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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

ENLARGED SERIES.—VOL. VII.]

TORONTO, JANUARY 8, 1887.

[No. 1.

THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE.

THERE can be no doubt that this bridge is one of the most stupendous enterprises ever undertaken by man, and that it deserves a place among the wonders of the world. As a triumph of engineering skill, it is without a rival.

In the year 1867, the plans for the bridge were made by Mr. John Roe-

The entire length of the bridge is 6,000 feet; that of the central span, across the river, from tower to tower, 1,595 feet. The floor of the bridge, at the centre, is 135 feet above high water mark. The towers rise to the height of 268 feet above high water, and are built of solid granite. The floor is 85 feet wide, and is divided into five parallel avenues, the outer

THE OLD TREE.

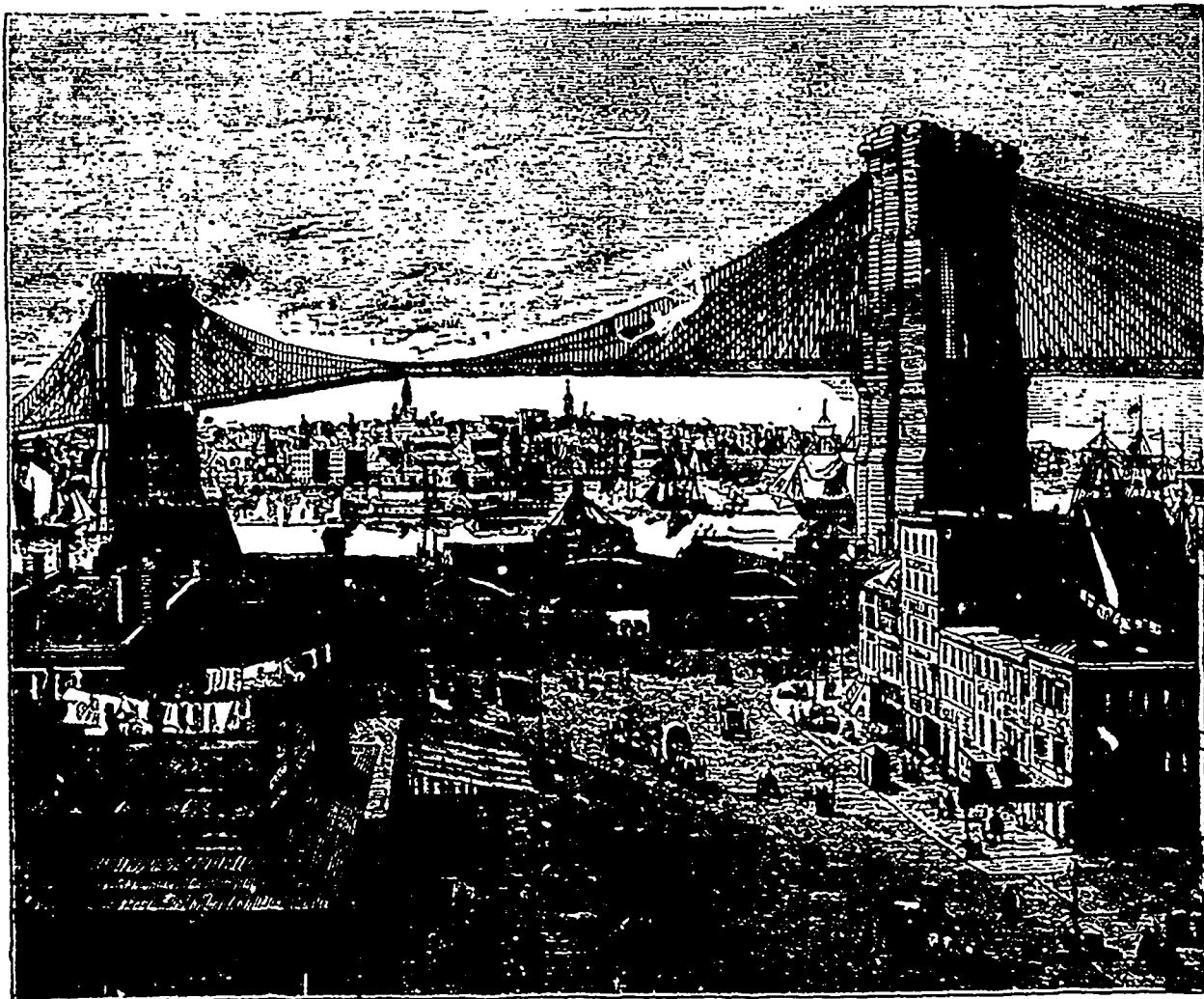
THUD! thud! went the axe, brought down by John's strong arms; and young Webster stood watching.

"What are you cutting that tree down for?" he asked at last.

"Dead!" said John, promptly; "not worth a red cent! We've coaxed it and potted around it for weeks, and it did not do a mite of good—kept

tree has got into the papers, do you?" "It's in a book," said Webster. "Every tree that bringeth forth not fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." That is exactly what is said, and that's what you are doing."

"That is true enough," said John; and he said not another word, but he thought about it a good deal. Far away back in his childhood, one day



THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE.

bling. At the death of this great builder, in 1869, his son, Washington Roebling, took up his unfinished work; and, notwithstanding serious illness contracted in laying the foundations, carried it forward to completion. Thirteen years were occupied in the construction of the bridge, and the total cost was over \$25,000,000. On May 24, 1883, it was formally opened with due ceremony, and amid great rejoicing.

two, each 19 feet wide, being for vehicles; the centre, an elevated road, 15 feet wide, for foot passengers; and the other two arranged for the use of the railroad.

HAVE something to love and care for. It has been wisely said: "Whatever a child takes care of, or works for, it begins to love." And "he who loves most is happiest."

getting more dead-looking all the time; and it made the other tree look bad, and kept the sun from it!"

"What are you going to do with it?" "Chop it up for kindling-wood. It will start the kitchen-fire for ever so long. It is good to burn, and that's about everything it is good for."

"Yes," said Webster, "I read about it."

"Read about it!" said John, much astonished. "You don't say this old

when he sat in a chair that was too big for him, and swung his feet, he studied over and over those words in his Sunday-school lesson. He knew just who said them, what came next, and how Jesus made the trees stand for men, though he had not thought of it before in years.

"John," said Webster, "it wouldn't be nice to be chopped down, good for nothing, would it?"

"No more it wouldn't," said John.

After Christmas.

I HAVE lately heard a secret,
Heard it, too, from truthful lips:
Santa Claus, the sly old fellow,
Makes his "after-Christmas" trips.

I've been told he has discovered
Many things that cause him pain;
Discontent and hateful envy,
Thoughtful love bestowed in vain.

He has seen his choicest presents
Torn and broken and defaced;
Santa Claus, though rich and lavish,
Frowns on wilful, wicked waste.

All unseen, he watched some children
In their pleasant home at play
With the very toys he gave them
On the merry Christmas-day.

Johnny's rocking-horse was splendid,
Gayly decked in red and gold;
Katy's doll as fair a creature
As a child could wish to hold.

Johnny's horse was kicked and battered,
Just because it couldn't neigh;
Thought his papa might have bought him
Two live horses and a sleigh!

Katy wished her doll was larger;
Wished its eyes were black, not blue;
Finally grew vexed and threw it—
Broke its lovely head in two!

Santa Claus looked grave and troubled,
Shook his head, and went away;
"I'll remember this," he muttered,
"On another Christmas-day!"

