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# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XIX.

TORONTO, JULY 1, 1899.

No. 26.



THE TARARD INN, SOUTHWARK.

### Grown Up Land.

Good-morning, fair maid, with lashes brown,  
Can you tell me the way to Womanhood Town?

Oh, this way and that way—never stop,  
'Tis picking up stitches grandma will drop,  
'Tis kissing the baby's troubles away  
'Tis learning that cross words never will pay,  
'Tis helping mother, 'tis sowing up rents,  
'Tis reading and playing, 'tis saving the pence,  
'Tis lovin' and smiling, forgetting to frown;  
Oh, that is the way to Womanhood Town.

Just wait, my brave lad—one moment I pray;  
Manhood Town lies where—can you tell the way?

Oh, by toiling and trying we reach that land—  
A bit with the head, a bit with the hand—  
'Tis by climbing up the steep hill Work,  
'Tis by keeping out of the wide street Shirk,  
'Tis by always taking the weak one's part,  
'Tis by giving mother a happy heart,  
'Tis by keeping bad thoughts and actions down,  
Oh, that is the way to Manhood Town.  
And the lad and the maiden ran hand-in-hand,  
To their fair estate in the grown-up land.

### CHAUCER.

BY THE REV. ALFRED H. BEYER, LL.D.

Professor of Modern Languages and Literature,  
Victoria University, Toronto.

Chaucer was the first great English poet; he may also be called the first great Englishman. Our ideal of a "fine old English gentleman" is not the same as our ideal of a Saxon. The Saxon is sober, even sombre, and, if not solitary, he is at best domestic, but he is not social. The typical Englishman has a clear head, a sprightly temper, and social grace that never came from the Saxon stalk or from German forests, but from Norman blood and from the vine-clad hills of sunny France. With this social light and grace the Englishman retains



CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.

the sterling qualities of his Saxon ancestors—the moral earnestness that puts duty before glory, and truth before brilliance, the domestic instinct that puts home and wife and children before society; the individuality and independence that will not stoop to the slavery of fashion or of creed.

In the Norman, the aesthetic bent was much stronger than in the Saxon, whilst in the Saxon the ethical tendency was stronger than in the Norman. Again, the strong social instinct of the Norman made him largely the creature of society, fashion, authority; it gave to the race a solidarity—to use a French word for a French thing—in which the individual feels lost when he stands alone and never seems to find himself till he is lost in the mass, in society, on the crowded boulevard, in the cafe, in a great visible church, or in a great nation. The Saxon, on the other hand, was marked in all things by the strongest individuality. He felt best when he stood alone, his home was his castle, his own conscience and judgment the rule of faith and life, and his personal choice and vote the ground of his allegiance.

Now there were in England from the Norman Conquest till about the time of Chaucer these two races and two languages, Saxon and Norman, but from that time the two were blended into one

Chaucer may or may not have been a college student, but he certainly was a student, for his writings show that he was familiar with classic learning and with the modern languages and literature and science of his times. In our day more than in Chaucer's, education is helped by books, but it is also true that education is now sometimes embarrassed and hindered by books as it was not then. In fact, we sometimes neglect education in the pursuit of learning—of book-learning, as it is sometimes called, with a touch of scorn not always undeserved. In the good old times young gentlemen had not so much of the school and college as they now have, but they had far more of the hall and court and camp. Would that our students had some of the advantages of the page and squire of old, so would they be saved from the prejudice often felt against a good student as a man whose head may be filled with learned lumber, but who does not count for much either in the business or in the amenities of life.

With Chaucer's appearance we are familiar, though his body has returned to the dust more than four hundred years ago. Occleve, one of the poet's friends and admirers, and himself a poet and an artist, painted from memory a portrait of his "worthy master," as he calls him, and writes thus of him in the book that contains the picture:



CHAUCER.

—the English. Chaucer is of abiding interest to us as an early and illustrious example of this composite character. Chaucer saw and felt and thought for himself, and his language was the perfection of art in that it was the most simple and direct expression of all that passed in his soul.

It is recorded on Chaucer's tombstone that he died on the 25th of October, 1400 A.D., but there is some uncertainty as to the year of his birth. The old biographers give 1328, following, it is supposed, an old slab or shield in Westminster Abbey, the predecessor of the present tombstone, erected in 1556 by Nicholas Brigham.

We have no information concerning Chaucer's education or academic training, but considering the opportunities of his time and his readiness to make the best of such opportunities, we may reasonably suppose him to have studied at Oxford or Cambridge. This is mere conjecture, however, notwithstanding some familiarity with university life that Chaucer shows in the "Canterbury Tales." But we do know that Chaucer was a student—he studied books, he studied nature, he studied human life and character.

His loving study of both books and nature finds expression in the "Legend of Good Women":

"As for me though that I know but lite  
On bookes for to read I me delight"

"Although his life be quenched, the resemblance

Of him hath in me so fresh liveliness,  
That to put other men in remembrance  
Of his person I have here his likeness  
Made, to this end in very soothfulness,  
That they that have of him lost  
thought and mind  
May by the painting here again him find."

This portrait impresses one at the first glance with a sense of life-likeness that could only come from one who bore his resemblance in "fresh liveliness." It represents Chaucer in the attitude of "a quiet talker with downcast eyes, but sufficiently erect bearing of body. The features are mild but expressive, with just a suspicion—certainly no more—of saturnine or sarcastic humour. The lips are full, and the nose is what is called good by the learned in such matters."

