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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVII.]

TORONTO, JANUARY 9, 1897.

[No. 2



AS IT OUGHT—AND AS WE HOPE IT ALWAYS WILL BE!

CHRISTIANITY (to Lord Salisbury and President Cleveland)—Men and brethren, respecting the Empire and the Republic, there is a better way to settle your disputes than by recourse to arms. Will you adopt it!"

SALISBURY AND CLEVELAND—"We will!" (They break their swords and shake hands.)

It is a very happy circumstance that the holy Christmas-tide, which a year ago was made ominous with the menace of war, should this year be made glad with the assurance of peace. We suppose there was really never any serious danger of Great Britain and America quarrelling over the Venezuela question, but it is none the less pleasant that peace with honour has been secured, and that our large cartoon expresses the real situation to-day.

The Restless Boy in Church.

How he turns and twists
And how he persists
In rattling his heels.
How uneasy he feels.
Our wide awake boy in church

Then earnest and still
He attends with a will,
While the story is told
Of some hero bold,
Our dear, thoughtful boy in church

But our glad surprise
As his thoughtful eyes
Are turned in despair
As he twitches the hair
Of his little sister in church.

Still each naughty trick flies
At a look from the eyes
Of his mother so dear,
Who thinks best to sit near
Her mischievous boy in church

Another trick comes
Yes, his finger he drums,
Or his 'korchief' is spread
All over his head—
And still we take him to church

He's troublesome? Yes,
I'm bound to confess,
But God made the boys,
With their fun and their noise,
And he surely wants them in church

Such children you know,
Long, long years ago,
Did not trouble the Lord,
Though his disciples were bored.
So we'll keep them near him in church

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217 St. Catherine St., Wesleyan Book Room,
Montreal, Halifax, N.S.**Pleasant Hours:**

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, JANUARY 9, 1897.

RUTH'S FIDELITY AND REWARD.

BY G. H. ARMSTRONG, B.A.

Ruth Craig was the only child of James and Mary Craig. Their home was in the quaint English village of M—. Happy, indeed, were they until Ruth's third birthday. The first shadow entered the home when the husband and father came in on the evening of that day under the influence of strong drink. The young wife loved her husband with all the strength of a true and tender woman. Her nature was gentle and mild. The bitter pang of sorrow and shame that entered her life found no expression in words. Her only rebuke was the mingled expression of pity and grief which rested upon her countenance when she said "good-bye" to James on the following morning as he set out on his daily toil.

James felt the reproach keenly and promised himself many times that day that he would never merit it again. He failed in the struggle with evil as many another has done. He soon ceased attending the village church on Sunday with his family. The day was now spent in the fields or in one of the village inns. His descent was rapid, and in five years Mary died of a broken heart.

When the mother found her earthly life drawing near an end, she called Ruth, now a bright, loving child of eight years, to her bedside, kissed her a last farewell, and said, "My dear, dear girl,

mamma can stay with you no longer. I have asked God to be a father and a mother to you. Always be kind to papa, pray for him every day, and bring him home at night. Some time he will be good to us again."

These words sank deep into Ruth's young heart. As the years passed, she forgot them not. She lived to save. She found a friend to comfort and sustain. Her Sunday-school teacher led her into close communion with the One who is acquainted with grief, and she learned how true is the promise, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee."

When Ruth was sixteen years of age, her father fell ill. His constitution was shattered and for some time there was little hope of his recovery. At last he began to amend. He had now time to look at his past life soberly. He saw how unkind and unfaithful he had been to his wife and child. He was wretched.

While in this condition of mind, Ruth entered the room, and asked if she might read to him the old, old story of Christ and his love for a sinful world. Her sweet voice and blessed message soothed his troubled spirit, and at the same time deepened his disgust with his former life. Ruth continued to read to, and pray for, her father, until he beheld "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world." James Craig arose from his sick-bed a new man in Christ Jesus. Henceforth his watchword was, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

Once again the home of James Craig is a happy one—as happy as it can be without Mary. Often in the twilight they sit and talk of her who died when Ruth was a little girl. With moistened eyes they say "good-night," and Ruth retires to her room, on the walls of which hangs this motto, which she is weaving into her new life, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
Toronto.

