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# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

VOL. XIX.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 2, 1899.

No. 48.

## SORNES IN ANTWERP.

BY THE EDITOR.

Antwerp, a busy town on the "lazy Scheldt," was, under Charles V., the most prosperous city in Europe. But Spanish tyranny and the terrors of the Inquisition reduced the population to, at one time, 40,000. It is strongly fortified, and has stood many a siege. The glory of the town is its magnificent cathedral. Its lofty open spire Napoleon compared to Mechlin lace, and Charles V. used to say it should be preserved in a glass case. Its interior is unique in this, that it has three aisles on each side of the nave. The perspective of the arches, supported on 125 columns, is very fine. The glory of the church is Rubens' masterpiece—his wonderful "Descent from the Cross." I confess to a lack of appreciation of Rubens. I can see little beauty in his figures, and they have often a vulgar coarseness that is offensive to good taste. Of course, the masterful life and rich colouring of his pictures indicate the consummate artist. But there is none of the poetic feeling of Raphael, nor of the seraphic purity of Fra Angelico. Crowded around the venerable cathedral, like mendicants around the feet of a priest, are a lot of squalid old houses, that greatly mar its beauty.

The Hotel de Ville, with a splendid facade 300 feet long, rising to the height of 180 feet, contains some fine historic halls, one with an immense chimney-piece, with famous Bible reliefs. In a neighbouring church-yard is an artificial Calvary, forty feet high, crowded with statues of saints and angels. Beneath is a grotto in imitation of the Holy Sepulchre, and an iron-grated purgatory, in which carved figures in painted flames beseech aims for masses to procure their release. It has all the horror of Dante without any of the poetry.

The picture gallery is wonderfully rich in "chefs d'oeuvre" of Flemish art; but none impressed me more than a dead Christ, by Matsys, whose deep pathos brings tears to the eyes. In the public squares are fine monuments of Rubens, Teniers, and Vandyck, and the streets bear the names of famous painters.

In this prosaic country even the dogs have to work for their living, as seen in the cut, which represents a common street scene in Antwerp. The large building at the top of the cut flanked with towers at the corners originally formed a part of the old castle of Antwerp. It was afterwards the seat of the Inquisition, and is now a museum of antiquities.

My most delightful memory of Antwerp is that of its sweet chimes. There are in all, in the cathedral tower, ninety-nine bells—the largest, at whose baptism Charles V. stood godfather, and gave his own name, weighs eight tons. Every quarter of an hour they ring out a beautiful "carillon," and at the full hour they proclaim in more elaborate melody the flight of time. My hotel was in the Cathedral Square, and at night I lay awake listening to the exquisite strain and thinking of Longfellow's musical lines:

"As the evening shade descended,  
Low and loud and sweetly blended,  
Low at times and loud at times,  
And changing like a poet's rhymes,  
Rang the beautiful wild chimes.  
Then with deep sonorous clangour  
Calmly answering their sweet anger,  
When the wrangling bells had ended,  
Slowly struck the clock eleven:  
And from out the silent heaven,  
Silence on the town descended,  
Silence, silence everywhere,  
On the earth and in the air."

## THE LITTLE RED ROCKING CHAIR.

BY W. BERT FOSTER.

The neighbours up and down both sides of the narrow, noisy street knew that chair. On every pleasant day it sat in the doorway of a tenement house midway of the block, and many a passing workman or busy housewife glanced at it with a smile. It was little and old and red. There was a faded cushion on the seat and a little diamond-shaped tidy on the back, and the chair and the cushion and the tidy belonged to little Berta Guild.

Sometimes big Jim Guild, the cabman, brought her out into the hall and set her in the little rocker when he went away early in the morning to his day's work, but that was only when it was very pleasant and warm, for little Berta was not like other children. Something was the matter with her back, something had always been the matter with it from babyhood. She could not walk far without becoming tired, nor could she play like the other children, and liked better to sit and rock in the little red chair and watch their romps.

Once, for a long three months, the lit-

tle chair was empty. Sometimes it stood in the doorway just the same as ever, but Berta lay upon her tiny bed within and wondered what the street looked like in the wintry weather. The doctor, who had taken a more than ordinary interest in her, told Big Jim that his little girl might run and dance and be happy like other little girls before the snow flew again, and they all waited for that time longingly.

At last the time arrived when she could go out, when she could walk quite a little way on by herself. It was a gala day for the street. Everybody nodded and smiled at the red chair (newly painted for the occasion) and its little occupant, and the wintry-faced old woman across the street who kept the notion store could hardly keep away from her window long enough to attend to the needs of her customers. Her old face fairly beamed through its wrinkles before the day was over.

