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# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES—VOL. VI

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 20 1886.

No. 4.



UNITED CHURCH ARCHIVES

## TAKING AIM.

HERE were four little boys  
Who started to go  
From the very same spot  
To take tracks in the snow  
He who made his path straightest,  
They had in their plan,  
Of all the four boys  
Should be their best man.

Now these four little boys  
Were Philip and John,  
And merry-faced Harry,  
And sober-eyed Don;  
The best friends in the world,  
And full of invention  
In play, but they seldom  
Were found in contention.

So they started together  
And hurried along,  
But John, Don and Harry  
In one way went wrong;  
The fourth made his path  
Nearly straight, and they wondered,  
As all tried alike,  
How they three had blundered.

Then Philip replied,  
"The reason is, you see,  
Though no harder I tried  
To succeed than you three;  
I pushed for that oak,  
Going forward quite ready,  
While you struggled on  
Without aim and unsteady."

Now you see, my dear boys,  
What an useless track;  
If there is a point  
That you wish to reach—  
A position in life  
At all worth the naming,  
If you gain it, it will greatly  
Depend on your aiming.

## A LITTLE TALK ABOUT JESUS.

(See first page.)

SUPPER is over, and while mamma is clearing away the tea things, Mamie draws a stool up in front of the fire to let Robbie warm his feet before he is undressed and carried away to bed. Robbie is not inclined to sit still, however. The bricks in front of the fireplace are nice and warm, and he says he likes to "stand on them barefooted." So, to keep him quiet, Mamie talks to him about another little child, who was once born into the world. Robbie's brown eyes open wide with wonder, when Mamie tells him how Herod the king searched for the little child, and finally killed all the babies for the sake of putting Jesus to death.

Robbie is very quiet now and listens with a great deal of interest, as he hears how this little child became a man who healed all the sick folks who came to him, gave sight to the blind, and even caused dead persons to live again. He cannot understand why the people were so wicked as to kill one who was so good to them; and he looks very indignant as he talks about it. He wishes he could have seen Jesus and been blessed like the little children whom Christ held in his arms when he was on earth.

Perhaps some of the children who read the PLEASANT HOURS may have wished the same. The writer remembers having done so when she was a little girl.

But Christ's invitations to the children were not alone to the little one, who lived at the same time that he did, but to all the children who will love him and obey him. When he said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," he intended that the children of all coming ages should have his blessing, as well as the little ones he held in his loving arms. He asks lovingly for the heart of every child to day, and wants you to give yourself to him. He has a work for each one

of you, which no grown person can do. It is a beautiful thought and full of comfort to us, that we can go to Jesus in prayer and faith, just as truly as those did who lived in Christ's time.

"Yet still to his footstool in prayer I may go,  
And ask for a share in his love;  
And if I thus earnestly seek him below,  
I shall see him at I hear him above.

"In that beautiful place he has gone to prepare  
For all who are washed and forgiven;  
And many dear children are gathering there;  
For of such is the kingdom of heaven."  
M. L. CADY.

## OWLS.

"As wise as an owl" is a very common expression; and it must have been derived from the bird's appearance, for he shows no more wisdom than other birds. Owls live in deserted buildings, out-houses, and hollow trees and during the day-time never leave their retreat unless forced to do so; for their eyes are so formed that the glare of the sunlight causes them evident uneasiness, if not pain. They are unable to distinguish objects clearly in so full a light. At night they are full of activity. They destroy great numbers of rats and mice, killing more than they can eat, if possible, and storing them up for future use. They are much like winged cats in several respects.

The chief peculiarity of owls is their mode of flying and their quick sense of hearing. Their food being mostly mice and other small animals which easily hide themselves in the ground, great silence and clear sight are necessary, as well as quick hearing; so we find the wing of an owl is provided with feathers so remarkably soft and pliant that in striking the air they make no rushing sound as the feathers of other birds do. There is something in the strange appearance and silent flight of owls that has made them often feared; and superstitious people have thought them always ominous of evil. But there is hardly a more useful bird anywhere. Its food consists of vermin and insects that would do great harm to the crops; and the farmers ought to be thankful to the quiet owls who go around the fields in the dark and pounce upon all the mice and insects that would injure the corn.

A writer in the *American Naturalist* who had read a story about an owl wringing his own head off by looking at a man who was walking around him, tested the matter by experiment. He obtained a specimen and placed him on the top of a post. "It was not difficult," says the writer, "to secure his attention; for he never diverted his gaze from me while I was in his presence. I began walking rapidly around the post a few feet from it, keeping my eyes fixed upon him all the while. His body remained motionless, but his head turned exactly with my movements. When I was half-way round his head was directly behind. Three quarters of a circle were completed and still the same twist of the neck and the same stare followed me. One circle, and no charge. On I went, twice around, and still that watchful stare and steady turn of the head. On I went, three times around, and I began really to wonder why the head did not drop off, when all at once I discovered what I had failed to notice before. When I reached half-way round from the front,

which was as far as he could turn his head to follow my movements with comfort, he whirled it back through the whole circle so instantaneously, and brought it facing me again with such precision, that I failed to detect the movement, although I was looking intently all the time."

Owls are found in all parts of the world, and in all climates. They are frequently met in the deepest solitudes of the forest. In the one hundred and second psalm, sixth verse, we read, "I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert." This is significant of the extreme loneliness and sorrow of the winter.

## THE OLD MAN OF DARTMOOR.

THERE was an old man of Dartmoor who, for many years, obtained his livelihood by looking after the cattle distributed over these wild moorland hills. At last, through infirmity and old age, and the constant and unusual exposure to all kinds of weather, his sight entirely failed him, so that he had to seek an asylum in one of the West of England infirmaries, to end his brief remaining days. While there he was frequently visited by one of his granddaughters, who would occasionally read to him portions of the word of God.

One day, when the little girl was reading to him the First Epistle of John, when she reached the seventh verse, "And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," the old man raised himself and stopped the little girl, saying, with all earnestness:

"Is that there, my dear?"

"Yes, grandpa."

"Then read it to me again; I never heard the like before."

The little girl read again:

"And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

"You are quite sure that is there?"

"Yes, quite sure."

"Then take my hand and lay my finger on the passage, for I should like to feel it."

She took the old blind man's hand and placed his bony finger on the verse, when he said:

"Now read it to me again."

The little girl read, with her soft, sweet voice:

"And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

"Are you quite sure that is there?"

"Yes, quite sure."

"Then, if anyone should ask how I died, tell them that I died in the faith of these words:

"And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

And with that the man withdrew his hand, his head fell softly back on the pillow, and he silently passed into the presence of Him whose "blood cleanseth us from all sin."

## A LITTLE GIRL'S TALK.

A FEW Sundays ago I heard a little girl's talk over her pocket-book, before church time. Her brother said to her:

"Where's your money? There will be a contribution to-day."

She went to get her pocket-book.

"I have two silver ten cents and a paper one."

Her brother said:

"A tenth of that is three cents."

"But three cents is such a stingy little to give. I shall give this ten cents. You see I would have had

more here, only I spent some for myself last week; it would not be fair to take a tenth of what is left, after I have used all I wanted."

"Why don't you give the paper ten cents? The silver ones are prettier to keep."

"So they are prettier to give. Paper ten cents look so dirty and shabby. No, I'll give good things."

So she had put one ten cent in her pocket, when some one said:

"I hope we can raise that three hundred dollars for home missions to-day."

Then that little girl gave a groan.

"Oh, is this home missions day? Then that other silver ten cents has to go, too." And she went to get it, with another doleful groan.

I said: "If you feel so distressed about it, why do you give it?"

"Oh, because I made up my mind to always give twice as much to home missions as anything else, and I shall just stick to what I made up my mind to."

Now this little affair set me to thinking.

1. We should deal honestly with God in giving. "It is not fair," said the little girl, "to count your tenth after you have used all you want."

2. We should deal liberally in giving. If the fair tenth is a pretty sum, let us go beyond it and give more.

3. Let us give our best things. That which is the nicest to keep is also the nicest to give.

4. Let us give until we feel it.—  
*Selected*

"WHERE THERE'S A WILL  
THERE'S A WAY."

