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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVII.]

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 6, 1897.

No. 6.

The Sunshine.

The sunshine is a glorious thing
That comes alike to all,
Lighting the peasant's lowly cot,
The noble's painted hall.

The music of the birds is heard,
Borne on the passing breeze,
As sweetly from the hedgerows as
From old ancestral trees.

There are as many lovely things,
As many pleasant tones,
For those who dwell by cottage hearths
As those who sit on thrones.

TWO BRAVE CHILDREN.

This story is told by a Western paper: "The sky at night in the vicinity of Apple Creek, in Dakota, was red all around the horizon, and people knew that prairie fires were burning. Every evening as darkness fell the farmers saw the glare becoming more and more distinct, and during the day the smoke increased until it got to be almost suffocating. Not far from Apple Creek is the little village of Sterling, and near Sterling lived the Stevens family. Mr. Stevens was away from home on the day that the fire approached his house, and it so happened that his wife was sick in bed. Their children were a girl of eight years and a boy of eleven. The boy had heard that it was a good thing to plough a furrow across the path of the advancing flames, and about noon of the day in question he tried to protect the property in that manner. With the two-horse team and the plough he cut a trench around the house and the sheds, and then another trench around the stacks of unthreshed wheat. He was not strong enough to plough the trench to a great depth; but the wide line of damp earth thrown up would be hard for the flames to leap across, especially since his little sister followed him around, carrying away all trash that would add to the fury of the flames. That night the fire was so near that the poor woman thought of getting out of bed with the purpose of attempting to escape, but she was too ill to try such a thing. Moreover, she knew that if her husband could reach the house he would come, and she watched and prayed as the light came into her room from the crimson skies without. When the flames, running before the wind, came down upon the Stevens' place they licked up the fences in a jiffy, swept away the shocks of grain and stacks of hay in the fields, and then rolled suddenly up to the furrows ploughed by the boy. The wheat stacks fell a prey, and numberless sparks were scattered around the house; but the brave boy and his sister ran all about, trampling out the fire wherever it caught. The little workers were desperate, for they knew that should the house burn their poor mother surely would perish in her bed. They fought with brooms, shovels, and water. Wherever they could they dug up fresh earth, and for

a quarter of an hour they did not pause a single moment. Once the house caught, and the wood began to add its crackling to the rush and roar of the vast prairie fire; but the children dashed bucket after bucket of water upon the burning spot, and so put it out. They carried the day. The great fire swept past, and in its wake came the father, half frantic with joy, to find that his little hero and heroine had saved their mother's life.

A SPELLING-BEE.

"I'm going to have a spelling-bee to-night," said Uncle John, "and I'll give a pair of skates to the boy who can best spell 'man.'"

The children turned and stared into one another's eyes.

"Best spell 'man,' Uncle John? Why, there's only one way!" they cried.

"There are all sorts of ways," replied Uncle John. "I leave you to think of it a while."

"I think this is Joe's to tell," interrupted Uncle John. "How was it, boy?"

"Why," said Joe, "I thought the girls had as much right on the pond as the boys. So I spoke to one or two of the bigger boys, and they thought so, too, and we stopped it all. I thought it was mean to treat girls that way."

There came a flash from Uncle John's pocket. The next minute the skates were on Joe's knee.

"The spelling-match is over," said Uncle John, "and Joe has won the prize."

Three bewildered faces mutely questioned him.

"Boys," he answered, gravely, "we've been spelling 'man,' not in letters, but in acts. I told you there were different ways, and we've proved it here to-night. Think over it, boys, and see."

"Katie, why haven't you warmed my study better? The thermometer shows only fifty-eight degrees!"

"But, Professor, for so small a room it seems to me fifty-eight degrees are enough."

BISHOP ADJAI CROWTHER.

A SLAVE WHO BECAME A BISHOP.

American travellers in England, as a rule, make a pilgrimage to the ancient cathedral of Canterbury, which is filled with associations of moment to the historian and the Christian. Here the Crusaders kept vigil before departing to the Holy Land. Here Becket was murdered. The stone steps are still here, worn in deep hollows by the knees of countless pilgrims in past centuries. Every stately pillar and carved stone has its record of dim, far-off days in English history.

One scene, however, which was witnessed in this great minster, is more significant to Americans, vexed as they are with their race problems, than any murder or coronation.

Here, before the high altar, with all the solemn splendour of the ceremonial of the English Church, a poor freed slave, with a skin as black as coal, was consecrated the first bishop of the Niger.

Adjai, a Yoruba boy of twelve, was taken prisoner with his mother by the Foulah tribe, and sold to Portuguese slave-traders. His mother was left in Africa. An English man-of-war ran down the slave-ship, and they brought out from the hold the wretched prisoners frantic with terror at the white skins and blue eyes of their rescuers. They mistook the cannon-balls on deck for skulls, and the carcass of a hog in the cook's cabin for a human body, and tried to escape from the supposed cannibals by jumping into the sea.

The boy Adjai, was sent to the mission school at Sierra Leone. There he was taught the Christian faith, and trained to be a carpenter. He was baptized

under the name of Samuel Crowther, but kept, too, his own name, Adjai, saying proudly:

"I am Christian. But I am always black and Yoruba."

He proved to be so faithful and practical, both as Christian and negro, that he was sent to England to make known the condition and wants of his people. Large sums were given him, which he used with much sagacity for his race. The Queen sent Bibles, Prince Albert a steel corn-mill, and other farming implements, which Adjai taught his people how to use.