"And to-morrow," said Tilly Guild, Berta's older sister, stopping to gossip with the old lady when she ran across in the evening for a yeast cake, "and to-morrow Berta and I are going as far as papa's stand. Won't that be fine?"

"Indeed it will!" declared the old lady.

And indeed the whole street thought so when the two little girls started off the next morning for "papa's stand." They came back in an hour, and Berta's eyes shone like twin stars. The world was so pleasant, and it was so good to walk like other little girls!

She sat down in the little red rocker, her face animated with the self-importance that comes with convalescence—and for another reason. Sister Tilly had gone across to the queer little shop to buy two cents' worth of candy. Papa had given each of them a penny. It was because of this that her eyes were fastened on the shining window of the store, behind which she could see Tilly earnestly conversing with the old lady. She could see them quite plainly, and she knew they were talking of her, for they were looking her way, and once Tilly waved a reassuring hand to her.

"And please, Tilly, don't gossip," had been Berta's parting injunction, and Tilly was surely forgetting it. The little lips quivered and the eyes were dimmed with tears. Waiting is very hard when one is convalescent.

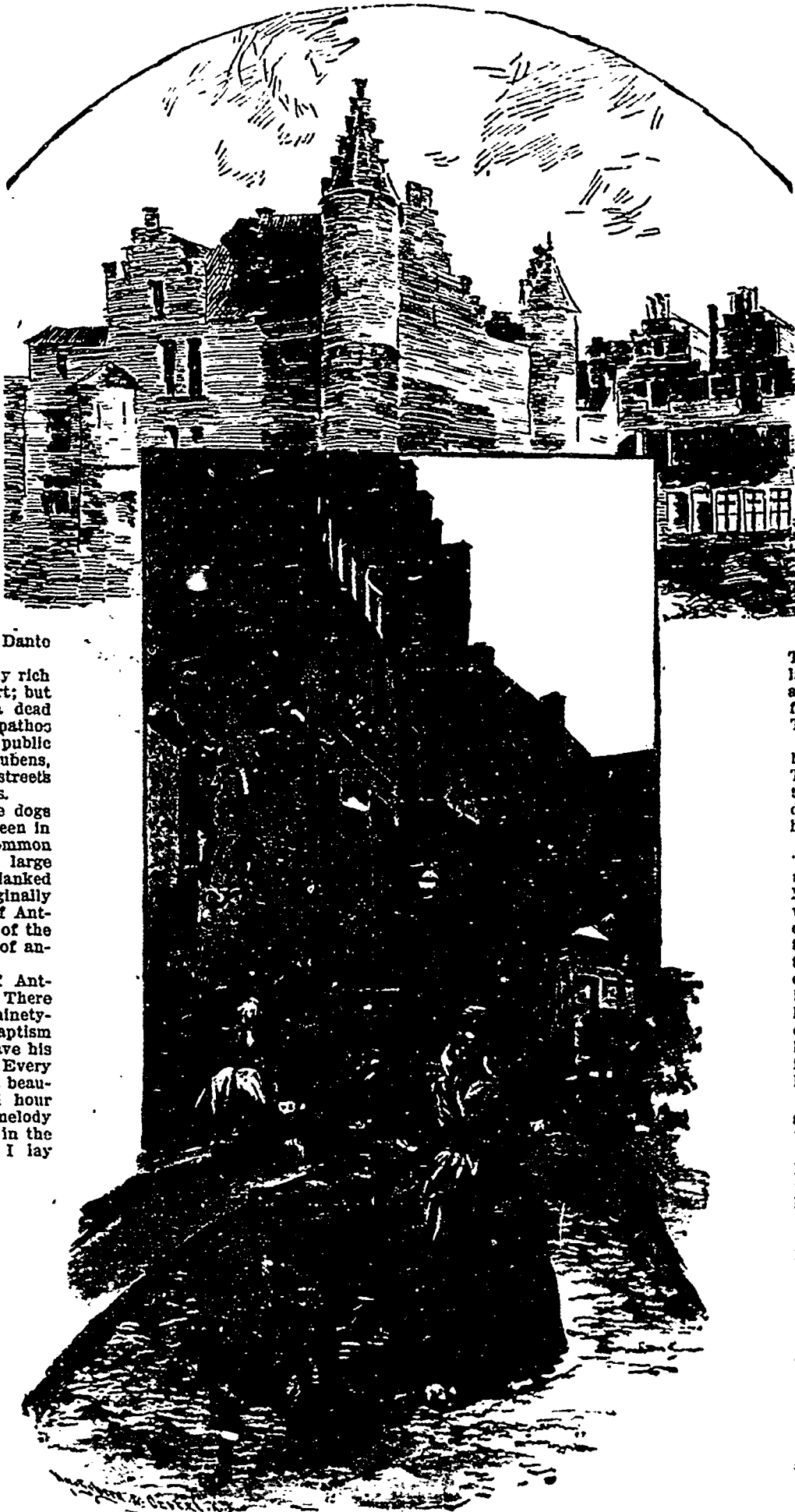
"Yes," Tilly was saying volubly. "Berta's all right now, and mamma let us go as far as papa's stand to-day. My, but he was glad to see us!" Tilly was as fond of gossip at fourteen as the old lady herself. "He let us sit inside the cab," she pursued, "and he'd have taken us for a drive, only he was afraid of losing a fare, and the cab business has been so bad this spring. No, I don't believe I'd better have any of them coloured drops, because papa said they mightn't be good for Berta, an' the worst of chewin' gum is she always forgets an' swallows it; she's that hurried!"