HOW TOM WON A SOUL.

Tom said, "It won't do to keep all this blessed news to myself," so he thought how he could bless others with it. His bed stood close by the window sill, which was low, and somehow he got pencil and paper, and wrote out different texts which he would fold and pray over, and then drop into the noisy street below, directed: "To the passer-by—please read." He hoped that by this means some might hear of Jesus and his salvation. This service of love faithfully rendered went on for several weeks, when one evening he heard a strange footstep, and immediately afterwards a tall, well-dressed gentleman entered the room and took his seat by the lad's bedside. "So you are the lad who drops texts from the window, are you?" he asked kindly.

"Yes," said Tom, brightening up. "Have you heard as some one has got hold of one?"

"Plenty, lad, plenty! Would you believe it if I told you that I picked up one last evening, and God blessed it to my soul?"

"I can believe in God's word doing anything, sir," said the lad humbly.

"And I am come," said the gentleman, "to thank you personally."

"Not me, sir! I only does the writin'; he does the blessin'."

"And you are happy in this work for Christ?"

"Couldn't be happier, sir. I don't think nothin' of the pain in my back, for shan't I be glad when I see him, to tell him that as soon as I knowed about him I did all that I could to serve him? I suppose you gets lots o' chances, don't yer, sir?"

"Ah, lad, but I have neglected them; but, God helping me, I mean to begin afresh. At home in the country I have a sick lad dying. I had to come to town on pressing business. When I kissed him good-bye, he said, 'Father, I wish that I had done some good for Jesus, I cannot bear to meet him empty-handed,' and the words stuck to me all day long, and the next day, too, until the evening when as I was passing down the street your little paper fell on my hat. I opened it and read, 'I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day—the night cometh, when no man can work.' (John 9. 4.) It seemed like a command from heaven. I have professed to be a Christian for twenty-two years, my lad, and when I made inquiries and found out who dropped these tracts into the street, and why it was done, it so shamed and humbled me that I determined to go home and work for the same Master that you are serving so faithfully."

Tears of joy were rolling down the lad's face. "It's too much, sir," he said, "altogether too much."

"Tell me how you managed to get the paper to start it, my lad."

"That warn't hard, sir. I jest had a talk with granny, and offered to give up my ha'porth o' milk that she gives me most days, if she would buy me paper instead. You know, sir, I can't last long. The parish doctor says that a few months of cold weather may finish me off, and a drop of milk ain't much to give up for my blessed Jesus. Are people happy as have lots to give him, sir?"

The visitor sighed a deep sigh. "Ah, lad, you are a great deal happier in this wretched room, making sacrifices for Jesus, than thousands who profess to belong to him, and who have time, talents, and money, and do little or nothing for him."

"They don't know him, sir. Knowin' is lovin', and lovin' is doin'. It ain't love without."

"You are right, Tom. But how about yourself? I must begin by making your life brighter. How would you like to end your days in one of those homes for cripple lads, where you would be nursed and cared for, and where you would see the trees and flowers, and hear the birds sing? I could get you into one of them not very far from my home if you liked it, Tom."

The weary lad looked wistfully into the man's kindly face, and after a few moments' silence answered: "Thank'ee sir, I've heard tell of 'em afore, but I ain't anxious to die easy when he died hard. I might get taken up with them things a bit too much, and I'd rather be lookin' at him, and carryin' on this 'ere work till he comes to fetch me. Plenty of joy for a boy like me to have a mansion with him up there through eternity."

SAVED BY A SHEEP.

On the 4th of May, in the year 1795, when George the Third was king, there was at Portsmouth a man-of-war called the Boyne, a vessel of ninety-eight guns. Persons engaged on the shore were that day startled by a terrible report, and looking out toward the Boyne they could see that an explosion had occurred on board. The powder magazine had exploded! In a few minutes the ship was enveloped in flames, and the people on board seeking the best means of escape. A large number of persons lost their lives—some by drowning, in attempting to swim ashore. At the moment of the explosion a marine on board was seated in his berth with his wife and child—a dear little baby-boy, a year and eight months old. Finding all hopes of escape to be in vain, the marine went to the pens where were kept the cattle for the food of the crew. The animals were, of course, in a state of wild excitement and fear, but seizing a full-grown sheep, the man tied his little boy to the creature's back, and dropped them both overboard, saying, "There, turn to the land, and God be with you."