Then he peered in dismal places,
Where he was not wont to go;
Where the hungry, shivering children
Never any Christmas know.

And his heart was sad and sorry
That he could not help them all;
And he thought, in grief and anger,
Of the broken horse and doll.

As he took his onward journey
He was seen to drop a tear,
And I'm certain that he whispered,
"I'll remember this next year!"

But he has so much to think of,
And so many things to get,
Can't the Johnnies and the Katies
Think of it, if he forget?

A NEW YEAR'S STORY.

BY MRS. R. H. WOOD.

"A HAPPY New Year, Hal," said Ernest, as he bounded into the parlor full of life.

"I shouldn't think you would wish one a Happy New Year such a morning as this, snowing and blowing, and the last of the holidays, too," grumbled Hal.

"Come, come, Hal, you are out of spirits this morning. I think you have had too many holidays already," said his father, who had heard his reply to Ernest.

Just then the breakfast bell rang, and as one after another came into the dining-room, they were saluted by their mother in her most cheerful manner. She noticed the unhappy look on Hal's face, but, like a wise mother, appeared not to see it.

"To-day," said she, after all had been helped to toast and steak, "begins a new year. We have wished a 'Happy New Year' to each other." Ernest looked into Hal's face, but Hal looked down at his plate. "I wonder if we have any plans for

making this year a happy one. If we have not, I am afraid the days, weeks and months which make up the year will pass and the next New Year's morning will find us about the same as to-day."

"About the same—only more so," said Mr. Renshaw.

"What do you mean by 'only more so,' papa?" asked Emma, a little girl of six years.

"I mean," said Mr. Renshaw, "that if we are happy to-day because we try to make others happy, then we shall be happy to-day, and the next day, and so on, growing happier every year; and if we are selfish and do nothing to make others happy, then every year we shall be more unhappy and make all our friends unhappy."

"O, is that it?" asked Emma.

"Yes, that is just it," said Cousin Robert. "I remember how unhappy I was six years ago. Nothing pleased me long at a time, when Aunt Belle took me in hand and showed me up. I declare, she made me see myself to be so perfectly selfish that I really hated myself and wondered that any one could love me. Then she taught me that to be happy and make others happy, I must be unselfish. It was a good lesson, and I thank her in my heart every time I think of her."

"Suppose you give us the benefit of your instructions, Robert," said Hal, sneeringly.

"That is a good idea," said Ernest, not minding the sneer, "and I'll appoint a meeting—a New Year's experience meeting—in the parlor at eleven o'clock, a.m. All in favor say 'Aye.'"

A rousing eye and merry laughter closed the breakfast interview.

Eleven o'clock found all the children in the parlor ready for the meeting. As Robert came in, Ernest said, "Cousin Robert, we want to hear your experience in working out Aunt Belle's method of making one's self happy, for we all want to be happy, you know."

"It was the last evening in the year 1868," commenced Robert, "that Aunt Belle took me into the study for a real, thorough lesson. I was twelve years old and as selfish as a boy could well be. I had never thought that I ought to do anything to make others happy, but expect all the family to please me. Aunt Belle saw that I was growing into a cross, selfish, unhappy man; so New Year's eve, as we were alone she said, 'Robert, how are you going to open the New Year?' I drawled out that 'I didn't know. I hoped papa would give me a horse. I thought I could get as much comfort out of that as anything.'

"Robert," commenced my aunt—I knew by the tone of her voice that she meant all she was going to say, and I began to grow sulky—but she only said, 'I made a discovery since I've been here. It will not please you much at first, but in the end, if you take up with my advice, it will be greatly to your advantage.'

"What is it?" I asked in an unpleasant way.

"I think I'll not tell you to-night. Come in here in the morning, and while the others are busy, we will have a talk," said my aunt.

"As I loved her very much, I consented, but had it been any one else I should have said, 'I guess not; I'm not coming in here to be scolded.'

"Next morning, as we met at the breakfast table, she gave me such a kind glance of the eye that all the dread of meeting her was gone, and I was ready to take quite all the advice she was disposed to give me. Really, I do think that Aunt Belle is one of the wisest of women, for instead of a long uncomfortable talk in a sad, serious tone, she said,—

"Robert, my discovery is simply this: You need to be doing something for others. Make yourself useful, then you will enjoy all that is done for you, and you will be surprised at yourself to see how happy you are. Try it, and see if I'm not right."

"No doubt you are right," I said, out of politeness to her, not believing a word of what she had said; "but, aunt, there is nothing I can do."

"Watch for opportunities, and report to me the next time I come. Will you, Robert?" asked Aunt Belle.

"Of course I could not refuse, and having promised, I meant to keep my word; and I did not wait long for opportunities."

"Tell me how you began," said Ernest.

"One of the first incidents came in this way. I found, one morning, little Gertie Rawson, the daughter of drunken Bill, as we call him, standing in the edge of the woods, shivering with cold. I asked why she was there, and found that she had been there all night, to get out of her father's way. I tried to coax her to go with me and get something to eat and warm herself, but could not. She was a timid little girl, so instead of going into the woods for chestnuts, as I wished to, I went back to the house, and my mother put bread, cold meat and doughnuts into a basket which I carried to her. The pleasure of this little act of doing something to make another happy, more than compensated for the loss of the chestnuts. From that time I have found many ways of doing something for others, if it is no more than to bring in a basket of kindlings for Bridget when I know she is tired, or by saying 'Never mind,' when she hasn't my lunch ready on time, ironing days. I've seen her look very happy when I said, 'Give me a cold dinner to-day, since papa and mamma are not to be here,' so that she could have a little time to enjoy herself; and really I am happier seeing her enjoy herself than I used to be while eating a hot dinner prepared just for myself. And she says to my mother, 'I had rather work for you for fifty cents a week less than for any one else, because you and the

family treat me as if I had some feelings."

When Robert paused, Emma said, "I think your story is beautiful, cousin Robert. Will you tell us some more some time?"

"Yes, we want more of your experiences," they all exclaimed.

"Well, you begin to practice, and we will have another meeting one year from to-day," said Robert—"a genuine experience meeting, after the old style."—*Zion's Herald.*

"Try Again To-morrow."

HE came to me with earnest look,
My bright-faced little brother,
And shyly showed his copy-book—
Was ever such another?

I point the faults out one by one,
As slowly o'er we con it,
The cramped, uneven, straggling lines,
The many blots upon it.

He said, and o'er his sunny face
There fell a cloud of sorrow,
"I didn't do it very well,
I'll try again to-morrow."

I felt the hot tears in my eyes,
Did not God's message reach me,
As I thought of failures often made
In lessons he would teach me?

How many a page of life is soiled,
With sin and shame and sorrow,
But though I've failed to-day, I am
To "try again to-morrow."

MILLICENT.

Ufford, Ont.

THE FINISHED WORK.

"MAURICE, when are you to get your new suit?" asked Mrs. Robertson of her son.

"This evening, mamma. I called at the tailor's to-day, and he said they were quite finished."

"And you believed him?"

"Of course, I did. He wouldn't have said so if it wasn't true, and he never told us a lie," said the boy, in surprise.

Mrs. Robertson turned to a woman who sat working in the room.

"Ah!" she said, "see how this child trusts in the word of a man; and you refuse to believe the dying Saviour, when he says the work of salvation is finished. 'He that believeth not the record that God hath given to us eternal life, hath made him a liar.' Awful thought! Now see if we can learn a further lesson from this child's simple belief in man. Come here, Maurice. Tell the tailor to send home your clothes at once, that I may put some patches upon them.

The boy looked still more surprised.