There was a sudden confusion in the street—a shout, the rattle of heavy wheels, the pounding of flying hoofs.

Tilly ran to the door, her hair flying, her eyes wild. She glanced across at the doorway of the tenement house. The little red rocking-chair was empty.

The white-faced driver pulled in his frightened horses at the corner and looked back. He saw the girl run out of the little shop and gather the little, still figure up from the dirty street. He heard her single agonized cry as she pressed little Berta to her bosom. Then the crowd shut out his view, and he climbed weakly down from his seat and went back.

The little red chair stands sometimes in the doorway now, but people who know hurry by with averted faces; and the wrinkled old woman in the store across the street does not go near her window the days the empty chair rocks in the hall, and often wipes her eyes while she waits upon her customers.



SCENERY IN ANTWERP.

"Never Soar So High Again."

I walked through the woodland meadow Where the thrushes aye sing...

I found a young life broken, By sin's seductive art, And touched with the Christ-like spirit...

But the bird with the broken pinion Kept another from the snare, And the life that sin had stricken, Trained another from despair.

OUR PERIODICALS:

Table listing various magazines and their prices, including 'The West', 'Christian Guardian', 'The Wesleyan', etc.

WILLIAM BRIGGS, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Pleasant Hours: A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

THE PUBLISHER finds himself reluctantly obliged to raise the price of Dew Drops from seven cents to eight cents.

JOHN BRIGHT ON SUNDAY-SCHOOLS. Mr John Bright, of England, speaking at a mission fair...

HIS NICKNAME. What do you suppose my Uncle Bob called me last week? Why, just "Sand," nothing more nor nothing less.

reat. Father and mother look sort of pleased. "Like I was something nice; and it is so, why, I don't mind."

Who? I shivered so that when Tom heard it the next morning, he declared all my jacket buttons had been shaken loose.

You see, it was this way: Father and Tom were off on business, to be gone all night, and mother was sick with a headache.

"Well, some time in the night came a loud knocking on Tom's door. Just like somebody scolding, or scolding me, or getting and I know in a flash what it meant."

I felt my way out into the hall and down to the back door. But when I put my foot on the step, I felt a sharp, stinging pain.

I was too scared to think much, so I just leaped the door and called "boo!" as loud as ever I could.

SMALLEST IN THE WORLD. The smallest book ever printed is the story of Perrault's little "Hop-o-my-Head."

Shears no bigger than a pin is one of the exhibits of the skill of a Sheffield workman; a dozen of these shears weigh less than half a grain.

A DROP OF INK. "I don't see why you won't let me play with Robert Scott's painted Waiter Brown."

Chinese streets are the narrowest in the world—some of them are only eight feet wide.

The smallest horse in the world is a Shetland pony owned by Marquis Caron. Its height does not surpass seven centimeters.

ROSEWOOD TREES.

Rosewood trees are found in South America and in the West Indies and neighbouring islands. There are half a dozen kinds.

Such is its value in manufactures as an ornamental wood that some of the forests where it once grew abundantly have now been cleared and the trees cut down.

THE LONGEST WORD.

"Rob" said Tom, which is the most dangerous and to pronounce in the English language?"

"Fool" I said Tom. "It's stumbled, because you are sure to get a tumble between the first and last letter."

"Pray, Study, Give." by REV. J. PASCOE. Pray, study, give, our motto be, May we so live, that we may see that it is well to work and pray.

THE OLD STORY.

Hear the old story again: A number of Chicago boys fell into the habit of meeting to read and discuss wild west stories.

