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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

Vol. XII.]

TORONTO, MARCH 12, 1892.

[No. 11.]

THE OLD SUGAR CAMP.

BY E. A. RAND.

"Now I tell you, boys, this is nice!" exclaimed Sim Bartlett. "I just like this."

He was lying in his bunk when he said this. About him was the roof of the old sugar camp which was built on one of the low-running slopes of Most Mountain. He heard the crackle of the fire on the broad open hearth at the foot of the camp-chimney. He caught the sound of the cold north west wind echoing down from the rugged top of Most Mountain, and rejoiced in his shelter from the blast. The other occupants of this camp were Tim and Silas and John Borton, his cousins. In the sugar season, Farmer Borton and Farmer Bartlett came to the camp and worked by day, returning home at night. The boys loved to stay there both day and night.

Sim now continued his remarks: "I tell you what, fellows; it did look interesting when it was growing dark. I was back here in the camp and you could not see me. I looked out. There was Uncle Henry stirring the sap in the kettle. Father was sitting on a log. Our two hired men were coming up with big, bouncing pails of sap. You three boys were round, looking happy as kings."

"Were we?" asked a growly voice in the next bunk.

"Yes, get up there, Silas! Tim! John, wake up!"

"I am awake!" said a voice belonging to John.

"So am I awake!" exclaimed Tim.

"Well then boys, keep awake!" urged Sim. "I have got some cider. Hold on! I'll get it."

Here Sim sprang out of his bunk, but quickly returned holding out to Silas by the light of the still sparkling fire a mug of cider.

Silas rose up in his bunk, shook his head and said decidedly, "None for me, thank you!"

"Why not?"

"Strong enough to knock you down, know where you got it."



THE OLD SUGAR CAMP.

"At Ransome Groton's out on the back road. He has got a cider-mill. It's all right, Silas."

"No, sir!"

"Well, Tim, then!"

"No, sir!"

"Now, John, you are not a fool!"

"Oh, no, of course not. I should be if I took that."

Amid the laugh that followed, Sim pettishly said, "There, boys! you are making too much of it. I came out here to enjoy my liberty, and to have a good time and so on. Next month, I am going to Carlton Academy —"

good opinion, and every one allowed that Sim made himself very agreeable.

The principal left the camp as the twilight shadows were falling, saying that as he had snow shoes, he thought he would "just run to Sunset Ridge and get a look at the western sky."

One by one, the older members of the sugar orchard party started for their homes, leaving the boys in supremacy of the camp.

"There," said Sim to his companions, "I have been on my good behaviour about long enough. Entertaining that principal was dull music, though. I doubt it has got me into the Academy. I knew

It was known to be an honour to receive admission to Carlton Academy. The scholarship there was thorough, and only a limited number of students would Principal Spearhead receive. While graduation was an honour, so was admission. Sim had made application for admission. The principal had replied that the question was not decided fully, but "probably, there would be an opening for Simon Bartlett."

Sim construed the word "probably" as "certainly," and now wished in this unworthy way to celebrate the event. He was compelled to be content with a personal celebration that night.

Who should appear, the next day, at the camp but Principal Spearhead himself!

"I have often wanted," he told Mr Bartlett, "to see a sugar orchard turned into a sugar house, the trees giving sap, and you sugar makers turning it into syrup and sugar."

"You are very welcome," said Mr Bartlett, who felt that it was a high honour to entertain the principal of Carlton Academy. Sim was jubilant.

"Just the time," he said to the others, "to make sure of my admission to the Academy! I will improve the chance."

Sim certainly endeavoured to improve his chance to secure Principal Spearhead's

what I was up to, I tell you. Now for a little treat."

He took an old blue mug out to a hiding place where he kept his cider, filled his mug, and returned. He offered the mug to his companions, but an invincible "no sir" met every proffer from Sam.

"He is getting too much," one said to another as they saw Sam drinking. "The stuff is strong."

Sam did stop, but his tongue was loosened and his talk was silly by this time.

"Hush!" he said. "What's that noise outside? I'll go out."

He took the lantern in one hand, his empty blue cider mug in the other, and he went out. He was gone about fifteen minutes and then returned.

"Where have you been, Sam?" asked Silas.

"Been?" he replied. "Oh I went to the road with some old fool—"

"Who was it?" asked John.

"Couldn't say, John. Some old fool, and I intimated as much to him. You see I could not make him out, for he had on a long ulster, and a collar was turned up and the rim of his hat turned down. I think he said he had lost his way."

