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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVII.]

TORONTO, APRIL 17, 1897.

[No. 16.]

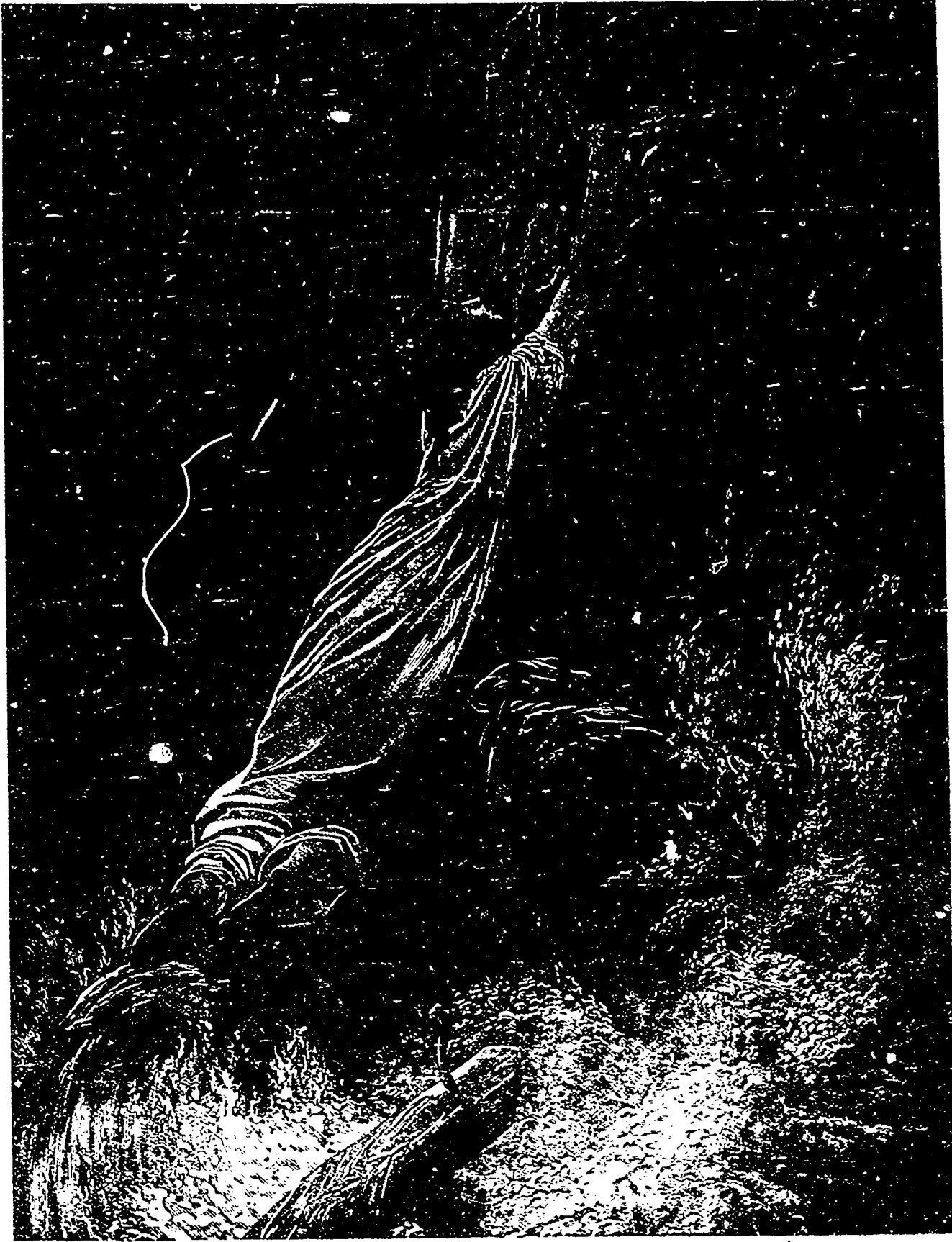
THE PASSOVER MOON.

It is passover at Jerusalem, that holy Hebrew feast. From all quarters have gathered the people of God. Like children coming to a dear mother, the Hebrew pilgrims have clustered in and about Jerusalem. They crowd the houses within the city. They pitch their tents on the emerald turf without the walls. They only wait for the opening of the great festival services. But look toward Olivet. Watch the crest of the hill around which darkens the evening, but above it, beyond it, what taper of light is that flashing its silver rays up into the heavens?

It grows. It swells. Now it is like a graceful dome on the horizon. It rises higher, swings clear of the hill, and there is the round, full-orbed, glorious passover-moon. We seem to hear acclamations of joy, shouts of welcome, hymns of praise, echoing through the night.

But look northward! What responsive flush is that from yonder hill-top? And, farther away, what beacon-light is that suddenly glowing from another eminence? And, farther still, a third crimson signal is kindled. And so, from hill-top to hill-top, the news is sent far away to the sojourners by the Euphrates, to the exiles from the beloved city, that passover has begun. So runs the ancient story.

