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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. IV.

TORONTO, MAY 3, 1884.

No. 9.

EASTERN PLOUGHING.

ONE of the most familiar sights in Egypt, at that time of the year when most tourists visit the land, is that of the fellahs, or farmers, preparing the soil for sowing seed. The implements of their husbandry are exceedingly simple. No modern improvements have as yet found their way into use.

"COULTERS AND MATTOCKS."

There must have been a somewhat curious state of things among God's chosen people, for we read, (1 Sam. xiii. 19-21) "Now, there was no smith found through all the land of Israel; for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears: But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulters, and his axe, and his mattock." Yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen the goads.

The "share" was a mere shoe of iron placed upon the point of that rude straight piece of wood, which pierced the soil. I think the word "coulters" must be an inaccurate rendering. It is too modern an invention altogether for the Hebrews. Perhaps a spade is here intended. They have nothing that answers to our coulters on their ploughs. "Mattocks" we saw everywhere. They are a rough sort of axe for cutting the blocks of fallow-ground into convenient pieces. The soil becomes as hard as the clay-bed of a brick-kiln.

The "goads" seemed to have a double use. They were shod at both ends with iron. One was pointed, and was employed to urge the animals ahead. They dug it into the flanks of the poor creatures with a most cruel sort of jab every now and then, as if to occupy the time. The other end was flattened into a diminutive sort of shovel, and they sometimes employed it to scrape off the clogs of earth from the ploughshare, to help it run more easily.

With a staff of heavy wood, often six or seven feet long, it is plain that a goad like this might in an exigency become a most formidable weapon. No wonder the Philistines felt jealous

of it, for we read that Shamgar slew six hundred of their warriors at one time, "with an ox-goad."

"TWELVE YOKE OF OXEN."

I have known a bright teacher's class quite demoralized, when they

to put the men on the same field, drawing parallel furrows, a long line of labourers, moving in the same direction, each coming in the other's wake. Elisha was the twelfth man, driving the twelfth plough.

A most significant act was that, by

by the railway from Alexandria to Cairo, yoked together in the furrows, and driving a miserable beam-point into the tough earth just to tear up the surface of the shallow soil, a camel and a cow. And if one ever expects on this mixed-up planet to behold a

mis-match, let him see that first. The long-eared, dun-colored cow, short in the legs, and appearing all the more lengthened along the back, into an ugliness inexpressible, seemed fairly subdued by the towering presence of her mate,—that tall, gaunt, humpbacked camel, his homely nose as usual superciliously stretched out far in advance of him, as if disdainful of his mortifying associations. These two were fastened to the ends of a yoke full ten feet long, a mere straight pole, slanting up like an inclined plane from the lowly beast to the lofty. They could not keep step. Each, I am sure, was ashamed of the other. At any rate, both of them were quite illtempered, and the man increased their savageness with a continuous punch of his goad. Without exception, this was the most incongruous, the most ill-adapted, the most inefficient, the most ludicrous, and least antic ploughing-team I ever saw.

But we recalled the commandment of the law and the precept of the gospel, and so gained an illustration of its moral meaning. Moses said, "Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together." And Paul said, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." I understand this last passage to catch its figure from the first, and to have the same general sense. God meant to teach his ancient people the power and use of keen, careful, discrimination. They must not confound things which were intended to be separate, nor link into one those which were intended to contrast. And the aim of this was to instruct them in deciding between holiness and sin.



EASTERN PLOUGHING.

read that the prophet Elisha was found in the field "ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen before." They understood this verse to say, that he had the entire drove hitched to his one plough. Not so at all; even the text gives a different hint—"and he with the twelfth." The custom in the east is

which he made known his entire and permanent surrender to the Divine command. He killed his oxen, and boiled the meat with his plough, yoke, and goad, in order to make a final feast for the people. He gave up his past life in a direct consecration.

We saw once, in a little plain close

A boy stood an umbrella, with a cord tied to it, in a public doorway. Within a quarter of an hour eleven persons thought that umbrella was theirs, and carried it with them to the length of the string. Then they suddenly dropped it, and went off without once looking after it.

THE COAST GUARD.

Do you wonder what I am seeing,
In the heart of the fire, aglow
Like hills in a golden sunset,
With a summer sea below
I see, away to the eastward,
The line of a storm-beat coast,
And I hear the tread of the hurrying waves
Like the tramp of a maddened host.

And up and down in the darkness,
And over the frozen sand,
I hear the men of the coast-guard
Pacing along the strand,
Beaten by storm and tempest,
And drenched by the pelting rain,
From the shores of Carolina,
To the wind swept bays of Maine.

No matter what storms are raging,
No matter how wild the night,
The gleam of their swinging lanterns
Shine at with a friendly light,
And many a shipwrecked sailor
Thanks God, with his gasping breath,
For the sturdy arms of the surfmen
Who drew him away from death.

And so, when the wind is wailing,
And the air grows dim with sleet,
I think of the fearless watchers
Pacing along their beat,
I think of a wreck, fast breaking
In the surf of a rocky shore,
And the life-boat leaping onward
To the stroke of the landing oar

I hear the shouts of the sailors,
The boom of the frozen sail,
And the creak of the icy halyards
Straining against the gale,
"Courage!" the captain trumpets,
"They are sending help from land!"
God bless the men of the coast-guard,
And hold their lives in His hand.

—St. Nicholas.

DAVID'S PRIZE.

A STORY OF THE BAY OF FUNDY.

"**W**HEY say there's a skeleton in every house, Almiry; and this is outra. I used to think we didn't have any, though we've always been poor enough, goodness knows!"

"I never minded poverty before, John," said the wife. "We've been blessed with good health, an' have been able to earn a comfortable livin', if not a bountiful one. But this—this is so hard to bear;" and she laid aside the worn garment she was mending and looked steadily into the fire with that expression of despair that comes, not of sudden grief, but of sorrow growing day by day into the life.

A slight sound from the trundle bed caused the mother to hasten to her little one, bending tenderly over the golden head, and softly smoothed the rumpled blankets. Then, as though there were a mournful pleasure in the act, she thrust her warm hand beneath the bedclothes, and gently caressed the little distorted feet that had never taken a step. This was the skeleton—this the sorrow that brooded over the household; the youngest child and only daughter was a cripple. She was a lovely little creature, now two and a half years old; the fairest, her parents believed, in all Nova Scotia; for this was

"In the Acadian land, on the shores of Basin of Minas."

As Mrs. Hart came back to the fire-side and resumed her work, her husband asked:

"Did Mr. Blako seem very sure about it?"

"Oh, yes," was the quick reply; "he said it had been done in scores of places both in England and America, and he would guarantee that this Boston surgeon could make her poor little feet as right as anybody's. Oh, it seems harder than ever to know she might be helped, while we are so poor and powerless."

"Dont take on so, Almiry," said Mr. Hart, wiping his eyes with a rough hand, for tears were chasing each other down the mother's pale cheeks; "mebbe we can manage to get the money somehow, though it does look dubious just now."

The eldest boy, David, who was sitting near, apparently engrossed with his arithmetic lesson, now looked up and eagerly asked:

"How much would it cost for mother to go to Boston with his little sister and have her feet straightened?"

"I don't know, exactly," replied the father, "but I s'pose the fare both ways, the board bill while there, and the surgeon's fee would amount, at least, to a hundred dollars; mebbe a good deal more."

"A hundred dollars!" was his astonished reply.

A million would hardly have seemed larger or more impossible of attainment.

"I thought," he faltered, "that p'raps you'd let me work out next summer—Jack and Stevie are gettin' big enough to help here at home—an' I could earn enough to send 'em, but I couldn't. 'Twould take a good while to earn that, but I could do it in a few years, mother."

"You're a good boy, Davie," was the gentle reply, and a smile shone through the tear-drops. "But the doctor thinks that to wait, even a year, would make her chances much smaller."

When David climbed the stairs to the little bed-room he shared with his two younger brothers, his brain was full of projects for making money. Half the night he lay awake forming plans and rejecting them, while the wild March wind mingled its roar with the thundering music of the mighty incoming tide.

Nor was this one wakeful night the end of David's planning; he took his brother Jack into confidence, and together they talked over each scheme.

"I'll go without butter on my bread," said Jack, swallowing a sigh; for, like most ten-year-old boys, he enjoyed good things, and butter was his special weakness.

"So'll I, but that won't make so much difference in my case," said David laughing.

"I wish't we could find a gold mine, an' not have to wait to earn the money," suggested impatient Jack.

