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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XV.]

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 7, 1895.

[No. 38]



WATER CARRIERS—(SEE "BOTTLES," NEXT PAGE).

"TAKE 'EM, JACK."

A very pleasing incident occurred on one of our busy streets during the heated term—pleasing because of the unselfish spirit it displayed.

It was a fatiguingly hot day, and only those whose business was urgent were found upon the scorching streets. Presently a little newsboy appeared in sight. He was not alert and bustling, as is the ideal newsboy; on the contrary, he moved

along as though each step was painful to him. Meeting an acquaintance, he stopped to exchange greetings, under the friendly shade of an awning.

"What's the matter with you to-day, Jack? You get along 'bout as fast as a snail."

"So would you, I guess, Tim Ragan, if your feet were full of blisters walking on the hot sidewalk. Every time I put a foot down it's like to set me crying," the other answered.

Tim looked down at the bare feet in question, and glanced at his own, encased in a pair of shoes that had certainly seen duty, but which still afforded protection from the heat of the dazzling pavements. Quick as a flash he dropped down on a step, and the next moment was holding out his shoes to Jack.

"Here, you can wear them till to-morrow. My feet ain't blistered. Take 'em, Jack, it's all right," and away he went crying, "Three o'clock edition of the Post," at the

top of his voice, seemingly unconscious that he had just performed a brave deed. *Southern Presbyterian.*

WHEN we say that a man is good-hearted we do not always mean that he is a good man.

BROKEN friendships may be mended but it is usually a poorly done job that will soon need to be done over again.

Give a Kind Word When You Can.

Do you know a heart that hungers
For a word of love and cheer?
There are many such about us;
It may be that one is near.
Look around you. If you find it,
Speak the word that's needed so,
And your own heart may be strengthened
By the help that you bestow.

It may be that some one falters
On the brink of sin and wrong,
And a word from you might save him—
Help to make the tempted strong.
Look about you, O my brother,
What a sin is yours and mine,
If we see that help is needed
And then give no friendly sign!

Never think kind words are wasted;
Bread on waters cast are they,
And it may be we shall find them
Coming back to us some day—
Coming back when sorely needed,
In a time of sharp distress;
So, my friend, let's give them freely;
Gift and giver God will bless.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 7, 1895.

THE PAPER PATSY FOUND.

"MOTHER! mother! come here; I've found a paper that I think is pretty nice," cried Patsy Gray.

Mrs. Gray left her ironing and came to the porch door.

Patsy had just come from school; his book and cap lay beside him, and he was spelling out the words on a clean, square, stiff paper.

"I found it in the street; it's clean and new, and no name on it."

"It is a temperance pledge," said his mother.

"And do you put your name here in the corner, to do as it reads, never to use wine, beer, cider or any intoxicating drink?"

"Yes; that is what it is for. I heard a gentleman was here to start a temperance society, and this must be one of his pledges."

"And folks sign it and belong to the society?"

"Yes; that is it. And when one signs such a pledge, one must keep it sacred, on honour, and that can be done by God's help only."

"Would you like me to sign?" said Patsy.

"Indeed I would," said his mother.

"I am a widow and you are my only son, my hope and comfort. If you go wrong my heart will break. If you are a good, true man, it will sing for joy."

"I wouldn't want you to sit crying like Mrs. Green, because her boy drinks and went to gaol."

"I hope not!" exclaimed Mrs. Gray.

"Suppose I sign this, and go hunt up the gentleman, and ask him to let me belong to his society?"

"That will be a good plan. He is at our preacher's house."

"Suppose I ask one or two boys to go with me? I hate to go alone, and maybe they will sign too."

"That will be fine. Perhaps there can be enough boys found to form a band. If some of you boys form a good strong band, and have meetings, and keep it up year after year, and become earnest temperance men, think how much good you can do; you may change the character of this village, and drive out all liquor-selling. Then our little village would grow into a rich, happy, safe town!"

"Can boys do all that?" shouted Patsy. "Yes; the boys of now are the men of by-and-bye. If all the boys thirty years ago had been real strong temperance boys I think the question of temperance would now be settled for this country."

"Well, now, mother, I'll sign this pledge, and take it to school, and tell teacher and the boys; and after school a lot of us will go to find the temperance man."

"Very good! Perhaps your teacher will be the president of the society, and you can have your meetings in the school-house."

"Whoop! ain't you the one to plan!" cried Patsy. "Here goes for signing, and I'll go off to school as soon as I have a bite of dinner. When I get to be a man I'll see that you have a big dinner every day, and a hired girl to cook it for you!"

BOTTLES.

BY MINNIE E. KENNEY.

