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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

SCENES IN JAPAN

BY REV. S. P. ROSE.

I.

Interest in the empire of Japan increases. Twenty-five years ago that beautiful country was largely an unknown land; but of late, in answer to the demand for fuller and more accurate information in regard to the "Flowery Kingdom" and its inhabitants, books have multiplied, until we are almost ready to cry, "Enough!"

Of the many books relating to Japan and the Japanese, few are more interesting than that by Mr. Maclay, whose "Budget of Letters" is the text of the present article. Mr. Maclay tells us that during his sojourn in "the land of the gods and of the rising sun," he made it a practice "to carefully reduce to writing his observations and experiences." These he afterward re-

wrote in the form of letters, and we have in consequence, a racy, readable and instructive volume. The range of topics covered by these letters is large. We get a glimpse of old feudal times in Japan. We are treated to a vivid picture of life in the interior. Some notion of school-teaching, its difficulties and characteristics, is imparted. Sketches are given of the principal cities and chief points of interest of the country. And, of greater moment than these, we learn of the social problems in Japan, and of the progress of missionary labour among this wonderful people. It will be sufficient to add, in connection with our outline of the general plan of the work, that the time covered by the letters extends from October, 1873, to January, 1878.

One of the earliest points of attraction to the visitor in Japan is Yokohama, a "city built upon a broad tongue of land jutting into Yeddo Bay. On one side is Yokohama harbour; on the other is Mississipi Bay." It is a cosmopolitan city, almost all nationalities being represented; hence it is not the most favourable place to select in order to study Japanese life and character. Yokohama, during Mr. Maclay's knowledge of it, enjoyed the reputation of being "the wickedest place in the empire." This is the natural result of the contact of lower forms of Western civilization with a degraded Eastern society. Even in 1873, however, the presence of the mis-

sionary was beginning to have a salutary effect upon the morals of the people.

Yokohama early became a depot whither European merchants shipped their goods; especially were dry-goods and clothing put upon the market. Early adventures of this kind generally resulted in commercial disaster. "The vast mass of the natives are too miserably poor to invest in anything beyond headgear. Imagine a man, whose yearly income is barely forty dollars, investing in our expensive clothing! Five dollars a month is considered good pay. Seven dollars a month is very good pay, sufficient to keep a wife in considerable style."

Social and home-life in Japan will not call for lengthened reference. A Japanese house, as a rule, is but one story high, and, to our thought, quite small. Mr. Maclay, however, while teaching in the interior, at Hirosaki, was the fortunate possessor of "a good native dwelling, having eight rooms." The only coverings of the floor are the tatamis, "heavily padded mats about seven feet long, three feet wide and about two inches thick. They constitute the principal feature in a native house, for, from their soft nature, they serve as beds, chairs, and tables. They are manufactured of soft rushes, and are bordered with silken edges." Accordingly, in our eyes, a native house would seem very scantily furnished.

The cost of a Japanese house is small; one of three rooms can be built for a sum ranging between twenty-five to one hundred dollars, the furniture costing some fifty dollars additional. There are no doors, their place being supplied by sliding partitions of a not overly strong or thick material. The houses are heated by little braziers, or small square wooden boxes filled with ashes, upon which a few small pieces of red-hot charcoal rest. It is no matter for surprise that one of the chief occupations of winter, with many of the natives, is the task of keeping warm; for while the thermometer does not often register a very great degree of cold, the air is peculiarly damp, and cold sea breezes seem to find their way to one's very bones.

Meals are served on small, square tables about a foot in height, one table being provided for each person, who sits, of course, on the floor. The meal over, the tables are removed.

Frequent bathing, in water of a high temperature is a habit of the Japanese. The bath is heated by a charcoal furnace, connected with one side of the tub. It is not always deemed needful to change the water for each bather, and guests at hotels find it difficult to secure absolute privacy during their ablutions.

Travel is generally prosecuted by means of the "ubiquitous jinrikisha man," who provides a mode of locomotion

not altogether unpleasant. The kago, a sort of palanquin, is, one would judge, an easier mode of travel.

Writing of the social condition of the Japanese, Mr. Maclay expresses the conviction "that, generally speaking, the Japanese men make kind and affectionate husbands, and the women make virtuous and exemplary wives and mothers, and the children are certainly the happiest little impa in the world; their parents fondle and spoil them most effectually, and, at the same time never lose their control over them." Though the husband has absolute control over the person of his wife, he does not seem to abuse his power as a general rule, though of course, exceptions to the rule occur.

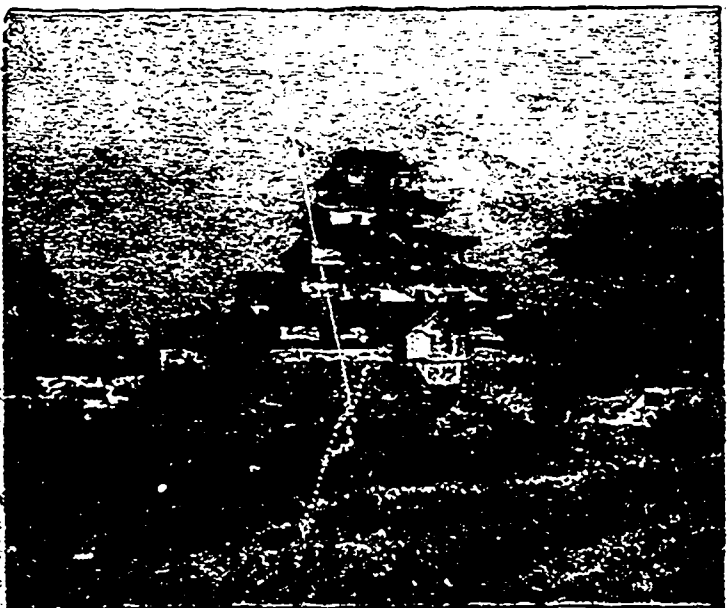
The morals of the people are much as might be expected among those who have always dwelt under

the shadow of heathenism. The people seem to be children in matters of moral distinctions between right and wrong, with this difference, however, between them and children—the absence in the vast majority of cases, of innocence. A maiden, to deliver her father from financial embarrassment, did, and still does, in the judgment of the Japanese, a virtuous and praiseworthy act, by selling herself to a life of sin.