THIS is a very old proverb, and a very true one. Sometimes we forget it though, and say "I can't" before we have really tried at all. Some years ago a few kind people made up their minds to try to get hold of all the chimney-sweeps in Dublin and give them an education. One day a little fellow came who was asked if he knew his letters.

"Oh yes," he answered.

"Can you spell?"

"Oh yes."

"Can you read?"

"Oh yes."

"What books did you learn from?"

"P'case, sir, I never had a book."

"Then who was your schoolmaster?"

"I never went to school at all."

The gentleman stared, for it seemed very strange that a boy should be able to read and spell, and yet never have had a master.

"Then however did you learn?" he asked.

The little boy smiled, and linked his arm in that of a sweep somewhat older than himself.

"Please, sir, Jim taught me the letters over shop doors as we went to our work, and now I know all the words by heart; and if you'd kindly let us have some books to read and teach us to do sums and writing, we'd be very thankful."

Can't you fancy what good pupils these two boys became, and how they delighted in reading in books instead of making their necks ache by peering up at the shops.

A LITTLE child of seven or eight said that when the Bible speaks of "children's children," it must mean dolls.

LITTLE BARBARA'S HYMN.

MOTHER stood by her spinning wheel,  
Winding the yarn on an ancient reel;  
As she counted the thread in the twilight dim,  
She murmured the words of a quaint old hymn:  
"Whether we sleep, or whether we wake,  
We are His who gave His life for our sake."

Little Barbara, watching the spinning-wheel,  
And keeping time with her toe and heel  
To the hum of the thread and her mother's song,  
Sang in her own sweet words ere long—  
"Whether we sleep, or whether we wake,  
We are His who gave His life for our sake."

That night in her dream as she sleeping lay,  
Over and over again the scenes of the day  
Came back, till she seemed to hear again  
The hum of the thread and the quaint old strain,  
"Whether we sleep, or whether we wake,  
We are His who gave His life for our sake."

Next morning, with bounding heart and feet,  
Little Barbara walked in the crowded street;  
And up to her lips as she passed along  
Rose the tender words of her mother's song—  
"Whether we sleep, or whether we wake,  
We are His who gave His life for our sake."

A wanderer sat on a wayside stone,  
Weary and sighing, sick and lone;  
But he raised his head with a look of cheer  
As the gentle tones fell on his ear—  
"Whether we sleep, or whether we wake,  
We are His who gave His life for our sake."

Toiling all day in a crowded room,  
A worker stood at her noisy loom;  
A voice came up through the ceaseless din,  
These words at the window floated in:  
"Whether we sleep, or whether we wake,  
We are His who gave His life for our sake."

A mourner sat by her loved one's bier,  
The sun seemed darkened, the world was drear;  
But her sobs were stilled and her cheeks grew dry,  
As she listened to Barbara passing by:  
"Whether we sleep, or whether we wake,  
We are His who gave His life for our sake."

A sufferer lay on his bed of pain,  
With burning brow and throbbing brain;  
The notes of the child were heard once more  
As she chanted low at his open door—  
"Whether we sleep, or whether we wake,  
We are His who gave His life for our sake."

Once and again, as the day passed by,  
And the shades of the evening-time drew nigh,  
Like the voice of a friend or the carol of birds  
Came back to his thoughts those welcome words  
"Whether we sleep, or whether we wake,  
We are His who gave His life for our sake."

Alike in all hearts as the years went on,  
The infant's voice rose up anon,  
In the grateful words that cheered their way,  
Of the hymn little Barbara sang that day—  
"Whether we sleep, or whether we wake,  
We are His who gave His life for our sake."

Perhaps when the labour of life is done,  
And they lay down their burdens one by one,  
Forgetting forever those days of pain,  
They will take up together the sweet refrain—  
"Whether we sleep, or whether we wake,  
We are His who gave His life for our sake."

HOW TO GET A LESSON, AND NEVER FORGET IT.

THE first rule is to be sure that you know what it means. If you can understand it, it will be easy to remember it. If you make a mistake, and get the lesson wrong, and remember it so, you have remembered a mistake, which will be worse than if you did not think you knew it at all.

The second rule is, when you are sure that you know what it means, say over a very little of it until you are sure you know it; then put on a very little more, and go back and repeat the two little parts until you are sure you know them together. And so put on a little more, always going back to the beginning, after you have learned

the last sentence, until you have finished the whole. By that means you will learn it easily, and each part will remind you of the one next to it.

The third rule is to review it often. It will go itself, without much trouble, if you know it; and every time you say it you will fasten it in the memory.

I can repeat a great many things that I learned before I was twelve years old, because I had a teacher who taught me to learn them in this way. I still learn them in this way. I still learn things in this easy way.

THE FIRST PRINTED BIBLE.

IN the National Library at Paris there is a copy of the first Bible that was ever printed. It is a great, clumsy affair, in two volumes folio, about six hundred pages in a volume, printed in Latin. The words are very black, and many of them are abbreviated and packed so closely together as to puzzle the eye. But it is a very valuable Bible, worth several thousand dollars at least. It is without the name of printer or publisher, and without date; but it was the work of a poor Dutchman named Gutenberg, who was put to much trouble and suffering through his printing.

The real story of printing began several years before, in 1420, when an old gentleman in the city of Haarlem first conceived the idea. He was walking in the woods one day, when he found a smooth piece of beech-bark, upon which he cut several nice letters; and when he returned home he inked the letters and stamped them upon paper for his little boy to use as a copy. After that he made stamps of all the letters on paper; and this set him to thinking, planning, and finally working.

At that time there were only a few books; and as they had to be written with pens on parchment, they were very expensive, as it was a most tedious affair to write one. Now, this old gentleman, whose name was Lawrence Coster, knew that if books could be printed they would be cheaper and better in every way; so he went on cutting letters on blocks of wood and trying his experiments.

He worked secretly; and as he employed several apprentices, he charged them to say nothing of the trials he was making. One of his apprentices, however, was dishonest; and after awhile he ran off into Germany, carrying with him a lot of his master's blocks and several pages of his manuscript. Thus it was that poor old Lawrence Coster lost the credit of the invention of printing. He did not give up his work, however, and several old, roughly-printed books of his are now in the state house at Haarlem.

About this time Gutenberg began working with letter-blocks too. Some folks think that he was the dishonest apprentice, but there is no proof of it, and I am inclined to think that Gutenberg was honest, for he was cheated himself by a man named Peter Schœffer. Others think that this Peter Schœffer was the same man who robbed Lawrence Coster.

Gutenberg borrowed money from a rich silversmith named Faust; and when Faust wished to be paid Gutenberg was unable to satisfy him, therefore Faust seized his tools, presses, and unfinished work, among which was a Bible nearly two-thirds com-

pleted. This Faust, with Schœffer's help, finished; and this was the first Bible that was ever printed.

CHILDREN OF THE TYROL.

PERHAPS Canadian children sometimes think they have a hard lot—so much work, so much study, so few toys, so few "good times."

Hear, then, about your little brothers and sisters in the Tyrol, and see if you will ever feel like complaining again.

Early in March the "Schwabenkinder," so called because they are sent into Swabia every spring to work in the farmhouse of that country, begin to gather at different points in the Tyrol. Many of these children are not above eight years of age, and some of the little ones weep bitterly at leaving their poor homes for the first time. The children are poorly clothed, and each one carries a little stick in his hand, and has a little bundle on his back containing a clean garment and a piece of bread and cheese.

A little company is formed, and an old man or woman takes charge of it, and the journey begins. The little ones wander on foot from village to village, living on charity, until at last they reach a large town where a "market" is held. They are tired, foot-sore, and heart-sore; children line the streets, waiting for employers to come and "buy" them! And this is a sad, strange sight. The farmers go picking out the stout, hearty-looking children, and the children eagerly wait their turn, often crying out to a kind-looking man, "Please buy me! please buy me!"

