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# PLEASANT HOURS

PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XIV.]

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 3, 1894.

[No. 5

## THE DOUM PALM.

"THE doum palm differs much from the ordinary palm. Its stem grows up a little distance, and then branches in two, and these two limbs each branch in two; always in two. The leaves are shorter than those of the date-palm, and the tree is altogether more scraggy, but at a little distance it assumes the dome form. The fruit, now green, hangs in large bunches a couple of feet long; each fruit is the size of a large Flemish Beauty pear. It has a thick rind, and a stone like vegetable ivory, so hard that it is used for drill-sockets. The fibrous rind is gnawed off by the natives when it is ripe, and is said to taste like gingerbread. These people live on gums and watery vegetables and fibrous stuff that wouldn't give a northern person strength enough to gather them."

The picture represents a characteristic view in Upper Egypt.

## LET NOTHING BE LOST.

GRASS, timber, sawdust and other products that were once rejected as useless are now saved and put to practical use. The Hollanders have even discovered how to convert the peat from bogs into soft wools which can be spun into cloth, rugs and blankets at half the cost these goods can be made from wool grown on the sheep's back. Such a discovery ought to open before Ireland and some other countries the prospect of a great industry which will increase their prosperity and commercial importance. A generation ago there was hardly a mill of any kind that was not troubled with a heap of rubbish or waste material that it did not know what to do with. Silk manufacturers saw the rise of this heap with annoyance, and they took it as a favour if anyone would cart it away and use it as a fertilizer. An English inventor guessed at the possibilities in this pile of refuse and set about inventing machinery to utilize it. And to-day as a result of his foresight and genius 5,000 persons are employed in making the finest seal plushes, ribbons and velvets from the refuse piles of silk mills, and the inventor has grown rich. The cotton-seed oil industry is a better illustration of economizing waste, but the dimensions to which the industry has grown are not so generally known.

The annual product in oil, cake, lint and hulls from cotton seed, which a generation ago was allowed to rot, is \$27,000,000, and it could be made greater if there was a market for the product. The great decrease in the price of paper comes

from the discovery that nearly everything that grows can be turned into this useful article. Cotton stalks, tobacco stalks, the stalks of the sugar cane, corn husks and sawdust, that used to cumber the ground, are now made into water pails, car wheels and even buildings for temporary purposes.

and firebrick, and when pulverized becomes a base for paints. The refuse from woollen mills, which has contaminated so many streams, has been found to be valuable for the oil it contains, and its extraction will not only profit the inventor but do away with a nuisance. The progress made in

in the crudest way, and that in a mastery over these forces lies the advancement of the human race.—*Truth*.

## LEARN A TRADE, BOYS.

I REMEMBER, years ago, when I was a very young man, writes John Coates, meeting John Roach, the great shipbuilder, in his shipyard at Chester, Pa. I remember, too, what he said then about the value of a trade to the average boy.

"Young man," he said, laying his great broad hand on my shoulder, and looking at me earnestly with his keen, steel-blue Irish eyes, "next to a clear conscience, a trade is as good a thing as any young man can have in this country. You can carry it with you all your life long; you have to pay neither rent nor taxes upon it, and it will help you around a sharp corner when most other things will fail."

I have never forgotten that utterance from a man who started in life—after landing in New York from Ireland—as helper to a machinist, who became the leading shipbuilder of his time, and who, up to the hour that he was stricken with a fatal illness, could take the place of any of his workmen, whether it was a man driving rivets, or an expert putting together the most delicate parts of a steamship's machinery.

Something very like what John Roach said I heard another great man, who is now dead, say. This was Peter Cooper, a man of whom American boys cannot know too much, and whom they certainly cannot too much admire.

"If I had my way," said the venerable philanthropist, on the occasion to which I refer, "I would give every boy a trade. Then I would have him stick to it, love it, and be good to it. If he does, it will be good to him."

How forcible is the fact, that almost everywhere the leading mechanical positions are filled by men of foreign birth.

Why is this? Is it because our boys are less able? Is it because there are no facilities for learning trades in this country? To the last question the argument may be advanced that the trades unions lay too many and too heavy restrictions regarding the number of apprentices who will be employed or allowed. Argument admitted, and the point taken granted. But the bottom cause is Young America's "don't want to." He would rather stand behind a counter in some store, or canvass for some agency, or work in some factory at piece-work, where he can earn more money, at first, per week than if put to learning a trade.



THE DOUM PALM.

The once despised sawdust can be used in still other ways. From it can be extracted alcohol, acids and dyes. The extraction of dyes from coal-tar and the refuse of refined petroleum have for a dozen years been one of the wonders of the chemist's art, but they are not the only things that are obtained from coal, and science is constantly widening the list. The slag of furnaces is now turned into asbestos, cement, pottery

utilizing waste material is probably only a beginning of what will be done in this way. There should, in fact, be no waste, and invention may yet realize that wish. It should be an instructive lesson to those pessimists who imagine that the facilities at the command of man have been put to their best use and that no further development is possible. It is more probable that the resources of nature are as yet only understood

restrictions regarding the number of apprentices who will be employed or allowed. Argument admitted, and the point taken granted. But the bottom cause is Young America's "don't want to." He would rather stand behind a counter in some store, or canvass for some agency, or work in some factory at piece-work, where he can earn more money, at first, per week than if put to learning a trade.