"WHY, I thought bottles were always made of glass," exclaims some little Bright-eyes, who is looking at this picture.

No; long ago, in olden times, bottles were always made of the skins of animals, which were properly dressed for that purpose. The openings of the skin were all closed except at the neck of the animal, and this was fastened with a string like the top of a bag, except when people wanted to fill it or empty out some of the contents.

These bottles were made of quite as many different sizes and shapes as the glass bottles that we use in these times, for sometimes the skin of a small animal, such as a kid or goat, was used, and sometimes a much larger one, such as the skin of an ox.

A traveller tells us of a bottle that he saw in Arabia, made of an ox-skin, which would hold sixty gallons. Was not that a large bottle?

Missionaries in Eastern countries often speak of the water-bottles made of goat-skins in which they carry water for their journey. When the roads are very rough and the bottles will be likely to strike against each other, they take the strongest, toughest material that can be used.

The bottles in which new wine was kept were made of the freshest, most flexible skins, so that they would not burst when the wine began to ferment.

All the drinking-water used in Egypt is brought from the river Nile by Arab water-carriers, like those shown in the picture, who bring it in skin bottles, from which they transfer it to stone jars or other receptacles.

Ought we not to be thankful that we live in a land where we have abundance of water, and where even the poorest can freely supply his needs? But we have a still greater cause for gratitude in our knowledge of the Water of Life which is freely offered to all who thirst, and of which whosoever will may drink.

WHAT GOD GIVES A BOY.

A BODY to live in and keep clean and healthy, and as a dwelling for his mind and a temple for his soul.

A pair of hands to use for himself and others, but never against others for himself.

A pair of feet to do errands of love and kindness and charity and business, but not to loiter in places of mischief or temptation or sin.

A pair of lips to keep pure and unpolluted by tobacco or whiskey, and to speak true, kind, brave words; but not to make a smokestack of, or a swill trough.

A pair of ears to hear the music of birds and tree and rill and human voice, but not

to give heed to what the serpent says, or to what dishonours God or his mother.

A pair of eyes to see the beautiful, the good and the true—God's finger-prints in the flower and field and snowflake; but not to feast on unclean pictures, or the blotches which Satan daubs and calls pleasure.

A mind to remember and reason and decide and store up wisdom and impart it to others, but not to be turned into a chip basket or rubbish heap for chaff and rubbish and sweepings of the world's stale wit.

A soul as fair as a new-fallen snowflake, to receive impressions of good and to develop faculties of powers and virtues which shall shape it day by day, as the artist's chisels shapes the stone, into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ.—*Morning Guide.*

DE-LEGALIZE THE TRAFFIC, AND SAVE THE BOYS.

THE Scott Act kills the treating system. Degraded men, who have acquired the drinking habit, may manage to get liquor in disreputable dives and dens, even where the law is in operation, but the boys are not tempted by the seductiveness of the open bar, and the terrible traffic is robbed of its potent attractions of joviality, warmth, good-fellowship, sparkle, light, and fun.

This fact was well brought out in reference to Maine, some time ago, by Mr. D. R. Locke, who visited the State named, to inquire into the working of Prohibition.

A STRONG ARGUMENT.

Mr. Locke said: "The best argument I found in Maine for Prohibition was by an editor of a paper in Portland, who was, for political reasons, mildly opposed to it. I had a conversation with him, which ran something like this:

"Where were you born?"

"In a village about sixty miles from Bangor."

"Do you remember the condition of things prior to Prohibition?"

"Distinctly. There was a vast amount of drunkenness, and consequent disorder and poverty."

"What was the effect of Prohibition?"

"It shut up all the rum-shops, and practically banished liquor from the village. It became one of the most quiet and prosperous places on the globe."

"How long did you live in the village after Prohibition?"

"Eleven years; or until I was twenty-one years of age."

"Then?"

"Then I went to Bangor."

"Do you drink now?"

"I never tasted a drop of liquor in my life."

"Why?"

"Up to the age of twenty-one I never saw it; and after that I did not care to take on the habit."

THEY WANT THE BOYS.

That is all there is in it. If the boys of the country are not exposed to the infernalism, the men are very sure not to be.

This man and his schoolmates were saved from rum by the fact that they could not get it until they were old enough to know better. Few men are drunkards who know not the poison till after they are twenty-one. It is the youth that the whiskey and beer men want.

WHAT A SMILE DID.