The liquor problem has not yet assumed the proportions in Japan that it has with us. The tame diet of the people, our author tells us, does not tend to produce violent appetites. It must not, however, be supposed that total abstinence is the rule; neither, when practised, that it is practised from principle. Public holidays, especially New Year's Day, are made the occasion of intoxication, and drunkenness is then common. Wine is not native to Japan. Beer, ale, porter, brandy, have never been made. But the Japanese soon acquired a taste for these products of our civilization (?), and the need for prohibitory legislation will undoubtedly be felt in the near future. Sake is the native intoxicant. It produces drunkenness, mild compared with ours, but real enough in all conscience. But Mr. Maclay was not aware that *delirium tremens* was known in the empire. Smoking, though not uncommon, is reduced to a genteel art, which women practise with propriety. But



VIEW OF THE THIRD TERRACE, NIKKO TEMPLES.



RUINS OF THE CITADEL OF AIZU CASTLE.



GLIMPSE OF CHURETSU LAKE.

minute quantities are smoked at a time, and only a couple of whiffs are taken at once. It is so gracefully and moderately indulged in as neither to injure the health nor make the smoker offensive.

The labour problem remains for future solution of Japan.

The masses will be many years in forgetting the old distinction between themselves and the upper classes. They regard the Samurai with instinctive fear and respect. They yet look upon them as beings inherently superior to themselves. But the day will surely come when the labourer will begin to question his own inferiority. He will query whether he has not more than merely the right to exist, whether he is not entitled to a few of the pleasures, and to a few of the relations of life; whether he should not have a few mental diversions and hours of leisure to devote to his spiritual development. When that time comes, the Japanese will see the application of the tenth and eleventh commandments, which contain, in fact, the only principles that can adjust this question here or anywhere else."

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, NOVEMBER 27, 1879.

HOW BOYS WILL SUCCEED.

We advise the boys to read this little story with great care. It "hits the nail on the head."

A few years ago a large drug firm advertised for a boy. The next day the store was thronged with applicants, among them a queer-looking little fellow, accompanied by a woman, who proved to be his aunt, in lieu of faithless parents, by whom he had been abandoned. Looking at this little wail, the merchant in the store said:

"Can't take him; places all full; besides, he is too small."

"I know he is small," said the woman; "but he is willing and faithful."

There was a twinkle in the boy's eyes which made the merchant think again. A partner in the firm volunteered to remark that he "did not see that they wanted such a boy—he wasn't bigger than a pint of cider." But after consultation the boy was set to work. A few days later a call was made on the boys in the store for some one to stay all night. The prompt response of the little fellow contrasted well with the reluctance of the others. In the middle of the night the merchant looked in to see if all was right in the store, and discovered him lusing scissoring labels.

"What are you doing?" said he; "I did not tell you to work nights."

"I know you did not tell me so, but I thought I might as well be doing something."

In the morning the cashier got orders to "double that boy's wages, for he is willing."

Only a few weeks elapsed before a show of beasts passed through the streets, and, very naturally, all hands in the store rushed to witness the spectacle. A thief saw his opportunity, and entered at the rear door to seize something, but in a twinkling found himself firmly clutched by the diminutive clerk aforesaid, and after a struggle was secured. Not only was a robbery prevented, but valuable articles taken from other stores

were recovered. When asked by the merchant why he stayed behind to watch, when all others quit their work, he replied:

"You told me never to leave the store when others were absent, and I thought I'd stay."

Orders were immediately given once more: "Double that boy's wages; he is willing and faithful!"

To-day that boy is getting a salary of \$2,500, and next July he will become a member of the firm.

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

DECEMBER 5, 1897.

Safe in the arms of Jesus.—Hymnal, 438. Methodist Hymn-Book, 829.

JOYFUL CONFIDENCE.

A child is never afraid when it rests in its mother's arms. A little boy was asked if he was not afraid, seeing it was densely dark. "No," he said, "I am not afraid, because my father is holding my hand." So the child of God feels perfectly safe when it rests in Jesus. You know the verse,

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee."

And we need no other, because nowhere else is there safety. No harm will befall the child if the parent can hinder. Isaiah speaks of "mother-comfort," which he regards as illustrative of the comfort enjoyed by those who abide in Christ.

FREEDOM FROM ANXIETY.

In this world we all more or less have to endure trials, and seasons sometimes occur when it is no easy matter to keep free from anxiety. The command is, "Be careful for nothing," that is, "Do not be anxious; do not kill" yourselves with carking care." The child does not trouble itself respecting the future. The child of God trusts in his heavenly Father, and the second verse of this hymn describes the state of such a one, "Safe from corroding care." The more we can feel the spirit of this hymn, the greater will be our peace and personal enjoyment. The whole hymn is remarkably expressive of the Christian's experience as he travels home to heaven.

