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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Vol. XIII.]

TORONTO, APRIL 1, 1893.

[No. 13.



THE RESURRECTION.

THE LORD IS RISEN INDEED.

This is the glad salutation with which we welcome the glorious Easter-day. What blessed truths are wrapped up in this the church's watchword, which is repeated all along the ages by the believing sons of men. He, the Lord of life, died once for us. He is thus transformed death. It is no longer, what before it seemed to be, the end of all life, the dark hopeless gulf into

which our hopes, our labours, our loves descend, never more to return. Death is proved to be but an experience of life, He died once. He liveth ever. He is the living Christ. Do we really believe this? Has this truth taken possession of our hearts, dispelled our fears, inspired our work? What room is there for unbelief and despondency? Can he ever fail us? Is he not more than sufficient for our utmost

need? Do we live in him? Oh that we were lifted out of the cold dead formalism in which we have been held; and that we felt the quickening power of the life of the living one. May he grant us all this Easter blessing. May we awake to a new hope and a new life, a life of unselfish devotion, a life of holiness and goodness, a life which death will only come to usher into its glad fruition and completeness.

A LITTLE shepherd-boy in Syria learned the Gospel from the missionaries. When he went out with his flock on the mountains he preached to the shepherds and begged them to give up lying and swearing, and love the Saviour. One day he went to the missionary and said, "Yu Sidi, these shepherds won't hear the Gospel. But one of them will. I fastened to him and would not give him up. and now he likes to hear."

Easter.

LIFT up your heads ye sorrowful... The town of Easter floods the hills with flame! The sun burns like the light of God's great name...

Thy spirit is a breathing of thy God, Pulsating in thy chest-chamber of life The dust that throes thy feet that onward plod...

I faltered in the storm and gloom, and I prayed That I might touch the hand of Christ, and know His might to lead me from my doubt and woe:

But when my fingers, trembling and afraid, Upon his gentle, loving palm were laid, I felt the prints that let his life's blood flow...

But when I gazed upon his face, I cried, "Oh, beautiful!" and bowed my head in shame. Now never more my soul, dissatisfied, Shall doubt because my pilgrim feet are lame.

OUR PERIODICALS:

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Table listing various periodicals such as Christian Guardian, Methodist Magazine, and Pleasant Hours with their respective prices.

WILLIAM BRIGGS,

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C. W. Colman, 5 High Street, Montreal. S. P. Huntley, Wesleyan Book Room, Halifax, N.S.

Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, APRIL 1, 1893.

WHAT IS SAID OF OUR PAPERS.

We receive many testimonials as to the benefits conferred by our Sunday-school papers. The following is one from New-oundland:—

"I thank you very much for the books received and do assure you that the people appreciate them very much, also papers, etc. I have had inquiry from numerous persons for these books and papers, amongst whom are Roman Catholics and not a few of our Episcopal friends, and I do say that the distribution of religious literature in this isolated part of the country is doing a vast amount of good as the papers referred to are eagerly sought after by not only the children but the parents as well. Kindly thank Dr. Withrow for us. Had inquiry from an intelligent Roman Catholic family yesterday for books and papers, and when told that I had nothing but Methodist literature, they replied, 'We will be glad to receive any good books or papers no matter to what denomination they belong.'"

AN EASTER MESSAGE FOR THE YOUNG.

BY MRS. HEWLETT (L. A. D.)

"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities."—Isaiah liii. 5.

EASTER-DAY seems to me the very gladdest of our Christian festivals. I think it is like passing out of the gloom and darkness of a dreary winter's night into the soft, clear brightness of a beautiful spring day, when bird and tree and flower are glad and gay together.

We have just been specially remembering a very sad event in the life of that precious Saviour whose birth into our world we were celebrating with thankful hearts at Christmas. Ah, what a wonderfully loving life his was! Not a very long one, though to some of you who are only nine or ten years old, thirty-three years may seem a very long time. But how much of sorrow and suffering there was in it! And why? You know, don't you, why it all was? Our text tells us. Shall we read the whole of it? It is one verse out of many lovely ones in the same chapter—verses which are full of hope and encouragement and glad thanksgiving for you, as you sadly think of all the wrong things in the past, and wonder how you may come to God to be forgiven.

