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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVII.]

TORONTO, MAY 15, 1897.

[No. 20.]

The Little Lad's Answer.

Our little lad came in one day,
With dusty shoes and tired feet,
His playtime had been hard and long.
Out in the summer's noontide heat.
"I'm glad I'm home," he cried, and hung
His torn straw hat up in the hall,
While in the corner by the door
He put away his bat and ball.

"I wonder why," 'twas laughing said,
"This little lad always comes here,
When there are many other homes
As nice as this, and quite as
near?"

He stood a moment deep in
thought,
Then, with the lovelight in
his eye,
He pointed where his mother
sat,
And said, "She lives here,
that is why!"

With beaming face the mother
heard;
Her mother heart was very
glad,
A true, sweet answer he had
given—
That thoughtful, loving, little
lad,
And well I know that hosts of
lads
Are just as loving, true, and
dear—
That they would answer as he
did,
" 'Tis home, for mother's liv-
ing here!"

LEADING THE BLIND.

Few things appeal more strongly to our sympathies than the condition of the blind. To see no sun, no moon, nor the sweet face of nature—and worse still, never to behold the faces we love—is one of the saddest afflictions of earth. Yet many who are blind are happy and cheerful, notwithstanding their affliction. It is surely the duty of those who can see, to help those who cannot. The young girl in our picture is doing this. Amid the crowded streets she is carefully guiding the poor boy, who is probably an utter stranger, across the road. If he could only see the look of sympathy on her face, he would be still more thankful than he is.

HOW RITCHIE "SAW IT."

Fred and Ritchie were school-fellows of about the same age, and regular chums. Yet you never saw boys so unlike in appearance. Fred was very tall and stout for ten years old, with rosy cheeks, and was always merry and full of fun. Ritchie was what the boys called "undersized," his face was very white, and he looked as if he had gone through more trouble than many grown-up men.

One reason why they were such constant companions was that neither of them had any boy play-mates at home. Fred had sisters, who petted him, and bought things for him, but they could not play at cricket, nor football, nor swim boats. When he had a boat given to him, he could not do without Ritchie to help him to sail it. Ritchie was the youngest of his family. He had big brothers, but they did not treat him kindly, and would not let him go out with them. They had "no patience with kids knocking about their heels," they said. So Ritchie was glad to be with merry, kind Fred, and Fred's mother always made him welcome. "Come in, dearie," she would say, "come when you can, and do not wait for an invitation." So they used to have fine times. If it rained, they might make as much noise as they liked in the breakfast-room; and when fine,

there was a pond to sail their boats in. The only thing the matter with the pond was that there were so many weeds in the middle; but ragged boys were always waiting about, and should a boat be caught in these weeds, they would take off their boots and wade in to free it.

Fred lived in a pretty small house. Ritchie's was very large, and in the fashionable part of the town. In Freddie's house Jesus was loved and honoured, but Ritchie's father did not love Jesus, and he used to teach his children not to believe in that dear Saviour who

"Ritchie, you know you have sinned, and God must punish sin, and Jesus was willing to be punished instead of you."

"I do not call it fair," he replied doggedly, stamping his foot on the floor.

"Ritchie, dear," said his governess, "Jesus was punished instead of you, on him was laid the iniquity of us all."

"I can't see it," replied Ritchie. "I wish I could, but it does not seem fair; what good could another being punished for me do?"

Fred had one fault which brought him into trouble. It was his chattering

could hardly conceal his vexation, it was such a lovely day, and half-holiday, too.

School was dismissed, and away went the boys, leaving poor, miserable Fred; but Ritchie lingered. At last he begged of the governess, "Do let me have half of Fred's punishment, please do."

"But," she replied, "that would not be fair; you have been good and Fred has not." "I know," said Ritchie, "but please let me." She could not resist his pleading. So the punishment time began. Fred looked one way and Ritchie the other. The governess sat writing,

not a sound could be heard but the scratching of her pen. At last the minute hand of the clock came to the quarter. "Time is up," she said; but Ritchie came to her, his face bright with joy. "Oh!" he cried, "I see it all. It is all right." "What do you mean, Ritchie, dear?" she asked. His face was aglow with joy, as he replied, "About the Lord Jesus He chose to be punished instead of me."

"Yes, Ritchie, but Jesus bore all the penalty, not the half, and he did it for you even when you did not love him."

"Yes," said Ritchie, "I can see it all now. He died for me." And away went the boys, Ritchie's heart filled with happiness he never knew before.



LEADING THE BLIND.

had loved them and died for them. He was very harsh to them, and what made his temper worse was, he had lost so much money, and in his trouble he could not go to Jesus to be comforted and helped to bear his loss. After a time he went to South Africa, leaving wife and children, so can you wonder that Ritchie was not merry like Fred?

The boys had a governess who loved Jesus, and the school was always opened with a Scripture lesson and prayer. They loved that lesson, and would gather round her as she spoke of the kind things the Lord Jesus used to do to people in sickness and sorrow, and how he died on the cross for them. Ritchie would listen with his quiet face quivering, and would say, "It was a shame!" Then she would point out that Jesus gave himself a sacrifice for sin, and say

his tongue in school-time. At 10-30 "silence time" commenced, and any boy speaking, except about lessons, must be kept in fifteen minutes for each offence. One morning Ritchie and Fred planned a journey along the shore.