We have come to our great festival season, to that which passover pre-figured, into which passover grew even as the taper above Olivet expanded into the glorious moon. It's our Easter. The Paschal Lamb has been slain. Calvary's sacrifice has been offered. But, lo, Christ has risen! He is alive again. The Old festival is merged into the New, is expanded into the glory and joy and peace and hope of Easter. When you see at Easter a moon that turns toward the earth all the unclouded splendour of its face, you think of that passover-moon announced from hill-top to hill-top. Now proclaim the joy and blessedness of your Easter heritage! Tell it everywhere that Christ is risen. Let the light of your proclamation go everywhere, that there is a finished salvation for all. Tell it to that homeless lad. Tell it to that tempted young man. Tell it to that drunkard. Tell it to that criminal. Tell it to the widow in her sorrow, and the children needing a father's love. Tell it to the sick, the poor, the forsaken. Tell it to other lands is darkness—to Africa, China,



ROCK OF AGES.

Turkey, and the Isles of the Sea. Flash the light everywhere! Proclaim that Christ is risen! Hallelujah!—S. S. Journal.

A deaf and dumb boy was asked, "What is truth?" He stepped to the blackboard and made a straight line.

"And what is falsehood?"

And he made a zigzag, crooked line. This was a good answer, wasn't it? We hear boys in their play pledging each other to do "the straight thing," meaning, of course, being true and truthful. And when we hear them say that a boy is "crooked," we know that means he lies and deceives.

A little girl who had tried it, said: "The trouble about telling a lie is that when you have told one you have to tell ever so many more to cover the first one up."

ROCK OF AGES.

This striking picture is a sermon in itself. How safe are those who cling by faith to the unshaken Rock of Ages. Tho' tempest rage and waves may shock, it never yields or falls. Safe, safe forever, are those who cling to the unshaken rock.

But, oh, what words shall portray the state of him who, amid the overwhelming waves, clings only to a drifting spar and at last finds even this wrenched from his grasp as he sinks forever into the abyss. Which, dear reader, do you wish to be your fate in the hour of death? Then act now that if death came to-day it might find you clinging to the Rock of Ages.

"Rock of Ages cleave for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."

THE COST OF A DINNER.

Recently a gentleman who is fond of arithmetic made up his mind that he would find out how much a dinner really cost. This gentleman asked how much a simple dinner that he was eating cost, and he was told seventy-five cents. He contradicted this, and then made out the following statement about the cost of that dinner: The pepper, he said, came from ten thousand miles away. It grew on a little bush about eight feet high, which must have had a growth of at least five years. The pepper was picked green; it had to be dried in the sun, and this meant employing women. It took one ship and a thousand miles of railroad to bring the pepper to the United States. The tea on the table came from China, and the coffee from South America. The codfish had to be brought from Maine. Men had to be employed to catch the fish; other men and women were employed in drying, packing, and boxing it, and it, too, had to make a long railroad journey. The flour of which the bread was made was grown in Dakota; some one owned the land, and that meant the investing of capital; and then he had also to pay wages to workingmen. The flour had to be ground and the building of the mill and the plant, or machinery meant more money invested. The millers had to be paid, coopers had to be paid for making the barrels and of course, the wood of which the barrels were made had to be cut and sawed and shaped and this meant the employment of more men. Then the flour had to be shipped over the railroad and handled again by cartmen before it came into the house. The salt came from the Indian reservation in the north-western part of New York State. The canned peaches came from California, and they too represented the employment of capital and labour. The spices in the cake came from the Spice Islands in the Indian Archipelago. After the gentleman had pointed out what the dinner really cost, he asked what on the table could be raised within the limits of the county where they were living. The answer was: only the corn bread, the butter, and buttermilk, and it was decided that the family could not live on those alone. The gentleman estimated that that little dinner represented, directly or indirectly, the employment of five hundred millions of dollars of capital and of about five millions of men.

A Fellow's Mother.

"A fellow's mother," said Fred, the wise, with his rosy cheeks and his merry eyes, "Knows what to do if a fellow gets hurt by a thump, or a bruise, or a fall in the dirt.

"A fellow's mother has bags and strings, tags and buttons and lots of things. No matter how busy she is, she'll stop to see how well you can spin your top.

"She does not care—not much, I mean—if a fellow's face is not always clean. And if your trousers are torn at the knee, she can put in a patch that you'd never see.

"A fellow's mother is never mad, but only sorry if you are bad; and I'll tell you this, if you're only true, she'll always forgive you, whatever you do.

"I'm sure of this," said Fred the wise, with a manly look in his laughing eyes, "I'll mind my mother, quick, every day, A fellow's a muf that don't obey."

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, APRIL 17, 1897.

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

APRIL 25, 1897.

Eldest for Isaac's wife.—Genesis 24. 10-22.

A FAITHFUL SERVANT.

The name of this servant is not given, but his character as a servant is faithfully portrayed, and he might really be termed a model servant. Christianity is a system of doctrines to be believed, and also a code of laws to be kept. If all servants were as faithful and obedient as Abraham's servant was, no doubt there would be better masters than there are. Whatever positions our young people occupy, they should act faithfully their part, not as eye-servers, as men-pleasers.

SEE HOW THE SERVANT ACTED.

Verses 12. He was a child of God, and acknowledged his Divine Master in all things. Christians should talk to God about everything. The command is, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him." Men should consult God about their business, social and family affairs, as well as their spiritual interests. There would not be so many failures, nor unhappy marriages as there are if more prayer was offered to God, respecting both the one and the other. See the prayer of this servant, verses 12-14.