HABAKKUK'S EXPERIENCE.

Read this prophet's beautiful language in the third chapter and seventeenth verse. I have sometimes thought that there is no other verse in the Bible so sublime as this. It is a noble resolution of the good man, as to what he would do should calamities of the most dreadful kind befall him. The Apostle Paul, also, when relating his own experience, says that he had learned in "whatever state he was, to be content," and then, as though that was not sufficient, he says, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me." It was this fact that made him content, even when hunger and persecution and multitudinous trials befell him. Christ is strength in weakness, wisdom in ignorance, our all in all.

NOBLE EXAMPLES.

Christians, in all ages of the world, and in every condition of society, have experienced the same like precious truth. Christ is precious to the believer. The sentiment, if not the words, of the hymn have been their joy and comfort. Christ dwelt in their hearts by faith and they rejoiced in him as their Saviour. What they have done we may do.

FOUR FAMOUS FISHERMEN.

BY ELIZABETH F. ALLEN.

"Ho! Caleb, bring thither thy net. Are there holes to be mended?"

"Nay, master; I have searched it over; it is in order."

"It may well be," answered Zebedee, bitterly, "since it hath not enclosed a single fish the night long, though James and John, with Andrew and Peter, have toiled the whole round of dark hours. When had they ever such poor fortune! But where are my sons?"

"They sent me but now, to entreat thee, master, that thou wouldst come to them in the small boat. The rabbi from Nazareth hath entered Simon's boat, and sits therein, as though within the temple walls, teaching those that crowd the shore."

"The rabbi Jesus; I verily thought he had left Capernaum. Put up the nets, Caleb, and thou, too, Benjamin; ye both shall hear the teacher."

But when Zebedee and his hired servants reached the place where Jesus sat, in the rocking boat of Peter and Andrew, with James and John moored alongside,

the sermon was ended. And the Master, caring nothing for his own weariness, thinking only of the empty boats, and of the disappointment of his poor disciples, said to Peter: "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught."

"Master," said Simon, "we have toiled all night, and have taken nothing. Nevertheless," he added, remembering how the day before his wife's mother had been raised from a sick bed at the sound of that voice; how, when even was come, the whole city had thronged to his door, bringing the sick, the halt, the maimed, the blind, and he had healed them all—"nevertheless, at thy command, I will let down the net."

And no sooner had the meshes disappeared under the bright waves, than a great weight of fishes hung upon their hands. Calling to James and John, to Zebedee and the hired servants, they made haste to secure the glittering creatures, and then Peter fell at the Master's feet.

Was it to thank him for the gift? No. Such a supply of food was indeed a blessing to poor men, but Peter was thinking of higher matters. Weeks before, on the banks of the Jordan, he had been brought by Andrew to see in Jesus the Messiah of his nation. At Cana he had seen the water turned into wine; at Jerusalem he had stood by, while Jesus drove the traders from the temple, and many other wonderful works had he seen performed.

But don't you see how much more this miracle appealed to the fisherman than any other could? As for wine, its transformation from grape juice was a mystery, at any rate, to the unscientific fellow. As for disease, all cures seemed magical to his simple mind. But fish—ah! he knew them by heart. If he knew anything, it was the impossibility of a shoal of fish being there at that hour, after the lake had been dragged all night long; with the crowd now on shore, and the movement of boats making stir and confusion enough to scare away even a chance swimmer!

And to see a multitude come thus at a word, to fill their nets, made Peter know, as he had never known before, that it was a divine word; and if a divine word, a divine speaker; and if divine, then holy; and if holy, what must he see in a poor sinner's heart that he could bear to look upon? So it was not to thank Jesus for his gift, that he knelt, but to say, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

It was an unanswered prayer. From this time, Peter and Andrew and James and John were never to leave him, but were to learn of him; to draw all men, by the Gospel net, to the Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

"COWARDY CUSTARD."

"Mother," said little Maggie one day, as she sat working by her mother's side, "why are women all cowards? When Allick wanted me to climb on the garden wall, and I was afraid of falling down, he called after me, 'Cowardly, cowardly custard! go and eat father's mustard,' and Maggie almost cried at the thought of it."

"But if he said you were a coward, that did not include all women," said mother, smiling.

"Yes, it did; because afterward he said that all women were alike—all cowards; but it didn't matter, nobody wanted them to be brave, because they hadn't got to fight or go to sea."

"Does my little girl think courage is only demanded from soldiers and sailors? No, indeed! women want courage as much as men, and have it too, as my Maggie will find out some day."

"Shall I ever be brave, mother, and fight?"

"I hope you will be brave, my darling; but there is no need to prove it by fighting. There are many kinds of courage. It is patient courage which is generally required by women, and in which they often excel. Bravery does not always consist of fighting and taking the lives of others. You have heard that a few years ago there was fighting in Paris. The people in the streets made what they called barricades. They tore up the pavements and piled them up across the streets, and threw down omnibuses and carts, and anything that came in their way to make a hill behind which they fought the soldiers who were sent to keep order. Many on both sides were killed and wounded. But there were some good women called Sisters of Charity, who were not afraid to approach the barricades, and if they saw any man badly hurt they would lead or carry him away and try to heal his wounds. One man fell down on the top of a barricade. He had been shot through both legs and

could not move. A soldier, seeing that he was still alive, lifted up his bayonet to stab the poor fellow as he lay before him. Suddenly he felt his arm caught, and looking angrily round, saw a Sister of Charity standing beside him in the midst of the flying bullets and slashing swords. "Stop," she cried, in a commanding voice, "nor dare to touch him. He belongs to me. He is wounded, and all the wounded are mine!" The soldier, astonished at her daring, dropped his weapon, and the brave woman contrived to carry the wounded man from the barricade, and thus saved his life at the risk of her own."