On his second visit he was made bishop. He returned to his own tribe, and after long search found his mother. He took her to his home, and she became a devout servant of Christ, and lived to a great age. But she persisted in wearing always the decent Yoruba costume, and in speaking that language, answering all arguments by saying:

"I am negro. Jesus will know me in my own skin and in my blanket."

No man in Africa served the Master more faithfully than Bishop Adjai Crowther. The thoughtful reader in the story of his life can find a meaning which, rightly used, will uplift his own.

The pond is an ocean to the tadpole.



PALACE OF DOM PEDRO I.

PALACE OF DOM PEDRO I.

Few things in history are more remarkable than the sudden and almost bloodless revolution which hurled from the throne of the vast Empire of Brazil, Dom Pedro, one of the most beneficent and liberty-loving monarchs the world has ever known. In his case the often quoted saying was abundantly verified, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." Doubtless when this unquiet dignity was laid aside, he enjoyed more real comfort and repose than when bearing the burdens of an empire.

"I ought to study photography," mused the seaside young man who had proposed again. "I really ought. I can develop more negatives in a given time than anybody I know of."

When going through a coal mine it is necessary to carry a safety-lamp, in order to throw a light across the path. The light prevents many a stumble over the uneven ground. This world is full of the darkness of sin; snares and temptations lie in the Christian's path; but if he carries with him the lamp of God's word, it will show him where the danger lies, and so keep him from falling.

And he buttoned up his coat and went away.

"What does he mean?" asked Bob. "I think it's a joke," said Harry, thoughtfully, "and when Uncle John asks me, I'm going to say, 'Why, m-a-n, of course.'"

"It's a conundrum, I know," said Joe; and he leaned his head on his hand and settled down to think.

Time went slowly to the puzzled boys for all their fun that day. It seemed as if that after-supper time would never come; but it came at last, and Uncle John came too with a shiny skate-runner peeping out of his great-coat pocket.

Uncle John did not delay; he sat down and looked straight into Harry's eyes.

"Been a good boy to-day, Hal?"

"Yes—no," said Harry, flushing. "I did something Aunt Mag told me not to do, because Ned Barnes dared me to. I can't bear a boy to dare me. What's that to do with spelling 'man'?" he added, half to himself.

But Uncle John had turned to Bob.

"Had a good day, my boy?"

"Haven't had fun enough," answered Bob, stoutly. "It's all Joe's fault, too. We boys wanted the pond to ourselves for one day, and we made up our minds that when the girls came we'd clear them off. But Joe, he—"

The Child at the Door.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock."
—Rev. iii. 20.

There's a child outside your door;
Let him in!
He may never pass it more,
Let him in.
Let a little, wandering wail
Find a shelter sweet and safe,
In the love and light of home,
Let him come!

There's a cry along your street
Day by day!
There's a sound of little feet
Gone astray.
Open wide your guarded gate
For the little ones that wait,
Till a voice of love from home
Bid them come.

There's a voice divinely sweet
Calls to-day;
"Will you let these little feet
Stray away?
Let the lambs be homeward led,
And of you it shall be said:
You have done it faithfully
Unto Me."

We shall stand some solemn day
At His door!
Shall we hear the Master say,
O'er and o'er,
"Let the children all come in
From a world of pain and sin;
Open wide the doors of home,
Children come!"

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 6, 1897.

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC

FEBRUARY 14, 1897.

The daughter of the Syrophenician woman.—Matthew 15. 21-28.

A DISTRESSED MOTHER.

She was not of the Jewish nation, but belonged to the Gentile race, consequently she had not been so highly favoured in respect to religious instruction. Her residence was on the borders of Canaan, so that she would not be altogether ignorant of the religion which Jesus Christ came into the world to propagate. But though a Gentile by birth, she was a mother and had all the feelings of a mother. Who can tell the feelings of a mother when any of her children are afflicted? Children never can know how much they are indebted to their mothers. Honour thy father and thy mother. Your mother is your best friend.

THE OCCASION OF HER AFFLICTION.

Verse 22. My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. Worse than to be insane. A demon was in her soul. The poor girl was completely under the control of the devil who had taken possession of her. The mother had no doubt used every means in her power to relieve, if possible, her beloved child. But having failed she now came to Christ. All should go to him in every time of need. Use all proper means, but pray to him for success. A good man was accustomed to say to persons who were in trouble, "Do the best you can, and pray to God to help you." This was what

this woman did. See how she addressed the Saviour. "Have mercy upon me." She made the affliction of her child her own.

HOW CHRIST TREATED HER.

Verse 23. "Answered her not a word." Acted as though he did not hear her, or if he did hear, as though he did not care. This was certainly strange, and not according to his usual custom. He knew why he acted thus. He does not always give reasons for his conduct, but he always acts wisely. The disciples interposed on her behalf, which was very creditable to them, which should teach us a lesson, viz., to show sympathy to those in trouble and help if we can. Jesus was trying the woman's faith, and was making her an object lesson for future ages.

HIS DISCOVERING MANNER.

Verse 24. This means he was sent first to the Jews—lost sheep of Israel. When she heard these words, she did not give up, but came nearer to Christ, and even worshipped him, and said, "Lord, help me." What an example is this. Let nothing keep you from Christ. No matter how great may be your discouragements, ever keep saying, "Nearer, my God, to thee." Perseverance rewards toil. Those who regard the clouds shall not reap. Never let difficulties deter you when engaged in good work. What a plea she makes, as much as to say, if you are sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, you can help me, for though I do not belong to those to whom you are sent, I am sure that I need help.

