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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

VOL. XVII.]

TORONTO, OCTOBER 16, 1897.

[No. 42.

The Reason Why.

BY PRISCILLA LEONARD.

I know a little maiden who is always in a hurry,
She races through her breakfast to be in time for school;
She scribbles at her desk in a hasty sort of flurry,
And comes home in a breathless whirl that fills the vestibule.

She hurries through her studying, she hurries through her sewing,
Like an engine at high pressure, as if leisure were a crime;
She's always in a scramble, no matter where she's going,
And yet—would you believe it—she never is in time!

It seems a contradiction, until you know the reason,
But I'm sure you think it simple, as I do, when I state
That she never has been known to begin a thing in season,
And she's always in a hurry, because she starts too late.

HOW THEY LEARNED ABOUT GOD.

BY RUTH ARGYLE.

Do you see the woman who sits in the left corner of the picture? Let us hear her story: One day her husband was very angry with her, and threatened to kill her because she had listened to the "white preacher-man," who was telling the people in the village about the true God, and the Saviour who died for our salvation, and the beautiful home awaiting all those who love and serve him on earth. But the woman longed to hear more about these wonderful things; so, when her hard day's work was done and her lazy husband lay fast asleep in their miserable hut, she crept softly away to the missionary's house, which was cleaner and pleasanter than her own home. It was so late that nobody was up, but the woman's timid knock brought Mr. Wilson to the door. He asked her what she wanted.

"To hear more about the 'new God,' please, good man."

So the missionary's wife brought the poor creature in and told her all about the blessed Saviour; and in the early dawn she went on her way rejoicing. She had found a Friend who would love and guard her all her life long and receive her into his own beautiful home when she should die. How happy she was!

"Where have you been, bad woman?" cried the angry husband when she came home.

"I have been to hear more about the true God. Our gods are nothing but bits of wood and lumps of earth that men make; they are no gods."

She was going to tell him all that she had just heard, but he struck her down with his club, and continued striking until he thought her dead; then he left the poor creature lying senseless on the mud floor of the hut and hurried away to brag among his friends of the brave deed he had just done. They praised him, you may be sure, and not one of them cared for the sufferings of the poor woman he had left to die alone. But the two women whom you see standing in the picture found her, and, not knowing what else to do, carried her to Mrs. Wilson's, who took her in and nursed her back to life. The kind act won the confidence of these three women, and the fourth soon joined them in their frequent visits to the missionary's house, and learned with them the way of peace. The enraged husband would not allow his wife to come back to her home, so she gladly gave up her life to spreading the story of the cross and him who hung thereon, among her friends.

The other three women, who were gentle, hard-working wives, did not grow discouraged because they could not go about telling the story of Jesus, but in their simple way lived the story their lips told; and that is just what we must

do. It is not enough for us to say that we are Christians; we must behave like Christians. We must be gentle, obedient, forgiving children of our Father in heaven.

ABOUT THE SUN.

Mornings when it was pitch dark, have you never woken quite early to find you could see nothing, not even your hand? As you lay there watching, the light came gradually creeping in at the window. If you have done this, you will have noticed that you can at first only just distinguish the dim outline of the furniture; then you can tell the difference between the white cloth on the table and the dark wardrobe beside it, then, little by little, all the smaller objects—the handles of the drawer, the pictures on the wall, and the different colours of all the things in the room—

hundred and seventy-one years for you to reach the end of your journey.

And when you arrived there, how large do you think you would find the sun to be? A learned Greek was laughed at by all his fellow-Greeks because he said the sun was as large as that little corner of their country called the Peloponnese. How astonished they would have been if they could have known that not only is he bigger than the whole of Greece, but more than a million times bigger than the whole world!

Our world itself, as you already know, is a very large place, so large that it would take nearly a month for an express train to travel around it. Yet even this great globe is but a very small object when compared to the sun, for it measures only eight thousand miles across, while the sun measures more than eight hundred and fifty thousand. Imagine that you could cut the sun and



HOW THEY LEARNED ABOUT GOD.

become clearer and clearer, till at last you see all plainly in broad daylight.

What has been happening here, and why have the things in the room become visible so slowly? We say that the sun is rising, but we know very well that it is not the sun which moves, but that our earth has been turning slowly round, and bringing the little spot on which we live face to face with the great fiery ball, so that his beams can fall upon us.

How far away from us do you think the sun is? On a fine summer's day, when we can see him clearly, it looks as if we had only to get into a balloon and reach him as he sits in the sky; and yet we know quite certainly that he is more than ninety-one millions of miles from our earth. These figures are so large that you cannot really grasp them. But imagine yourself in an express train, travelling at the rate of sixty miles an hour, and never stopping. If it were possible for you to travel at that rate, straight to the sun, it would take one

the earth each in half, as you would cut an apple; then, if you were to lay the flat side of the half-earth on the flat side of the half-sun, it would take one hundred and six such earths to stretch across the face of the sun.

One of the best ways to form an idea of the great size of the sun, is to imagine it to be hollow, like an air-ball, and then see how many earths it would take to fill it. You would hardly believe that it would take one million three hundred and thirty-one thousand globes the size of our world squeezed together. Just think; if an immense giant could travel all over the universe and gather a number of worlds, each as big as ours, and were to make first a heap of ten such worlds, how huge it would be. Then he must have a hundred such heaps of ten to make a thousand worlds; and then he must gather together again a thousand times that thousand to make a million; and should he put them all into the sun-ball, he would fill only about three-quarters of it.

After hearing this, you will not be astonished to learn that so immense a ball should give out a very great amount of light and heat, so great that it is almost impossible to form any idea of it. It will help us to understand this, if we remember how few of the rays, which dart out on all sides from this fiery ball, can reach our tiny globe, and yet how powerful they are.