David shook his head. "There's no use wishin' that; the money's got to come, little by little. Let us get a box an' put in ev'ry cent we can earn, and say nothin' about it to mother till we get a real lot. I'll put in that silver half dollar I got, an' Billy Farham says he'll give me a quarter of a dollar for a little sail-boat like that I rigged for Stevie; an' if he would, don't you s'pose there are other boys who'd do the same? Folks ain't so poor as we be, an' if they was they don't all have little sisters they want to send to Boston."

But opportunities for earning were not frequent in that sparsely settled region, and the money came very

slowly. At times David was despairing, and again a stroke of good fortune—for such he considered the earning a few dimes—rendered him hopeful.

Once as he stood on the shore of the Basin watching the tide as it came rushing in, he recalled a story he had heard, how a man had found on the shore a jewelled ear-ring of great value, that had probably been torn from some victim of a wreck.

"Oh, if I could only find such a thing!" exclaimed the boy, clasping his hands tightly; but his homely common sense discouraged such a wild idea, and he added: "Precious little time have I to be searchin' the flats. I might better be at work tryin' to earn somethin' than runnin' on that fool's errand."

Meanwhile little Bessie was growing more and more beautiful and winsome. Though nothing was ever said in her presence concerning her deformity, she was evidently aware she was different from other children. As spring advanced and the boys began to go barefoot, she would sometimes pull off her little stockings and home-made cloth shoes, and gravely look first at the strong sturdy feet of her brothers, and then look at her own so unnaturally bent.

"It cuts me right through to see her do that," said David to Jack on such occasions; an' the awful sorry look on mother's face is jest as bad."

One night, in early June, the brothers lay awake long, talking in whispers of their failures and possibilities, until poor Jack became so sleepy that in the midst of a sentence he was carried away to dream-land. But David was restless and wakeful, his warm heart full of desire to do something for the sister he loved so well, and fear lest he should not succeed. He counted the slow strokes of the clock as they told the hour of eleven, and said to himself:

"I do know as I was ever awake so late in all my life before."

Shortly after this he became conscious that for some time he had been hearing a sound as of the surf beating against the shore. Being so accustomed to the roaring of water—for in this arm of the Bay of Fundy the tide rises and falls from fifty to seventy feet each day—he had thought nothing of it. But just now it flashed across his mind that the tide was high between six and seven o'clock, and therefore must now be nearly run out.

"What on earth can that splashin' mean?" the boy thought; "there's no wind a-blowin', an' the tide ain't coming in, unless I've been asleep an' didn't know it;" and he sat upright in bed rubbing his eyes to assure himself he was not dreaming.

The noise was fast becoming terrific. David thought he had never heard even the wind and tide make such a commotion.

Presently the cloak struck twelve, and then he knew that he had not been asleep, and that something unusual must be occurring along the shore. Noiselessly slipping out of bed, he went to the window; the waning moon was shining faintly and the stars were bright.

"Twin't so very dark, if 'tis midnight," said David. "I'm a-going to find out what all this is about."

It was but the work of a moment to draw on his scanty clothing, and, swinging himself into a low tree, whose branches were within reach of his

window, he was soon on his way to the shore. Rolling up his pantaloons, he boldly made his way down the flat, toward the receding tide and the noise, his bare feet sinking into the mud at every step. But he had not gone far ere terror overcame him, and he went back to sit on the bank to wait and wonder.

"It can't be a ship," he mused; "no kind o' a craft could kick up such a fuss as that; I b'lieve its somethin' alive."

As loud as the report of a small cannon, but sharper, and more like what one might suppose to be the clapping of gigantic hands, sometimes three or four in quick succession, came the sounds.

An hour passed, and the commotion was perceptibly less, long pauses occurring between the noises, after a time all was still except an occasional heavy thud.

Courage and curiosity now triumphed over fear, and David again ventured down the flat. With wide-open eyes and sense alert, he proceeded in the direction of the sounds, and soon was able to see, in the dim light, a dark object outlined against the sky.

"It looks like the hull of a ship, bottom upwards," thought the boy, cautiously going a little nearer. But just then one end of the shape gave a flop that sent the mud flying in all directions.

David made a backward leap that would have done credit to a professional gymnast, saying aloud in excitement:

"It's a whale, sure's I'm alive! an' it's my whale, for I'll have it, I will!"

How to hold possession of it was the next question, for a quarter of a mile of mud lay between him and the bank, and the tide which was already turning would carry away the prize; but with our hero to think was to act, and we shall see whether wisely or not. Running as fast as possible over the oozy ground, he made his way to his father's boat-house, and, hastily throwing into his skiff a gaff hook and a long stout rope, he again started back, dragging the boat after him.

He had not gone far when he bethought himself that his parents might be alarmed at discovering his absence; so, leaving the boat, he ran to the house which was not more than thirty rods from the shore. Going to the open window, he shouted:

"Father! Mother! I've got a whale!" and then darting back without waiting a reply, so fearful of losing what he already considered his own property.

Mr. and Mrs. Hart were both sound asleep when their boy's voice penetrated the room, but they awoke instantly, fully conscious that some one had spoken, but uncertain as to the words.

"Who was that?" questioned the father.

"'Twas David's voice, I'm sure," answered the mother; "an' it seemed as though he was right here in the room."

"David," called Mr. Hart; but no answer came. Going to the stairway, he called again, with the same result.

"It must be he hollered out in his sleep, an' both windows bein' open it sounded pretty plain. Guess I'll see what time 'tis," and he struck a match and held it before the clock. It's a quarter past two; time for another nap;" and, undisturbed, he lay down to sleep.

But Mrs. Hart was more wakeful, and presently said:

"It sounded to me as though he said, 'I've got a whale.'"

"D'ye think he's been a fishin'?" was the laughing response. "I thought he said, 'Git out the way;' you better go to sleep, Almiry."

Meanwhile David hastened back to his prize, which was now surrounded by the water.

The monster was utterly motionless, and as the boy approached it he almost thought he had been mistaken, and that such an enormous thing could not have been alive.

Getting into his boat, he paddled close up to it, finally ventured to touch it with an oar. As there was still no movement he lost all fear and became exultant.

He rowed around the great creature, and in the starlight could see the open mouth—a cavern large enough to engulf several such boys. David became for the time an animated exclamation point.

"Of all this world an' creation, what a mouth! Conscience alive, what a tail! I shouldn't ha' cared to be very near when he was thrashin' round so."

Our hero now tied one end of the rope securely to the iron ring in the bow of the boat, fastened the gaff to the other end and hooked it firmly into the lower jaw of the dead whale, and then lay down in the boat to wait for morning and high water.

The novel sensation of being out in the Basin in the night under such peculiar circumstances kept him awake. But the time dragged heavily. He tried to make a little fun for himself when beginning to feel drowsy.

"Mighty big hoss I've got here, but my kerridge is ruther small. Git up, ole feller!" A thrill shot over the boy as he added: "My, what if he should not be really dead, an' the water as it gits higher should bring him to life! My neck wouldn't be worth much."

But no such thing happened, and, save being tossed about by the waves, the night passed quietly until the eastern sky began to show faint streaks of red.

The great carcass was now afloat, and David felt safer to keep a rope's-length distant, as it made him just a trifle nervous to see the huge thing rolling on the water.

Soon there was a tremendous lurch which nearly upset the boat, and drenched its occupant to the skin; but no serious harm was done; the whale had simply turned over, and only its white breast was now visible at the surface of the water.

David's plan was to wait until high tide and then row to shore, towing the whale; but he soon found he could not do that.

"I might as well think o' draggin, the meetin'-house off!" he exclaimed in despair, after tugging with all his might and making no progress. "I wish father was here."

Early in the morning the Hart family was astir as usual, for they were workers from the father down to little Stephen.

"Where's David?" asked Jack, coming into the kitchen, where his mother was preparing breakfast; "he must ha' got up awful early, for I've been awake ever so long."

"I haven't seen him. Perhaps he went out with your father," was the unconcerned reply.

But at breakfast-time it appeared that no one had seen him.

"John!" said Mrs Hart energetically,

as a recollection flashed across her mind, "I do believe 'twas David that shouted in the night, and I believe he said, 'I've got a whale.'"

Mr. Hart could not help laughing at the idea, but he sent Jack to the shore to see if the missing boy were to be found, and himself went to the barn to search.

Jack soon came running back to say that the boat was gone, and that there were barefoot tracks down the bank.