Chaucer's years of literary activity fall naturally into three periods—the first (till 1372), in which his writings were largely translations or imitations from the French; the second (1372-1384), in which he was chiefly influenced by Italian models; and the third (1384-1400), in which his English genius reached its maturity and his own originality was most marked. In the transition from one period to another there is no sudden break, but only an easy, natural development.

In the "Romaunt of the Rose," Chau-



CANTERBURY PILGRIMS.

cer did little beyond translating and condensing the work of the French masters. In his last period Chaucer writes in the Teutonic spirit, and presents more frequently for the love and worship of mankind the noble examples of conformity to the true, the beautiful and the good.

In the second or Italian period we notice "The House of Fame," "Troilus and Cressida," and the "Knight's Tale." In the "House of Fame" he dreams that he is carried away by an eagle to a sublime region between heaven and earth and sea. Here he finds the temple of fame. It is on a great rock of ice covered with the names of famous men:

"Many were melted or melting away,  
but the graving of the names of men  
of old fame was as fresh as if just written,  
for they were conserved with the shade."

"Troilus and Cressida" is a tale of ancient Troy, diversified with characters and incidents from all times and lands. Writers of the fourteenth century had no fear of anachronisms before their eyes.

The "Knight's Tale" is of the second period, though contained in the "Canterbury Tales." We have not space to dwell on it, but if the reader would study some of Chaucer's best poems in the best form and with the best annotations, he will find his work in a volume from the Clarendon Press Series containing this tale, "The Prologue" and the "Nonne Preste's Tale."

Here we reach the greatest of Chaucer's works, and the last that we will mention—"The Canterbury Tales." In this work Chaucer still follows the prevailing taste for stories, but he follows more freely than before his personal and national bent in choice of subject and mode of treatment. In the following passage Lowell describes the style of this work:

"His best tales run on like one of our inland rivers, sometimes hastening a little and turning upon themselves in eddies that dimple without retarding the current; sometimes loitering smoothly, while here and there a quiet thought, a

(Continued on next page.)



INTERIOR OF CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.

**He Could Go On Wid Dat Prayer.**

(A story of missionary work among the coloured people in the South, after they had been freed from slavery.)

A poor ignorant old coloured man. When the work among the freed began. Came to the mission place one day. And asked that he be taught to pray A lady missionary there, Tried him with the Lord's Prayer; She explained each separate sentence. Of forgiveness and repentance.

To understand he long had striven,  
"We must forgive to be forgiven."  
He agreed with all the rest,  
But "forgive" he couldn't digest.  
"So God forgive dis darkie none,  
Till he forgive every one  
Say, teacher, stop! I can't do dat"  
He left repeating, "Can't do dat"

After some weeks he came again,  
To go on "wid dat prayer" then,  
"Now, teacher, commence where yer close,

Forgive us as we forgive those.  
I've done forgive ole massa all,  
How he kicked me like a ball!  
Five hundred lashes once he gave  
Dis here poor old coloured slave!  
Hit a crowbar on me head,  
And trow me out for nearly dead.

And I pass him by on the street,  
An' wouldn't speak as we'd meet,  
But to-day I forgive him true,  
For when we met I says, 'How'd do?'  
Now, go on again wid dat prayer,  
I forgive him as it says there."

'Twould be well for many another,  
As well as our old coloured brother,  
Just to think more seriously of those  
Whom they refuse to forgive hard blows,  
You'll certainly have to do your share,  
Before you can go on "wid dat prayer."

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**Pleasant Hours:**

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, JULY 1, 1899.

**ALCOHOL AND COLD.**

The unvarying testimony of Arctic explorers, whale-fishers, fur-traders and trappers, and of the inhabitants of high northern latitudes, of Alpine guides and others exposed to extreme and long-continued cold, demonstrates not only the ineffectuality, but the absolute injuriousness of alcohol as a generator of animal heat, and the vast superiority of an oleaginous diet for that purpose.

Sir J. Richardson mentions as a proof of his power of resisting cold, which he attributed to his entire absence from spirits that, though advanced in years, he was enabled to go into the open air at a temperature of fifty degrees below zero without an overcoat.

Sir John Ross says of his northern expedition: "I was twenty years older than any of the officers or crew, and thirty years older than all excepting three, yet I could stand the cold and endure fatigue better than any of them, who all made use of tobacco and spirits." "He who will make the corresponding experiments," says the same commander, "on two equal boats' crews, rowing in a heavy sea, will soon be convinced that the water-drinkers will far outdo the oilers." The free use of ardent spirits

is one of the chief causes of the failure of so many Arctic expeditions, and when the men drank nothing but water, they endured the rigour of the climate with impunity. A Danish crew of sixty men were winter bound in Hudson's Bay before spring, fifty-eight of them died. An English crew, under the same circumstances, lost only two men. The former had an ample supply of ardent spirits; the latter had none.

An old Orkney whaler narrated to the present writer a tragical illustration of the depressing effect of alcoholic liquors on the bodily powers. The crews of two ice-blocked vessels were forced to abandon their ships, and to travel many miles on the ice in order to take refuge in that to which he belonged. The one had only their usual rations of fat pork and biscuit. The other had, in addition, a supply of brandy. The whole of the first crew arrived safely. The whole of the second perished from cold and exposure.