"Now, Fred," said Ritchie, "don't get kept in this morning." "All right," replied Fred, "I will look out." When "Silence" was called, Ritchie looked meaningly at Fred, who nodded in reply, and nearly made the slip of saying, "All right!" Suddenly Fred remembered something droll, and whispered it to his neighbour. The monitor saw him, and called, "Fifteen minutes, Fred, for speaking." Ritchie looked at him reproachfully, but it was not ten minutes after when the monitor again called, "Fred, another fifteen minutes for speaking in silence hour." Ritchie

A BICYCLE RAILWAY.

The town of Ridgeway, Ontario, Can., boasts of the most novel method of transportation yet put in practical use. It is the invention of Captain Lina Beecher, and is known as the Beecher single rail or bicycle railway. The new road starts at Ridgeway, and has been completed a portion of the way towards Crystal Beach. A trial was made of the completed portion of the road recently by an invited party under the chaperonage of the inventor, which was a success, and demonstrated the practicability of Captain Beecher's system of transportation. The track of this novel road is elevated on posts about five feet apart, and consists of a centre "T" rail and two guide rails. These guide rails are eighteen inches apart, and the "T" rail, on which the cars run, is between, and about four inches higher. The car runs on two flat wheels along the "T" rail, and is held upright by four bevel-edged wheels, which move along the ground rails. While the car is in motion it retains the upright position in obedience to the same law that holds a bicycle thus when in motion, hence the name "bicycle railroad," by which it is becoming generally known. It is worthy of comment that while in motion the guide wheels hardly touch the rails, the car running very easily and steadily on the two centre flat wheels.

The cars are equipped with electric brakes, lights and bells, and take the curves and sharp grades with surprising ease and perfect safety. Each car weighs about a ton and a half, and will seat eighteen passengers very comfortably. They are fitted with a five horse-power motor and storage batteries, which are suspended from the car on each side of the track, helping by their weight to preserve the car in its upright position. A speed of thirty five miles an hour has been attained on the piece of road already finished, which, it is claimed, can be increased if necessary. One of the great advantages the company claim for the road is that it will be absolutely free from dust, smoke, and cinders, as it will run, in this case, from four to eighteen feet above the ground, passing through fields instead of along dusty highways.

A Gentleman.

MARGARET B. HANSEYER.

I knew him for a gentleman,
By signs that never fail;
His coat was rough and rather worn,
His cheeks were thin and pale—
A lad who had his way to make,
With little time for play—
I know him for a gentleman
By certain signs to-day.

He met his mother on the street;
Off came his little cap
My door was shut; he waited there
Until I heard his rap.
He took the bundle from my hand,
And when I dropped my pen,
He sprang to pick it up for me,
This gentleman of ten.

He does not push the crowd along,
His voice is gently pitched,
He does not fling his books about,
As if he were bewitched.
He stands aside to let you pass;
He always shuts the door,
He runs on errands willingly,
To forge and mill and store.

He thinks of you before himself;
He serves you if he can;
For in whatever company
The manners makes the man.
At ten or forty 'tis the same,
The manners tell the tale;
And I discern the gentleman
By signs that never fail.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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

TORONTO, MAY 15, 1897.

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

MAY 23, 1897.

Samuel to anoint David.—1 Samuel 16. 1-13.

THE OCCASION.

David was chosen by God to be the successor of Saul, king of Israel. Saul was a valiant soldier, and for a time he was a faithful servant of God. When he became wicked and disobedient to the divine requirements, then God cast him off. Learn to obey God in all things. Saul became very wicked. When men enter upon a wicked course their ruin is sure.

SAMUEL KNEW OF SAUL'S DOWNFALL.

Samuel was a good man, a true prophet, whom God informed of his intentions. He faithfully reproved Saul for his disobedience, and did not keep him in the dark respecting the plans of Jehovah. "The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel." Poor Saul was anxious to have Samuel pray for him. When bad men get into trouble, they often seek the aid of good people to pray for them. Samuel did all in his power for Saul, but it was useless.

WHY DAVID WAS SELECTED.

God sometimes chooses the weak things of this world to confound things that are mighty. He was the youngest son of his father, and had a most eventful career. It might justly be termed romantic. It is full of the most thrilling incidents, and cannot fail to inspire the greatest possible interest. The selection

of David as the successor of Saul was a surprise to Jesse, the father of David, hence, though he had several sons, he did not for one moment suppose that all the older ones would be rejected, and the youngest would be the choice. You see, man seeth not as God seeth, man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart and makes no mistakes.

A RELIGIOUS CEREMONY.

When they asked Samuel his business, he said, "I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord." Nothing should be done that we cannot ask God's blessing upon. One reason why men do not succeed better is they do not seek divine direction. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy paths." Men should never enter into any business, or undertake any matter, no matter how trivial may be its importance, without being certain that they are acting as God would have them act.

DIFFICULTIES.

Though anointed king of Israel, David's path was crowded with trouble. It did not seem likely that he would ascend the throne. Saul hated him. He even had to flee for his life. God's purposes are not always speedily accomplished. But what he says will assuredly come to pass. Learn to trust God, no matter how dark and lowering the clouds may be.

"GWINE BACK HOME."

As we waited in the L. & N. depot at Nashville for the train, someone began crying, and an excitement was raised among the passengers. A brief investigation proved that it was an old coloured man who was giving way to his grief. Three or four people remarked on the strangeness of it, but for a time no one said anything to him. Then a depot policeman came forward and took him by the arm, and shook him roughly, and said:

"See here, old man, you want to quit that! You are drunk, and if you make any more disturbance I'll lock you up!"