"He's probably gone a-fishin'," said the father; "he happened to wake up, an' so he took an early start; 'most likely thought he'd be back to breakfast-time; he' done it before, you know."

"But the whale?" questioned the mother.

"Pooh, Almiry," replied her husband, "you must a dreamt that; though he might ha' said he was goin' to see 'f he couldn't catch a whale; p'raps he'll bring ye one for dinner;" and Mr. Hart laughed aloud at his own joke.

But the forenoon wore away and David did not come. The family were now alarmed, and the father started in search of him.

He walked rapidly down the shore, eagerly scanning the water, now sparkling in the mid-day sun.

"Have you seen anything of a boy in a boat?" was the question he asked everyone. But nobody answered in the affirmative. Three or four miles he walked, and was about ready to turn back, thinking David must have gone up the Basin, when he spied something far out on the water, but it did not look like a boat.

Hastening on he came to "the store," and there requested others to look and see if they could make out the object. A boy was dispatched to "Cap'n Wilkinson's" to borrow a spy-glass, by means of which they discovered a boat with an occupant, and something else which appeared like a portion of a wreck.

To make a long story short, other boats were sent out, and with the aid of a few pairs of strong arms, David's prize was towed ashore.

The lad was fairly ill for lack of sleep, excitement, and hunger; but he was a hero in the eyes of the crowd that soon assembled—for news travels fast—and a happier boy never trod Arcadian soil.

He knew the whale was worth something, but his ideas of value were vague; he only hoped he could sell it for enough to send little Bessie to Boston.

When the immense creature was in position where it could be seen and measured, it was found to be eighty-seven feet in length, and seventeen feet from back to breast through the thickest part. The tallest man in the company stood on the monster's lower jaw, and his head did not touch the upper.

Before night a steamer came down the Basin and the captain purchased David's big fish, paying what seemed to the boy the incredible sum of four hundred dollars.

"It's David's own cash," said his father, "an' he shall have his say as to what shall be done with it."

And David had his say.

The much-needed surgical treatment was given the little sister, and to-day she walks on two sound feet; while the remainder of the money was laid aside to be used for schooling.—*Christian Union.*

FINDING OUT THE WORLD.

YOU come to me, my little lad and lassie,
With eager, questioning looks,
To tell you something new, some curious story,
You cannot find in books.

And you are eight and eleven, nowise troubled
With wrinkles or grey hair;
And you have balls and dolls and games a dozen,
Plenty to eat and wear.

And you have books, with gayly painted pictures
Of kings and queens and slaves,
With stories of good people, wise and tender,
And tales of wicked knaves.

And you can read of—oh! so many countries
Beyond so many seas,
Of unknown people and their curious customs,
Of foreign fruits and trees.

Of famous battles fought by land and water,
Of ladies and brave knights,
Gay palace festivals with all the splendour
Of tossing plumes and lights;

And still you ask, my little boy and maiden,
For something new and strange,
All your young thoughts and eager fancies
reaching
About the world for change.

Something you cannot find in books or story?
Something you think I keep
Hidden away, to talk of and dream over,
When you are well asleep.

Hunting for fairies in some moon-touched forest,
With these same troubled eyes
That lift to me, by day, their eager pleading
For some new sweet surprise.

And so you find in all your nursery legends
The things of every day
Changed just a little—all the world's new people
Are going the old way.

And, too, you find that man to man is brother?
That heart to heart is bound?
That all things answer, each unto another?
And that the earth is round?

To all the centuries, little boy and maiden,
You hold the thread and clue,
Beat lower, little hearts, and cease your questions,
I know of nothing new.

—Wide Awake.

THE SUEZ CANAL.

THE Suez Canal is of vastly more importance to civilization than it is commonly supposed to be. The shortening of the transit between Europe and the far East is multiplying the interchange of goods in a marvellous manner. In 1870 700,000 tons of shipping passed through the Canal; in 1882 the tonnage had increased to five millions, or more than 700 per cent. in 12 years. This increase represents partly trade that used to go around the Cape of Good Hope; but the immense increase may be regarded as almost entirely new trade—trade that would not exist without the Canal. And whereas at first the Canal seemed scarcely wanted, now it is so crowded that a new one has been projected. People do not exchange goods for fun; the increase of trade represents an increase of benefits, and as yet the harvest has scarcely begun. If there be proper facilities, the 5,000,000 will become 100,000,000 in another dozen years. It is notable that England's share in this Canal tonnage is now 80 per cent. She has four times as much interest in it as all the rest of mankind, taking only her trade through it as a measure. When we consider, besides, that the Canal has become the highroad to India, and even to Australia, we need not wonder that sensible people in England want to keep Egypt. Mr. Charles Waring,

from whose article in the *Fortnightly Review* we obtain our figures, calls attention to the fact that the high tolls (about \$2.50 per ton) are prohibitive of many kinds of Eastern products. American wheat, for example, is protected by the Canal to an amount fully equal to the freights from New York to Liverpool. A free, capacious Canal at Suez might produce remarkable commercial changes.

THE SINKING SHIP.



THE ship *Britannia* which struck on the rocks off the coast of Brazil, had on board a large consignment of Spanish dollars. In the hope of saving some of them a number of barrels were brought on deck, but the vessel was sinking so fast that the only hope for life was in taking at once to the boats. The last boat was about to push off when a midshipman rushed back to see if any one was still on board. To his surprise there sat a man on deck with a hatchet in his hand, with which he had broken open several of the casks, the contents of which he was now heaping up about him.

"What are you doing?" shouted the youth. "Escape for your life! Don't you know the ship is fast going to pieces?"

"The ship may," said the man; "I have lived a poor wretch all my life, and I am determined to die rich."

His remonstrances were answered only by another flourish of the hatchet, and he was left to his fate. In a few minutes the ship was engulfed in the waves.

We count such a sailor a madman, but he has too many imitators. Many men seem determined to die rich at all hazards. Least of all risks do they count the chance of losing the soul in the struggle. And yet the only riches we can hug to our bosom with joy in our dying hour are the riches of grace through faith in our only Saviour, Jesus Christ. Let us make these riches ours before the dark hour comes. It will come to all.

PRINCE LEOPOLD'S DEATH.



HER MAJESTY is again called upon to endure the loss of one of her nearest and dearest. It goes without saying that universal sympathy will be extended to her in this her latest affliction. Because of his lifelong frailty, Prince Leopold has been dear to his mother in a sense which every parent will understand. The very fact that his life has so long hung upon a thread has made him doubly dear, whose lofty personal character and blameless life constituted him a model for the imitation of all young men.

It is greatly to be feared that the Queen is in no condition to withstand this sudden shock. Her own once robust health has shown within the last few years indubitable signs of breaking down. Affliction after affliction has crowded upon her, and it would not be surprising if, within the next few weeks, the strain should show itself in a manner not to be thought of without the deepest anxiety. That she may be given strength to endure her sorrows will be the prayer not only of British subjects everywhere, but of the denizens of every land into which the fame of her virtues has penetrated. —*Globe.*

ENDEAVOUR.

THE soul grows strong in noble strife—
This is the law, forever;
Be it the motto of thy life—
Endeavour! Oh, endeavour!

Strive for the mastery of self,
From all low aims to sever,
From passions, pride, and love of self—
Endeavour, and endeavour!

Let thy mind entertain the good;
Corrupt guests harbour never!
Feed on high thought—'tis angel's food—
Endeavour, still endeavour!

Spurn all the blandishments of sin,
But follow virtue ever,
Her smile tis blessedness to win—
Endeavour, aye endeavour!

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Over 20 copies	0 25
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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLKS:

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

TORONTO, MAY 3, 1884.

PLANTING NEW SCHOOLS.

WE like that word "planting." It means that a school is a living thing. Like the banyan tree or mighty palm, it may spring from a small beginning and bring forth goodly fruit. This is the time, the early spring months when everything begins to grow, to plant new Sunday-schools. There are a very large number of appointments—there are some hundreds in all—in connection with which no Sunday-schools are yet organized. These are chiefly in the missions in the more recently settled parts of the country, and in its more sparsely-peopled regions. The assistance of the ministers is urgently solicited, that in every place where there is Methodist preaching there may also be a Methodist Sunday-school. It is in helping this work that the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund has been most useful in the past, and may be expected to be increasingly useful in the future. Scores of new schools have been established by its help. If brethren will only organize, in every place where even a handful of children can be gathered, a school under Methodist management, the Society will grant liberal aid in the way of Sunday-school helps.

