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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ROLPH SMITH & CO.

Vol. XIII.]

TORONTO, MAY 27, 1893.

[No. 21.

A SCENE IN JUNE.

The accompanying picture represents a scene in June. Doubtless there are many such scenes during this matchless month, when nature is at her best and the earth clad in beauty. Poetry is full of laudations of June. Among them all there is none more worthy the theme than the tribute paid to this queen of months by Lowell in his "Vision of Sir Launfall," a poem, by the way, which every one ought to read. Mr. Lowell says:

"And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever, come perfect days;
Then heaven tries earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays;
Whether we look or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur or see it glisten;
Every clod feels a stir of might,
An instinct within it that reaches and
towers,
And, groping blindly above it for light,
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers.
The flush of life may well be seen
Thrilling back over hills and valleys;
The cowslip startles in meadows green;
The buttercup catches the sun in its
chalice,
And there's never a leaf nor a blade too
mean
To be some happy creature's palace.

"Now is the high tide of the year
And whatever of life has ebb'd away
Comes flooding back with a rippling cheer
Into every bare inlet, and creek, and bay.
We may shut our eyes, but we cannot help
knowing
That skies are clear and grass is growing,
That maize has sprouted, that streams are
flowing,
And the river is bluer than the sky,
That the robin is plastering his house near
by.

"Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how;
Everything is happy now;
'Tis as easy now for the heart to be true
As for grass to be green or skies to be
blue."

BOYS.

We never get tired talking to or about boys. We suppose it must be because we were once a boy, but never a girl. We know what boys are. We understand all about them; and, if the truth must be spoken, we think a great deal of them. At this time we wish to say a few words about different kinds of boys. And first, there is the persevering boy. This boy sticks to a thing; never gets discouraged, never gives up. Such a boy will always succeed. He does not know what failure means. When Dr. Carey, the celebrated missionary to India, was a boy, he tried one day to climb a tree. He didn't succeed very well, for his foot slipped and he fell to the ground, breaking his leg in the fall. For weeks he was confined to his house, and suffered a great deal of pain; but as soon as he was well enough to go out, he went directly to the same tree, and succeeded in climbing it. There was no give-up in him; and it was this determined perseverance that, under God, enabled him to do so much good.

When Demosthenes, the great orator, was a youth, he had a thin, feeble voice, and stammered badly; but he determined to be an orator. To gain strength for his voice he practised declaiming on the sea-shore,

Months and months he persevered, until his voice could be distinctly heard above the roar of the waves. To correct his rapid and stammering way of speaking, he put small pebbles in his mouth; these compelled him to speak slowly and distinctly. His perseverance was rewarded with wonderful

turns his hand to something else. A boy of this kind called on a merchant who was a perfect stranger, and asked for the loan of a shilling, for which he would pay next day. The merchant looked at him with much surprise. There he stood with ragged clothes and without a penny in the world;

vested his shilling in newspapers, and by buying and selling he had supported himself. This was the beginning of his fortune.

Then there is the obedient boy. A disobedient boy is a hard case. It is not easy to do anything with him; and we don't like such a boy, and we don't like to think about him; but a truly obedient boy is the delight of our eyes. He will come out right and make a man. Once upon a time a circus came to town, and everybody knows how the music and the grand tent and horses set all the boys a-going. Pennies and shillings are in great demand; and many a choice bit of money have the circus riders carried away which was meant for better purposes. A little boy was seen looking around the premises with a great deal of curiosity. "Halloo, Johnny," said a man who knew him, "going to the circus?" "No, sir," answered Johnny, "father don't like them." "O well! I'll give you money to go, Johnny," said the man. "Father don't approve of them," answered Johnny. "Well, go for once, and I'll pay for you." "No, sir," said Johnny, "my father would give me money if he thought it was best; besides, I've got five shillings in my box." "I'd go, Johnny, for once; it's wonderful the way the horses do," said the man, "your father needn't know it." "I sha'n't," said the boy. "Now, why?" asked the man. "'Cause," said Johnny, twirling his bare toes in the sand, "after I've been I could not look my father right in the eye, and I can now." The man gave up, and didn't try any more. Johnny was a brave and plucky little fellow; but he was brave because he was obedient.

DON'T SMOKE.

BY ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

"Be not rash with thy mouth."—
Ecc. 5. 2.

My boy, if my nose hath not forgot her cunning—and I think she still carries it on her person—I have a distinct impression as I catch the faint, yet not too faint, perfume of your good strong breath, that although you have cast away the cigarette at my unexpected approach, the scent of the rice paper hangs round you still. Now, suppose we sit down and talk this thing over for, say, five minutes or an hour. What? This preaching about smoking makes you tired? Son, it doesn't make you half so tired as your first cigarette did. If you can truthfully deny that statement I'll agree to buy all the tobacco you can use during your natural life. Another thing; it doesn't make you half so tired to hear me preach, as it makes me to see you try to smoke.