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Surely this is good news! You could not have thought of anything so good if God had not written it down in his own book. Here is one who has stood in your place, and borne the penalty of your sin. Think of it! And that one is God's dear and only Son. Yes, he has suffered instead of you; for the next verse tells that we have all "gone astray" like poor wandering sheep. Instead of following in the steps of our Good Shepherd, we have gone on in our own wrong way. Do you not feel that this has been often true of you? And so because we cannot save ourselves, or make an atonement for sin, "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

There is a sense in which these words are true of everybody. It is quite true that Christ died for all—but everybody is not saved. Perhaps some of you are not, as you read these lines. These precious words cannot be a glad message to you until you take the Lord Jesus to be your own Saviour. Will you not do it now? God has laid your iniquity upon him. Remember the precious Saviour was "wounded" and "bruised" and "chastened" for you during those terrible hours in the garden of Gethsemane, when "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood." Ah, you can never tell how much he suffered there! but it was almost more than even he—the divine Saviour—could bear. Well may you love him with your whole heart's love for what he has done for you. Picture him climbing slowly and sadly the slopes of Mount Olivet, and submitting to all the shame of a death on the cross in order that he might save you. And now, if you are truly sorry for the wrong things in your hearts and lives, which have so often wounded the Saviour afresh, God says you may each of you put the little words "my" and "I" into the verse. Let us do it now: "He was bruised for my iniquities; the chastisement of my peace was upon him; and with his stripes I am healed." Yes, even I, a poor little sinful child—"with his stripes I am healed." O, if you can say this, you will indeed have a glad Easter-tide!

You can bring no thank-offering this Easter to the Lord Jesus so acceptable as

yourself; and then you may bring all sorts of loving deeds done to everybody you can, as grateful thank-offerings to the love which has saved you. I heard some pretty words the other day which I think I must tell you, and I should like all of you who have already given yourselves to Jesus to remember them every day:

"Loving deeds, for Jesus' sake, Now our best thank-offering make."

God bless you all, dear little ones, and give to each a joyous Easter tide!

A Tiff with the Tiffins. By Frances Isabel Currie. New York: Hunt & Eaton. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 170. Price 50 cents.

The number of books and magazines for the little ones has greatly increased during the last few years. "Nothing is too good for the children," seems to be the motto of this age. This bright little book about little Miss Alison Fleming and her quarrel with her friends the Tiffins, the very sad consequences which followed for a time, and the happy ending, will be welcomed eagerly by a large number of young folks. It is prettily bound and has a couple of fine illustrations.

A SAFE GUIDE.

In the late war a part of the army came in its progress to a river the water of which, raised by heavy rains, had become a swollen and rapid torrent. There was a well-known ford across the stream, which led diagonally to the other shore, and which all seemed to think it was easy to find and follow, though on each side of it the waters were deep. As the soldiers passed on they had gone but a little way from the shore when not a few looking on the rushing and whirling waters, were bewildered, and several lost their footing, and were swept down the stream.

At the further end of the ford, on the other side of the river, was a large tree, and the officer in command, seeing the confusion and danger to the troop, cried out, in a ringing voice, "Keep your eyes fixed on that tree!" The order was heard and heeded, and the result was that all obeying it passed over in safety.

As I read the account I thought of the stream of life through which every one of us must pass, and of the dangers to which we are exposed by the sweeping currents of temptation and the rushing torrents of impulse and self-indulgence and worldly inclination, and that our only safety is in keeping the right path; and that we may do this by keeping our eyes fixed on the one point of safety and pressing steadily on to the end to which it guides.

There is such a point and way of safety to which we are plainly directed, for a voice from heaven cries to us, "This is the way—walk ye therein." There is such an object on which if we fix our eyes we shall always go safely, for "Looking unto Jesus" is the only direction we need to be kept from all the perils of our earthly course. Look then to Jesus—to his example, to his teachings, to his spirit—look to him trustfully, continually, prayerfully pleading his faithful promises, and doing faithfully the work he has given you to do, and by his grace you are safe forever.