Look at the flame of a lamp in the middle of the room, and see how its light pours out on all sides and into every corner, then take a grain of mustard-seed, which will very well represent our earth in size, and hold it up at a distance from the lamp. How very few of all those rays which are filling the room fall on the little mustard-seed. And yet, as a grain of mustard-seed is to the flame of the lamp, so is our earth to the great globe of the sun. On! the two-billionth part of all the rays sent out by the sun ever fall upon the earth. But this small quantity does nearly all the work of our world.

In order to see how powerful the sun's rays are you have only to take a magnifying glass and gather them to a point on a piece of brown paper, for they will at once set the paper on fire. Sir John Herschel tells us that at the Cape of Good Hope the heat was even so great that he cooked a piece of beefsteak and roasted some eggs by merely putting them in the sun in a box with a glass lid.

Indeed, just as we should all be frozen to death if the sun were cold, so we should all be burned up with the heat if his fierce rays fell with all their might upon us. But we have an unseen veil around us, made of—what do you think?—those tiny particles of water which the sunbeams have turned into an invisible vapour and scattered in the air. These cut off part of the great heat, which would otherwise reach the earth, and thus, even in the hottest days of midsummer, the air is much cooler and more pleasant than it would be were the sun's rays to fall with their full force upon us.

MR. LINCOLN AND THE DYING SOLDIER ROY.

One day, in May, 1863, while the great war was raging between the North and South, President Lincoln paid a visit to one of the military hospitals, says an exchange. He had spoken many cheering words of sympathy to the wounded as he proceeded through the various wards, and now he was at the bedside of a Vermont boy of about sixteen years of age, who lay there mortally wounded.

Taking the dying boy's thin, white hands in his own, the President said, in a tender tone:

"Well, my poor boy, what can I do for you?"

The young fellow looked up into the President's kindly face and asked: "Won't you write to my mother for me?"

"That I will, answered Mr. Lincoln; and calling for a pen, ink and paper, he seated himself by the side of the bed and wrote from the boy's dictation. It was a long letter, but the President betrayed no sign of weariness. When it was finished, he rose, saying:

"I will post this as soon as I get back to my office. Now, is there anything else I can do for you?"

The boy looked up appealingly to the President.

"Won't you stay with me?" he asked. "I do want to hold on to your hand."

Mr. Lincoln at once perceived the lad's meaning. The appeal was too strong for him to resist; so he sat down by his side and took hold of his hand. For two hours the President sat there patiently as though he had been the boy's father.

When the end came he bent over and folded the thin hands over his breast. As he did so he burst into tears, and when, soon afterward, he left the hospital, they were still streaming down his cheeks.

A Little Visitor.

BY HELEN STANDISH PERKINS.

There's a busy little fellow,
Who came to town last night,
When all the world was fast asleep,
The children's eyes shut tight.
I cannot tell you how he came,
For well the secret's hid;
But I think upon a moonbeam bright,
Way down the earth he slid.

He brought the Muses' Maple
Each a lovely party gown;
It was a brilliant red and yellow,
With a dash or two of brown.
And he must have had a Midas touch,
For, if the truth is told
The birches all, from top to toe,
He dressed in cloth of gold.

Then he took a glittering icicle,
From underneath the eaves,
And with it, on my window,
Drew such shining silver leaves,
Such fair and stately palaces,
Such towers and temples grand,
Their like I'm sure was never seen
Outside of Fairyland.

Who is this busy little man,
Whose coming brings us joy?
For I'm very sure he's welcomed
By every girl and boy.
The little stars all saw him,
Though they will not tell a soul;
But I've heard his calling card reads
thus:
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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, OCTOBER 16, 1897.

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

OCTOBER 24, 1897.

David's festival service.—1 Chron. 16.
7-36.

DAVID.

David never forgot the obligations under which he was laid to God. His career had been most marvellous. Think of his humble origin, a shepherd's boy, and yet he became the king of Israel. Too many, when they are elevated in the scale of society, forget themselves and become proud and arrogant. Let all our Epworth Leaguers guard against this danger. Never forget the wise man's saying: "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

DAVID AS A RULER.

Though he had the affairs of the nation resting upon him, he was always especially anxious concerning the duty of himself and the people toward God. He always sought to impress them with the thought of their accountability to the God of the universe. The worship of the sanctuary he always remembered. He was anxious that as a nation they should fear God and work righteousness. What an advantage it is to a people when their rulers, both by precept and example, are God-fearing men, and study the best interests of those over whom they are placed in authority. The people of the British Empire have been favoured in this respect far more than many, and they may well sing with

heart and voice, "God save the Queen." For sixty years Victoria has been our ruler, and she has not been a tyrant or an oppressor of her people.

THE ARK OF GOD.

Verso 1. The ark of God was a small chest, about 33 inches broad and high, and 66 inches long. The sides and the lid were all covered with gold. A rim of gold also went round it. The rings by which it was carried were also gold, while at each end there were figures of the cherubim, whose wings spread over the top and met in the middle. It was a beautiful object to look upon. It contained a golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod, and the tables which contained the ten commandments. It was always carried by the priests in their marches, and was always conspicuous in the camp. It afterwards had a place in the tabernacle, and then in the temple. It was the symbol of the Divine presence.

DAVID'S ESTEEM FOR THE ARK.

The ark of the covenant had been taken in the time of war by the Philistines, and now, when David was well settled on the throne, he desired to have the ark brought to Jerusalem. The occasion was a memorable one. A church dedication comes nearest to resembling the service here described. David made great preparation for the event, as you may see in the closing portion of the previous chapter. He composed this hymn of praise to be sung on the occasion. It would be impossible to read the whole lesson without being filled with admiration for the spirit by which he is animated.

THE LESSON.

Our worship should largely consist of praise. Singing is an important part of praise. Great attention is paid at the present day to the cultivation of music, but much of the music, even in the sanctuary, is artistic, rather than praise. Choirs and musical instruments should be helps, whereas they are often substitutes. We should have our hearts in tune to praise God, both for temporal and spiritual blessings, individual mercies and national mercies. Let our lives be lives of praise.