Moreover, it makes you disagreeable company. When you bring into society the malodorous taint of stale tobacco-smoke in your hair and clothes, your presence is always more gratefully welcomed when you stay away. You are pleasanter when you sit by the open window. On the outside of it, at that. Aren't you a little ashamed to carry about with you a breath which you have to disinfect before it is safe for your mother to breathe?



A SCENE IN JUNE.

success. In time he became the most renowned orator of his country and, perhaps, of all the world.

Then there is the enterprising boy. This boy has an eye to business; he means to earn his own living, to make his way in the world, and he will do it too. If one thing fails, he does not go moping about, but

but the boy's face and manner interested him. He lent him the money and took his name. Weeks passed away, and the merchant saw nothing of the boy—indeed, he forgot all about him; but after a while he walked into the merchant's store, and said he had come to pay the shilling which he had borrowed. It appeared that he in-

you? I sometimes wonder what some men would do, if every time they kissed their wives they had to endure what the poor, long-suffering women do.

So don't smoke, my boy. It makes you stupid, so it does not help you in your studies. It is bad for the heart, so it does not advance you in athletic sports. It makes you nervous, so it doesn't make you a better shot. It makes you smell like a tap-room, so it doesn't make you pleasant company. It doesn't do you one particle of good; it makes you appear silly and ridiculous; it is as disagreeable and offensive to yourself as it is to any body else; you don't get a bit of comfort out of it, and you know it; so don't smoke!—*Golden Rule.*

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, MAY 27, 1893.

A STOLEN BIBLE.

SOME years ago there lived in a peaceful mountain home an Arabian vinedresser. His life was quiet and uneventful. But suddenly war broke out, and he was drafted into the Turkish army, and was forced away from his budding vines and quiet home. The change in his life was bad for him, and before long he had become as rough and as reckless as any of his comrades, the Mussulman soldiers. While the company with which he served was out on one of their foraging expeditions they attacked a small Christian village. The terrified villagers fled; and the soldiers ransacked their houses, seizing all the booty they could carry off. The Arabian soldier was very fond of reading; and he took away several books, choosing them haphazard, regardless of their contents.

One of the books thus carried off proved to be a Bible. He scarcely glanced at its contents till the war was over; but as soon as he was allowed to return home, and he was away from the excitement of camp life, he began to read the stolen Bible. Then he determined to read it carefully. As he read, his attention and interest grew, and soon he said to himself, "This book is far better than the Koran," and he was filled with wonder at its contents. Then he began to wonder at himself; for in the study of his word God revealed himself to the young soldier, and in its light the poor man saw the sinfulness of his own heart and life. He had no human teacher; but he earnestly studied and searched God's word. It taught him to pray, and to whom to pray. It taught him his sinfulness, and pointed him to the Saviour. He came to the Redeemer of whom he read, and was soon rejoicing in him as his own Saviour and Friend. His family and friends were most indignant when they found that he had "turned Christian," and persecuted and insulted him as much as they could. They mobbed him in the streets; they destroyed his carefully-kept fruit trees.

But nothing could shake his faith and his love to God. An English minister heard of his distress, and gave him employment. More and more precious did the Bible become to the persecuted Arabian vinedresser. Prayerfully he studied it; and rapidly did he "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Three years afterward he was happily settled as a Christian teacher and preacher, in a Syrian village on Mount Lebanon; and among the converts there under his charge were some who had been his bitterest enemies and persecutors when first he began to serve the Lord.

This is just one proof that "the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

A SALOON INCIDENT.

THERE was the sound of the chink, chink of glasses, ribald laughter and cursing, while the atmosphere was thick with the fumes of tobacco and alcohol. The hour was near midnight, and the eyes of the men sitting around the little tables drinking and playing cards were heavy and bloodshot. The round, red face of the bartender was flushed with beer and exertion: for his patrons were drinking heavily and often. Presently there was a lull in the business, and the barkeeper improved the opportunity by leaning forward and resting both elbows upon the counter in front of him.

For some time a shabbily-dressed old man, standing near the door and leaning against the soiled wall of the room, had been watching the dealing out of the liquor with feverish, blood-shot eyes. His face was pale and thin almost to emaciation, and his gray hair and beard were long and unkempt. The thread-bare black coat, which clung loosely about his attenuated frame, was buttoned up tightly around his throat and down his breast. As he stood there, his long, thin hands would clasp and unclasp themselves nervously, while every now and then a tremour would pass over his frame. When the barkeeper leaned his fat arms upon the counter, the old man gave a quick, nervous glance around the room, and walking up to him asked, in a husky voice, for a glass of whiskey.

The bartender looked at him contemptuously for a moment, and then inquired: "Have you got the chink?"

"Certainly, certainly; of course I have. I'm no deadbeat," replied the old man.

The saloonkeeper handed him a glass of the fiery beverage, and he drank it down at a swallow.

As he put the empty glass down upon the counter, he turned to the man behind the bar and said: "Say, old fellow, I have poured a large fortune, a beautiful home and a loved wife and child into your till, and you have poured ruination down my throat; so I guess you can stand this one drink, for I have not a cent left in the world," and he turned to go.