A LADY of position and property, anxious about her neighbours, provided religious services for them. She was very deaf—could scarcely hear at all. On one occasion one of her preachers managed to make her understand him; and, at the close of their conversation, asked: "But what part do you take in the work?" "Oh," she replied, "I smile them in and I smile them out!" Very soon the preacher saw the result of her generous, loving sympathy in a multitude of broad-shouldered, hard-fisted men, who entered the place of worship delighted to get a smile from her as she used to stand in the doorway to receive them. Why do not the working classes attend the house of God? They

would, in greater numbers, if self-denying, Christ-loving Christians would smile them in and smile them out.

Something Great.

THE trial was ended—the vigil past—All clad in his arms was the knight at last; The goodliest knight in the whole wide land, With a face that shone with a purpose grand. The king looked on him with gracious eyes, And said, "He is meet for some high emprise."

To himself he thought, "I will conquer fate, I will surely die or do something great."

So fresh from the palace he rode away. There was trouble and need in the town that day;

A child had strayed from his mother's side Into the woodland, dark and wide.

"Help!" cried the mother, with sorrow wild—"Help me, sir knight, to seek my child! The hungry wolves in the forest roam; Help me to bring my lost one home!"

He shook her hand from his bridle-rein: "Alas! poor mother, you ask in vain; Some meaner succour will do, maybe, Some 'squire or varlet of low degree. There are mighty wrongs in the world to right—

I keep my sword for a noble fight; I am sad at heart for your baby's fate, But I ride in haste to do something great."

One wintry night, when the sun had set, A blind man by the way he met:

"Now, good sir knight, for our Lady's sake, On the sightless wanderer pity take! The wind blows cold and the sun is down: Lead me, I pray, till I reach the town."

"Nay," said the knight, "I cannot wait; I ride in haste to do something great."

So on he rode in his armour bright, His sword all keen for the longed-for fight.

"Laugh with us—laugh!" cried the merry crowd; "Oh, weep!" wailed others with sorrow bowed;

"Help us!" the weak and weary prayed. But for joy, nor grief, nor need he stayed. And the years rolled on, and his eyes grew dim, And he died—and none made moan for him.

He missed the good that he might have done, He missed the blessings he might have won; Seeking some glorious task to find, His eyes to all humbler work were blind.

He that is faithful in that which is least, Is bidden to sit at the heavenly feast. Yet men and women lament their fate If they be not called to do something great.



JUNIOR LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

September 15, 1895.

MAN'S WHOLE DUTY.—Ecclesiastes 12: 13.

The word Ecclesiastes means "preacher." No name is given as to who the preacher in question was, yet we will not err if we say that Solomon was the preacher. Chapter 1, v. 1, says, the Preacher is Solomon, "the son of David, king in Jerusalem." Every preacher should be a man of experience. Solomon certainly answers this description. He was a man of extensive wisdom, as the book of Proverbs abundantly testifies. His experience was varied, as we may learn from the book which contains our present lesson. He had indulged himself in everything which was capable to the least, smallest degree to minister to his pleasure and enjoyment, and respecting one and all he declared that they were "vanity and vexation of spirit."

From his life-long experience, he arrived at one conclusion as to man's whole duty: "Fear God and keep his commandments." This does not mean that we are to fear God as the slave fears the master's lash, or as the forger fears the master's lash, or as the performer of some wicked deed, but that we should fear God in the same manner as the obedient child fears his loving parent,—he does not wish to do anything that would offend his parent. Keep his commandments. These are found in Exodus, chapter 20. We recommend all our Junior Leagues to commit these ten commandments to heart. Jesus Christ gave a summary of these in two, viz., "Love to God and love to all mankind—love God and thy neighbour as thyself."

PROSPEROUS, RIGHTEOUS,
UPRIGHT & CO.

By E. Donald McGregor.

CHAPTER II.—(Continued.)

At the head of a flight of stairs the boys found an open door, and just inside stood a pleasant-faced gentleman who beckoned them to a seat at the back of the room. It was a large hall, and a great lot of people had gathered to hear the music as Tom and Pete supposed, but when a gentleman at the front stood up and began to read from a book, they felt sure it was the wonderful story that had brought such a crowd.

"Let not your heart be troubled," the gentleman read, and in another moment he went on, "I go to prepare a Place for you."

Tom slipped forward on his chair, and Pete clutched his brother's arm, whispering excitedly:

"Tom, listen, it's the Place he's talkin' about."

"And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." Verse after verse read the gentleman, but though Tom and Pete listened eagerly, they could hear nothing more about the Place. Another gentleman spoke for a few minutes about "peace," and after that there was some more singing, that Tom and Pete thought very beautiful. Then all the people bowed their heads, and covered their eyes, and the first gentleman began to ask someone for a lot of things.

"It's a lord he's axin'," whispered Pete to Tom.