To all the nations they must go, Mid'burning sands and winter's snow, Where there is peace, where there is strife, Proclaim the words of endless life.

"I've a great story to tell you, boys," said a man to a group at the City Hall. "I don't think any of you ever heard me tell it before."

"Why, mother, you are laughing at me. One drop, nor a dozen, nor fifty, won't do that."

"No, my son, and therefore I cannot allow one drop of Robert Scott's evil nature to mingle with your careful training, many drops of which will make no impression on him."

TRUE COURAGE.

We are told that when Colley Patterson was a boy at Eton, and captain of the cricket eleven, he was present one evening at a "cricketing supper," and one of the boys told a nasty, low story.

TALES.

If any one comes to you with a story of what some one has said about you, let me advise you to try this experiment. Look the story-teller in the face, and say, "I shall not say so in a day or two, and I will ask her about it."

HE WAS OBSCURE.

A barrel of whiskey was once being carried up a street, when, by accident, it fell to the ground and the head was driven in. A gentleman, who saw the whiskey spilled on the ground, said, "Oh, dear! Oh, dear! what a pity!"

"Pray, Study, Give."

Pray, study, give, our motto be, May we so live, that we may see that it is well to work and pray.

That it is well to study, too, The character of which we do; That it is well for us to see The need and the utility

Of Christian missions, good and grand, Their influence in every land, To duty let us all awake, And work for our dear Saviour's sake.

Soon after he from death did rise, Ere he ascended to the skies, To occupy his throne in heaven, Authority by him was given.

To his disciples, there and then, To preach his Gospel to all men; Throughout the world they should proclaim, Salvation through their Saviour's name.

They should proclaim the Gospel sound, Wherever man on earth is found; They should to Jew and Gentile teach, The Gospel which they were to preach.

To all the nations they must go, Mid'burning sands and winter's snow, Where there is peace, where there is strife, Proclaim the words of endless life.

Oh, let us pray and labour, too, That all may now the Gospel know; For missions let us money give, That all may have God's word and life.

Let all be done for Jesus' sake, Who knows the efforts that we make To spread his Gospel far and wide, That men may by its truths abide.

That men may by its truths be blest, And find in Jesus peace and rest, And find in all his precepts given, The path of life, the way to heaven.

Petticoat, N.B. "I've a great story to tell you, boys," said a man to a group at the City Hall.

"Why, mother, you are laughing at me. One drop, nor a dozen, nor fifty, won't do that."

**Farewell to the Toronto Volunteers.**

BY ANNIE NOBLE.

Oh, noble boys, who dare to die,  
For country and for Queen,  
What if the war clouds warning cry,  
You'll do the right, I ween.

It may be hard to say good-bye,  
But friends must sometimes part,  
Oh, what if anguished be the cry,  
And hard the rend of heart from heart,

Our Transvaal brothers need your aid,  
Then haste, brave boys, away,  
'Tis by the strong that right is made,  
Then bravely join the fray.

So, farewell, boys, God speed you back,  
Though now our hearts are riven,  
We know there must be no retract,  
Unless it is God-given.

**COLD WATER CHARLIE.**

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.

"Come on, Frank. Do."  
It was a coaxing voice that spoke the words. The one who listened seemed to be holding back.  
"Say, Frank," called another voice, "you might as well go first as last. If Cold Water Charlie asks you once, he'll keep on asking till you'll have to go to get rid of him," and the boy who said this, passed on, laughing.  
"Frank, you don't know how nice it is at the Band of Hope," Charlie went on. "We sing and recite and march, and learn a lot of things. Do say you'll come."

But Frank would not come—not that day. It was just as Harry said, however; Charlie kept coaxing, till there seemed to be no help for it, and Frank joined the Band of Hope. The leader, Miss Hunter, was much pleased. "You see what good it does to keep on keeping on," she said to Charlie.

Do you want to know why this boy was called Cold Water Charlie by his mates? But of course you can guess. I think it was a beautiful reason. I'm sure his mother was glad to know that her son was such a temperance boy and so ready to help in the Band of Hope that he got this name.

It was not because his father or his brother, or any one belonging to Charlie drank more than he should—and one glass would be too much—that he earned his name by what he did for temperance. His mother had taught him that because he had never been hurt by the terrible drink habit, that he ought, from very thankfulness, to do all he could for those who had suffered. She taught him, too, to be such an out-and-out cold water boy, that there could never be any danger of his touching the dreadful stuff that makes drunkards. Many other boys in the Band of Hope were carefully taught there and at home, but Charlie seemed to think more about it than most boys and let it be known what he thought. Oh, if all the boys would only be "out-and-out" like this! It gave Charlie a chance to do something that made him glad always, as you shall hear.