The Boy Questions.

"You have quizzed me often and puzzled me long;

You have asked me to cipher and spell;
You have called me a dolt if I answered wrong,

Or a dunce if I failed to tell
Just when to say lie and when to say lay.
Or what nine sevens may make
Or the longitude of Kamschatka Bay,
Or I forgot-what's-its-name lake.
So I think it's my turn, I do,
To ask a question or so of you."

The school-master grim, he opened his eyes,
But he said not a word for sheer surprise.

"Can you tell what 'phen-dubs' means?
I can,

Can you say all off by heart
The 'onery, twoery, hickory ann'!
Or tell 'commons' and 'alleys' apart?
Can you fling a top, I would like to know,
Till it hums like a humble-bee?

Can you make a kite yourself that will go
Most as high as the eye can see,
Till it sails and soars, like a hawk on the wing,
And the little birds come and light on the string?"

The school-master looked, oh, very demure,
But his mouth was twitching, I'm almost sure.

"Can you tell where the nest of the oriole swings,

Or the colour its eggs may be?
Do you know the time when the squirr' brings

Its young from their nest in the tree?
Can you tell when the chestnuts are ready to drop,

Or where the best hazel-nuts grow?
Can you climb a high tree to the very tip-top,

And gaze, without trembling, below?
Can you swim and dive, can you jump and run,
Or do anything else we boys call fun?"

The master's voice trembled, as he replied,

"You are right, my lad, I'm the dunce,"
he sighed.

—Educational Journal.

DO YOU PRAY FOR THEM?

BY ROSETTA L. SUTTON.

"How is it that you and the girl across the aisle are such friends now? She seemed such a disagreeable girl. I thought you disliked her?"

"Well," replied the sister, "I was scolding about her one day, to mamma, of course expecting her to sympathize with me; all she said was:

"I think you would better try to pray for her."

"I was very much ashamed, for, though I had kept everything smooth on the outside, being polite to her, you know, and lending her my things and keeping my side of the aisle clean, I was constantly in such a state of inward irritation that I had never even thought of doing so.

"So I tried it, and I assure you that it has made things different. In the first place, I am different myself. You cannot honestly pray for any one and dislike them at the same time. It seems so—well, so sneaking, to ask God to help a person when you are not willing to help her yourself, if you have the opportunity.

"So I began by really trying to find something to like in her and to do her kindnesses as if I meant them, instead of in the coldly considerate manner I discovered I had been using. Presently I took genuine pleasure in it. She seems like another girl to me; I suppose I do to her."

God answers us according to his own wisdom, and, oh! how much greater it is than ours. How little we understand the loving kindness of the Lord until we find we have been led by ways we know not into those of pleasantness and peace.

Autumn Ploughing.

More than the beauty of summer
Is shed on the hills to-day,
And the fragrant breath of the vintage
Is borne on the winds away.
As, father and son together,
The farmers are guiding the plough;
Deep and straight is the furrow
They set in the green earth now.

"Plough deep," is the old man's counsel,
As they turn the fallow field,
That yet shall laugh with the harvest,
And wave with a golden yield,
"Plough deep and straight," and the sturdy
Answer rings back with a will,
As the till is ready for sowing
On the sun-swept reach of hill.

I watch, and over my spirit
There wafts an echoed psalm;
Sweet as the thought of our Father,
And full of Heaven's balm,
God knows how deep the furrow
Needed by soul of mine,
Ere the stony soil shall quicken
And bloom with fruits divine.

And God who cares for the vintage
When the sap is in the stem,
And God who crowns the summer
With the autumn's diadem,
And God who all the winter
Beholds the world's bread grow,
May be trusted for loving kindness,
Though his plough-share lay me low.

In storm and sun, our Father
Hath a care surpassing ours,
That is fain to find a shelter
For our little fragile flowers,
Why do we borrow trouble,
And why resist his hand,
That sends us gifts in sorrow
That we do not understand?

JUST IN TIME.

"It's such a pity!" Prissy said.
"Yes, it is a great pity," Mrs. Dorance sighed, as she went on cutting bread and piling up the slices. Two hungry boys, to say nothing of a wide-awake, active girl, know how to make the bread and butter disappear very rapidly. "If only your father were at home now I am sure he would drive into town and see what could be done. Poor old people. I say, it's a shame," and she wiped a tear from one corner of her eye. "What could papa do if he went to town, mamma?" asked Lenny.
"Well, I think he might see some of the church folks and find out if they might it was right to let those dear old people go to the poorhouse. Maybe they don't know about it. The old folks have lived out here on this little place a good many years now, and I suppose it's a long time since they were able to drive into church, and 'cut of sight is out of mind' among church folks, I suppose, as well as among other folks." Lenny laid down his knife and fork. "Mother, let Bert and me go into town and see what we can do."
"Why, son, you know papa never trusts you alone with the horse."
"But we can go most of the way on our skates. The river is frozen over tight, and five miles is just nothing with our new skates."
"But what could you do when you were there, child?" said Mrs. Dorance, smiling. "I don't even know that papa would undertake it. He might say there was no use."
"We can go to the minister's, and there's the store-keeper, and old Mr. Norris, he's an awful kind man." It was Bert who spoke this time.
"Oh, mamma," pleaded Prissy, "do let the boys go! I just wish I had a pair of skates, or a bicycle, or something. I'd do anything to help those poor old people!"
"It's Saturday, and you don't have to lose your school; and who can tell? It may be the Lord's way to help two of his poor children."
So it was settled that the boys were to go to the town on their skates and carry a note to the minister, telling the story of the poor old people's trouble. Mrs. Dorance was not in the habit of writing to a minister, and it took some time. The Dorance family were no "church folks," but they were much respected in the community, though it was generally believed that they held some strange notions about religion. For all that, they were very kind to any one in distress, and old Farmer Dunn, who lived near them, said he was afraid they were trying to be saved by their good works.
"Now, do be careful, boys, and don't run any risks on soft ice or anything," called Mrs. Dorance after them.
"And just tell the minister something's got to be done right away, for they say the man's coming to take them