"Some rich un," answered Tom, "for he's just axed him to take care of all these folks."

"I can't see him," said Pete, peeping through his fingers, "maybe he's upon the front seat."

"More like he's on the platform; big uns don't sit down here," said Tom.

"But what makes him call out so loud if he's right close to him?"

Tom didn't answer, for just then everybody got up, and the people began to leave the Hall.

"Let's foller that man, an' ax about the Place," said Tom.

Pete looked as though he thought this a very risky thing to do, but Tom was seldom frightened of anyone, and in the end Pete usually caught some of his courage.

"It's all right, old chap," Tom said cheerily. "In course he'll tell us if he can, an' what's to hurt us? Come, there he is, just goin' out of the door!"

Hurriedly picking their way through the crowd the boys were soon close behind the strange gentleman, and Tom said:

"Please, sir, will you tell us where's the Place you was talkin' about to-night? We wants to go there."

The gentleman seemed startled at the question. He hesitated, then said earnestly:

"God grant that you may, my lads. I must take this car," he added, hastily, "but I will show you the way if I can."

He began hurriedly feeling in his pockets.

"I haven't a single tract—here, you must have sister's Bible," and taking out a small, old-fashioned book, he said:

"This book is very precious to me, my boys, but I dare not let you go without a message, so here it is. It is a chart to show you all about the way to the Place where the Lord Jesus lives. Get someone to show you how to read it, and may God bless you, my children."

In another moment the boys' new friend had swung himself onto a car that carried him swiftly out of sight, and Tom found in his hands a book that was declared to be a chart to guide Pete and himself to the Place.

Do you think he shouted? No, indeed, he did something very different.

CHAPTER III

MOTIONING Pete to be silent, he led the way into a dark alley. On and still further on into the darkness he went, until stumbling against some empty packing-cases he suddenly halted.

"Creep round into one of them boxes, Pete," he whispered; "maybe there'll be some straw."

Pete quietly obeyed orders, and sure enough in the bottom of a big case, that rested on its side, he found a tempting nest of warm, clean straw.

Tom followed him, and then, listening to see that all was quiet, he whispered:

"I knowed there'd be some boxes here, 'cause there was a lot of big shops to the front, an' then an alley, and now Pete," he continued earnestly, "I'm goin' to set up to-night, an' watch the chart. If folks should find out as we had it they'd rob us sure."

"What's a chart?" Pete asked suddenly.

"Why, a thing to show the way, like the

captain had. This kind shows the way to the Place."

"Maybe everyone ain't so very eager to find the way to the Place," Pete said doubtfully.

"Ain't they then," Tom answered, with a touch of scorn in his whisper; "folks is not all fools yet, an' if they knowed where to find the way to the Place, I know they'd find it pretty quick."

Poor little Tom, he would have been surprised had he known that there really were people who owned charts for the Place, which they seldom troubled to examine. To him this Bible chart was a priceless treasure, and all through the long, cold night he watched it as though it had been some rare casket of gold and silver. He had wrapped it in his ragged jacket lest a spot of damp might mar its beauty, and there he sat, fighting off the sleepy feelings that would come, and trying to make believe that he wasn't cold. Just as the dingy-coloured dawn was beginning to creep round the edge of his queer bed-chamber, a bunch of bright red something was thrust right in at the door, and a voice said, "Hello there."

Tom was very much frightened. For a moment he felt sure that he was about to be robbed of his treasure, and he tried to slyly push it under the straw. Then remembering that bravery was a good defence against most foes, he sat straight up, and answered in a loud voice:

"Well, what's up with you?"

"Nothin's up, only I slept next door to you last night, an' I heard such a stirrin' this mornin' that I reckoned I'd get up an' see."

By this time the owner of the bunch of red hair had pulled himself into the box, and Tom saw that he held under his worn coat a mite of a shaggy dog.

"Where'd you get the dog?" he asked curiously.

"Maybe same place where you got that book."

Tom looked down, and sure enough, in his struggle to hide his treasure, he had unwrapped one corner. Three things flashed through his mind. The first was that the new boy had very sharp eyes; the second, that he was a good deal bigger than himself; and the last, that possibly the best way to protect the chart was to share it.

"Stranger," he said, seriously, "I've got a secret here. If you've a mind to tell me who you are, an' what you does for a livin', an' if you're real decent, maybe I'll take you in."

"Wall," the new boy replied, with a grin of amusement, "yer a queer un, but I like yer way though, an' I'll tell you. My name is Jinks. I work for old Joe Spence, an' I stay round anywheres at night. I guess that's all."

