he had to turn back with, "What in the world do you keep a lantern burning for? You can't see!"

"I keep it so that folks won't stumble over me," was the reply. We should keep our lights burning brightly for others' sake, as well as for the sake of being "in the light" ourselves.



### Soldiers of Liberty

BY

EMILY P. WEAVER.

Author of "My Lady Nell," "The Robb's Son," etc.

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