DRINK AND SECRET SOCIETIES.

BENEFICIARY ORDERS CANNOT AFFORD TO ADMIT DRUNKARDS.

BY REV. JESSE S. GILBERT, A.M.

THAT strong drink in all its various forms affects, and very disastrously affects, the death rate, few will have the hardihood to deny. It produces many deaths directly every year through drunken brawls, accident, suicide, and murder. Sometimes an entire holocaust is offered up upon the altar of Bacchus through the negligence of some drunken watchman or employee.

Indirectly intemperance causes the death of multitudes every year. It produces many serious diseases. It weakens every organ and vitiates every tissue. By strong drink the stomach is inflamed, the kidneys disordered, the liver hardened, the heart weakened, and the blood poisoned. Be-

sides producing specific disease, it so enervates the system that it falls a victim to acute disease from which recovery would otherwise be possible. In these different ways intemperance greatly increases the death rate.

Nor is it only the hard drinker and drunkard whose life is shortened by strong drink; it cuts off the life of many a man who never becomes a drunkard. In fact a man who goes on an occasional spree, but who wholly abstains in the interim, stands a better chance for life than the man who, although never drunk, is constantly in small doses taking the poison of alcohol into his system. In the one case the system has a chance to throw off the poison, while in the other it is never free from its effects. The habitual beer drinker is never healthful and seldom sound. He easily falls a victim to disease, and rarely is long lived.

The moral of all this to an Order such as ours is very apparent. We cannot afford impaired risks. Viewed without any sentiment and apart from all moral considerations, from a purely business standpoint, we cannot but look with disfavour upon the traffic in and use of all ardent and malt spirits. In the case of the moderate drinker there is the ever eminent danger of his becoming a drunkard. No man ever becomes a drunkard all at once. Not every moderate drinker becomes a drunkard, but every drunkard was once a moderate drinker. Not every tadpole becomes a frog, but every frog was once a tadpole.

While it may not be possible to draw the line of admission at the point of total abstinence, the nearer we approach such a standard the safer and sounder will be our Order.—Knights of Honour Reporter.

BROTHER BEAR IN WINTER.

BY EDMUND COLLINS.

As soon as the leaves begin to turn in the woods, several animals and insects busy themselves gathering food for the winter when snow covers the ground and no food is to be obtained. But there are some animals which make no provision for the season of frost and snow, but remain in holes in the ground or in hollow trees three or four months, scarcely moving. It was long actually believed that the bear sucked his paws all winter, and in some unaccountable way lived on the fat he had accumulated through the summer. This is not so. The truth is that where there is little motion there is small waste of tissue. The heartbeat is barely strong enough to keep the blood moving, the breathing is almost suspended, and the animal comes forth in the spring, when the snow begins to drift from the boughs very lean and hungry, but in no other way the worse for the long fast.

Bruin does not retire from the open till he is compelled to do so by frost and snow. He lives through the summer on berries, buds, insects of every kind, grass mice, or any other small animal that he can get. I may say, for the benefit of the gentlemen who publish so many terrifying bear stories in the daily newspapers, that Bruin is as harmless as a cow during the summer, and will take to his heels in fright on sight of a human being. It is only when he leaves his lair too early in the spring and is not able to find anything to eat that he will attack man; but he prefers a calf or a sheep, and the farmer's tale is often short at sundown. But, as I have said, when winter overtakes him he sets about to find a winter home. He has very likely during the summer, when poking his nose into hollow trees looking for the honey of wild bees, seen some place that will suit him; and to this he goes straightway. The tree must be a large one; and he will not select it unless there is a space with plenty of room where the snow or rain cannot reach him. This secured, he bundles himself together, his head on his paws, closes his eyes and remains in this posture till "those blind motions of the spring" tell that "the year has turned." Then he drags himself out, and once more begins his struggle for an existence. Sometimes, however, when lying in this stupor, loud sounds startle him, and his tree creaks and shakes; this is when the lumbermen have found him, and are sawing the tree with their axes. He seldom escapes; and if he does he will surely die in the snowy forest unless he can find another home.