"Why should you do that, mamma?" he exclaimed. "You would only spoil them. They are finished, you know."

"Even so we cannot add any fancied merit to God's work," replied Mrs. Robertson. "To him who worketh not, but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

SILENT deeds are better than unprofitable words.

A New Year's Dialogue.

HARBY.

Lord from the north the wild wind blows;
It swoops the blue sky clear,
And parts, amid the drifting snows,
The path of the New Year—
The glad New Year that always brings
So many bright, delightful things—
Gay holidays and merry plays,
And loving wishes from our friends.
A "Happy New Year" let us make,
And keep it "happy" till it ends,
By trying every day to see
What good, good children we can be.

KATE.

Last year, when anything went wrong,
I used to fret the whole day long,
And sometimes sob and cry aloud,
Dark looking as a thunder cloud;
But even in a gloomy place
I now must keep a sunny face,
For all this year I mean to see
How bright and cheerful I can be.

MARY.

Last year the flitting butterfly
Was not so idle as was I;
I liked my sports and frolic well,
But would not learn to read and spell;
Now I must change my ways at once,
Or I shall surely be a dunce.
This glad New Year that has begun
Must leave me wiser when 'tis done.

JAMES.

Last year my temper was so quick
My angry words came fast and thick,
And brother Tom I'd scold and strike
When he did what I did not like.
I am sorry! Loving words
Are sweeter than the song of birds;
And all this year I mean to see
If I a gentle child can be.

ALL. (Four or more.)

The past is past; the year is new;
We will be patient, brave and true;
When we are bidden, quick to mind;
Unselfish, courteous and kind;
And try in every place to see
What good, good children we can be.

—Marian Douglas.

A NEW YEAR'S GIFT.

It snowed. Oh, how it snowed!
And it was New Year's morning.

Kate and Nellie sat by their little coal fire in a small attic chamber, at the village hotel, very sad and desolate; for this New Year's snow fell upon their mother's newly made grave. They were all alone; for their father died when Nellie was a baby, and their mother had kept a little school, and earned enough to support them, till her health failed; and then she started with them for the grandfather's home in a distant State. During the journey she became more ill, and had suddenly died in a village on the way, leaving the little girls among strangers.

Nellie looked out of the window at the storm, and then at a Christmas wreath that hung on the sash, and said: "Katie, nobody gives us any New Year's presents this year; and we've nothing to give, and nobody to give it to. Let's ask God to send us one, and we can carry this wreath to mamma."

Then the little girls said the prayer their mother had taught them, and Nellie added: "Please send us a New Year's present;" and they wrapped themselves in their worn clothing, and started out in the storm to the grave-

yard where their mother was buried. The storm was more severe than they had supposed; and thoughtful, unselfish Katie took off some of her own wrappings and put them around Nellie. They clasped their little hands together about the umbrella-staff, and struggled towards mamma's resting-place. Katie was chilled with the cold, and, realizing their sad loneliness, was almost discouraged; but Nellie believed some way they would find their New Year's gift when they came to where mamma was. Poor little girls!

But the New Year's Day, which brings so many blessings to bestow all around the world, had a glad surprise for them too. The sleigh-bells rang merrily, and a handsome pony, driven by an elderly man wrapped in buffalo robes, came up the cemetery road.

"Little girls," called the man, "are you Katie and Nellie?" and waiting only to catch the weary look in Katie's eyes, and the hopeful one on Nellie's face, he caught them in his arms, and, wrapping them warm in the buffalo robes, placed them in the sleigh, saying: "Don't say a word. I am your grandfather. We will be introduced by-and-by. I came as soon as I knew about it;" and then wiping away the tear that was freezing on his cheek, he tenderly laid the faded Christmas wreath on the snow-covered grave, by which the little girls had been standing.

"You are the New Year's gift God has sent us," said Nellie. "I knew if we came here, we should find it; for mamma always made things happy for us."

Many New Years came with their blessings, and old ones laden with happiness joined the train of the past; and Katie and Nellie rejoiced in their good fortune, but never forgot to be thankful for the New Year that brought to them their dear grandfather, with home and comforts; and so kind and loving have the little girls been that the old grandfather often says he found the brightest sunshine of his life in that New Year's snow-storm.

HEROIC.

In the great square in The Hague, Holland, called the Plein, is the statue of William the Silent, erected in 1848, "by the grateful people to the father of their fatherland."

He was a king who lived for the people, his country, and his God, and his death has been compared to that of our own Lincoln. The assassin was a man named Balthazer Gerard, who falsely represented himself to be a French Protestant exiled for his religion.

Philip II. had offered twenty-five thousand crowns of gold to any one who would murder the prince, and the friends of the latter had begged him to take measures for self-protection, but his answer always was: "My years are in the hands of God."

The prince took Balthazer into his service, and at the time he was murdered he was living at the convent of St. Agatha at Delft, a building which is still standing.

June 10th, 1584, William was descending the staircase to dinner with his daughter, Louise de Coligny, on his arm, when Balthazer met them with his passport in his hand, which he asked the prince to sign. He was commanded to return later.

At dinner the princes inquired who that young man was who had spoken to them, and that his expression was the most terrible she had ever seen. The assassin was at that time in waiting in a dark corner for his victim.

At this fatal hour the king left the table, and approached the staircase, where the assassin was hidden in a recess. The assassin fired. The king staggered. He knew that he was mortally wounded, but the thought of his life became the thought of his death. He had but a minute to speak, and his thought rose sublime in prayer: "God, have mercy upon my poor people."

They were the Silent's last words. The years have answered the prayer.

SEEKING STRENGTH.

DOUBTLESS most young readers have heard of Gustavus Adolphus, the great and famous king of Sweden.

Well, one day, he was sitting quietly by himself, reading a book, in which he was apparently much interested. It was the Bible. One of his officers finding him thus, looked with surprise at the volume in his master's hand. Perhaps his astonishment was increased when the king said, quietly:

"I am seeking strength against temptation."

There are some more words which Gustavus added, preserved for us by history, but these are the ones which I want to fix in your minds. "I am seeking strength against temptation." Where was he seeking it? In the Bible.

This story of Gustavus reminds us of another mighty king, who lived many hundred years before—royal David. Do you remember what he says in Psalm cxix.1 "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

Now, dear children, will you learn a lesson from these kings?

Do you really want to follow the Lord Jesus, but find temptation comes to you, perhaps, every hour? Well, I think the best way to meet it is just to get your mind and heart filled with his words, earnestly asking him to help you to obey them.

Then if, for example, you feel tempted to be selfish or cross, recall his direct commandment: "That ye love one another, even as I have loved you."

So will you have his word hid in your heart, that you may not sin against him.

Up the Hill.

Up a steep and rocky hillside
Climbed a little child one day,
Heedless of all stones and briars,
Hastening, panting all the way;
Hair all flying in the breezes,
On she went with cheeks aglow,
Though her tiny feet were weary,
And her steps became more slow;
But she never faltered till she
Reached the summit, then stood still,
And with childhood's joyous laughter,
Shouted, "I am up the hill!"

Backward through the misty shadows
Of the years that since have flown,
Comes that echo to my fancy
Like some long forgotten tone.
I can almost feel the bounding
Of that baby heart again,
As the world lay stretched before me
In that long ago. Since then
I have climbed another hillside,
And am toiling upward still,
And the evening shades as ever
Find me climbing up the hill.