CHRIST'S ANSWER.

Verse 26. This looks like an insult. The Jews called all Gentiles by the op-

"LITTLE DO DOES IT."

Little Tommy Bell, when told to shut a door, or do anything about the house, had a funny way of replying by saying: "I do does it." And he persisted in this form of expression until they nicknamed him "Little Do Does It." Was it not a queer name for a boy?

But Tommy, like some other little boys, was not always as prompt at performing as he was in promising; and so his papa told him one day that he should have to name him "I Don't Do It," instead of "I Do Does It," if he did not mind.

Tommy would reply: "But, papa, I do does it after a while; I don't never don't do it."

"Yes, my son, that is something to your credit. 'Better late than never,' as the saying is; but better still, never late. You must learn to act promptly, my boy, or we cannot continue to call you 'Little Do Does It.'"

A THRILLING STORY BY J. B. GOUGH.

A minister of the Gospel told me one of the most thrilling incidents I ever heard in my life. A member of his congregation came home for the first time in his life intoxicated, and his boy met him upon his doorstep, clapping his hands, exclaiming:

"Papa's come home!"
He seized the boy by the shoulder, swung him around, staggered and fell in the hall.

The minister said to me: "I could give you his name, if necessary. I spent the night in the house. I went out, bared my brow that the night air might fall upon it and cool it. I walked down the hill. There was his child—dead!"



TARSUS, BIRTH-PLACE OF ST. PAUL—(see lessons).

probious term of dogs, hence he was only speaking after the manner of men in what he now says. She was a clever woman, for she said in effect, call me a dog if you will, I claim the dog's portion. Give me the crumbs just the same as the dog always receives. She minded nothing else but the one thing which she had in view, hence she argues skillfully.

CHRIST'S COMMENDATION.

Verse 28. Delays you see, are not denials. When he at last speaks, he does so in the greatest commendation, and commends her faith her strong confidence, which she had in the power and goodness of God. If she had not professed faith, she never could have come through such floods of opposition as she had to face. She had evidently made up her mind as to her course. She felt unshaken confidence in God. And her conduct should teach us this lesson, that faith in God is absolutely necessary in the Christian warfare. "Without faith 't is impossible to please God." etc. Hebrews 11. 6.

KINDNESS TO DESTITUTE CHILDREN.

The Junior League of the Camden East church, upon the Newburg Circuit, Bay of Quinte Conference, deserves to be mentioned for their thoughtfulness and zeal in providing a well-filled box of clothing, books, and toys, for the needs of little ones under the care of the Rev. C. W. Watch, and his assistants in the child-saving work at Brighton. It is needless to say the box was very much appreciated, and the boys and girls of Camden East were the actual Santa Claus to some of these children. Let us hope that the joy in giving the gifts was as great as that of receiving.

There was his wife in strong convulsions, and he asleep!"

A man but thirty years of age asleep with a dead child in the house, having a blue mark upon the temple where the corner of the marble steps had come in contact with the head as he swung him around, and a wife upon the brink of the grave!

"Mr. Gough," said my friend, "I cursed the drink. He had told me I must remain until he awoke, and I did. When he awoke he passed his hand over his face, and exclaimed: 'What is the matter? Where am I? Where is my boy?'"

"You cannot see him."
"Stand out of the way! I will see my boy!"

To prevent confusion I took him to the child's bed, and as I turned down the sheet and showed him the corpse he uttered a wild shriek: "O my child!"

That minister said further to me: "One year after he was brought from a lunatic asylum to lie side by side with his wife in one grave, and I attended the funeral."

The minister of the Gospel who told me that fact is to-day a drunken hostler in a stable in Boston!

Now tell me what rum won't do! It will debase, degrade, imbrute, and damn everything that is noble, bright, glorious, and Godlike in a human being. There is nothing that drink will not do that is vile, dastardly, cowardly, sneaking, or hellish. We are united, comrades, are we not, to fight this monster rum till the day of our death?—Charleston Messenger.

One-third of the females of France over fourteen years of age are farm labourers.

HOW TO WINTER A BOY WELL.

A writer in The Colporteur gives some pretty good advice upon "how to winter a boy." We are inclined to believe that the boy might take some of it himself, as well as his parents:

"Start him to school early in the fall, and see that he has something to keep him busy a part of every morning, afternoon, and evening.

"Encourage him to eat three square meals, passing up his plate as often as he pleases, and then set the cookie-pan and raisin-box out of his reach between meals.

"A sled, a good pair of skates, and several baseballs are very important for keeping him in good condition.

"A boy and a dog fit each other pretty well, but two wide-awake boys are better.

"Give him nine hours for sleep, seven for study, four for work, and four for play every day.

"Sprinkle everything well with praise. "Stretch him once in a while on a high ideal of manhood.

"A pinch of giving up to others and a dime savings-bank are wholesome.

"Let him kick up his heels, but teach him not to kick anything but air.

"If he is in love with his mother, his grandmother, and several other good women, you need not worry lest he run to girl nonsense.

"An excellent exercise is for him to plant both knees on the carpet and bury his face in the bed covers just before jumping in. God will take care of what he says."

ST. GOTHARD TUNNEL.