AN INTERESTING LOVE AFFAIR.

Verses 15-28. These verses are of the most fascinating kind, and if they were found in any other book they would be the subject of universal admiration. There is an eloquence about them which is truly captivating, and an artless simplicity which is most commendable. It should serve as a model for young people.

GRATITUDE.

Verses 26, 27. God wonderfully answered the prayer of Abram's servant, for which he returns thanks. Men

often forget to praise the Lord. An old writer says, "How strange it is that a world so full of Jehovah's goodness, should be so empty of his praise." David said, "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." We should cultivate a grateful spirit.

The works of God are truly marvellous, past finding out. Read this narrative again, and how can you account for the contents without you acknowledge the hand of God? Was it merely accidental that the servant should meet with the young woman as he did? Is there no divine interposition in the fact that he obtained such a cordial reception in the family of the maid whom he had met? He who regards a Providence, will never lack a Providence to regard. The great lesson which we may learn from this meditation is, "Trust in God, and do your duty."

HOW SADDLEBACK LEDGE WAS KEPT BURNING.

This is one of the wildest and bleakest of light stations of that savage region, and according to a story told there it was once the scene of a remarkably plucky adherence to duty on the part of a fifteen-year-old boy. He was the son of the keeper, and on this occasion was left alone in the tower while his father went ashore for provisions in their only boat. Before the latter could return a violent storm arose, and for the next three weeks there was no time in which the keeper's boat could have lived for a moment in the wild seas that raged about the lonely rock. Still the light was kept burning by that fifteen-year-old boy, who had little to eat, and but scant time to sleep. Night after night, for three weeks, its steady gleam shone through the blackness of the pitiless storm and gladdened the father's straining eyes. When the ordeal was ended the boy was so weak from exhaustion as to be barely able to speak. At the same time there was no prouder father, nor happier young light-keeper on the Maine coast than those who met on the storm-swept ledge of Saddleback that day.—Kirk Munroe, in Scribner's.

HEROIC DOROTHY HOBSON.

BY DANIEL WISE, D.D.

Dorothy Hobson is not a high-sounding name. Yet the English girl who bore it clothed it with a moral splendour more brightly beautiful than the gems which shine in queenly crowns.

Dorothy was only a potter's child; but in heart she was brave enough to have been the daughter of paladin or prince. See her, for instance, when very young, stolen from her home by a band of gypsies. With rude hands they bore her to their camp in a sequestered wood. They were rough creatures, and almost any other child would have been terrified into speechlessness and tears. But Dorothy shed no tears—gave no place to the excess of fear. On the contrary, when found by her father, who, with a number of his workmen, had traced the gypsies to their lair, she was sitting in a hamper of straw, eating ginger-bread as calmly as she was wont to do when under her father's roof-tree.

That this was not the calmness of a thoughtless child, but of a brave heart, was shown by her conduct when, a few years later, her mother died, and she—moved by that mother's dying words—entered the ranks of Christ's disciples. In obedience to her Lord's commands, she then began to work for his cause as a Sunday-school teacher, a collector of money for missions, and a soul-winner. But her father, being angry because she was such a true-hearted Christian, and a Methodist withal, said to her one evening:

"Dorothy, I give you your choice. You must give up praying, visiting the sick, and collecting missionary money, or leave my house and find another home. Let me know your decision in half an hour!"

The motherless girl's heart was wounded as with keen points of steel by these cruel words. She was only fifteen years old. She had no relatives near by, and had nothing to depend on except her moderate skill as a painter on china for a pottery in the neighbourhood. But the brave spirit which had faced captivity in a gypsy camp, being now strengthened by her faith in Him who she knew was able to provide for her, enabled her to face this unwonted trial in an heroic spirit. Therefore, though her cheeks were bedewed with tears, her voice was firm, as she gently but firmly replied:

"Father, I cannot promise what you ask. I must serve Jesus first!"

When the half-hour expired, Dorothy left her father's door-step, with a servant carrying her clothing. Crooping her way through the darkness, she sought and found shelter in the humble cottage of a poor widow.

Oh, brave and heroic Dorothy! Brave in that she faced a serious peril without a fear, heroic, because she sacrificed her home for the sake of Him who had sacrificed himself on the cross for her!

After some time her heroism was rewarded. Her father, ashamed of his unfatherly conduct, requested her to return to his hearth-side, promising he would not again interfere with her Christian service.

A few years passed, and then Dorothy's brave heart was again subjected to another bitter trial. It happened that—through her missionary zeal—she became known to a young Wesleyan minister, who had offered himself for missionary work. They became affianced. This greatly enraged her violent father. And when she asked his consent to marry the missionary, and go with him to his mission, he angrily replied:

"I suppose if I say No, you will go!"

But Dorothy had learned that, as a daughter, it was her duty not to disregard her father's wishes, except when they stood between her and her duty to her King and Saviour. Hence she replied:

"No, father, I should not think it right to go if you say no."

The father then tried to persuade her to give up the marriage and the mission. But she answered him so dutifully that he said at last:

"Well, I neither say yes nor no. Please yourself."