"Not so fast," cried the enraged saloonkeeper, as he sprang over the bar and seized him by the collar. "You drunken old brute, pay for that glass of whiskey, or I'll kick your old carcass into the gutter."

The old man's voice trembled as he replied: "Don't, don't, old friend. For you I have lost a fortune, home, wife and baby; surely you will not begrudge me a single glass of whiskey? I had to have it or I would have died."

"Out upon you, you snivelling old hypocrite," yelled the saloonkeeper, with an oath, emphasizing his command with a brutal kick and a violent jerk on the coat collar.

The collar gave way, and the greedy eyes saw a thin gold chain to which was fastened a small gold locket, hanging around the bare, wrinkled neck.

"Ha, ha! you old miser," laughed the brute, as he tore the chain violently from off the old man's neck. "I'll keep this little trinket till you pay for the whiskey."

For a moment the old man stood as if dazed, and then, clutching wildly with both hands at his throat in a vain search for the locket, cried out: "For God's sake give me back my locket! Give me back my

locket! Don't open it!" he yelled as the saloonkeeper began to examine the locket. "Give it to me! For the love of heaven give it to me."

"You blubbering old idiot," laughed the saloonkeeper, "who'd have thought you'd have a sweetheart at your time of life? Come, boys, let us see what kind of a looking gal she is."

Then the lookers-on saw a strange sight. The gray-headed old man flung himself on his knees before the brutal saloonkeeper, and while the tears ran down his hollow cheeks, begged and implored him to give him back the locket.

But the saloonkeeper only laughed and said: "Must be a pretty girl to make all that fuss over. I wouldn't miss seeing her picture now to save my soul from purgatory." As he said this he opened the locket. A long curl of beautiful golden hair fell out, and, catching on his fingers, twined itself around them like a thing of life. "Saints and angels!" he yelled, as he hurled the locket, hair and all, upon the floor, and began to stamp upon them.

Like a tigress fighting for her young, the old man sprang to the rescue of the golden curl. A short but terrible struggle ensued, and then there was a gleam of glittering steel, a thud, and the gray head fell backward to the floor, while the red blood spurted up in the face of the murderer.

Strong hands seized the saloonkeeper; but the old man was beyond help.

"Oh, my darling, my darling!" he murmured, as his life-blood ebbed away, "who would have thought, when you put your soft white arms around my neck to clasp that locket, kissing me as you did so, and saying in your sweet baby voice: 'Papa, I love 'oo, I love 'oo so. Won't 'oo tise me 'cause I gives 'oo such a sweet birthday's present?'—who would have thought that I should die a drunkard's death, stabbed in a drunken quarrel over a lock of my dead baby's golden hair? Forgive me! Oh, forgive me! my murdered wife and child!" And then raising himself on one elbow, he almost shrieked, while his face took on a look of more than mortal anguish: "May God curse and blast whiskey and all who deal in it, as whiskey has cursed and blasted me and mine!"—and he fell back a corpse.—*Alvin Jovencil, in Union.*

COULDN'T GET THE GATE OPEN.

MORE than sixty years ago, a boy, ten or twelve years old, started one morning to go to school. He didn't like his teacher, and did not like to go to school. He wanted to stay at home, but he knew he could not do that because he was not sick, and had no excuse. But he thought he could invent one that would answer.

His mother started him off with his dinner-pail in his hand, and thought, of course, her little boy would go straight to school, as he often had done before. But after he had been gone fifteen or twenty minutes the little fellow came back.

Was he sick? No. Had he been hurt? No. Did anybody or anything frighten him? No. What then?

Well, he told his mother, "he couldn't get the gate open."

His mother knew this was a poor excuse. She knew he could very easily climb over the gate if it was fast, and that her little boy was only shamming.

What do you think she did? Let him stay at home? Go and open the gate for him? No. She just went towards the wood-pile, and picked up a little switch, and then, turning to the boy, said:

"Come on, I will help you to get the gate open."

Her son took the hint and was off as nimble as a cat, not caring for gates or fences either.

This boy lived to be nearly eighty years of age. He died on the day before last Christmas.

During his long life he found many gates to be opened—as we all do—and that a lively switch will help not only over gates, but over wide ditches, steep hills, and high mountains.

After many years the gray-haired man came to the last gate. It opened of itself and led into the graveyard, where he now sleeps.

That last gate is before us all. It may be just a little way off, or it may be a long

journey. No matter, it is surely ahead somewhere, and we will come to it sooner or later. When we reach it, may it not only lead into the graveyard, but beyond it into the brighter world where gray hairs and trembling limbs are never seen.—*Exchange.*

"Boys Will Be Boys."

"Boys will be boys." We resent the old saying

Current with men;
Let it be heard, in excuse for our straying—
Never again!
Ours is a hope that is higher and clearer,
Ours is a purpose far brighter and dearer,
Ours is a name that should silence the jeerer;
We will be men!

"Boys will boys" is an unworthy slander:
Boys will be men!
The spirit of Philip in young Alexander
Kindles again.