By means of this Fund a school was started in a cow-stable, far from any church, and that school stimulated many another, and exerted an influence of which its founders little thought.

Many of the ministers of the Methodist Church are very successful in

planting new schools. We give extracts from a few letters in which they report their progress.

A minister of the London Conference writes as follows:

"A year ago we had but two schools on this circuit (though we have five churches) and these were supplied with papers principally from Montreal or Chicago. With a good deal of management, we have now five schools, and nearly all our literature furnished from our own Publishing House.

"The one for which I ask aid is at an appointment which had very much run down. No Sunday-school, scarcely any congregation, every thing discouraging.

"Now, we have an interesting Bible Class, a Sunday-school with an average attendance of thirty, and an increasing congregation. What I want is that you will make us an appropriation of \$4, which will help us very much at the present, but I think will shortly return with interest to our Society and Church. It will furnish me with a fine argument when the Cook publications are put into competition with ours."

This small grant was made, and shortly after the minister reports as follows: "Since opening the school our congregation has, I think, doubled, and I want to do all I can to build up an interest." Did ever so small a sum do more good?

A minister in Newfoundland who has also to act as superintendent of the school writes: "I wish to obtain a small grant of books for our Sabbath-school here. The scholars number about forty, their parents are generally very poor, and are particularly so this year owing to the failure of the fishery. PLEASANT HOURS, *Home and School*, etc, would be much valued and would be very useful to both children and parents. A few first and second reading-books would be very acceptable."

Another missionary in Newfoundland writes, "In the name of the school, and of the children generally, throughout this mission, I sincerely thank the Sabbath-school Board for the grant so kindly made. The papers will be gratefully received and often read by the children, and such of their parents and friends as are able to read, and I hope and believe that these papers and tracts will do a great deal of good among them."

Still another Newfoundland missionary writes "The papers are doing immense good both here and at —, getting into homes where High Church doctrines are sent in tract form. You will find that much fruit will come of it."

From the Parry Sound District a missionary writes, "Please find enclosed \$3, the amount which we promised as part payment for the S. S. papers for our school. We have organized another Sabbath-school which is in good working order. It has been going on for some time. The people are taking a lively interest in it. We have raised \$2 towards getting Sabbath-school papers. Could you send us some papers and I shall forward you the \$2 at once? By so doing you will greatly aid in the good work on this mission. Our school here is a grand success. From thirty to forty attend it every Sabbath. We purpose keeping our new school open all winter."

This shows the way in which many new schools in back neighbourhoods are strenuously striving to help themselves. The Aid and Extension Fund



CAMPING OUT IN THE NORTH-WEST.

only supplements their own contributions.

Another missionary writes, "Please accept my thanks for your S. S. papers which you have been sending to us. I hope you will still continue to send them as they are very much appreciated by the young Indians who all look for them. The papers bring them regularly to school. I am the Superintendent of the Sabbath-school as I can't find another to take it."

A missionary teacher at another Indian school writes: "Your grant of the past six months of Sunday-school papers has been a great boon to our little children and young people. They are delighted with the splendid pictures, and quite a number of them can read them intelligently. We make a collection in our Sabbath-school every Sunday; please to say at what time we shall remit."

Another missionary writes: "I organized a Sunday-school in this place last January. We commenced with about thirty, now we have seventy. The people are poor and I have supplied the school with books and papers. I have given nearly \$40 in all, in order to give the school success, and a grand success it is."

A missionary in a French village writes: "I enclose the sum of \$1.20 in this letter for Sunday-school papers, it is all that I can get. The people here are poor, and it is hard to get much money for anything like that. We do feel thankful for the papers that was sent to us the past year, and hope that you will help us again."

From still another missionary comes the following appeal: "I believe it is your custom to help weak and struggling schools by way of Sabbath-school papers, etc. Our cause is very weak here, and we have not been able to have a Sunday-school; but lately my wife started a Sunday-school class in the parsonage which appears to be doing very well. The class is growing. I think she began about a month or so ago with seven pupils and she has now twenty. She wishes me to write to you asking you for some assistance in the shape of papers, etc., hoping in this way to encourage the pupils and enlarge the attendance until finally it may grow into a school. We are not able to buy and pay for anything of this kind at present, and if you can assist in this way, I am sure anything you can send will be acceptable and productive of good results."

This is the very work for which the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund is organized. A large number of new

schools have been established by its helps. As many as six new schools have received grants in a single day.

A zealous brother writes of his school, "I and my colleague take the management in turns, and also teach the senior class. We take this work at 9.30 a.m. Though beside this we preach three times and drive nearly twenty miles the same day."

CENTENNIAL DAY AND METHODIST UNION.

OUR readers are aware that, according to Act of Parliament, the union of the various Methodist churches in Canada takes effect on Sunday, June 1st. This is one of the most important events, we think, which ever took place in the history of Canadian Methodism. It is proper that it should be duly observed and celebrated. The General Superintendents will doubtless announce the arrangements that have been made for this purpose. We hope that the day will also be celebrated in all our schools.

The General Conference recommended that, in connection with this event, should also be combined the Centennial celebration of the organization of Methodism as a distinct Church on this continent. It is just a century ago this year since the first Methodist Conference was organized in America. In commemoration of the double event—the ending of the first century of organized American Methodism, and the birth-day of the united Methodist Church of this Dominion—we are preparing a special Centennial and Union Number of PLEASANT HOURS. It will contain an account of the beginnings of Methodism in this New World, and of its early progress and introduction into Canada—a story full of interest, and illustrating wonderfully the good Providence of God. It will have pictures of EMBURY'S HOUSE, New York, where the first Methodist meeting was held; of the OLD RIGGING LOFT, where Captain Webb, the British officer, used to preach,—of the FIRST METHODIST CHURCH IN AMERICA. With portraits of good BARBARA HECK, the mother of American and Canadian Methodism, of CAPTAIN WEBB, BISHOP ASBURY, and others of the early founders and fathers of Methodism in the United States and Canada.

Every child in every school should have a copy of this paper. It will be sent POST FREE for \$1 PER 100.

Send in your orders at once that we may know how many to print, or we may be unable to supply the demand.



STARTING A PRAIRIE FARM.

IN THE CRUCIBLE.

Out from the mine and the darkness,
Out from the damp and the mold.
Out from the fiery furnace,
Cometh each grain of gold;
Crushed into atoms, and levelled
Down to the humblest dust,
With never a heart to pity,
With never a hand to trust.

Molten and hammered and beaten—
Seemeth it ne'er to be done;
Oh! for such fiery trial,
What hath the poor gold done?
Oh, 'twere a mercy to leave it,
Down in the damp and the mold
If this is the glory of living,
Then better be dross than gold!

Under the press and the roller,
Into the jaws of the mill;
Stamped with the emblem of freedom,
With never a flaw or a dint;
Oh, what a joy the refining!
Out from the damp and the mold,
And stamped with a glorious image;
Oh, beautiful coin of gold!

RECENT SUNDAY SCHOOL BOOKS.

WE have received from the Congregational S. S. Publishing Society, Boston, the following valuable

books:
The Sunday-School Library. By E. A. DUNNING, (pp. 105. Price 60 cents) Mr. Dunning has had ample experience in connexion with S. S. libraries, and has produced an admirable book on the subject. Next to the newspaper, probably no class of printed matter is so widely read as S. S. books. It is estimated that over 3,000,000 copies are circulated every week. In many places it is the only sort of reading that is circulated. Over \$5,000,000 are employed in publishing this class of books. But the library, says Mr. Dunning, "may be made a far more effective aid to the Church in converting souls and building up Christian character." He gives valuable suggestions on the selection, use, distribution, and power of S. S. libraries. He advises schools to purchase from the publishing houses of their own churches, which give a guarantee of proper selection, instead of from irresponsible, free-lance publishers, whose chief aim is to make money, often by the sale of cheap and trashy books

which would be dear at any price. The mode of forming a "Winnowed List," adopted by our own Church is highly commended.

How to Build a Church. by the Rev. Dr. GOODELL. (pp. 76. price 50 cents) is an excellent little book, by a successful pastor, on the true work of church building—that is, saving souls. It treats of the pastor in the pulpit, in the parish, among the youth, in the prayer-meeting, dealing with skepticism, and in revivals.

Ned Harwood's Delight; or, The Homes of the Giants. by Mrs. S. G. KNIGHT (pp. 224. Price \$1), in the form of evening fire-side talks, gives much interesting information on Bible Lands—the Jordan Valley, Upper Syria, Gilcad, Nineveh, Babylon, and especially "the Giant Cities of Bashan."