The setting in of a Canadian winter or any "cold snap" of unusual severity, is generally attended with several instances of death from exposure of poor wretches enfeebled and almost devitalized by habits of inebriation.

Baron Larrey, the great French surgeon, says that "during Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, those soldiers who indulged in the use of intoxicating liquors sank under the effects of cold almost in battalions; but their fate was not shared by those of their comrades who abstained from those liquors." Marshal Grouchy says that "he was kept alive for days on coffee, while others, who took spirits, slept never more to rise." At the present time the Russian soldiers, on a winter march, have rations of oil served out instead of spirits, experience having shown its superiority as a generator of heat. The Esquimo, who live largely on blubber, are able to endure with impunity the intensest cold.

Dr. Hooker, a medical officer under Sir J. Ross, says: "Ardent spirits never did me an atom of good. It does harm; the extremities are not warmed by it. . . . you are colder and more fatigued a quarter or half an hour after it, than you would have been without it."—Withdraws Temperance Tracts.

**THE AUSTRALIAN BOOMERANG.**

BY WILLIAM RITTENHOUSE.

The national weapon of the Australian aborigine is a queer affair. It is convex on the upper surface, and flat below, and always thickest in the middle, from which it is scraped away, toward both edges, which are tolerably sharp, especially the outer one. Hard, tough wood is necessary for these "throw-sticks," and the crooked root of a tree, or a branch grown at an angle of about forty-five degrees, makes the best boomerang.

For such branches and roots the Australian savage is ever on the alert, his favourite wood for the purpose being that of the blue gum tree, or eucalyptus. As far as mere finish goes, he shapes his boomerang roughly; but when it comes to the essentials of the thing—the adjusting of the proper curves, the weight, etc.—the otherwise unintelligent native shows remarkable science and skill.

All boomerangs are not alike, by any means. There are the large and heavy weapons, for hunting and fighting, and then there are the lighter ones for games of skill, and the tiny ones for the children to practice with. Most "throw-sticks" are perfectly plain; but occasionally a native paints his in bright red, or ornaments them with raised carvings, serpentine figures, or tribal hieroglyphics. A typical war specimen measures thirty-three inches from tip to tip, is two inches wide, and weighs twelve ounces. The general and mistaken notion about a boomerang is that, when skillfully thrown, it always returns to the thrower. But this is not true. Whenever a boomerang strikes anything, whether the object it is aimed at or not, it drops like an ordinary stick. Only when it meets with no obstruction in its flight does it return to the thrower.

**A GOOD PLEDGE.**

I promise—  
To be loyal forever to my faith and my country.  
To be attentive to my religious duties.  
To honour and respect my parents at all times.  
To be temperate in all things.  
To be clean of speech.  
To venerate the aged.  
To protect the helpless.  
To cultivate my own talents.  
To discourage trashy literature.  
To help my neighbour.  
To be kind to dumb animals.  
To labour for the good of my associates.

**Chaucer Continued.**

tender . . . a pleasing image, a golden-hearted verse, opens quietly as a water-lily, to float on the surface without breaking it into ripple."

It is this ease and naturalness that makes Chaucer the favourite that he is. With him is nothing strained or forced, we have not to labour in sympathy with him in our effort to follow him. Neither does he take us away to some other world to show us something tender or beautiful or strong, but he simply disenchants us from the blinding power of familiarity, and lo! the common world is found still to contain the bright May morning, and the sparkling dew, and the tender green, and the "wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower," and in our common lives are characters in whom we recognize the features of the squire and knight, the lawyer and doctor, the jolly host of the Tabard and the "poor parson of a town."

Another notable feature of this work is its dramatic spirit. Here again Chaucer appears as the father of modern literature, and the herald of the great age of action and progress that was coming on. In the collections of tales before Chaucer, we do not think of the persons who tell the tales, but only of the persons and times of whom they tell. In Chaucer we never lose interest in the men and women who are speaking to us, their characters and histories, and what they say and what they do. It is not too much to say that in the "Canterbury Tales," for the first time in modern literature, we find the marks of a genius that would afterwards have rejoiced in the life and movement of the Elizabethan drama; or, later still, in the character and incident of the modern novel.

To us, one of the most interesting things in the "Canterbury Tales" and other writings of Chaucer in this period is the growing ascendancy of the ethical and modern and English spirit. The old Teutonic reverence for women, of which the Roman Tacitus speaks with admiration, is reasserting itself and superseding the mock reverence of flattery that is still so dear to the Gallic mind. No one admires more than Chaucer the sweetness and beauty and innocence of maidenhood, but he is not carried away with a French flutter of ecstasy at sight of a pretty girl. It is the good wife and mother that commands his deepest reverence and admiration. So may it ever be with Englishmen.

In Chaucer we find, too, a reverence for true religion that is not overborne by contempt and disgust of the ignorance and hypocrisy which have so often brought discredit on sacred things. He tells of the itinerant peddler of indulgences:

"His wallet lay before him in his lap  
Bret-ful of pardons come from Rome  
all hot."

So, too, he tells of the friar, "a wanton and a merry":

"Full sweetly heard he confession  
And pleasant was his absolution.  
He was an easy man to give penance  
There as he wist to have a good pitance."