"ALMOST FELL"

"Mother I almost fell to-day."
"What do you mean, my son?" asked the weary, careworn mother.

"Why, I did. I almost fell into an awful sin. I was almost dishonest," and the childish voice was lowered, and the face flushed with shame.

"Thank God, you resisted, my child. Tell me all about it."

"Well, mother, you know that I sell papers at the depot every morning, and there is one very pleasant, kind gentleman who buys a paper of me 'most every morning and always speaks so pleasant. He always seems to have lots of money in his pocket, and takes out a handful of change. Several times he has only had nickels, no pennies, and has told me to keep the extra three cents for myself. One morning he had nothing but two quarters and two silver dollars. He handed me one of the quarters and said, in his pleasant way, 'Got any change, my boy?' I looked, but did not have enough; so he said, 'Never mind; you remember it to-morrow.' The next day was Sunday; and Monday, to-day, you know, I was standing outside the depot and I saw him coming. I thought to myself, 'He will never remember the twenty-three cents that I owe him if he don't see me, and I do want it so much; I will just hide till he has gone.' So I went across the street. I somehow could not hold my head up as I usually do, and I went into a blacksmith shop and peeped out of a crack. I saw him looking as if for some one, and then he said: 'Where is the paper boy this morning? I will have to buy a paper of the boy on the train. Poor little fellow! I hope that he ain't sick. He looks delicate.' Oh, mother, you don't know how his kind words cut me, and how ashamed I felt. I had felt ashamed before; but after that I felt that the money was stolen—that I, your Tommy, was a thief. I rushed across the street, and he was still talking to a gentleman, but I pulled him by the sleeve and gave him the change. He said: 'That is right. I am glad that you are an honest boy.' I felt my face getting red. I felt as if he must read how wicked I had been in my thoughts, and how I meant to cheat him."

The mother's eyes filled with tears as she folded her boy in her arms and kissed him. "Thank God! I have still an honest boy to kiss, Tommy," said she. "Let it be a lesson to you, and the shame that you felt at the dishonest thoughts ever stay in your memory and

keep you from falling, or even almost falling, again. 'Pray that ye enter not into temptation.' Our dear Lord said those words to his disciples just before he was crucified. He knew just how weak we all are, and only by praying to him for strength can we conquer. In time of temptation pray for your heart, 'Jesus, help me,' and he will always hear and answer."

NAPOLEON AS A SCHOOLBOY.

Professor Sloane, in his life of Napoleon Bonaparte, devotes an interesting chapter to an account of Bonaparte's life at the military academy of Brienne. He entered the school at the age of ten, and left it at fifteen. His comrades were young sprigs of nobility; in fact, all candidates for admission were required to furnish proof of noble descent—a condition which, in the case of Bonaparte, caused some little trouble. "Money and polished manners were the things most needed to secure kind treatment for an entering boy. These were exactly what the young foundation scholar from Corsica did not possess." He spoke French badly, with an abominable accent, and he could not stand chaff. He became a gloomy and solitary Ishmael, continually quarrelling with the other boys, and sometimes, when goaded beyond endurance, turning on them "in a kind of frenzy," and inflicting serious wounds. Once, on being taunted with his lack of any ancestry worth naming, he challenged his tormentor to fight a duel. His punishment by the school authorities eventually gave him a kind of prestige with his comrades, and he became a recognized leader in their games. The Royal Inspector, who visited the school in 1763, reported on him thus:

"M. de Bonaparte (Napoleon), born August 15, 1769. Height, five feet three inches. Excellent health, docile disposition, mild, straightforward, thoughtful. Conduct most satisfactory; has always been distinguished for his application in mathematics. He is fairly well acquainted with history and geography. He is weak in all accomplishments—drawing, dancing, music, and the like. This boy would make an excellent sailor; deserves to be admitted to the school in Paris."

Napoleon's docile disposition and mildness did not, however, impress his preceptors at Brienne. About a year after the report of the Royal Inspector he left the academy with a certificate endorsed as follows: "Character masterful, imperious and headstrong."

It should be remembered that Bonaparte's father naturalized himself as a French subject only about three months before the birth of Napoleon, and that during boyhood and early manhood the latter not only considered himself as a foreigner in France, but regarded that country with positive hatred. He could speak no French whatever until just before he went to Brienne. Less than two years before the capture of Toulon he writes to a Frenchman thus: "If your nation loses courage at this moment, it is done with forever." At about this time he was thinking of taking service under the English in India, where, he said, a career was open to a good officer of artillery. "In a few years I shall return thence a rich nabob," he wrote to his brother. "and bring five dowries for our three sisters." Up to the age of twenty-three he can hardly be said to have had a profession, for he had persistently neglected his military duties, and had tried and failed to secure attention as an author and as a politician. His first success in arms against the insurgent Girondists in 1793 was really the turning point in his career; from that time forward he has done with visionary schemes, and casts in his lot with the armies of France.

ELIZABETH OF AUSTRIA.

Speaking of Elizabeth of Austria, an exchange says: Soon after the marriage of the Empress Elizabeth of Austria, she was visiting a barrack, when above the beating of drums in a distant courtyard she heard cries of pain. "What is that?" she asked. "Merely soldiers undergoing the punishment of the whipping-rods," she was told. The young empress' attention was not to be diverted until she had made further inquiries; then she begged of her husband, as a wedding gift, that this barbaric punishment should be abolished.

The new law on military punishment—of January 15th, 1855—shows that Franz Josef yielded to her entreaties. Subsequently she had the chaining of prisoners stopped, and many other hardships of soldiers and prisoners lessened.

As these incidents indicate, she has a tender heart. The story is told of her that because one of the nurses of her little girl, Marie Valerie, was worried about her parents and little children, from whom she was separated, the empress took a long ride twice a week for some months to visit the nurse's family, and bring the good woman news of them.