Her rejoinder was:

"Father, I think it my duty to go, as you do not forbid."

Dorothy soon after gave her hand to Mr. Jones, her lover, and sailed with him to the island of Antigua, in the West Indies, where she was very useful and greatly beloved. After a year of successful work, Mrs. Jones went with her husband to a district meeting, on the island of St. Christopher. While on their voyage back, in company with a missionary party numbering fourteen souls, they were overtaken in the night by a violent gale, which soon increased to a hurricane. Their vessel was thrown on her beam-ends, the wild waves swept over it; their only boat, with two sailors in it, was carried away. The passengers sought safety on deck, and, clinging to each other, waited for day, hoping that the storm would then lull. But their hope was changed to despair of escape when, just before the hour of dawn, the vessel broke into two parts!

Two of the missionaries, with their wives and children, with two nurses, a gentleman passenger, and several seamen, went down with the sinking quarter-deck. Mrs. Jones would have sunk with them, but her feet being caught in the rigging, she was rescued by her husband, who lifted her on to the forward part of the vessel, which was still afloat. All that day she clung with him to the wreck, chilled by the water, which rose up to her chin, bruised by pieces of the wreck, which kept dashing against her, and tore her scanty dress in pieces; twice almost forced beneath the still angry waves, by a large dog, which persisted in placing his feet upon her head; and horrified by the bodies of the dead, which, being entangled in the rigging, floated around her.

After a day and a night the storm abated, but none came to rescue her and her friends. One after another, exhausted by hunger and pain, they fell from the wreck and died. Another terrible night passed. Another day dawned, bringing sunshine, but no succour. The sun, cloudless, was no boon, for it blistered Dorothy's unprotected face and hands. Then Dorothy when almost at the point of death, heard Mr. Jones whisper: "Let me go, for I am dying!"

These words caused her brave heart to rally—to forget herself. Collecting all her remaining strength, she drew her much-loved husband toward her, held him in her arms, placed his head on her shoulder, and, weeping with agony, vainly tried to utter words of love and comfort. At last, he cried: "Come, Lord Jesus!" and passed to his reward in heaven. Dorothy clung to his lifeless body until convinced that it was the prey of death.

At last this noble woman alone was left alive. Then, when she was about to sink into insensibility, a boat, containing two gentlemen, approached the wreck, snatched her from the grip of death, bore her gently to the shore, and placed her with friends whose tender care nursed her back to life. As soon as she could speak she gave them, at their request, her father's address in England, adding these memorable words: "If you write to my father, tell him I

have never regretted engaging in this alone work."

Heroic Dorothy! Her bravery was Nature's gift. It enabled her to endure suffering. But her choice to sacrifice herself on the shrine of duty, and her heroism in accepting the suffering involved in sacrifice without repining, were the fruits of a noble purpose to imitate the example of that gracious Master of her life whom she loved with a love that was stronger than death.

History has no nobler example of moral heroism than is found in the life of Dorothy Hobson, the missionary's wife.—Our Youth.

HOW GADABOUT CHANGES HIS COLOUR.

BY SARAH E. UFFORD.

Gadabout is a little lizard, not quite six inches long, his tail making half of this length. It was after a great many curious experiences and much journeying that Gadabout found his way from the Florida woods to his present home in California. At first he was disposed to be timid. Gradually he became tamer, until he would lie quietly on my finger while I watched his scale-like coat fade to the palest gray; for, as nearly as possible, Gadabout takes the colour of whatever he rests upon.

It is this habit that makes the little creature so interesting. When asleep upon his nasturtium-leaf bed he is of an exquisite green tint. When he lies on my brown gown, he quickly changes to a brown hue. When he lies on the carpet, his armoured coat is as spotted and velvet-like as a leopard's. Indeed these changes in Gadabout's colours seem endless, and take place in a marvellously short time.

In all probability, Gadabout himself knows very little about his many-tinted coats; for this power of changing colour is one of Nature's ways of protecting some of her small helpless creatures. If in his native woods Gadabout should crawl out, or rather dart out (for these little lizards are like a flash of light in their movements), upon the brown limb of a tree, or upon the sandy ground, he would be a very conspicuous object, as he is naturally of a beautiful light-green hue. He would be quickly noticed by the first bird or other lizard-eating enemy that came along. But Mother Nature enables him to take the colour of his surroundings, and thus find protection by not being easily seen.

The magic change in Gadabout is caused by the effect which the colour he lies upon has on his colour-cells. In an inner layer of the skin of Gadabout there are little bags or cells filled with colouring matter—some with red, some with black, some with brown, some with green, and so on. These cells, though very small indeed, have the power both of expanding and contracting; and a coloured light carried to them through Gadabout's eyes causes that same colour to appear on Gadabout's skin.

The New York Mail and Express says: The attention of the New York hospital surgeons has been called to the large number of bartenders that have lost several fingers of both hands within the past few years. The first case was that of an employee of a Bowery concert hall. Three fingers of his right hand and two of his left were rotted away when he called at Bellevue one day and begged the doctors to explain the reason. He said his duty was to draw beer for the thousands who visited the garden nightly. The man was in perfect health otherwise, and it took the young doctors quite a time to arrive at a conclusion. But they did finally, and it nearly took the beer man's breath away when they did. "Your fingers have been rotted off," they said, "by the beer you have handled."