"Deed, but I hain't drunk," replied the old man, as he removed his tear-stained handkerchief. "I'ze lost my ticket an' money, an' dat's what's de matter."

"Bosh! You never had any money to lose! You dry up or away you go!"

"What's the matter y're?" queried a man, as he came forward.

The old man recognized the dialect of the Southerner in an instant, and repressing his emotions with a great effort he answered:

"Say, Mars Jack, I'ze bin robbed."
"My name is White."
"Well, then, Mars White, somebody has done robbed me of ticket an' money."
"Where were you going?"
"Gwine down into Kaintuck, where I was bo'n an' raised."

"Where's that?"
"Nigh to Bowlin' Green, sah, an' when the wah dun sot me free I cum up this way. Hain't bin home sence, sah."

"And you had a ticket?"
"Yes, sah, an' ober \$20 in cash. Bin savin' up fer ten y'ars, sah."

"What do you want to go back for?"
"To see de hills an' de fields, de tobacco an' de co'n, Mars Preston, an' de good old missus. Why, Mars White, I'ze dun bin prayin' fur it fo' twenty y'ars. Sometime de longin' has cum till I cooldn't hardly hold myself."

"It's too bad."
"De ole woman is buried down dar, Mars White—de ole woman an' free chillen. I kin 'member de spot same as if I seed it yisterday. You go out half-way to de just tobaccker house, an' den you turn to de left an' go down to de branch whar de wimmen used to wash. Dar's fo' trees on de oder bank, an' right under 'em is whar dey is all buried. I kin see it! I kin lead you right to de spot."

"And what will you do when you get there?" asked the stranger.

"Go up to de big house an' ax Mars Preston to let me lib out all de rest of my days right dar. I'ze ole an' all alone, an' I want to be nigh my dead. Sorter company fur me when my heart aches."

"Where were you robbed?"
"Out doahs, dar, I reckon, in de crowd. See? De pocket is all cut out. I'ze dreamed an' pondered—I'ze had dis journey in my mind fur years, an' now I'ze dun bin robbed an' can't go!"

He fell to crying, and the policeman came forward in an officious manner.

"Stand back, sir!" commanded the stranger. "Now, gentlemen, you have heard the story. I'm going to help the old man back to die on the old plantation and be buried alongside of his dead."

"So am I!" called twenty men in

chorus, and within five minutes we had raised enough to buy him a ticket and leave \$50 to spare. And when he realized his good luck the snow-haired black fell upon his knees in that crowd and prayed:

"Lord, I'ze been a believer in you all my days, an' now I dun ax you to watch ober dese yere white folks dat has believed in me an' helped me to go back to de ole home."

And I do believe that nine-tenths of that crowd had tears in their eyes as the gateman called out the train for Louisville.—Our Dumb Animals.

ARE THE PLANETS INHABITED?

This is a question which is frequently asked and variously answered. It is at best a matter of pure speculation, and there is absolutely no proof on either side of the question. The most that can be done is to suggest certain possibilities. We know very little of the surface conditions of the planets, and therefore can arrive at very uncertain conclusions as to their habitableness. There are but two of them on which it would seem possible for life to exist. These are Venus and Mars. An atmosphere is an absolute necessity of life—at least such as we have on the earth. It serves two special purposes. In the first place, it supports life by furnishing gaseous food. In the second place, it moderates the heat of the sun, and tempers the cold on the side of the planet away from the sun. Without the atmosphere our earth would be uninhabitable. The days would be burning hot and the nights freezing cold, and animal life could not long endure such extremes.

Let us see how it is with the planets. Mercury is so near the sun that little is known of its surface conditions. We have no evidence that it has an atmosphere, and the extremes of heat and cold must be very great. Life on Mercury is therefore hardly possible. Venus resembles the earth in many respects. It has a solid surface, there is water on it, and it has an atmosphere containing water vapour. Being nearer the sun, its temperature is somewhat higher than that of the earth. With these conditions, there seems to be no reason why it may not support life. Mars is still more like the earth. Its surface shows indications of land and water, and the spectroscope shows that its atmosphere contains moisture. On its surface is a network of fine lines which have been supposed to be canals containing water, as they appear and disappear from time to time. There are bright spots at the poles which have been supposed to be caps of ice and snow. The day on Mars is about equal to our day, and the seasons recur in the same manner, though they are twice as long as ours. The year of Mars is nearly equal to two of our years. As in the case of Venus, life may exist here, but there is no proof of it. Jupiter and Saturn are masses of molten matter, surrounded by dense clouds of vapour, and with no solid crust. Life, as we understand it, is here impossible. Uranus and Neptune are still hotter, being yet in a semi-nebulous condition, and shining partly by their own light. Of course, life cannot exist on them. The moon is a cold body, without atmosphere, and turns on its axis only once a month. It is thus seen that the possibilities of planetary life are very limited, and speculation in regard to it is not very profitable.—Cumberland Presbyterian.

WRITTEN.

"Don't write there," said a father to his son, who was writing with a diamond on his window.

"Why not?"

"Because you can't rub it out. And did it ever occur to you, my child, that you are daily writing that which you cannot rub out? You made a cruel speech to your mother the other day. It wrote itself on her loving heart, and gave her great pain. It is there now, and hurts her every time she thinks of it. You can't rub it out."