But this hill seems so much longer,
And the way sometimes so steep,
That 'tis hard to keep the pathway,
And to shun its pitfalls deep.
Then the briars on life's journey,
Harder are to thrust aside,
And most all that early courage,
With that fresh young hope has died.
Many of the dearly loved ones
Now are lying cold and still,
And have left me sad and lonely,
Slowly climbing up the hill.

But the summit of life's mountain
Must be very near to me,
And I know when I have finished
All my climbing, I shall see
That if ofttimes I have laboured
When I fain would stop and rest,
It had made that rest but sweeter—
For the Father knowest best.
And perhaps ere long—who knoweth?—
I may cry out with a thrill
Of that same old joyous rapture,
"I am safely up the hill!"

—Selected.

SAM JONES' APHORISMS.

No man can be religious in anything unless he is religious in everything.

This to me holy holiness—if you put a "w" before it you will get the best idea of holiness you ever had.

Show me a Church that does not believe in revivals and I will show you a Church that looks like an abandoned cemetery.

Stagnation is the last station this side of damnation.

It is an abnormal state of things that makes revivals necessary.

Religion is loyalty to God, and the right holiness is a hundred cents in the dollar. It is doing the square thing every time you do anything.

Fun is the next best thing to religion.

Character is builded by living in perfect harmony with God. Religion is harmony. Religion is the setting of the ten commandments to music in your soul.

It is mighty hard to talk sense for a whole hour and not bore some green-horn.

It takes less sense to criticize than it does to do anything else in the world.

I am sorry for a fellow when he is nothing else but a preacher.

My New Year's Gift.

"Just as I am," thine own to be,
Friend of the young, who lovest me.
To consecrate myself to thee,
O Jesus Christ, I come.

In the glad morning of my day,
My life to give, my vows to pay,
With no reserve and no delay,
With all my heart I come.

I would live over in the light,
I would work ever for the right,
I would serve thee with all my might,
Therefore to thee I come.

"Just as I am," young, strong and free,
To be the best that I can be
For truth, and righteousness and thee,
Lord of my life, I come.

With many dreams of fame and gold,
Success and joy to make me bold;
But dearer still my faith to hold,
For my whole life, I come.

And for thy sake to win renown,
And then to take my victor's crown,
And at thy feet to cast it down,
O Master, Lord, I come.

—Marianne Farningham.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, JANUARY 8, 1887.

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FOR MISSIONS

FOR THE YEAR 1887.

WE are greatly obliged to our friend Dr. Sutherland, the indefatigable Missionary Secretary of our Church, for the following kind remarks in the last number of the *Outlook*. We are determined that our missionary interests shall be kept prominently before our young people. We would bespeak for the *Outlook* an increased circulation in all our congregations. It gives full information as to the mission, operations of our Church. The last number, for instance, has letters of absorbing interest, more fascinating than romance, from Japan, Naas River, North Bay, Fort McLeod, also departments for

Woman's Work and Young Folks. The *Outlook* costs only forty cents a year. Eight copies or more to any address, only twenty-five cents. Cannot many clubs be formed among the teachers and senior classes of our schools? Now is the time to subscribe. The cheer from the *Outlook* we wish to quote are these: "A few years ago we thought it would be a good thing to have an illustrated missionary paper for our Sunday-schools, but that need is so well supplied by the admirable series of papers under the editorial management of our able and scholarly friend Dr. Withrow, that the idea of a separate missionary paper has long been abandoned. In almost every issue the Doctor has a word of cheer for our mission work, and no doubt he will soon be telling us of what he saw in this connection during his recent trip to the Pacific Coast. Our Sunday-school papers are, in our judgment, the best and the cheapest published on this continent."

In writing to the Secretary of the Sunday-school Board, correspondents will please confer the favor of always giving their full post office address, including the Province and Conference. We have just received a letter containing five dollars, but cannot tell in what Province or Conference the brother who sends it lives. We looked in a gazetteer of Canada and find that there are six places of the name of the post office from which his letter comes. Frequently we have to look through the Minutes of ten Conferences to find out to which one money is to be credited. Please, brethren, give your address in full.

We have just received two other applications for a grant without full address, which sends us again to the gazetteer—and this at our very busiest season.

THE Pilgrim Hand-books, junior and senior, of the International Lessons for 1887, edited by M. C. Hazard and Miss Ordway, (Congregational Publishing House Boston,) are admirable little manuals of the lessons for the coming year. Prices, 16 and 20 cents.

A MOTHER'S LOVE.

OH, there is an endearing tenderness in the love of a mother to her son that transcends all other affections of the heart. It is neither to be chilled by selfishness, nor daunted by danger, nor weakened by worthlessness, nor stifled by ingratitude. She will sacrifice her comfort to his convenience, she will surrender every pleasure to his enjoyment; she will glory in his fame and exult in his prosperity; and if adversity overtake him he will be dearer to her by misfortune; and if disgrace settle upon his name, she will still love and cherish him; and if all the world beside cast him off, she will be all the world to him.

OUR CHINESE MISSION IN VICTORIA, B. C.

NOTHING more strongly impressed the present writer during his recent visit to the Pacific Coast than the ubiquitous presence of the Chinaman. He is everywhere—in the towns and villages and country—camped beside the railway and washing gold by the river bank—and travelling by the steamboat and railcars and on foot. They occupy whole streets of Victoria with large business establishments, with two Joss-houses—a sort of temple—and one or two theatres. They do most of the market gardening and domestic service and menial work of the city.

We were continually haunted by the thought that here was a fragment of a vast system of paganism in the heart of our Christian civilization. Among the three or four thousand Chinamen in Victoria not twenty are Christians. These thousands of heathen are representative of four hundred millions of our race. Is there not here a grand opportunity for the Christian Churches to do important missionary work among these pagans in our very midst! Even self-interest should impel them thereto, for if they do not seek to Christianize those pagan masses, they will to a no small degree paganize the communities among which they dwell.

We are glad that the Methodist Church has entered the open door of opportunity thus set before it in the city of Victoria. We had the pleasure of twice attending the service of the Chinese Methodist Mission and were greatly impressed with the value of the good work being done. When Dr. Sutherland was in Victoria in 1885 he baptized and received into Church membership eleven Chinese converts. These we found, we think without exception, amid discouragements and persecution, holding fast to their Christian profession.

A most valuable missionary has been found in Mr. Vrooman, an accomplished Chinese scholar, who devotes himself with enthusiasm to the work. He is the son of a Presbyterian missionary, was born in China and speaks the language with such fluency that he is employed in the Custom-house as Chinese interpreter. It was very impressive to hear him go over with his Chinese congregation the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer in both English and Chinese, and to hear them sing the familiar doxology and such hymns as "Blest be the tie that binds," and others in their strange foreign tongue. We had the privilege of addressing, through him, this interesting congregation. On being introduced to several of them they exhibited much intelligence and thankful appreciation of the provision made for their religious and secular instruction. It is a remarkable fact that the attendance at the purely religious meetings is much larger than that at the classes for secular instruction.



TWO GOOD HANDS.

WHEN I was a boy I once became especially interested in the subject of inheritances. I was particularly anxious to know what my father's inheritance was. So one day, after thinking about the matter a good while very seriously, I ventured to ask him; and this was his reply: "My inheritance! I will tell you what it was: two good hands and an honest purpose to make the best use in my power of my hands and of the time God gave me." Though it is now many years since, I can remember distinctly the tones of my father's voice as he spoke, with both of his hands lifted up to give emphasis to his words.