As the years of our youth fly swiftly away,
As brightens about us the light of life's day,
As the glory of manhood dawns on us we
say,
We will be men!

When "boys will be boys" you exclaim
with a wink,
Answer us, men!

How old are those "boys?" Is their age
do you think,
Fifty or ten?

It may be the boys with whom you used to
go
Considered wild oats not unpleasant to sow;
But how looks the harvest you hoped would
not grow,

Now you are men?
"Boys will be boys!" Yes, if boys may be
pure,

Models for men;
If their thoughts may be modest, their
truthfulness sure,

Say it again!
If boys will be boys such as boys ought to
be—

Boys full of sweet-minded, light-hearted
glee—
Let boys be boys, brave, loving and free,
Till they are men!

A Modern Prodigal.

BY

Mrs. Julia McNair Wright.

CHAPTER III.

CONCERNING THE WRATH OF ACHILLES.

THE next morning, drawn by the command of the good Quaker as by an irresistible destiny, Achilles appeared at the house of Friend Amos Lowell at the appointed time. Achilles in his attic had risen early, washed carefully, dressed in his new clothes, and, carrying his shoes and stockings in his hand, had left the house unknown to any one and walked down the mountain, the three miles to the village. He put on his shoes and hose as he waited for Amos to come out.

The day was just breaking as they reached the station, where only one or two passengers besides the sheriff and his prisoner were waiting for the cars. Friend Amos approached Thomas Stanhope, and held out his hand.

"Thy words yesterday, Thomas, gave me hope for thee. When a man sees his errors and confesses that his punishment is just, when he begins to take care for others, a good work is going on in his soul. I have come to tell thee that Mercy and her children shall not lack a friend and a helper while Amos Lowell is spared by the good Lord."

Achilles meanwhile was gazing on his father from behind the shadow of the portly Amos. Here was a new father. His clothes were clean and well mended. He was washed and closely shaven. The fiery glow of alcohol had faded from his eyes and skin, and his features, thinned little by abstinence and anxiety, had returned to something of their natural refinement. Prisoner as he was, he held himself more erect and had a firmer glance than when he shambled along half-drunken the crouching bondsman of alcohol.

"Friend Lowell," he said, "I despair of what I have got, and I ask nothing for

myself. But help them to get work—and oh! if you have any influence here in Ladbury, close those saloons which have been my ruin before my two boys get old enough to go the evil way I have gone!"

"I and certain others whose hearts the Lord hath touched," replied Amos, "do daily fight this traffic. Whether or not we can drive out these saloons I cannot tell, but by God's help we will keep thy boys out of them. Poverty and the necessity of hard labour keep, by God's blessing, many a boy from mischief. When man became a sinner, the good Lord gave him a blessing in labour. If Deacon Stanhope had left thee his good name and example and not a dime, he might have had a more worthy successor. Thomas, I have brought thy son to bid thee farewell."

He stepped aside, and Thomas stared blankly at Achilles as at a stranger. It was not that the boy, thus put face to face with him, looked suspicious, defiant, beligerent; for years Thomas Stanhope's actions had been of such a nature that Achilles could show to him no more pleasing expression. The lad's nature was sturdy and war-like; there was more iron than clay in his make-up. What was curious to Stanhope was that for the first time for years he saw his son in new shoes and new cap, a tidy suit, a necktie, a percale shirt, and scoured to the unblemished cleanliness of his Quaker protector.

It came to Stanhope that this eminent respectability might have been the moral condition of Achilles but for him. He suddenly remembered a day when he had come with his own father, the good deacon, to this station, to start on a pleasure trip to Philadelphia. He had then been about the age that Achilles had now reached. Good fare, good clothes, had been his birthright. What a happy, innocent, frank-faced boy he had been, holding by his father's hand, so trustful and fond of such a good father! And here—here was his son, clothed by a stranger's care, defiant, wrath brooding in his soul, come to see his father carried off to serve a ten-years' sentence! His lips trembled, there was a sob in his voice, as he held out his hand to his deeply injured son and said, "Achilles! my boy!"

Achilles was not one to be placated by a tear, or to forget ten cruel years in five minutes. He took his father's hand, but without cordiality.

"How are they?" asked the prisoner. "Better off than they've been this good while," said Achilles. Stanhope winced.

"You'll be good to the mother and the children, my boy."

"I'll be better than you have, by a long shot," said the son.

Stanhope turned paler at this home-thrust.

"I've been very bad. You're better without me. I'm going for a long time, Achilles."

"None too long," retorted Achilles. "When you come back I will be a man, as big as you are, and the rest of 'em will be grown up. You'll find you can't carry on up at our house any more the way you have. I'll have a good place for mother by that time, and she is going to have some peace and quiet in it."

"I hope so, she needs it," said the humbled father. "I have thrown away my chance in life and ruined you all. I shall never come back to trouble you. Build up the home I destroyed, Achilles, and be all I have not been and nothing that I have. I suppose your mother and Letitia are glad to be rid of me too?"