"Come 'round the corner with me, Charlie," said Allen Brown one day, meeting Charlie on the street. Allen looked as if something were the matter, and Charlie slipped around the corner with him, where in the shadow of a brick wall, they could have a quiet talk.

"Charlie," Allen began, "I feel awfully about Ted. He wanted to earn some money, you know, and he went to the saloon on Third Street, and got a place to run errands and carry glasses to the kitchen. And don't you think, Charlie, he drinks what's left in the glasses, and sometimes the men give him a taste of the stuff they drink and he's got to like it? He told me all about it, and he says there's no harm in just taking a little like that."

"There is!" burst out Charlie, much excited over the story.

"I know it," Allen said, "but I wouldn't have known it, only for you. You took me to the Band of Hope a few times when I could go, you know, and I heard enough to make me afraid of that dreadful alcohol. Ted never went. He always had to work for the man we live with. He won't believe what I tell him—not a word. But, oh, Charlie, the other day when he came home he acted so funny, that I am afraid he's begun to be a drunkard already." Allen's voice trembled. Poor boys. They had no one to look out for them.

"What can we do?" asked Charlie, feeling that something must be done, and he must help.

"You talk to Ted," said Allen. "He won't listen to me, but he knows you have learned a lot at the Band of Hope."

After agreeing upon the best time to

see Ted the boys parted, Allen feeling comforted by Charlie's promise of help.

Charlie, who had learned to think by practicing it, went on slowly, trying to puzzle out the best way to help Ted. Because he was in earnest, a happy thought came to him. It must have been from above, it was so wise: "Ted must go away from that place, or how can he stop tasting the stuff? And he won't leave that if he hasn't another. Oh, if I could get him a place. Papa would take him, but he travels. There's Mr. Gray. I'll ask him."

And before long an earnest little pleader was telling good Mr. Gray the whole story, and asking this great favour for Ted.

The errand was successful. When our heavenly Father wants us to do something, and finds us in earnest about doing it, he opens the way. Charlie ran home, too happy to wait, and told his mother all about it.

"Now, Charlie," said the wise mother, "tell Ted about the new place first of all. Make him want to do this better thing and it will be easier to get him to leave off what is worse. Don't vex him by telling that Allen has told about his tasting the stuff. Perhaps he will confess it himself. Talk to him about the harm that alcohol does, and how sad it is to help others to become drunkards, or to grow fond of strong drink."

It is best and safest to talk things over with mother, isn't it? Charlie followed this good advice, and Ted listened with interest.

"Well," he said at last, "I'm sure you mean what you say, and you know what you're talking about, Charlie; I'll be glad of the new place. I never thought about helping folks to be drunkards. I thought if I didn't do this work somebody else would."

"You can't help what others do, but you can help doing it yourself," Charlie quoted from Miss Hunter. So Ted was saved, and his friend helped because all along he had been known as Cold Water Charlie.—Union Signal.

**SOME FUNNY PETS.**

BY MARY G. WOODHULL.

Olive Waldron had been very sick. For weeks she could not go to school nor enjoy playing with her friends. Fortunately, she was fond of reading, and had many ways besides to make time pass pleasantly and quickly.

One day Olive came across an old magazine which contained a most interesting illustrated article on "Spiders and Their Habits."

Like most girls, she had always been afraid of all such crawling creatures, but the subject seemed to fascinate and haunt her, until at length this small maiden decided to amuse herself in a novel manner.

After procuring a big glass preserve jar from her mother, she coaxed one of her boy friends to collect spiders for her. In a day or so the big jar was plentifully supplied (too plentifully for Mrs. Waldron's taste, indeed), but she allowed her little daughter to keep her strange pets, and waited to see what would come of this new idea.

A perforated piece of paper was tied about the neck of the jar, to admit sufficient air to prevent the spiders from suffocation and serve likewise as a means to prevent their escape. This done, Olive, with illustrated article in hand, sat down to study her new pets. The study proved very interesting, and before long she thought she knew a great deal about their habits, and grew quite attached to the brisk, spidery little creatures.

Her evident devotion to these strange pets amused the family vastly. Mr. Waldron would throw back his head and laugh heartily when Olive assured him that she "just fairly loved spiders—in jars."

One morning Olive came down to breakfast looking pale and worried.

"O father, dear!" she said. "What do you think? Those horrid, horrid spiders have all climbed out of the jar; the thread around the paper must have given way. So, probably, when my biggest, strongest black spider pushed against it, he knocked it off!"