Many people have heard of the St. Gothard tunnel, that great engineering triumph of the nineteenth century, but few, perhaps, have grasped the full idea of its vastness. Beginning at the town of Goshenen, in Switzerland, it extends through the entire range of St. Gothard mountains, and ends nine and one-fourth miles to the south of its beginning, in the little town of Airolo, in Italy. The work consumed ten years' time, the labour of over three thousand men daily, and over eleven millions of dollars. And yet it seemed a labour of love, as both Italy and Switzerland toiled unremittingly to overcome this mighty barrier which the Alps had interposed between them, eager to clasp hands in a closer union, even though it were in the depths of the St. Gothard range, six thousand feet below the top. But all the toil is over now, and the journey can be easily made in sixteen minutes by rail.

There is a pretty story of love and devotion connected with the history of the tunnel. Two orphan children

lived near it, Jean and Louise Dufour. Jean, a stalwart lad, could remember when they began boring it, but they had been working longer ago than Louise could remember. She was a poor little invalid, but the doctor had said when the tunnel was finished and cars running, Jean should take her to Italy, and she would recover. So the children had been very impatiently waiting. The boring was done at last, but the day it was completed little Louise had fainted from exhaustion. Too frightened to reason, Jean dared not wait, he thought, for the cars to get running, so taking the money they had saved for the journey, he lifted his little, frail and still unconscious sister in his arms, and carried her the entire distance. Oh, what a black, horrible nightmare it all seemed like! For fear and excitement made him speed along like the wind. Years afterward, when Louise was fully recovered, and they were both rosy and happy, Jean said, "that they passed through the awful shadows of death that night in the tunnel." "And was not this sunny town of Nervi heaven?" "It had vines and sloping hills, covered with the dusky olives, and beautiful gardens full of roses and magnolias and oranges and lemons and palms. Surely if not, it must be very much like heaven."—Michigan Advocate.

"How Shall I Give?" by the Rev. George A. Fournet, M.A., is a very thoughtful and judicious treatment of an important subject. It clearly sets forth the obligation of Christian stewardship, the principle of tithing in both the Old and New Testaments, and its application to modern conditions. We cordially commend the pamphlet.

The Right Kind of a Boy.

Here's to the boy who's not afraid
To do his share of work;
Who never is by toll dismayed,
And never tries to shirk.

The boy whose heart is brave to meet
All lions in the way;
Who's not discouraged by defeat,
But tries another day.

The boy who always means to do
The very best he can;
Who always keeps the right in view,
And aims to be a man.

Such boys as these will grow to be
The men whose hand will guide
The future of our land; and we
Shall speak their names with pride.

J. Cole, the Boy Hero

BY EMMA GELLIBRAND.

CHAPTER IV.

And now I must confess to those—for surely there will be a few—who have felt a little interest so far, in the fortunes of J. Cole, that a period in my story has arrived when I would fain lay down my pen, and not awaken the sleeping past, to recall the sad trouble that befell him.

I am almost an old woman now, and all this happened many years ago, when my hair was golden instead of silver. I was younger in those days, and now am peacefully and hopefully waiting God's time for my summons. Troubles have been my lot, many and hard to bear. Loss of husband, children, dear, good friends, many by death, and some troubles harder even than those, the loss of trust, and bitter awakening to the ingratitude and worthlessness of those in whom I have trusted. All these I have endured. Yet time and trouble have not sufficiently hardened my heart that I can write of what follows without pain.

Christmas was over, and my dear husband again away for some months. As soon as I could really say, "Spring is here," we were to leave London for our country home, and Joe was constantly talking to Mrs. Wilson about his various pets, left behind in the gardener's care. There was an old jackdaw, an especial favourite of his, a miserable owl too, who had met with an accident, resulting in the loss of an eye; a more evil looking object than "Cyclops," as my husband christened him, I never saw. Sometimes on a dark night this one eye would gleam luridly from out the shadowy recesses of the garden and an unearthly cry of "Hoo-oo-t," fall on the ear, enough to give one the "creeps for a hour," as Mary, the housemaid, said. But Joe loved Cyclops, or rather "Clippy," as he called him, and the bird hopped after Joe about the garden, as if he quite returned the feeling.

All our own dogs, and two or three malmed ones, and a cat or two, more or less hideous, and indebted to Joe's mercy in rescuing them from traps, snares, etc.—all these creatures were Joe's delight. Each week the gardener's boy wrote a few words to Joe of their health and wonderful doings, and each week Joe faithfully sent a shilling, to be laid out in food for them. Then there was Joe's especial garden, also a sort of hospital, or convalescent home rather, where many blighted, unhealthy looking plants and shrubs, discarded by the gardener, and cast aside to be burnt on the weed heap, had been rescued by Joe, patiently nursed and petted as it were into life again by constant care and watching, and after being kept in pots awhile till they showed, by sending forth some tiny shoot or bud, that the sap of life was once more circulating freely, were then planted in the sheltered corner he called "his own."

What treasures awaited him in this small square of earth. What bunches of violets he would gather for the "Missis"; and his longing to get back to his various pets, and his garden, was the topic of conversation on many a long evening between Joe and Mrs. Wilson.

Little Bogle, the fox terrier, was the only dog we had with us in town, and Bogle hated London. For the quiet country life, the incessant roll of carriages, trampling of horses, and callings of coachmen, shrill cab whistles, and all the noises of a fashionable neighbourhood at night during a London season, were most objectionable to Bogle; he could not rest, and often Joe got out of bed in the night, and took him in his arms, to prevent his waking all of us

with his shrill barking at the unwanted sounds.