"Lost his way?" said Tim. "Wonder who it could have been? Oh I tell you, the man that carries the mail to Tylerville! He comes across the mountain spur, as we call it, and folks have said it was fool-hardy."

"Fact is—ha—ha!" said Sam, "I gave him to understand that it was about as silly a thing as he could do—his getting lost—yes, I told him. Then he said to me it was not so silly as getting lost through the old mug in my hand, for he said he thought it was a cider mug, judging by the smell—"

"He had you there!" cried Tim.

"He had me? I gave him a shot then," replied Sam.

"How?" asked Silas. "Fire the mug at him?"

"Gave him a piece of my mind, sir."

The conversation soon ceased, and the boys had supper.

It was about a week after this, when the boys were at home, that Sam and Silas chanced to meet. Silas remarked, "What makes you look so blue? Got your death sentence?"

"Yes," said Sam, moodily. "Have just had a note about the Academy where I was going to attend, you know. Whom do you think I saw that night at the camp, that man who had lost his way?"

"Mail-carrier?"

"No, Principal Spear!"

"You don't say!"

"But I do say it, and all is lost through that old cider mug. You wanted to know, or somebody did, if I fired my mug at him. I am going to get it and fire it at something and never touch one of the kind again."

In a few minutes Farmer Bartlett, who was reading his paper in the kitchen of his comfortable home, looked up and said to his wife, "Huldah, what's that sound outside, of a sort of smashing?"

"I heard it, but don't know," said his wife.

Sam knew.

PROFITS OF THE RUM TRAFFIC.

"I HAVE made a thousand dollars the last three months," said a prosperous liquor-seller to a group of men standing near his saloon.

"You have made more than that," quietly remarked a listener.

"What is that?" was the quick response.

"You have made wretched homes, women and children poor, sick, and weary of life. You have made my two sons drunkards; you made the younger of the two so drunk that he fell and injured himself for life. You have made their mother a broken-hearted woman. Oh, you have made much more than I can reckon, but you will get the full account some day."

Ben's Excuse for Old March.

BY M. THAYER ROUBE.

Oh, hurry for the March wind! A long, lusty shout,
Quite as loud as he gives in his blust'ring tone.

His his way to be rough,
To make racket enough

For a whole dozen breezes, bustling about,
With a rattle and grumble and groan.

Oh, he rattles the latch, and he taps at the pane;
Then he laughs at the fellow who shivers and shakes,
And whosoever he goes

On his trumpet he blows.

Down the chimney he whistles, with shrill might and
main;

And he shrieks till the echoes he wakes.

Oh, he's full of his pranks, and he'll play you at catch,
And he'll race with you, too, till he beats;

And he'll blow you away

And back the same day,

But look out for the rogue, for he's likely to snatch

All he can, from whomsoever he meets.

But he's only in fun, for his meaning, I'm sure,

Is to have a rare frolic, and not to annoy;

It would take all the starch

Quickly out of old March,

Should he know people call him a regular boor,

For at heart he's a regular boy!

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, MARCH 12, 1892.

CRUELTY TO CHILDREN.

THE Chinese in some directions are as cruel as they are superstitious. If they are kind to their parents they are inhuman to their children. The girls suffer most. Their feet are tightly bound to keep them small, in a way to give them constant pain. The wail of the poor foot-bound girls is heard far and wide in China. And in some provinces parents kill their daughters and nothing is thought of it. It is said that in the great city of Foochow, more than half of the families have destroyed one or more of their daughters.

What can save such a people but the Gospel of Jesus? It is pleasing to close this sad story of wickedness and superstition by telling how the light is beginning to shine in the midst of the darkness. Forty years ago no Protestant missionary was permitted to live within the bounds of China. Now twenty-six missionary societies are maintaining labourers, and over 300 churches have been organized, having probably over 20,000 persons connected with them, while there are many thousand more who have left their idol-worship, and are hearing the Gospel of Jesus. It is said that as many as 600 native Chinamen are now employed as preachers or Christian teachers. Will not some of the young people who have read the story of China ask God to fit them to go to that land with the blessed Word of Life?

GET THE MOST GOOD OUT OF BOOKS.