Another pretty story of Elizabeth is that one day she was walking in the beautiful Miramar gardens, when a heavy shower came up. She took refuge in a grotto. Presently a little girl came running in, breathless from her race to escape a wetting. She and the empress exchanged a few words. It rained harder and harder. The child was much distressed; she had been told to do an errand at the chateau, or her way home from school, and then to come straight home. She was sure to receive a scolding if she stayed any longer.

What was to be done? The empress bravely picked up her skirts, took the little girl by the hand, and walked home with her. It was no small thing to do, for the child's home was at some distance, and it was still raining. The little girl escaped a scolding, and it was not until some time later that she knew who her beautiful protector was.

Elizabeth's beauty is almost classic in its style. Her grand appearance and manner betrayed her in one of her early attempts to travel incognito. Of late years she has travelled a great deal under the name of Countess Hohenembs. As she dresses simply and usually has but one attendant with her, she often passes unnoticed.

THE STORY OF THE ACORN.

BY ELIZABETH DAVIS FIELDER.

When mamma went to the basket to find something for the bedtime talk, it was filled to the brim with—nothing but acorns.

"Tell us all about them," Jack said. "We picked them up under the big tree in the corner of the yard. Ellen says that they are good for nothing but to feed pigs."

"I suppose they are good for pigs," mamma said; "but the story of the acorn's life is so beautiful that it really seems like 'casting pearls before swine.' Did you know that inside the smooth, hard shell is a tiny tree?"

"Why, mamma!" Jack interrupted; "I bit one to see if it tasted like a chestnut, and there was nothing but a white kernel, that was very bitter."

"I know," mamma answered; "you cannot see the tree, but it is there. The little brown nut must be buried in the earth for a long time, down where it is damp and dark. The rain must fall on it, and the snows cover it, and the sun shine on it for many days. It takes a great deal of patience for a little boy to wait for it, but by-and-by, when the winter snows are gone, and the earth begins to grow warm in the spring sunshine, two small, pale leaves peep timidly out of the ground. They are very tender and shy at first; but they soon grow stronger and bolder, and lift their heads a little higher above the ground, and other leaves appear to keep these company. The stem which holds them grows firm, and the leaves take on a deeper, richer green. It is a twig now, reaching toward the sunlight, stretching itself upward and longing for the time when it will be a tree in which birds can build their nests and sing their songs all day long. After a while the frosts come, and the little twig, which has been trying so hard all the summer to grow and be something, is touched. The leaves turn yellow, then brown, and soon a chill gust of November wind sweeps them off and whirls them away. It seems that the twig had all its trouble for nothing, for now it appears to be but a lifeless thing. There it stands all winter, beaten by storms, covered with snow and ice, and one would think that it could never be warm with life again. But the south winds blow once more. The little twig feels a strange thrill run all along its slender body. The sap is rising, life is returning, and soon the leaves will come again. The twig will send out other branches. It will reach higher and higher toward the light, and after many summers of growing and many winters of resting the twig will find one day that it has become a tree. It tosses its branches proudly toward the sky and waits without fear for the winter, because it has grown very wise now, and knows that it is only for a little while. It can sleep patiently through the dark, cold days, wrapped in its garment of snow and ice, dreaming of returning birds and opening flowers in the spring time that is near at hand."

October.

BY HELEN HUNT JACKSON.

O suns and skies and clouds of June,
And flowers of June together,
Ye cannot rival for one hour
October's bright blue weather;

When loud the bumble-bee makes haste,
Belated, thriftless vagrant,
And goldenrod is dying fast,
And lanes with grapes are fragrant.

When gentians roll their fringes tight,
To save them for the morning,
And chestnuts fall from satin burrs
Without a sound of warning;

When on the ground red apples lie
In piles like jewels shining,
And redder still on old stone walls
Are leaves of woodbine twining;

When all the lovely wayside things
Their white-winged seeds are sowing,
And in the fields still green and fair,
Late aftermaths are growing;

When springs run low, and on the brooks,
In idle golden freighting,
Bright leaves sift noiseless in the hush
Of woods, for winter waiting;

When comrades seek sweet country
haunts,
By twos and twos together,
And count like meers, hour by hour,
October's bright blue weather.

O suns and skies and flowers of June,
Count all your boasts together,
Love loveth best of all the year
October's bright blue weather.

THE TWO LIGHTS.

BY MRS. S. H. DUNLAP.

"Tom-my! O Tom-my!" called Mrs. Graham, standing on the front porch. "Where can the child be?" she said wonderingly, for she had looked all over the place for her little son. "Have you seen Tommy, Maggie?" she asked as her daughter came downstairs.

"No, mamma; I haven't seen him since dinner. Perhaps he went to the post-office with Hugh," Maggie suggested.

"No, he did not. He was with me after Hugh left. If he doesn't come soon, I will send George to look for him," the mother said uneasily, as he went back to her work.

The evening passed and Tommy did not come. It was in early spring, and it became dark very early. As the stars began to appear Mrs. Graham became genuinely alarmed. She sent Hugh in one direction, and George, the serving-man, in another.

About eight o'clock, just as Mr. Graham reached home, the door opened and Tommy rushed into his mother's welcoming arms. Soon after Hugh and George returned, and were rejoiced to find little Tommy safe at home.

"Where on earth have you been, darling?" asked his mother, as Tommy sat in her lap with his little arms clasped round her neck.

"I heard sister say she wanted some violets, and I went to get her some, and I got lost in the woods," he explained, displaying a bunch of withered violets, which he held, tightly clasped, in his little hand.

"You darling boy! Sister had forgotten all about the violets," said Maggie, as she kissed his chubby little face.

"When you found out that you were lost, did you feel afraid, Tommy?" asked Hugh.

"No," the little fellow answered stoutly; "but I thought I wasn't going to get home any more."

"And how did you find your way home, son?" asked his father, looking fondly at the little boy.