Tom listened and looked, then after he had thoroughly inspected the new boy, he said slowly and impressively:

"Jinks, I'll take you in."

When Pete awoke a few moments later, Tom said:

"Pete, this feller is Jinks, an' I've let him inter the chart, an' he's goin' to take us to a man as will learn us to read it."

"We'll have to be sly," said Jinks, "if we find Mr. Black afore I goes to work. You know I has to be at the stall by half-past six, (that's the rushin' time), an' it ain't so very far off six now."

In another ten minutes three rough-looking boys stood outside a large but dingy old book-store. They peeped curiously in through the window, then opened the shop door, and walked straight up to a man who was stirring something on a small coal stove behind a screen. "Good mornin', Mr. Black!" Jinks said, with the air of an old acquaintance.

"Oh, good morning, Jinks." Mr. Black lifted the spoon from his porridge, and looked at his visitors. "I'm not opened up yet," he said; "in fact I haven't breakfasted."

"Well, sir, we'll tell you about it," said Jinks. "These two boys has just come from Liverpool, an' they got a book as they wants to learn to read, afore they can find the Place."

"What Place?" asked Mr. Black.

"Why, a Place where no one's ever sick or hungry or any of them things—they've heard of it, an' this book tells the way. Will you please show us how to read it (they let me inter the secret) an' we'll be awful much obliged."

Mr. Black set his pot of porridge onto the top of the stove. Then he took the chart from Tom, and began to slowly turn over its pages.

"Do you believe in this Place?" he said, glancing sharply at the boys.

"Why, sir," Tom answered in surprised tones, "the man with the red vest, an' the captain, an' the gentleman as gave us the chart, all said as they knowed the Place."

"An' they wasn't the kind as lied, neither," Jinks added, assuringly. "These fellers know a straight man when they sees him."

Mr. Black looked back at the book, and his eyes fell upon these words underlined in red ink: "Whosoever shall offend one of these

little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."

He hesitated a moment, then said: "You may come to-night, and I will see what I can do for you."

The three boys who walked out of Mr. Black's shop were still dirty-faced, but they looked so very happy, that I fancy you would have noticed the happy, shiny look before even the grime and dirt.

"Come on down to the stall," said Jinks. "We'll buy our breakfast there," Tom said to Pete, and he felt for the captain's dimes as he spoke.

"We're pretty near late," Jinks said, as they came in sight of Joe Spence's little coffee-stall, then he added wonderingly, "Why it ain't opened up yet."

"No," said a big, burly policeman who stood by, "and it won't be Joe Spence that'll open it up again. What's your name, boy?"

"Jinks, sir."

"Well, Jinks," the policeman said kindly, "this stall is yours. Joe Spence died right here while he was mixing coffee this morning. I was standing close by, and when I picked him up, he said: 'Jinks is to have the stall an' the money, I guess I'm agoin' to die. Will you tell him?' and of course I promised, and—well, my lad here's a chance for you to set up for yourself."

Jinks said not a word. He stood staring blankly first at the policeman, and then at the stall.

"Jinks," said Tom, after a moment, "the men are wonderin' where's the coffee. Hadn't you better make some, for fear they get to goin' somewheres else?"

Jinks understood this business-like suggestion, but he was dazed, and I fear, had not Tom and Pete helped, there would have been small business done that morning. When the busy time was over Jinks turned to Tom.

"Tom," he said, "how old be you?"

"I'm eleven!" Tom answered, promptly. "Grannie told me so, not long afore she died."

"An' how much is the little un?"

"Pete's eight, I think."

"Wall, then," Jinks said slowly, "I'm thirteen, as near as I can reckon it, and I want you to be my pardners in this business, will you?"

Tom looked serious, but he answered very promptly.

"Why, yes, if you'll let us!" and the compact thus sealed, the new firm began their work by washing up a great pile of dirty dishes.

(To be continued.)

SHECHEM—THE CITY OF REFUGE.

THE town called Shechem in the Bible, obtained under the Roman dominion the name *Neapolis*, which means new city, from the circumstance of having been rebuilt or restored. This name, in the abbreviated Arabic form of Nablus, it has retained to the present time. This is worthy of special note as one of the few instances in Palestine in which the Roman name of a place has permanently superseded the original Bible name. Shechem is thirty-five miles north of Jerusalem, and is situated in the valley between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, about a mile and a half west of its mouth at the plain of Moreh. It is situated on the southern side of the valley, extending from the precipitous face of Mount Gerizim down to the bottom of the valley, and for a short distance beyond it. The town is 1,870 feet above the sea level, with Gerizim towering 1,000 feet above it. It is on the watershed between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea. Springs east of the town flow into the Jordan. Those in town and to the west run into the Mediterranean Sea. The present population of Shechem is estimated by Europeans at 13,000, but by intelligent natives at 20,000. It is solidly and compactly built of stone. It drives a thriving business, and it bears evident marks of growth, prosperity, and recent improvements. The principal part of its ancient wall is still standing, though the town has outgrown it. The people of the city are all Moslem except about six hundred believers in Christianity, chiefly Greek Catholics, and one hundred and thirty Samaritans.