The Resurrection Morning.

CHRIST, the Lord, is risen to-day!
Sons of men and angels say!
Raise your joys and triumphs high!
Sing, ye heavens; thou earth, reply!

Love's redeeming work is done,
Fought the fight, the victory won;
Lo! the sun's eclipse is o'er;
Lo! he sets in blood no more.

Vain the stone, the watch, the seal;
Christ hath burst the gates of hell.
Death in vain forbids his rise;
Christ hath open paradise.

Lives again our glorious King!
"Where, O death, is now thy sting?"
Once he died our souls to save;
"Where's thy victory, boasting grave?"

Soar we now where Christ has led,
Following our exalted head;
Made like him, like him we rise;
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies.

SUSIE REDMAYNE:

OR,

A Story of the Seamy Side of Child-life.

BY

CHRISTABEL.

CHAPTER I.

"ALONE, ALONE; ALL, ALL ALONE!"

"It is so cold, Ralphy,—so cold! is it going to be colder?"

"Do you feel it very much, Susie?" said the boy, turning to the all but fireless grate and trying to rake together the few dying wood ashes.

But it was no use. There was nothing in the grate to give warmth,—nothing to give light,—nothing to make the cheerless winter afternoon seem cheerful.

They were not quite orphan children, perhaps they were rather worse than orphans.

The mother had died when little Susie was born; and it would be hard to say how the child had managed to live through seven summers and winters of neglect, hard-usage, and scant fare.

Yet she had lived as nature's wild flowers do live; and like them, the little thing contrived to shed a certain sweetness upon the hard world about her.

She was almost like a flower to look at with her golden head, her lily-white face, and her eyes of pure forget-me-not blue; and there was a flower-like grace about her that caught your attention at once if you happened to be passing through Piper's Court.

The room, or rather the garret, in which the children were sitting was at the top of Smirk's Buildings. The slanting roof was low and smoke-blackened. The snow, which had been falling softly all the afternoon, was beginning to lie densely on the cracked skylight, shutting out the last ray of light, and making the children

feel as if it were probable that they might be buried there in the chill gloom and darkness.

They had not much to say to each other now. They had had time enough during the day to talk themselves sad, and then to talk themselves bright again, half a dozen times over.

They had eaten the last morsel of bread, or rather Susie had eaten it; for Ralph declared that he had no appetite when he had no work.

His work was to run errands, to hold horses, or to help the market people; in short, to do anything and everything that a quick and eager boy of eleven might be expected to do.

He had been unfortunate on this particular day. Not a penny could he earn, and he had never yet had to beg. He could not have told you what instinct within him made him shrink from an appeal to charity, as he would have shrunk from theft.

He only remembered his mother very vaguely, but that vague remembrance acted as an unseen check, when the boy knew it not.

It gave him the feeling that he was not exactly as the other boys of Piper's Court, and he saw plainly that Susie was not like the other girls.

Something marked them off, though the boy was all too young and too ignorant to know what that something was.

His resolution, if such it could be called, had been tried many and many a time, but never more than to-day; and now, when the day was almost gone, it was tried more than ever.

His little sister's words rang in his ear, "It is so cold, so very cold!" He knew how cold it was too; his own jacket was thin, he had no stockings, and in the morning he had had to fasten his left shoe on to his foot with a piece of string. He had laughed as he did it, but he did not laugh now, when the night was coming down into that bare unfurnished room, bringing with it new hopelessness, new terror, new and unknown dread.

There was a little straw bed in one corner of the garret, where Susie always slept. Ralph's bed, where he slept with his father on the rare nights when the latter went to bed, was in an adjoining garret; that was a straw bed too, and had only a ragged coverlet, which was of little use in the way of warmth.

The frost grew more and more intense, and colder still grew the evening.

Instinctively the children crept closer, and Ralph put his arm around Susie, for was he not her protector?

It was a great thing that each had the other. Fain would they have tried to soothe one another, but what could they do? This thought puzzled them much.