The Academy Boys in Camp. by Mrs. S. F. SPEAR (pp. 264. price \$1.25) will commend itself to all active "live" boys, fond of adventure and loving fun. While full of interest it is free from the sensationalism that mars so many boys' books.

The Forged Letter, and other Stories. by SARAH P. BRIGHAM (pp. 203. price \$1), contains seven short stories that will be eagerly read, and that will leave a wholesome flavour in the mind.

Songs of Faith, Hope, and Love. by ALBERT J. HOLDEN (New York: Wm. A. Pond & Co.), is a well printed book of 150 4to. pages, with many old favourites; and a choice selection for Christmas, New Year's, Easter, and anniversary occasions.

Songs Perennial. by Rev. W. L. Romsberg, Cincinnati, price 75 cents, contains a number of anthems, chants, and select pieces for revival, missionary, and temperance occasions, etc.

"CHINESE" GORDON.

THIS man who has been said to "carry the fortunes of the British Government on the back of his camel," has attracted the intense regards of the civilized world as probably no man ever did before. The Book Steward, with his usual energy, has just published a cheap Life of this British hero, with portrait, for 5 cents. Every boy should have it. Sold at all book stores.

PROVINCE OF MANITOBA. II.

THE river system of Manitoba and the North-West is a striking feature of the country. A steamer can leave Winnipeg and proceed via the Saskatchewan to Edmonton, near the base of the Rocky Mountains, a distance of 1,500 miles; and steamers are now plying for a distance of more than 320 miles on the Assiniboine, an affluent of the Red River, which it joins at the city of Winnipeg.

The Red River is navigable for steamers from Moorhead, in the United States, where it is crossed by the Northern Pacific Railway, to Lake Winnipeg, a distance of over 400 miles. Lake Winnipeg is about 280 miles in length, affording an important navigation. The Saskatchewan, which takes its rise in the Rocky Mountains, enters this lake at the northern end, and has a steamboat navigation as far as Fort Edmonton, affording vast commercial facilities for those great areas of fertile lands.

With respect to ploughing, or, as it is called, "breaking" the prairie, the method in Manitoba is quite different from that in Old Canada. The prairie is covered with a rank vegetable growth, and the question is how to subdue this, and so make the land available for farming purposes. Experience has proved that the best way is to plough not deeper than two inches, and turn over a furrow from twelve to sixteen inches wide.

It is especially desirable for the farmer who enters early in the spring to put in a crop of oats on the first "breaking." It is found by experience that the sod pulverizes and decomposes under the influence of a growing crop quite as effectually as when simply turned and left for that purpose, if not more so. Large crops of oats are obtained from sowing on the first breaking, and thus not only is the cost defrayed, but there is a profit. It is also of great importance to a settler with limited means to get this crop the first year. One mode of this kind of planting is to scatter the oats on the grass and then turn a thin sod over

them. The grain thus buried quickly finds its way through, and in a few weeks the sod is perfectly rotten.

Before the prairie is broken the sod is very tough, and requires great force to break it; but after it has once been turned the subsequent ploughings are very easy from the friability of the soil, and gang ploughs may easily be used.

On account of the great force required to break the prairie in the first instance, there are many who prefer oxen to horses. A pair of oxen will break an acre and a half a day, with very little or no expense at all for feed.

The intending settler may go by way of the Great Lakes to Thunder Bay, where he will take the railway to Winnipeg. This line is the shortest, and wholly within Canadian territory; and the settler who takes this route is free from the inconvenience of all customs examinations required on entering the United States, or again on entering Manitoba from the United States;

or he may take the all rail route via Chicago and St. Paul to Winnipeg. The distance by this route is longer, but it is continuous, and there is very little difference in point of time, now that the railway is opened from Thunder Bay.

Manitoba hardships, if they are to be called so, are nothing to be compared with those of regions where the forest must be hewn down before a harvest can be reaped. They are nothing to those endured by our forefathers, when there was no railway to convey in what was needed, or to carry out the surplus product of the soil.

The farmers are as well pleased with the soil as with the climate of Manitoba; they declare that it is a black mould from two feet to four feet in depth, and so rich as to produce, without manure, large crops of vegetables and grain. They state that water is abundant and good, that the finest hay can be procured with little trouble at a trifling cost; that there is no lack of timber; that the minimum yield of wheat is nine bushels an acre in excess of the average yield in Minnesota, and the weight of each bushel is 1 lb. heavier; that the average yield of oats is 57 bushels an acre; of barley, 40; of peas, 38; of rye, 60; and of potatoes, "mealy to the core," 318 bushels. It is not uncommon for 500 bushels of the best potatoes to be taken from a single acre of land. Some of the potatoes weigh 4 1/2 lbs.

Whether the soil and climate of Manitoba are as much superior to the soil and climate of Dakota, as many persons assert them to be, may remain a matter of controversy. There is no doubt, however, that the Homestead Act, as regards both citizens of the British Empire and aliens, is far more liberal in Manitoba than in Dakota. This consideration ought to influence the decision of the emigrant who desires to obtain, under the beneficent provisions of the Homestead Act, a home in the North-West.

A young lady informed her friend on the train, the other day, loud enough for others to hear, the depth of the hem on her graduating dress for next June. It is well to decide important matters in time.

SONG OF THE DECANTER.

THERE was an old decanter,
and its mouth was gaping
wide; the rosy wine
had ebbed away
and left
its crys-
tal side;
and the wind
went humming,
humming;
up and
down the
sides it flew,
and through the
reed-like
hollow neck
the wildest notes it
blew. I placed it in the
window, where the blast was
blowing free, and fancied that its
pale mouth sang the queerest strains
to me. "They tell me—punny con-
querors—the Plague has slain his ten,
and War his hundred thousand of the
very best of men; but I"—twas thus the
bottle spoke—"but I have conquered
more than all your famous conquer-
ors, so feared and famed of yore.
Then come, ye youths and maidens,
come drink from out my cup the beve-
rage that dulls the brain and burns
the spirit up; that puts to shame
the conquerors that slay their
scores below; for this has deluged
millions with the lava tide
of woe. Though in the path
of battle, darkest waves of
blood may roll; yet while
I killed the body, I have
damned the very soul.
The cholera, the word
such run never wrought
as I in mirth or malice, on
the innocent have brought.
And still I breathe upon them,
and they shrink before my breath,
and yearly year my thousands tread
THE FEARFUL ROAD TO DEATH."

FORWARD MISSIONARY MOVE-
MENT AND WHAT IT WILL
COST.

DR. SUTHERLAND writes in
the following vigorous vein in
the *Missionary Outlook*:

When the great Union
movement is about reaching its final
stage in necessary legislation, it becomes
the Methodist Church to weigh carefully
her responsibilities, and plan for greatly
enlarged operations. Many interests
will claim attention, but none of them
equal in importance to the work of
Missions. The questions of the hour
are: What ought the Methodist
Church to do in regard to Missions?
What is she able to do?

It is not enough to say, in general
terms, that the Church should enlarge
her work, and push out into "the
regions beyond." We must indicate
more definitely the scope of the work
to be undertaken. We propose, there-
fore, that within the next six years,
that is, before the General Conference
of 1890, the Church should undertake:

1. To so strengthen her home force
as to keep pace with the needs of the
growing population of the Dominion,
especially in the North-West.

2. To bring up the allowance of
married missionaries on Domestic,
French, and Indian Missions, to the
minimum of \$750. This by a two-fold
method, (1) By increased grants where
really necessary; and, (2) By develop-
ing the giving power of the Missions
themselves.

3. To bring up the working strength
of the French Mission to 50 men—we
have twelve now. Anything less than
this is but trifling with the work.

4. To increase the force on the
Indian Missions (Missionaries, Native
Assistants, Teachers, and Interpreters)
to 150. The present number is about 86.

5. To give Japan five well-equipped
men for the Training College; increase
the number of our own missionaries to
20, and supplement these by 100 native
evangelists.

All this will involve the sending into
the mission field, within six years,
some 300 more men.

"Ridiculous! Absurd! The man
who makes such a proposal must be
insane!" Not so, brethren; we "speak
the words of truth and soberness." It
is no more than the Church ought to
do. It is no more than she is well
able to do, as we shall presently show.
"But," says some cautious, calculating
disciple, "it will require a vast amount
of money." Yes, a vast amount com-
pared with what we have hitherto
done; but not a vast amount com-
pared with the real ability of the
Church. This will be apparent when
we say that one cent a day for Missions
from each member of the United
Methodist Church will meet the cost of
all the work above mentioned, and leave
an annual surplus almost equal to the
present income of the Society!!