"One day you whispered a wicked thought in the ear of your playmate. It wrote itself on his mind, and led him to do a wicked act. It is there now; you can't rub it out."

"All your thoughts, all your words, all your acts, are written in the book of God, and you can't rub them out. What you write on the minds of others will stay there, but what is written in God's book may and can be blotted out. You can't rub it out, but the precious blood of Jesus can blot it out if you are sorry and ask him. Go then, my child, and ask Jesus to blot out the bad things you have written in the book of God."

ONE BLACK DROP.

One black drop—only one—but what a tinge it has given that water! Spreading to every other drop in its neighbourhood, it has clouded the whole mass.

That is the way with a thought that is not pure. It affects the desires, and there follows the wish to do the impure thing. It reaches the will, and there follows the deed. Then, how the recollection of it clouds the hour when one prays; the hour when the Bible is read, and God's house is visited; the hour of solitary study, or of intercourse with friends!

Look out for this devil. How? A man says of the water obscured by the black drop, "I will expel this dusky cloud." Stop! Let him go farther back, and not admit that drop in the first place. That impure desire, don't gratify it; that impure book, put a hundred feet as quickly as possible between you and it. Who will promise in this one thing to look not, touch not? That promise will make a memory of sunshine for you which will last a lifetime.

A VEGETABLE PISTOL.

But the most remarkable instance of this method of scattering the seeds (shooting them from the pod) is afforded by *Hura crepitans*, a handsome tree, a native of the forests of South America. The curious fruit of this tree is a somewhat flattened, deeply furrowed or fluted body, made up of a circle of many cells, each containing one seed. When the seeds are ripe, the cells open, and expel them with a loud report, like the crack of a pistol. Hence the fruit is sometimes called the "monkeys' dinner-bell."

Stories have been told of *Hura* fruits being placed in desks and subsequently opening and discharging their seeds with such violence as to break ink-wells, and even to crack the wood of the desk.—"How Plants Spread," by Thomas H. Kearney, Jr., in *St. Nicholas*.

SOME FACTS ABOUT CANADA.

The Canadian rivers and lakes swarm with game fish. The timber lands are almost limitless. The undeveloped coal fields cover about 100,000 square miles. She has more iron than any other country in the world. There are vast quantities of gold and silver. Lead is found in nearly every province. There is also a vast supply of copper; the salt deposits are the largest in the world, while one place yields nickel in large quantities. While on the subject, it may be said that considerable error exists regarding Canada's climate. It is not very well known, for instance, that the mean temperature for Hudson Bay is three degrees warmer during the winter months than the mean temperature of Lake Superior. There was colder weather in the winter of 1888 in Iowa and Nebraska than in the Northwest Territories of Canada.

A mother was talking to her sick and dying child, trying to soothe the suffering one. First, she told the little one of the music in heaven that she would hear—of the harps and songs of joy. "But, mamma," spoke the feeble child, "I am so sick, it would give me pain to hear that music." The mother, grieved at the failure of her words to comfort her darling, next told her of the river of Life, gushing from the throne of God, and of the lovely scenes of the New Jerusalem. She talked at length, and finally paused. "Mamma, I am too sick," whispered the dying child, "too tired to like those pretty things." Deeply pained, the mother tenderly lifted her child and pressed it to her bosom, and the little one said: "Mamma, this is what I want—rest—and if Christ will take me to his breast and let me rest, then I would like to go to heaven now."

Of the great Powers across the sea, five—Russia, Germany, France, Italy, and Austria-Hungary—have enormously increased their public debts during the past ten years; England, Spain, and Denmark have decreased theirs. France to-day is the most deeply involved, her indebtedness being at the rate of nearly \$140 to each inhabitant; moreover, she is retrograding financially instead of recuperating. England's proportion is about \$84 to each inhabitant, but she is yearly reducing her debt. Russia's obligations are enormous, but the proportion is small—only about \$30 to each inhabitant. Germany's is higher—nearly \$60; and Italy's is higher still—about \$83.—*Zion's Herald*.

A Prayer.

If any little word of mine
 May make a life the brighter;
 If any little song of mine
 May make a heart the lighter,
 God help me speak the little word,
 And take my bit of singing,
 And drop it in some lonely vale
 To set the echoes ringing!
 If any little love of mine
 May make a life the sweeter;
 If any little care of mine
 May make a friend's the fleetier;
 If any lift of mine may ease
 The burden of another,
 God give me love and care and strength,
 To help my toiling brother!

"Probable Sons."

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST PUNISHMENT.

Slowly but surely little Milly was advancing in her uncle's favour. Her extreme docility and great fearlessness, added to her quaintness of speech and action, attracted him greatly. He became interested in watching her little figure as it flitted to and fro, and the sunny laugh and bright childish voice about the house were no longer an annoyance to him.

One day he was moved to anger by an accident that happened to a small statue in the hall, and Milly was the delinquent. Her ball had rolled behind it, and both she and the dog were having a romp to get it, when in the scuffle the statue came to the ground and lay there in a thousand pieces. Hearing the crash, Sir Edward came out of his study, and completely losing his temper, he turned furiously upon the child, giving vent to language that was hardly fit for her ears to hear. She stood before him with round, frightened eyes and quivering lips, her little figure upright and still, until she could bear it no longer; and then she turned and fled from him through the garden door and out upon the smooth grassy lawn, where she flung herself down face foremost close to her favourite beech-tree, there giving way to a burst of passionate tears.