The wife now leaped into the sea, and the husband followed and supported her. At length they were picked up by a boat that had been sent out to rescue the sufferers. At the same time the sheep struck out for land with its precious burden, and was rescued by the spectators on shore, who rushed forward to meet it, and released the child. The little fellow was very soon restored to his parents, little the worse for his strange experiences and narrow escape from death.

A LOVE LETTER.

He hurried up to the office as soon as he entered the hotel, and without waiting to register, inquired eagerly:

"Any letter for me?"

The clerk sorted out a package with a negligent attention, that comes with practice, then slipped one—a very small one—on the counter. The travelling man took it with a curious smile. He smiled more as he read it. Then, oblivious of the other travellers, who jostled him, he laid it gently against his lips and actually kissed it. A loud laugh startled him.

"Now, look here, old fellow," said a loud voice, "that won't do, you know. Too spoony for anything."

Said the travelling man, "That letter is from my best girl."

The admission was so unexpected that they said no more until they had eaten a good dinner, and were seated together in a chum's room. Then they began to badger him.

"It's no use, you have got to read it to us," said one of them; "we want to know all about your best girl."

"So you shall," said the one addressed, with great coolness. "I'll give you the letter, and you can read it for yourselves. There it is," and he laid it on the table.

"I guess not," said one who had been the loudest in demanding it; "we like

to chaff a little, but we hope we are gentlemen."

"But I insist upon it," was the answer; "there is nothing to be ashamed of—except the spelling: that's a little shaky, I'll admit; but she won't care in the least. Read it, Hardy, and judge for yourself."

Thus urged, Hardy took it, shamefacedly enough, and read it. First he laughed, then swallowed suspiciously; and as he finished, threw it upon the table again, and rubbed the back of his hand across his eyes, as if troubled with dimness of vision.

"Pshaw! If I had a love-letter like that,"—and then was silent.

"Fair play!" cried one of the others with an uneasy laugh.

"I'll read it to you, boys," said their friend, "and I think you'll agree with me that it's a model love-letter."

"'Ml oween dear Papa,—"

"'I sa mi Prahrs every nite and Wen I kis yure Pictshure I Ask god to bless you. good bl Papa yure best gurl.'"

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

JANUARY 17, 1897.

Jesus in the temple.—Luke 2. 40-52.

A babe is always an interesting little creature. Jesus Christ was a babe, in appearance like all other babes. His growth excited the admiration of all beholders. As the law of Moses required all parents to present their children in the temple at a certain age, so the parents of Jesus attended to the requirements of the law, and having done this they returned home to Nazareth. There were several interesting incidents which are recorded in our lesson to which we must refer. Our young friends cannot be too familiar with these incidents.

Verse 40 tells of his growth. When children do not grow in strength their parents are greatly concerned. Christ grew in wisdom. We should all become wiser every day. The grace of God was upon him. Child piety was developed in him. When a child is capable of loving his parents, he is capable of loving God.

AN EVENT.

The Feast of the Passover was instituted to keep in mind the deliverance of the people from the bondage of Egypt. The feast was celebrated at Jerusalem. Those who lived a distance from the city journeyed thither in companies, both going and returning. When Christ was twelve years old, they went up as usual, and when they returned their son was lost. His parents could not conceive what had become of him, and those who are parents can understand their anxiety. They sought him, but did not find him until they had sought him three days.

WHERE HE WAS FOUND.

He was in the temple. It was a custom of the people to consult their rulers, or those who were supposed to understand the various matters pertaining to the affairs of every-day life, more especially such as pertained to their spiritual welfare. He was not disputing, only hearing questions and their answers. He took part in the conversation, and displayed such good sense in the part which he took, that all present were astonished at the wisdom which he displayed. His course of conduct was so unusual, and his knowledge so far superior to that of others of similar age that wonder was excited.

SUBJECT TO HIS PARENTS.

Verse 49. He does not blame them for seeking him, but he asks why they did so, as though they might have known that he would be properly employed. Let our young friends remember that at the age of twelve Jesus was intent about his Father's business. This is an example for all, both young and old. Not too young to love God, not too young to do good. There are more promises in favour of early piety than is generally believed, until the Scriptures are examined. Persons may do good, and thus be like Jesus, in a variety of ways.