"Oh, they cried like everything; women are so dreadful soft-hearted and don't know what's good for 'em; but of course they'd be scared enough to see you back."

The train whistled. The sheriff touched the prisoner's arm.

"Good-bye, Achilles, my boy," said Thomas. "Forgive me if you can and ask them to; don't think harder of me than you can help. I'd have been a good father if it hadn't been for drink."

"What did you drink for when you knew how it made you act?" said the obdurate Achilles.

The second whistle blew. "All aboard!" cried the conductor. Thomas suddenly clasped his son in his arms and kissed him.

Then leaving the astounded lad on the platform, he entered the car before the sheriff. Achilles stood dazed for a moment,

then ran along by the car window, where he could see his father, and shouted: "Good-bye, father! I'll give 'em your love! Don't fret. I'll take care of 'em. We'll be all right now!" To the sound of which assurance, which might have a double meaning, the train rolled out of the station. Achilles looked after it.

"There," he said to Friend Amos, "you wanted me to come say good-bye, and I did it."

"Thee has not a very soft heart," said the Quaker quietly, "and I conclude thee has a hard head. I could bid the prisoner good-bye more kindly."

"Good reason why. He never treated you to brickbats and kicks, nor scared your little sister, nor chased your mother out in the rain, nor sold your steer."

"Thee will come to breakfast with me, Achilles," said Friend Amos, trusting rather to time than to argument to soften the rancour of the injured lad.

At the Quaker's door was Friend Sara Lowell, with little Patty in her arms. Patty, washed and curled, clad in a new pink dress and white apron from the ample supplies in Friend Lowell's big country-town store, roused up to give a smile to her brother. Both Achilles and Patty ate heartily of the ample breakfast set forth by Friend Amos, one of the most notable housewives of the village.

After breakfast, Friend Amos took them into his adjoining store and gave Patty a little red cart, a doll, a woolly dog, and a stick of candy. Upon Achilles he bestowed a rake and a hoe.

"This is as much as thee can carry three miles up the hill," he said. "Friend Jacob Lyman is not far from thee. He will give thee seed potatoes, and cabbage and tomato plants, and lend thee a spade. Get the garden made betimes, and let me see at the end of two or three weeks what thee has done to better affairs. Thee is not slow to promise what thee will do; let us see if thee will be equally good at performing."

It was six o'clock and the sun was well up, drinking the dews of the April morning. The grass was green on the road-side; the chickweed and shepherd's purse were in blossom. As Achilles, full of hope, sped along, his rake over one shoulder, the hoe over the other, he counted every moment lost until he could begin to work in his long neglected garden and tell his mother of the happy fortunes of Patty. Seeing a dandelion spreading its golden disc by the clear purling water in the roadside rannel, he broke into a joyous whistle. A black-bird and a blue-jay chased each other over and under the rails on the fence, and watching the flash of green neck and vivid blue wings, Achilles felt as if scales had fallen from his eyes, and for the first time in his life he saw that he was living in a beautiful world. How had he been robbed of his childhood's heritage of joy!

When he reached the little home, his mother, Letitia, and Samuel were busy with a vigorous house-cleaning. Mercy at first had felt too out of heart, too wearied and broken down to undertake anything, but Letitia had seen a good possibility of decency and home-life for the first time, and had entreated her: "Don't give up, and had entreated her: 'Don't give up, mother. You will feel better if you get your mind on something new. Don't discourage us, now we've got a chance for the first time in our lives. If you don't help us on, I'm afraid Achilles will run away in despair. He was talking of it yesterday.'"

"Achilles run away! Achilles leave me!" cried Mercy.

"He won't if you'll give him anything to live for," said Letitia.

"But where is he now?" cried the poor mother.

"Looking for work, maybe," said her daughter. "He'll come back; let us show him we are trying to make something of this place."

Mercy, spurred by thoughts of her children, stung by fears for Achilles, began to gather together the wreck of her household goods, to see what could be done with it; casting anxious glances towards the road, her heart heavy for her son. At this moment the husband was forgotten. She was a glad woman when Achilles, with his implements, came in.

"I've been to the train to see father start," he said. "Mr. Lowell made me. He gave me this hoe and rake for doing it and breakfast. I saw Patty. She looked

so pretty in a pink frock and white apron, just like other folks; and Mr. Lowell gave her a doll, a cart, a woolly dog, and some candy. You ought to see her!" The little sister was of much more importance than the father.

"O Achilles, you saw your father! How did he look? What did he say?" cried Mercy.

"He looked a heap better than I ever saw him look before. Being a prisoner does him good, seems to me. He said he was sorry, and he was never coming back to trouble us, and for me to take care of you, and he cried and kissed me."

Mercy sat down and burst into violent weeping.

"Wish't I hadn't told you," said Achilles, "making you cry so. Don't, mother. I thought you'd not be crying any more."

Mercy tried to control herself. Evidently her son was not fond of crying people. He had had overmuch of crying and sighing in his short existence. Letitia whispered to her: "Don't discourage Achilles so, mother. I think it was a good sign if father felt bad." Achilles caught the words.