Then a cheering idea occurred to Ralph. He had been a Sunday scholar before his father had sunk so low through drink. And his teacher had once told him, that when we were in difficulties and could do nothing for ourselves, that if we prayed God would do it for us.

"Susie, child," said Ralph, in tremulous tones, "let us ask God to help us." And with Susie's hand locked fast in his own he knelt and uttered a broken prayer.

Who shall say that it was not answered when half an hour afterwards good old Bessie Brown looked in upon the forlorn little ones?

"Has it come to this, Ralph?" said Bessie in a husky voice, as she looked at the fireless grate and the desolate room.

Heaven help you! poor motherless barns," she continued.

Then in a more cheery voice:

"Come now, Ralph and Susie, I think we could make this place a little bit cheerful, and perhaps father will be pleased, when he comes home, to see that you have made the best of things. Just run along to my room, Ralphy, and bring a few pieces of wood and coal."

Very soon a blaze from the fire sent its fitful glare over the bare floor and walls.

Ralph was sent to get a loaf. And while he was gone, Susie, who had taken off her shoes to save them, took the big kettle and ran off to the tap.

The splash of her bare feet amid the half-melted snow on the wet stone steps fell heavily on the ears of a well-dressed young lady, who passed upward to another gallery to see a sick woman.

The lady turned to look, but the child was gone. It seemed useless to follow, for the windings in Piper's Court were very intricate to a stranger.

She passed on to fulfil her errand. But as she returned to her comfortable suburban home, the momentary glance, by one dim gas-lamp, of the naked feet and the big kettle, and the beautiful tangled hair flying wildly in the wind, and she thought the child was sobbing,—these things haunted her.

The luxuries of her home had lost their charm. When she retired to her boudoir her eyes rested on velvet, and marble, and gilt; but these she saw not.

Miss Frere's mental vision was too full of the sad picture in Piper's Court. The frail child, the tiny bare feet, the big kettle, and the ice and snow. To what kind of people could the poor child belong? Miss Frere almost despaired of ever finding her, for her organ of hope was not large; but she at once resolved to pray every day that she might again meet the child and befriend her.

If a room could be made tidy or cheerful Bessie Brown could do it. And Susie looked carefully among the cups and saucers to find one that was not cracked, to set ready for father.

Bessie made them some hot coffee, for she thought it would help to keep the frost out.

They drank their coffee and ate their bread, and although they had neither sugar, milk, nor butter, they were happy; for good old Bessie was near them, and she always carried about her an atmosphere of peace and kindness.

Yet over their short-lived happiness there hung a cloud. They could not shape their fears into words. But a vague undefined dread of what might happen haunted them; a consciousness that Bessie Brown would leave them, and with her would go all hope, and comfort, and happiness.

Bessie Brown was a great power in Piper's Court. She had known better days. Most of the women there knew that, in comparison with themselves, she was a lady.

They said it was because she had lived among fine people. But the greatest difference was that she was a true Christian. A Christian woman cannot be coarse or vulgar. Some laughed at her, and many were spiteful to her in small ways.

Still she kept on her way calm and peaceful, and kept her light burning, although she dwelt in a dark place.

When Bessie had done what she could for the little Redmaynes she went back to her room, which looked cosy and cheerful in contrast with the desolate one she had left.

She half wished she had taken the children with her, but then there was the father to be considered.

Ralph and Susie were weary and sleepy, and fain to creep to their comfortless beds.

But still they sat and waited, half-hoping and half-fearing their father would come.

"Is that father? shall I hide in bed?" said Susie, as she laid her trembling hand on her brother's arm.

"Yes, father's coming," said Ralph, "as the sound of uncertain footsteps came nearer; "but never mind, perhaps he won't be cross."

(To be continued.)

EASTER JOYS.