"By the light in George's house," answered Tommy, pointing through the window, where they could see a bright light streaming from the window of the servant's house.

"But how did you know that the light was in George's window, dear?" asked Maggie.

"I didn't know it. I got all turned round in the woods, and when I started home I didn't know which way to go. I reckon I kept going farther in the woods, for I went a long way and couldn't find any path. Then I turned round and went another way. It was getting dark then, and I could see a light shining somewhere. I thought sure it was at home, and I tried to go toward it. Sometimes it would be bright, then it would 'most go out, and sometimes I couldn't see it at all. But I kept going toward it, because I was so tired, and I was so certain it was at home," said little

Tommy, as his mother drew his head to her shoulder and kissed him fondly.

"Well, son, did you find your way home by following that flickering light?" asked his father.

"No, papa. Once when that light went out I saw another big, bright light, but I didn't think it was the right way, so I wouldn't follow it. But it kept bright all the time, and every time the little light would go out the big one would get brighter. After a while I was so tired, mamma, I turned round and followed the big light anyhow, 'cause I thought it was somebody's house, and I knew that I could rest. That light didn't do like the other one, for the more I walked the bigger it got, and when I got 'most to it I found that it was a light in George's house. And, oh, mamma! I was so glad, 'cause I knew it had brought me home."

"And we are so glad, too, my darling! But my little man must never again go to the woods by himself," said his mamma, as she clasped him close to her heart.

"What are you thinking of so deeply, Hugh?" asked Mr. Graham after supper, when little Tommy had been put to bed, and Hugh was sitting quietly in the room where his father was reading.

"I was thinking of what Tommy said to-night, papa. Somehow it made me think of the sermon Sunday, and I think it made me understand better what Mr. Strong said."

"Tommy said a great many things to-night, son. What particular portion of his story do you allude to?"

"About the big light and the little one, papa. Mr. Strong was preaching about the difference in God's way and ours. He said that we often got lost on the journey through life because we were in the dark and wouldn't look in the right direction for light. He said that God's light was shining always, if we would only see it, and if we would follow it, it would always lead us the right way. But he said that we often mistook the promptings of our own will for God's direction, and that was the reason we so often go wrong and become discouraged. Instead of following God's light, which is always brightly shining, we rely on our own feeble strength, and when we stumble and fall we blame God for it. He said that if we would stop depending on ourselves and look to God for guidance, his bright light would shine steadily before us, and grow brighter and brighter the nearer we get to it. And, papa, he said that the faint light we were following, and which so often leads us into error, is our own selfish desires, which we keep before us all the time, and the bright light is Jesus Christ. I never understood him well until to-night when Tommy was talking, and then it all seemed so plain." Hugh looked very thoughtful as he spoke.

His father listened closely, and when he concluded Mr. Graham said earnestly: "My dear son, will you be as wise as Tommy? Will you leave the faint, flickering light, which you have been following, and turn gladly to Jesus Christ, the Light of the world?"

"Yes, father, I will," answered Hugh decisively, the light of an earnest purpose shining in his great brown eyes. "I have been trying all the week," he continued, "but somehow I just couldn't give up my own will. Like Tommy, I was so sure that I was right that I kept blindly on; and all the time Jesus Christ, God's great bright Light, was shining for me, and I would not see it."

There were tears of thankfulness in Mr. Graham's eyes, and he took his son's hand in a close, warm clasp. Just then his wife, followed by Maggie, came into the room.

"Mother," said Mr. Graham, turning to her, "little Tommy's brief loss has proved a great blessing to our dear boy here," and as his wife looked at him in astonishment, he told her what Hugh had just told him. Oh, what a glad light came into the mother's eyes! She kissed her son fondly and raised her heart in gratitude to God.

"How wonderfully God works!" exclaimed Maggie, as she kissed her brother warmly. "From circumstances which seem too insignificant for us to notice he produces the grandest results. Tommy's loss and Hugh's great blessing are all the result of my careless wish for a few wild violets." As Maggie spoke she stooped and took from the floor the bunch of withered violets that little Tommy had dropped.

Cohen—"My friend, when you walks up town in those clothing peobles vill think you own a block on Fifth Avenue." Mr. Jarsey (surveying himself)—"Wa-al, I hev heard that some o' your richest men dressed poorly, but I didn't think it was quite ez bad ez this!"

A DARK EVENING.

He was just discouraged, and that was the whole of it. He sat close to the stove, leaned his ragged elbow on his knee, and his cheek on a rather sooty hand, and gave himself up to troubled thought, the two books which had slipped from him lying unheeded on the floor. Let them lie there, what was the use in trying to study? Here was the third evening this week that he had been held after hours, when he wanted to go to the night-school and find out how to do that example! He might just as well give up first as last.

There was a loud stamping outside, and the door of the little flag-station burst open, letting in a rush of spiteful winter air.

"Halloo!" said a boy of about fourteen, muffled to his eyes in fur.

"Halloo yourself," said the boy by the stove, without changing his position more than was necessary to glance up.

"Has the six o'clock freight gone down yet?"

"Not as I know of. I wish she would be about it. I've been waiting on her an hour after time."

"Lucky for me she is behind, though. I guess I can catch a ride into town on her; can't I? I've been out to Windmere and missed the five o'clock mail. I set out to foot it, but it is rather rough walking against this wind, especially when you have to walk on ice. I'd rather be toted in on the freight train than try it. Do you suppose they will give me a lift?"

"You can sit down and wait and try for it, if you like," and the boy glanced toward a three-legged stool. "I'd give you this chair, only it hasn't any bottom," he added, with a dreary attempt at a smile.

"The stool is all right. Do you have to wait every night for the freight?"

"No; not much oftener than every other night. It isn't my business to wait at all, but as often as three times a week the fellow in charge wants me to do that or something else after I'm off duty."

"So you fill up the time with reading; that's a good idea. What have you here?"

The visitor stooped and picked up the fallen books.