"Tain't no use. Mother's bound to cry; she's got 'customed to it. I did think maybe we'd have good times now, but we won't. I think father ought to feel bad. I told him so. I told him I'd see myself further if I couldn't be better to all of you than ever he was. But there! 'tain't no use to try."

And again in Mercy's heart the wife gave way before the claims of the mother. She wiped her eyes. "There, Achilles, you will not see me cry any more. I'm going to keep up heart for you children, and you'll all help me. We'll try to do all those things we planned yesterday, Achilles. You shall lay out the work and we'll help you. You are the man of the house now."

"There!" cried Achilles, who liked to be at the head of affairs, "that's something like. Whatever you want, mother, you just sing out, and it's going to be done. It's a little after seven now by the sun. Some day we'll own a clock. As soon as I get off these nice clothes I'm going to work. I say, Tish, I've been to town and back. Won't you go over to Lyman's and get a spade for me to dig with, and ask for some seeds, and plants, and seed potatoes? Things had ought to be in right off. You tell 'em I'll help 'em haying or harvesting, to pay for what I get. We ain't going to beg—we're folks now."

Letitia at once set off across the pasture lot for Mr. Lyman's. Samuel pulled his mother's arm.

"Say, mother, can't I put on the new clothes and go to school now? I had to stop 'cause of my trousers and no shoes. Can't I go?"

"Maybe Achilles wants you to help him in the garden."

"O Kill!" pleaded Samuel, "You let me go. I'm forgetting all I learned about reading, and I want to read, and if I can read I can have that beautiful story-book mother got down last night. And I like the teacher, Kill, she's so nice to me. I will work like sack, Kill, 'fore an' after school, an' Sat'days, if you'll let me go to school, Kill."

Highly flattered at being thus created into the family autocrat, Achilles paused with his foot on the attic stair and contemplated his little brother.

"I say, mother, he ain't much size for his age, and ain't much good to work—s'pose we send him to school, and make a scholar of him, like some of the big-bugs down in the town?"

"Well, Achilles, just as you say; he has always had to be kept home on account of his clothes. But since Mr. Lowell brought him some—you must help brother out of school though, Samuel. Brother can't do all the work."

"I'll work just as tight as I can lick," responded Samuel.

"Well, then," said Achilles, "it will be an hour before you need get ready. You begin gathering all the rubbish up from the yard. You put all that will burn in the stove, in a nice pile close to the house for mother, and make a heap of the rest. Don't leave any old tin, or rags, or shoes around."

Samuel darted out to obey.

"Achilles," said Mercy entreatingly,

"if you only could forgive your father—now he's gone—"

"I forgave him—a little, down at the depot," said the boy. "I said good-bye, and we'd be all right now. I can't forgive him the hull of it till I can forget, and I don't know how good I am at forgetting. Maybe when I see you all right, and things looking pretty nice, I may forgive him some more."

With what pride and security did Achilles now look about his poor home, feeling himself free to work for its effectual restoration. In the new manliness aroused by his independent position, he suddenly began to wonder why the house and its twenty surrounding acres had not been sacrificed in the devastations wrought by his father. He asked his mother, after he had returned to old clothes and bare feet, and had taken time to reprove Samuel for not working thoroughly.

"Your grandfather left it to you children," said the mother, "so your father could neither sell it nor mortgage it."

"But he wrecked it all he could," said the boy. "Ours, is it? Well, I'll make it worth having, and if ever he does try to come back he just won't get in. I'll be a man then. Samuel! don't run about so here and there. Begin at a corner of the house, and work clean as you go."

Here came Letitia flushed and breathless with running.

"Kill! Mr. Lyman's ever so kind. He says he'll come right over now, and plough the garden, cause you can't work it up right with a spade. And he'll bring seed potatoes, and plants and seeds, and he says he believes there's good stuff in you, and you'll make a man if you have half a chance. And, mother, Mrs. Lyman's baby is sick, and Mrs. Lyman says if I can come over and work for her for a month, she'll give me a hen and chicks, and a little pig, and a new calf. Can't I go? Can't you finish up here and get me a dress and some aprons made, so I can be decent while I go and work? Mrs. Lyman said she'd lend me an apron and a sack till you fixed some."

"A pig!" shouted Achilles, "a calf! a hen and chicks? What are you stopping for, Tish? Why don't you go back as fast as ever you can? I'll take hold and help mother till Mr. Lyman gets here. I guess now we can have things that won't be carried off for whiskey. I'll make coops and I'll build a little pig-pen, and mend the barn-yard fence, for our pig and calf and chickens, Tish!"

Letitia was soon speeding back across the pasture, and Achilles put his brawny strength at his mother's service. He swept down the walls, straightened the stove-pipe and fastened it up, and rubbed it clean with some paper.

"He didn't leave us much, only what things were to strong to break, and too heavy to take to town," he said, as looked at the stove, table, bed, two or three chairs, a tub, pail, and washing bench, which formed the major part of their household gear. "I'll mend some of those things, mother. I will make you a stool or so, if I can get hammer or nails. Couldn't you cover them the way Mrs. Lyman does? And can't you take the old clothes and rags, and braid us some mats the way she does?"