Sometimes brothers and sisters are separated and a little wailing follows, but it cannot be helped; and the market closes, the children go to their new homes, and the work of summer begins.

It is a comfort to know that, as a rule, the children are well treated. Their work generally consists in looking after the cattle, the sheep, pigs, and poultry, and leading the horses or oxen in the ploughing-field.

In the autumn the old man or woman appears again, ready to take the children back to their homes. They return better dressed than when they came, having earned a good suit of clothes, besides a little money, and we can easily believe that the journey home is a much happier one than the first. But at the best, it seems hard and sad that these tender children should be sent away from home, love, and care to "begin the world" among strangers, to suffer from loneliness and homesickness, and sometimes from real sickness, without the touch of a mother's hand, and at last to learn to get along without the sweet ministers of love which makes home a little heaven! —S. S. Advocate.

SIGNS OF NEATNESS.

A LOOK into the chamber of a boy or girl, will give you an idea of what kind of a man or woman he or she will probably become. A boy who keeps his clothes hung up neatly, or a girl whose room is neat always, will be apt to make a successful man or woman. Order and neatness are essential to our comfort as well as that of others about us. A boy who throws down his cap or boots anywhere will never keep his accounts in shape, will do things in a slovenly, careless way and not be long wanted in any place.

YOUTH AND AGE.

"So slow, so slow," one cried,  
"The hours creep by."  
"So swift, so swift," one sighed,  
"The short years fly."

"So sweet, so sweet," one sang,  
"Those days of bloom."  
"So brief, so brief," one rang  
A voice of doom.

One lifted as she sang  
A summer's grace,  
Gold-crowned and fair and young,  
With summer's grace.

One turned a weary head  
With backward gaze,  
Toward the sunset red  
Of dying days.

—Nora Perry.

THE QUEEN'S MERCY.

QUEEN VICTORIA was not twenty years of age when she ascended the throne. Coming into possession of power with a heart fresh, tender, and pure, and with all her instincts inclined to mercy, we may be sure that she found many things that tried her strength of resolution to the utmost.

On a bright beautiful morning the young queen was waited upon at her palace at Windsor by the Duke of Wellington, who had brought from London various papers requiring her signature to render them operative. One of them was a sentence of court-martial pronounced against a soldier of the line—that sentence, that he be shot dead. The queen looked upon the paper, and then looked upon the wondrous beauties that nature had spread to her view.

"What has this man done!" she asked.

The duke looked at the paper and replied:

"Ah, my royal mistress, that man, I fear, is incorrigible; he has deserted three times."

"And can you not say anything in his behalf, my lord?"

Wellington shook his head.

"Oh, think again, I pray you!"

Seeing that her Majesty was so deeply moved, and feeling sure she would not have the man shot in any event, he finally confessed that the man was brave and gallant, and really a good soldier.

"But," he added, "think of the influence."

"Influence!" the queen cried, her eyes flashing and her bosom heaving with emotion.

"Let it be ours to wield influence. I will try mercy in this man's case, and I charge you, your grace, to let me know the result. A good soldier, you said. Oh, I thank you for that. And you may tell him that your good word saved him."

Then she took the paper and wrote, with a bold, firm hand, across the dark page, the bright, saving word, "Pardoned!"

The duke was fond of telling the story, and he was willing, also, to confess that the giving of that paper to the pardoned soldier gave him far more joy than he could have experienced from the taking of a city.—Sel.

A BABE, thirteen months old, was sent the other day, by express, from Cincinnati to Vincennes, a distance of 200 miles. This is probably the youngest passenger that ever travelled alone. The infant sat up all the way and never cried.



THE ANGELS' LADDER.

"If there were a ladder, mother,  
Between the earth and sky,  
As in the days of the Bible,  
I would bid you all good-bye,  
And go through every country,  
And search from town to town,  
Till I had found the ladder,  
With angels coming down.

"Then I would wait, quite softly,  
Beside the lowest round,  
Till the sweetest-looking angel  
Had stepped upon the ground;  
I would pull his dazzling garment,  
And speak out very plain  
'Will you take me, please, to heaven,  
When you go back again?'"

"Ah, darling," said the mother,  
'You need not wander so  
To find the golden ladder  
Where angels come and go.  
Wherever gentle kindness  
Or pitying love abounds,  
There is the wondrous ladder,  
With angels on the rounds.'"

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

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FOR MISSIONS  
For the Year 1886.

THE MISSIONARY BOX.

There is a story told of a little boy, who in his zeal for the cause of missions, not being able to procure anything better, made a collecting box of an ox's horn, and carved upon it the lines:

Once I was the horn of an ox,  
Now I am a missionary box.

We hope it proved for the cause of missions a real horn of plenty. We hope, too, that our young friends will very largely adopt that excellent plan of collecting funds for missions. The Rev. Dr. Sutherland, Missionary Secretary, at Toronto, will be happy to supply nice boxes, such as that shown in the picture, to juvenile collectors. The best plan will be for the superintendent of the school to see how many are wanted, and then have them all sent together. These can be placed on

the parlour table, or mantelpiece, or be used in the school—in each class—and it is marvellous what an amount of money can in this way be raised. Besides, this method will teach the young folk to save their pennies instead of spending them all for candies or toys. It will cultivate self-denial, and love for the best of causes. It will help the missionary cause in a time of great need. The contents of these boxes will help to send the Gospel to some Japanese village, or Indian tribe, or back-woods settlement in Canada, and only the great day shall reveal the good that they may do.

THE MISSION YACHT "GLAD TIDINGS."

We are glad to learn from a letter from Mr. Crosby to the *Guardian*, that the debt of the little mission ship, *Glad Tidings*, is just about paid. The noble little boat has run near 9,000 miles during the year, and taken the Gospel to many a poor wanderer. It has also assisted in taking lumber and material to build up Christian villages, mission churches, etc. With care, and a little assistance, she will be of great service to the mission work on this extensive coast for many years to come.

THE THIRST OF THE SOUL.

EVERY one knows what it is to be thirsty. How uneasy we feel! If it be long continued, how great the distress it causes! The lips are parched, the throat is dry! We cannot work or play or do anything well, while thirst is strong upon us. Yet we know less about it than those do who live in other lands. There the heat of the sun is great; often no water can be found; those who journey wander to and fro in search of it. If none be had, the thirst grows fierce, the strength of the strongest goes, and even life itself must perish.

The Bible tells of a little boy who was once thus perishing for want of water. He had wandered with his mother far into the wilderness, their water was spent, and she had laid him down under a shrub to die. What was the boy's name? and the mother's? Who came to their help? How was the trouble put away?

There is another kind of thirst than this. An eager wishing and longing for anything we have not got is like thirst. We all wish for something or other at times; and with some this wish is strong as a raging thirst. Often, too, it is a wish for what is not good, or the wish for what is right may become hurtful. Some are eager for pleasure, or honour, or riches, or to be thought highly of. The thirst for these things is so strong in some that they care not always how they are got, and so harm and "hurtful snares" may come to themselves and to others.

But we may thirst for what is better than any of those things—for happiness and peace, and quiet rest of heart. Where can these be got? How shall that thirst be satisfied? The verse, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink," answers these questions.



THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.

THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK ON THE ARCH OF TITUS.

WHEN Titus overthrew Jerusalem, he carried many splendid trophies from the temple of Mount Zion to Rome, which were borne in triumph immediately before the conqueror. Josephus' Wars, B. vii: c. 5, § 5. And a representation of the golden candlestick as well as of the table of shew-bread, the jubilee trumpets, and some of the vessels of the sanctuary, may yet be seen chiseled in the solid rock on the inside of the Arch of Titus, which is still standing at Rome.