After this will anyone venture
to say the thing can't be done?
Surely not. But we know what some
will say. They will say: "Oh, yes;
the scheme looks well enough on paper,
but then the people will not give the
cent a day." If they will not, there
must be a serious fault somewhere, and
we suspect the fault is that the duty of
proportionate giving to the Lord—
never less than a tenth—has not been
clearly set before them. The proof is
found in the fact that, in churches
where this duty has been faithfully
inculcated, the giving for Missions
alone have steadily increased, and in
some cases amount to far more than
the cent a day.

We have but one thing more to say!
Do not let us wait till everybody else
has adopted the practice before we
begin it, but let each begin it forthwith;
the poorer members one cent a day, the
richer in proportion, and the results
will astonish us all.

BOOK NOTICES.

The Canadian Methodist Magazine
for April, 1884. Price \$2 a year;
\$1 for six months; 20 cents per
number. For sale at all Book-
sellers.

The April number of this Magazine
contains three splendidly illustrated
articles: Picturesque New Brunswick,
with fine views of St. John's City and
River; The Luther Monument at
Worms, by F. H. Wallace, B.D.,
with large engraving of the entire
group and of several of its statues;
and Lady Brassey's account of her
passage through Magellan's Straits,
with the rescue of a crew from a
burning ship, with numerous engra-
vings of the strange scenes of the
"Land of fire." Judge Dean contributes
a vigorous article on Christian Unity,
from the standpoint of a Methodist
layman, which will attract much
attention. William Kirby, F.R.S.C.,
has a paper on the U. E. Loyalists of
Canada, which is very timely, in view
of the approaching celebration of the
Centennial of the Province. "Britain's
Oldest Colony" recounts the strange
story of the Island of Newfoundland;
and "How Methodism came to Foxes,"
gives a graphic picture of its social and
religious life. The Editor, in an out-
spoken manner, discusses the Salvation
Army, the Bribery Scandal, Free

Discussion, etc. A marked feature is a
number of Easter Hymns and Carols,
and a fine Easter Anthem, with
music.

Early numbers will contain articles
by John Cameron, Esq., Editor of
the *Toronto Globe*, Rev. W. W. Ross,
Prof. Stewart, a reply to Bishop Fuller
on Christian Unity, Homes and Haunts
of Luther, English Cathedrals, Walks
about London, etc, etc.

Back numbers can still be supplied.
Specimen copies of the Magazine sent
free.

*The Torn Bible; or, Herbert's Best
Friend.* By Alice Somerton. Lon-
don: Frederic Warne & Co.; Toronto:
William Briggs. Pp. 175. Price
75 cents.

This is a story of the last century,
of a young soldier who goes to India,
falls into evil ways, forgets his mother's
Bible, and the Guide of his youth; but
who, in a far country, is brought to him-
self by the long forgotten teachings of
God's word. It is a sound and whole-
some book.

Layton Croft, The Story of a Prodigal.
Same Author and Publishers. Pp.
244. And same price.

The moral of this story is well ex-
pressed in the words, "Take care of
your boys; never let them be idle; give
them an occupation, and teach them to be
manly; and the manliest thing, next
to religion, is self-respect—a feeling
which will make them shun every
contemptible action." Both these
books are beautifully printed, illustrated,
and bound.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

A SUNDAY-SCHOOL superin-
tendent writes as follows:—

I have experienced some
difficulty in my school to get them to
repeat the Lord's Prayer in unison. As
a rule only about half-a-dozen repeat,
while many of the smaller scholars and
large ones too are whispering or looking
around. I have arranged the prayer
for a responsive reading, and while it
would be a very fine closing service, I
believe if you could arrange to publish
it, it would meet with the hearty
approbation of all Sunday-school
workers.

CLOSING SERVICE.

Superintendent—Our Father, which
art in heaven,

School—Hallowed be thy name,

Supt.—Thy kingdom come.

School—Thy will be done on earth
as it is done in heaven.

Supt.—Give us this day our daily
bread,

School—And forgive us our tres-
passes as we forgive those that trespass
against us,

Supt.—And lead us not into temp-
tation;

School—But deliver us from evil,

Supt.—For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory, for ever
and ever.

All—Amen.

REV. DR. COCHRAN will go to Japan
in a few months as missionary of the
Methodist Church. He formerly
worked in the country as a missionary
for six years, and acquired considerable
fluency in the native tongue. Five
years ago he was compelled to return,
owing to the ill-health of Mrs. Cochran.

CHARLES H. SPURGEON.

FEW Canadian tourists remain
over Sunday in London with-
out going to hear the great
Baptist preacher. No man
of his generation has ever given more
full proof of a successful ministry. For
twenty-eight years he has preached to
a congregation of more than 6,000
persons. He has received into church
membership nearly 10,000. He has
furnished weekly sermons for twenty-
seven years, and they have been trans-
lated into many foreign languages. He
has founded and presides over a College
which is unique in itself, preparing
one hundred for the ministry. He is
the originator and director of an Or-
phanage, giving a home to 500 needy
children. On the 25th anniversary of
his marriage, he gave the testimonial
then given him, of over \$30,000, to
provide an asylum for a score of poor
widows. He is the author of over
forty different volumes, including ser-
mons, commentaries, lectures, and essays.
The sale of one book alone, John
Ploughman, was over 300,000 copies.

Such a man as this is worth know-
ing about. Mr. Needham, the well-
known evangelist, is in hearty sym-
pathy with his subject, and in this
noble volume* has given us a bio-
graphy worthy of the man. The
vigorous intellect, the deep spirituality,
the earnest zeal, the strong common
sense, the executive ability, the broad
charity, the racy humour of the great
preacher are well set forth. Converted
in his sixteenth year in a Primitive
Methodist chapel, he began forthwith
to preach the Word, and became
thenceforth a burning and a shining
light on the right hand of God. No
man of his time, by the living voice
and printed page, has influenced so
many minds. To carp at his Calvin-
ism is to seek for spots on the sun.
God abundantly owns his preaching,
and well may man. His great soul
spurns the limitation of close com-
munion, and welcomes every believer
to Christian fellowship.

Copious extracts from Mr. Spur-
geon's writings are given. No man
better knows how to use homely
Anglo-Saxon speech. His John Plough-
man is as pithy as Bunyan and as
witty as Fuller, and the pictures are
very funny. This book has over forty
illustrations, including steel portraits
of Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon, and numer-
ous others of much interest. We
commend it warmly to both ministers
and laymen.

BETWEEN \$6,000 and \$7,000 have
been raised by subscription for the
enlargement of the Metropolitan
Church School-room. Work will be
commenced shortly, as the remainder
of the required sum, \$10,000, will
probably be raised in a few weeks.
The enlargement will, it is claimed,
make the school-room the largest in
the Dominion, and will accommodate
about 1,200 children.

ONE of our ministers writes as
follows about the *Methodist Magazine*:
I congratulate you on the splendid
illustrations and articles in the April
number of the *Magazine*; and what
beautiful paper! You are, I am sure,
meeting the most critical wish and
expectation of your subscribers.

* "The Life and Labours of Charles H.
Spurgeon." By George C. Needham. 8vo,
pp. 650. Boston: D. L. Guernsey. To-
ronto: Wm. Briggs. Price, cloth extra, \$4.

FIVE HUNDRED FOLD.

ONE morn in his study knelt apart
Michael Feneberg good and gray;
His lips moved not, but his thankful heart
Sang the song of St. Barnabas' Day.
And his joy was not for the world's reward
(Poor village parson, his purse was lean),
But in humble silence he praised the Lord
For health, and grace, and a conscience clean.

"What shall I render, dear Lord, to Thee
For thy kindness, blessing me more and more?"

Did he dream the answer so near could be?
Who knocks at Michael Feneberg's door?
There stood a traveller, soiled and lame,
Face to face with the poor man's friend,
Begging three crowns "In Jesus' name,"
To help him on to his journey's end.

A thrill through the pastor's bosom ran,
And his face was grave,—but still serene,
He welcomed and fed that hungry man,
And plied him with questions kind but keen,
Till pitying faith his doubt controls,
And he chides his heart with a promise sure,
"Michael Feneberg, shepherd of souls,
He lends to the Lord who helps the poor."