HIS RESIDENCE IN NAZARETH.

He fulfilled the law in every particular. He did not forget the first commandment with promise, which you will remember reads, "Honour thy father and thy mother." Hope all our readers will remember this commandment.

Verse 52 is remarkable for its comprehensive character. We do not know of another that may be considered its equal. This verse gives us all the knowledge we can obtain of Jesus Christ from his twelfth year until his thirtieth. While it is brief, how important it is. "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." If we can all do this, we shall answer the great end of life.

The Brewer's Work.

BY C. T. O.

The oats in the field stood straight and tall,
Waving their tasselled grain;
And proudly said as they shook their plumes,
"The master will come for strength full soon;
He'll not look to us in vain.

The wheat spears stood in serried ranks,
Like soldiers brave and true,
And said, "He will come to us for bread,
No lack from us need he ever dread,
What we're bidden we always do."

The barley spread its bristled heads
Saying, "See how full are we,
He will laugh when he sees how we have grown,
You need never fear we will make him moan,
For no trustler can there be."

And the rye rose up so firm and trim,
And said, "We'll give drink and bread,
Let him come to us if he seeks for strength,
Nowhere in the land through its breadth or length,
Is there aught can stand in our stead."

The corn shook its plumes and its banners waved,
And pricked up each well filled ear,
Crying, "Give us a chance and you all may rest,
For you know very well he loves us best,
Nor listens of others to hear.

Alas! could they only have looked to the end,
How each grain would have blushed for shame,
For the brewer took each and in place of bread,
Into whiskey and beer he made it instead,
And then when the farmer came

For the bread which should have given him strength,
The brewer gave him, I'm told, in a glass,
The demons which from the grains he'd let loose,
They tripped up his heels, put his brains in a noose,
And stole all his money alas!

And when the poor man from his dreams awoke,
'Twas to find that his friends had fled,
That his fields were mortgaged beyond recall;
That the brewer had taken possession of all,
And his wife and children were dead.

Young people, beware of the demons in drink,
That the brewer lets loose from the grain,
They will lead you, I fear, to murderous strife,
They will rob you of health, of wealth, and of life,
And heaven you never will gain.

THE CHRISTIAN MARTYR.*

Early in the morning the army of slaves who had charge of the Coliseum, were hard at work. Some at the very summit of the building, with much shouting and pulling of ropes, were stretching the great velarium or awning, as a protection from the rays of the sun. Others were sweeping the sand of the arena to a smooth and even surface. Many cart-loads of fresh sand were heaped around the wall for the ghastly purpose of being spread upon the blood-stained surface after each act of the sanguinary drama of the day. Others were decorating with garlands of flowers, and with gold and purple banners, the seats of the Emperors Diocletian and Galerius, and those of the senators and other persons of distinction. The structure seemed even more striking in its vastness, as a few score figures crawled like flies over its empty seats, than when filled with its tumultuous throng of spectators. It was an immense oval, six hundred and fifteen feet in its longer diameter, and five hundred and ten feet in the shorter. The circling seats rose tier on tier to the giddy height of one hundred and fifty feet.

As the present writer climbed these cliff-like walls, now crumbling into ruin, he tried to re-people those long-deserted seats with the eager and excited throngs which had often filled them to overflow-

ing, when twice eighty thousand cruel eyes were wont to gloat upon the dying martyr's pang, "butchered to make a Roman holiday." Then he wandered through the vast vaulted corridors and stairways, eighty in number, still bearing the old Roman numerals by which access was gained to the different galleries. These were so capacious that the whole multitude could in a few minutes disperse, and were thence called vomitoria. He then explored the dens and caves for the wild beasts, and the rocky chambers in which the gladiators and martyr victims awaited the signal that called them to their doom. The row of seats just above the podium was reserved for the equestrian order; those higher still, for the populus, or common people; and the highest of all, for persons of the lowest rank. Early in the day, multitudes of spectators began to arrive, mostly arrayed in gala dress and many wearing the colours of their favourite gladiatorial champion. With a loud flourish of trumpets the great gates of the imperial entrance opened, and the chariots of the Emperors and their respective suites entered and took their places in the grand tribune reserved for these august occupants.