"Put all the rags you find here in this tub, Samuel," said Mercy, stepping to the door. "I did use to make mats, but your poor father sold them and I gave it up."

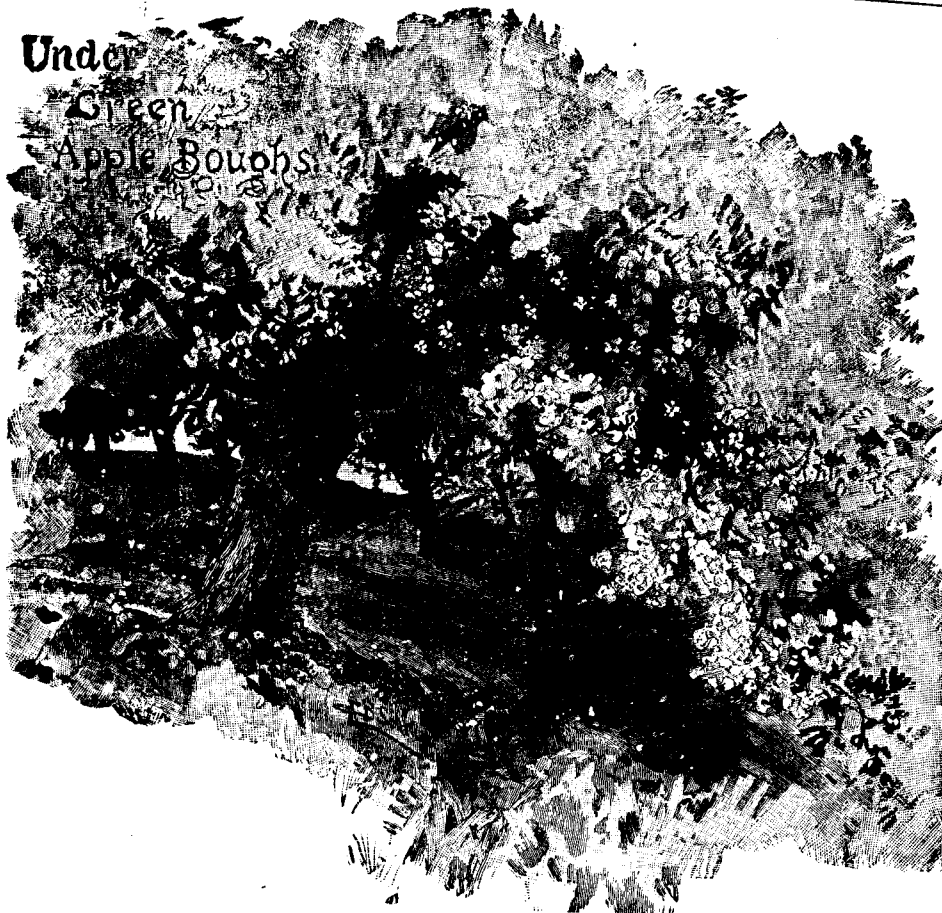
"Poor father!" said Achilles, between his teeth, going out to help Mr. Lyman unload the plough from the waggon and begin work on the garden. "I'll show poor father a thing or two, if he ever sets foot in this house again."

(To be continued.)

SELF-DENIAL.

A LITTLE box came into a missionary collection inscribed with the singular words, "Tis But." It was from a lady who had never felt that she could do much for missions. But she had been accustomed to buy a good many things for herself which she did not absolutely need, saying, "Tis but a dollar," or "Tis but a trifle." This year she determined, when so tempted, to put her "tis buts" into the missionary box; and it surprised her to find that they amounted to \$150.

Under Green Apple Boughs



UNDER GREEN APPLE BOUGHS.

THERE is not a more beautiful sight on earth than an apple orchard in full blossom. Who cannot recall such a vision as he looks at our illustration? Why, you can almost smell the fragrance of the sweet pink and white blossoms. Do you not remember how often you used to steal away with your favourite book and curl yourself up in that notch or on that old gnarled, crooked trunk, away from all disturbing influences? I can remember many such delightful hours.

I know an old apple-tree that has lived over half a century. What stories it could tell if it could speak! It once stood in the middle of an orchard; now it stands alone. All its companions have either died or have been cut down to make room for improvements, so-called. The orchard is gone. It was gone before my recollection, but this one old tree still stands and bears fruit, good fruit; not so much as it formerly did, of course, when it was young and vigorous, but every spring it is covered with blossoms.

I remember many, old and young, who oftentimes rested beneath its friendly shade, who have passed away from earth, but whose lives have left a fragrance as sweet as the old tree's blossoms.

LESSON NOTES.

SECOND QUARTER.

OLD TESTAMENT TEACHINGS.

B.C. 977.] LESSON X. [June 4.

REVERENCE AND FIDELITY.

Eccles. 5. 1-12.] [Memory verses, 1, 2.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.—Rom. 12. 11.