## A Beautiful Land.

There is a beautiful land, we are told,  
With rivers of silver, and streets of gold;  
Bright are the beings whose shining feet  
Wander along each quiet street,  
Sweet is the music that fills the air—  
No drunkards are there.

No garrets are there, where the weary wait,  
Where the room is cold and the hours are late;  
No pale-faced wife, with looks of fear,  
Listens for steps she dreads to hear,  
The hearts are freed from pain and care—  
No drink is sold there.

All the long day in that beautiful land,  
The clear waters ripple o'er beds of sand,  
And down on the edge of the water's brink,  
Those white-robed beings wander, nor shrink,  
Nor fear the power of the tempter's snare—  
For no wine is there.

Father, look down from thy throne, I pray,  
Hasten, oh hasten the glorious day,  
Help us to work as a temperance band,  
To drive the demon away from the land,  
Teach us to say; We will dry every tear  
Which drink makes flow here.

—Juvenile Temple.

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## Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 3, 1894.

## BOYHOOD OF JESUS.

BY REV. W. F. CRAFTS.

Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.—Luke 2: 52.

ALTHOUGH Jesus came down from heaven, yet in his boyhood he was like other boys. "He grew in stature," with no evil habits, such as smoking cigarettes, and doing other things too foul to mention, to stunt his growth. Doubtless every year at his birthday he measured himself on the side of the house, to see how fast he was growing. But he also "increased in wisdom," in the thinking part of him. His mother taught him a great many things, especially about the Bible. At five years of age he began to learn by heart the Commandments and other texts, which he afterwards used to repeat when he grew up to be a minister. Probably he went to some such school as I saw at Nazareth, where about twenty-five little Arab boys with red caps on their heads were sitting cross-legged on the floor, which was covered with straw matting, there being no seat in the room, except one for the teacher. Each boy had before him a little ink-bottle, and in his hand a sharpened reed for a pen, and a tin slate like the one I hold in my hand, on which had been written a verse from the book called the Koran. All the boys were moving their bodies backward and forward and saying their verses aloud. As I stooped over to see what was on one of the slates, a roguish boy behind me gave me a push which almost tipped me over, making me think that boys in Nazareth were very much like boys in America. The teacher very quickly boxed

the little fellow's ears, which made all the others, for fear of a like punishment, move their bodies faster and say their verses louder. When Jesus was a boy he probably went to such a school and wrote on his slate verses from the Bible to commit to memory.

Another way that Jesus grew in wisdom was by "asking questions." The only true story that we have about Jesus' boyhood tells us that once when he had gone from Nazareth to a great city called Jerusalem, in a great procession of people, for a festival that was like a whole week of Christmas Days, his mother lost sight of him, and hunted around for two days before she could find him. I suppose she looked in all the candy shops and wherever the boys were playing, and last of all she thought she would look in the church, the big temple, and there she found him, in one of the rooms, sitting cross-legged on the floor at the feet of the wise teachers, asking them questions about the Bible and about God and heaven. They were very much "astonished" to find how much he already knew about those things. Children to-day might learn a great deal more than they do about such matters if they would study their Sunday-school lessons and then ask questions of parents and teachers about whatever they could not understand.

Another thing that is told us about Jesus' boyhood is that he was obedient to his mother. I once saw in the papers an advertisement printed in this way: "*Wanted for a store—a boy that obeys his mother.*" The man who kept that store knew that if a boy did not mind his mother at home, he would not obey his master in a store, or be so likely to obey the laws of the country against stealing and other wrongs, and the laws of God. The world does not want in business or anywhere else boys who do not mind their mothers. Home is a little school of obedience. If we do not learn to obey the laws of home, we shall be very likely to break the laws of the country and get into prison at last.

One other thing that the Bible tells us about Jesus' boyhood is, that he was diligent in his duties. A certain bishop, who lived long after Jesus did, wished very much to know what Jesus did in his boyhood, about which the Bible tells us so little. After that, one day he had this dream. He seemed in his sleep to see a carpenter working at his trade, and beside him a little boy who was gathering up chips. Then came in a woman clothed in green, who called them both to dinner and set porridge before them. All this the bishop seemed to see in his dream, himself standing behind the door, that he might not be perceived. Then the little boy said, "Why does that man stand there? Shall he not also eat with us?" And this so frightened the bishop that he awoke.

In the very building at Nazareth where it is said Joseph, the husband of Mary, worked as a carpenter, there is a picture on the wall of Joseph at one end of a board, which he is measuring with a string, and Jesus as a little boy at the other end, holding one end of the string, and helping Joseph at his work. We know that Jesus before he became a minister worked in such ways as a little carpenter in the shop of Joseph at Nazareth. He was helpful at home; and the boy that would be like Jesus must do likewise.