In addition to the ordinary traffic of a large town of Palestine, the inhabitants of Shechem are largely engaged in the manufacture of soap made from olive oil. The town is said to contain over twenty soap factories. It has a large trade with the villagers around, and with the wandering tribes of Arabs which live east of the

River Jordan. It is also the seat of the Turkish Government for that side of the river. In 1818 the Baptists had a mission at Shechem under a native preacher who was educated in England. He was conducting two schools, and also holding religious meetings for the instruction of adults in his own dwelling. This mission was established and supported by Baptists in Great Britain. Of the two schools, one was for boys and the other one for girls. The chief obstacle in the way of these and all other schools of the kind where missionary work is attempted in connection with the education of children, is the almost total indifference of parents on the subject of education, added to the fear that their children may be led to adopt the religious faith of their teachers. In 1878 there were only one hundred and thirty Samaritans in the world, and they all lived at Shechem. They had a synagogue in the south-west part of the city, in which were deposited several ancient Samaritan manuscripts, among them the celebrated Samaritan Pentateuch, supposed to be one of the oldest manuscripts in existence. It was at that time very difficult to obtain a sight of this ancient manuscript, as the priests were in the habit of deceiving visitors by showing them one of later date.

Shechem is probably the best-watered town by living springs in all Palestine. Fountains of fresh water from these springs are abundant on all the streets of the city. It is said there are about seventy-five never-failing springs within the town and its immediately vicinity. There is an extensive burying ground in the valley immediately north of the city. This graveyard extends to the very foot of Mount Ebal. Below this, toward the west, the valley descends rapidly, grows narrower, is abundantly watered, and is verdant with trees and shrubs and gardens. Besides the usual fruit trees in the towns of Palestine, Shechem has many white mulberry trees whose fruit is large and sweet. Jacob's Well is at the foot of Mount Gerizim, near to Shechem. In the fourth chapter of John this well is referred to as the place at which Jesus held the famous conversation with "a woman of Samaria." The town is here called Sychar, but this is evidently the same as Shechem. The well is still there, and there is little doubt that Jacob dug it and "drank thereof himself, and his children and his cattle." This plain is first mentioned in the Old Testament as the camping place of Abraham when he first came into the land of Canaan. (Gen. xii. 6.) In this plain also Jacob bought a piece of land from the prince of Shechem when he returned from Padan-aram, and here he resided till after the slaughter of the Shechemites by two of his sons on account of their sister Dinah. (Gen. xxxiii. 18; xxxv. 5.) The well, which is still known as Jacob's Well, is on the principal highway through Samaria, only a few steps to the right of the road. This location conforms exactly to the requirements of the account given in the fourth chapter of John. A church was built over the well in the fourth century, and its water was drawn up through the floor of the church near its eastern end. Nothing now remains of the church but its foundation walls and the arches or vaults which supported its stone floor. The top of the vault which stood over the well has partly fallen in, and in order to reach its mouth one must climb down through the opening in this vault. The stones of the vault lie in a confused heap about the well's mouth. The top of the well is arched over like a cistern, and a round opening is left about twenty inches in diameter. Another opening of irregular shape has been broken through it. The wall of the well is built of stones of good size, smoothly dressed, and nicely fitted together. The workmanship is like that of the wells at Beersheba. The well is a perfect cylinder seven and one-half feet in diameter. In 1878 it measured sixty-six feet in depth, and earlier writers give it a depth of one hundred and five feet. At the latter depth it contained twelve or fifteen feet of water the year round, but at sixty-six feet it was dry except during very wet weather.—*School Visitor.*

A MAN who will not reflect, and, if necessary, repent, is a ruined man.

The Graves of a Household.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

They grew in beauty, side by side,
They filled one home with glee;
Their graves are severed far and wide,
By mount and stream and sea.

The same fond mother bent at night
O'er each fair sleeping brow;
She had each folded flower in sight—
Where are those dreamers now?

One, 'midst the forest of the West,
By a dark stream is laid—
The Indian knows his place of rest,
Far in the cedar shade.

The sea, the blue lone sea, hath one—
He lies where pearls lie deep;
He was the loved of all, yet none
O'er his low bed may weep.