WHAT especially has afforded the world joy and peace? It was the resurrection of Christ from the dead. There was joy on his advent, and angels joined in the glad refrain, "Glory to God in the highest!" There is real joy also after Jesus suffered the agonies of the cross to see him come forth victor over death and the grave. How sad were all his disciples and friends to see him suffer and die! How dark the world as the Son of man expired on the cross! What a solemn stillness brooded over the holy city as Joseph took him down, and laid him in his rock-hewn tomb! With what sadness all who loved him spent that night and the succeeding day. Grief had settled down on many

hearts who had learned to love the Prince of Peace. But, oh! the joy when it is announced on the morning of the third day that "He is not here, he is risen." Though doubts were mingled with fears, yet how great the joy when the fact is fully declared! Then the darkness fades before the rising light. Then gloom departs like mist before the sun. Then sorrow flies from despondent hearts, and joy and peace begin their loud acclaim, "All hail, all hail!" Oh, what a load is lifted from the despondent friend to know that Christ the Lord is risen from the dead, and has conquered the powers of eternal darkness and woe!

It is joy even to-day. The Christian rejoices in such a Saviour. The Christian Church hails this day with anthems of praise, for it declares her victory over the great enemy of sin. It makes the demon of despair rage and quake at this strong potentate, who fears neither death nor the grave. With what joy we should celebrate this festival! How appropriate to consecrate one's self to his service as an offering of joy for his salvation!

"The Lord is Risen!"

BY DR. J. P. LANGE.

TRANSLATED BY DR. HENRY HARBAUGH.

The Lord of life is risen!
Sing, Easter heralds! Sing!
He burst his rocky prison:
Wide let the triumph ring.
Tell how the graves are quaking,
The saints their fetters breaking:
Sing, heralds! Jesus lives!

We hear in thy blest greeting—
Salvation's work is done!
We worship thee, repeating—
Life for the dead is won!
O Head of all believing!
O Joy of all the grieving!
Unite us, Lord, to thee.

Hail! hail! Our Jesus risen!
Sing, ransomed brethren, sing!
Through death's dark, gloomy prison,
Let Easter carols ring;
Haste, haste, ye captive legions,
Come forth from sin's dark regions;
In Jesus' kingdom live.

IT PAYS TO BE POLITE.

SEVERAL winters ago a lady was coming out from a public building where the heavy doors swung back, and made egress some what difficult. A little street boy sprang to the rescue, and as he held open the door, she said, "Thank you," and passed on.

"D'ye hear that?" said the boy to a companion standing near by him.

"No; what?"

"Why, that lady said 'Thank yer' to the likes o' me."

Amused at the conversation, the lady turned and said to the boy—

"It always pays to be polite, my boy; remember that."

Years passed away, and last December, when doing her Christmas shopping, this same lady received exceptional courtesy from a young man, which caused her to remark to a friend who was with her—

"What a great comfort to be civilly treated once in a while—though I can hardly blame people for being rude during the holidays."

"The young man's quick ear caught the words, and he said—

"Pardon me, madame, you gave me my first lesson in politeness a few years ago."

The lady looked at him in amazement, while he related the little forgotten incident and told her that that simple "Thank you" awakened his ambition to be something in the world. He went and applied for a situation as office boy in the establishment where he was now an honoured and trusted clerk.

GETTING READY.

"MAMMA," said a little child, "my Sunday-school teacher tells me that this world is only a place in which God lets us live a while, that we may prepare for a better world. But, mother, I do not see anybody preparing. I see you preparing to go into the country, and Aunt Eliza is preparing to come here, but I do not see anyone preparing to go there; why don't they try to get ready?"

Reader, are you making any preparations?



EASTER LILIES.

Easter Morning.

Oh, fair as the splendour of lilies,
And sweet as the violet's breath,
Comes the jubilant morning of Easter—
A triumph of life over death;
For fresh from the earth's quickened bosom
Fresh tribute of flowers we bring,
And scatter their satin-soft petals
To carpet a path for our King.

We have groped through the twilight of sorrow,
Have tasted the Marah of tears;
But, lo! in the gray of the dawning
Breaks the hope of our long silent years!
And the love and the lost we thought perished,
Who vanished afar in the night,
Will return in the beauty of spring-time
To beam on our rapturous sight.

Sweet Easter-tide pledges their coming,
Serene beyond trouble and toil,
As the lily upsprings in its freshness
From the warm, throbbing heart of the soil.
And after all partings, reunion;
And after all wanderings, home;
Oh, here is the balm for our heart-ache,
As up to our Easter we come!