At a flourish of trumpets, the iron-studded doors of the cells in which the Christians were confined were thrown open, and the destined martyrs walked

timony to be the enemies of the Caesars and of the gods, had been condemned to death by exposure to wild beasts.

"Nay, not the enemies of the Caesars," exclaimed the aged Demetrius. "We are the friends of all, the enemies of none." We pray for the Caesars at all our assemblies."

"Will you do homage to the gods?" demanded Diocletian. "Will you burn incense to Neptune? Here is his altar, and here are his priests."

"We worship the true God, who made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is," replied the venerable man, with uplifted and reverent countenance, "and him only will we serve. They be no gods which are made by man's device, and 'tis idolatry to serve them."

"Away with the atheists," cried the priests of Neptune; "they blaspheme the holy gods."

"The Christians to the lions!" roared the mob: and at the signal from the Emperor to the master of the games, the dens of the wild beasts were thrown open, and the savage brutes, starved into madness, bounded into the arena. The defenceless martyrs fell upon their knees in prayer, and seemed conscious only of the presence of Him who stood with the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace, so rapt was the expression of faith and courage on their upturned faces.



THE CHRISTIAN MARTYR.

forth on the arena in the sight of assembled thousands. It was a spectacle to arrest the attention of even the most thoughtless, and to move the sympathy of even the most austere. At the head of the little company walked the good presbyter, Demetrius, his silvery hair and beard and benignant expression of countenance giving him a strikingly venerable aspect. Leaning heavily on his arm, evidently faint in frame but strong in spirit, was his daughter Callirhoe. Robed in white, she looked the embodiment of saintly purity, and in her eyes there beamed a heroic courage which inspired a wonder that so brave a soul should be shined in so frail a body. Adauctus, Aurelius, and other Christian confessors condemned to death, made up the little contingent of the noble army of martyrs.

The prefect Naso, from his place in the tribune, near the Emperors, read the sentence of the court, that the accused having been proven by ample tes-

* On this very arena perished the venerable Ignatius, linked by tradition with the Saviour himself as one of the children whom he took in his arms and blessed. "Suffer me to be the food of wild beasts," he exclaimed, "by whom I shall attain unto God. For I am the wheat of God, and I shall be ground by the teeth of wild beasts, that I may become the pure bread of Christ."

The fierce Numidian lions, and tigers from the Libyan desert, instead of bounding upon their prey, began to circle slowly around them, lashing their tawny flanks meanwhile, glaring at their victims from bloodshot, fiery eyes, and uttering horrid growls.

At this moment a loud shout was heard, and a soldier, clad in burnished mail, and with his drawn sword in his hand—one of the body guards of the Emperors, leaped from the tribune and bounded, with clashing armour, into the arena. Striding across the sand, he hurled aside his iron helmet and his sword, and flung himself at the feet of the aged priest, with the words:

"Father, your blessing; Callirhoe, your parting kiss. I, too, am a Christian. Long time have I sought you, alas! only to find you thus. But gladly will I die with you, and separated in life, we are united in death and forever."

"Nunc dimittis Domine" exclaimed the old man, raising his eyes to heaven. "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." And he laid his hands in blessing on the head of his long-lost son.

"Ezra, my brother!" exclaimed Callirhoe, folding him in her arms. "To think we were so near, yet knew not of

* This famous phrase dates from the time of Tertullian, in the third century, and is also recorded in the Catacombs.

each other! Thank God! we go to heaven together; and, long divided on earth, we shall soon, with our beloved mother, be a united family forever in the skies. And God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

"Amen! even so, come, Lord Jesus!" spake the young soldier as he unfolded, as if in a sheltering embrace, the gray-haired sire and the fair-faced girl.

The utmost consternation was exhibited on the countenance of the old Emperor Diocletian. "What! have we Christians and traitors even in our body-guard? Our very life is at the mercy of these wretches!"

"I would feel safer with them," said the more stoical or more courageous Galerius, "than with the delators and informers who betray them," and he glanced, with mingled contempt and aversion, at Naso, the prefect, and Furca, the priest. "When a Christian gives his word, 'tis sacred as all the oaths of Hecate. I want no better soldiers than those of the Thundering Legion."