to that horrid old poorhouse next week," added Prissy.
The ice was perfect, the skates were now, and the errand was one to inspire boys with big hearts, as the Dorance boys certainly had. But as they drew near the town and saw the church steeple, and the big houses and stores, their hearts began to fall.
"Say, Bert, you must do the talking," said Lenny. "I don't know what to say to a minister."
"You are the fellow who wanted to go to see the minister, you know."
"Well, you can just give him the letter, and maybe he won't give us a chance to say anything. I hope so, anyway," Bert concluded.
But, after all, the minister wasn't at home! "Been gone two weeks, and won't be home for another week," said the smart maid, who wore a cap which filled the country boys with wonder.
A bright idea struck Bert. "Could we see the minister's wife?" he asked. The maid smiled. "I'm afraid not; she went away with him."
"Take the letter to the storekeeper," suggested Lenny: "he's a member of that church."
So the boys went to the store. The storekeeper wasn't in; he had gone to the city to buy goods.
"What shall we do?" said Bert, in real distress. Going to the poorhouse looked very dreadful to these children, especially when it was dear old Father and Mother Lawrence who had to go.
A pleasant-faced girl who was matching some ribbon looked up with interest. "Were you waiting to see my father especially?" she asked in such a friendly way that Bert at once felt like confiding in her, and so he poured out the whole story. She listened with the greatest interest and attention.
"May I see the letter?" she asked, when Bert had ended.
It seemed to take a long time to read the letter, but the little lady was really taking a part of the time to think and plan. At last she spoke, "I should like to take this letter to one of the ladies of our church. You must go with me, for she may want to ask some questions."
It was a beautiful house to which they were taken, and the lady who met them was so gentle and kind that they felt at home at once. She remembered the old people very well, and when Lenny told of his visit to them the day before, and how, sadly and patiently they spoke about leaving the little home so dear to them, the lady's eyes filled with tears.
"Surely this must not be," she said; "I know who Mrs. Dorance is, and we may be sure that all she says of the case is true. It is a shame that we have not looked after this dear old brother and sister before. But now what can we do? Elma, you must help me plan."
"I was thinking," said Elma, "that it is about time for the Juniors to give a Mercy and Help entertainment. That would help some. And then I am almost sure the League can do something. In fact, we have been planning to, but we had no special object in view. Oh, I wonder if we could have a donation party for the old folks? We could go out in sleighs, you know."
Mrs. Olcott smiled brightly. "I thought your busy brain would think up a way to help. But now, we cannot wait for the minister and stewards to move in this matter. I think I must drive out on Monday and find out the particulars. Will you go with me, Elma?"
"I'd just love to," was the quick reply, and so the matter was settled.
"Thank you, boys, for coming all this way to let us know about our old friends. What made you think of coming?"
Then the story of the table talk came out, and again the boys were thanked, and a hearty lunch was pressed upon them before starting on the homeward journey.
"You may tell the dear old people," said Mrs. Olcott, "that they are not going to the poorhouse as long as the First Church stands, and say that on Monday they will receive a call from one who is sorry and ashamed that she has not looked after them before."
Two happy boys whirled home on their skates, and told the wonderful story of their venture. Prissy was wild with delight, and he father, who had reached home earlier than was expected, laughed heartily as he said, "You had more courage than I should have had, I'm afraid."
"Seems to me," said Prissy, thoughtfully, "that it's harder to find men to do good, but things than women."
"Ho! who skated to town and went calling on folks they'd never seen, and was half scared to death too. I'd like to know?" cried Bert.
"But you're not men—yet," said Prissy.

"Little men, I should say," said Mrs. Dorance, and her husband nodded his head.
The children could scarcely wait until their mother had prepared the generous basket of food to carry to the old people for over Sunday use, so eager were they to tell them that they were never, no, never, so long as the First Church stood, to go to the poorhouse. A sweet little visit they had with the old folks, who blessed them and wept tears of joy when they heard how the children had undertaken their cause when they were poor and without helpers.
"The dear Lord always has his own way to do things, and I'm main sure he had some reason for using those blessed children this time," said the soft-voiced old lady, and the husband said, "Amen, just as if it had been a meeting," Prissy told her mother.
It all came out beautifully. Mrs. Olcott had not only a large heart, but a long purse, and she was also a wise Christian leader. The young people did their share toward making the old people comfortable, and had a very good time doing it too, and the church made generous and loving arrangements by which these true servants of their Lord, who in their days of plenty had gladly helped to build up Zion, should not be left to feel forsaken in old age and adversity.
But this is not quite the end of the story. Mr. and Mrs. Dorance came to see the heart of the church as never before, through the loving care it gave to its stricken ones, and one sweet June day, a year or so after the boys started out on their mercy and help work, the father and mother, together with the three children, stood before the altar in the First Church and took the vows of loving service upon them.
The old people were in the church that morning, and at the close the sweet old lady said between smiles and tears: "God sent his messengers just in time to save us from the poorhouse, and to save this dear family to his church."