As I have said before, I am very nervous, and the prospect of spending several more weeks in the big London house, without my husband, was far from pleasant; so I invited my widowed sister and her girls to stay with me some time longer, and made up my mind to banish my fears, and think of nothing but that the dark nights would be getting shorter and shorter, and meanwhile our house was well protected, as far as good strong bolts and chains could do so.

One night I felt more nervous than usual. I had expected a letter from America for some days past, and none had arrived. On this evening I knew the mail was due, and I waited anxiously for the last ring of the postman at ten o'clock; but I was doomed to listen in vain; there was the sharp, loud ring next door, but not at ours, and I went to my room earlier than the others, really to give way to a few tears that I could not control.

I sat by my bedroom fire, thinking, and I am afraid, conjuring up all sorts of terrible reasons for my dear husband's silence, until I must have fallen asleep, for I awoke chilly and cramped from the uncomfortable posture I had slept in. The fire was out, and the house silent as the grave; not even a carriage passing to take up some late guest. I looked at the clock—half-past three, and then from my window. It was "that darkest hour before dawn," and I hurried into bed, and endeavoured to sleep; but no, I was hopelessly wide awake; no amount of counting, or mental exercise on the subject of "sheep going through a hedge" had any effect, and I found myself lying awake, listening. Yes, I know that I was listening for something that I should hear before long, but I did not know what.

"Hark! what was that?" a sudden thud, as if something had fallen somewhere in the house; then silence, except for the loud beating of my heart, that threatened to suffocate me. "Nonsense," I said to myself, "I am foolishly nervous to-night. It is nothing here, or Bogle would bark;" so I tried again to sleep. Hush! Surely that was a foot-step going up or down the stairs! I could not endure the agony of being alone any longer, but would go to my sister's room, just across the landing, and get her to come and stay the rest of the night with me. I put on my slippers and dressing-gown, and opening my door, came face to face with my sister, who was coming to me.

"Let me come in," she said, "and don't let us alarm the girls, but I feel certain something is going on downstairs. Bogle barked furiously an hour ago, and then was suddenly silent."

"That must have been when I was asleep," I replied; "but no doubt Joe heard him, and has taken him in."

"That may be," said my sister, "but I have kept on hearing queer noises at the back of the house; they seemed in Joe's room at first. Come and listen yourself on the stairs."

It is strange, but true, that many persons, horribly nervous at the thought of danger, find all their presence of mind in full force when actually called upon to face it. So it is with me, and so it was on that night. I stood on the landing, and listened, and in a few moments heard muffled sounds downstairs, like persons moving about stealthily.

"There is certainly somebody down there, Nelly," I said to my sister, "and they are down in the basement. If we could creep down quietly and get into the drawing-room, we might open the window and call the watchman or policeman; both are on duty until seven."

"But think," said my sister, "of the fright of the girls if they heard us, and find they were left alone. The servants, too, will scream, and rush about, as they always do. Let us go down and make sure there are thieves, and then see what is best to be done. The door at the top of the kitchen stairs is locked, so they must be down there; and perhaps if we could get the watchman to come in quietly, we might catch them in a trap, by letting him through the drawing-room, and into the conservatory. He could get into the garden from there, and as they must have got in that way from the mews over the stable wall, and through the garden, they would try to escape the same way, and the watchman would be waiting for them, and cut off their retreat."

I agreed, and we stole downstairs into the drawing-room, where we locked ourselves in, then very gently and carefully drew up one of the side blinds of the bay window. The morning had begun to break, and everything in the wide road was distinctly visible. In the distance I could see the policeman on duty, but on the opposite side, and going away from our house instead of toward it. He

would turn the corner at the top of the road, and go past the houses parallel with the backs of our row, and then appear at the opposite end of the park, and come along our side; there was no intermediate turning—nothing but an unbroken row of about forty detached houses facing each other.

What could we do? I dared not wait until the policeman came back, quite twenty minutes must pass before then, and day being so near at hand the light was increasing every moment, and the burglars would surely not leave without visiting the drawing-room and dining-room, and would perhaps murder us, to save themselves from detection.

If I could only attract the policeman's attention—but how?

My sister was close to the door listening, and every instant we dreaded hearing them coming up the kitchen stairs. I could not understand Bogle not barking, and Joe not waking, for where I was I could distinctly hear the men moving about in the pantry and kitchen.

"I wonder," I said to my sister, "if I could put something across from this balcony to the stonework by the front steps? It seems such a little distance, and if I could step across, I could open the front gate in an instant and run after the policeman. I shall try."

"You will fall and kill yourself," my sister said; "the space is much wider than you think."

But I was determined to try, for if I let that policeman go out of sight, what horrors might happen in the twenty minutes before he would come back.

The idea of one of the girls waking and calling out, or Joe waking and being shot or stabbed, gave me a feeling of desperation, as though I alone could and must save them.

Luckily the house was splendidly built, every window-sash sliding noiselessly and easily in its groove. I opened the one nearest to the hall-door steps, and saw that the stone ledge abutted to within about two feet of the low balcony of the window; but I was too nervous to trust myself to spring across even that distance. At that moment my sister whispered:

"I hear somebody coming up the kitchen stairs!"

Desperately I cast my eyes round the room for something to bridge the open space that would bear my weight, if only for a moment. The fender-stool caught my eye, that might do, it was strong, and more than long enough. In an instant we had it across, and I was out of the window and down the front steps.

