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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVI.]

TORONTO, MAY 9, 1896.

[No. 19.]

The Years Pass On.

"When I'm a woman you'll see what I'll do—
I'll be great and good and noble and true;
I'll visit the sick and relieve the poor—
No one shall ever be turned from my door;
But I'm only a little girl now."
And so the years passed on.

"When I'm a woman," a gay maiden said,
"I'll try to do right and not be afraid;
I'll be a Christian and give up the joys
Of the world, with all its dazzling toys;
But I'm only a young girl now."
And so the years passed on.

"Ah me!" said a woman gray with years,
Her heart full of cares and doubts and fears,
"I've been putting off the time to be good
Instead of beginning to do as I should;
And I'm an old woman now."
And so the years passed on.

Now is the time to begin to do right;
To-day, whether skies be dark or bright;
Make others happy by good deeds of love,
Looking to Jesus for help from above;
And then you'll be happy now
And as the years pass on.

THE BOY DISCIPLE.

BY

ANNIE FELLOWS JOHNSTON.

CHAPTER II.

Nothing was said for a little while. The doves as before cooed of peace, and Phineas began a steady tap-tap with his hammer.

A pleasant-faced woman came out of the door with a water-jar on her head, and passed down the path to the public well. She gave Joel a friendly greeting in passing.

"Wait, mother!" lisped Ruth, as she ran after her. The woman turned to smile at the little one, and held out her hand. Her dress, of some soft, cotton material, hung in long flowing folds. It was a rich blue colour, caught at the waist with a white girdle. The turban wound around her dark hair was white also, and so was the veil she pushed aside far enough to show a glimpse of brown eyes and red cheeks. She wore a broad silver bracelet on the bare arm which was raised to hold the water-jar, and the rings in her ears and tallmans on her neck were of quaintly wrought silver.

"I did not know it was so late," said Joel, rising to his feet. "Time passes so fast here."

"Nay, do not go," said Phineas. "It is a long walk back to your home, as the sun is very hot. Stay and eat dinner with us."

Joel hesitated; but the invitation was repeated so cordially, that he let Jesse pull him down on the grass again.

"Now I'll tickle your lips with this blade of grass," said the child. "See how long you can keep from laughing."

When Abigail came back with the water, both the boys were laughing as heartily as if there had never been an ache or pain in the world. She smiled at them approvingly, as she led the way into the house.

Joel looked around with much curiosity. It was like most of the other houses of his kind in the town. There

was only one large square room, in which the family cooked, ate, and slept; but on every side it showed that Phineas had left traces of his skillful hands.

There was a tiny window cut in one wall; most of the houses of this description had none, but depended on the doorway for light and air. Several shelves around the walls held the lamp and the earthenware dishes. The chest made to hold the rugs and cushions which they spread down at night to sleep on, was unusually large and ornamental. A broom, a handmill, and a bushel stood in one corner.

Near the door, a table which Phineas had made stood spread for the mid-day meal.

There was broiled fish on one of the

manhood in Jerusalem, and, unlike the simple Galileans among whom he now lived, tried to observe its most detailed rules.

The child heard them discussed continually, till he felt he could neither eat, drink, nor dress, except by these set rules. He could not play like other children, and being so much with older people had made him thoughtful and observant.

He had learned to read very early; and hour after hour he spent in the house of Rabbi Amos, the most learned man of the town, poring over his rolls of scriptures. Think of a childhood without a picture, or a story-book! All that there was to read were these old records of Jewish history.



A CARPENTER SHOP, NAZARETH.

platters, beans and barley bread, a dish of honey, and a pitcher of milk. The fare was just the same that Joel was accustomed to in his uncle's house; but something made the simple meal seem like a banquet. It may have been that the long walk had made him hungrier than usual, or it may have been because he was treated as the honoured guest, instead of a child tolerated through charity. He watched his host carefully, as he poured the water over his hands before eating, and asked a blessing on the food.

"He does not keep the law as strictly as my Uncle Laban," was his inward comment. "He asked only one blessing, and Uncle Laban blesses every kind of food separately. But he must be a good man, even if he is not so strict a Pharisee as my uncle, for he is kinder than anyone I ever knew before."

It was wonderful how much Joel had learned, in his eleven short years, of the law. His aunt's husband had given to

The old man had taken a fancy to him, finding him an appreciative listener and an apt pupil. So Joel was allowed to come whenever he pleased, and take out the yellow rolls of parchment from their velvet covers.

He was never perfectly happy except at these times, when he was reading these old histories of his country's greatness. How he enjoyed chasing the armies of the Philistines, and fighting over again the battles of Israel's kings! Many a tale he stored away in his busy brain to be repeated to the children gathered around the public fountain in the cool of the evening.