OUTLINE.

1. The Fear of God, v. 1-7.
2. Doing Justice, v. 8-12.

TIME AND PLACE.—Perhaps about B.C. 977, but very doubtful.

EXPLANATIONS.

"Keep thy foot"—In the East, shoes or sandals were taken off when entering the temple. "Be more ready to hear," etc.—An attentive, teachable heart is better than formal worship without sincerity. "Be not rash with thy mouth"—Wise counsel in any case, but it here specially refers to inconsiderate prayers and vows to God. "A dream . . . and a fool's voice"—Dreams mean nothing,

and they come most frequently when the mind is more than full with taxing, ill-arranged business. So a fool's voice means nothing. No one depends upon it for guidance, and its utterances are characterized not by good sense, but by a multitude of ill-arranged words. The Hebrews rightly judged that the men who disregarded God were fools. "Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin"—That is, Don't make rash promises which cannot be kept. "Before the angel"—God's representative. "Matter"—Purpose. "The king himself is served by the field"—Dependent upon its cultivation.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where does this lesson teach that it is foolish and wicked—

1. To be irreverent in worship?
2. To utter prayer or testimony or ritual without sincerity?
3. To make vows of reform without consideration?
4. To become discouraged by the wrong-doings of others?
5. To seek permanent happiness in transient wealth?
6. To expect luxury to minister to health?

Where does this lesson teach that it is wise and right—

1. To reverence God in public and in private?
2. To remember the unsatisfactoriness of earthly treasures?
3. To keep all promises made to God and man?
4. To cherish firm faith in the Judge of all the earth?
5. To take one's religion into daily life?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What is our first duty when approaching God? "Reverence." 2. By what is a fool's voice known? "By multitude of words." 3. What three duties are enjoined upon us by the Golden Text? "Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." 4. What is said about wealth? "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver." 5. What is each of us exhorted to do? "Fear thou God."

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The omnipresence of God.

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

What is an eternal Spirit?
One who is without beginning and without end.

What do you mean by saying that God is infinite?

I mean that his nature and attributes are high above all understanding, and without any limit.

GOOD vinegar always has a "mother" and the better the "mother" the better the vinegar. And it is generally so with a boy,



BEDFORD JAIL.

BEDFORD JAIL.

YEARS and years ago, John Bunyan was sent to prison for preaching the gospel of Christ. He was confined in Bedford jail, a picture of which is here given, for twelve years. It was while he was in this prison that he wrote a great part of that wonderful book, the Pilgrim's Progress.

His jailer proved to be kinder to him than his enemies, and sometimes allowed him to go and see his family. His enemies, suspecting this, sent a messenger overnight to question the jailer. Bunyan had gone home and to bed, but could not rest. So he rose and returned, late as it was, to the prison. The jailer blamed him for coming at so unseasonable an hour; but early in the morning the messenger came and said, "Are all the prisoners safe?" "Yes." "Is John Bunyan safe?" "Yes." "Let me see him." He was called, and appeared, and all was well. After the messenger left, the jailer said to Bunyan, "Well, you may go out again when you think fit, for you know when to return better than I can tell you."

What Will You Do?

WHAT will you do with the new year?
The question is asked to-day
To you who are travelling onward
To the land that is far away.
The old year has gone forever;
It has bid you a last adieu;
Ah, children dear! consider,
What will you do with the new?

Do you wish for a happy new year?
Without one anxious care?
Then turn to the face of Jesus,
Lift up your soul in prayer;
Trust yourself to his keeping,
Follow him as your guide,
Willingly work in his vineyard,
Closer press to his side.

Do you wish for a holy new year?
Then sit at the Master's feet,
And ask for his Holy Spirit
To guide your faltering feet;
Then resting upon his promise,
Without a doubt or fear,
You may step out with gladness
Into the fair new year.

AN EMPTY POCKET.

THE old man who had long swept the crossing at the entrance of one of the city parks, was stricken down by illness early one summer morning, and as he was taken up to be carried away to the hospital, a policeman handed his broom to Tom Jenks, a poor ragged boy who was standing by, saying, "Here is a chance to fill your empty pocket."

Tom took the broom, and leaning upon it, watched the ambulance move down the still, quiet street, with a very sad face. His pocket was empty, and his stomach also; for he had neither home nor friends.

As if reading his thoughts, the policeman said, as he came marching back over his beat, a few moments later, "One never need have an empty heart; that may be filled with love toward God and one's fellow-men."

That thought put new courage into Tom. It made him kind, thoughtful, and obliging to old people, and little children in particular; and it brought him many a dime and nickle, and many a smile and kind word.

It brought him something better even than these; for the superintendent of the park had an eye on him, and when the old sweeper came back to his crossing, Tom was given a place in the park, with good wages and a neat uniform, where his pleasant face and polite manners made him a favourite.

Tom is an earnest Christian, and never loses a chance to tell of God's love to himself, or of passing on the good news to the poor and friendless, and if one has an empty pocket, he may have a life full of kindly deeds done for our Saviour's sake.

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