A little Newfoundland puppy lived in a kennel and was fed three times a day from an earthen dish. One noon his dinner did not come. After waiting an hour he began to bark and growl, but nobody came; so picking up his plate, he carried it to his mistress and held it up before her with the most pleading look in his little brown eyes. Of course such a request could not be refused, and he was rewarded by a bountiful dinner.

Visitor—"How does the land lie out this way?" Native—"It ain't the land that lies, sir; it's the land agents."

"So," said Mr. Donegan, "they've been printing the funeral notices as a man that wasn't dead yet. It's a nice fix he'd be in if he had been wan o' these people that believe everything in the newspapers?"

Easter.

BY MARGARET E. SANDSTER.

Sing, that the winter is over,
Sing for the coming of spring,
For the showers and flowers and beautiful hours,
And the flash of the robin's wing,
Sing for the gladness of Easter;
Lift up your voices and sing.

Deep in the heart of the forest,
Down at the roots of the trees,
There is the stir of the violets coming,
And smile of anemones,
And many a kiss of fragrance
Goes out to the fragrant breeze.

Sing, for the coming of Easter,
And many a rare surprise
Of beauty and bloom awaiting
The looking of happy eyes.
Sing, for the Easter sunshine
And the blue benignant skies.

And carry the tall white lilies,
And the roses brimming sweet,
To the church where aisle and altar
Are sought by hastening feet.
Sing, to the Lord of the Easter,
Who is coming, your songs to meet.
—Harper's Round Table.

FACTS CONCERNING EASTER.

Very few people, even among devout Christians, can give any accurate account of the origin of the Easter festival, or can tell why it occurs on a different day each year, and how that day is determined. Its name, like those of the days of the week, is a survival of the old Teutonic mythology. To the Germans it was known as Ostern, and to the Anglo-Saxon as Eastre, or Eostre, a name derived from Eostre or Ostara, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of Spring, to whom the fourth moon, answering to our April, thence called Eostur monath, who dedicated. The name of the goddess comes from the Saxon oster, to rise.

To the French, Easter is known as Paques; to the Italians, as Pasqua; and to the Spanish, as Pascua—all of which are derived from the Latin Pascha and the Greek Parxa, which are Chaldee or Aramaean forms of the Hebrew word Pesach, signifying the "Passover," by which was meant the passing over of the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt by the destroying angel when he smote the Egyptians, commemorated by the great annual feast so often spoken of in the Scriptures as the Feast of the Passover.

Easter, which from its earliest day has been styled the "Queen of Festivals," was the perpetuation of this feast by the first Christians, who, from their close connection with the Jewish Church, naturally continued to observe the Jewish festivals. Thus the Passover, ennobled by the thought of Christ, the true Paschal Sacrificial Lamb—the first fruits from the dead—became the Christian Easter.

But there quickly sprang up between Christians of Jewish and Gentile descent, a long-continued and bitter controversy as to the proper time for the observance of this festival. The former insisted that Lent should terminate at the same time as the Paschal fast of the Jews, to which it was analogous, on the fourteenth day of the moon, and that Easter should immediately follow, without regard to the day of the week. Gentile Christians, on the contrary, maintained that the first day of the week should be observed as that of our Lord's resurrection, and that the preceding Friday should be kept as the occasion of his crucifixion, without regard to the day of the month. By reason of their observance of the fourteenth day of the moon, the former class was derisively styled "Quarto-decimani," or fourteen-day men, by the latter, who also stigmatized them as heretics.

It was the Church of Rome that gradually harmonized these differences. The Council of Nicea, called by the Emperor Constantine, A.D. 325, partly to settle this controversy, finally agreed that "Easter shall hereafter be kept on one and the same day throughout the world, and none shall hereafter follow the blindness of the Jews."

It was also the Church of Rome which established the rule that the day for the celebration of our Lord's resurrection should be the first Sunday after the fourteenth day of the calendar moon, which happens on or next after March 21—the vernal equinox—thus allowing it to occur as early as March 22, or as late as April 25. This old Roman rule is still observed throughout the Christian world; though as the churches of Russia and Greece, and indeed the Oriental churches generally, still observe the old Julian calendar instead of the more modern Gregorian one, their Easter

comes sometimes before and sometimes after that of the Western Church, though very rarely—as in 1865—it falls upon the same day.

Easter customs, sports, and superstitions afford a wide field of interest. While many of them have existed almost from the first celebration of this festival, and are found among Christians of all nationalities, there are others which are peculiar to peoples and places. In the middle districts of Ireland there is a superstition that the sun dances in the heavens on Easter morning. About eight or nine o'clock of the previous evening, called "Holy Saturday," the wives of prosperous farmers place many a fat hen and choice piece of juicy bacon in the family pot, and woe betide the luckless wight who ventures to taste before cock-crow. At midnight, among universal expressions of joy, there are heard loud cries of "Out with the Lent!" Then, after a short period of merriment, the household retires to rest, rising again by four o'clock in the morning, "to see the sun dance." Nor is this superstition confined to the lower or middle classes, for I have been assured by persons of wealth and culture that they have repeatedly seen the sun dance on Easter morning.