He gave to the stranger weary and sad
Three crowns, and smilingly sped him on.
'Twas all that the good old pastor had,
But he thought of his prayer, and his fears
were gone—

"I honour God's bounty best," he said,
"To spend it free for a brother's need:
For piety thrives where the poor are fed,
And charity thanks the Lord in deeds."

"They serve not heaven whose souls are bound;
Their prayers are pagan whose hearts are
frozen;

And praise is shallow and selfish sound
From him who nothing in love bestows.
The helping hand is a test of grace,
And giving the measure of gratitude,
And they live in the light of Jesus' face
Whose joy is the joy of doing good."

Days passed, and though for better or worse,
Michael still on the Lord relied,
Empty so long was the good man's purse
That his soul was sad and his faith was
tried;

And he knelt and spake in his childlike way,
"Dear Master, I lent three crowns to Thee;
Thou knowest I need them, Lord, I pray
In thy mercy give them back to me."

Did he dream the answer could be so near?
There came a letter that very night;
Heavy and large, and bold and clear
Was the writing that showed in the candle-
light.

Who sent it? Only the post-mark told
It had born its burden through twenty
towns;
But soon as he broke the seal,—behold,
There fell at his feet five hundred crowns!

O'er the Bavarian highlands, west,
Half way from the Danube to the Rhine,
One little deed to a sufferer blessed
Had gone, like a tender star to shine.
For the weary stranger the story spread
Of Michael's gift as he homeward came,
And a pious rich man heard and paid
The beggar's debt in the Saviour's name.

So God in bounty His promise kept
To the kind of heart and free of hand;—
Michael Feneberg gazed, and wept
At the blessing he scarce could understand.
"Ah, Lord," he murmured, "one drop I
sought,
And heaven rains, till my hands o'erflow!
It is like Thee, Lord;—I dare ask naught
Of Thee, for Thy goodness shames me so."
—Theron Brown.

A GOOD story about an old Metho-
dist minister baptising an infant is
told in "Echoes from Welsh Hills."
"He took the babe in his arms very
affectionately, and addressed, in a pa-
ternal fashion, a few words of advice
to the young parents. 'See that you
train up the child in the way that he
should go; that you surround him
with the best influences, and that you
give him a good example. If you do
so, who knows but that he may become
a Christmas Evans or John Elias!
What is his name?'" "Jane, sir,"
replied the mother.

MAY.

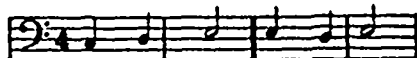
BY W. T. MILLER.

"It is May! It is May!
And all earth is gay."

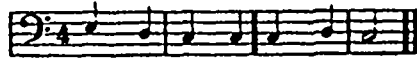
WE have waited for this pleas-
ant month a long time.
Ever since we ate the last
of the Christmas goose;
over since the New Year gave into our
lap her gifts, we have watched for the
coming of May. Soon after the begin-
ning of the year, the boys and girls
got tired of the unpleasant monotony
of change—

Snow and rain,
And snow again;
Rain and sleet,
And muddy feet.

The winter did not afford to them the
pleasure they had expected. They did
not fasten their skates; ride down hill
on their sleighs; or build snow men;
and do many such things as are
generally engaged in during a pleasant
winter. Forced by circumstances, they
repressed their glee and did not do very
many funny things. Forming into
line they crossed the hills of January,
and the lowlands of February, then
took their March right through the
opening gates of April, and as they
passed beneath the budding arch of
this flowery-bordered-meadow-land,
they sang a sweet song, which all
Canadian boys and girls should learn.
Here it is complete—words and music
and all.



Smil - ing May Comes this way



Mak - ing all things Bright and gay.

But why is it that all our boys and
girls are so fond of May? Is it because
the girls can now make their gardens
and train their vines up the windows;
and the boys, having changed their
dress, feel free to take their hop, step,
and jump? We will cease to wonder
at such things if we but remember that
once upon a time we were a little boy,
just so high, and as fond of fun as the
next one. Then, again, just think of
the sights and sounds of this month!
See the boy with bat and ball and
fishing-rod, and the girl with her sun-
hat and wreath of flowers. Bessie,
this is the month when our picnics
begin; when ferns are so eagerly sought,
when bathing and boating and ram-
bling commences, with a score of other
pleasures common to this merry season.
And there are so many things which
make those pleasures more romantic.
The breeze steals the fragrance of the
flower and wafts it freely upon the air.
The birds warble in the grove, and
teach their nestlings to sing the song
of love and the chorus of joy. The
stream winds along, hiding beneath
bank, and grass, and fern leaf, forget-
ting that it reveals its position by the
song which it sings as it dances upon
the pebbles.

Nature, sweet Nature, is everywhere!
rejoicing with the gay, and mourning
with the sad; dispelling sorrow and
suffering, and increasing happiness and
joy. She rests the weary traveller
beneath her umbrageous foliage, and
cools the pilgrim's feet by the palm
trees in the desert. She sends forth
the winds to play, and give to the
clouds their mission of refreshing. The
most pleasant place to live is in the

midst of Nature's bounty—in the
country. It is pleasant to live in the
city at times, but nothing can surpass,
or even approach in degrees of delight,
the revels of nature in the country.
Just try it, if you do not believe me.
But you do believe me; for I know
that the first chance city boys and girls
get, they will be off to see their country
cousins. In the country there is so
much to catch the eye and the ear;
so much to remind one of God, and to
display His providence and goodness.
What a nice thing it is to take a
ramble and meditate upon what we
behold! Nearly a hundred years ago,
a man walked to and fro on Hamp-
stead Mead. He had a slow step, and
seemed very melancholy. Could you
but see his face and his mild but
sorrowful eyes, you would feel like
speaking a kind word to him. If you
could read his thoughts, you would hear
him saying:

"My ear is pained.
My soul is sick with every day's report
Of wrong and outrage with which the earth is
filled."

Seating himself to rest beneath a mighty
oak, he plucks a flower growing among
the grass. Suddenly his face brightens,
and drawing a pencil and a book from
the folds of his coat, he writes. Would
any boy and girl desire to know the
words which dropped from that pencil,
and gave immortality to its touch? I
shall tell you some of them, but remem-
ber they are the words of a great and
good man.—William Cowper:—

"Not a flower
But shows some touch, in freckle, streak, or
strain,
Of His unrivalled pencil. He inspires
Their balmy odors, and imparts their hues,
And bathes their eyes with nectar, and in-
cludes,
In grains as countless as the sea-side sands,
The forms with which He sprinkles all the
earth.
Happy who walks with Him! whom what he
finds
Of flavour or of scent in fruit or flower—
Or what he views of beautiful or grand
In nature, from the broad majestic oak
To the green blade that twinkles in the sun,
Prompts the remembrance of a present God."

We think that this beautiful piece
of verse ought to be sufficient to make
the name of William Cowper live in
every boy and in every girl's memory,
even without the aid of John Gilpin.

There is another little poem that was
written by a poet named Dr. Good. I
think he must have been a good man
too; or, as we say sometimes, "Good in
name and nature too." While out
walking in a dreary spot, which he did
not suppose to afford anything so
beautiful, he found a daisy,—a small
little flower, but well worthy of Dr.
Good's tribute, which he paid thus:—

"Not worlds on worlds in phalanx deep,
Need we to prove a God is here;
The daisy, fresh from nature's sleep,
Tells of His love in lines as clear.
For who but He who arched those skies,
And pours the dayspring's living flood,
Wondrous alike in all He tries,
Could raise the daisy's purple bud!
Mould its green cup, its wiry stem,
Its fringed border nicely spin,
And cut the gold-embossed gem,
That, set in silver, gleams within!
And fling it, unrestrained and free,
O'er hill, and dale, and desert sod,
That man, where'er he walks may see
In every step the stamp of God."

Now, boys and girls, we would have
you contemplate the glorious monu-
ments of God's power, as you may read
them in the Book of Nature. The great
Dr. Guthrie once said that "the word

'God' might be read in the stars and
on the face of the sun; painted on
every flower; traced on every leaf;
engraved on every rock; and whispered
by every wind." Read and try to
understand the Book of Nature; and
whether you are examining the rolling
spheres, or the modest snow-drop,
listen to the voice that speaks to you,
saying, "The hand that made us is
Divine." Holding the humblest flower
in your hand, you can say to the skeptic
and infidel:

Not all the worlds ye view above,
Not ocean without bound,
Need we to prove that God is love,
Where proofs like this are found.