It mattered not what character he told them of,—priest or prophet, judge or king,—the picture was painted in life-like colours by this patriotic little hero-worshipper.

Here and at home he heard so many discussions about what was lawful and what was not, that he was constantly in

fear of breaking one of the many rules, even in as simple a duty as washing a cup.

So he watched his host closely till the meal was over, finding that in the observance of many customs he failed to measure up to his uncle's strict standard.

Phineas went back to his work after dinner. He was greatly interested in Joel, and, while he sawed and hammered, kept a watchful eye on him. He was surprised at the boy's knowledge. More than once he caught himself standing with an idle tool in hand, as he listened to some story that Joel was telling to Jesse.

After a while he laid down his work and leaned against the bench. "What do you find to do all day, my lad?" he asked, abruptly.

"Nothing," answered Joel, "after I have recited my lessons to Rabbi Amos."

"Does your aunt never give you any tasks to do at home?"

"No. I think she does not like to have me in her sight any more than she is obliged to. She is always kind to me, but she doesn't love me. She only pities me. I hate to be pitied. There is not a single one in the world who really loves me."

His lips quivered, but he winked back the tears. Phineas seemed lost in thought a few minutes, then he looked up. "You are a Levite," he said slowly, "so of course you could always be supported without needing to learn a trade. Still you would be a great deal happier, in my opinion, if you had something to keep you busy. If you like, I will teach you to be a carpenter. There are a great many things you might learn to make well, and by-and-bye it would be a source of profit to you. There is no bread so bitter as the bread of dependence, as you may learn when you are older."

"Oh, Rabbi Phineas!" cried Joel. "Do you mean that I may come here every day? It is too good to be true!"

"Yes; if you will promise to stick to it until you have mastered the trade. If you are as quick to learn with your hands as you have been with your head, I shall have reason to be proud of such a pupil."

Joel's face flushed with pleasure, and he sprang up quickly, saying, "May I begin right now? Oh, I'll try so hard to please you!"

Phineas laid a soft pine board on the bench, and began to mark a line across it with a piece of red chalk.

"Well, you may see how straight a cut you can make through this plank."

He picked up a saw, and ran his fingers lightly along its sharp teeth. But he paused in the act of handling it to Joel, to ask, "You are sure, now, that your uncle and aunt will consent to such an arrangement?"

"Yes, indeed!" was the emphatic answer. They will be glad enough to have me out of the way, and learning something useful."

The saw cut slowly through the wood; for the weak little hand was a careful one, and the boy was determined not to swerve once from the line. He smiled with satisfaction as the pieces fell apart, showing a clean, straight edge.

"Well done!" said Phineas, kindly. "Now let me see you drive a nail." Made bold by his first success, Joel pounded away vigorously, but the hammer slipped more than once, and his unpractised fingers ached with the blows that he had aimed at the nail's head.

"You'll soon learn," said Phineas, with an encouraging pat on the boy's shoulder. "Gather up those odds and ends under the bench. When you've saved them in-

The Refuge.

Within the car a little girl
With hair of gold, and tress and curl
Like living sunshine—all alive,
Kept flitting up and down the aisle;
Now here, now there, from seat to seat
Danced merrily the little feet;
The sunny face now pressed the pane,
Now called the sunshine back again.

All loved her, as from place to place
She fluttered with a birdlike grace;
And now with this one, now with that
Stopped to exchange a smile or chat,
So the long journey was beguiled;
Her blue eyes could so friendly be,
Nobody knew whose treasure she.

But suddenly from sunlit plain
Into a tunnel rushed the train.
Ah, then we knew whose arms should
hold

The little one with locks of gold:
"Papa! papa!" she trembling cried,
And, groping, sought her father's side;
As we into the day we dashed,
Her head lay on her father's breast!

'Tis so with us: when life is fair,
We, too, forget our Father's care,
And wander wheresoe'er we will;
But oh, he's watching, watching still;
And when the shadows around us fall,
He hears and heeds his children's call.
We run to him with fear oppressed—
He folds us to his gracious breast.
—Selected.

LESSON NOTES.

SECOND QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE.

LESSON VII.—MAY 17.

PARABLE OF THE POUNDS.

Luke 19. 11-27. Memory verses 13-15.

GOLDEN TEXT.

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.—Luke 16. 10.

Time. A.D. 30.

Place.—At or near Jericho.

CONNECTING LINKS.

A rich young ruler was told how he might inherit eternal life; the crucifixion was foretold; two blind men were healed; Christ became the guest of Zaccheus, a publican; and to the crowd assembled around his house, as well as to the disciples, he spoke this Parable of the Pounds.