You should treat a book as you would a person with whom you are talking for information; that is, question it, read it over and turn back and try to get at the meaning; if the book itself does not answer the questions you raise, go to some other book, ask a dictionary or encyclopedia for an explanation. And if the book treated in this way does not teach you anything or does not inspire you, it is of no more service to you than the conversation of a dull, ignorant person. I just used the word "inspire." You do not read all books for facts or for information merely, but to be inspired, to have your thoughts lifted up to noble ideas, to have your sympathies touched, your ambition awakened to do some worthy or great thing, to become a man or a woman of character and consideration in the world. You read the story of a fine action or a heroic character—the death of Socrates, or the voyage of Columbus, or the sacrifice of Nathan Hale, or such a poem as "The Lady of the Lake"—not for information only, but to create in you a higher ideal of life, and to give you sympathy with your fellows and with noble purposes. You cannot begin too young to have these ideals and these purposes, and therefore the best literature in all the world is the best for you to begin with. And you will find it the most interesting.—Charles Dudley Warner, in *January St. Nicholas*.

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.

JOHN WESLEY was saintly in piety, but not more so than Fletcher; a prince among orators, but not the equal of Whitefield; a charming poet, but surpassed by his brother Charles; a master in scholarship, but not superior to many others of his day; but in thoroughness of devotion, self-sacrifice, wise and tireless work and masterful organization, he had no superiors or equals in his own age, or scarcely in any other. Hence the mighty Methodist movement which stirred England and marvellously influenced the religion of the Western world. With all his endowments and grace, if Wesley had confined his labours to a single parish, the Methodism born in the eighteenth century would have been impossible, and the history of Protestant Christianity for the century now closing would have been widely different from what it is.

Asbury, the restless, self-forgetful, laborious, heroic apostle of Methodism on the American continent, followed by his coadjutors in the ministry and laity, men of like faith and zeal with their matchless leader, carried the flag and forced the fight wherever the enemy could be found. And they were irresistible. Their sanctified zeal overcame all obstacles. They went everywhere planting the Church. Because of these things American Methodism of to-day is the largest and most aggressive religious force of the country.

Men differ in accounting for the wonderful growth of Methodism. Its doctrines; its polity, particularly the itinerancy; the freedom of its form of worship; its singing; its revivals, have each in turn—and possibly others—been insisted on as the true explanation. We will not venture into this question. As we see it, no one of these things is sufficient to account for the result. It is due rather to the "mighty working" of all of them by men and women of zeal, "full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith." It would have mattered little how good the doctrines were, if they had not been preached; how wise the economy, if it had not been worked; how inspiring the songs, if they had not been sung. It is because men have preached and toiled and sung under the constraint of the love of Christ, and under a weight of responsibility which never lost sight of the Judgment Day, that Methodism has won its greatest victories. The secret of its success is downright, persistent, unconquerable hard work, energized and inspired by the Holy Spirit of God.

This never fails. By their holy zeal godly men have often moved whole communities, and won multitudes for Christ. The results may not have always wisely conserved, it is true; but the effects were produced. The zeal of good men cannot fail when used and directed by God.



"YOU'RE JUST AS BAD, EVERY ONE OF YOU!"

NELLY'S DARK DAYS

By the Author of "Lost in London."

CHAPTER IV.

VIOLETS.

ALL the neighbours said it was a mystery how the Rodneys lived for the next three months, for Rodney was away for days together, only coming home now and then during his sober intervals—but it was no mystery at all. The wondrous kindness which the poor show to the poor was at work for them. Mrs. Rodney needed little food; and Nelly was always welcome to share the stinted meals in any house near at hand. Every day at dusk Bessie came in; and if she had been lucky in selling her flowers or fruit in the streets, she did not fail to bring some small, cheap dainty with her to tempt the sick woman's appetite. So the depth of the winter passed by, and the spring drew near, with its Easter week of holiday and gladness.

It was the day before Good Friday, when Rodney was returning, with lagging steps and a heavy heart, to his wretched home, after an absence of several days. Every nerve in his body was jarring, and every limb ached. He could scarcely climb the narrow and steep staircase; and when he reached his door he was obliged to lean against it, breathing hardly after the exertion. It seemed very silent within—awfully still and silent. He listened for Nelly's chatter, or her mother's cough, which had sounded incessantly in his ears before he had left home; but there was no breath or whisper to be heard. Yet the door yielded readily to his touch, and with faint and weary feet he crossed the threshold to find the room empty.