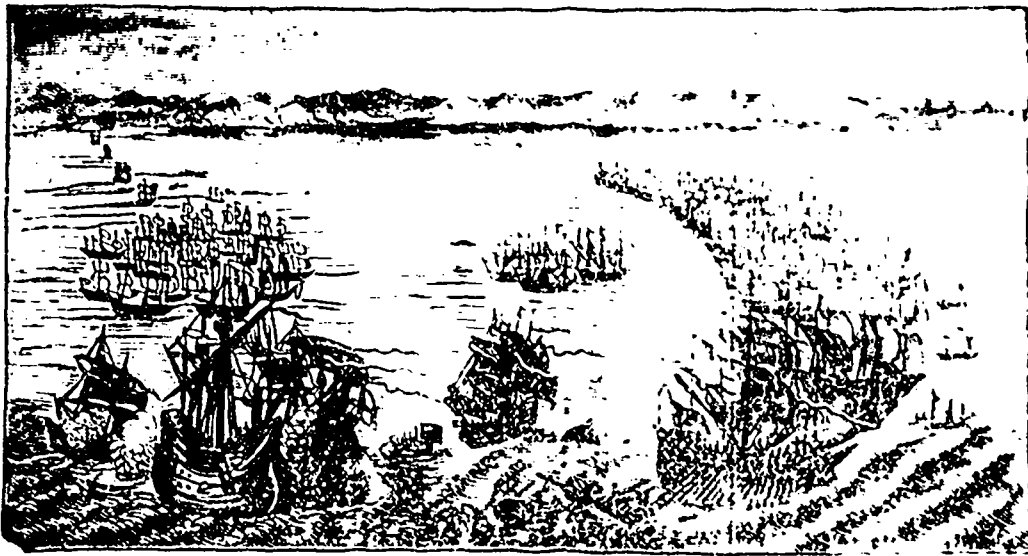
This sculptured likeness may not be entirely accurate in its ornamentations, but it is no doubt substantially correct in form; and so the monument erected by the Roman people to gratify the pride of a Roman warrior has been preserved for eighteen hundred years to illustrate the sacred Scriptures, and prove the correctness of those holy books.

It is Jesus who says this. What does it mean? How can a soul be at peace? Will riches bring it? No; many who are rich have it not. Will health or honour or power or pleasure bring it? Not always; for often there is no peace when these abound. What, then, brings peace? Only the favour and love of God. What keeps that away? It is sin. How can sin be got rid of? Jesus only can do this. Do you desire peace? Do you thirst for safety and comfort, and happiness now and forever? Hear the voice of Jesus still saying, "Come unto me, and drink."

A Catholic legend says that the devil gave a hermit the choice of three great vices, one of which was drunkenness. The hermit chose this as being the least sinful; he became drunk, and then he committed the other two.—Rev. Wm. Reid, Edinburgh.



MY MISSIONARY BOX.



THE SPANISH ARMADA.

HEAVEN'S REWARDS.

**L**IGHT after darkness,  
Gain after loss,  
Strength after weakness,  
Crown after cross;  
Sweet after bitter,  
Song after fears,  
Home after wandering  
Joy after tears.

Sheaves after sowing,  
Sun after rain,  
Bright after mystery,  
Peace after pain;  
Joy after sorrow.  
Calm after blast,  
Rest after weariness,  
Sweet rest at last.

Near after distant,  
Gleam after gloom,  
Love after loneliness,  
Life after tomb;  
After long agony  
Rapture of bliss  
Truth was the pathway  
Leading to this.

THE SPANISH ARMADA.

THREE hundred years ago Spain was probably the strongest nation in the world. The people were Roman Catholics, and their King, Philip the Second, was determined to overthrow Protestantism if he could. In 1588 this powerful monarch despatched an immense fleet to conquer England, then under the rule of a Protestant queen. This fleet, named "The Invincible Armada," was composed of one hundred and thirty ships, some of the largest that had ever ploughed the deep, carrying, exclusive of eight thousand sailors, no less than twenty thousand of the bravest troops of the Spanish army.

In our picture you can see the ships of this great fleet. They are very differently constructed from the ships of to day; some are provided with oars in addition to sails as in ancient times.

The Spaniards looked with great pride on their fleet. The Pope blessed the expedition, and offered the sovereignty of England as the conqueror's prize. But the brave English were not daunted; they got their navy ready and mustered their armies, and waited patiently for the Spaniards. They, however, waited in vain; not a single vessel of the Armada ever reached England. By storm and disaster the great fleet was scattered and destroyed, long before it reached its destination.

This was a great victory for Protestantism. The power of Spain was broken, and the Roman Catholics abandoned the hope of seeing the Pope's authority acknowledged in England.

"HOLIDAYS AT THE FOOT OF THE ROCKIES," 1885-86.

DEAR DR.,—Until last Christmas eve these children of the mountains had never seen a Christmas-tree, nor had they ever in their lives listened to such choice music, as was rendered at that time by some of our young folk at Morley and the children from the orphanage. These did their part well, and very much pleased the Indians from the villages and camps, who are waking up to the fact that there are very many pleasant things yet to see and learn in gospel civilization. The decorating of the church and tree, the arranging of the programme, which gave such joyous satisfaction to all who came, reflects great credit upon our faithful missionary teacher, Bro. Bettes, as also the "kind few" who ably assisted him. May they have many happy Christmases full of blessing to others also.

On New Year's eve we went over to hold our regular Thursday night meeting at Bear-Paw's village, and we were not a little surprised as well as rejoiced on entering the council chamber to see that there had been a very fine effort towards decoration; evergreens were tastily arranged, and up in the centre of the building the "Union Jack" hung conspicuous, while at one end of the room was placed the flag of the Dominion, and at the other the Hudson Bay Co.'s, which is also an English flag.

This display of evergreens and flags was altogether impromptu on the part of these, until recently, nomadic, barbarous people, and though perhaps a trivial matter to some, to us who have seen and had to come in contact with the original savage, this scene spoke volumes of encouragement to still more earnest effort towards those things which will lift the people higher and yet higher in the scale of humanity and civilization. Last year all hands joined in a general entertainment on New Year's Day. This year the three villages made "local arrangements," and thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and that in accord with the teachings of Christianity.

The first Sunday in the new year was our "Quarterly Meeting Sunday," and most heartily did the people come out to these services. At the morning service the church was crowded, and a solemn sense of God's presence was manifest in the afternoon. After the administration of the sacrament we had a most enjoyable love-feast. The

testimonies were clear and convincing—God's spirit was with the people in the mountains and valleys, in the woods, and on the prairies. They had found the Lord precious, and his words were sweet and strengthening. Several spoke for the first time, and we feel that we have every reason to believe that real work is being done for God in the hearts of this people.

JOHN McDUGALL.

Morley, Jan. 5th, 1886.

Bro. McDougall sends, with his interesting letter, a well-written note by an Indian boy, who, two years ago, did not know his letters. We are inclined to think that it is a good deal more easily read than the writing of the editor of PLEASANT HOURS.—E.D.

TEMPERANCE.

I CAN keep no terms with a vice that fills our jails, that destroys the comfort of homes and the peace of families, and debases and brutalizes the people of these islands—*Lord Chief Justice Coleridge of England.*

It is in vain that every engine is set to work that philanthropy can devise, when those whom we seek to benefit are habitually tampering with their faculties of reason and will,—soaking their brains with beer, or inflaming them with ardent spirits. The struggle of the school, the library, and the church all united against the beer-house and gin-palace, is but one development of the war between heaven and hell.—*Charles Buxton, M.P., at one time England's greatest brewer.*

Drink is the curse of the country. It ruins the fortunes, it injures the health, it destroys the lives of one in twenty of our population, and anything which can be done to diminish this terrible sacrifice of human life and human happiness is well worthy of all the attention and study we can give it. . . . The agitation will go on without us if not with us. If we are silent, the very stones would cry out. If there is in the whole of this drink business any single encouraging feature, it is to be found in the growing impatience of the people at the burden which they are forced to bear, and their growing indignation and sense of the shame and disgrace it imposes upon them.—*Joseph Chamberlain, M.P., Chairman of National Educational League of England.*

"LITTLE CREASES" AND HOW SHE SAW THE QUEEN.

BY A CITY MISSIONARY

I.