The other members of the family did their best to comfort her, and her father promised to see that she had a new supply of spiders at once, but Olive hastened to reply:

"I never, never want to see one again in all my life, father; why, those spiders of mine are all loose in my dear little room, just ready to spring on me any time."

Mrs. Waldron told her daughter that her room should be carefully swept, and Olive was comforted, and never did she

see one of those escaped little prisoners again.

Now that she is grown up, Olive often laughs at the thought of her odd but interesting collection of spiders.

Some weeks after the escape of the spiders Olive was watering her favourite-rose-geranium, and digging gently about the roots lest they might become pot-bound, when a little, fat, brown worm reared up its head from a tiny hole in the roots. After watching it awhile Olive decided that after all it was not so very ugly.

For several days the worm showed itself when the geranium was watered, and Olive took a fancy to it, and was pleased to find that the fat little thing also fancied her. He grew so friendly Olive decided to name him; she called him "Brownie," and to this day she will tell you that he knew his name, and would leave his little earth burrow at her call.

For weeks Olive amused herself with "Brownie;" but one day when she watered the flowers he did not appear, though she called his name again and again; nor could she find him anywhere, though she dug gently about the geranium roots to see if she could find him.

After the loss of his wormship, Olive contented herself with her dogs and kittens, and, to tell the truth, they proved much more satisfactory pets, as any one can readily believe.

**"IF I WERE A BOY."**

If I were a boy again I would look on the bright side of everything, for almost everything has a cheerful side. Life is very much like a mirror; if you smile upon it, it smiles back upon you, but if you frown and look doubtful upon it, you will be sure to get a similar look in return. I once heard it said of a grumbling, unthankful person: "He would have made an uncommonly fine sour apple, if he had happened to be born in that station in life!" Inner sunshine warms not only the heart of the owner, but all who come in contact with it. Indifference begets indifference. "Who shuts love out, in turn shall be shut out of love."

If I were a boy again I would school myself to say "No" oftener. I might write pages on the importance of learning very early in life to gain that point where a young man can stand erect and decline doing an unworthy thing because it is unworthy.

If I were a boy again, I would demand of myself more courtesy toward my companions and friends. Indeed, I would rigorously exact it of myself toward strangers as well. The smallest courtesies, interspersed along the rough roads of life, are like the little English sparrows now singing to us all winter long and making that season of ice and snow more endurable to everybody.

But I have talked long enough, and this shall be my parting paragraph. Instead of trying so hard, as some do, to be happy, as if that were the sole purpose of life, I would, if I were a boy again, try still harder to deserve happiness.—Journal of Education.

**THE EVER-WATCHING EYE.**

A young man of upright character, in the service of a great corporation, found himself—as was every other of the employees—shadowed by a detective, after a robbery from the office of the company. Wherever he went he was watched, although quietly, and at a distance. He would hurry along the crowded street in the hope of getting out from under that eye; but when he looked back or across the way, he would find that he had not escaped it. As he left his home in the morning, he saw that he was still under surveillance. When he looked out from the window of his darkened room before retiring, he would catch a glimpse, by the street lamp, of the man who never deserted him.

The consciousness of this unflinching companionship became torture. He went to the superintendent of the company, and told him that while he was innocent of any wrong-doing, and was willing to be put to any fair test, he could not stand being always watched in this way. It was more than human nature could bear.

No one of us is ever alone. There is an eye always on us. (See Psalm 139.)

7-12.) Is it the eye of an enemy, or of a friend? Are we under the constant watch of one whom we love and trust, or of one whom we have offended, and from whose presence we have reason to shrink?—S. S. Times.

**GIVING TO GOD.**

God's Commands About Giving.—God had commanded his people to give to him the best of all their possessions, their flocks and herds and crops, when they brought their gifts to God's house. He had also commanded them to give him one-tenth of everything they received.

The People's Disobedience.—Instead of doing as God commanded, however, the people had brought to God's house the



worst of all their goods, and they had not given the Lord one-tenth.

God's Message.—So God put it into the prophet Malachi's heart to speak the words of our lesson verses, so the people would know that God was much displeased with their disobedience. The prophet told the people that if they had offered to their governor the poor and mean gifts which they had offered to God he would not have accepted them. He also said that when they did not give the Lord one-tenth of their goods, as he had commanded them to do, they robbed God.

A Gracious Promise.—He then said if they would now bring the right kind of gifts to God's house, just as God had commanded, the Lord would give them a blessing so great that there would not be room enough to receive it; and he would destroy all insects and everything that could injure their crops, and would give them great prosperity, so that all the nations round them should see it and call them blessed.