The use of flowers to decorate churches at Easter has been in vogue from time immemorial, and they were originally intended as direct emblems of the resurrection, having risen in the spring from the earth in which, during the severe winter, they seem to have been buried.

There is an old superstition, that unless some new article of dress is worn on Easter, misfortune will be sure to follow throughout the year, as stated by the following couplet in "Poor Robin's Almanac":

"At Easter let your clothes be new,
Or else be sure you will it rue."

An old English name for Easter was "God's Sunday." In Twickenham, England, it was long customary to divide two large cakes among the young people in the parish church; but, in 1645, it was directed by Act of Parliament that thenceforward there should be bought, in lieu of the cakes, loaves of bread for the parish poor, and for many years it was customary to throw these loaves from the church tower, to be scrambled for by the poor children on the Thursday following Easter.

Among the peasantry of Spain it is the custom to choose an Easter King; and a good story is told of Charles the Fifth, that, during one of his journeys, he encountered one of these royal personages with a tin crown upon his head and a split in his hand for a sceptre. Wholly ignorant of the real king's rank, the peasant ordered him, rather roughly, to take off his hat to the King of the Easter!

"Your Majesty," said the Prince, uncovering, with a profound obeisance, "if you find royalty as troublesome as I do, you will soon be glad to abdicate."

Abstinence from meat on Easter Sunday will, it is said, avert fevers during the ensuing year. In certain parts of England, the first dish brought to the table on that day is a red herring, fashioned by the cook after the likeness of a man riding on horseback. A piece of bacon is then eaten to show abhorrence to Judaism. The usual Easter morning salutation among the primitive Christians was, "Christ is risen," to which the response was, "He is risen indeed," or else, "And hath appeared unto Simon."

Parish clerks in the counties of Dorset and Devon leave, as an Easter offering, at the house of every parishioner, immediately after the church service on Good Friday, a large and a small white cake, having a mingled sweet and bitter taste. This is evidently a survival of the "bitter herbs" of the Passover Supper.

The oldest, most familiar, and most universal of the Easter customs, are those associated with eggs. Hundreds of years before Christ, eggs held an important place in the theology and philosophy of the Egyptians, Persians, Gauls, Greeks, and Romans, among all of whom an egg was the emblem of the universe, while the art of colouring it was profoundly studied. The sight of street boys striking their rival eggs together to see which is the stronger and shall win the other, was as common in the streets of Rome and Athens two thousand years ago, if we are to believe antiquarians, as it is in any of our American cities to-day. These eggs, now called Easter eggs, were originally called "Paste eggs," corrupted to "Pascate eggs," because connected with the Paschal, or Passover Feast.

One reason for associating an egg with the day on which our Saviour arose from

the dead, may be that the little chick, entombed so to speak in the egg, and rising from it into life, was regarded as typical of an ascension from the grave.

An old North-of-England custom is the exchanging of Easter eggs as presents, to which usage the sending of cards and other Easter offerings, of late years so much in vogue in this country, may be traced. It is also customary in England's northern countries, to elaborate "engrave" Easter eggs, by scraping off the dye with a penknife, thus leaving the design in white upon a coloured ground. The full name of the decorator, and the date of his or her birth, preserved as mantel ornaments for generations, present as reliable evidence of dates as the records of a family Bible.

HOW RAY SET THE BALL ROLLING.

It was fine coasting in Bruce's field, and Ray Light was off for a good time with the sled all to himself; for Ralph had a toothache that morning—a real one, that kept him in the house, and sent the big tears trickling down his cheeks.

"Hi rrah! Won't I have a jolly time with nobody to say, 'Here, it's my turn now!' " he thought, as he trudged along after the other boys.

He had coasted down a few times, enjoying every minute, when, as he drew his sled up the hill, he noticed a new boy standing watching the others. His clothes were old and patched, and his hands were in his pockets for warmth, because he had no mittens.

Away went Ray again, to show the new boy how fast his sled could go. Conscience was talking to him. "I don't have to," he answered. "Every other time I have to share it with Ralph; so—" And away he spun down the hill the second time. But some way it didn't seem so much fun this time, and by the time Ray reached the top again conscience had won.

"Say, want a coast?" he called out as he passed the new boy. "Come on, if you do."

The new boy did not wait for a second invitation. His face beamed with delight as he hastened to "come on." My, how the sled did whiz! He fairly flew down the hill, and his pinched cheeks were rosy as he trudged back.

"Haven't you any sled?" asked Ray. The boy shook his head.

"We'll take turns, then," said Ray, bravely. "Here goes! Hooray!" Every coast was fine now, as they took turns, and Ray saw how happy Jack was to be in the fun with the rest. Soon the other boys began to offer their sleds, and by-and-bye Joe Hill said he must go, but if Ray would bring it along when he came, Jack could take his sled the rest of the morning.

To say that Jack was happy would not begin to tell what a joyful flutter was in his heart. He had but lately moved to town, but if this was the way boys did here, it must be a pretty good sort of place, he thought. Ray now had his sled to himself, and, as conscience was very well contented, he enjoyed every minute.

When noon came, and the boys started home, some one asked Jack where he lived.

"Down by the old mill," he answered.

"What, are you the folks that were burned out over in the South village?"