In the countless green blades of the meadow,
The sheen of the daffodil's gold,
In the tremulous blue on the mountains,
The opaline mist on the wold,
In the tinkle of brooks through the pasture,
The river's strong sweep to the sea,
Are signs of the day that is hastening
In gladness to you and to me.

So down in thy splendour of lilies,
Thy fluttering violet breath,
O jubilant morning of Easter,
Thou triumph of life over death!
For fresh from the earth's quickened bosom,
Fresh tributes of flowers we bring,
And scatter their satin-soft petals
To carpet a path for our King.

LESSON NOTES.

SECOND QUARTER.

OLD TESTAMENT TEACHINGS.

B.C. 1520.] LESSON II. [April 9.

AFFLICTIONS SANCTIFIED.

Job, 5. 17-27.] [Memory verses, 17-19.

GOLDEN TEXT.

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.
—Heb 12. 6.

OUTLINE.

1. The chastening of the Almighty, v. 17-22.
2. The favour of the Almighty, v. 23-27.

TIME.—About B.C. 1520, but very doubtful.
PLACE.—Doubtful; but probably the northern part of Arabia Deserta. In ancient times this territory was more fertile than now. It lies southeast of Palestine and southwest of Chaldea.

INTRODUCTORY.

Who wrote the Book of Job no one knows. It is probably one of the oldest of books. It tells the story of Job, a man of great piety and wealth, who suffered extraordinary sorrows. These sorrows were, with God's permission, applied as tests to Job's character, by Satan. His three friends—Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite—came to condole with him, but really criticized him. Our present lesson is taken from part of one of the speeches of Eliphaz.

EXPLANATIONS.

Verse 17 is one of the earliest beatitudes. The same blessing occurs in Psalm 94, Prov. 3, and Heb. 12. "Bindeth up"—Most ancient medicines were externally applied, and a large share of the pains and aches of our forefathers were "bound up" for cure. "He woundeth, and his hands make whole"—He dislocates, then sets the dislocated limb. The thought of Eliphaz is, that for every sorrow there comes from God a compensating joy. The deeper truth, that all God's afflictions are really mercy in disguise, is taught later on; but, after all, the only perfect consolation for human sorrow comes from the Gospel of Christ, and that had not yet been proclaimed. "Six and seven"—Mean many, just as in modern phraseology "half-a-dozen" means a "few." In verses 20, 21, and 22, the great sources of ancient sorrow are mentioned. "Famine"—Which is almost sure to prevail wherever there are massed unproductive populations, as was the case throughout the Orient in Job's day, and is now the case in large portions of India and China. "War"—Which was the normal condition of the ancient world, six months of peace being often unknown for a century. "The tongue"—Which stands for malicious detraction, false testimony, such as must ever be prevalent in despotisms. "Destruction"—Which may stand for all natural calamities, like earthquakes. "The beasts of the earth"—Only in our century has this terror been removed from mankind; and even now the wolves of Russia, and the beasts of Indian jungles ravish large districts and destroy many lives. "Thou shalt be in league with the stones"—All nature, being in subjection to God, is in covenant of peace with his friends. "Like as a shock of corn"—Ripe for death; not prematurely cut short in death.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. That troubles are not accidental but come by divine appointment?
2. That troubles are not evils but blessings?
3. That the worst troubles of human life are gradually being removed by the favour of God?
4. That when troubles have wrought their good work in us, God removes them.

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Can you give a reason why "tabernacles" are referred to so frequently in Job and in Paul's writings, while "palaces" are more often spoken of in the writings of David and Solomon?

2. What modern facts can you recall which illustrate the influence of right living in doing away with troubles, both personal and national?

3. Prepare a brief outline of the Book of Job.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What man is described as happy? "The man whom God correcteth." 2. Why are troubles sent to men? "To make men better." 3. Who is the great defence against poverty, sickness, misrepresentation, war, and other troubles? "In God is our refuge." 4. What is promised the good man? "A blessing on his home and his children." 5. How will he approach death? "In a full age, like a shock of corn in its season." 6. What is the Golden Text? "For whom the Lord loveth," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION—The mercy of God.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

How does the New Testament teach his religion?