One sleeps where southern vines are drest
Above the noble slain;
He wrapped his colours round his breast
On a blood-red field of Spain.

And one—o'er her the myrtle showers
Its leaves, by soft winds fanned;
She faded 'midst Italian flowers—
The last of that bright band.

And parted thus they rest, who played
Beneath the same green tree;
Whose voices mingled as they prayed
Around one parent knee.

They that with smiles lit up the hall,
And cheered with song the hearth—
Alas for love, if thou wert all,
And naught beyond, O earth!

LESSON NOTES.

THIRD QUARTER.

STUDIES IN JEWISH HISTORY.

B.C. 1444.] LESSON XI. [Sept. 11.]

THE CITIES OF REFUGE.

Josh. 20. 1-9. Memory verses.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Who have fled for refuge to lay hold
the hope set before us.—Heb. 6. 18.

OUTLINE.

1. The Avenger of Blood, v. 1-6.
2. The Place of Safety, v. 7-9.

TIME.—B.C. 1444, at the close
conquest.

PLACE.—The Israelites were now at
the place of the tabernacle.

HOME READINGS.

- M. The cities of refuge.—Josh 20.
Tu. Purpose explained.—Deut. 19. 1-13.
W. The law of refuge.—Num. 35. 9-15.
Th. God our refuge.—Psalm 91.
F. A safe refuge.—2 Sam. 22. 1-20.
S. True rest.—Matt. 11. 25-30.
Su. Sure and steadfast.—Heb. 6. 13-20.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. *The Avenger of Blood*, v. 1-6.
Who told Joshua to appoint cities of refuge?
Who had before been thus commanded?
For whose safety were they appointed?
From whom would they afford a refuge?
What example of innocent slaying does
Moses state? See Deut. 19. 5.
To whom must a fugitive state his case?
What were the elders required to do?
To whom should they not give up the
fugitive? Why not?
How long must the slayer dwell there?
Where then could he go?
What were the elders to do with a wilful
murderer? Deut. 19. 11-13.
2. *The Place of Safety*, v. 7-9.
What three cities west of the Jordan were
chosen?
In the territory of what tribe were these
cities?
What cities were selected east of the
Jordan?
Within what tribes were these located?
For whose benefit were these cities ap-
pointed?
Where is our only place of refuge? Acts
4. 12.
How only can we find safety? (Golden Text.)

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

- What does this lesson teach us about—
1. The value of human life?
 2. The duty of protecting the innocent?
 3. The need that we have of a place of
safety?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. For whom were the cities of refuge appointed? For the innocent slayer of a man.
2. From whom was the innocent manslayer to find refuge? From the avenger of blood.
3. How long was he to remain in the city? Until the death of the high priest.
4. How many cities of refuge were chosen? Six, three each side of the Jordan.
5. Who is our refuge? Christ.
6. What is the Golden Text? "Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The mercy of God.

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

What is the teaching of the New Testament concerning children as members of the Church?

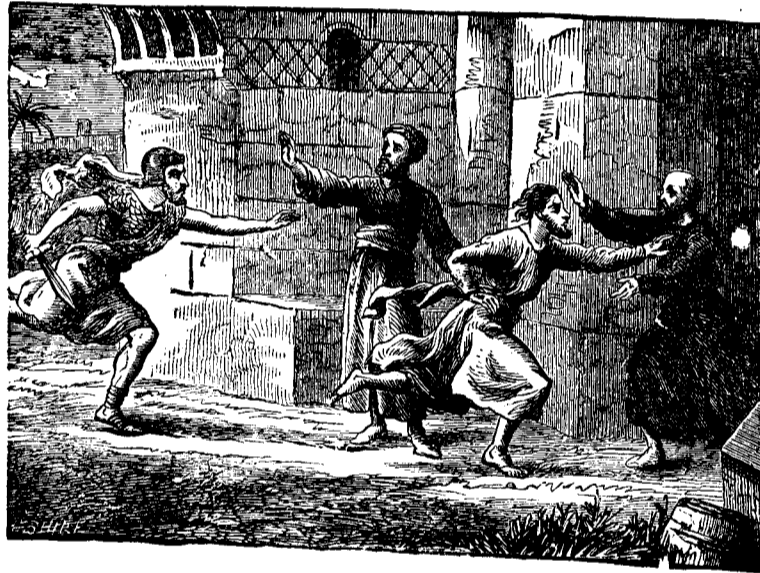
It is implied that their baptism places them in the same relation to the New Covenant in which infants were placed in the Old by the rite of circumcision. Hence they are spoken of, addressed, and exhorted, as heirs of Gospel privilege.