"Yes. There's where I lost my sled, in the fire," answered Jack.

"Whew! that's tough," whistled a chorus of voices. And the new boy was a hero at once.

When boys are interested, "does not take long to do things." The next time he coasting was good in Bruce's field, Jack was there with a brand new sled, of which he was very proud; and with boyish good-nature it was passed around and tried by all, for hadn't the boys an interest in that particular sled? When a boy's pocket-money goes to give some other boy a good time, his interest goes with it, you may be sure. A new pair of mittens kept Jack's hands nice and warm, and his ragged jacket was covered by a thick reefer.

The mothers heard about the sled, and began to inquire about the family down by the old mill. Then they found that the mother had been sick, and the father was so burned in the fire he could not use his hands; and so they were very poor, and had scarcely anything to be comfortable with.

So bags and boxes of good things to eat began to appear in Jack's home, and warm clothing, made by kind and generous hands, came to the sick mother; and matters began to look very encouraging to the poor people, who had felt that everything had gone in that terrible fire. Work was found for the father, the mother gained rapidly, and home seemed a very different place to Jack in a few months.

And it was Ray Light who had set the ball rolling which brought so much comfort and good cheer to them all. But Ray never thought of it in that way. He had only shared his sled with the new boy; that was all—Every other Sunday.

LESSON NOTES.

SECOND QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

LESSON IV.—APRIL 25.

PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON.

Acts 12, 5-17. Memory verses, 7-9.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.—Psalm 34, 7.

OUTLINE.

1. The Prisoner, v. 5, 6.
2. The Angel, v. 7-11.
3. The Disciples, v. 12-17.

Time.—In the spring of A.D. 44.

Place.—Jerusalem.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Peter delivered from prison.—Acts 12, 1-10.
- Tu. Peter delivered from prison.—Acts 12, 11-19.
- W. God's power to save.—Psalm 83, 10-22.
- Th. The Lord's angel.—Psalm 34, 1-10.
- F. Refuge of the godly.—Psalm 91.
- S. Able to deliver.—Dan. 6, 15-23.
- Su. Helping by prayer.—2 Cor. 1, 1-11.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The Prisoner, v. 5, 6.
What encouragement had the church to pray? Matt. 18, 19.
How was Peter guarded while the church prayed?
2. The Angel, v. 7-11.
What visitor came to Peter?
What did he do and say?
What further did he tell Peter to do?
What did Peter think of all this?
How did they get out of prison?
Where did the angel leave Peter?
To what conclusion did Peter then come?
What truth concerning God's care does this illustrate? Golden Text.
3. The Disciples, v. 12-17.
To whose house did Peter go?
Who came to the door when he knocked?
What did she do? Why?
What did the disciples think?
When they saw Peter how did they feel?
What did he tell them?
What did he bid them?
What "James" was this? Matt. 10, 3.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- Where in this lesson are we shown—
1. The strength of prejudice?
 2. The value of united prayer?
 3. The power of God?

THE SALOON AND DRINK.

WHAT THEY THINK OF IT.

A curse.—Queen Victoria.
A scandal and a shame.—Wm. E. Gladstone.
Traps for workmen.—Earl Cairns.
Devilish and destructive.—Lord Randolph Churchill.
Drink is the curse of the country.—Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, M.P.
Stupelics and besota.—Bismarck.
The mother of sins.—Southey.
The devil in solution.—Sir Wilfred Lawson.
Liquid fire and distilled damnation.—Robert Hall.
The mother of want and the nurse of crime.—Lord Brougham.
A poison in politics as well as in society.—Sir W. Harcourt.
The nation is being throttled by the traffic.—Lord Rosebery.
A huge nuisance and misery.—London Times.
Yet "this curse," so "devilish and destructive," that "stupelics and besota," "the mother of sins," "of want and the nurse of crimes," the "devil in solution," "the nations' scandal and shame," and the "trap for workmen," the English nation legalizes, protects and cherishes at a cost of well-nigh seven hundred million dollars, and the American nation does the same with the huge curse at a cost of one billion dollars, and Canada at a cost of fifty millions.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

India is once again overwhelmed by famine in many of her provinces. Owing to the failure of rain, and the continual drought, the wheat and cotton crops will be very short, especially in Northern India. The southern and Western provinces will also be seriously affected. How great the deficiency may prove cannot as yet be ascertained, but the evidence in the shortage is of a serious character. While the Indian Empire, as a whole, produces sufficient food each year for its enormous population, at certain points the food fails, and where the means of transportation between the provinces are inadequate, terrible suffering arises and multitudes of people starve and die. These constantly recurring famines have caused unusual anxiety and exertion to the English government in India's behalf, the cost of the famine of 1874-76, costing England about \$32,500,000, and that of 1877 nearly \$50,000,000.

During the famine of 1876, there was the most frightful suffering throughout the whole country. Parents sold their children for a small supply of rice, barely sufficient to last the adults in the family three days. Thousands died in the streets and highways. An English writer at the time, describing an incident of frequent occurrence, said he was present in a part of one of the cities where the native relieving officers were distributing rice. Men and women were sitting around patiently waiting, many with gaunt hunger written on their faces. But they got nothing, although the rice bags, full to bursting, were piled up in a corner. The native officials had lists of names, and only those who were on the list received relief. The turn of the patient watchers would come some time—if they lived. A few questions by the English officer, a sudden exclamation, and then, drawing his sword, he ripped the rice bags open one after another and scattered the precious food in the direction of the watchers. The native officials were horror-stricken, and explained that "their names were not on the list, and now they would be fed twice!" "Better feed them a dozen times than have them die here," was the impetuous answer.