Meanwhile, the wild beasts, startled for a moment by the sudden apparition of the mail-clad soldier, seemed roused thereby to tenfold fury. Crouching stealthily for the fatal spring, they bounded upon their prey, and in a moment crunching bones and streaming gore appeased the growing impatience of the cruel mob, who seemed, like the very wild beasts, to hunger and thirst for human flesh and blood.

We dwell not on the painful spectacle. The gallant young soldier was the first to die. The brave girl, bound to a stake, with a queenly dignity awaited the wild beast's fatal spring. She was mercifully spared the spectacle of her father's dying agony. Her overstrung nerves gave way, and she fell in a swoon. Demetrius met his fate praying upon his knees. Like Stephen, he gazed steadfastly up into heaven, and the fashion of his countenance was suddenly transfigured as he exclaimed: "Lord Jesus! Rachel, O my beloved! we come, we come!" And above the roar of the ribald mob, and the growl of the savage beasts, fell sweetly on his inner ear the song of the redeemed, and burst upon his sight the beatific vision of the Lord he loved, and for whom he gladly died.

So, too, like brave men, victorious o'er their latest foe, Adauctus, Aurelius, and the others calmly met their fate. When all the rest were slain, a lordly lion approached the prostrate form of Callirhoe, but she was already dead. She had passed from her swoon, without a pang, to the marriage supper of the Lamb—to the presence of the Celestial Bridegroom—the fairest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely—to whom the homage of her young heart had been fully given. She was spared, too, the indignity of being mangled by the lion's jaws. When the king of beasts found that she was already dead, he raised his massy head, gave a mournful howl, and strode haughtily away.

In the great gallery of Dore paintings, at London, is one of this Flavian Amphitheatre, after a human sacrifice such as we have described. There lie the mangled forms upon the gory and trampled sands. The sated wild beasts prowl listlessly over the arena. The circling seats rise tier above tier, empty and desolate. But, poised in air, with outstretched wings, above the slain, with a countenance of light and a palm of victory, is a majestic angel; and sweeping upward, in serried ranks, amid the shining stars, is a crowd of bright-winged angels, the convoy of the martyrs' spirits to the skies. So, doubtless, God sent a cohort of sworded seraphim to bear the martyrs of our story blessed company, and to sweep with them through the gate into the heavenly city.

Quite a Spell.

There is a farmer who is YY
Enough to take his EE,
And study nature with his II
And think of what he CC
He hears the chatter of the JJ
As they each other TT,
And sees that when a tree DKK
It makes a home for BB.
A yoke of oxen he will UU,
With many haws and GG,
And their mistakes he will XQQ
When ploughing for his PP.
He little buys, but much he sells,
And therefore little OO,
And when he hoes his soil by spells
He also soils his hose.

* The Legio Tonans, tradition affirms, was a legion composed wholly of Christians, whose prayers, in a time of drought, brought on a violent thunder storm, which confounded the enemy and saved the army.

* From "Valeria, the Martyr of the Catacombs." New Edition. Illustrated. By W. H. Withrow, D.D. Toronto. William Briggs. Price, 75 cents. This book will throw much light on the Sunday-school lessons for 1897.

Maize and Tobacco

The Indian corn looked over the fence,
And what do you think he spied?
A field of tobacco just ready to bloom
And stretching in lordly pride

To his broad leaved neighbour at once
he called,
In accents loud and clear,
I thought you belonged to a sunnier
clime—
Pray, what are you doing here?

So then, with a haughty air replied
The plant of power and puff,
You are pleased to ask of my business,
sir,
What do you do yourself?

I feed the muscle and blood and bone,
To make our farmers strong,
And furnish blood for the little ones
That round their tables throng.

I move in a somewhat loftier sphere,
The foreign guest rejoined,
As a chosen friend and companion dear
Of men of wealth and mind.

I'm the chief delight of the gay young
spark,
O'er the wise my sway I hold,
I lurk in the book-worm student's cell—
In the dowager's box of gold.

Thousands of hands at my bidding work:
Millions of coin I raise—
He ceased to speak, and in angry mood
Responded the tasseled maize:

You're in secret league with dyspeptic
ills—
A merciless traitor band,
With clouds of smoke you pollute the air,
With floods of slime the land.