WHEN I first came up to town, it was to become junior minister of one of the London East End churches. I lodged in a baker's first-floor room. The residence could boast of some "amenities." When I looked out of my window in rainy weather, I could see—thanks to the underground bake-house—the pavement beneath a dry patch in the midst of sloppiness on all sides, and the snow melted there almost as soon as it fell. But, *per contra*, the sickly sour scent of the new bread was at times almost stifling, and the floury "black beetles" marched up in such squadrons from the bake-house, that I was forced to keep a hedge-hog; and the antidote turned out to be almost as great a nuisance as the bane. I am ashamed to say that at first my temper was ruffled by these trivial annoyances. Just because there was nothing to boast of in bearing them, they annoyed all the more. It was "Little Creases" who shamed me out of my puerile pettishness.

One sultry summer night, when I was still quite a novice in London, the beetles had kept me awake by crawling over me, and dropping from the bed-curtains like windfall fruit. In the early morning the scent of the hot bread came steaming up the stairs, and to get the nearest approach to fresh air within my power, I half-dressed and throw up one of my sitting-room windows. As I was leaning out of it, the police-sergeant, who lodged in the room above, clumped up the staircase. "Morning, sir," he said, stopping at the open door. "Up early. Can't sleep, eh? Well, it is rather close, but just you look at that little gal cuttin' along there. This is a palace to where she has been a-sleepin', an' yet she's off to the market pipin' like a little lark. She's thankful for the 'eat, she is. It's bitter work for her when she's to turn out in the winter mornin's. I do pity that poor little soul. I've little gals of my own. Little Creases she's known as, and she's been at the cross-sellin', off an' on, this two years, though she ain't eight yet. Creases' She don't look much like a Girl, do she, sir?" and, with a grin at his pun, the pitying policeman mounted toward his bed.

The little girl to whom he had called my attention wore a fragment of a black straw bonnet, with gaping chinks in its plait, through which her watted curls bulged like bows of dirty silk. A limp, ragged, mud-bued calico frock reached to where the calves ought to have been in her bare, skinny little legs. That was all her dress. In one hand she carried a rusty iron tray, thumping upon it, tambourine fashion with the other, as an accompaniment to "The days when we went gipsying," which she sang, as she trotted along, in a clear, sweet little voice that justified the police-sergeant in likening her to a lark. At the end of the street she put the empty tray upon her head, and merrily shrilling out, "Pier' pier' all 'ot' all 'ot'" turned the corner and disappeared.

The next time I saw the sergeant I asked him where Little Creases lived. "Bottom house in Bateman's Rents, that's Miss Creases's address when she's at home," was his answer. "I can't rightly remember just now which

room it is, but you ask any one about there where Little Creases dwells, and they'll show you, sir. She lives with her granny. They're a rough lot down there, but they've some sort of a respect both for the old woman an' the little un, an' they won't insult you, sir, if they think you wants to do 'em a kindness. I'll go with you an' welcome, if you like, when I'm off; but they'll think more on ye, sir, if you don't go with one of us. No, sir, the force ain't popular, and yet it's only our duty that we try to do; and monkey's allowance we get for doin' on it. If you want to ketch the little un in and awake, you'd better go somewhere between six and seven in the evenin'. The little un has to tramp a weary way to sell her stuff, an' she's glad enough, I'll go bail, to go to her 'by-by,' as my littlest calls it, when she's had her grub. You know your way to the Rents, sir! Second turnin' to the left, arter you pass the Duke o' York. You can't mistake it, sir—the name's up just inside the archway."

On the following evening I found my way to Bateman's Rents. The archway was almost choked with gasping loungers, who looked at first very awfully at me; but when I inquired after Little Creases, and used the very term which the sergeant had taught me—much as a Moravian missionary might use his first conciliatory bit of Equimese—the loungers relaxed into a general grin. "She've just come in, sir," said a hulking rough, leaning against a post. "Jim, go and show the parson where Little Creases dwells," and at this repetition of the friends making pass-word there was another general grin.

Jim, the shock-headed youth, whose dress consisted of a one-sleeved shirt and a pair of trousers with a leg and a half, upheld by a single brace of greasy twine, speedily piloted me to the bottom of the Rents, and up a filthy, creaking staircase to the first-floor back of the last house. "Creases!" he shouted, as we stopped at the open door of a dark little dungeon of a room, "ere's a parson a-lockin' arter ye. Whatever 'as you been a-doin' on?"

The only window of the room gave on a high dead wall, within arm's-length of it; and though half of the window panes were broken, the room on that hot evening was very close as well as dark. It was very dirty also, and so was the parchment-skinned old woman who sat crouching, from the force of habit, over the little rusty, empty grate. Opposite her sat Little Creases, on the floor. The old woman's half backed arm-chair, and the low bedstead on which she and her granddaughter slept together, were almost all the furniture. The scantiness of the bed-clothes did not matter so much in that sultry weather; but, hot as it was, it almost made one shiver to think of lying under them in winter.

"Yes, sir," said the old woman when I had seated myself on the bed, and stated why I had come, "Bessie an' me 'as ad our tea. No, we don't light a fire this time o' year. It's heavy to git a potful o' bilin' water somewheres or other—our pot don't take much to fill it. It ain't much the neighbours can do for us, but what they can they will. I must say that. No, I don't think I could git any on 'em to clean up my room. They hain't got the time, an' if they 'ad they hain't got the water."

I was young then, and had a weakness for giving a "professional" turn to conversation; plumbing myself on my clerical cleverness when I had lugged in a text of Scripture, *apropos* of anything—more often, in fact, of nothing. I began to talk about the woman of Samaria and the water of life, in a way that I could not help feeling was hazy even to myself. The old woman listened to me for a time in sulkily patient silence, although plainly without the slightest comprehension of what I meant. I was having my say, she thought, and she would get hers by-and-bye, and would get all the more out of it, if she "behaved proper" whilst I was talking. She was full of complaints, when her turn came; especially at the hardship of her having to support a great girl like Bessie, although, so far as I could make out, Bessie contributed at least her full share of the cost of the old woman's room-keeping. Finding that I had small chance of hearing anything about Little Creases, except the amount of bread she ate, in her self-contained grandmother's presence, I proposed that Bessie should visit me at my lodgings next morning; and to this arrangement the grandmother grudgingly consented, when I had promised to make good the loss which the little girl would incur through giving up her work.

I was amused to see how I sank in the "social" estimation of my new acquaintances when they learnt that I was lodging at a baker's. "Wilson" was a very rich man in their opinion, and "made good bread, an' giv fairish weight—better than the English bakers, though he was a Scotchman;" but Bessie and Granny had at times bought bread of Mr. Wilson, and, therefore, looked upon themselves as his patronesses, and at me as a "kind o' make-believe sort o' gen'tleman" to be lodging on his first-floor. They evidently felt comforted when they heard that Little Creases was to knock at the private door.

I was looking out for her when she knocked. Had I not been, the "slavery" most likely would have ordered her off as "a humpidant match-gal as wouldn't take No."