A MEMBER OF THE SPIDER FAMILY.

BY LOUISE GARDINER STOCKTON.

It is often surprising to find plants or animals that are outwardly dissimilar belonging to the same classes and families, but it only serves as an illustration of the fact that we cannot appreciate our surroundings if we do not take the trouble to look below the surface. It would take several guesses, I imagine, to place the scorpions in the arachnida, or spider family, but that is where they belong, and although scientists, as yet, have not given them the comparatively minute study accorded other species, we know quite well their habits and structure. There are over one hundred and twenty species scattered over the warmer countries of Europe and South America, where they grow to be eight or ten inches in length. Smaller ones are found in other parts of Europe, and a few in the United States as far north as Nebraska, and fortunately for us, for they are annoying and dangerous visitors; though their sting is not necessarily fatal, it frequently results in serious complications. The sting, their only weapon of defence, in spite of their formidable claws, consists of a small swelling at the tip of the tail, ending in a sharp, curved sting, pierced by two minute holes, through which is sent the irritating poison. Their food consists of the eggs of other insects, and very frequently the other insects themselves as well, though they are humane enough to kill their victims by stinging them, before proceeding to their meal. Their food canals are so narrow that they can only suck the juices from the dead bodies, which are grasped tightly in their claws. Nocturnal in their habits, they hide in the daytime under stones, in ruined walls and behind the loose bark of trees, but as soon as night falls they emerge in active search for food. They are ungainly and slow in their method of covering the ground, finding it necessary, in order to make any progress, to raise the tail perpendicularly above their body, to maintain their equilibrium. When alarmed they also raise the tail and wave it violently to and fro, as if warning all newcomers of impending danger. They are often handled with apparent carelessness and ease by the natives of Egypt—an ease which is certainly born of training and skill.
The body of a scorpion is distinctive from that of other insects, the head and the thorax being united and covered by a scale. In most other cases they are semi-detached.
Besides their enormous crab-like claws they possess four pairs of walking legs,

seven-jointed and covered with fine hairs. Besides numerous legs they also possess a number of eyes, varying in the different species from six to ten, placed well on the top of the head.
The old name of our beautiful little forget-me-not was scorpion-grass, since it was supposed to be a sovereign remedy for the bite of the insect. There is a curious story told of the hatred of the scorpions for fire, that they will commit suicide if surrounded by it, by curling their tails over their heads and stinging themselves to death. But this has been proven false, for no reptile can poison itself, nor, indeed, one of its own species. The explanation seems to lie in the fact that they are extremely susceptible to heat, and in their writhings and contortions seem to be striking their own bodies with their tails.
It is said that a tame scorpion is perfectly willing to live on bananas, but it is probable that the experiment is not very often made.
It is rather hard to imagine a scorpion as a very valued pet.

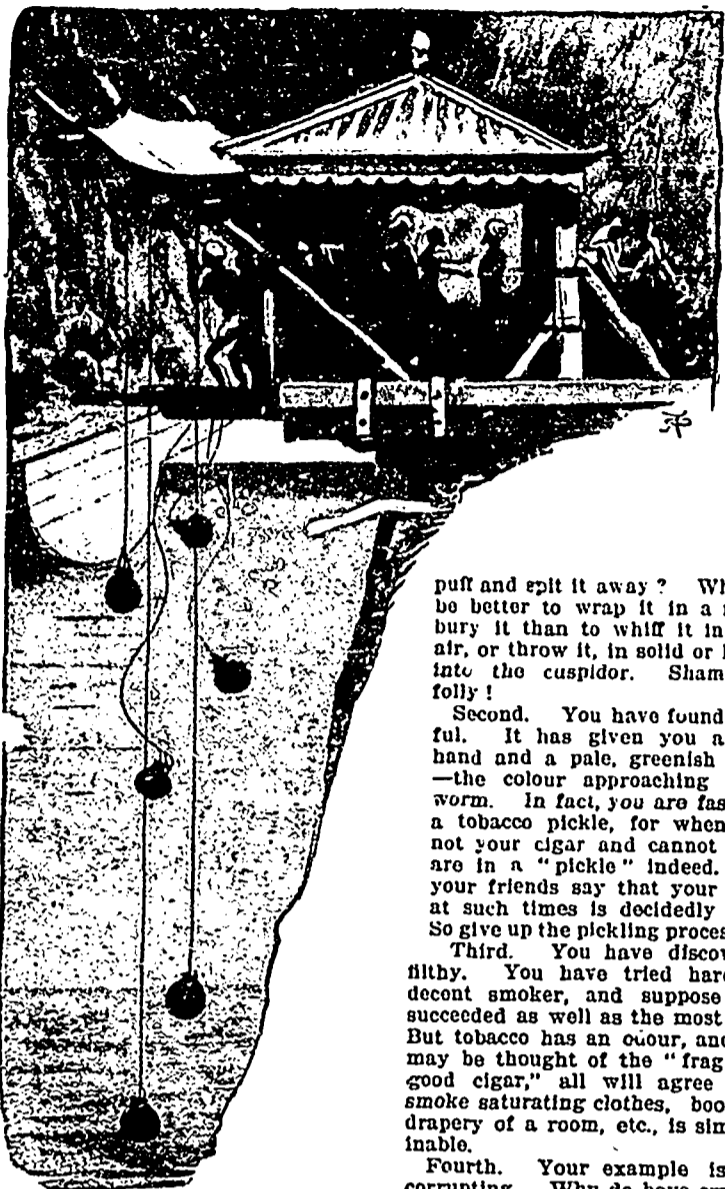
Paul the Hero.