As I turned the handle of the heavy iron gate, I looked down at the front kitchen window. A man stood in the kitchen, and he looked up and saw me—such a horrible looking ruffian, too. Fear lent wings to my feet, and I flew up the road; the watchman was just entering the park from the opposite end, he saw me, and sounded his whistle; the policeman turned and ran towards me. I was too exhausted to speak, and he caught me, just as, having gasped "Thieves at 50!" (the number of our house), I fell forward in a dead swoon.

When I recovered, I was lying on my own bed, my sister, the scared servants, and the policeman, all around me. From them I heard that directly the man in the kitchen caught sight of me, he warned his companion, who was busy forcing the lock of the door at the head of the kitchen stairs, and my sister heard them both rushing across the garden, where they had a ladder against the stable-wall. They must have pulled this up after them, and tossed it into the next garden, where it was found, to delay pursuit. The park-keeper had, after sounding his whistle, rushed to our house, got in at the window, and ran to the door at the top of the kitchen stairs, but it was quite impossible to open it; the burglars had cleverly left something in the lock when disturbed, and the key would not turn. He then went through the drawing-room into the conservatory, where a glass door opened on the garden, but by the time the heavy sliding glass panel was unfastened, and the inner door unbolted, the men had disappeared; they took with them much less than they hoped to have done, for there were parcels and packets of spoons, forks, and a case of very handsome gold salt-cellars, a marriage gift, always kept in a baize-lined chest in the pantry, the key of which I retained, and which chest was supposed until now to be proof against burglars; the lock had been burnt all round with some instrument, most likely a poker heated in the gas, and then forced inwards from the burnt woodwork.

"How was it," I asked, "Joe did not wake during all this, or Bogle bark?"

As I asked the question, I noticed that my sister turned away, and Mrs. Wilson, after vainly endeavouring to look uncon-

cerned, threw her apron suddenly over her head, and burst out crying.

"What is the matter?" I said, sitting up; "what are you all hiding from me? Send Joe to me; I will learn the truth from him."

At this the policeman came forward, and then I heard that Joe was missing, his room was in great disorder, and one of his shoes, evidently dropped in his hurry, had been found in the garden, near some spoons thrown down by the thieves; his clothes were gone, so he evidently had dressed himself after pretending to go to bed as usual; his blankets and sheets were taken away, used no doubt, the policeman said, to wrap up the stolen things.

"Is it possible," I asked, "that you suspect Joe is in league with these burglars?"

"Well, mum," said the man, "it looks queer, and very like it. He slept downstairs close to the very door where they got in; he never gives no alarm, he must have been expecting something, or else why was he dressed? And how did his shoe come in the garden? And what's more to the point, if so be as he's innocent, where is he? These young rascals is that artful, you'd be surprised to know the dodges they're up to."

"But," I interrupted, "it is impossible. It is cruel to suspect him. He is gone, true enough, but I'm sure he will come back. Perhaps he ran after the man to try and catch them, and dropped his shoe then."

"That's not likely, mum," said he, with a pitying smile at my ignorance of circumstantial evidence; "he'd have called out to stop 'em, and it ain't likely they'd have let him get up their ladder, afore chucking of it into the next garden, if so be as he was a-chasing of 'em to get 'em took. No, mam; I'm very sorry, particular as you seem so kindly disposed; but, in my humble opinion, he's a artful young dodger, and this 'ere job has been planned ever so long, and he's connived at it, and has hooked it along with his pals. I knows 'em, but we'll soon nab him; and if so be as you'll be so kind as to let me take down in writin' all you knows about 'J. Cole,' which is his name, I'm informed—where you took him from, his character, and previous career, it will help considerable in laying hands on him; and when he's found we'll soon find his pals."

Of course, I told all I know about Joe. I felt positive he would come back, perhaps in a few minutes, to explain everything. Besides, there was Bogle, too. Why should he take Bogle? The policeman suggested that "perhaps the dawg foller'd him, and he had taken it along with him, to prevent being traced by its means."

At length, all this questioning being over, the household settled down into a sort of strange calm. It seemed to us days since we had said "Good night," and sought our rooms on that night, and yet it was only twenty-four hours ago; in that short time how much had taken place! On going over all the plate, etc., we missed many more things; and Mrs. Wilson, whose faith in Joe's honesty never wavered, began to think the poor boy might have been frightened at having slept through the robbery; and as he was so proud of having the plate used every day in his charge, when he discovered it had been stolen, he might have feared we should blame him so much for it, that he had run away home to his people in his fright, meaning to ask his father, or his adored Dick, to return to me and plead for him. I thought, too, this was possible, for I knew how terribly he would reproach himself for letting anything in his care be stolen. I therefore made up my mind to telegraph to his father at once; but not to alarm him, I said—

"Is Joe with you? Have reason to think he has gone home. Answer back."

The answer came some hours after, for in those small villages communication was difficult. The reply ran thus:

"We have not seen Joe; if he comes to-night will write at once. Hoping there is nothing wrong."

So that surmise was a mistake, for Joe had money, and would go by train if he went home, and be there in two hours.

All the household sat up nearly all that night, or rested uncomfortably on sofas and armchairs; we felt too unsettled to go to bed, though worn out with suspense, and the previous excitement and fright. Officials and detectives came and went during the evening, and looked about for traces of the robbers, and before night a description of the stolen things, and a most minute one of Joe, were posted outside the police-stations, and all round London for miles. A reward of twenty pounds was offered for Joe, and my heart ached to know there was a hue and cry after him like a common thief.

(To be continued.)

Two Cents a Week.