Bessie was rather shy at first, but when she was asked what she would like to have, she suggested, "Wilson sells stunnin' brandy-snaps," with a glibness which showed that she had the answer ready on her tongue. Whilst she was munching her anticipated dainties, I got a little of her history out of her, which I will put together here, as nearly as I can in her own words:—

"My name's Bessie—ye called me so yerself. Some calls me Little Creases, an' some jist Creases—'cos I sells 'em. Yes, Bessie, I s'pose, is my Chris'n name. I don't know as I've got another name. Granny 'as Marther's 'er Chris'n name, an' sometimes folks calls 'er Missis Jude—sometimes they calls 'er Hold Winegar, but that ain't horfen. No, sir, they don't call 'er that to 'er face. Granny 'ud give it back to 'em if they did, an' they ain't a bad lot—not them as we lives with. No, I can't remember when I fust come to live with Granny—'ow could I! I was jist a babby, Granny says. Oh, Granny does whatever she can—she ain't a lie a bed. Sometimes she gets hout cheeria' now, but she ain't strong enough for that, an' the

work an' what she gits to drink makes her precious cross when she comes 'ome. Yes, I love Granny, though she do take hall I arns. She's a right to, I s'pose. She says so, anyways, 'cos she took me when father and mother died, an' father 'ad wexed 'er. No, I can't remember nuffink o' them an' I don't see as it matters much. There's kids in the Rents as 'as got fathors an' mothers as is wuss hoff than me. Well, I s'pose, when I grows up, I can spend what I gits accordin' to my own mind. But I 'on't forgit Granny. She may growl, but she never whipped me—an' some on 'em does get whipped. Yes, sir, I knows I ought to be thankful to Granny for takin' care on me afore I could git my hown livin'—didn't I say so? No, I can't read, an' I can't write. I never went to school. What's the good o' that to folks like me as 'as to arn their livin'! I know 'ow much I oughter give a 'and for my creases, an' then 'ow to split 'em up inter bunches, an' I'm pickin' up the prices o' hother thinx at the markets, an' that's hall a gal like me need know. Readin' an' writin' may be hall wery well for little gals as can't 'elp theirselves, but I don't see as it would be hany 'elp to me. Yes, I likes to look at pictures sometimes in the shops, but I can make out what they means—them as I cares about—w'out readin'. Where does I git my creases? Why, at the market. Where else should I git 'em? Yes, it is cold gittin' up in the dark, an' the creases feels shivery when you git a harmful, when the gas is a-burnin'. But what's the good o' growlin' when you've got to do it? An' the women as sells 'em is horfen kinder in the winter, though they looks half-perished theirselves, tuckin' their 'ands under their harms, wi' the frost on 'em. One on 'em last winter giv me a fair market—and when I 'adn't got no stock-money, an' the browns to git a cup o' cawfee an' a bread-and-butter. That did do me good, for it was hawful cold, an' no mistake. If it 'adn't been for the pain in 'em, my toes an' fingers seemed jist as if they didn't belong to me. But it's good fun this time o' year. We 'ave our larks when we're a-pumpin' on the creases, an' a-settin' on the steps tyin' 'em up. Rushes we ties 'em with. No, we 'avn't to pay for the rushes—they're gived us by them as sells the creases. Yes, I think I've seed rushes a-growin'—in 'Ackney Marshes—but there wasn't much in that, as I could see. I'd rather be where there was houses, if that's country. It's sloppier than the streets is. No, I don't go to church. Granny says that she used to go, but they never give her nuffink, so she dropped it. 'Sides, Sunday's when I sells most. Folks likes a relias a-Sundays for their breakfasts an' teases; an' when I ain't a-walkin about, I likes to git a snooze. 'Sides, I hain't no clothes fit to go to church in. No, I don't go to theaytres an' that, nayther—I sh'd like to if I'd got the browns. I've 'eared say that it's as fine as the Queen a-hopenin' Parliament—the Forty Thieves at the Pawillion is.

"Yes, I've seed the Queen once. I was in the Park when she come along wi' them fine gen'tlemen on 'osback a-bangin' away at the drums an' that; I s'pose them was the Parliament. I never was so far afore, an' I ain't been since, an' I was wery tired, but I sq'reeged in among the folks. Some

on 'em was swolls, an' some on 'em was sich as me, an' some on 'em was sich as shopkeepers.

"One hold fellow says to me, says he, 'What do you want 'ere, my little gal!'

"I want to see the Queen, an' Prince Halbert, an' the Parli'ment gen'tlemen," says I.

"I'm a Parli'ment gen'loman," says he, 'but I ain't a-goin' down to-day.'

"I worn't a-goin' to let 'im think he could do me like that, for he worn't dressed nigh so smart as Wilson a-Sundays. 'You're chaffin',' says I; 'why hain't you got a 'oss, an' a goold coat, an' summat to blow!'

"Then he busted out larfin' fit to kill 'isself; and says he, 'Oh, you should 'ear me in Parli'ment a-blowin' my own trumpet, an' see me a-ridin' the 'igh 'oss there.'

"I think he was 'alf-silly, but he was wery good-natur'd—silly folks horfen is. He lifted me hup right over the people's 'eads, an' I see the Queen wi' my own eyes, as plain as I see you, sir, an' Prince Halbert, too, a-bowin' away like them himages in the grocers' winders. I thought it was huncommon queer to see the Queen a-bowin'. I'd 'spected that all on us would a-'ad to bob down as hif we was playin' 'oney-pots when she come by. But, there she was a-bowin' away to hoveybody, an' so was Prince Halbert. I know 'im from the pictures, though he didn't seem 'arf so smart as the gen'loman that druv the 'osses. What a nice-lookin' gen'loman, though, that Prince Halbert is! I do believe that himage in the barber's window in Bishopsgate, with the goold sheet on, ain't 'arf as 'ansome. Wisher may die hif he didn't bow to me! The queer hold cove I was a-settin' on, giv me 'is 'at to shake about like the other folks—law, 'ow they did shake their 'ats an' their 'ankerchers, an' beller as if they'd bust theirselves! An' Prince Halbert grinned at me kind-like; an' then he giv the Queen a nudge, an' she grinned, an' giv me a bow too, an' the folks all turned round to look at me, an' I felt as hif I was a swell. The hold cove was huncommon pleased, an' he giv me a 'arf-a-bull, so Granny said he was a real Parli'ment gen'loman arter all."

"And what did you do with the money, Bessie?" I asked.

"Guv it to Granny."

"But didn't you get any of it?"

"Oh, yes. Granny'd a blow out o' trotters, an' she giv me one, an' huncommon good it were."

A little girl who had sold water-creases for two years, with no more memorable treat than a trotter, could not be injured, I thought, by a little indulgence. If I confirmed Bessie in her opinion that, in the complimentary words she had already used in reference to me, I wasn't "sich a bad sort, arter all," I might be able to "get hold" of her, and eventually do her more good than giving her a little passing pleasure. Still I was at a loss how to carry out my plan of giving her a day's treat; so I asked her to choose her entertainment for herself.

"Well," she answered promptly, "I should like to 'ave some more to heat bimeby;" and then, after a minute's pause, "an' I should like to go up the Monument. I've horfen seed the folk at the top lik' rats in a cage; an' I should like to 'ave a lock down them railin's, too."



FOR BABY'S SAKE.

It was evening, and the dwellers in a quiet London street heard a strange uncommon shouting and the rush of many feet. Instantly they left their dwellings in a hurry to inquire what had caused the great commotion, when they heard the cry of "Fire!"

Close at hand a house is burning, they can see its lurid light tinting all the dull surroundings, making everything seem bright; and the flames grow fiercer, stronger, and the smoke grows dense overhead, while the crowd is gazing, spellbound, filled with wondrous awe and dread.

Hark! the hoofs of horses clatter! See, the engines dash along, cheered by hundreds as they scatter right and left th' excited throng! Losing not one precious moment, firemen get the hoses out, and the folks, when sprinklers the water, raise a loud applauding shout. Then is heard a mighty hissing as the water fights the fire, but in spite of all the efforts, fiercer grow the flames and higher, still the firemen never falter, though the foe is gaining fast, they with firm and fixed endeavour mean to fight it to the last.

See, the crowd is stirring strangely—'tis a woman pushing through, she is ghastly pale and haggard, and seems very fragile, too; yet she struggles, well-nigh frantic, doing but what would dare, as she cries to those around her, "Let me pass; my baby's here!"

Like a flash the news is scattered, every eye is turned to see the frantic mother who is striving very hard to get her free; and at last the crowd dividing, she can from her fetters break 'twas a battle, but she fought it only for her baby's sake.

Not a moment does she waver, straight towards the house she flies, heedless of the frightful danger and the people's warning cries. Firemen chase her, she eludes them, spite of all the haste they make, right inside the house she dashes for her darling baby's sake.

The deed has sent a thrill of horror through the folks—they hold their breath, for they can't but think the woman's gone to certain, frightful death. The fire is burning unabated, the house one mass of seething flames, yet the mother's darting through it; breathing out her baby's name.