You tax the needy labourer sore,
You quicken the drunkard's thirst,
You exhaust the soil—and I wish you'd
go,
To the place whence you came at first.

LESSON NOTES.**FIRST QUARTER.****STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.****LESSON III.—JANUARY 17.****A MULTITUDE CONVERTED.**

Acts 2. 32-47. Memory verses, 38, 39.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The promise is unto you, and to your
children, and to all that are afar off.—
Acts 2. 39.

OUTLINE.

1. Earnest Seekers, v. 32-40.
2. Glad Believers, v. 41-43.
3. United Christians, v. 44-47.

Time.—Same day as last lesson, Sun-
day, May 28, A.D. 30.

Place.—Jerusalem, in the neighbour-
hood of the upper room where the events
of last Sunday's lesson occurred.

Connecting Links.—Peter answers the
criticisms of the crowds. He sets aside
the charge of drunkenness as absurd, and
declares that the miracles are the fulfil-
ment of ancient prophecy; that they
are signs that the climax of Hebrew his-
tory has come. He proclaims Jesus of
Nazareth as the Chris of God, and
charges his hearers with having mur-
dered him.

HOME READINGS.

- M. A multitude converted.—Acts 2.
25-36.
Tu. A multitude converted.—Acts 2.
37-47.
W. Call to repentance.—Isa. 55. 1-7.
Th. Confession and salvation.—Rom. 10.
4-13.
F. Born anew.—1 Peter 1. 17-25.
S. Joy in heaven.—Luke 15. 1-10.
Su. The prodigal returning.—Luke 15.
11-24.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Earnest Seekers, v. 32-40.
Of what fact were the apostles wit-
nesses?
What honour had Jesus received?
What promise had he received?
What had he to do with the scenes of
Pentecost?
What testimony had David borne of
him?
What truth did Peter now proclaim to
Israel?
How was the multitude affected by
Peter's words?
What did they ask?
What two duties did Peter declare to
be necessary?
What is the remission of sins?
What gift was promised?
Who were included in this promise?
Golden Text.

- What further did Peter say?
2. Glad Believers, v. 41-43.
Who then were baptized?
How many converts were added?
How did they show their steadfastness
of faith?
How were the citizens of Jerusalem
affected?
3. United Christians, v. 44-47.
How did the believers live?
What was done with their possessions?
Where were they daily found?
How were they engaged?
In what spirit did they live?
How were they regarded by men?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. The duty of repentance?
2. The duty of baptism?
3. The duty of joining the church?

A BEDOUIN.

Our exceedingly spirited picture gives
us a fine view of one of this remarkable
race. The name (pronounced bed-oo-
een) is from the Arab Bedawi, and means
dweller in the desert. The Bedouins
are the descendants of Ishmael, the son
of Abraham and Hagar. Concerning
this son the angel, when he found Hagar
by the fountain in the wilderness (Gen.
16. 7-14), declared the prophecy that he
should be a wild man, that his hand
should be against every man and every

live. They are quite at home on horse-
back, and as riders are not equalled
anywhere on the globe. In intelligence
and morals they hold a low rank. They
practice polygamy, hold slaves, and think
robbery of any persons except those of
their own race entirely justifiable.
Their highest virtue is that of hospitality.
Our picture represents a fine specimen
of the Bedouin returning from a maraud-
ing excursion. He is well laden with
plunder, obtained probably from a car-
avan which he and his companions fell
upon. He rides at full gallop, as though
apprehensive that a rescuing party were
in pursuit.

**MR. GLADSTONE IN A NEW
LIGHT.**

The Rev. Newman Hall tells in *The
New Age*, recently, an interesting story
of Mr. Gladstone, related to him by Sir
Francis Crossley. When Mr. Gladstone
was Chancellor of the Exchequer, he
used to go to the church of St. Martin's-
in-the-Fields, which, as many people
know, overlooks Trafalgar Square. One
day Sir Francis was dining with the
vicar, who had recently been to see a
sick crossing-sweeper. The vicar asked
the crossing-sweeper if any one had
lately visited him.

"Yes, Mr. Gladstone," answered the
invalid.