"Two cents a week" the Master asks
From all the loving children's hands;
Two cents a week to tell his love
And teach his Word in foreign lands.

"Two cents a week" to place afar
The gates of mercy, high and broad,
Two cents a week to spread afar
The knowledge of our risen Lord.

"Two cents a week" may send a blaze
Of Gospel light o'er India's plains;
Two cents a week may free a race
For ages bound by error's chains.

"Two cents a week;" from China's shore
We catch the cry and hear the plea;
Two cents a week a few years more,
And struggling China shall be free.

"Two cents a week" may wake the note
Of Zion's song in fair Japan;
Two cents a week, O blessed Christ,
May tell of all thy love to man.

WILD DUCKS.

BY ELLA RODMAN CHURCH

To see a waddling and swimming fowl,
Like the barnyard duck, spread a good-
sized pair of wings and
mount up into the air
until it became a small
speck in the sky, would be
a remarkable sight; yet
this is just what its
cousin—the wild-duck,
who is a very "high
flyer"—does continually.
It can also swim and
float, for, like its plainer
relative, it belongs to the
swan family, and must
therefore be at home on
the water.

These wild ducks are
beautiful birds, and each
family of them has its own
peculiar style of dress.
Thus, the summer or wood
duck—which is the hand-
somest of all the species
—appears in the most
gorgeous colouring, with
softly-shaded tints, and it
moves so gracefully that
it seems more like a swan
than a duck. It is called
the summer duck, because
it is the only one of its
tribe that is seen here dur-
ing the summer months;
and because its eggs are
usually laid in a hollow
tree or stump. It is also
called the wood duck.

The nest is carefully
hidden under grasses and
water ferns; and both
parents are very watchful
that no harm shall come
to the precious eggs. The
mother-bird does not seem
to know what fear is
when she is sitting on her
eggs; and a naturalist
tells a story of a pair of
summer ducks which had
built their nest in a
hollow oak overhanging a
creek. Not more than ten
feet away from them some
workmen were building a
boat, and a constant noise
and hammering went on
from morning till night.
In spite of all this con-
fusion the mother-duck
would not move from her
eggs, and there she stayed
until—before the little
ducklings appeared—some
heartless sportsman shot
them both.

The summer duck is
known all over the coun-
try, as it usually flies in pairs, or in
very small flocks. When it alights it
utters a curious, whistling sort of cry,
that sounds like "tee eek" and can be
heard at some distance. Strange to say,
it prepares its food before eating it by
making a mixture of dried snails, acorns,
and wild-oat seeds.

The mallard—although it looks more
like the common duck—is nearly as hand-
some as the summer duck, and has a
great variety of glowing and beautiful
colours in its plumage: "The dark
emerald of the head, the snowy-white
line which encircles the neck, the brown-
ish carmine of the chest, the gold and
blue and crimson of the wings, the clear,
flashing transparency of the eye—are all
beautiful features."

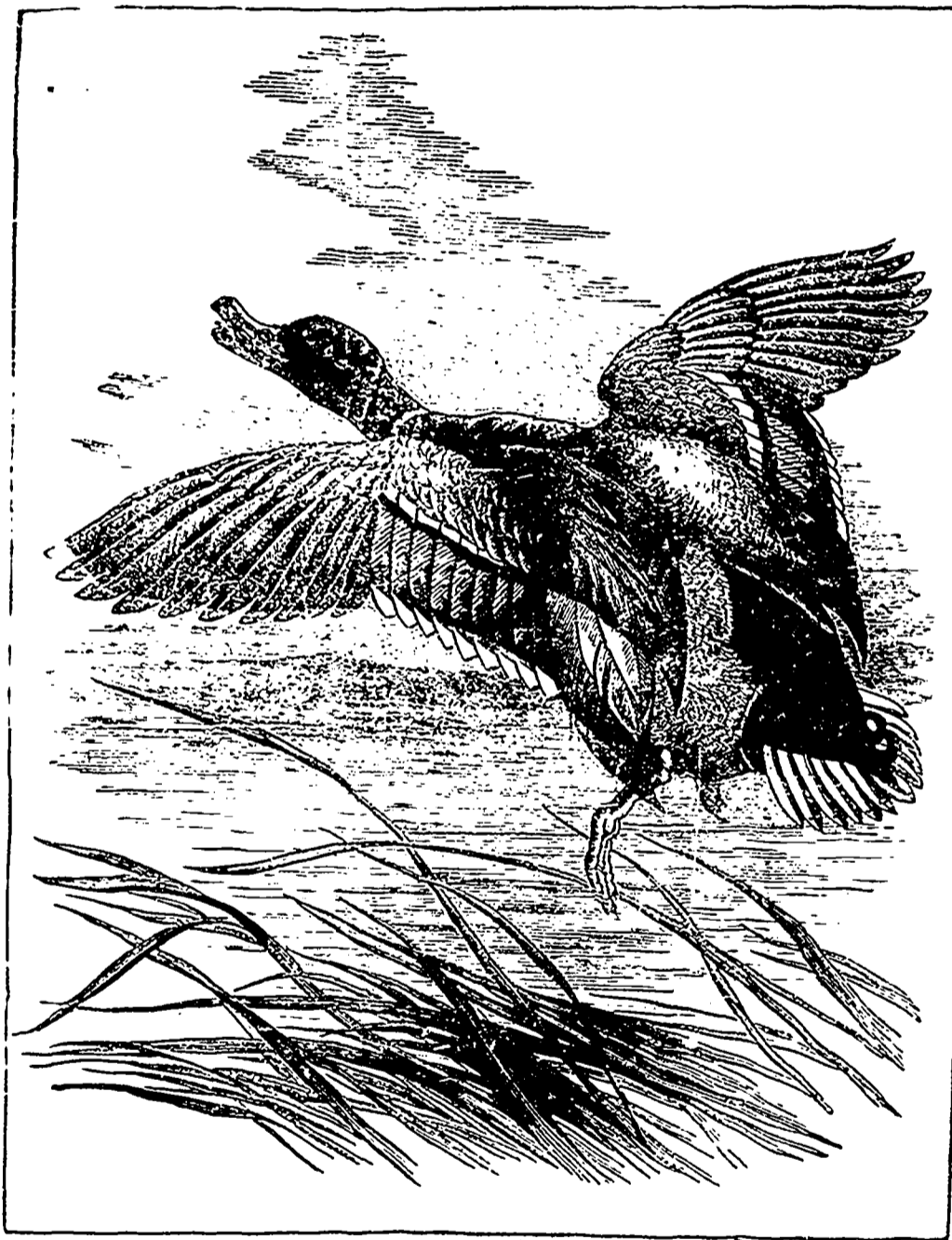
This duck is a strong flyer, and very
suspicious of any near approach. He
may sometimes be seen floating on a
lake like a swan, with his beautiful,
glittering head raised high, and his eyes
gazing in the sun. A long distance
off, perhaps, there is a man with a gun,