"I didn't mean it—oh! I didn't mean to break it," she sobbed aloud. "Uncle Edward is a fearful angry man; he doesn't love me a bit. I wish I had a father! I want a father like the probable son; he wouldn't be so angry!"

And when later on nurse came, with an anxious face, to fetch her little charge in from the cold, wet grass, she had not the heart to scold her, for the tear-stained face was raised so pitifully to hers with the words,—

"Oh, nurse, dear, carry me in your arms. No one loves me here. I've been telling God all about it. He's the only One that isn't angry."

That evening, at the accustomed time, Milly stole quietly into the dining-room, wondering in her little heart whether her uncle was still angry with her.

As she climbed into her chair, now placed on the opposite side of the large table, she eyed him doubtfully through her long lashes; then gathering courage from the immovable expression of his face, she said in her most cheerful tone,—

"It's a very fine night, uncle."

"Is it?" responded Sir Edward, who was accustomed by this time to some such remark when his little niece wanted to attract his notice. Then feeling really ashamed of his outburst a few hours before, he said, by way of excusing himself,—

"Look here, Millicent, you made me exceedingly angry by your piece of mischief this afternoon. That statue can never be replaced, and you have destroyed one of my most valuable possessions. Let it be a warning for the future. If every you break anything again, I shall punish you most severely; do you understand?"

"Yes, uncle," she answered looking up earnestly. "You will punish me most severely. I will remember. I have been wondering why I broke it, when I didn't mean to do it. Nurse says it was a most 'unfortunate accident.' I asked her what an accident was. She says it's a thing that happens when you don't expect it—a surprise, she called it. I'm sure it was a dreadful surprise to me, and to Fritz too; but I'll never play ball in the hall again, never!"

A week later, and Sir Edward was in his study, absorbed in his books and papers, when there was a knock at his door, and, to his astonishment, his little niece walked in. This was so against all rules and regulations that his voice was very stern as he said,—

"What is the meaning of this intrusion, Millicent? You know you are never allowed to disturb me when here."

Milly did not answer for a moment, she walked up to her uncle, her small lips tightly closed, and then, standing in front of him with clasped hands, she said, — I've come to tell you some dreadful news."

Sir Edward pushed aside his papers, adjusted his glasses, and saw from the pallour of the child's face and the scared expression in her eyes, that it was no light matter that had made her venture into his presence uncalled for.

"It's a dreadful surprise again," Milly continued, "but I told nurse I must tell you at once. —I felt so bad here," and her little hand was laid pathetically on her chest.

"Well, what is it? Out with it, child! You are wasting my time," said her uncle impatiently.

"I have—I have broken something else."

There was silence. Then Sir Edward asked drily,—

"And what is it now?"

"It's a—a flower-pot, that the garden-er's boy left outside the tool-house. I—I well, I put it on Fritz's head for a hat, you know. He did look so funny, but he tossed up his head and ran away, and it fell, and it smashed to bits. I have got the bits outside the door on the mat. Shall I bring them in?"

A flower-pot was of such small value in Sir Edward's eyes that he almost smiled at the child's distress.

"Well, well, you must learn not to touch the flower-pots in future; now run away, and do not disturb me again."

But Milly stood her ground.

"I think you have forgot, Uncle Edward. You told me that if I broke anything again you would punish me 'most severely.' Those were the words you said; don't you remember?"

Sir Edward pulled the ends of his moustache and fidgeted uneasily in his chair. He always prided himself upon

silence. There was commiseration in her tone. The situation was becoming ludicrous to Sir Edward, though there was a certain amount of annoyance at feeling his inability to carry out his threat.

"Nurse told me," continued his little niece gravely, "that she knew a little boy who was shut up in a dark cupboard for a punishment, but he was found nearly dead, and really died the next day, from fright. There is a dark cupboard on the kitchen stairs, I don't think I should be very frightened, because God will be in there with me. Do you think that would do?"

This was not acceptable. The child went on with knitted brows. "I expect the Bible will tell you how to punish. I remember a man who picked up sticks on Sunday; he was stoned dead; and Elisha's servant was made a leper, and some children were killed by a bear, and a prophet by a lion, and Annas and Sophia were struck dead. All of them were punished 'most severely,' weren't they? If you forgave me a little bit, and left out the 'most severely,' it would make it easier, I expect."

"Perhaps I might do that," said poor Sir Edward, who by this time longed to dispense with the punishment altogether; "as it was only a flower-pot, I will leave out the 'most severely.'"

Milly's face brightened.

"I think," she said, coming up to him and laying one hand on his knee—"I think if I were to go to bed instead of coming down to dessert with you this evening, that would punish me; don't you think so?"

"Very well, that will do. Now, run away, and let this be your last breakage. I cannot be worried with your punishments."

"I will try to be very good, nurse, always," said Milly whilst being tucked up in bed that night, "because Uncle

nearly upset his gravily at the outset by taking off her hat in imitation of him and covering her face with it. But when the sermon commenced her large, dark eyes were riveted on the clergyman as he gave out the text so well known to her:

"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son," and though the sermon was half an hour in length, her gaze never left the pulpit. "Uncle Edward," she said, when their steps at length turned homewards, "do you know, I heard all the sermon, and understood it pretty well, except the long words. Wasn't it nice to hear about the probable son?"

"Prodigal," you mean; "cannot you pronounce your words properly?"