BY E. E. HEWITT.

Of all the splendid stories that we have ever heard,
The truest and the grandest are in God's holy word;
And one that stirs the feelings and makes the pulses bound,
Is that of Paul, the hero, whose name is glory-crowned.
So tireless in his service, so earnest in his zeal,
No pain could check his courage, no threat his lips could seal.
He lifted up Christ's banner wherever he might be,
In palace or in dungeon, by land or on the sea.
In labours more abundant, in stripes and treachery;
In perils of the robbers; in perils of the sea;
In hungering and thirsting; in weariness and pain;
In deserts and in prisons; in heat, and cold, and rain.
Just read about that shipwreck upon his way to Rome!
The sky was sunless, starless, the billows white with foam;
The soldiers were disheartened, the sailors shook with fear,
And Paul alone was peaceful—he knew the Lord was near.
So brave and yet so gentle, so courteous in his ways,
His prison walls re-echoed with joyful songs of praise.
Ah! yes, a noble hero, this soldier of the cross,
Who for the sake of Jesus was glad to suffer loss.
But give him not the honour, as we his life recall;
To Christ be all the glory—"Tis by his grace," said Paul;
And now the faithful servant is with the King above,
And wears a crown all radiant with fadeless gems of love.

THE TURK'S MISTAKE.

A letter from a missionary in Turkey tells this story: "The situation in Turkey is about as bad as it can be. The follower of Mohammed offers the Christian Islam submission or the sword. As long as any race is submissive under the Moslem yoke the Moslem is tolerant, but if he lifts his head or demands a part in the government, the Moslem religion offers no mercy.
"I heard a Turkish censor make the remark to a Bulgarian friend in our employ: 'We made the mistake with you Bulgarians that we did not kill you all. If we had done so, we should have saved ourselves all the trouble we have had with you since.'
"I knew the Turk, and he was a pleasant-appearing man, yet he could make such a remark in cold blood. Such is Islam.
"All the massacres in Asia Minor seem to have been deliberately planned and executed with a fiendishness that is not easily understood by one that does not know that the spirit of Mohammedanism has not changed during the intervening centuries between the time of the False Prophet and the present day.
"But he shows the characteristic attitude of the missionaries when he adds later: 'However, we do not allow ourselves to look far ahead. God reigns, and his will be done. We love his will and desire to make it ours.'"



WATER TANKS AT ADEN.

Aden, in the Red Sea, is said to be the hottest place on earth. It is a barren rock, and water for ships is very scarce. It is kept in large tanks, from which the natives laboriously draw it in leathern bottles for the purpose, as required.

Sowing—Reaping.

Be careful what you sow, boys!
For seed will surely grow, boys!
The dew will fall,
The rain will splash,
The clouds will darken,
And the sunshine flash;
And the boy who sows good seed to-day
Shall reap the crop to-morrow.

Be careful what you sow, girls!
For every seed will grow, girls!
Though it may fall
Where you cannot know,
Yet in summer and shade
It will surely grow;
And the girl who sows good seed to-day
Will reap the crop to-morrow.

Be careful what you sow, boys!
For the seeds will surely grow, boys!
If you plant bad seed
By the wayside high,
You must reap the harvest
By-and-bye;
And the boy who sows wild oats to-day
Must reap wild oats to-morrow.

Be careful what you sow, girls!
For all the bad will grow, girls!
And the girl who now
With a careless hand,
Is scattering thistles
Over the land,
Must know that whatever she sows to-day
She must reap the same to-morrow.

QUIT SMOKING.

Joel Swartz, D.D., said: "If I could tell as well why I took to the cigar as I can tell why I quit, I should feel as much ashamed as I now do for having to confess that I ever polluted my life and breath with it. The reason why so many are lost in the smoke of the battle is because they have not thought themselves into clear conviction that it is a duty to quit."

There are six solid reasons that should constrain you to forego the fragrant weed.

First. It is wasteful. Money, of which you have none to spare, is a possible talent for good. Why should you

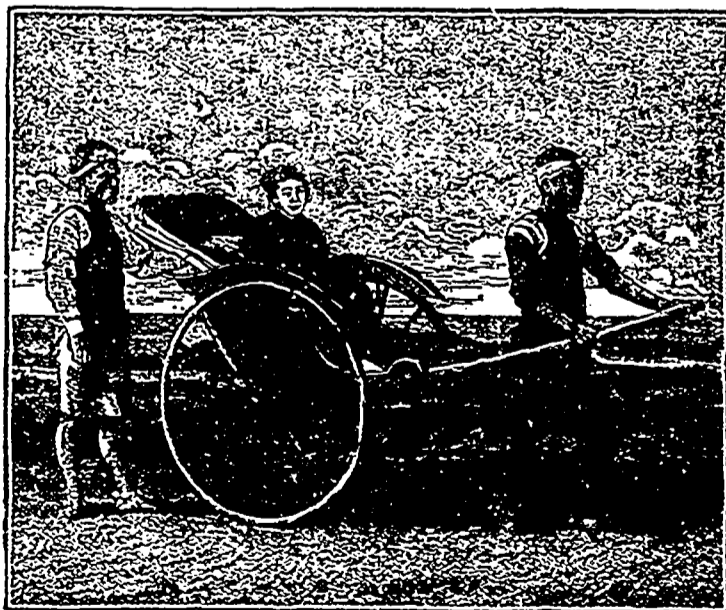
puff and spit it away? Why, it would be better to wrap it in a napkin and bury it than to whiff it into the thin air, or throw it, in solid or liquid form, into the cuspidor. Shame on such folly!