**GREATER THAN A RAILROAD PRESIDENT.**

Sam was a farmer's son. A new railroad had just been built through his father's farm. One Sunday Sam was surprised to see an engine drawing a car stop in front of his home. The president of the road stepped out of the car and started to examine a new bridge. The little barefooted Sam trudged along behind the party. After a while the president turned to Sam and said, "See here, my little fellow, do you know who I am?" "Yes, sir," said Sam. "I suppose you are the head man of this railroad." "And what do you think I would be likely to want just now above everything else?" Sam replied, "I should think, sir, you would want to get God to forgive you for taking his day from him to come and look at your new bridge." The president looked at the boy for a moment and then said, "Who told you to say that?" "No one," answered Sam. "I just thought of it in my own heart, sir." "You think right, my boy, and I thank you for reminding me of my duty, and promise you that the reminder will not be forgotten. You have shown yourself a greater man than a railroad president. So Sam Brown ran home to tell his father that he was a greater man than the president of the railroad."

**SHUT OUT**  
BUYING  
SELLING  
WORKING  
PLAYING

**I SHOULD LOVE**  
GOD'S HOUSE



**LESSON NOTES.**

**FOURTH QUARTER**

**STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

**LESSON XI DECEMBER 10**

**LESSONS IN GIVING.**

Mal. 1. 6-11 and 3. 8-12. Memory verse Mal. 3. 10.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**

God loveth a cheerful giver.—2 Cor. 9. 7.

**OUTLINE.**

1. False Worship of the True God v. 6-11.
2. Curses, or Blessings? v. 8-12. Time—About B.C. 433. Place—Jerusalem.

**LESSON HELPS.**

Malachi was the last of the Jewish prophets. He lived after Zechariah, for the temple, begun in Zechariah's time, was now completed. Hebrew language and poetry had declined in the days of Malachi.

6. "A son honoureth his father"—The chapter opens with a statement of the favour God had shown to the Israelites, and then the thought is, What gratitude have they shown in return? Jehovah is a "father." Where is your filial love and obedience? He is a "master." "Where is my fear?" that is, the respect which is due unto me. "Wherein have we despised thy name"—A strange question for the priests to ask. Sin must have obscured their mental vision.

7. "Polluted bread"—To please the people, or because of cheapness, the priests offered refuse beasts. What was worthless or of little worth was placed upon the Lord's altar, and so the priests seemed to say, "The table of the Lord is contemptible." The priests are dead but it may be that something of their spirit lingers in the Christian church. What we offer to God should be something of worth, even if much self-sacrifice is necessary. He is worthy of our best.

8. "Unto thy governor"—The viceroy, who ruled in place of the king. Neither at this time nor after this was there a Jewish king in Judah.

9. "Beseech"—Pray that your sins may be pardoned, else God will not accept any offering you make.

10. This verse shows that God is insulted by hypocritical worship. The worldliness of the worshippers made their sacrifices worthless. It is the giver which sanctifies the gift.

11. "Among the Gentiles"—The non-Jewish, the heathen world. A remarkable prophecy, not understood by the prophet himself in its fulness of meaning. Mosaic sacrifices were to be abolished, a spiritual worship was to be established, and the incense of praise from Gentiles should ascend, and the "pure offering" would be the Lamb of God.

8. "Will a man rob God"—A question to startle, followed by a serious charge, and the proof. "In tithes" (or tenths)—That is, in tributes, voluntary gifts for the maintenance of worship. Religious service was generally neglected or regarded as of slight worth.

10. "Bring ye all the tithes"—That the priests may be supported and the sacrifices carried on. "Prove me now"—Make test of. "Open ye the windows of heaven"—That is, send abundant rain, so that the harvest should be so plentiful that the barns and granaries should be too small to store it.

11. The devourer. The locusts and the caterpillars, which were an army to devour, and greatly dreaded. "Cast her fruit. Every blossom shall come to fruitage, every bunch of grape shall ripen.

12. All nations shall call you blessed. Seeing that the land was like a garden in its prosperity.

**HOME READINGS.**

- M. Lessons in giving—Mal. 1. 6-11, 3. 8-12.
- Tu. "As he is able."—Deut. 16. 9-17.
- W. The reward.—Luke 6. 30-38.
- Th. Christ's example.—2 Cor. 8. 1-9.
- F. A willing mind.—2 Cor. 8. 10-21.
- S. A cheerful giver.—2 Cor. 9.
- Su. Ready to distribute.—1 Tim. 6. 6-19.

**QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.**

1. False Worship of the True God, v. 6-11. How can we honour God? With what did the Lord of hosts charge the priests? Did the priests know that they "despised" God's name? How did they "despise" it? Why did people offer polluted bread? (It was most easily got.)



**MOSQUE OF THE PIGEONS.**

At one of the mosques of Constantinople, the pretty scene shown in the picture may any day be witnessed. Mahomet's life having on one occasion been saved by pigeons, it is thought a religious act to care for and protect them. They are fed at a certain time every day, and flock in thousands to the feeding-place—graceful, pretty things, fluttering and hopping about. It would be as much as a man's life is worth, almost, if he were to hurt one of them.

A similar custom prevails at Venice. Every day at two o'clock, a great bell is rung to call the pigeons to dinner—and instantly the air is full of the whirr of their wings, as they flock to the appointed spot. Six hundred years ago, the Doge of Venice won a victory over the Turks at Candia, and the news was brought to Venice by carrier pigeons. The grateful Senate decreed that they and their successors for ever should be fed by the State—and the custom is kept up to the present day.

Why did they offer lame and sick animals as sacrifices? (They were cheaper.) Did these priests and people treat God as well as they treated their governor?

Are we as reverent and loving towards God as we are towards some of our fellow-beings?

Would God hear the prayers of these irreverent priests?

Will he hear our prayers if we are irreverent?

What does God say about his name among the Gentiles?

How can we make "pure offerings" unto God?

2. Curses, or Blessings? v. 8-12.

How had Judah robbed God?

How many had been thus guilty?

What was the penalty on them?

What does God command in verse 10?

What sort and degree of blessing were conditioned on obedience to this command?

What material blessings are promised?

How would others regard Judah?

Does God need our gifts to-day?

Does he want them?

How does he regard the cheerful giver?

**PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.**

- Where in this lesson are we taught—
1. That the Lord wants no gifts which we do not value?
  2. That the prayers of those who shut their hearts and pockets against God are not answered?
  3. That our best blessings are conditioned on "bringing in the tithes"?

Do we shut the gates? How is it? Are the gates of the heart shut on the



**CONSTANTINOPLE BUTCHER.**

The above picture shows the queer way in which the butchers of Constantinople carry on their business. A any of the streets are so narrow that there is no room for carts, so most of the traffic is by means of donkeys. You see this fellow takes his whole establishment with him. His shop and stock-in-trade are borne by his donkey, and he

carries his scales in his hands and shouts his wares as he goes along. No picture of street life in Constantinople would be complete without one or more of its hungry curs. So here we have some of them prowling round in hope of getting some scraps of meat, and another is sleeping in the shade oblivious of even this boon.

Sabbath against the week-day work and plans and play, and against all wrong, angry, unkind thoughts? Do we remember God's day and call it a delight because we love the dear Lord who gave it? Are we as glad to have Sabbath come as we are to go to a beautiful garden? Do we keep it holy by pleasing him in prayer and praise and in learning about Jesus? Then the gates that shut out all wrong things shut in love and joy and peace and all things good and sweet.

**Advice to Boys.**

Whatever you are, be brave, boys! The liar's a coward and slave, boys! Though clever at ruses, And sharp at excuses, He's a sneaking and pitiful knave, boys.

Whatever you are, be frank, boys! 'Tis better than money and rank, boys! Still cleave to the right; Be lovers of light; Be open, candid, and frank, boys!

Whatever you are, be kind, boys! Be gentle in manners and mind, boys! The man gentle in mien, Words and temper, I ween, Is the gentleman truly refined, boys!

But whatever you are, be true, boys! Be visible through and through, boys! Leave to others the shamming, The "greening" and "cramming"; In fun and in earnest, be true, boys!

—Leisure Hour.

**TRUE BRAVERY.**

Between twenty and thirty years ago, three little English boys were amusing themselves together in a woodlodge one summer forenoon. Suddenly one of them looked grave and left off playing. "I have forgotten something," he said; "I forgot to say my prayers this morning; you must wait for me." He went quietly into a corner of the place they were in, knelt down, and reverently repeated his morning prayer. Then he returned to the others, and was soon merrily engaged in play. This brave boy grew up to be a brave man. He was the gallant Captain Hammond, who nobly served his Queen and country, till he fell headlong leading on his men to the attack on the Redan, at the siege of Sebastopol. He was a faithful soldier to his earthly sovereign, but better still, a good soldier of Jesus Christ, never ashamed of his service, ever ready to fight his battle.

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