DAY BY DAY WORK.

Monday.—Read this week's lesson (Luke 19. 11-27). Prepare to tell in your own words the last lesson and this.

Tuesday.—Read about our talents and how to use them (Matt. 25. 14-30). Fix in your mind Time, Place, and Connecting Links.

Wednesday.—Read how a young man won promotion (Gen. 41. 37-35). Learn the Golden Text.

Thursday.—Read what God promises good servants (Mal. 3. 13-18). Learn the Memory Verses.

Friday.—Read a list of God's gifts (1 Cor. 12. 1-11). Answer the Questions.

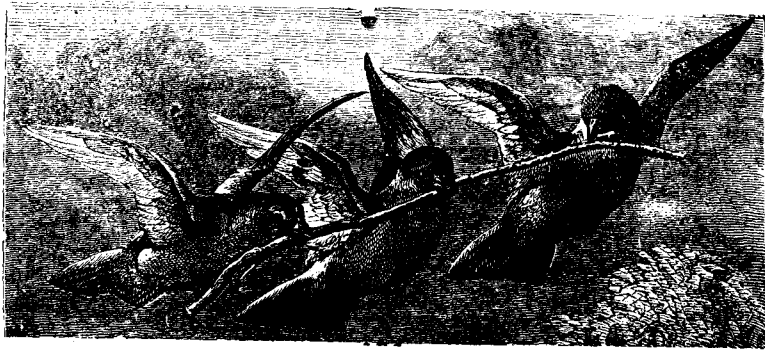
Saturday.—Read what is the right use of gifts (Rom. 12. 1-9). Study the Teachings of the Lesson.

Sunday.—Read what will happen on the last day (2 Peter 3. 1-14).

QUESTIONS.

1. The King, verses 11-15.

11. How far was Jericho from Jerusalem? What led Jesus to speak this parable? 12. Whom did the nobleman represent? 13. To how many servants did he intrust money? What did Christ mean to teach by the few faithful ones and the many rebels? What was the value of a pound? How did Eastern masters make money? 14. Who was represented by these rebellious citizens? 15. Can opposition hinder Christ's plan? For what are our talents given us? Is Christ's kingdom to be advanced by persecution?



THE SICK SPARROW.

2. The Workers, verses 16-19.

16. How much did the first man gain? How did he show his modesty? 17. For what will God reward people? Will there be different degrees of reward? 19. Why was the second man's reward less? What classes are represented by these two people?

3. The Idler, verses 20-27.

20. What was this napkin? How might he have used it? 21. How did he excuse himself? For what do men blame God? Was his charge a true one? 22. Why was he called "wicked"? 23. What was meant by the bank? 24. If we do not use our powers what follows? Give instances of people losing in this way. 26. How can we win promotion? 27. What will be the doom of the rebellious?

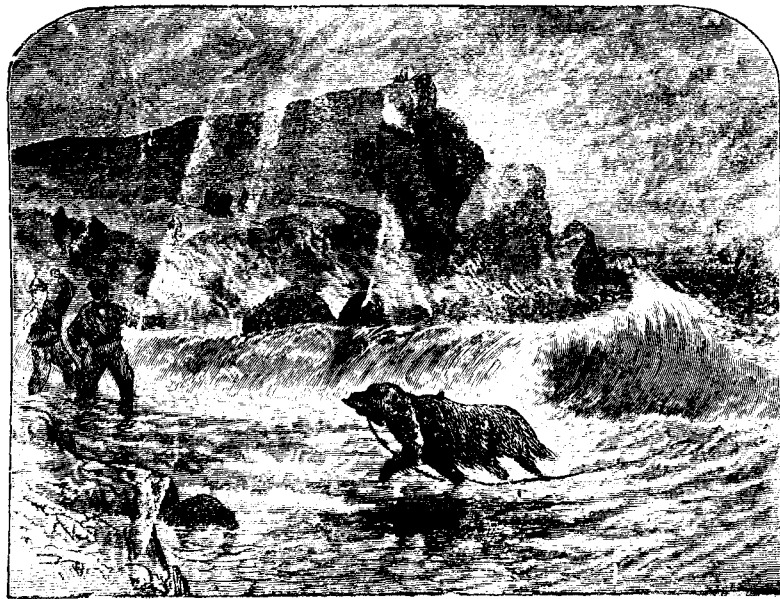
TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Our talents are in no sense our own. We hold them in trust. All can be equally faithful; we must use or lose. There is no excuse for idleness. God gives the means to do what he requires. If we gain for God he will give us words of approval and higher positions. If we fail to serve God we will have no excuse at last. Opposition to Christ will hurt no one so much as ourselves; we should make Jesus our friend now.