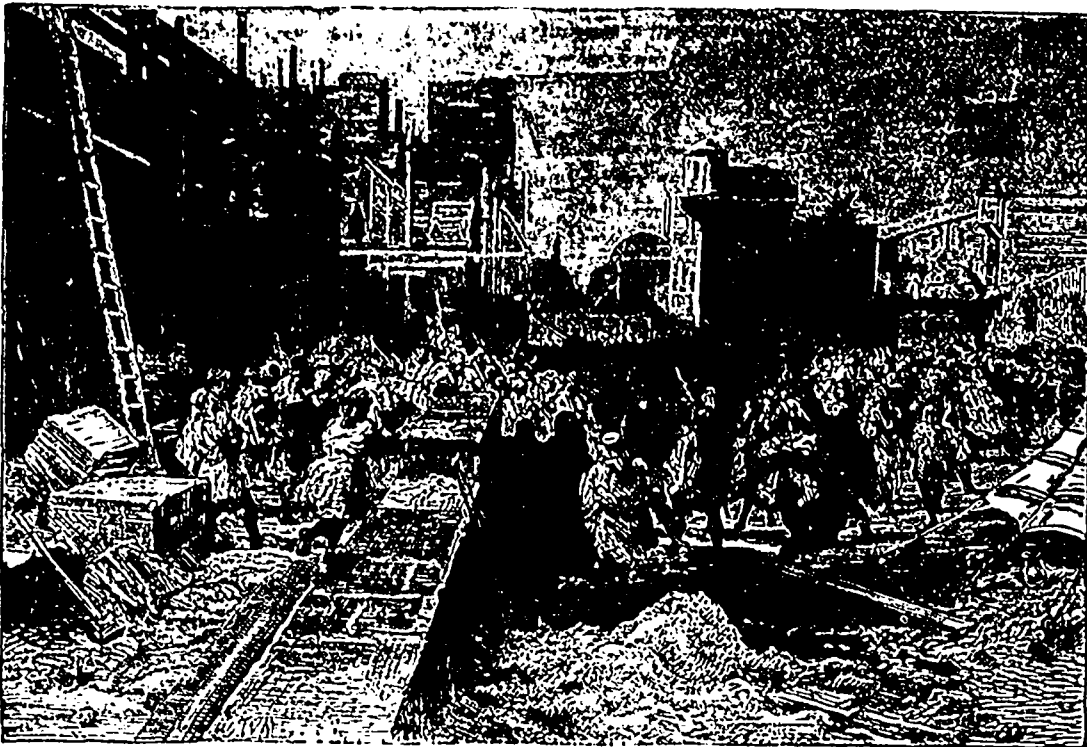
Many a boy does not receive a large inheritance of money or lands; but every one has a pair of good hands, which are better than thousands of money. And the good purpose to make the best use of them is in every boy's power. Remember this wise injunction, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

A NEW YEAR'S WORK.

THE old has gone, and the new has come. With its work achieved or left undone, with its successes and failures, whatever they may have been, the old is now numbered with the years of the great past, and its record is unchangeable. In the great day to come, when the books shall be opened, and the final accounts be rendered, all the record of the year will come up again for review, and men will be judged according to that which they have done.

But here is a new year again before us. It is fresh from the hand of God, pure and white, unstained by sinful deed or thought. And what wealth the year brings—three hundred and sixty-five days of golden opportunity, days for loving service, days for doing good, for walking in the Master's footsteps.

What use shall we make of the blessings which the New Year offers? Whatever we shall do will be done to Christ. "I was an hungered," he will say, "and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." Or he will say, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink," etc. And, "Inasmuch as ye have done it, or, ye have not done it, unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it, or ye have not done it, unto me."



REBUILDING THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

The New Year.

FADES soon the mystic glory
That on fair childhood lies,
And all too brief the story
Its vanished dream supplies;
And youth, with heart high beating,
With hopes that spring so fast,
Than morning mist more fleeting,
On swift wings sweepeth past.

The pride, the strength, the beauty
That come with manhood's prime;
The zeal that nerves to duty
And stirs to deeds sublime;
Ambition's lofty scheming,
And pleasure's cup run o'er,
Wealth o'er its treasures dreaming,
Success that asks no more;—

All, all, years swiftly flying,
Too soon leave far behind;
To each year, ere its dying,
Some jewel is resigned;
Some star that bright was growing,
To the strained sight is lost;
Some flower that fresh was blowing,
Falls blighted by the frost.

The friends that once were treading
Life's pathway by our side,
Their love its sweetness shedding,
Like perfume far and wide,—
With finished years have slumbered,
Have vanished from our sight,
With holy angels numbered
Beyond the vault of night.

Yet life! thy years that stay not,
Thy scenes that glide away,
Thy pleasures that delay not,
The strife that fills thy day;
Come not in vain to mortals,
If faith Divine they give,
And up through heaven's high portals
Bring man with God to live.

New Year! that, with glad greeting,
Hast come once more to me
In whispers still repeating
Words oft said tenderly;
Thy voice my soul now heeding,
To noblest aims I rise,
And on where God is leading
Tread with uplifted eyes.

When years so swiftly flying,
Shall all have run their round;
When death itself is dying,
And earth no more is found:
O Saviour, then behold me
From thy great judgment throne,
And let thine arms unfold me,
Thy lips call me THINE OWN!

—Ray Palmer.

REBUILDING THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

BUT it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews. And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned? Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall. Hear, O our God; for we are despised: and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity. So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work. But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth, and conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it. Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them. Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall, and on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows. And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses. And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other

half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons: and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah. They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me. And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another. In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye hither unto us: our God shall fight for us. So we laboured in the work: and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared.

"WHERE ARE YOU GOING?"

THERE was an apprentice in London once who made an appointment with another boy to spend a particular Sunday evening in folly. He was hurrying along to meet his companion, and at the turning of the street he met his master's wife.

"William," said she, "where are you going?"

William told her. Then the good woman said to the lad, "That would be a wrong way to spend the day of rest. Come to God's house with me."

The lad consented and went; and that night Jesus, who has the hearts of all men in his keeping, caused the preacher to choose for his text, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" The text came like a loud knock to the heart of William, and it kept knocking at the door of his heart. The lad heard the voice of his Saviour in the words, and God gave him grace to open his heart to let the Saviour in. He became a Christian and then a student

of the Bible, and in the end the great South-Sea missionary and martyr, Williams.

A NEW YEAR.

"It's coming, boys,
It's almost here;
It's coming, girls,
The grand New Year!
A year to be glad in,
Not to be bad in;
A year to live in, to gain and give in;
A year for trying, and not for sighing;
A bright New Year! O, hold it dear!
For God who sendeth, he only lendeth."

This is what someone wrote before the New Year came. Now that it has come the words are just as appropriate. Whether this new year will be a "grand" one or not depends on ourselves. We can make it what we please. We shall certainly have grand opportunities. If we improve them, the new year will be to us "happy" all the way through. If we slight them, we cannot expect either happiness or success.

It is astonishing how many good resolutions are made at the beginning of every new year. There was Jack Jones, for instance, who had been very negligent of his lessons for a long time. He was content to skim along, and happy if he could get through his examinations by "a tight squeeze," as he called it.

Just before the Christmas holidays Jack's teacher had a plain talk with him about his negligence. Jack received it kindly, and promised to "turn over a new leaf" as soon as he came back to school. The first day after the vacation Jack's teacher reminded him of his promise, and the boy assured him he fully intended to carry it out. And so, no doubt, he did; but unfortunately he lacked firmness and decision; and thus, when his cousin Will asked him after school to go skating, he readily consented, satisfying himself that there would be time enough for study after the fun was over. But he became so interested in his play that it was dark when he reached home, and he was too tired to study much after supper. He went to bed early, resolved to get up unusually early, and study hard. But he slept unusually late, and went to school unprepared.