Sir Edward's tone was irritable. He had not been feeling very comfortable under the good vicar's words.

"I can't say that; I always forgot it. Nurse says one long word is as good as another sometimes. Uncle, what did the clergyman mean by people running away from God? No one does, do they?"

"A great many do," was the dry response.

"But how can they? Because God is everywhere. No one can't get away from God, and why do they want to? Because God loves them so."

"Why did the prodigal want to get away?"

Milly considered.

"I s'pose he wanted to have some a—adventures, don't you call them? I play at that, you know. All sorts of things happen to me before I sit down at the beech-tree, but—but it's so different with God. Why, I should be fearful unhappy if I got away from Him. I couldn't, could I, uncle? Who would take care of me and love me when I'm asleep? And who would listen to my prayers? Why, Uncle Edward, I think I should die of fright if I got away from God. Do tell me I couldn't."

Milly had stopped short, and grasped hold of Sir Edward's coat in her growing excitement. He glanced at her flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes. "You foolish child, there is no fear of your getting away from God. Don't be so excitable. We will change the subject. I want to see Maxwell, so we will go through the wood."

Maxwell was Sir Edward's head keeper, and a little later found them at his pretty cottage at the edge of the wood. It was Milly's first visit, and Mrs. Maxwell, a motherly-looking body, greeted her with such a sunny smile that the child drew near to her instinctively.

"What a lovely room," she exclaimed, looking round the homely little kitchen with a child's admiring eyes, "and what a beautiful cat! May I stroke her?"

Assent being given, Milly was soon seated in a large cushioned chair, a fat tabby cat on her lap, and whilst Sir Edward was occupied with his keeper she was making fast friends with the wife.

"Uncle Edward," she said, when they had taken their leave and were walking homewards, "Mrs. Maxwell has asked me to go to tea with her to-morrow. May I—all by myself?"

"Ask your nurse; I have no objection." "I should love to live in her house," continued the child eagerly; "it is all amongst the trees, and I love trees. And this wood is so lovely. Why, I might get lost in it, mightn't I? I have never been here before. In my story-books, children always get lost in a wood. Uncle Edward, do you think the trees talk to one another? I always think they do. Look at them now. They are just shaking their heads together and whispering, aren't they? Whispering very gently together, because it is Sunday. Sometimes they get angry with one another and scream, but I like to hear them hum and sing best. Nurse says it's the wind that makes them do it. Don't you like to hear them? When I lie in bed I listen to them round the house, and I always want to sing with them. Nurse doesn't like it; she says it's the wind moaning: I think it's the trees singing to God, and I love them when they do it. Which do you think it is?"

And so Milly chatted on, and Sir Edward listened and put in a word or two occasionally, and on the whole did not find his small niece bad company. He told her when they entered the house that she could go to church every Sunday morning in future with him, and that sent Milly to the nursery with a radiant face, there to confide to the nurse that she had had a "lovely time," and was going to tea as often as she might with "Mrs. Maxwell in the wood."

(To be continued.)

Palestine is about one-fourth the size of New York



"I DIDN'T MEAN TO BREAK IT," SHE SOBBED.

being a man of his word, but much regretted at the present moment that he had been so rash in his speech.

"Oh! ah! I remember," he said at length, meeting his little niece's anxious gaze with some embarrassment. Then, pulling himself together, he added sternly,—

"Of course you must be punished; it was exceedingly careless and mischievous. What does your nurse do when she punishes you?"

"She never does punish me—not now," said Milly plaintively. "When I was a very little girl I used to stand in the corner. I don't think nurse has punished me for years."

Sir Edward was in a dilemma: children's punishments were quite unknown to him. Milly seemed to guess at his difficulty.

"How were you punished when you were a little boy, uncle?"

"I used to be well thrashed. Many is the whipping that I have had from my father!"

"What is a whipping—like you gave Fritz when he went into the game wood?"

"Yes."

There was a pause. The child clasped her little hands tighter, and set her lips firmer, as she saw before her eyes a strong arm dealing very heavy strokes with a riding-whip. Then she said in an awe-struck tone,—

"And do you think that is how you had better punish me?"

Sir Edward smiled grimly as he looked at the baby figure standing so erect before him.

"No," he said; "I do not think you are a fit subject for that kind of treatment." Milly heaved a sigh of relief.

"And don't you know how to punish?" she said, after some minutes of awkward

Edward is very puzzled when he has to punish me. He doesn't know what to do. He looked quite unhappy and said it worried him."

And Sir Edward, as he finished his dinner in silence and solitude, muttered to himself,—

"The child is certainly a great nuisance at times, but, upon my word, I quite miss her this evening. Children after all are original, if they are nothing else, and she is one of the most original that I have ever met."

It was Sunday morning, and Sir Edward was just starting for church. As he stood over the blazing fire in the hall buttoning a glove, a little voice came to him from the staircase: "Uncle Edward, may I come down and speak to you?"

Permission being given, Milly danced down the stairs, and then, slipping a little hand into her uncle's, she lifted a coaxing face to his.

"Will you take me to church with you? Nurse thinks I'm almost big enough now, and I have been to church in the afternoon sometimes."

Sir Edward hesitated. "If you come, you will fidget, I expect. I cannot stand that."

"I will sit as still as a mouse; I won't fidget."

"If you behave badly I shall never take you again. Yes, you may come; be quick and get ready."