Hark! what means that mighty cheering! She has passed the topmost height, she has found her darling living, and she holds him up to sight, quick the firemen spread a blanket, and they catch the baby-boy, while the people cry like children, shedding tears of heartfelt joy.

But the day is turned to terror—ere the mother takes the leap she is seen to reel and stagger, like a person half asleep. Flames are bursting all around—she sinks into that burning lake, yielding up her life right nobly for her darling baby's sake.

Yes, the little one is living; loving hands attend to him, as his round eyes gaze in wonder at the smoke-wreaths black and grim, neighbours vie with one another in the zealous care they take of the little orphan baby for his noble mother's sake.

—John F. Nicholls.

BAD company is like a nail driven into a post, which, after the first or second blow, may be drawn out with little difficulty, but being once driven up to the head, the pinners cannot take hold to draw it out; it can only be done by destroying the wood.

SHOEBLACK JIM.

A TRUE STORY BY A NEW YORK TEACHER.

In a small, crowded room in one of the rear tenement houses of our great city, where the sun's rays were never known to shine, or the fresh air allowed to penetrate, our little Jim lay dying.

Months before, I, one morning, saw him standing on a street corner, with his shoe-box strapped to his back, calling out in tremulous tones, "Shine, sir!" But the hurrying business men paid little or no attention to the pleading voice and the frail form which was swayed to and fro by the bitter, biting, December wind. As I handed him a picture paper, I asked, "Are you hungry, my boy?" I noticed the pale, pinched cheeks and the large brown eyes fast filling with tears as he replied, "Yes, miss, I've had nothing to eat since yesterday morning; but granny is worse than me; fur she's had nothing but a cold tater since day afore yesterday."

"And who is granny?"  
"She lives in the rear alley on Mott; me own mother died over on the island, so granny says, and I guess I never had any father."

"Did you ever go to a Sunday-school or Band of Hope meeting?"  
"Laws, no, miss! I've no time. I has to stan' around all day, and then sometimes gits only a couple of shines; them Italian fellers, with the chairs, takes all the profits off us chaps. Granny says, 'tis a hard world."

I handed the child a dime, and told him to get a warm cup of coffee and a roll; then got from him a promise to attend the Band of Hope meeting that afternoon at four o'clock. I hardly expected to see him again, but was happily surprised to see him walk in—shoe-box on his back—while we were singing "Fold me to Thy bosom." I shall never forget the expression that was on his face as he stood spellbound in the middle of the floor, and stared at me and the organ. I motioned him to a seat, but he did not move till the music had ceased and the other children were all seated.

My lesson that day was about the Great Shepherd that goes out upon the hills and mountains of sin and gathers in the little lambs that wander away from the sheepfold. I did not know, that day, that the dear Saviour's hand was already stretched out to receive this one little lamb that had many times, young as he was, been found tipsy, and also smoking cigarettes that he had stolen from somebody's street-stand.

He was a regular attendant at Sunday-school and Band of Hope, and no one joined more heartily in the singing than "Jim." One day, in our children's prayer-meeting, he gave his heart to Jesus. No one could doubt the conversion of that little heart when they looked into the bright eyes and beaming face that continually shone with heavenly light.

One day a messenger came to me in haste, and said, "Jim is dying. Hurry, please, miss; he wants to see you agin afore he dies." I hurried; and, as I groped my way along the dark alley and up the rickety stairs, I caught the sound of the sweet voice singing, "Fold me, fold me, precious Saviour." I entered quietly, so as not to disturb the singer, but his bright eyes saw me, and he said, "Sing it with me once

more, teacher." We sang it through together, then he said, "The next time I sing will be when Jesus folds me in his arms; I'll never forget the hymn, but will remember it til you come up there too; then we'll sing it agin—"

The little lamp of life went out. The Great Shepherd had called his little lamb home. There was

"Another gem in the Saviour's crown,  
Another soul in heaven."

—S. S. Times.

"BOYS' AND GIRLS' GORDON MEMORIAL."

It is pretty generally known that the deep interest which the lamented "Obinero" and "Soudan" Gordon took in ragged schools has led to his memory being honoured by the formation of what is known as "The Gordon Memorial Fund for the Benefit of Poor Children." The late Earl of Shaftesbury was the first chairman of the committee which has the matter in hand. The Lord Mayor of London, the Earl of Aberdeen, Archdeacon Farrar, and other prominent men are members of the same committee. The objects of the Fund include the following:—

1. Paying for the maintenance of poor children in existing homes and institutions.
2. Providing funds, wholly or in part, for the conveyance of wealthy and convalescent children and for their maintenance, in the country or at the seaside.

Mr. John Macdonald, the well-known merchant of this city, has been asked to interest Canadians in the fund. He has secured the co-operation of Mr. S. H. Blake, Q.C., and Mayor Howland. To any one of these gentlemen subscriptions may be sent. What they propose is that the Sunday-schools of the country take the matter up, and that, in order to put a subscription within the reach of every child, one cent collections be asked for in every school. The money thus raised will be devoted to the "Boys' and Girls' Gordon Memorial," which forms a branch of the general plan. It is with pleasure that we direct attention to this matter.—Globe.

The editor of PLEASANT HOURS will be happy to receive and forward any subscriptions for this praiseworthy object.

DON'T BE A SHAM.

As the boy begins, so will the man end. The lad who speaks with affectation, and minces foreign tongues that he does not understand at school, will be a weak chamois in character all his life; the boy who cheats his teacher into thinking him devout at chapel will be the man who will make religion a trade, and bring Christianity into contempt; and the boy who wins the highest average by stealing his examination papers will figure some day as a tricky politician. The lad who, whether rich or poor, dull or clever, looks you straight in the eyes, and keeps his answer inside of truth, already counts friends who will last his life, and holds a capital which will bring him a surer interest than money.

Then get to the bottom of things. You see how it is already as to that. It was the student that was grounded in the grammar who took the Latin prize; it was that slow, steady drudge

who practised firing every day last winter that bagged the most game in the mountain. It is the clerk who studies the specialty of the house in off hours who is promoted. Your brilliant, happy-go-lucky, hip-or-miss fellow usually turns out the dead weight of the family by forty five. Don't take anything for granted, get to the bottom of things. Neither be a sham yourself, nor be fooled by shame.

HAVE YOU DONE IT!

Don't what? Given your heart to Christ. The winter is rapidly going, with its special opportunities. Have you made any serious attempt to lay hold of these? Have you sought the Lord in prayer? Have you asked others to pray for you? Have you listened to the voice of your conscience, or heeded the earnest pleadings of your friends? Have you read the Word of God, to see the path of duty? Have you striven to overcome your sinful heart, or break with your worldly companions? Have you done any of these things? Remember that your precious soul is in peril, and that if you die in your sins, you must be forever lost. The loving Saviour says, "Come." Will you heed his gracious call?

THE THOUGHTS OF THE FATHERLESS.

It is not easy to say which is the greater loss to a child, that of father or mother. This I know: the most touching sermons I heard in childhood came not with the voice of man, were not heard by others, but came to me in silence as I often stood by my father's grave and wondered where he was.

I remembered a pale face, a thin hand placed upon my head, and a feeble voice saying, "Be a good boy, my son, and meet me in heaven."

Then I remembered a solemn day—a hearse, a long procession, the open grave—and I remembered when the stone was set up, having on it the name of my father, and a voice seemed to say once more, in the whispering of the "pines," with their soft and soul-like sounds, "Meet me in heaven."

A LITTLE LIE.

A LIE is a little thing. You have told a lie, just one single word which is not true. But let us see what else you have done. First, you have broken the law of God. Second, you will have to tell many more to maintain that one. Third, you lose the love and friendship of schoolmates. Fourth, if you practise lying, that will lead to something worse; but worst of all, God has said that liars shall some day have their place in the lake that burneth with fire.

From April 1st to December 31st there were in Montreal 3,175 victims of small pox. Of these only ninety-seven were Protestants. Taking in the suburbs, in which the victims were almost entirely Roman Catholic, the figures are altogether about 100 Protestants out of 4,000 cases. According to population the figures should be 960 to 4,000. It is very remarkable how few Methodists have been stricken down—only six out of a population of 6,000.