But Jesus was diligent in another kind of business. One day when he was in the church or temple, studying the Bible and talking about God and heaven, he called it his heavenly "Father's business" that he was doing. Sometimes a man has a little shop and another very large one. So Jesus teaches us that what we do in our common work is our little business, and what we do to make men Christians is our great business; and he teaches us that "a boy twelve years old is not too young to begin doing business for his heavenly Father," by being a Christian himself and trying to lead others to be Christians. When Jesus was twelve years old, like other boys of that country, he joined the church, put the boxes called phylacteries on his forehead and arm, with verses of the Bible in them, and put on his shoulders the talith, with blue bands in it, that reminded the people they were going to heaven beyond the blue sky. And so all the boys of good parents and all the boys that loved God began to be workers in the church when they were twelve years

old, the same age at which your pastor and a great many others have joined the church in these days, and some when they were not half as old.

## A WISE BOY.

MR. HILL was busy in his carpenter shop one morning. The door stood open, and he heard a voice outside. He turned and saw a bright-faced boy with a brown suit and a red cap.

"Good-morning, my little man," said Mr. Hill. "What can I do for you? Do you want a house or a bridge built?"

"No," said the boy. "We've got a house, and there's a bridge now over the creek. My name's Johnny Jay, and I want those, if you don't want them yourself." He pointed to the shavings which lay under the bench.

"You do, hey? And what will you do with them, Johnny? Build a bonfire?"

"No. I'm going to sell them to old Miss Clark. She'll give me a cent for a basketful."

"Well, I guess you may have them." So Johnny brought his basket and picked up the shavings. When he was nearly done he saw something bright upon the floor. It was a dime. Johnny had never had more than a cent at a time in his life. He looked to see if Mr. Hill had seen it; but he had not. Johnny picked up the dime and slipped it into his pocket. He filled his basket, and went out without saying anything to Mr. Hill. But as he was going away he thought:

"This dime isn't mine. It is Mr. Hill's. If I keep it I shall be a thief. But I want it very much. I s'pose Mr. Hill has plenty more dimes. He doesn't know it was on the floor."

And very deep into the little boy's heart came the thought, "What would God say?"

He ran back to Mr. Hill and said: "This is yours; I found it on your floor."

Mr. Hill took the money and put it in his pocket. "You are an honest boy," he said. "You may come every day for shavings."

Do you think Mr. Hill ought to have given the dime to Johnny? He thought of it; but then he said to himself:

"I'm not going to pay the little fellow for being honest. He will find pay enough in doing right for its own sake."

And if you had seen Johnny running away with plenty of little skips and shouts you would have said that Mr. Hill was right.

## WHY GEORGE DID NOT WORK IN THE BREWERY.

BY ELLA GUERNSEY.

"MOTHER has told you often that she doesn't want her only son to engage in any work in which he cannot ask God to bless him while he is doing it. I will say no more now, Georgie," said Mrs. Bell to her twelve-year-old son, who stood at the kitchen door, twirling his hat about, and wishing that "mother would help a fellow out," and thinking that "he believed, just as father said, she was entirely to particular about some things, and in these days one couldn't be too choice about work. One could be a good, honest boy working in a brewery if he choose."

The Bells needed money. Mr. Bell was sick, and George must help earn their daily bread. He had looked several days for work, but nobody wanted boys except the proprietors of the big brewery.

Mr. Bell said, "Go, my son, by all means. The wages are really good for a boy, and you will be learning something."

"Yes, that he will, Charles," replied the mother, a scarlet flush dyeing her cheek.

"Oh! now, Sarah," your just like an unreasonable woman. I s'pose you'd like to shut our George in a bandbox, and keep him from mingling with his feller men. I haven't the least fear of our boy learnin' to drink, if that's what you're drivin' at. There ain't any drunkards on my side of the house," returned Mr. Bell, testily. And Mrs. Bell said very slowly and decidedly,

"Neither have my family been drunkards, but I will not be sure that George will not learn to be one if he works daily in a brewery, surrounded by men, young and old, who have given up soul and body

to the destroyer. Beer, beer, the very name is loathsome."

"I don't know about that, Sarah. I've seen weak men and women almost made over, when clean run down bodily, by drinking real, pure, fresh beer," replied Mrs. Bell, wishing in his heart that "Sarah wasn't quite such a fanatic about such things."

"Yes," replied Sarah, quickly, with a stern rebuke in her eyes and feeling almost angry with a father who could speak such perilous words before his little son. "I've seen strong men and women made so weak by the drink habit that they went into worse than nothingness. How can you say a good word for beer, the bitter, sour, stale, stuff!"

"Mother," said George, "I am only to wash the bottles. We do need money so much, or I wouldn't think of taking such work."

"Listen to me, Georgie. Mother would rather move into a tent and live on crusts than to live better, if it is to be paid for with money earned by my son in a brewery."