A DOG SAVING A SHIPWRECKED CREW.

A gentleman connected with the Newfoundland fishery was once possessed of a dog of singular fidelity and sagacity. On one occasion a boat and a crew in his employ were in circumstances of considerable peril, just outside a line of breakers, which, owing to some change in wind or weather, had, since the departure of the boat, rendered the return passage through them most hazardous.

The spectators on shore were quite unable to render any assistance to their friends afloat. Much time had been spent, and the danger seemed to increase rather than diminish. Our friend the dog looked on for a length of time, evidently aware of there being a great cause for anxiety in those around. Presently, however, he took to the water, and made his way through the raging waves to the boat. The crew supposed he wished to join them, and made various attempts to induce him to come aboard; but no, he would not go within their reach, but continued swimming about at a short dis-



A DOG SAVING A SHIPWRECKED CREW.

tance from the boat. After a while, and several comments on the peculiar conduct of the dog, one of them suddenly divined his apparent meaning, "Give him the end of a rope," he said, "that is what he wants." The rope was thrown, the dog seized the end in an instant, turned round, and made straight for the shore, where, a few minutes afterwards, boat and crew—thanks to the intelligence of our four-footed friend—were placed safe and sound!—Aims and Objects of the Toronto Humane Society.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ANIMALS.

A poor sparrow, being unable to fly, clung to a twig which two others bore, as shown in the cut.

The greyhound runs by eyesight only, and this we observe as a fact. The carrier-pigeon flies his two hundred miles homeward by eye-sight, viz., from point to point of objects which he has marked; but this is only conjecture. The fierce dragon-fly, with twelve thousand lenses in its eye, darts from angle to angle with the rapidity of a flashing sword, and as rapidly darts back, not turning in the air, but, with a dash, reversing the action of his four wings, and instantaneously calculating distance of the objects, or he would dash himself to pieces. But in what conformation of his does this consist? No one can answer.

A cloud of ten thousand gnats dance up and down in the sun—the minutest interval between them—yet no one knocks another headlong upon the grass, or breaks a leg or a wing, long and delicate as they are.

A four-horse coach comes suddenly upon a flock of geese on a narrow road, and drives straight through the middle of them. A goose was never yet fairly run over, nor a duck. They are under the very wheels and hoofs, and yet, somehow, they contrive to flap and waddle off. Habitually stupid, heavy, and indolent, they are, nevertheless, equal to the emergency.

Why does the lonely woodpecker, when he descends his tree and goes to drink, stop several times on his way, listen and look around before he takes his draught? No one knows.

A young student of Natural History conveys to the N. H. Farmer some of his observations in the stock-yard. He noticed that a horse in rising from a recumbent position, employed his fore legs as a fulcrum to raise his body, but that

with the bovine tribe the system is reversed. It was noticed, too, that fowls, in flying from one place to another, unless frightened or hardly pressed, light upon the top of the fence or wall and take a brief survey of the new field before dropping into it. There is another characteristic of the hen family not readily explained, and that is a propensity to steal away to some blind place where an egg is to be deposited, but making a terrible cackling when leaving, thus betraying what she seemed so anxious to conceal. A dog, in seeking a place of repose, is very apt to circle around two or three times before dropping down, even though no bedding is there requiring this preparation. A bird, in seeking rest upon the limb of a tree, almost invariably drops below the point selected, and rises to it by a gentle upward curve.

Several observers have stated that monkeys certainly dislike being laughed at, and they sometimes invent imaginary offences. In the Zoological Gardens I saw a baboon that always got into a furious rage when its keeper took out a letter or book and read it aloud to him, and his rage was so violent that, as I witnessed on one occasion, he bit his own legs until the blood flowed out. All animals feel wonder, and many exhibit curiosity, the latter quality affording opportunity for the hunters, in many parts of the world, to decoy their game into their power. The faculty of imitation, so strongly developed in man, especially in a barbarous state, is not a peculiarity of monkeys. A certain bull-terrier of our acquaintance, when he wishes to go out of the room, jumps at the handle of the door and grasps it with his paws, although he cannot himself turn the handle. Parrots also reproduce with wonderful fidelity the tones of voice of different speakers, and puppies reared by cats have been known to lick their feet and wash their faces after the manner of their foster-mothers. Attention and memory are also present in the lower animals, and it is impossible to deny that the dreams of dogs and horses show the presence of imagination, or that a certain sort of reason is also present. Animals also profit by experience, as any man realizes who has closely observed their actions.—Aims and Objects of the Toronto Humane Society.

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