A few moments later, Sir Edward and his little niece were walking down the avenue, she clasping a large Bible under her arm, and trying in vain to match her steps with his.

The squire's pew was one of the old-fashioned high ones, and Milly's head did not reach the top of it. Very quiet and silent she was during the service, and very particular to follow her uncle's example in every respect, though she

True Living.

To breathe to eat, and sleep, or in vain strive
 With Nature's laws a hopeless war to wage,
 And reap unrest and pain from youth to age.—
 This is not life, but death. He only lives
 Who from the heart's full fountain freely gives,
 And takes as freely, love's large heritage.
 Who saves his life shall lose it, and the prize,
 If gained, is not worth having. He who dies
 For God and truth and lost humanity,
 Scorning delights to live laborious days
 Shall win, not wealth nor place nor human praise,
 But life indeed, and immortality.

JEWISH LIFE IN PALESTINE IN THE TIME OF CHRIST.

BY THE REV. W. F. ADENEY, M.A.

There is no reason to suppose that the dwellings of peasants and artisans were different from those seen in the towns and villages of Palestine in the present day. Let us look at such a house as that in which Mary and Joseph brought up the child Jesus. It is not built with stones or bricks, but only with mud dried in the sun, and externally it looks like a square block of earth, it may be with green grass growing on the roof. We can understand how it would be possible for a thief to dig through and steal from a house thus built. There is no chimney. Fires are rarely lit; but when the weather is cold a charcoal brazier may be laid on the floor.

There is no window. All the daylight that is to be had comes in through the open door. The strong sun-light of the East makes the most of the smallest chink, and the gloom of a windowless house is much less there—where, too, no one wishes to shut the door to keep out the cold air—than it would be under the fall smoke that envelopes London. For all that, the light must have been greatly obscured; and we are not greatly surprised to learn that the woman, who had lost a piece of silver, needed to light a lamp before she could look for it. Nor are we to be surprised at her having to sweep the floor before she could find it—for the floor is only trodden earth, often thick with dust and refuse.

Practically, the house consists of one chamber, but there is an alcove at the further end, where part of the family sleep. It is likely enough that the house is built against a hill, and if so, a cave may be utilized for this purpose. A raised platform, approached by three or four roughly-hewn steps, constitutes the women's portion of the dwelling.

Domestic utensils are but few. All-important is the mill—consisting of two stones, the upper one having handles attached to it, with which the two women, who sit facing one another, with the mill between them, turn it. A bushel is an article of furniture which one is always to look for. Thus Christ speaks of "the bushel." Turned upside down it serves as a table while the family squat round it at their homely meal. When the lamp is lit this may be conveniently placed on the bushel—it would be a mistake, Christ says, to reverse the action, and put the lamp under it. The lamp is a little earthen vessel, with a spout for the wick to come out at, a hole in the middle for the oil to be poured through, and a handle at the back.

If Joseph's workshop were like a carpenter's shop in Nazareth at the present day, it would be a square room, open on one side to the street, and quite flush with the pathway, so that passers-by could watch the young apprentice as he drove the saw and plane, and fashioned the ploughs and yokes, of which Justin Martyr speaks. Here he would often be called into conversation with the talkative loiterers, to whom—as to most Eastern people—time is of no value. Thus he would be an observer of men in the street of Nazareth even in his early days. Through these streets there would pass a busy traffic.

In the present day, wheeled vehicles are unknown in Palestine, excepting on the road from Jaffa to Jerusalem. The broken, rocky paths would not admit the roughest waggon to travel over them. But things were better in the old, more civilized days. Wealthy men rode about in their chariots; and carts, drawn by oxen, were in use. But wheels were never employed in the East as freely as with us; and beasts of burden were employed to carry goods on their backs.

It is a singular fact, that the camel is the only one referred to in the New Testament, for it must have been much in use, not only for conveying merchandise across the desert, but for carrying

goods between the towns and villages of Palestine. The ox and the ass were the more common domestic animals of the agricultural classes. Wealthy men drove about in carriages drawn by horses. Other persons rode on asses—the Syrian ass being a strong, brisk little animal, though not regarded so highly as the noble Arabian horse.

Dress—most people in the streets were on foot and probably dressed much as they are dressed in the present day. A little baby would be put into light swaddling clothes. When liberated from this painful constriction, he might be seen in a state of complete nudity, sitting astride his mother's shoulder, a safe vantage-ground from which to survey the brisk crowd with infantine merriment. A little older, the child runs about and plays in the street, clad in a single garment—a sort of long shirt, with short sleeves, and open at the chest. He has no shoes.

The dress of a man is richer, and more various. He wears a large cloak about his shoulders, of striped colours—the commonest being brown and white. When he is travelling he gathers it about him the loose folds above the girdle serving as a large pocket. Beneath the cloak is a close-fitting, long tunic, with sleeves—often of bright colours—blue, yellow, red. The humbler classes are more often clad in blue, or blue and white colours. It is likely that our Lord's tunic was blue. Beneath the tunic a shirt was sometimes worn. The priests wore trousers down to their feet. The coverings of the feet were of two kinds—shoes and sandals. On the head



NATIVE TYPES IN MODERN PALESTINE.

was a shawl, bound with cord, and falling back on the shoulders.

Pictures representing Christ bare-headed must be false. Under the fierce Syrian sun, everybody must protect himself against sunstroke. Therefore, we must imagine that our Lord wore one of these shawl-like head-dresses—perhaps a silk one, of bright colours—yellow predominant—the present of one of his devoted wealthy followers.