"How will you feel in the Sunday-school room, and can you sing your cold-water songs on Sunday, when you have spent the last six days before, helping to send out the foe your comrades are leagued against?"

"Will a brewery boy, who goes into the spider's parlour of his own free will, and stays in the net, deserve a place in the temperance ranks? Think this over, my son. Does the Bible say that we are to expect good to come from evil?" urged Mrs. Bell.

George went out into the street, then walked to the brewery. He loved his father dearly and he didn't seem to think "just washing beer bottles" a great sin, and women were so cranky about certain things.

Do not judge George and Mr. Bell too harshly, for they could not bear to think that they must eat bread earned by Mrs. Bell over a neighbour's washtub.

"Vell, Sheorgie, vas you coom to wash dem bottles, hey? Here, you good-for-notin' scamp, out of mine way! Leave an' dond git back ag'in so quick. No beer for you! He's only a boy dat hangs around vatchin' to get beer, and is von plague," said Hans Leib, rolling a beer keg and driving away a miserable, sickly boy of about fourteen, who trembled and ran as if used to kicks. "He vas a bottle vasher, but gits so no account, ve has to sheep him. Ve needs spy, sober boys, as we has mooch vork here. Vas you coom to vork?" inquired Hans.

"Oh, no, never, in this place," cried George setting out on almost a gallop for home, and surprising his mother, who sat at his father's bedside weeping, by saying loudly;

"I'll never work in that brewery so long as I live; I've just seen one of their boys. Mother, I can help you with the washing and ironing."

"Thank God, Georgie," said Mrs. Bell, thankfully, while Mr. Bell said: "I'm proper glad, son; I couldn't feel quite easy 'bout your working in a brewery. None of the Bells ever did that sort of work."

## WHAT HE COULD NOT DO.

On one of the days that Stanley spent in the heart of Africa, a poor, cowering native was dragged before him, charged with having stolen a gun. The gun he carried, and which belonged to the exploring party, the terrified negro did not seem able to give any clear account of how he came by it. But on one point he spoke clearly. He had not stolen it. "I am a son of God," he cried; "I could not steal!" This he repeated over and over.

Stanley believed him, set him at liberty, and gave him the gun. Afterward it appeared that the man had picked up a gun which had been lost, and upon conferring with the missionary the poor native brought back the gun to Stanley's camp.

But the great explorer's heart must have been thrilled by this proof of the power of God's grace—that this savage, brought up in the midst of all that was vile and low and dishonest, should have risen to such a conception of the dignity of a son of God as to say, "I could not steal, because I am a son of God!"

SUITABLE FOR RECITATION.

We give two companion poems on similar topics, one by an American, the sweet-voiced Alice Carey, the other by a distinguished English writer, Sidney Dobell. The second poem strikes us as of peculiar pathos. It has not the happy ending of the first one. The inability of the poor mother, wrapped up in the fate of her son, to conceive it possible that he could perish is, we think, very touching:

Elihu.

"O sailor, tell me, tell me true,  
Is my little lad—my Elihu—  
A-sailing in your ship?"  
The sailor's eyes were dimmed with dew.  
"Your little lad? your Elihu?"  
He said with trembling lip;  
"What little lad—what ship?"

What little lad?—as if there could be  
Another such a one as he!  
"What little lad, do you say?"  
"Why, Elihu, that took to the sea  
The moment I put him off my knee.  
It was just the other day  
The *Gray Swan* sailed away."

The other day? The sailor's eyes  
Stood wide open with surprise.  
"The other day?—the *Swan*?"  
His heart began in his throat to rise.  
"Ay, ay, sir; here in the cupboard lies  
The jacket he had on."  
"And so your lad is gone!"

"Gone with the *Swan*. And did she stand  
With her anchor clutching hold of the sand,  
For a month, and never stir?"  
"Why, to be sure! I've seen from the land,  
Like a lover kissing his lady's hand,  
The wild sea kissing her—  
A sight to remember, sir."

"But, my good mother, do you know,  
All this was twenty years ago?"  
I stood on the *Gray Swan's* deck,  
And to that lad I saw you throw—  
Taking it off, as it might be so—  
The kerchief from your neck;  
Ay, and he'll bring it back.

"And did the little lawless lad,  
That has made you sick and made you sad,  
Sail with the *Gray Swan's* crew?"  
"Lawless! the man is going mad;  
The best boy mother ever had;  
Be sure, he sailed with the crew—  
What would you have him do?"

"And he has never written line,  
Nor sent you word nor made you sign,  
To say he was alive?"  
"Hold—if 'twas wrong, the wrong is mine;  
Besides, he may be in the brine;  
And could he write from the grave?  
Tut, man! what would you have?"

"Gone twenty years! a long, long cruise;  
'Twas wicked thus your love to abuse;  
But if the lad still lives,  
And come back home, think you, you can  
Forgive him?" "Miserable man!  
Your mad as the sea; you rave—  
What have I to forgive?"