What was the matter with Jack? His intentions were good, but he lacked that noble self-denial, without which no one can hope to succeed. The new year of itself will help nobody. We must be ready to do our very best every day, whether the year is new or old, and then we shall not feel called upon to make good resolutions only to be broken.

The last line of the little verse quoted above deserves to be remembered. Our time is lent to us by God for a good and a wise purpose. It is not to be trifled away, but to be diligently improved. God, who lends it to us, will one day ask us to give account of it. We ought, therefore, so to improve it that when this account is rendered, it shall be found that we have been wise, and good, and useful in the world.

For the New Year.

ANOTHER year! another year
Has borne its record to the skies.
Another year! another year,
Untried, unproved before us lies;
We hail with smile its dawning ray—
How shall we meet the final day?

Another year! another year!
Its squandered hours will ne'er return.
O, many a heart must quail with fear
O'er memory's blotted page to turn.
No record from that leaf will fade—
Not one erasure may be made.

Another year! another year!
How many a grief has marked its flight!
Some whom we love no more are here—
Translated to the realms of light.
Ah! none can bless the coming year
Like those no more to greet us here.

Another year! another year!
O! many a blessing, too, was given
Our lives to deck, our hearts to cheer,
And antedate the joys of heaven,
But they, too, slumber with the past,
Where joys and griefs must sink at last.

Another year! another year!
Gaze we no longer on the past,
Nor let us shrink with faithless fear,
From the dark shade the future casts.
The past, the future—what are they
To those whose lives may end to-day?

Another year! another year!
Perchance the last of life below;
Who ere its close Death's call may hear,
None but the Lord of life can know.
O! to be found, whene'er that day
May come, prepared to pass away.

Another year! another year!
Help us earth's thorny paths to tread;
So may each moment bring us near
To thee, ere yet our lives are fled.
Saviour, we yield ourselves to thee
For time and for eternity.

—The Changed Cross.

CANADIAN NOTES.

BY T. B. STEPHENSON, LL.D.

My dear children, I have seen a great deal of this noble country since I sent my last communication. I spent a few hours in Montreal, for many years the chief city of Canada, and still claiming that position, though Toronto is pushing vigorously for the first place. Montreal means Regal or Royal Mountain, and is so called because it is built on the slopes of a very high hill. The site is very picturesque. The upper parts of the "Mountain" have been laid out as a park, and from the various points of the drive round it, there are very fine views of the city and the river at its feet: for that river is the St. Lawrence, a mile and a half wide at this point, one of the mightiest torrents of fresh water in the whole world. The great river is here spanned by the tubular railway bridge—which is one mile and a quarter long, and is a wonderful specimen of human skill and power. In the city are many fine buildings. Most of them belong to the Roman Catholic Church, which is here very strong; for the greater part of the population are French Canadians, who hold tenaciously to the Roman faith. Out of about 140,000 inhabitants, more than 100,000 are Romanists, and only about 34,000 are Protestants. More-

over, the Roman Catholic Church is endowed with enormous wealth. So we are not surprised to find a great many fine churches, and a large number of convents, monasteries, and schools of all sizes. The "French Church" of Notre Dame is an enormous building. Quite 6,000 people can assemble in it; and it is often filled three and four times on a Sunday. The principal Methodist church is in St. James Street, and is a fine old "meeting-house." But it is to be sold, and a new church built instead of it, which will be one of the largest and noblest Methodist churches in the world.

This Canada is a great place for churches. In Toronto the people are almost all Protestants; and their Protestant churches are almost as numerous and as fine as Romanish churches are in Montreal. It is really a noble sight to see the crowds of people hurrying through the streets to the several places of worship on Sunday. I have seen nothing like it, except in Edinburgh.

In Toronto, to which I came from Montreal, I addressed the Conference of the Methodist Church. The Conference is the Parliament or governing body of the Church. The Methodist Church is now the largest in the Dominion; and indeed, it is the largest Protestant Church in the world: much larger than the Church of England, though, in England, Methodism is not nearly so great as the Established Church. So, if bigness is anything of importance, the Methodists ought to be a very holy and a very useful people. I believe they are, but I am sure they might be more so. Let us all be far more anxious to be good, than to be big.

This Conference was meeting in the Metropolitan Church—a very beautiful building. There must have been more than 2,000 people present on the Sunday morning when I had to preach there. And the singing was very beautiful, but the choir did not do it all. They led the congregation: and the congregation followed: which all congregations ought to do, though some do not. It was really grand to hear the volume of praise rolling up to heaven from that great mass of worshipping people. If only these dear, kind people pray much, and work hard, the Methodist Church of Canada cannot fail to be a great blessing to the nations of people who will crowd into the Dominion in the next fifty years. But happily the Methodists are not the only Christians in the country. There are many other powerful Churches: and best of all they seem to live together in this happy country in a state of very good and cordial feeling. That is as it ought to be: but it is not always so. Perhaps one reason why they agree so well here, is that no one Church is set above the rest. You know that when one boy in a family is made a favourite, the others don't like it: and when one church in a country is made a pet, and allowed

to wear a coat of many colours, the other Churches are likely to feel sore about it.

But I am writing quite an ecclesiastical letter: and I am not sure that my young readers will care much about this kind of talk. But what else shall I talk about? I have been almost entirely in the great towns so far, and I haven't had any alarming adventure. I have not seen any wild animals more savage than a squirrel. It was a pretty little brown one that ran along the road-side a little way, and then sprang up a tree. I have seen some Indians, but they were tame too: for they had become Christians through the preaching of the Gospel, and though they talked a strange language, they did not offer to scalp anybody, and they shook hands with me as pleasantly and gracefully as any gentleman in London. However, perhaps I shall have something more like adventure to tell you about in my next letter, for I am going up to the "North-West," which is not quite so much like London as Toronto and Montreal are.

But I have seen what has pleased me far more than any number of lions, and bears, and wolves would have done. I have seen a great many of my dear old boys and girls, and I have found them all doing well. Many of them are now grown up to be men and women. Several of them are married. And best of all, the most of those I have seen are earnest Christians, trying to live in the love and service of God. O, dear children, this is the best of all. We who spend our lives in trying to help you, have no joy on earth like the joy of knowing that you are trying to love the Saviour.

ALL OF ONE FAMILY.

It was the first of July. The great city railway station was crowded with gay, well-dressed people on their way to some summer resort in the mountains or by the sea. In odd contrast to them was a group of ragged Italian emigrants, with whom a uniformed official was arguing angrily.

"I tell you this is not your station!" raising his voice, as people are apt to do to foreigners. "At the other end of the city. Emigrant station. Two miles. Come, clear out!"

The man of the party shook his head stolidly, muttering "Tol'ido" as his sole answer and holding out a bit of written paper.

"Toledo, Ohio," read the train-hand. "The idea of a lot of wretches as stupid as dogs going half round the world with nothing but that scrap of paper to guide them!" he ejaculated to his companions.

He hustled away and the emigrants shrank back into their corner. The man looked at his pale, hunger-bitten little girl and his wife and they at the groups who were chattering and laughing about him. Some young girls drew their light dresses aside as they passed him and a sour-looking, middle-

aged woman muttered something to them about "the country being an asylum for paupers." The poor Italian scowled with bitter envy at a party of fashionable young men. He carried a stick, with a few rags in a bundle; they were equipped with costly rilles and fishing tackle.