The dress of the women was like that of the men, excepting that it was more ample, and that a veil was commonly worn over the face. A Jewish woman was freer in this respect than a Mohammedan woman is at the present day. She could unveil her countenance when she pleased, without being considered immodest; but she could also veil it when she pleased. An attempt to remove a woman's veil was always a gross insult.

LESSON NOTES.

SECOND QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

LESSON VIII.—MAY 23.

THE CONFERENCE AT JERUSALEM.

Acts 15. 1-6, 22-29. Memory verses, 3, 4.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.—Acts 15. 11.

OUTLINE.

1. Jewish Law, v. 1-6.
 2. Christian Liberty, v. 22-29.
 Time.—A.D. 51.
 Places.—Jerusalem and Antioch in Syria.

HOME READINGS.

M. The conference at Jerusalem.—Acts 15. 1-11.
 Tu. The conference at Jerusalem.—Acts 15. 12-21.

W. The conference at Jerusalem. Acts 15. 22-32.

Th. Paul's reference.—Gal. 2. 1-10.

F. The true rule.—Gal. 6. 11-18.

S. True righteousness.—Phil. 3. 1-11.

Su. One in Christ.—Col. 3. 8-17.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

- Jewish Law, v. 1-6.
 What visitors became teachers?
 Who had sent them? Gal. 2. 12.
 What did they teach?
 What had Jesus taught about this? Mark 16. 16.
 Who disputed this teaching?
 To what city were they sent?
 Who were to settle the dispute?
 Through what cities did they pass?
 What tidings made the brethren glad?
 Who received the delegates at Jerusalem?
 What report was made?
 Who was offended?
 What did they insist upon?
 Who were called together to settle the question?
- Christian Liberty, v. 22-29.
 What did the council decide to do?
 Who were chosen to go to Antioch?
 What greeting was sent with these messengers?
 What did the church at Jerusalem learn?
 What did they decide to do?
 What was said to Barnabas and Paul?
 What was said about imposing burdens?
 What things are forbidden?
 What is the final word?
 What is the real burden of this message? Golden Text.

frigate" so and so, "and I take the liberty of coming to speak to you in reference to what you said about these islands. I was there with my ship, I saw these people, and I saw the circulation of the Bible among them, and I never saw such Christianity in all my life as among the people of these islands." Said he, "They reminded me of those people of whom you read in the Acts of the Apostles."

"MAKING A LANDFALL."

Having secured his pilot, it is the captain's next aim to make a "landfall." That is to say, he wishes to come in sight of some well-known object on shore, which, being marked down on his chart, will show him just where he is and how he must steer to find the entrance to the harbour.

A special lighthouse is usually the object sought, and in approaching New York harbour it is customary for steamers from Europe to first find, or "sight," Fire Island Lighthouse. This is on a little sandy island near the coast of Long Island. Besides the lighthouse there is on this island a signal and telegraph station. When, therefore, the liner steams in sight of Fire Island Light she hoists two signals, one of which tells her name and the other the welfare of those on board. The operator then telegraphs to the ship's agent in New York that she has been sighted and that all on board are well, or are otherwise.

The ship's course is then laid to reach the most prominent object at the harbour entrance, in this case Sandy Hook Lighthouse. She is easily recognized: a big, cradle-shaped hulk, painted red, with two stumpy masts, having black ball-shaped cages on top of them. If it were night she would be found by a light at her masthead flashing brightly white for twelve seconds and invisible for three.—St. Nicholas.

ON A HOT DAY.

One of the New York daily papers recently told of a boy who was passing one of the large hotels when ice was being delivered there. In handling the ice a large block broke and several pieces were left on the sidewalk. The boy stood still and watched the icemen until he decided they were not going to pick those pieces up. He went to one of the men and asked if he might have the ice. He was told he could. He gathered the pieces up and carried them to a trench where some workmen were at work in the sun and gave the pieces to them. The men were astonished at the offer, and then eagerly grasped the ice. The boy walked on whistling.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where does this lesson show—

- That good men do not always agree?
- That Christianity is not rites, but holy living?
- That it is by grace we are saved?

LIVE OR DIE, PUT ME ASHORE.

A STORY TOLD BY DR. JOHN HALL, OF NEW YORK.

It is nearly two generations since a boat's crew left their ship to reach the Hervey Islands. One of the passengers upon that boat desired to land, but the boat's crew feared to do so, as the cannibals were gathered together on the shore; but holding up the Bible in his hand, he said, "Live or die, put me ashore." They would not go near the land; he plunged into the surf and held high the book. He reached the land. The cannibals did not kill him; but he won their favour, and lived among them, and, for aught I know, he died among them.

Thirty years afterward another ship reached the same Hervey Islands, bringing literally a cargo of Bibles. They were all wanted, and were taken with the greatest eagerness, and paid for by these people. This was the result of the labours of that heroic young man who said, "Live or die, put me ashore." I was preaching to my people some time ago on behalf of the Bible Society. I mentioned this circumstance in illustration of the fact that it is not so long, after all, between the sowing and the reaping. When I came down from the pulpit and was standing in the middle aisle, there came up to me a tall, manly-looking gentleman, a man that looked as if he might be a descendant of one of the old Vikings, and said, "You will excuse me for coming up to speak to you and introducing myself; I am Captain" so and so—I need not give you his name—"I am in command of her Majesty's

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