"Arithmetic and history! You are studying, eh? Well, now, I call that industrious. Where do you go to school?"

"Nowhere. I pretend to go to the evening class at the Twenty-third Street station, and sometimes I get there twice in the week, and sometimes only once. It's a discouraging kind of studying. I've been after one example for two weeks and can't get it."

"Whereabouts are you? Ho! that old fellow! I remember him. I can show you about it; there's just a mean little catch to it; but you've done well to get so far along."

Then the two heads bent over the book, and over the row of figures on the margin of a freight bill; and presently the face of the discouraged boy lighted with a smile. He saw through the "catch." Then there was a little talk between the two.

Ralph Westwood learned that the boy was an orphan; was working at the freight depot beyond his strength and on very small pay, because times were hard and boys were plenty; that he had a little sister in the Orphans' Home, and the ambition of his life was to learn and become a scholar and earn money to support the little sister. He went to school regularly while his mother lived, and worked between times to help support himself; and his mother wanted him to be a scholar, and thought it was in him; but she had been dead for two years, and things were growing worse with him, and sometimes he was discouraged.

Then the freight came, and Ralph Westwood caught his ride into town, and had only time to say: "Don't give it up, Charlie. Who knows what may happen? The new year's coming."

"New Year!" said Charlie to himself, with a bitter smile. What could that bring to him but more work because of an extra train, and late hours and scanty fare, and not even time to run up to the Home and see little Nell?

As for Ralph Westwood, he waited only to brush the snow from his clothes and wash away the stains of soot from his hands, which must have been left when he shook hands with Charlie; then he sought a handsome library where a gentleman sat reading. Here he did not even wait to reply to the cordial "Good-evening" which greeted him, save as his polite bow was a reply; then he dashed into business: "Uncle Ralph, I have found your boy for you."

"Indeed! That is quick work. Where did you find him?"

"I blundered on him; the very one. I didn't know why I should have missed

the five o'clock train, and didn't know why he should have to do overwork to-night. I hope we shall both have a glorious reason why worked out before our eyes."

Then he drew a low chair in front of the lovely grate fire and told his story.

That was three days before New Year's. A great deal can be done in three days. Ralph Westwood and his Uncle Ralph did a great deal, and at the end of the time knew almost more about Charlie Watson than he knew of himself.

The end of it all, or, more properly speaking, the beginning of it all, came to Charlie on New Year's Eve—an invitation to Dr. Westwood's elegant home, to meet seven boys, all of whom were in the Sabbath-school class which Charlie had just joined.

I wish I had time to tell you about the dinner-table to which they all sat down—roast turkey, of course, and cranberry sauce, and chicken-pie, and jellies, and tarts, and all the elegancies of an elegant dinner, the like of which none of them had ever seen before. At each plate was a bouquet of roses. Think of roses for eight hard-working, homeless boys!

Some people might think they didn't like those roses with all their hearts; but some people don't understand some boys. Slipped into each bouquet was a slip of paper which said on it, "Happy New Year!" in beautiful writing, and then followed wonderful things. One paper was a receipt for a year's house-rent, for one of the boys who lived with his mother and had hard work to meet the landlord's agent each month. Another had an order on a certain tailor for a full suit of clothes, such as it could be plainly seen he very much needed. Everyone had something. When Charlie Watson read his, he turned red and pale by turns, and stammered and trembled, and knew not what to say. It was longer than the others, and it took him some time to understand it all; but at last he made out that he was to enter the Fort Street Grammar School as a pupil, on the Tuesday after New Year's, and that his home was to be at Dr. Westwood's office, which he was expected to keep in order, in return for his board and clothes.

What an amazing chance had come to him! Do you wonder that he trembled and stammered? But, after all, I don't know that he was any happier than Ralph Westwood, who hovered about him in great satisfaction, and in one of the pauses of his duties as assistant host found a chance to murmur, "I say, Charlie, aren't you rather glad the six o'clock freight was late that night?"—The Pansy.

HISTORY OF ELECTRICITY.

The electrical properties of amber were known to the Greeks before the Christian era. Electricity takes its name from the Greek word for amber, says a writer in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. Gilbert, in 1600, was the first to employ the terms "electric force" and "electric attraction." In 1748 Franklin's electrical researches had progressed so far that he killed a turkey by the electric spark and roasted it by an electric jack before a fire kindled by the electric bottle, and in 1752, by means of the kite experiment, he demonstrated the identity of electricity and lightning. The first magneto-electric machine was made at Paris by Pixii in 1832, the first telegraph line in the United States was set up between Washington and Baltimore in 1844; the first submarine cable was laid between England and France in 1850. As early as 1802 Sir Humphrey Davy produced an electric light with carbon points on almost the same principle as that now employed. The first electric railway, on the Continent of Europe, was built by Siemens at Berlin in 1881; the first in England was constructed in 1825, and in America the first electric line was built in 1885.

WILL HEAVEN BE LONELY TO YOU?

"I don't want to go to heaven any more, Auntie," said a little girl in the talk just before bedtime.

"Why not, darling?"

"I'm afraid to go to sleep" (her idea of death) "and wake up in heaven by myself. It is lonely there—I want mamma and papa and you. I do not like to go to heaven any more now, because I be all by myself."

You who read this, did you ever feel so? Shall I tell you the reason why you do? It is because you do not know Jesus. If you loved him and knew him better, you would never think heaven strange or lonely. Jesus would be such a loving, real friend, that any place would feel homelike if he were there.

THE FIRST STEAMBOAT.

Robert Fulton travelled on his steamboat from New York to Albany, a distance of one hundred and fifty miles, in thirty-two hours, and thought he did a wonderful thing; and so he did, for that day. In a letter dated August 22, 1807, and written to Joel Barlow, of Philadelphia, he says: "My steamboat voyage to Albany and back has turned out rather more favourable than I had calculated. The distance from New York to Albany is one hundred and fifty miles. I ran it up in thirty-two hours. The latter is just five miles an hour. I had a light breeze against me the whole way going and coming, so that no use was made of my sails; and the voyage has been performed wholly by the power of the steam-engine. I overtook many sloops and schooners beating to windward, and passed them as if they had been at anchor."