The sailor twitched his shirt so blue,  
And from within his bosom drew  
The kerchief. She was wild:  
"My God!—my Father!—is it true?  
My little lad—my Elihu?  
And is it?—is it?—is it you?  
My blessed boy—my child—  
My dead—my living child!"

My Boy.

"Ho, sailor from the sea,  
How's my boy?"  
"What's your boy's name, good wife,  
And on what ship sailed he?"  
"My boy John,  
He that went to sea.  
Sure, his ship was the *Jolly Briton*."  
"Speak low, good woman; speak low."  
"And why should I speak low?  
If I were loud  
As I am proud,  
I'd cry him o'er the town."  
"The good ship went down."  
"What care I for that?  
I'll be bound  
Her owners can afford her.  
How's my boy?"  
"The good ship went down,  
And every man aboard her."  
"What's that to me,  
I'm not their mother;  
My boy's my boy to me.  
How's my boy?"

In Prison and Out.

By the Author of "The Man Trap."

CHAPTER V.—LESSONS IN PRISON.

It was quite dark at night when the prison van containing David and other convicted offenders reached the jail to which they were committed. As yet he was still feeling bewildered and confused; and the sound of heavy doors clanging after him as he passed through them, and the long, narrow passages along which he was led, only served to heighten his perplexity. He had hardly ever been within walls except those of the poor house which had been his home as long as he could remember, and the prison appeared immeasurably large as he dragged his weary footsteps along the stone flagging of the corridors. The spotless cleanliness of both floor and walls seemed also to remove him altogether out of the world with which he was acquainted. The dirt and squalour of the old jails would have been more home-like to him.

By the time his hair had been cropped close to his head, and the prison-garb put upon him in the place of his own familiar clothes, stained and tattered with long wear of them, he began to doubt his own identity. Was he really David Fell? Could he be the boy who had hitherto led the freest life possible, roaming about the busy streets, with no person to forbid or to question him? David Fell could not be he who was now locked up quite alone in a little cell, dimly lighted by a gas-jet, which itself was locked up in a cage lest he should touch it. Not a sound came to his ears, let him listen as sharply as he could. Where was the old roll and roar of the streets, and the cries of children, and the shrill voices of women, and the din and tumult, and stir and life, to which he was accustomed? No dream as dreadful as this silence and solitude had ever visited him.

For a long while he could not go to sleep, though his previous night in the police station had been one of wakefulness. His hammock was comfortable, more comfortable than any bed he had ever slept on, and his prison-rug was warm; but the very comfort and warmth brought his mother to his mind,—his mother and little Bess. What were they doing now? Were they shivering on their hard mattress, under their threadbare counterpane, which was all that was left them to keep out the night's chill? Perhaps they were looking out for him. What day was it? Was it not Saturday to-day? And he had promised to be home on Saturday!

Oh, how different it would all have been if he had only escaped being caught! He would have been at home by this time; and they could have had a bit of fire in the grate, and something to make a feast of as they sat round it, whilst he told the story of his wanderings, and tried to describe all the rich, good folks who had been kind to him. Or if the magistrate had taken away all the money, and let him go home on his promise never to go begging again, even that would have been nothing to this trouble. He fancied he could see his mother's face, pale yet smiling, as she listened to his danger, and his escape from it; and Bess, sitting on the floor, with shining eyes and clasped hands, hearkening eagerly to every word. Why had they sent him to jail? At last he sobbed himself to sleep; but all through the night might be heard, if there was any ear to hear, the heavy, deep-drawn sob of the boy's overwhelmed heart.

He was awakened early in the morning, and briefly told what he must do before quitting his cell. Then he ate his breakfast alone in the dreary solitude of the prison-walls, and the food almost choked him. It seemed to the boy, used to the wild, utter freedom of the streets, as if his very limbs were fettered, and that he could not move either hand or foot freely. His body did not seem to belong to himself any longer. He was neither hungry nor cold, as he might have been at home; but his head ached, and his heart was sore with thoughts of his mother. He was unutterably sick and sad. Cold and hunger were almost like familiar friends to him; but he did not know this faintness and heaviness, this numbness which kept him chained to the prison-seat, and made it appear an impossibility that a day or two ago he was rambling about as long as he pleased, and where he pleased, in the wide, free world, outside the prison walls. Were there any boys like him still running and leaping and shouting out yonder in the autumn sunshine?

It was Sunday morning, and he was left longer than usual to himself. He was taken to the chapel, and sat in his place during the reading of the prayers and the sermon which followed; but not a word penetrated to his bewildered brain. It was much the same on the week-day when he went to school. He knew a little both of reading and writing;

but he could not control his attention to make use of what he knew. He said the alphabet stupidly, and wrote his first copy of straight lines badly. He could not bring himself to think of these things. His mind was wandering sadly round the central thought that he was in jail, and what would become of his mother and little Bess without him.