But he gives also another picture—that of the faithful minister of the Gospel:

"A good man there was of religion  
That was a poore Parson of a town;  
But rich he was of holy thought and werk:

He was also a learned man, a clerk  
That Christe's Gospel truly woulde preach,

His parishens devoutly would he teach.  
Wide was his parish, and houses far asunder,

But he ne left not for no rain nor thunder  
In sickness and in mischief to visit  
The farthest in his parish much and lit,  
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staff.  
This noble exsample to his sheep he gaf

That first he wrought and afterward he taught.  
He waited after no pomp nor reverence,

Nor naked him a spiced conscience  
But Christe's love, and his apostles twelve

He taught, and first he followed it himselfe."

John Wycliffe was Chaucer's illustrious contemporary; he died fifteen or sixteen years before the poet. For a long time Wycliffe was protected by the great Duke of Lancaster, who was also Chaucer's patron. It is impossible therefore to suppose that Chaucer was not familiar with Wycliffe and his work, but we have no statement of Chaucer's by which we can say positively that he was either a partisan or an opponent of

Wycliffe. We do know, however, that Chaucer was heartily opposed to the religious degeneracy of the times and so far in sympathy with Wycliffe. We know also that Chaucer was a hearty admirer of the true minister of the Gospel, and the description of the parson, given above, is in some of its features peculiarly Wycliffite. No one thinks of Chaucer's parson as a good churchman. His object is not to teach and serve the church.

"But Christe's love and his apostles twelve,  
He taught, but first he followed it himselfe."

This freedom from a nauseous Churchianity was a mark of the Wycliffite as it is of every one who knows the freedom of a Christian man. Again, the parson's wandering on foot from end to end of his parish, staff in hand, was a peculiarity for which the Lollard priests of the time were noted. The objections to the Lollard in the "Canterbury Tales" come from the swearing host and the rough shipman.

But the silence of Chaucer has a meaning. He was not willing apparently to take a strong stand with Wycliffe. The age was not ready to take such a stand. For a reformation in morals and practice there was a readiness, but not for a reformation that demanded sweeping changes in discipline and doctrine. The need of such a reformation did not yet appear, nor was it felt at a later age by Luther and his sober contemporaries till circumstances forced it upon them in spite of their fears and prejudices. What wonder, therefore, if Chaucer, like many of the influential men of the age, held aloof from a movement that seemed to be running into fanaticism and heresy? And yet he could not take a strong stand against it because it was allied to a moral movement the need of which was deeply felt.

How gladly would we leave Chaucer here, with no word of any more serious fault or defect than an imperfect understanding of questions for which the world would not be ready for more than a hundred years. But there was a graver defect—there was a lack of moral sensitiveness and earnestness that has left its mark upon his work in a way that we must forever deplore. It is very true that there was a coarseness of taste and roughness of manner in those days that should not in fairness be judged by modern usages. Some of the collections of literary delicacies of those days remind one of a German cheese-stall, and we must pass through the writings of Chaucer sometimes holding our noses. Yet after making all charitable allowances for peculiarities of taste, we cannot see how a man of thorough moral earnestness can deliberately make merry over tales of sin and shame. Chaucer himself feels this, and advises the reader to turn the page where some just cause of offence is to be found. There is much difference of opinion as to the genuineness of Chaucer's prayer or "Retractions" appended to the "Parson's Tales;" but, however the details of it may have been altered, we are not satisfied to pass it over as a fabrication made out of the whole cloth. There was room for retraction, and we cannot but think that in the quiet of his later years Chaucer must have reviewed his works, acknowledged frankly what was wrong in them, and thanked God, as we do now, for so much that is good.

**WHERE HE WAS POOR.**

"A rich man," says the Rev. W. M. Hay Aitkin, "was showing a friend through his house, and, after scaling a high tower, pointing in a northerly direction, said:

"As far as your eye can reach, that is all mine."

"Is that so?" said the friend.

"Yes. Now, turn this way; that is also mine."

"Indeed?" said the friend.

"Now, look southerly—that is all mine, and westerly is mine also—in fact, on all four points of the compass, as far as the eye can reach, it is all mine."

"His friend, looking at him, paused, and said:

"Yes; I see you have land on all four quarters; but, pointing his finger upward, 'what have you got in that direction?'"

"But the rich man was unable to answer. He had nothing there."

In India there are 166 hospitals and dispensaries, and in China 182.

It cost \$1,220,000 to evangelize the Sandwich Islands, and the United States have now a trade with them of \$6,000,000 annually.



**The Vagabonds.**

John Townsend Trowbridge, the author of "The Vagabonds," is best known as the writer of stories for boys. He has produced over twenty books of this nature, many of which have been very successful, and three volumes of poetry. "The Vagabonds" is his best-known poem. He is now in his seventy-second year, and is a resident of Arlington, Mass.

We are two travellers, Roger and I  
Roger's my dog.—Come here, you scamp!  
Jump for the gentleman—mind your eye!  
Over the table, look out for the lamp!  
The rogue is growing a little old;  
Five years we've tramped through wind and weather,  
And slept out-doors when nights were cold,  
And ate and drank and starved together.

We've learned what comfort is, I tell you!  
A bed on the floor, a bit of rosin,  
A fire to thaw our thumbs (poor fellow!  
The paw he hold's out there's been frozen),  
Plenty of catgut for my fiddle  
(This out door business is bad for strings),  
Then a few nice buckwheats hot from the griddle,  
And Roger and I set up for kings!