"The power of propelling boats by steam is now fully proved. The morning I left New York there were not, perhaps, thirty persons in the city who believed that the boat would ever move one mile an hour, or be of the least utility. And while we were putting off from the wharf, which was crowded with spectators, I heard a number of sarcastic remarks; this is the way, you know, in which ignorant men compliment what they call philosophers and projectors."

THE JEWISH TABERNAACLE.

The tabernacle comprised three main parts—the tabernacle more strictly so called, its tent and its covering. Ex. 35. 11; 39. 32, 34; 40. 19, 34; Num. 3. 25, etc. These parts are very clearly distinguished in the Hebrew but they are confounded in many places of the English version. The tabernacle itself consisted of curtains of fine linen woven with coloured figures of Cherubim, and a structure of boards which contained the holy place and the most holy place and the tent was a true tent of goat's hair cloth to contain and shelter the tabernacle—the covering was of red ram skins and seal-skins—Ex. 25. 5 and was spread over the goat's hair tent as an additional protection against the weather. It was an oblong rectangular structure, 30 cubits in length by 10 in width (45 feet by 15) and 10 in height, the interior being divided into two chambers, the first or outer of 20 cubits in length, the inner of 10 cubits, and consequently an exact cube. The former was the holy place, or first tabernacle—Heb. 9. 2—containing the golden candlestick on one side, the table of shew-bread opposite, and between them in the centre the altar of incense. There can be no reasonable doubt that the tent had a ridge, as all tents have had from the days of Moses down to the present time. The front of the sanctuary was closed by a hanging of fine linen, embroidered in blue, purple and scarlet, and supported by golden hooks on five pillars on shittim wood, overlaid with gold and standing in brass sockets; and the covering of goat's hair was so made as to fall down over this when required.

The court of the tabernacle, on which the tabernacle itself stood, was an oblong space, 100 cubits by 50. i. e., 150 feet by 75, having its longer axis east and west, with its front to the east. It was surrounded by canvas screens—in the East called "kannauts"—5 cubits in height, and supported by pillars of brass 5 cubits apart, to which the curtains were attached by hooks and fillets of silver—Ex. 27. 9, etc. This enclosure was broken only on the east side by the entrance, which was 20 cubits wide, and closed by curtains of fine twined linen wrought with needlework, and of the most gorgeous colours. In the outer or east side of the court was placed the altar of burnt offering, and between it and the tabernacle itself, the laver at which the priests washed their hands and feet on entering the temple. The tabernacle itself was placed toward the west end of the enclosure.

Housekeeper—"Nora, you must always sweep behind the doors." New Servant—"Yes'm, I always does. It's the easiest way of getting durrin' out of sight."

SOME STRANGE FRIENDS.

BY L. A. BANKS.

Mr. Edward Lang tells some very interesting stories about how some kinds of animals which are supposed to be natural enemies to each other may be trained to be friends. He once knew a cat and a mouse that played together. When tired, the mouse ran back to his hole.

A lady who was very fond of animals owned a fine dog. One day she brought home a cat. War was declared at once between the cat and the dog; some one had to be on guard all the time to protect the cat. At last the lady decided that they must be taught to live in peace. She made them know each other, and in less than a month they became friends enough not to watch each other; and in three months' time they took their regular meals out of the same dish. Just at this time a friend gave the lady a canary. The bird, then, must be guarded from the cat. As the cat had gone freely about the house, this was not an easy thing to do, to remember to shut the doors and to see where the cat was before a door was opened. The lady then decided that bird and cat must live in harmony. She succeeded so well that at last the cat, the dog, and the bird would drink from the same dish; and it was not an unusual thing to see the cat sleeping with the bird standing on her head.

I once owned a dog and a cat that were such great friends that at the close of a summer vacation I sent them by express, in the same box, from Silver Creek, N.Y., to Boston, a distance of over five hundred miles. While they were waiting to be put aboard the train in the express-office, the dog was lying

it was their funny little dog brother that had made all the noise, and that they were in no danger. From that day on the pup barked to his heart's content, but the kittens were not alarmed at it any more.

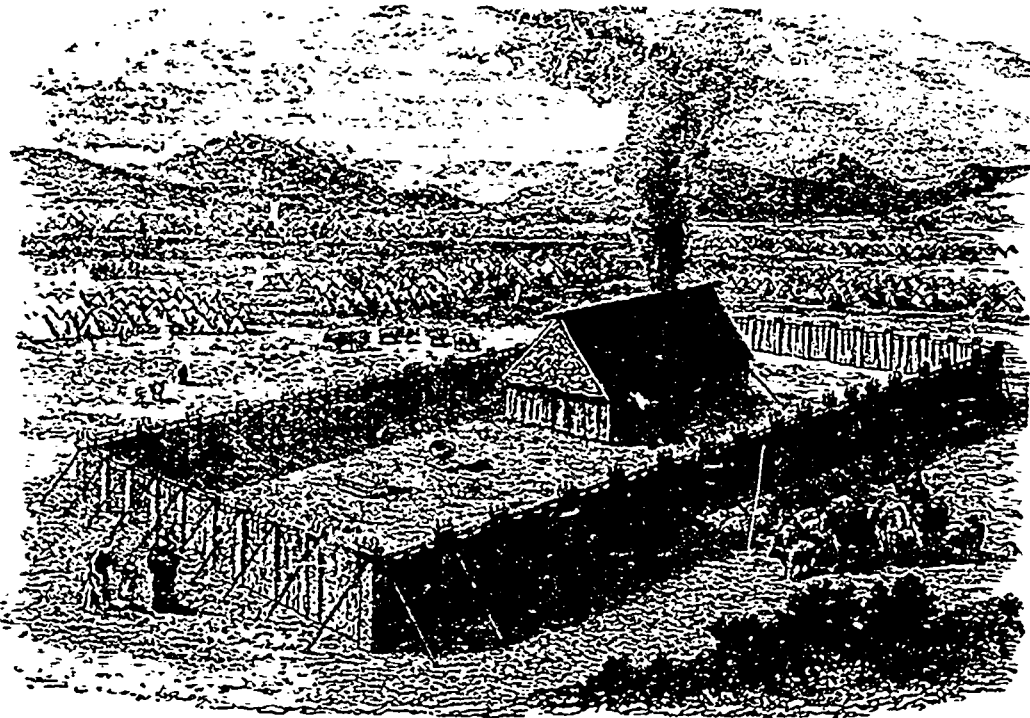
There is no more interesting study for boys and girls than the habits of these creatures which God has made to live in the world with us. The Bible says that Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived, took a great deal of interest in such things. "He spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes."