David was naturally a bright boy, active in mind and body; but he was crushed by the sudden and extreme penalty that had befallen him. He had all along known that the police were "down" upon begging; but it had not entered his mind that he could ever actually get into jail except for thieving. Among the street lads of his acquaintance many a one had been in for some short term for picking pockets or stealing from the street-stalls; but few of these had ever been sentenced to three months' imprisonment. And he had always kept his hands from picking and stealing,—the only item of his duty to man which his mother had impressed upon him. He would not have begged if he could have worked; but no man of the hundreds of thousands about him had offered him work, or seen that he was taught to work. Yet here he was for three months in jail, a lad who had never known any will to guide him but his own untrained and vagrant nature, and his mother's kindly and weak indulgence.

The first glimmer of hope came to him when he was set to learn shoemaking. This was a trade by which he could earn a living,—not the trade he would have chosen (his ambition was to be a carpenter like his unknown father), but still honest, real work. He received his first lesson in a handicraft with ardour, and sat with an old boot on his knee, picking it to pieces with unvarying industry. If he could only learn as much as to mend his mother's shoes before his term was out! The tears started to his dull, bloodshot eyes, and his lips quivered at the thought of it. He would do his best at any rate to learn this lesson.

The jail was a large one, and the number of prisoners great. David had been asked if he was a Protestant or a Roman Catholic,—a question he did not understand, and could not answer. He was classed with the Protestants, and put under the care of the jail-chaplain, who saw him among the other prisoners, and taught him his duty towards God in a class, but who could not find time to give him any individual attention. The chaplain told him, among the rest, that he had broken the laws of his country and of God, and that his punishment was the just reward of his sin. David's ideas of right and wrong were exceedingly limited, and his conscience very unformed; but he could not believe he had done wrong, and he did not. His mother was starving, and he had begged for help. If the laws of his country and of God forbade him to do this, they were in the wrong.

He could not have put his thoughts into words, but they were none the less in his heart,—dim, bewildering, and oppressive; and he pondered over them night and day. Very few persons spoke to him, and he was never ready to speak in reply. Those who taught him thought him a blockhead, or fancied that he was at least shamming incapacity and vacancy of mind. As a matter of fact his mind was always absent, except at his cobbling lesson; for he was incessantly brooding over the recollection of his free life, and of the poor, desolate home he had been so suddenly torn from.

David had no idea of writing to his mother, or hearing from her. No such thing as a letter reaching them, or being written in their home, had ever occurred within his memory. The policeman was a much more frequent visitor than the postman in their street. Yet he longed for her to know where he was. Day after day he wondered what had happened to her and Bess, and knew they were wandering and fretting about him. The only comfort he had—the only miserable spark of hope—was in thinking he should know how to mend their shoes when he went home.

It was therefore with a sudden burst as of sunshine that he learned one day that prisoners might write to their friends once in three months. The schoolmaster gave him the writing materials, and he took unwearied pains over a letter to his mother. The sheet of note-paper contained the address of the jail, and under it David wrote, in his crooked, ill-formed characters, as follows:

"DEAR MOTHER,—I was took up for beging, and cent to jal, and I'm lerrin' to mend shoes. Don't yu fret about me. I luv yu and Bess. They'll let me out in 3 months, and I'll mend yure shoes. I've kep my hands from pickin' and steelin' as muther ses. God bless yu. From david fell yure luvin' son."

He slept that night more soundly than he had ever done before within the prison-walls, and dreamed pleasant dreams of working for his mother, and buying her and little Bess all they needed with the money he had earned.

(To be continued.)

JUNIOR LEAGUE.

DEPARTMENT OF LITERARY WORK—HEAD.

"Feed my lambs."—Jesus.

If but one meeting of the League can be held each week it is best to combine the work of this department with that of the devotional hour. But where time and workers can be found this department will yield a large increase, second only in importance to purely spiritual work.

The Bible is, above all, the book to be studied here. First, drill the children in the number and names of the books of the Bible. If this were taught to the children of the Church to-day, in a few years hence we should not see the slow and imperfect work in "finding the place," when the pastor announces the psalm to be read responsively or the lesson from the New Testament.

It is also recommended to take up some systematic study of the Bible. Courses of study have been provided for by Dr. Hurlbut, on the successful completion of which certificates are given, to which seals may be added.

The Bible in the League will lay the principles of religious and civil liberty deep in the hearts of the children; so deep that no icy hand of unbelief nor intrigue of the Romish Church can destroy them.

"Holy Bible, book divine,  
Precious treasure! thou art mine;  
Mine to teach me when I rove,  
Mine to tell a Saviour's love."

Next to the Bible we should take up the history and doctrines of our own Church. No branch of the evangelical Church has a more romantic and remarkable history than the Methodist Church.

It is in the Junior Epworth League that the Church Catechism may be most effectively taught. In the great majority of our Sunday-schools the Catechism, if taught at all, is done to disadvantage and very imperfectly.

The Catechism should be thoroughly memorized by the children before they are allowed to take up the higher studies.

How many good people there are who sniff at the Catechism as though it were obsolete! The good effects of its teachings are undervalued. Scotland and Wales have the fewest infidels, and infidel writings in their language are almost unknown—a living testimony to catechetical instruction.