## OUTWARD BOUND.

SIT and watch the ships go out  
Across the widening sea;  
How one by one, in shimmering sun,  
They sail away from me.  
I know not to what land they sail,  
Nor what the freight they bear;  
I only know they outward go,  
While all the winds are fair.

Beyond the low horizon line  
Where my short sight must fail,  
Some other eyes a watch will keep,  
Where'er the ships may sail;  
By night, by day, or near, or far,  
O'er narrow seas or wide,  
These follow still, at love's sweet will,  
Whatever may betide.

So round the world the ships will sail,  
To dreary lands or fair;  
So with them go, for weal or woe,  
Some dear ones everywhere.  
How will there speed each lagging keel,  
When homeward it is laid;  
Or watch will keep, o'er surges deep,  
If there a grave be made!

O human love, so tried, so true,  
That knoweth nor mete nor bound,  
But follows with unweary watch  
Our daily changing round!  
O Love divine, O Love supreme,  
What matter where I sail,  
So I but know, where'er I go,  
Thy watch will never fail!

—Anson J. F. Randolph.

## NELLIE'S CHICKENS.

NELLIE has fed her little chickens so often that they know her very well. Even the old mother, though she made a great fuss at first when she came near, has learned that she does not want to hurt them, and seems glad to see her come.

I wonder if Nellie ever thinks about that One who wants little children to run to him, just as these little chickens will run to her, or rather, just as they run to their mother. He came to the people in Jerusalem, and wanted to save them. He said, "How often would I have gathered you under my wings, as a hen gathereth her chickens." He meant that he wanted to save them from the great destroyer, Satan; to save them from the wrath due for their sins; to keep them from all evil, and to give them great good. But they hated him; they would not come to him that they might have life; they even put him to death on the cross.

Do you feel sorry when you see a little chicken or a little lamb suffering? Don't you want to help it right away?

Jesus is sorry to see us living in sin, and he wants to save us from it. Will you not come to him every day, that he may do this for you?—*Selected.*

## THE DUSTY ROOM.

A YOUNG girl was sweeping a room one day when she went to the window-blind, and drew it down.

"It makes the room so dusty," she said, "to have the sunshine always coming in."

The atoms of dust which shone golden in the sunbeams were unseen in the dimmer light. The untaught girl imagined it was the sunlight which made the dust.

Now many persons imagine themselves very good people. One poor old man, who lived all his life without a thought of love to God, said he was worth a shilling.

If the Spirit of God should shine brightly into such a heart how would it look? It would show him sins enough to crush him. This light of

the Spirit is like the sunshine in the dusty room. It reveals what was before hidden. When we begin to feel unhappy about our sins, let us never try to put away the feeling. Don't let us put down the curtain, and fancy there is no dust. It is the Holy Spirit's voice in our hearts. He is showing us ourselves, and better still, He will show us the true way to happiness.

## THE ONLY CURE.

"If you were seriously burned, and many remedies were brought to you, only one of which could certainly cure you, while the others might do you some good, which remedy would you prefer?"

"The one that would certainly cure me."

"Would you not try the others?"

"No, sir; try the one that cures certain."

"There is but one cure for sin. In 1 John 1. 7 it is written, 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' That only can cure the wounds sin has made."

A little girl giving her experience for membership, said, "I was converted the day the bee stung my mother." When asked what she meant by that, she replied, "When the bee stung my mother I cried and ran away, afraid he would sting me. She called me back, and said, 'Don't be afraid; he can't sting you now. He has left his sting in my hand.' Then she told me that sin could not sting me either if I believed in Jesus; for sin had left its sting in Jesus. I believed it, and ever since then I have felt I had a new heart."—*Kind Words.*

## NEATNESS IN GIRLS.

NEATNESS is a good thing for a girl, and if she does not learn it when she is young, she never will. It takes a great deal more neatness to make a girl look well than it does to make a boy look passable. Not because a boy, to start with, is better looking than a girl, but his clothes are of a different sort, not so many colours in them; and people don't expect a boy to look so pretty as a girl. A girl that is not neatly dressed is called a sloven, and no one likes to look at her. Her face may be pretty, and her eyes bright, but if there is a spot of dirt on her cheek, and her fingers' ends are black with ink, and her shoes are not laced or buttoned up, and her apron is dirty, and her collar is not buttoned, and her skirt is torn, she cannot be liked. I went into a little girl's room once, and all her clothes were on the floor, and her playthings, too. Learn to be neat, and when you have learned it, it will almost take care of itself.

THE current "catch" is to ask your friend if Christmas and New Year's come in the same year. Not a few people will promptly answer, "No, of course they don't," and a half minute later they feel sick over their mental weakness.

"SAM, you are not honest. Why did you put all the good peaches on top of the measure, and the little ones below?" "Same reason, sah, dat makes de front of your house marble and the back gate chiefly slop bar', sah."

## LESSON NOTES.

B.C. 445.] LESSON IX. [Feb 28.

NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER.

Neh. 1. 1-11. Commit to mem. vs. 8, 9.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man. Psa. 108. 12.

OUTLINE.

1. A People's Need, v. 1-3.
2. A Patriot's Prayer, v. 4-11.

TIME.—445 B.C. Almost a century since the lesson. 83rd Olympiad. Year of Rome, 308.

PLACE.—Shushan or Susa.  
EXPLANATIONS.—*The twentieth year*—That is, of the reign of king Artaxerxes. *The remnant that are left*—Only a comparatively small part of the children of the captivity returned to Canaan. *Sat down and wept . . . certain days*—Not one continuous act of weeping, but a weeping and fasting extending through several days at times when he was alone and free from official duty. *The king's cup-bearer*—The cup-bearer, or butler, to the king was an officer of high rank under every oriental monarch.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where, in this lesson, are we taught—  
1. Sympathy with God's people in trouble?  
2. Sorrow for sin?  
3. Confidence in God's promises?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Who was Nehemiah? A nobleman at the court of Persia. 2. When did he live? After the return of the Jews from captivity. 3. In what condition was Jerusalem at that time? It was without gates or walls. 4. What did Nehemiah undertake to do? To rebuild the wall. 5. How did he begin? By seeking God's help. 6. How is his prayer expressed in the GOLDEN TEXT? Give us, etc. 7. How did he succeed in building the wall? By leading the people in the work.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The nature of prayer.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

11. What is his warning to them? That his word shall condemn them at the last day. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day.—John xii. 48.

B.C. 444.] LESSON X. [March. 7.

READING THE LAW.

Neh. 8. 1-12. Commit to mem. vs. 8-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. Neh. 8. 8.

OUTLINE.

1. A Great Congregation, v. 1.
2. A Bible Reading, v. 2-8.
3. A Day of Gladness, v. 9-12.

TIME.—444 B.C. Fifty-two days after the arrival at Jerusalem the wall was done. This service followed 83rd Olympiad. Year of Rome, 309.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.  
EXPLANATIONS.—*Street . . . before the water gate*—In the south-eastern part of the city, south of the temple. *Pulpit of wood*—A tower of wood in margin. A raised platform built in this street where the speaker could stand and be plainly seen. *Lifting up their hands*—With their hands raised toward heaven, palms upward and faces upward. *Gave the sense*—They explained and expounded the law as it was read so that all could understand.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where, in this lesson, are we taught—  
1. Reverence for the word of God?  
2. Carefulness in the reading of the word?  
3. To rejoice in the understanding of God's law?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. For what purpose did Nehemiah gather the people in Jerusalem? To hear the law of God. 2. Who read the law? Ezra the priest and scribe. 3. Who listened to the reading? All who were old enough to understand. 4. What is said of the reading in the GOLDEN TEXT? So they, etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The authority of the word.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

12. What blessing does he pronounce on believers? To Peter he gave it thus: [Read Matthew xvi. 17.] And to Thomas he gave it thus: [Read John xx. 29.]

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