Maletesta looked as though he felt himself an outcast from the happy, human race. There was no tie between him and these well-to-do people.

A moment later there was a cry, a fall, a sudden rush of the crowd toward him. His child, a pretty little girl, had slid from her mother's knee and lay on the stone floor as if dead. The wretched Italian threw himself down beside her.

"Ah, Gila! *Piglia mia!*" he cried, in a voice that made the tears start to the eyes of many a woman.

In a moment the great room was alive with help and friendliness. One of the young men had the child on his knee.

"I am a physician," he said quietly. "She is not dead. It is the heat and—hunger. Jem, go to the nearest drug shop and bring —," lowering his voice. "And, Will, get some milk from the restaurant."

The young men dropped their guns and rods and ran; old men, young girls and negro waiters crowded forward with help. When the child recovered, a dozen eager hands led Maletesta and his wife to the eating-room and somebody went round with a hat, collecting a fund for their relief. The young doctor still held the child feeding it carefully, when the old lady, no longer haughty and sour, came up to him.

"As soon as the baby is fit to travel I will take them all home with me. The man is a vine-dresser, it seems, and my husband is a grape-grower in New Jersey. They shall have their own roof over their heads before night."

The Italian and his wife stood beside her crying and smiling and crossing themselves. They were believers in the Pope, the doctor was a Baptist and the good woman a Methodist, but the single touch of suffering had made them all children of one Father.

SPECULATION'S FAILURES.

DESPITE the somewhat prevalent idea that speculation is the royal road to wealth, the truth is still as evident as ever that honest industry is the only way to success. Laziness never accomplishes great results in any direction. The Micawbers, who wait for something to turn up, rarely get beyond the waiting period. It is true, all along the way of life, honest industry alone will win. It is so with education in childhood. The mere ability to slip through examinations with little study does not make the successful scholar. It is only the plodding, hard-working student who really succeeds. A chance success in speculation only proves the rule of business life. To offset this are the thousand failures.

New Year's Wishes.

BY FRANCES R. HAYWARD.

WHAT shall I wish thee?

Treasures of earth?
Songs in the springtime?
Pleasure or mirth?
Flowers on thy pathway,
Skies ever clear—
Would this insure thee
A Happy New Year?

What shall I wish thee?
What can be fount
Bringing thee sunshine
All the year round?
Where is the treasure,
Lasting and dear,
That shall insure thee
A Happy New Year?

Faith that increaseth,
Walking in light;
Hope that aboundeth,
Happy and bright;
Love that is perfect,
Casting out fear—
These shall insure thee
A Happy New Year.

Peace in the Saviour,
Rest at his feet;
Smile of his countenance,
Radiant and sweet;
Joy in his presence,
Christ ever near—
These will insure thee
A Happy New Year.

THE LORD'S MONEY.

"BETIE, Bertie," isn't this a shame?" cried little Casper Hall, as he held up a silver quarter for his elder brother to look at.

It was a bright quarter, and at first sight there was nothing the matter with it, but closer inspection showed that it had been bored and the hole afterward had been carefully filled up.

"They wouldn't take it where I bought my slate," said Casper, ruefully, "and I tried to pass it to the candy shop, and the lady shook her head, and when I offered it to the conductor of the car he was quite cross, and asked me if I didn't know how to read. When I said, 'Yes, of course I do,' he pointed to the notice in big letters, 'No mutilated coin received here.' What shall I do with it?" finished the little fellow with a sigh.

"You have no idea who gave it to you, have you, Casper?" said Bertie.

"Not the least. It is part of the change I had from Uncle John's Christmas gift to me."

"Well, you must be sharper next time. Now, if I were you, I would put it in the missionary box. The society will work it off somehow."

"But I don't want to put a whole quarter in the box."

"It is not a whole quarter, Casp; it is a quarter that's had a whole in it. Nobody'll take it from you. You may just as well get rid of it in that way as any other."

Bertie and Casper Hall were in their father's library when this conversation took place. They thought themselves alone. But just on the other side of a curtain, which divided the room from the parlor, their cousin Ethel was sitting. As Casper moved toward the mantel where the family missionary

box stood in plain sight, Ethel drew the curtain aside and spoke to him.

"Boys," she said, "I did not mean to listen, but I could not help overhearing you. Casper, dear, don't drop that quarter into the box, please."

"Why not, Ethel?"

"The Lord's money goes into that box."

Bertie looked up from his latin grammar to meet the glowing face of the little girl. Her eyes were shivering and her lip quivered a little, but she spoke gravely: "It was the lamb without blemish, don't you know, that the Hebrews were to offer to the Lord! If you saw Jesus here in this room, you would not like to say, 'I give this to thee, because nobody else will have it.' It was gold, frankincense and myrrh the wise men offered the infant Jesus."

The boys drew near Ethel. She went on: "It isn't much we can give to him who gave himself to us, but I believe we ought to give him our best, what costs us something. Excuse me, but it seems you mean to drop a battered coin into God's treasury just to get it out of sight."

Casper and Bertie agreed with Ethel. They were about to do wrong for want of thought. Are there no older people who should remember the Lord's money ought to be perfect, and of our best?

"THEY ALL DRINK."

It is well known that at certain central agencies a record is kept of the name, position, and standing of nearly every business man in the country. Careful men are employed to collect this information; and it not only includes the amount of property which the parties are worth, but also their standing as regards punctuality, promptness, integrity, temperance, morals, etc. A number of years ago, it is stated, a firm of four men in Boston were rated as "A 1." They were rich, prosperous, young, and prompt. One of them had a curiosity to see how they were rated, and found these facts on the book and was satisfied; but at the end it was written, "but they all drink." He thought it was a good joke at the time; but to-day two are dead, another is a drunkard, and the fourth is poor and living partly on charity.

This is the outcome of the fact stated in the words, "they all drink." Business men know very well that such habits are to be reckoned in making an estimate of the probable success of any business man. He who would prosper in any business undertaking should learn to shun the cup. Moderate drinking leads to drunkenness, and this involves the wreck of morals, business, fortune, family—all a man has. No one can trust the word of a drinking-man. Strong drink benumbs conscience, vitiates judgment, rots out principle, and ruins the man. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

READING THE BIBLE WELL.

A LITTLE boy came home one day from church service, from which his parents had been detained, and asked his father if he ever read the twenty-first chapter of Revelation.

"O yes, often," said his father.

"But did you ever read it to us here at home?"

"I think so."

"Well, father, I don't think I ever heard it. The minister read it to-day, and it was just as if he had taken a pencil and paper and pictured it right out before us."

So much is there in good reading. I have often wondered how Jesus read the old prophets the day he went into the meeting and took up the Scriptures and read them before the congregation.

The eyes of every one were "fastened upon him," and all wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth. If we could read the Bible as he did, what would it be in our houses! It is worth a mother's while to study elocution, to some extent, as well as to study deeply into the spirit of the word, if she would make her Bible reading effective on the hearts of her children. A monotonous way of reading takes much of the life out of the sweetest portions.

A conversational tone and manner are much more instructive than the "Bible twang" which the good old Scotch grandmother held so sacred that she sharply reprov'd her lad for using it when reading the newspaper.—*Selected.*

HOW TO ENJOY SCHOOL.