It was his first impression that it was empty; but, when he looked round again with his dim, red eyes, whose sight was failing, they fell upon one awful occupant of the desolate room. Even that one he could not discern all at once, not till he had crossed the floor, and laid his hand upon the strange object resting upon the old bed—the poor, rough shell of a coffin, which the parish had provided for his wife's burial. She was not in it yet, but lay beyond it—in its shadow; her white, fixed face, very hollow and rigid, at rest upon the pillow; and her wasted hands crossed upon her breast. The neighbours had furnished their best to dress

her for the grave, and a white cap covered her gray hair; while between her hands—on the heart that would beat no more—Bessie had laid a bunch of fresh spring violets.

Rodney sank down on his knees, with his arms stretched over the coffin towards his dead wife. Some of the deep, hard lines had vanished from her face, and an expression of rest and peace had settled upon it, which made her look more like the girl he had loved and married twenty years ago. How happy they had been then! And how truly he had loved her! If any man had told him to what a wretched end he would bring her, he would have asked indignantly: "Am I a dog, that I should do this thing?"

The twilight came on as he knelt there, and for a few minutes the white features looked whiter and more ghastly before the darkness hid them from him. Then the night fell. It seemed more terrible than ever now—this stillness in the room which was not empty. His mind wandered in bewilderment. He must get something to drink, or he should go mad.

There was nothing in the room of any value—he knew that; yet there was one thing might give him the means of gratifying his quenchless drouth. He knew a man, serving at the counter of one of the nearest spirit-vaults, who had a love for flowers; and there was the bunch of sweet violets withering in the dead hands of his wife. For a minute or two the miserable drunkard's brain grew steady and clear, and he shuddered at the thought of thus robbing the dead; but the better moments passed quickly away. The scent of the flowers brought back to his troubled memory the lanes and hedgerows where he had rambled with her, under the showery and sunny skies of April, to gather violets—so long ago that surely it must have been in some other and happier life, and he must have been another and a far better man.

Still, underneath the surface of these thoughts, his purpose strengthened steadily to exchange the fresh, sweet flowers for one draught of the poison which was destroying him—he knew it—body and soul. But the darkness had grown so dense that he could not, with all the straining of his bedimmed eyes, trace the white outline of the dead face and hands; and his skin crept at the thought of touching, with his hot hand, the deathly chill of the corpse. The flowers were there; but how was he to snatch them away from the frigid grasp which held them without feeling her fingers touch his? But the pangs of his thirst gathered force from minute to minute, until, overpowered by them, he stretched out his feverish and trembling hands across the coffin and laid them upon the dead hands of his wife. The cold struck through him with an icy chill that he would never forget, but he would not now fail in his purpose. He loosed the violets from her fingers, and rushed away from the place, not daring to pause for an instant till he had reached the gin-palace where he could sell them.

Rodney had not left the house many minutes when Bessie Dingle entered it, shading with her hand a candle which she had borrowed from a neighbour. She stepped softly across the room, and looked down with tearful eyes upon her friend's corpse. The hands had been disturbed, and the flowers were gone. Bessie started back for an instant with terror, but guessing instinctively what had happened, and whither the miserable man had gone, she drew her shawl over her head and ran down the street in the direction he had taken. She had to peep into three or four gin-palaces before she found him, lolling against the counter, and slowly draining the last few drops of the dram he had bought. Bessie did not pause in her hurried steps, and she threw herself half across the counter, speaking in clear and eager tones:

"You don't know where those violets come from," she cried. He's taken 'em out of the hands of his poor, dead wife, where I put 'em only this afternoon, because she loved me so, and I thought they'd be buried with her. I think she knows what he's done, I do. Her face is gone sadder—ever so—since I saw it this afternoon; for he's stolen the posy from her, I tell you, and she's lying dead!"

"Dead!" he exclaimed. "Come straight from a dead woman to me!"

"Ay!" said Bessie, "straight. And also loving him to the very last; and toiling me, when she could hardly speak: 'Take care of him! Take care of him!' And he goes and robs her of the only thing I could give her! That's what you make of a man," she continued, more and more eagerly; "you give him drink till there isn't a brute beast as bad; and he was a kind man to begin with, I can tell you!"

"It's his own fault, my girl," said the man, in a pacifying tone. "He comes here of his own accord. We don't force him to come."