(Matthew 19. 14; Mark 10. 14; Isaiah 40. 11; Acts 2. 39; Genesis 17. 7, 10; 1 Corinthians 1. 16; 7. 14; Ephesians 6. 1, 4; Colossians 3. 20.)

THE CITY OF REFUGE.

BY H. S. H.

AFTER the children of Israel had entered the land of Canaan and were settled, the Lord told them to set aside six cities for Cities of Refuge—three on each side of



THE CITY OF REFUGE.

Jordan. These cities were as a refuge for the shelter of him who had slain a person undesignedly. The custom among the ancient nations was, that when one murdered another the nearest kinsman of the one murdered must avenge the blood of his kinsman by killing the guilty one. This seems to have been the custom among the nations around Israel, and became also a law among the Israelites themselves. The danger of shedding innocent blood under this law can be readily seen—and yet, in order to guard the sanctity of human life God could not entirely lift this law among the nations then existing. It was a kind of a lynch law, and yet it was a great way ahead of lynch law in that it allowed no man but the one nearest of kin to the murdered one to avenge the murderer.

To guard and protect the innocent one and give all a proper hearing, these cities of refuge were divinely ordered. They were so situated that they would be always within the reach of anyone who might be exposed to the sword of the avenger. If any slayer happened to fall into the hands of the avenger of blood, it was not for want of a refuge near at hand, but because he had failed to avail himself of it.

The existence of these cities and their purposes have often been used to illustrate the escape of the avenger of sin (the law) under the Gospel; and it is certainly a beautiful illustration. Let us look at some points of resemblance.

1. The cities were always accessible—day or night, at any hour he who sought shelter from the avenger of blood could find their gates open. So it is with Christ—He is always accessible. He is never

too busily engaged to take a poor sinner in. Night or day he stands with outstretched arms to give the sinner who flees from the wrath to come shelter.

2. The cities were open to all. There was no distinction of nationality or class. Black or white, rich or poor, ignorant or learned, all might come to these cities and find shelter from the avenger. From Christ the message sounds forth, "Who-soever will." None who will can be shut out.

3. The way to the cities was prepared and made plain. The roads to them were to be kept open and in good repair. At every crossing a post was put up bearing the sign, "Refuge," "Refuge," pointing towards the city, to guide the flight of the fugitive. This is also true of the way to Christ. Every obstacle has been removed; though the way to God was closed up, Christ opened it himself and has given all necessary instructions which course to take so that there is no need of being side-tracked if we only read. He that runneth may read.

4. It must be sought—effort on the part of the slayer must be put forth. Though these cities were prepared, always accessible, open to all, and the way to them prepared, yet, if the slayer would not put forth an effort to get there, they would be of no use to him. He would perish, and it might be within sight of the preparation and provision made for his safety. And so it is with the sinner. He must seek Christ—make an effort—turn away from his sins,

Why do you not flee to Christ when you know you are guilty and the provision is made for your salvation? Come, run and be saved, so that you can sing, "The Lord is my Rock and my fortress and my Deliverer. The eternal God is my refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

The Bugle-Call.

HAVE you heard the troops a-marching,
Marching, marching?
Oh, my soul, to hear the bugle and the long
roll of the drum!
Up the hill and down the valley, I can hear
his step among them,
Before you see his scarlet coat, I'll know my
love has come.

"I can see the troops a-marching,
Slowly, slowly,
As they near the pale leaves tremble at the
coming of that band;
There is neither sound nor footfall, neither
bugle-blast nor drum-call,
A silent host they pass from sight into a
silent land."

Nay, I hear the bugle calling,
Calling, calling!
Oh, the footsteps of my soldier, I can count
them as they fall;
As I time mine to the echo, over hill and
over valley,
I am marching, marching ever to that
unseen bugle's call.

THE SEA-CAPTAIN'S STORY.

"I HAD a little vessel on the coast. She had four men besides myself. I had my wife and two children on board. The night was stormy, and my brother was to stand watch that night. The seamen prevailed on him to take 'one glass' to help him perform his duties. Being unaccustomed to liquor, he fell asleep, and in the night I awoke to find my vessel a wreck. I took my wife and one of my little ones in my arms, and she took the other, and for hours we battled with the cold waves. After hours of suffering the waves swept my little one from my embrace. Then, after more hours of suffering, the waves swept the little one from my wife's arms, and our two little dears were lost to us forever. After more battling with the storm and waves, behold, my wife was cold in death. I made my way to the shore, and here I am—my wife, my children, and all my earthly possessions lost for 'one glass' of rum."

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