In many instances it has been found advisable to conduct this department for nine months of the year only. A vacation from June to September will give the boys a rest and afford the leader an opportunity to work up new methods and plans of work.

Another advantage to be gained by the existence of the Junior Epworth League is, that whenever the children are wanted for a rehearsal, as at Christmas, Easter, or Children's Day, the department of instruction will always find them on hand, and of the most reliable kind.

The use of the blackboard will call forth great interest in this department. Always have it on duty. A few simple remarks will reach the heart through the eye when words fail through the ear. Put down the number of the hymns to be sung at the beginning of the meeting, or as they are announced. Print the number present. If greater, make a point in a few words about attendance. Any scrap of present interest when placed upon the board will hold attention and fix an idea.

Children love to sing. People like to hear them sing. Encourage every voice. The leader of the League must sow great tact right here. Sing often rather than too much of any one hymn. Practise antiphonal singing, the most ancient and most effective form of church music, one that should not be laid aside. The only difficulty likely to occur is the want of an efficient leader; but poor and few indeed are the churches that cannot with a little effort find a competent musician for this important branch of church work.

SOME FAMOUS MEN.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS was the son of a weaver, and also a weaver himself. Claude Lorraine was bred a pastry cook. Cervantes was a common soldier. Homer was the son of a farmer. Demosthenes was the son of a cutler. Oliver Cromwell was the son of a brewer. Howard was an apprentice to a grocer. Franklin was a journeyman printer and son of a tallow chandler and soap boiler. Daniel Defoe was a hosier and son of a butcher. Cardinal Wolsey was the son of a butcher. Lucian was the son of a maker of statuary. Virgil was the son of a porter. Horace was the son of a shopkeeper. Shakespeare was the son of a wool stapler. Milton was the son of a money scrivener. Pope was the son of a merchant. Robert Burns was the son of a ploughman in Ayrshire.

**A Boy's Mother.**

My mother, she's good to me!  
If I was good as I could be;  
I couldn't be as good—No, sir!  
Can't any boy be good as her!

She loves me when I'm glad or mad,  
She loves me when I'm good or bad,  
And what's the funniest thing, she  
says  
She loves me when she punishes!

I don't like her to punish me;  
That don't hurt, but it hurts to see  
Her cryin'; nen I cry; an' nen  
We both cry, an' be good again

She loves me when she cuts and sews  
My little cloak and Sunday clothes,  
An' when my pa comes home to tea,  
She loves him most as much as me!

She laughs, and tells him all I say!  
And grabs me up, and pats my head.  
An' I hug her, an' hug my pa,  
An' love him put 'nigh much as ma.

**GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM**

"He believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness."

Our picture is one that might be seen to-day. But in most respects it well portrays the period of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. The spear standing upright shows the tent of the chief. The camels and horses and people gathered in the distance look now as they did many hundreds of years ago. The chief sits at the opening of his tent, and there receives new-comers, or dispenses hospitality, or drives sharp bargains.

**LESSON NOTES.****FIRST QUARTER.**

B.C. 1898.] LESSON VI. [Feb. 11.

**GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM.**

Gen. 17. 1-9. Memory verses, 7, 8.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**

He believeth in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.—Gen. 15. 6.

**OUTLINE.**

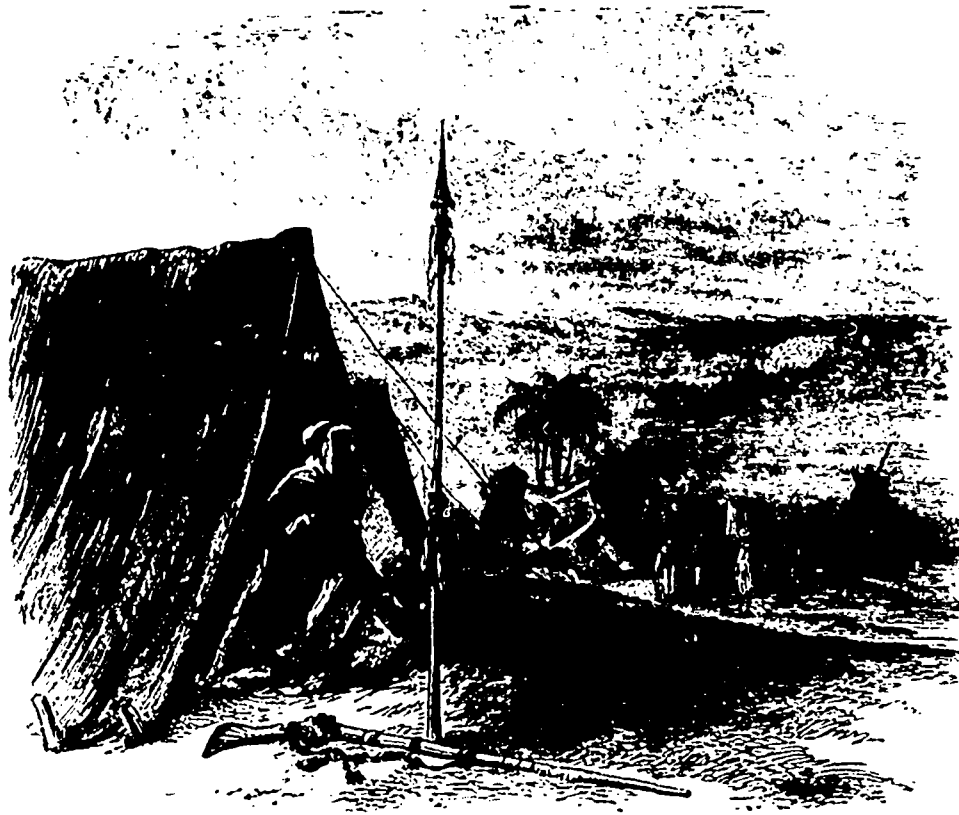
1. A New Covenant, v. 1, 2.
2. A New Name, v. 3-5.
3. A New Promise, v. 6-9.