We need not hear the thunder's roar
Nor see the lightning's flash,
We need not feel the torrents pour,
Nor blast that breaks the ash.

We need not see the mighty bow
Encircling the sky,
To testify of God; we know!
Nor ask the reason why.

Each blade of grass, a story tells,
Of Him who made it grow,
Up from the root, where down it dwells
Deep in the soil below.

Each little leaflet of the tree,
High up upon the bough,
Tells of His power, and says that He
Keeps it from falling now

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LUCKE BECKLEY was noted for his
dry, caustic wit. One raw morning he
came into his store, and walking up to
the stove, remarked, "That is what I
call a cold, wet storm!" One of the
bystanders remarked! "Uncle Luke,
did you ever hear of a hot, dry storm?"
"Yes," returned the old man, "I think
I have, about the time of Sodom and
Gomorrhah—that is what I call a hot,
dry storm!"

"How do you know when a cyclone
is coming?" asked a stranger of a
western man. "Oh, we get wind of
it," was the answer.

CAT'S CRADLE.

It is a hammock for pussy,
Hung in the corner
Close to the fireplace
Where she can swing and doze and purr,
With nought in the world to trouble her
Except to wash her face!

Or is it a willow basket
In which to tuck the kittens
While mother-puss is away,
With rackets to sway it to and fro,
Which grandma puss with a furry toe
Can jog for half a day?

Ah, no! 'tis a cunning puzzle
Which the restless little children
Play with a bit of string,
When winter twilights haste to fall,
And the disk inside is warm, while all
Outside is shivering.

A half yard hoop is knotted,
Wrought over Gold-Lock's fingers,
Twisted from her's to Ted's,
Changing its shape with each new change,
And though it is neither new nor strange
To those two busy heads.

Yet they're like a pretty picture
At this quiet game—cat's cradle,
With its cross-ross, slip-a-nose, thus!
As first one takes, then another takes;
And the kind of sing-song that it makes
Has a charm for all of us.

VARIETIES.

NEVER judge by appearance. A shabby old coat may contain an editor.

Our grand business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand.

CLEAR writers, like clear fountains, do not seem so deep as they are; the turbid looks most profound.

HE who thinks he can do without the world deceives himself; but he who thinks the world cannot do without him is still more in error.

What a heaven earth would be could we always appreciate all we have as keenly as we do when on the point of losing it!

"DE reason dat we think dat our mudders could beat anybody cookin' is because we kain't carry de boy's appetite into old age."

A NON-Christian education is also an anti-Christian education: and only the more dangerously so because it is not so openly.

It is claimed that there is a wonderful spring at Toyah, Tex., which instantly cures all human diseases. It must be a spring gun. There are such things in Texas.

A BIG Yankee from Maine, on paying his bill in a London restaurant, was told that the sum put down didn't include the waiter: "Wal," he roared, "I didn't eat any waiter; did I?" He looked as if he could' though; and there was no further discussion.

"WHAT influence has the moon upon the tide?" the teacher asked John Henry. And John Henry said it depends on what was tied; if it was a dog it made him howl and if it was a gate it untied just as soon as a cow or a man came along.

PEDAGOGUE: "What is the meaning of the latin verb *ignosco*?" Tall Student (after all the others have failed to give the correct definition): "I don't know." Pedagogue: "Right. Go up to the head."

THAT was a cool Scottish "aaside" of an old dealer, who, when exhorting his son to practice honesty in his dealings, on the ground of it being the "best policy," quietly added, "I have tried baith."

LESSON NOTES.

SECOND QUARTER.

A.D. 57.] LESSON VI. [May 11.]

VICTORY OVER DEATH.

1 Cor. 15: 50-58. Commit to memory vs. 55-58.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Death is swallowed up in victory. 1 Cor. 15: 54.

OUTLINE.

1. A Mystery, v. 50-53.
2. A Victory, v. 54-57.
3. A Duty, v. 58.

TIME.—A.D. 57.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Flesh and blood*—Our present body, which has flesh and blood, and must die. *Cannot inherit*—We are not able in our present bodies to possess the heavenly enjoyments of Christ's kingdom. *Corruption*—That which must die. *Incorruption*—That which cannot be destroyed. We cannot in this body enter heaven. *A mystery*—A truth revealed only by the Spirit of God. *Not all sleep*—Those who are living when Jesus comes again will not die. *Be changed*—In order to enter heaven. *At the last trump*—The trumpet of the resurrection. *We*—The Christians living when Christ comes. *Death is swallowed up*—Because death will be ended and God's power will be living. *Sting of death is sin*—Because sin brought death into the world. *Strength of sin is the law*—Because the law of God lets men know that they are sinners. *Through the Lord Jesus Christ*—Who overcame death by rising from his grave. *Therefore*—Because of this hope of victory. *Not in vain*—We shall enjoy hereafter the full reward of our labour here.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. The doctrine of the resurrection of the body?
2. The certainty of victory through faith in Jesus?
3. The need of constant labour for Christ?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What must mortal put on to inherit the kingdom of God? "This mortal must put on immortality." 2. What saying shall then be brought to pass? "Death is swallowed up in victory." 3. What is the sting of death? "The sting of death is sin." 4. Through whom do we gain the victory over death? Through our Lord Jesus Christ. 5. What does the apostle urge his brethren to be? Steadfast, unmovable, abounding in the Lord's work.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The resurrection of the dead.

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

What do you mean by the almightiness or omnipotence of God?

That God can do whatever He will. Job xli. 2. Matthew xix. 26.

What do you mean by the omniscience of God?

That God knows all things, past and present and future.

How does the Scripture describe this knowledge?

It teaches that God knows every thought in man's heart, every word and every action. Psalm cxxxix. 2-4.

A.D. 57.] LESSON VII. [May 18.]

THE UPROAR AT EPHESUS.

Acts 19: 25-41, and 20: 1, 2. Commit to memory vs. 35-40.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing? Psal. 2: 1.

OUTLINE.

1. Wild Excitement, v. 23-34.
2. Wise Advice, v. 35-2.

TIME.—A.D. 57.

PLACE.—Ephesus, in Asia Minor.

EXPLANATIONS.—*That way*—"The way," meaning the Gospel of Christ. *Silver shrines*—Small images of Diana and the temple of Ephesus, which were sold to visitors in the city. *Craftsmen*—Men whose business was to sell shrines and images. *Craft*—Trade. *All Asia*—Here means only the western portion of Asia Minor. *No gods made with hands*—That the images are not gods. *Craft is in danger*—Because then none would buy their images. *The temple*—A large marble building, one of the finest in the world. It was afterward burned down. *Goddess Diana*—An image without beauty, standing in the temple.

Full of wrath—At the Christians who were injuring their trade in idols. *The theatre*—A large building with stone seats cut in the hill-side, and no roof over it, holding many thousands of people. *Chief of Asia*—Men of high rank called Asiarchs. *Alexander*—Probably a Jew, and an enemy of the apostle. *Town-clerk*—The secretary of the city, who was perhaps friendly to Paul. *Fell down from Jupiter*—It was believed that the rude image in the temple at Ephesus had fallen from heaven. *Robbers of churches*—Rather, "of temples." *Deputies*—The officers of the court. *Implead*—Bring accusations or charges. *In danger*—The Roman government did not permit such riotous acting of the people.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson do we find—

1. That self-interest is an enemy to spiritual life?
2. That idolatry blinds men to the truth?
3. That wise counsel is better than hasty zeal?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What led to the uproar at Ephesus? Fear of the overthrow of Diana. 2. Who was the leader of the uproar? Demetrius, a silversmith. 3. To what place of concourse did the people take Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's companions? To the theatre. 4. Whom did the Jews put forward to address the people? Alexander. 5. Who finally appeased them? The town-clerk.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION—Human depravity.

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

What is meant by saying that God is all-wise?

That God does everything in the best and most perfect way, for the accomplishment of His purpose. Job xii. 13. Psalm civ. 24. Romans xvi. 27.

[Romans xi. 33; Ephesians iii. 10, 11.]

What is meant by saying that God is holy?

That His nature is perfectly good and without the possibility of evil, and that He cannot allow sin in His creatures. Leviticus xi. 44. Joshua xxiv. 19. Habakkuk i. 13. How is God righteous or just? His laws and government are righteous; and He will reward and punish justly. Psalm xi. 7. Revelation xv. 3. Isaiah xlv. 21. Genesis xviii. 25.

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