No, thank ye, sir,—I never drink;  
Roger and I are exceedingly moral,—  
Aren't we, Roger?—See him wink!  
Well, something hot, then,—we won't quarrel.  
He's thirsty, too,—see him nod his head?  
What a pity, sir, that dogs can't talk!  
He understands every word that's said,—  
And knows good milk from water and chalk.

The truth is, sir, now I reflect,  
I've been so sadly given to grog,  
I wonder I've not lost the respect  
(Here's to you, sir!) even of my dog.  
But he sticks by, through thick and thin,  
And this old coat with its empty pockets,  
And rags that smell of tobacco and gin,  
He'll follow while he has eyes in his sockets.

There isn't another creature living  
Would do it, and prove, through every disaster,  
So fond, so faithful, and so forgiving,  
To such a miserable, thankless master!  
No, sir!—see him wag his tail and grin!  
By George!—it makes my old eyes water!  
That is, there's something in this gin  
That chokes a fellow. But no matter!

We'll have some music, if you're willing,  
And Roger (hem! what a plague a cough is, sir!)  
shall march a little—Start, you villain!  
Paws up! Eyes front! Salute your officer!  
'Bout face! Attention! Take your rifle!  
(Some dogs have arms, you see!) Now hold your  
Cap while the gentlemen give a trifle,  
To aid a poor old patriot soldier!

March! Halt! Now show how the rebel shakes  
When he stands up to hear his sentence.  
Now tell us how many drams it takes  
To honour a jolly new acquaintance.  
Five yelps,—that's five; he's mighty knowing!  
The night's before us, fill the glasses!—  
Quick, sir! I'm ill,—my brain is going!  
Some brandy,—thank you,—there!—it passes!

Why not reform! That's easily said,  
But I've gone through such wretched treatment,  
Sometimes forgetting the taste of bread,  
And scarce remembering what meat meant,  
That my poor stomach's past reform,  
And there are times when, mad when thinking,  
I'd sell out heaven for something warm  
To prop a horrible inward sinking.

Is there a way to forget to think?  
At your age, sir, home, fortune, friends,  
A dear girl's love,—but I took to drink!  
The same old story; you know how it ends.

If you could have seen these classic features,—  
You needn't laugh, sir; they were not then  
Such a burning libel on God's creatures;  
I was one of your handsome men!

If you had seen her, so fair and young,  
Whose head was happy on this breast!

If you could have heard the song I sung  
When the wine went round, you wouldn't have guessed  
That ever I, sir, should be straying  
From door to door, with fiddle and dog,  
Ragged and penniless, and playing  
To you to night for a glass of grog!

She's married since a parson's wife,  
'Twas better for her that we should part,—  
Better the soberest, prosiest life,  
Than a blasted homo and a broken heart.

I have seen her? Onco, I was weak and spent  
On a dusty road, a carriage stopped,  
But little she dreamed, as on she went,  
Who kissed the coin that her fingers dropped!

You've set me talking, sir; I'm sorry;  
It makes me wild to think of the change!

What do you care for a beggar's story?  
Is it amusing? you find it strange?  
I had a mother so proud of me!  
'Twas well she died before—Do you know  
If the happy spirits in heaven can see  
The ruin and wretchedness here below?

Another glass, and strong, to deaden  
This pain, then Roger and I will start.  
I wonder, has he such a lumpish, leaden,  
Aching thing in place of a heart?  
He is sad sometimes and would weep, if he could,

No doubt remembering things that were,—  
A virtuous kennel, with plenty of food,  
And himself a sober, respectable cur.

I'm better now; that glass was warming.—  
You rascal! limber your lazy feet!  
We must be fiddling and performing  
For supper and bed, or starve in the street!

Not a very gay life to lead, you think?  
But soon we'll go where lodgings are free,  
And the sleepers need neither victuals nor drink:—  
The sooner the better for Roger and me!

**A BOY OF TO-DAY**

BY

Julia MacNair Wright.

Author of "The House on the Bluff," etc.

**CHAPTER IV.**

**FIRST-FRUITS.**

In this world of quiet beauty which surrounded the humble happiness of the Sinnet farm Heman Leslie lived, grew, and was glad. Once, in an hour of confidence, leaning on Aunt Espey's knees, he asked her if she thought the little boys in heaven were any happier than he was, and if she did not think that his father and mother were glad that he had stayed behind when they went to the good land.

"You can make them more glad still," said Aunt Espey, "if they hear that you are so good and useful that this world is better and happier because you are in it. If people go to heaven and say that you helped them to get there, then they will thank God for you, because the citizens of heaven are glad of the good done on earth."

"And can I be a citizen of heaven?" asked the boy.

"Yes, surely. Don't you know that Abraham, while he was in this world, was always seeking a better country, higher up, and trying to live in the fashion of that better land?"

In this way before Heman the earthly and the heavenly were knit together. Without any especial help at home, except his general training in diligence and obedience, Heman did well at school. Sometimes Urias was troubled with a fear that Heman was "getting too much education," but he reflected that in these days people "appeared to need more than they had when he was a boy," and then Joey Clump was kept at school, and Heman ought to do as well as Joey Clump. Joey was Heman's class-mate, lagging along a little for his younger friend to help him in lessons as in physical activities. Joey, in spite of his infirmities, was becoming tough and healthy, his future began to occupy him, and he planned that whatever Heman did he would do, and they would be partners. Joey's chief trouble in life was that out of school Heman spent so much time with the nimble, driving Urias; and it was quite hopeless for Joey to try to keep up with either of them, he was obliged to fall back on the so-

ciety of Dolly, his adopted sister—a rosy, tiny little maiden, who wore ruffled gingham aprons every week-day but Saturday, and then in the afternoon came out resplendent in a white pinafore and a blue hair-ribbon.