"But you do all you can to 'tice him in," answered Bessie. "If it wasn't standing here so handy, and bright, and pleasant, he wouldn't come in. There's something wrong somewhere, or Mr. Rodney 'ud never be like that, or do such a thing as that, I know. Look at him! And when I was a little girl he jumped into the river after me, and saved my life."

"You're just as bad, every one of you," she cried, turning to the onlookers; "you take the bread out of your children's mouths, and that's as bad as stealing violets from your poor, dead wife. It doesn't do her any real harm; but you starve, and pinch, and cheat little children, and it harms them every day they live. None of you has any call to throw stones at him."

She thrust her way through them, and was leading Rodney to the door, when the man behind the counter called to her to take away the flowers.

"Do you think I'd take 'em from such a place as this? No, no! keep 'em and carry 'em home, and tell everybody you see what your customers will do for drink. I'd sooner cut my fingers off than touch them again."

The courage her agitation had given her was well-nigh spent now, and she was glad to get Rodney out of the place.

"Hush!" she said, "hush! Don't go to say you couldn't help it, and she loving you so to the very last minute of her life. 'If he'd only pray to God to help him,' she said. And then, just before she was going away, she said, 'Bessie, you take care of him and Nelly.' And I'm going to do it, Mr. Rodney. You saved me once, and I'm going to try to save you now, if God'll only help me. It shan't be for want of praying to him, I assure you. Oh, if you'd only give it up now at once, before you get worse and worse!"

"I can't be any worse," moaned the drunkard.

"Not much, may be," said Bessie, frankly. "You went and stole Nelly's doll for drink, and now you've stole the violets. But you might be dead, and that's worse. Perhaps, if you go on as you are, you'll be dead in a very little while."

"I wish I was dead," he groaned.

"Why!" exclaimed Bessie, in a tone of as tonishment. "And then you could never undo the harm you've done to poor little Nelly, that you love so, I know, in spite of all. If you'd only think of Nelly, and think of God you wouldn't get drunk again, I'm sure."

"I never will again, Bessie! I never will again!" he repeated fervently. Bessie drew him aside as he was about to turn into his own room.

"No," she said, "you couldn't bear to stay in there alone all night—it 'ud be too much for you. Mrs. Simpson, as is taking care of Nelly, 'll let you sit by her fire, and I'll go and stay in your house. I'm not afraid at all. She loved us all so—you, and Nelly, and me. We're going to bury her in the morning, and I'd like to sit up with her the last night of all."

Before long, Rodney was seated by his neighbour's fire in a silent and very sorrowful mood, with Nelly leaning against him, her arm round his neck, and her cheek pressed against his. He was quite sober now, and his spirit was filled with bitter grief and a senso of intolerable degradation. He loathed and abhorred himself; cursed his own sin, and the greed of the people who lived upon it. If the owners of these places of temptation could hear the deep, unutterable curses breathed against them, their souls would be ready to die within them for their own sin, and the terrible shame of it.

(To be continued.)



THE GARDEN.

TEA GARDEN.

While not such a gay, pleasure-loving people as the Japanese, from the fact that the conditions of life are harder, the country more crowded, and population poorer than in Japan, the Chinese have yet one great holiday, the New Year, and are fond of picnics to their tea gardens and other picturesque places. One of these is shown in our cut, a pretty pavilion, with numerous plants and flowers, and a pond in the pleasure-garden. There is this to be said in their favour, that, using the cup that cheers but not inebriates, their holidays are free from the disgraceful scenes of drunkenness and vice that characterize the holidays of many so-called Christian lands.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER REVIEW.

LESSON XII.—March 20.

SCRIPTURE LESSON FROM ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, AND EZEKIEL.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.—Isa. 55. 6.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

God uses every means to save men from sin.

Drill on the titles and Golden Texts
Look up all places on the map
Study the chart at the beginning of the book for the kings and prophets; the chief events.

Isaiah prophesied from 760 to 697.
Jeremiah prophesied from 622 to 586.
Ezekiel prophesied from 593 to 571.
The central events were the destruction of Jerusalem, B.C. 586, and the seventy years' captivity, 605-536.

The cause of the events was the idolatry and wickedness of the people.

Warnings and entreaties were sent by the prophets. They saw Samaria fall for its sins, and the sister kingdom blotted out (722). They were besieged by Sennacherib, and brought to the verge of destruction (701), and then were delivered in a marvellous manner. The final destruction came by degrees. There were three sieges by Nebuchadnezzar (605, 598, 588-586). God gave great promises through the prophets.