but the mallard seems to know it, and
to remember the dreadful noise of the
report that frightened him so much; so,
drawing his feet under his body, he
springs upon them, opens his wings, and,
with loud "quacks!" takes himself off—
as the bird in the picture is doing.

The blue-winged teal and the green-
winged teal are both beautiful birds.
The latter has such soft, beautiful shaded
colouring, that it seems to have been
laid on with a fine brush. The head is
of emerald, streaked with chestnut; the
wings of the freshest green, and the
back is finely pencilled.

These ducks are all very much sought
after for their tender, juicy flesh; but
none are quite equal to the canvas-back.
This delightful, but rather stupid duck
begins to arrive from the north early in
October, and it always comes in great
flocks, and is slaughtered in countless
numbers. It dearly loves the wild
celery, for which it has to dive, as the
root—the only part it cares for—grows
under water; and the widgeon, another
duck that likes celery, is sure to be the
companion of the canvas-back.

This widgeon has been described as a
"thorough rascal," getting his living by
stealing from others. He cannot dive
as his companion can; but he is quite



WILD DUCK.

as fond of celery, so he waits patiently
until his victim disappears in quest of
food. "A violent commotion now goes
on under the water. It is the struggle
of the duck with the plant. Finally, the
luckless canvas-back emerges, blinded
momentarily by the water. The widgeon
'gibbles' quickly forward, snatches the
morsel, and is off ere the dupe has got
the water out of his eyes." The canvas-
back does not like this, yet—except at
feeding-time—he and the widgeon are
very good friends.

LESSON NOTES.

STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

LESSON VII.—FEBRUARY 14.

THE PRISON OPENED.

Acts 5. 17-32. Memory verses, 29-32.

GOLDEN TEXT.

We ought to obey God rather than men.
—Acts 5. 29.

OUTLINE.

1. Prisoners, v. 17, 18.
2. Preachers, v. 19-28.
3. Witnesses, v. 29-32.

Time.—Not definitely known, but prob-
ably between A.D. 30 and A.D. 33.

Place.—The hall of the Sanhedrin; the
prison, the temple—all in Jerusalem.

HOME READINGS.

- M. The prison opened.—Acts 5. 17-32.
Tu. Rejoicing.—Acts 5. 33-42.
W. Jonah's prayer.—Jonah 2. 1-9.
Th. Fearless obedience.—Jer. 26. 8-15.
F. Suffering for Christ.—1 Peter 3. 8-17.
S. Blessed in trial.—Luke 6. 17-23.
Su. Boldness for truth.—Dan. 3. 8-18.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Prisoners, v. 17, 18.
Who were put in the prison?
Did they deserve to go there?
What is said in 1 Peter 4. 16?
Who put the apostles in prison?
What made them angry at the
apostles?

**STRAIGHTENING A CHIMNEY
STACK.**

The straightening of a chimney stack
at a brick and tile works in Earnest, Pa.,
was recently accomplished in a novel
manner. The stack is 122 feet high, 11
feet square at the base, tapering some-
what at the top, and weighs 400 tons.
The walls are 36 inches thick. The top
was found to be leaning 45 inches from
the vertical line. To right the chim-
ney, ten and a half inches of brick work
was removed from the foundations on
three sides. As the bricks were re-
moved, square blocks of wood were in-
serted, one after another, until three
sides of the structure rested on the
blocks. Between the blocks substantial
brick piers six inches high were built,
leaving a space of four and a half inches
between the top of the piers and the bot-
tom of the undermined brickwork. The
blocks were then set on fire and kept
burning evenly. If one burned faster
than the others, the fire on that par-
ticular block was checked, so that all
were made to burn uniformly, and, as
the blocks were reduced to ashes, the
stack slowly righted. As the top
gradually swung back through the
45-inch arc, small fissures appeared near
the base. In every groove a steel wedge
was driven to maintain the weight of
the walls. The entire work consumed
one day, and the reduction of the wooden
blocks to ashes required one hour.—The
Electrical Review.

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