Two important factors entered into Heman's education in these early days. Aunt Espey's eyes were failing, even the large print of her big Bible tired them, and Heman was daily called upon to read the Scriptures to her. It never occurred to him to feel this a burden; it was the least he could do to minister to the good aunt. In the school he might fall into that sing-song, droning style of reading too current in country schools; his reading from the Bible aloud to Aunt Espey rescued him from that, and made him a clear, accurate, sympathetic reader. Whoever practices reading in the Psalms, the Gospel of John, Proverbs, and the Epistles to the Hebrews, cannot fail to read well.

The pastor of the Sinnets had not ceased to take an interest in their adopted son, and fearing lest the fewness of books in the home, and Urias' jealousy of educational privileges, might dwarf the lad, had persuaded Drexley and Mrs. Clump each to subscribe for a young people's magazine. The two being read and exchanged between the homes, the two boys were supplied with information and fresh mental interests. Urias himself liked to hear these magazines "read out."

Of all his companions Heman still found Urias the most congenial. In spite of his hard early life, Urias carried into his mature age much of boyishness; there was still a suggestion of childhood in the hard-faced, hard-handed man. Urias liked to chat and tell stories; he enjoyed conundrums and jokes. Every year he eagerly secured an almanac or two—usually from the druggist for nothing—and the jokes, puns, and fun in these were an endless source of amusement. On long, cold evenings of early winter Urias would take down a succession of these almanacs running through several years, and he and Heman would go over the jokes together with great satisfaction. Aunts Drexley and Espey would smile serenely, but not be able to see very much fun in it. Gravely and calmly happy, Drexley and Espey had never been children; the cares of maturity had fallen upon both almost in infancy; it never occurred to them to spend an autumn day or two gathering nuts, and to crack these nuts in winter evenings; they never thought it entertaining to thread an apple on a wire, and roast it in that way before the coals. "Land sakes!" Aunt Drexley would say, "if you want apples, I can bake you a whole pan full in the oven without that trouble."

"They're sweeter for this trouble, ain't they, Heman?" said Urias with a laughing glint in his eyes, and Heman said, "Yes," even when the apples were a little black in some spots and a little hard in others.

It was to Heman that Urias confided his longing after riches, his dreams of a fortune. These had haunted his life, and by them he had been sometimes betrayed into financial follies. Wandering agents had lured good ten-dollar bills out of his pockets for their treasures, or even double that amount for the privilege of being agent himself, and of these investments Uncle Urias wished to hear nothing. In very dark corners of the cellar were certain queer forms that Uncle Urias would have been glad to have butted out of sight and memory forever. There was a patent medicine that had endangered the life of a neighbour or two, a liniment which had left hairless spaces on Drexley's best cow; a hinge that would not work, a gate that would neither open nor shut. Over these things friendship drew a veil.

"But, then, boy," Urias would say, as he and Heman worked at the wood-pile or in the barn, "plenty of people have fortunes left 'em, and why shouldn't I? There's many a poor man who finds coal, oil, gas, copper, iron, or gold on his barren little farm. Why can't diamonds turn up here as well as in Africa, I say? Drexley might sit in a satin frock and do nothing all day long."

"I don't guess she'd enjoy that," said Heman. "I wouldn't, I'd rather stir round. What do we want a fortune for, Uncle Urias? We've got enough."

"Oh, well—we could help the church—" "That's the Lord's, and if he wants us to help that more he'll see to it, won't he? I don't know what I want more than I've got, unless it's a new pair of overalls and a new jack-knife and, well, an' some dumplings for dinner; and I've got most money laid up enough for the overalls," for Heman earned pennies and nickels very often, husking corn, or driving sheep, or picking fruit for neighbours.

"Well, after all, there's nothing like contentment," said Urias. Then he added slowly,

"I can sharpen your knife good as new, and as far as I know I can plan for dumplings for dinner. So come to find out, you don't want any thing."

Urias was full of wise saws, the essence of ancient wisdom, and of up-to-date modern acts, the very essence of unwise wisdom.

Happy were the days when the ten-year-old Heman could go out with Urias for work at carpentry. If the working-place was near enough they walked, each with some tools over his shoulder and a dinner pail in hand. If the place were distant they rode on the rude vehicle called a "buck-board," on which they were easily dandled up and down while the dinner-pails swung beneath between the wheels. Heman could nail on lath, could hold the boards for his uncle to nail, could run up and down ladder and skip along rafters, nimble as a squirrel. Many was the good lesson he got on honesty in work and faithfulness in things out of human sight no crooked rusty nails, no neglected nail holes, no rotten boards, no sills left weak, no beams untrue. "The Lord is particular, and he's our Master-Workman," Urias would say.

(To be continued.)

**SEA URCHINS.**

BY ADELBERT P. CALDWELL.

Last summer Willie was spending some months by the seashore.

However hard the doctors might try they couldn't straighten the little crooked back. Yet every one was so kind and thoughtful of his pleasure he forgot at times that he couldn't run, row, dig clams, and swim, as did the other little boys, sons of the sturdy fishermen.