Second. You have found it unfaithful. It has given you a trembling hand and a pale, greenish complexion—the colour approaching a tobacco worm. In fact, you are fast becoming a tobacco pickle, for when you have not your cigar and cannot get it, you are in a "pickle" indeed. Some of your friends say that your disposition at such times is decidedly acidulate. So give up the pickling process and quit.

Third. You have discovered it is filthy. You have tried hard to be a decent smoker, and suppose you have succeeded as well as the most fastidious. But tobacco has an odour, and whatever may be thought of the "fragrance of a good cigar," all will agree that stale smoke saturating clothes, books, papers, drapery of a room, etc., is simply abominable.

Fourth. Your example is bad and corrupting. Why do boys smoke? Because they see their elders smoke, and so to seem to be manly they try to do as they do. What a shame it is to lend one's influence in encouragement of such a wasteful, filthy, unhealthy habit! Moreover, how can any one maintain his self-respect or the respect of the pure and good, and yet lend himself to such an indulgence?

Fifth. But worse than all that is thus far named is the loss of liberty. He who becomes addicted to smoking becomes a slave to his cigar. All who have contracted the habit and then have tried to throw it off know what an awful and imperious mastery the weed assumes. How domineering is his master, and what a master a cigar? Shams on the coward slave who wears the chains of a master who can whip and scourge him with such odious things! Do you boast of freedom? Take away your cigar and see how weak and petulant



THE JINRIKISHA.

and wretched you are! What a degradation and dishonour for a rational, free being to sell out his God-given birth-right for such a mess of pottage—pottage made of tobacco leaves!

Sixth. These things being so, to smoke is morally wrong; it is sinful. To many this may seem extreme. Can you feel innocent and carry about with you and into the presence of God in prayer,

or anywhere else, a habit that is all I have sold of it. Quit the cigar and let nothing tempt you to resume the shameful, guilty habit.

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

LESSON X.—DECEMBER 5. CHRIST'S HUMILITY AND EXALTA- TION.

Phil. 2. 1-11. Memory verses, 5-8.
GOLDEN TEXT.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.—Phil. 2. 5.

OUTLINE.

1. The Loving Mind, v. 1, 2.
2. The Lowly Mind, v. 3-8.
3. The Loyal Mind, v. 9-11.

Time and Place.—This epistle was written from Rome to the church in Philippi in Macedonia, during Paul's imprisonment, about A.D. 63.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Christ's humility and exaltation.—Phil. 2. 1-11.
Tu. Meekness of Christ.—Isa. 42. 1-7.
W. Lowly in heart.—Mat. 11. 25-30.
Th. Lower than the angels.—Heb. 2. 9-18.
F. Example of humility.—John 13. 1-15.
S. First and last.—Rev. 1. 1-8.
Su. Worthy the Lamb.—Rev. 5. 9-14.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The Loving Mind, v. 1, 2.
What four motives to love are named in verse 1?
What do "bowels and mercies" mean? Tender feelings and compassion.
What does Paul ask them concerning his joy? That it may be made full or complete.
What is it to be like-minded?
How is this stated in Rom. 12. 16?
What is it to have the same love?
Why should Christians be united in heart?
Should those who love Christ love each other?
2. The Lowly Mind, v. 3-8.
What does the apostle forbid in verse 3?
What does he urge?
What is recommended in verse 4?
How is this to be construed?
What mind is recommended? Golden Text.
In what "form," or station, was Christ?
How is this stated in John 1. 1?
What is the meaning of verse 6, last clause? That Christ's equality with God was no act or robbery or selfish claim.
How did Christ humble himself?
In whose likeness was he found?
To what death did he submit?
For what purpose was this death?
1 Peter 3. 18.
3. The Loyal Mind, v. 9-11.
What honour has God given to Christ?

"What Next."

A mother sat stitching and stitching away;
It rained, and her wee ones were indoors at play,
When one of them came and leaned on her chair,
And said, with a touchingly wearied-out air;
"We've played every play in the world that we know;
Now, what shall we do?"

Before poor mamma had a chance to reply,
The rest of the little ones gathered close by;
And the sum of their troubles all seemed the same—
"We wish that we knew some wonderful game;
We've been sailors and soldiers, and fought battles, too;
Now, what shall we do?"

Mamma thought for a moment, then gaily replied:
"Build a palace of blocks, with a portico wide,
And play that the owner had money to spend,
And wanted to decorate rooms without end,
And ordered some pictures painted by you;
That's what you can do.

"Now each take a pencil and paper, and draw
The most wonderful thing that you ever saw;
A lily, a sunset, a shore or a sea,
A gorgeous-winged butterfly chasing a bee;
Or—three little boys, that are crying, like you,
"Now, what shall we do?"

The brightened-up children took pencils in hand,
(As amateur artists, you'll all understand),
And worked at their pictures until it was plain
The funny gray clouds had forgotten to rain;
And mamma had a rest (not a long one, 'tis true),
From, "What shall we do?"

Oh! sweet, patient mothers, in this earnest way,
You are doing life's work while your little ones play;
You are fashioning souls that hereafter shall rise,
God's beautiful angels, winged, to the skies;
And heaven makes reply to your "What shall we do?"
Since love teaches you.

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What honour is due to the name of Jesus?
What should every tongue confess?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson do we find—

1. That love brings joy?
2. That humility obtains honour?
3. That Christ is Lord of all?