It contains the history of his life and death, the record of his teaching while he was among men, and the doctrine which he taught the apostles by his Spirit after he ascended into heaven.

EASTER EGGS.

WHEN I was little, like most of you, my pets, it was always a great mystery to me why eggs were used so freely on Easter Sunday. When you break an egg at breakfast on Easter, you are doing just what Roman boys and girls did centuries ago, for they began the first meal of the day with eggs, and the egg was looked upon as a symbol of the resurrection and the future life. The giving of an egg is considered a mark of friendship, and the preparing of it is always a work of love. The Russian salutes a friend on Easter morning with, "Christ is risen," and offers him his Easter egg, and in some parts of Scotland it is said to be the custom for young people to go out early on Easter morning and search for wild fowls' eggs to be used at breakfast, and it is thought lucky to find them.

The confectioner's windows are full of fancy candy eggs, but far prettier are the ones made and decorated by skilful little fingers. Care should be taken, however, that the designs are tasteful and appropriate, and that no ridiculous groupings are painted on them.—*Christian at Work.*

LONELY WORKERS.

MANY Christians have to endure the solitude of unnoticed labour. They are serving God in a way which is exceedingly useful, but not at all noticeable. How very sweet to many workers are those little corners of the newspapers and magazines which describe their labours and successes; yet some who are doing what God will think a great deal more of at the last never saw their names in print. Yonder excellent brother is plodding away in a little country village; nobody knows anything about him, but he is bringing souls to God. Unknown to fame, the angels are acquainted with him, and a few precious ones whom he has led to Jesus know him well.

Perhaps yonder sister has a class in the Sunday-school; there is nothing striking in her or in her class; nobody thinks of her as a remarkable worker; she is a flower that blooms almost unseen, but she is none the less fragrant. There is a Bible-woman; she is mentioned in the report as making so many visits a week, but nobody discovers all she is doing for the poor and needy, and how many are saved in the Lord through her instrumentality. Hundreds of God's servants are serving him without the encouragement of man's approving eye, yet they are not alone—the Father is with them.

Never mind where you work; care more about how you work. Never mind who sees, if God approves. If he smiles, be content. We cannot be always sure when we are most useful. . . . It is not the acreage you sow; it is the multiplication which God gives to the seed which will make up the harvest. You have less to do with being successful than with being faith-

ful. Your main comfort is that in your labour you are not alone, for God, the eternal One, who guides the marches of the stars, is with you.

Ring, Happy Bells.

BY LUCY LARCOM.

ORING, sweet bells of Easter time,
The world is glad to hear your chime;
Across wide fields of melting snow
The winds of summer softly blow,
And birds and streams repeat the chime
Of Easter time.

Ring, happy bells of Easter time!
The world takes up your chant sublime;
"The Lord is risen!" The night of fear
Has passed away, and heaven draws near!
We breathe the air of that blest clime,
At Easter time.

Ring, happy bells of Easter time!
Our happy hearts give back your chime!
The Lord is risen! We die no more!
He opens wide the heavenly door;
He meets us, while to him we climb,
At Easter time.

A DEADLY SERPENT.

SOME time ago a party of sailors visited the Zoological Gardens. One of them, excited by the liquor he had taken, and as an act of bravado to his companions, took hold of a deadly serpent. He held it up, having seized it by the nape of the neck in such a way that it could not sting him. As he held it, the snake, unobserved by him, coiled itself around his arm, and at length it got a firm grasp, and wound tighter and tighter, so that he was unable to detach it. As the pressure of the snake increased, the danger grew, and at length the sailor was unable to maintain his hold on the neck of the venomous reptile, and was compelled to loose it. What did the snake then? It turned around and stung him, and he died. So it is with the appetite for strong drink. We can control it first, but in a little while it controls us. We can hold its influences in our grasp for a little while, so that it shall be powerless.—*Sel.*

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