As Willie lay in his hammock on a bright, warm morning, watching the tin-breakers tumble over each other on the sand, Tom, a barefooted fisher boy, came hurrying up the garden path.

He touched his ragged, visorless cap politely. "Say, don't you want to play ball—we're one short? It's lots of fun, an' we'd be stavin' glad to have you!"

Willie smiled just a bit sadly, and without saying a word pointed to his back.

"I—I didn't know you were sick-like!" exclaimed Tom, gently. "Can't you play any, or jump, or swim?"

Willie shook his head.

"And you have to be cooped up here all day long, and not to do one thing same's other boys do?"

It did seem queer to a boy who never had such a thing as an ache or a pain, and Tom looked perplexed and strangely thoughtful. After a moment's reflection he asked, "Say, did you ever see any sea urchins?" Then, without waiting for a reply, "Lots of fun to watch 'em. I've got some, and I'll divide with you rather do it 'n not!"

Willie reached out his little white hand as he accepted Tom's proposal.

"'Twill be so nice to have something new to do," he thought, "while mamma is busy and Uncle Jack is away at the office."

Before long Tom came in sight, carrying in a pail four of the queer little creatures.

"What a lot of tiny hands they have—all over their bodies!" exclaimed Willie.

Tom placed them near by, where Willie could watch them, and then described some of their strange habits. While he was talking one of the little creatures suddenly turned over on its side, apparently affected by the hot sun.

"Just look there see!" cried Willie, with delight.

Strange as it may seem, the sick urchin's companions were beginning to work their feelers under the little invalid, and it was not long before they were able to support him in an upright position.

"Who would think," exclaimed Willie, "that these little fellows would know enough to be such excellent nurses?"

"He needs a cooler place," said Tom, taking him out of the tub. "There, I guess he'll come around all right now, and he put him in a pail of cool water all by himself."

Willie forgot all about his aching back, so interested he became in watching his little animal friends.

"'Twas so good of Tom," he said, over and over again.

"Halloo!" exclaimed Uncle Jack, as he came in that afternoon from his business in town, "what's my boy got in the tub?"

"Sea urchins," replied Willie, gaily, and then, with a mysterious smile, "but the best one the one that brought me these—has gone home."



**A TREE-CLIMBING FISH.**

BY GRANT ALLEN

Of all land frequenting fish by far the most famous is the so-called climbing-pitch of India, which not only walks but is out of the water but even climbs trees by means of special spines near the head and tail, so arranged as to stick into the bark, and enable it to wiggle its way up awkwardly, something after the same fashion as the "looping" of caterpillars.

The tree climber is a small scaly fish, seldom more than seven inches long, but it has developed a special breathing apparatus to enable it to keep up the stock of oxygen on its terrestrial excursions, which may be regarded, to some extent, the exact converse of the means employed by divers to supply themselves with air under water. Just above the gills, which form of course its natural hereditary breathing apparatus, the climbing perch has invented a new and wholly original water-chamber, containing within it a frilled bony organ, which enables it to extract oxygen from the stored up water during the course of its aerial peregrinations.

While on shore it picks up small insects, worms, and grubs; but it also has vegetarian tastes of its own, and does not despise fruits and berries.

The Indian jugglers tame the climbing-perches, and carry them about with them as part of their stock-in-trade. Their ability to live for a long time out of water makes them useful confederates in many tricks which seem very wonderful to people accustomed to believe that fish die almost at once when taken out of their native element.—Popular Science Monthly.

**LESSON NOTES.**

**THIRD QUARTER.**

**STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.**

**LESSON II.—JULY 9.**

**DANIEL IN BABYLON.**

Dan. 1. 8-21. Memory verses 17-20

**GOLDEN TEXT.**

Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself. Dan. 1. 8.

**OUTLINE.**

- 1. True to God, v. 8-16.
- 2. Honoured of Men, v. 17-21.

Time.—About 598 or 597 B.C.  
Place.—Babylon.

Daniel was one of the best of the old Jewish prophets. He was a statesman at a foreign court, he was a man of prayer. True piety marked him from his youth upward. He was enslaved and taken to Babylon, but he never forgot the home of his early days nor Jehovah and his people. The book he wrote is partly historical, as is seen in the first six chapters, and is partly prophetic, as is seen in the last six chapters.

**LESSON HELPS.**

8. "But Daniel purposed in his heart." A young man with a purpose and a conscientious one, and so strong he could not be laughed or threatened out of it. "That he would not defile himself with the king's meat"—He was true to the Mosaic regulations, and therefore would not eat meat (1) ceremonially unclean, (2) or which had been offered in part to idols. "The prince of the eunuchs"—Was a chief officer at court.

9. "God had brought Daniel into favour"—Not by miracle, but by bringing out the noble part of his nature. He was favoured, for he was worthy of favour.

10. It was a mistake to fear that plain food would make their "faces worse liking" than others. Gluttony and costly luxuries do not promote physical beauty. "Endanger my head"—For the heads of kings' servants were taken off

for trifling offences, and sometimes to please the whims of a tyrant king. "Meizar"—An officer under Ashpenaz whose duty it was to attend to the food and clothing of the royal captives.

12. "Prove"—That is, make test or trial of. "Thy servants"—Or slaves, though well-treated ones. "Pulse"—That is, seed or grain. There was doubtless a special blessing on such a diet, because prompted by religious motives. "Water to drink"—The best beverage is water, pure, abundant.