**A BEDOUIN.**

man's hand against him, and that he
should dwell in the presence of his
kindred; also, that his offspring should
be exceedingly numerous, so that it
should not be numbered for multitude.
Through all the ages down this prophecy
has found its fulfilment. In ancient
times the descendants of Ishmael dwelt
in tents, as the Bedouins do now. They
were hardy, brave, warlike, kept exten-
sive flocks, lived in wild and uncultivat-
ed countries, and made frequent incur-
sions for plunder upon the neighbouring
nations who dwelt in cities and cul-
tivated the soil. The same mode of life
is still pursued by their descendants.
They occupy their old home, Arabia.
They live in bands of from two hundred
to twenty or thirty thousand, and move
their camps from place to place as pas-
torage for their flocks or other consid-
erations may lead. They despise agricul-
ture and trade, and subsist chiefly by
their flocks. The love of robbery and
plunder is transmitted from generation
to generation. Their hand is against
all their neighbours, and the hands of
all men are against them. Through all
the wars that have convulsed the nations
of the East they have never been con-
quered. In the seventh century they
were reached by the preaching of Mo-
hammed, and accepted his religion.
Under his appeals their fierce, warlike
spirit was aroused to the highest heat,
and they became a terror to both Asia
and Europe. They still continue de-
voted Mohammedans, and attend strictly
to the teachings of that religion. In
appearance they are dark-skinned, with
piercing eyes. They are of medium
size, sinewy, strong, and exceedingly ac-

But now came he to see you?" asked
the vicar.

"Well," answered the crossing-sweeper,
"he had always a nice word for me when
he passed my crossing, and when I was
not there he missed me. He asked my
mate, who had taken my place, where I
was, and when he heard that I was ill
he asked my address, and when he was
told he put it down on paper. So he
called to see me."

"And what did he do?" asked the
vicar.

"Why, he read some Bible to me and
prayed," was the answer.

SOME QUEER TRAPS.

What would you think of plants which
catch birds and eat them? And yet
there are such plants. They grow in
some of the islands of the Pacific Ocean,
far away on the other side of the world.
They are large and have many leaves.

The middle vein of each leaf, instead
of stopping at the tip, grows out a foot
or two beyond it.

On the further side of this stem is a
graceful pitcher, with two fringed flaps
down the front and a leaf hinged on for
a lid, which is sometimes open and some-
times shut. The pitcher is partly filled
with a sticky fluid. Some of the pitchers
which grow on these wonderful plants
are half a yard long and would hold
several quarts of water.

The rim around the mouth of the
pitcher is very prettily trimmed, and
the sides are curiously marked and
coloured green and red and pink. In-

side the mouth there is a kind of funnel,
with sharp points all around, leading
down to the trap below.

You may have seen rat-traps made in
much the same way.

Small birds often come to this pitcher,
drawn to it by the smell or colour of the
flower. They see the liquid at the bot-
tom and try to get to it.

It is a trap easy to get into, but hard
to get out of, against all those sharp
points. In its struggle for freedom the
poor struggling prisoner gets its wings
wet and sticky, and is either drowned
at once or lingers on until partly eaten
up by the pitiless pitcher.

This is turning the tables truly, when
plants catch and eat birds instead of be-
ing eaten by them.

Another trap of this kind grows in
North Carolina, and in some other places,
and is called Venus's fly-trap. It is a
plant with few and small roots, and with
from eight to twelve leaves growing out
from a short stalk. The flowers are
quite large and of a greenish-white
colour.

The trap grows on the very tip of the
leaf, and looks like the two valves of a
clam-shell hinged together at the back
and edged all around with sharp points.

On the inner side of each valve there
are three long hairs; these hairs are
very sensitive, and the moment they are
touched the valves close and the points
come together just as your fingers do
when you clasp your hands. If the
thing caught in the trap is not fit for
food, the valves open before long; but
if it is the right sort of food, the spikes
stay closely clasped until whatever is of
use to the plant is eaten up; then they
open, and the leaf is ready for another
insect and another feast.

Father—"And so papa's dear little boy
is very ill. Now, is there anything I
can get for him that will make him feel
better?" Invalid—"I don't know, papa.
—but—I think I would like a gong."

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