AT the beginning of the school year, many students find school a little flat and "slow" after the lively and varied employments of the vacation. If they settle to faithful work, they soon become interested in their studies and enjoy again the familiar experience of wondering "where the morning has gone," so swiftly and so unmarked have the hours flown by. The strife for excellence is the secret for enjoying labour. A ploughman who draws his furrows straight, deep, and clear, has a tranquil pleasure in doing every one of them, and when the field is finished he surveys the rippled surface with pride and satisfaction. It is fortunate for us that we are constituted as to enjoy the labour by which we live, since most of us are compelled to spend more than half our waking hours in that labour, and it is generally as monotonous as ploughing. To pass ten hours a day in ploughing as well as ploughing can be done by man, is a very cheery and pleasant thing.

Students have a singular happiness in their occupation—so varied is it, and so full of natural interest. But it is dull and wearisome enough unless it is pursued with intelligent zeal and worthy ambition to excel. An old teacher can tell which of his pupils have enjoyed doing their sums by just

glancing at their slates. A very clean slate is a good sign. Then look at this great sun in long division. Observe how clear, even, and regular in form it is, and what a pleasing contrast it presents between the dark blue slate and the white pretty figures! Above all, it is right! The young arithmetician who executed the task so elegantly and so well, must have been unconscious of the flight of time. Excellent work is done understandingly. Every student who has puzzled his brains over an author or a subject that was too hard for him, knows what we mean by this. Some of our older readers may remember that they began to study geometry about two years too soon; or that they tried, on entering a new school, to join a class that was a little in advance of them. What dull and discouraging work it was! The usual result of such an experiment is that the student gives up in despair, and never masters the study. The better way is to wait, and to take the subject in hand when one or two more years of work and growth have brought the mental faculties to the requisite degree of power. The book then becomes one long delight.

If you would enjoy your school-work this year, strive hard for excellence, and learn nothing by rote. Put heart and mind into all you do. If any particular study is peculiarly distasteful, do not resolve to "hate" it, but reflect that it may just now be a little beyond your faculties. Should you take it up at exactly the right time it may be hereafter your favourite study.—*Youth's Companion.*

CHRIST WELCOMING SINNERS.

WE are told that in stormy weather it is not unusual for small birds to be blown out from land on to the sea. They are often seen by voyagers out of their reckoning and far from the coast, hovering far up over the mast on weary wings, as if they wanted to alight and rest themselves, but fearing to do so. A traveller tells us that on one occasion a little lark, which followed the ship for a considerable distance, was at last compelled through sheer weariness to alight. He was so worn out as to be easily caught. The warm hand was so agreeable to him that he sat down on it, and buried his little cold feet in his feathers, and looked about with his bright eye not in the least afraid, and as if feeling assured that he had been cast amongst good, kind people whom he had no occasion to be backward in trusting. A touching picture of the soul who is aroused by the Spirit of God, and blown out of its reckoning by the winds of conviction; and the warm reception which the little bird received at the hands of passengers conveys but a faint idea of that welcome which will always greet the worn-out sinners who will commit themselves into the hands of the only Saviour.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

New Year's 1887.

"HE GIVETH THE YEARS."

The years are his gifts for our using,
They are ours by the grace of his love,
And are blessings to us by our choosing
To live for the crowning above.

The years are for us what we make them,
For each day has a blessing in store,
And each hour has its gifts if we take them,
And heaven has eternally more.

The years are our days of probation,
Let us then in the name of the Lord,
With full faith and with glad adoration,
Live always as taught by his Word.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

B.C. 3875.] LESSON III. [Jan. 16.

CAIN AND ABEL.

Gen. 4. 3-16. Commit to mem. vs. 9-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Am I my brother's keeper? Gen. 4. 9.

OUTLINE.

1. Abel.
2. Cain.

TIME.—3875 B.C. It is entirely uncertain when this incident occurred. The date given is the date, according to our chronology, of Seth's birth—which, we think, occurred soon after Abel's death (Gen. 4. 25), and because Cain alludes to certain ones who would kill him—and the one hundred and thirty years gives the needed time for the spread of population.

PLACE.—Outside of Eden. Gen. 3. 23. Here begin the wanderings of the human race. Where this first home outside of Eden was we do not know.

EXPLANATIONS.—*In process of time*—After many days, as time went by; perhaps at the end of the year of labour. *Fruit of the ground*—Vegetables, grain, and any produce which they had learned to cultivate and raise. *Firtings of his flock*—The first-born, perhaps lambs of the flock, or kids of the goats; at all events, a sacrifice of life. *Had respect*—Was pleased with the sacrifice, and showed it in some way, so that both brothers understood. *Countenance fell*—As every man's countenance falls when he is angry—Eyes downcast, mouth drawn down in a scowl. *Sin lieth at the door*—Commentators differ. Perhaps it means, "If thou doest not well, thou art committing sin against me." *Unto thee . . . desire is interpreted in two ways*: First, The younger brother shall still look up to you, and you shall be his superior. Second, Sin, though it desire you, shall yet be under your control, if you will. *Cursed from the earth*—Perhaps, thou art cursed and banished from the land in which thou hast dwelt. *Every one that findeth me shall slay*—Who would find him? Perhaps Adam and Eve had many sons and daughters at this time, who were scattered over that land, and children born among them. *Lord set a mark*—God gave a sign or mark to Cain as proof that he should not be slain.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where, in this lesson, are we taught—

1. The necessity of atonement?
2. The danger in yielding to anger?
3. The certainty of punishment for sin?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1 Who was the first murderer? Cain.
2 Whom did he murder? His brother, Abel.
3 What led Cain to hate and murder his brother? Because God accepted Abel's sacrifice.
4 What did Cain say to God after he had slain his brother? "Am I my brother's keeper?"
5 What was Cain's penalty for murder? He became a wanderer on the earth.
6 Against what sin does this lesson warn us? Against anger, which may lead to murder.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The ruin of sin.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

3. When did God create man? After the creation of the earth, God made man to be the chief of his creatures upon it.
Isaiah xiv. 11, 12. Thus saith the Lord, . . . I have made the earth, and created man upon it.

B.C. 2348.] LESSON IV. [Jan. 23.

NOAH AND THE ARK.

Gen. 6. 9-22. Commit to mem. vs. 17, 18.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him. Gen. 7. 5.

OUTLINE.

1. Noah.
2. The Ark.

TIME.—Fifteen centuries after time of last lesson. The year 2348 B.C. And as yet there is no kingdom founded among men.

PLACE.—Perhaps the high table lands of Central Asia.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Make thee an ark*—This means a vessel for sailing, and is a different word from that translated "ark" when the ark made by Moses is described. It is the same word as the word naming the little ark in which Moses was saved. We use boat in the same way. *Of gopher wood*—The weight of modern authority seems to favour calling this word cypress, though it is not certainly known. *Pitch it . . . with pitch*—Paint it with bitumen, inside and outside, filling all the crevices. *This is the fashion*—The proportion, or relative appearance, the actual shape is not given. *Three hundred cubits*—6,300 inches, calling the

cubit 21 inches, or, in length, 525 feet. *A window . . . in a cubit . . . above*—What this means it is hard to tell; perhaps a course of windows one cubit down from the edge of the roof.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where, in this lesson, are we taught—

1. The value of good company?
2. The evil effects of bad company?
3. God's care for those who love him?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What was the character of men after the fall? The world became very wicked. 2. Who only was a good man? Noah. 3. What is said of Noah in the GOLDEN TEXT? "Noah did," etc. 4. What did God warn Noah that he would do? Destroy all mankind by a flood. 5. What did he command Noah to do? To build an ark. 6. What good example may we find in Noah? Obedience to God.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—God's wrath against sin.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

4. How was man the chief creature on earth? Because the Creator made man in his own image.
Genesis i. 27. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.

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