13. "And as thou seest, deal with thy servants"—If they thrive under such fare for ten days, let them continue to have it.

15. "The king's meat"—Good in itself, but not good to those who had conscientious scruples. Conscience should be the guide, yet every effort should be made, as with a watch, to regulate and keep it accurate.

17. "As for these four children"—Young men or youths would be a better translation. Understanding in all visions and dreams—Such as were inspired, for most dreams are from a deranged state of the body or a disturbed state of the mind.

18. "Nebuchadnezzar"—Then the reigning king in Babylon.

20. "Astrologers"—Men who studied the stars, partly from a scientific motive, partly to read in their movements the destinies of men. Astronomy had its birth in astrology.

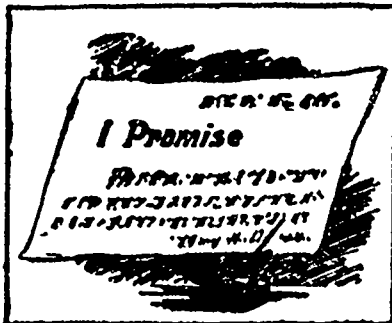
**HOME READINGS.**

- M. Captivity.—Dan. 1. 1-7.
- Tu. Daniel in Babylon.—Dan. 1. 8-21.
- W. Prosperity from God.—Gen. 39. 1-6.
- Th. The safe way.—Psalm 1.
- F. The upright way.—Prov. 16. 1-9.
- S. Temperate in all things.—1 Cor. 9. 19-27.
- Su. The Rechabites honoured.—Jer. 35. 12-19.

How long did Daniel remain at court? What promise does godliness hold forth? 1 Tim. 4. 8.

**PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.**

- Where in this lesson are we taught—
- 1. To be true to conscience?
- 2. To be courteous to all men?
- 3. To be diligent in business?



A primary temperance lesson is based upon the subject of "keeping the body under." This, however, is to present the negative side of the primary temperance question. Presenting its positive side, we should promise God to keep ourselves pure. How blessed are we when we acquire a splendid training of body, mind, and soul!



(See S. S. Lessons for June 2.)

Let us call our lesson topic "Bible Invitations." From the nine verses of our

One is a coffin, one a tomb, That wait the toper's early doom; While near at hand, beside the wall, There stands the drunkard's waiting pall.

Fit things, indeed, to lure the blind; Make sure a grave is close behind."

**God's Ways.**

BY REV. J. B. RANKIN, LL.D.

God's ways are not like human ways; He wears such strange disguises; He tries us by his long delays, And then our faith surprises. While we in unbelief deplore, And wonder at his staying, He stands already at the door, To interrupt our praying.

He takes his leader from the Nile, Where mother hands have laid him; Hides him in palaces the while, Till he has right arrayed him. He sends him to the desert's hush, With flocks and herds to wander, Then meets him in the burning bush, New mysteries to ponder.

Why should we doubt his care or grace, As though he had forgotten; As though time's changes could efface What love has once begotten; As though he'd lost us from his thought, And moved on now without us, Whose love has always goodness wrought, And constant been about us?

Spiritual ploughman, sharpen thy ploughshare with the Spirit! Spiritual sower, dip thy seed in the Spirit, so shall it germinate, and ask the Spirit to give thee grace to scatter it, that it may fall into the right furrows! Spiritual warrior, whet that sword with the Spirit, and ask the Spirit, whose word is a sword indeed, to strengthen thy arm to wield it!—Spurgeon.

**Readable Books.**

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**DEATH IN THE BOTTLE.**

**QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.**

- 1. True to God, v. 8-16.
  - What was Daniel's settled purpose? Golden Text.
  - How does this purpose show that he was true to God?
  - What request did he make?
  - What mark of favour had God given Daniel?
  - What favour may all expect who please God? Prov. 16. 7.
  - What did the prince of the eunuchs fear?
  - What were the names of Daniel's three young friends?
  - To whom did Daniel propose a test?
  - How long a test did he ask?
  - What was the test?
  - What was the result of the trial?
  - What food was given to Daniel and his three friends?
  - What rule should govern Christians in eating and drinking? 1 Cor. 10. 31.
- 2. Honoured of men, v. 17-21.
  - What gifts did God bestow on these captives?
  - What further skill had Daniel?
  - Before whom were the Hebrews brought?
  - Who surpassed all their companions?
  - What reward had they?
  - How did they compare with the magicians?

lesson text we glean the invitations: "Return to the Lord," "Ask him to receive." Our invitation says, "I will heal," "I will love," "I will be as the dew," and asks us to "grow as the lily," with the promise that we shall "dwell under his shadow."

**DEATH IN THE BOTTLE.**

This is not a very pretty picture; but it is just as pretty as the hideous traffic it depicts. Death as a gaunt and grinning skeleton is pointing to the coffin hidden in every whiskey or brandy bottle. There's death in the cup; there's poison in the bowl. Did you ever think that the word intoxicate means to poison? The following lines describe the picture better than we can:

"Oft have you seen attractive signs That told of old and costly wines, Or couched in terms to catch the eye And lure the thoughtless passer-by; You have beheld the devil's bait Concealed in showy cards, that state How whiskey, brandy, rum, or gin May all, and more, be had within; And you have smiled and caught the hook, Nor thought to give a second look. But turn the glass; 'twill well define The shape of each deceitful sign."