"IF I WERE A BOY."

BY JAMES T. FIELDS.

If I were a boy again I would look on the cheerful side of everything; for almost everything has a cheerful side. Life is much like a mirror; if you smile upon it it smiles back again at you, but if you frown and look doubtful upon it you will be sure to get a similar look in return. I once heard it said of a grumbling, unthankful person, "He would have made an uncommonly fine sour apple if he had happened to be born in that station of life!" Inner sunshine warms not only the heart of the owner, but all who come in contact with it. Indifference begets indifference. "Who shuts love out, in turn shall be shut out from love."

If I were a boy again I should school myself to say, "No!" oftener. I might write pages on the importance of learning very early in life to gain that point where a young man can stand erect and



THE JEWISH TABERNAACLE.

down, and the cat was curled up asleep, with its head on the dog's shoulder, to the great amusement and astonishment of many people gathered about. They went through all right, and were as good friends as ever after their journey.

I have told in one of these stories about an old cat that adopted a little squirrel, and brought him up just the same as her kittens. I have since heard of a cat that adopted a tiny puppy whose mother had died. The cat had five kittens. The puppy was put in the box with the kittens while the mother cat was away. When she came back, she discovered the little orphan at once. She was very much interested, but soon nestled down with a contented little "me-ow" and purr, and seemed to love the new member of the family as well as the older ones.

One day, in jumping into the box, she jumped on the pup, and he barked. She sprang from the box badly scared, her tail like a great plume over her back. She looked all around, but not seeing any dog, she got back into the box and settled down to rest.

Whether he did it just for fun or not I do not know; but the old cat had scarcely got to sleep when Master Pup gave another queer little bark. The cat family were in an uproar at once; mother and kittens were in a wild state of excitement. The lack of fear on the part of the pup seemed to arouse the old cat's suspicions, and she boxed the pup's ears, and he barked again. She saw through it at once, then, and her tail came down to the regular size. In some mother-cat way she told the kittens that

decline doing an unworthy thing because it is unworthy.

If I were a boy again I would demand of myself more courtesy toward my companions and friends. Indeed, I would rigorously exact it of myself toward strangers as well.

But I have talked long enough, and this shall be my parting paragraph. Instead of trying so hard as some of us do to be happy, as if that were the sole purpose of life, I would, if I were a boy again, try still harder to deserve happiness.

WAIT FOR THE MUD TO DRY.

Father Graham, as everybody in the village called him, was one of the old-fashioned gentlemen of whom there are so few left now. He was beloved by every one, and his influence in the little town was great, so good and so active was he.

A young man of the village had been badly insulted and came to Father Graham full of angry indignation, declaring that he was going at once to demand an apology.

"My dear boy," Father Graham said, "take a word of advice from an old man who loves peace. An insult is like mud; it will brush off much better when it is dry. Wait and little till he and you are both cool and the thing is easily mended. If you go now, it will only be to quarrel."

It is pleasant to be able to add that the young man took his advice, and before the next day was done, the insulting person came to beg forgiveness.

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

LESSON IV.—OCTOBER 24.

PAUL BEFORE KING AGRIPPA.

Acts 26. 19-32. Memory verses, 22, 23.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.—Matt. 10. 32.

OUTLINE.

1. The Apostle, v. 19-23.
2. The Governor, v. 24, 25.
3. The King, v. 26-32.

Time.—Close of A.D. 60 (?).

Place.—The judgment hall in Caesarea.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Statement by Festus.—Acts 25. 13-23.
 Tu. Paul's answer.—Acts 26. 1-11.
 W. The persecutor converted.—Acts 26. 12-18.
 Th. Paul before King Agrippa.—Acts 26. 19-32.
 F. Redemption and resurrection.—Col. 1. 12-20.
 S. Paul's ministry.—Col. 1. 21-29.
 Su. Boldness in bonds.—Phil. 1. 12-21.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The Apostle, v. 19-23.
 To whom were these words spoken?
 To what had Paul been obedient?
 What duty had he preached?
 To whom had he declared this duty?
 Why had the Jews sought to kill him?
 Who had been Paul's helper?
 Whose witness had Paul repeated?
 What was the testimony?
 What is our Golden Text?
2. The Governor, v. 24, 25.
 How did Festus interrupt him?
 What was Paul's reply?
3. The King, v. 26-32.
 To whom did he appeal as knowing these things?
 Why would the king have ample knowledge?
 What question did Paul ask?
 What did he affirm that he knew?
 Who uttered words of indecision?
 To whom were they spoken?
 What did Agrippa say?
 What was Paul's wish for Agrippa?
 As Paul ceased speaking what occurred?
 What did they say of Paul's guilt?
 What did Agrippa say to Festus?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson have we an example of—

1. Obedience to duty?
2. Blindness to truth?
3. Want of loyalty to conscience?

Five-year-old William was talking about his knuckles, and his brother asked what he meant. "I mean the little elbows on my fingers," was the ready reply.

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