The end of the way was reached. Jerusalem and the temple destroyed, the kingdom depopulated. It was the only way in which there could be a spiritual temple and a true people of God. The tree was cut down to enable a fresh shoot to spring up. Visions of hope were given in almost every lesson. The prophets never despaired. The promises were first fulfilled in the return from exile. That was a proof of a larger fulfilment when Jesus Christ came; and both give the absolute assurance that the complete fulfilment will be accomplished in the redemption of the world.

Find in this quarter's lesson—

The danger of going on in sin.
Some things God does to save us.
Some blessed promises.

REVIEW EXERCISE.

1. What danger was threatening the Jews? "Destruction of their city and nation." 2. On what account? "Because of their idolatry and sins." 3. What did God do for them? "He sent prophets to instruct and dangers to warn and promises to attract." 4. What was the end? "Jerusalem was destroyed and the people carried captive." 5. What promises were made to them? "Salvation from sin, a new heart, return from exile, a Redeemer for the world."

TIRED PEOPLE.

THE world is full of tired people—merchants tired of business, farmers tired of raising crops, mechanics tired of building houses, housekeepers tired of preparing food, operatives tired of rushing wheels. Pass along the road or street and see how very tired three-fourths of the people look. How shall they get rested? Some say, "By fewer hours of work!" But some of them have no work at all. Others might prescribe easy sofas and more

arm-chairs and soft beds. But some of the people, who have the weariest look, have plenty of good furniture and luxurious upholstery. Now, we offer a pillow not curtained with Gobelin tapestry nor stuffed with the down of angels' wings. But a man who puts his head on it gets rid of his cares and aches and anxieties. It is a pillow stuffed with the promises: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" "Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he will sustain thee." We have friends who, because they cannot sleep well, put under their head at night a pillow of hops, but they never have tried the better pillow filled with the myrrh and frankincense from the Lord's garden. Men and women tired out with the world, try it!—*De Witt Talmage.*

The Little Lad's Answer.

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

"I wonder why," his aunt said,
"This little lad always comes here,
When there are many other homes
As nice as this, and quite as near?"
He stood a moment deep in thought,
Then, with the love-light in his eye,
He pointed where his mother sat,
And said, "She lives here—that is why!"

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

WHAT CAN IDOLS DO?

A MISSIONARY in India tells the following story of a little boy who, in a mission school, had been taught about the one God, and about Jesus:

"One day this boy, who lived in a house with a heathen, said to him, 'There is only one God, the one who made the earth and sky and everything. He gives us the rain and the sunshine; he knows everything we do; he can save us or kill us. But these images you pray to are only lumps of baked clay. They can't see nor hear; how can they do any good, or save you from any trouble?'

"The heathen paid no attention to him, but soon afterwards he went on a journey. While he was gone, the little boy took a stick and broke all the images except the largest, into the hands of which he put the stick.

"When the man returned he was angry at what had happened and exclaimed:

"Who has done this!"

"Perhaps the big idol has been beating his little brother," said the boy.

"Nonsense!" said the man, "don't talk such stuff as that! Do you think I am a fool? You know as well as I do that the thing cannot raise his hand. It was you, you little rascal! it was you! To pay you for your wickedness I will beat you to death with the same stick, and seizing the stick, he went towards him.

"But," said the boy quickly, "how can you worship a god like that? Do you suppose if he can't take care of himself and the other idols, he can

take care of you and the world—alone making you?"

"The heathen stopped to think, for this was a new idea. The more he thought, the more senseless the idol seemed. After a while he broke his idol, and went and knelt down to pray to the true God, and called him 'My Father.'"

THE MERCHANT'S PROPHECY.

As we were coming down to the office to-day we overheard a paragraph from a conversation between two gentlemen who occupied the seat in front. They were talking about a young man who had evidently entered the employ of one of them quite recently. "He'll reach the top if he keeps on this way," the gentleman remarked, "for he works as though my business were his own." We repeat the warm commendation of the business man for the benefit of the boys who may be putting in long hours in factory or store or office. Duty done in a unperfunctory manner never wins the appreciation of an employer. He likes to see an employee take vital interest in what he is doing. One who thus identifies himself with the business of the firm, and zealously pushes the work of his department, lays the foundations for promotion which is never long delayed. That is a piece of history which has repeated itself again and again. The hint may be worth something, boys. Tack it up on memory's wall.—*Epsworth Herald.*

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