This famine seems to be very likely to threaten the country lying between Madras, Bangalore and Bellary, in the north. The people inhabiting this portion are largely agriculturists and cotton-weavers. For several seasons suffering has been on the increase, and a few months ago, the rivers overflowed and washed out all the fields that had been planted chiefly with rice. There was practically no rain during the last four months.

"The people are largely vegetarians," said Mr. Rutnam, the young Hindu lecturer, to the writer, "and when they are deprived of the natural products of the land, they will necessarily look forward to the government officials or the missionaries for help. In the year 1876, when they had one of the worst famines India ever saw, the government took up the relief work, and the people were provided with one scanty meal a day, and the only alternative left for the poor was to go into the jungles and feed on the noxious weeds. Many people who had not even these weeds to eat, went to the lakes, and took wet clay and swallowed it. A great many died in that way. More than a hundred thousand perished during this famine. My brother-in-law said that he went and found all the servants who were in charge of the relief work looking well fed, while the people who were supposed to have received relief looked thin and sickly. I hear that the ambassador at St. Petersburg is arranging to send wheat to Northern India through Tibet. A large part of the population lives on a great deal of rice. In Northern India they live on wheat. When deprived of rain, everything stops short. They do not eat meat; those who live on wheat could manage to get along on rice, and vice versa. I understand this famine is likely to spread over



FAMINE IN INDIA.

Northern and Central India, and that the government is already making preparations to start relief work in Rajputana, Punjab and Oudh."—Christian Herald.

THE FIRST EASTER.

But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping; and as she wept, she sitting, one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they said unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.—John 20. 11-18

HE KNEW HOW

A baby beaver was caught and given to a gentleman as a pet. Beavers, as you know, build dams in which they can make their houses. But here was this poor baby living in a house where there was no possibility of his having the kind of home that he would love to have. One day, when the little beaver was in the kitchen, a leaky pail was put on the floor. The moment the baby beaver saw the water running in a little stream across the floor he ran out in the yard, and appeared in a minute with a chip. The gentleman who owned the

beaver was called to see him. The chip was placed in such a way as to stop the water, and the beaver hurried out and came in with another bit of wood, and then some mud. Orders were given that the beaver was not to be disturbed, but allowed to work out his plan; and in four weeks he had built a solid dam around the pail in which was the water.—The Outlook.

THE OBEDIENT ELEPHANT.

In some countries in Asia an elephant is made to carry the flag in battle. This is because the elephant is tall, and the soldiers can easily see the flag flying from his back.

One of these elephants, which belonged to the Poona host, was very brave and very kind, but he would obey the orders of no one except his mahout, or driver.

One time, while a very fierce fight was raging, the driver called to him. "Stand, my brave beast, stand!" A moment later the mahout received a fatal wound and fell to the ground, where he lay beneath a pile of wounded and slain.

The obedient animal would not move, though the battle waged wildly about him. The Poona soldiers, who feared they were being overcome, were cheered on by the sight of the flag still floating from his back.

He never stirred a foot, and all through the hot fight, the noise, the smoke, the confusion, listened patiently for the voice of his master. Sharp spears were hurled at him, a score of javelins pierced his side, his long ears dripped with blood, but he stood like a rock.

"Come forward, my men," cried the war-brought to the battle-ground the the battle will yet be ours."

His men, discouraged and ready to fly, rallied at his command, and with a cheer for the flag, pressed forward. In a short time they won the victory, and put the enemy to flight.

And then they gathered round the brave elephant, offering to lead him where he could be fed and cared for. But, though wounded and worn, the obedient creature would not move until

he heard his master's voice. That master could never speak again.

A rider was sent in great haste to a place fifty miles away, where lived the driver's little son, whom the elephant knew and loved. When the little boy was brought to the battle-ground the elephant showed very plainly that he was glad to see him, and permitted the child to lead him away.

An Apt Answer.

Why are there no more members ready to assist in the juvenile temperance work? was a question found in the question box at Monroe County Lodge, and has been aptly answered by Miss Ella R. Scoble, of Rochester.

Some are too busy, some will shirk
Whatever calls for outside work.
Some do not like the fourfold pledge.
These are the smokers, I allege.

For want of time, and want of thought,
Some do not do the thing they ought.
Indifference rules in many a heart,
So they take not the children's part.

The boys we teach will soon be men,
The girls be women true, and then
The temperance ranks will be increased
By foes to all that makes men beasts.

If they the first glass always shun,
Will they be drunkards? No, not one.
Our pledge is not to merely save
The fallen man from a drunkard's grave.

To keep from falling young and old
And a multitude that can't be told,
This is one solemn, earnest vow,
Then help us, Lord, to keep it now.

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C. W. COATES, Montreal, Que.
S. F. HARRIS, Halifax, N.S.



THE FIRST EASTER.