**CONNECTING LINKS.**

1. Abram's visit to Egypt and attempted deceit concerning his wife (Gen. 12. 10-19). 2. His dismissal from the country (Gen. 12. 20). 3. Lot's departure from Abram and settlement near Sodom (Gen. 13. 1-13). 4. God's promise to give Canaan to Abram (Gen. 13. 14-18). 5. The conquest of Chedorlaomer (Gen. 14. 1-7). 6. Rebellion of the five kings of the Jordan valley (Gen. 14. 4). 7. Battle of the Vale of Siddim, and capture of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 14. 5-11). 8. Abram and Melchizedek (Gen. 14. 12-24). 9. God's covenant with Abram (Gen. 15. 1-21). 10. The painful story of Hagar and Ishmael follows (Gen. 16). Then comes our lesson.

**EXPLANATIONS.**

"Ninety years old and nine"—Thirteen years after the birth of Ishmael. "The Lord appeared to Abram"—Lest he should regard Ishmael's birth as the complete fulfilment of the promise. "I am the Almighty God"—Our Bible does not give the full sense of this. It is the announcement of God's name made at a time when the names of all persons were deeply indicative of their character; so that this is in the profoundest sense a revelation of certain attributes of God. "The name here describes God as revealing himself violently in his might, distinguishing Jehovah, the God of salvation, from Elohim, the God who creates nature so that it is, and supports it so that it may stand. This is the God who compels nature to do what is contrary to itself, who subjects it so as to bow and minister to grace; who possesses the power to realize his promises."—Whitclaw. "Walk before me"—Set thyself to walk in my presence. "Be thou perfect"—Copy me closely in detail. "I will establish my covenant"—This means that the covenant already concluded is about to be carried to completion. "Abraham"—His name was altered to suit the enlargement of his character.



A CAMP IN THE DESERT.

**PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.**

What are we taught in this lesson about—

1. The power of God?
2. The love of God?
3. The mercy of God?

**THE LESSON CATECHISM.**

1. How did God introduce himself to Abram? "I am the Almighty God." 2. What did he command Abram to do? "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." 3. What did he pledge to make Abram if he was faithful? "A father of many nations." 4. To what did he change his name? "'To Abraham, which means 'Father-of-a-great-multitude.'" 5. What was said of Abraham? Golden Text: "He believed in the Lord," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The divine omnipotence.

**CATECHISM QUESTION.**

How was our Lord exalted in his resurrection?

Because his rising from the dead proved that he was the Son of God; that he had conquered death and had atoned for sin.

How was he exalted in the ascension?

He was taken up into heaven, there to receive honour and glory from all creatures; and thence send down the gift of the Holy Spirit.

**GEHAZI'S GOLD.**

"NAAMAN, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by

him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: He was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper. And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid, and she waited on Naaman's wife, and she said unto her mistress, 'Would God, my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.' And one went in and told his lord, saying, thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel." Therefore Naaman went to Elisha, the man of God, and was told to wash in the Jordan seven times. This Naaman did, "and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." And he returned unto Elisha and would that he should take a gift in return for the blessing of healing he had received, but Elisha would receive nothing from him.

"But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, 'Behold my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: But as the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.' So Gehazi followed after Naaman." And he told Naaman that Elisha had sent him for some silver and changes of raiment for two young men who had just come from Ephraim to Elisha, his master. Then Naaman gave the silver and the changes of raiment to Gehazi. When Gehazi returned to his master, Elisha said, "Whence comest thou, Gehazi?" and he said, "Thy servant went no whither." (You see Gehazi had said what was false once and now without trouble he told a lie to his master). But Elisha said, "Went not my heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? . . . The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee and unto thy seed forever: And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow."

**Popular Music Books.**

During the past six or eight months the two music books which, next to our own popular Canadian Hymnal and the old reliable Songs and Solos, have had the largest sale with us have been the following:

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NAAMAN AND ELISHA.