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# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVI.]

TORONTO, JULY 18, 1896.

[No. 29.]

## Picnic Time.

BY EUGENE FIELD.

It's June agin, an' in my soul I feel the  
fillin' joy  
That's sure to come this time o' year to  
every little boy;  
For, every June, the Sunday-schools at  
picnics may be seen,  
Where "fields beyont the swellin' floods  
stand dressed in livin' green;"  
Where little girls are skeered to death  
with spiders, bugs an' ants,  
An' little boys get grass stains on their  
go-to-meetin' pants.  
It's June agin, an' with it all what hap-  
piness is mine—  
There's goin' to be a picnic an' I'm  
agin' to jine!

One year I joined the Baptists, an' good-  
ness how it rained!  
(But grandpa says that that's the way  
"baptizo" is explained.)  
And once I jined the 'piscopills an' had a  
heap o' fun—  
But the boss of all the picnics was the  
Presbyterium!  
They had so many puddin's, sallids,  
sandwidges, an' pies,  
That a feller wisht his stummick was as  
hungry as his eyes!  
Oh, yes, the eatin' that the Presbyteriums  
give us is so fine,  
That when they have a picnic you bet  
I'm going to jine!

But at this time the Methodists have  
special claims on me,  
For they're goin' to give a picnic on the  
21st, D.V.:  
Why should a liberal Universalist like  
me object  
To share the joys of fellowship with  
every friendly sect?  
However strict their articles of faith  
elsewise may be,  
Their doctrine o' fried chick'n is a  
savin' grace to me,  
So on the 21st of June, the weather be-  
in' fine,  
They're goin' to give a picnic, an' I'm  
agin' to jine!

## THE BOY DISCIPLE.

BY

ANNIE FELLOWS JOHNSTON.

### CHAPTER XII.

Abigail sat just inside the door, turn-  
ing the noisy hand-mill that ground out  
the next day's supply of flour. The  
rough mill-stones grated so harshly on  
each other that she did not hear the  
steps coming up the path. A shadow  
falling across the door-way made her  
look up.

"You are home very early, my  
Phineas," she said, with a smile. "Well,  
I shall soon have your supper ready.  
Joel has gone to the market for some  
honey and—"

"Nay! I have little wish to eat," he  
interrupted, "but I have much to say to  
you. Come! the work can wait."

Abigail put the mill aside, and brush-  
ing the flour from her hands, sat down  
on the step beside her, wondering much  
at his troubled face.

He plunged into his subject abruptly.  
"The Master is soon going away," he  
said, "that those in the uttermost parts  
of Galilee may be taught of him. And  
he would fain have others beside the  
twelve he has chosen to go with him on  
his journey."

"And you wish to go too?" she ques-  
tioned, as he paused.

"Yes! How can I do otherwise?  
And yet how can I leave you and the  
little ones alone in these troubled times?  
You cannot think how great the danger  
is. Remember how many horrors we  
have lately heard. The whole country  
is a smouldering volcano, ready to burst  
into an eruption at any moment. A  
leader has only to arise, and all Israel  
will take up arms against the powers  
that trample us under foot."  
"Is not this prophet, Jesus, he who is  
to save Israel?" asked Abigail. "Is he  
not even now making ready to establish  
his kingdom?"

"I do not understand him at all!"  
said Phineas, sadly. "He does talk of  
a kingdom in which we are all to have  
a part; but he never seems to be work-

ing miracles cannot make them forget how  
boldly he has rebuked them for hypocrisy  
and unrighteousness. They never will  
come to his support now, and I do not  
see how a new government can be  
formed without their help."

Abigail laid her hand on his, her dark  
eyes glowing with intense earnestness,  
as she answered. "What need is there  
of armies and human hands to help?"

"Where were the hosts of Pharaoh  
when our fathers passed through the Red  
Sea? Was there bloodshed and fighting  
there?"

"Who battled for us when the walls  
of Jericho fell down? Whose hand  
smote the Assyrians at Sennacherib?  
Is the Lord's arm shortened that he can-  
not save?"

of joy,—you are rightly named. You  
have led me out of the doubts that have  
been my daily torment. I see now, why  
he never incites us to rebel against the  
yoke of Caesar. In the fulness of time  
he will free us with a breath.

"How strange it should have fallen  
to my lot to have been his playmate and  
companion. My wonder is not that he  
is the Messiah, but that I should have  
called him friend, all these years, un-  
knowing."

"How long do you expect to be away?"  
she asked, after a pause, suddenly re-  
turning to the first subject.

"Several months, perhaps. There is  
no telling what insurrection and riots  
may arise, all through this part of the  
country. Since the murder of John  
Baptist, Herod has come back to his  
court in Tiberias. I dislike to leave  
you here alone."

Abigail, too, looked grave, and  
neither spoke for a little while. "I  
have it!" she exclaimed at length,  
with a pleased light in her eyes. "I  
have often wished I could make a long  
visit in the home of my girlhood. The  
few days I have spent in my father's  
house, those few times I have gone  
with you to the feasts, have been so  
short and unsatisfactory. Can I not  
take Joel and the children to Bethany?  
Neither father nor mother has ever  
seen little Ruth, and we could be so  
safe and happy there till your return."

"Why did I not come to you before  
with my worries?" asked Phineas.  
"How easily you make the crooked  
places straight!"

Just then the children came running  
back from the market. Abigail went  
into the house with the provisions they  
had brought, leaving their father to  
tell them of the coming separation and  
the long journey they had planned.

A week later, Phineas stood at the  
city gate, watching a little company  
file southward down the highway. He  
had hired two strong, gaily-caparisoned  
mules from the owner of the caravan.  
Abigail rode on one, holding little  
Ruth in her arms; Joel mounted the  
other, with Jesse clinging close behind  
him.

Abigail, thinking of the joyful wel-  
come awaiting her in her old home, and  
the children happy in the novelty of  
the journey, set out gaily.

But Phineas, thinking of the dangers  
by the way, and filled with many fore-  
bodings, watched their departure with  
a heavy heart.

At the top of a little rise in the road,  
they turned to look back and wave  
their hands. In a moment more they  
were out of sight. Then Phineas,  
grasping his staff more firmly, turned  
away, and started on foot in the other  
direction, to follow to the world's end,  
if need be, the friend who had gone on  
before.

It was in the midst of the barley har-  
vest. Jesse had never been in the  
country before. For the first time, Na-  
ture spread for him her great picture-  
book of field and forest and vineyard,  
while Abigail read to him the stories.

First on one side of the road, then the  
other, she pointed out some spot and told  
its history.

Here was Dothan, where Joseph went  
out to see his brothers, dressed in his  
coat of many colours. There was Mount  
Gilead, where the arrows of the Philis-  
tines wounded Saul, and he fell on his  
own sword and killed himself. Shiloh,  
where Hannah brought little Samuel to  
give him to the Lord; where the Prophet  
Eli, so old that his eyes were too dim to  
see, sat by the gate waiting for news  
from the army, and when word was



BETHANY.

ing to establish it. He spends all his  
time in healing diseases and forgiving  
penitent sinners, and telling us to love  
our neighbours.

"Then, again, why should he go down  
to the beach, and choose for his con-  
fidential friends just simple fishermen.  
They have neither influence nor money.  
As for the choice of that publican Levi-  
Matthew, it has brought disgrace on the  
whole movement. He does not seem  
to know how to sway the popular feel-  
ing. I believe he might have had the  
support of the foremost men of the na-  
tion, if he had approached them differ-  
ently.

"He shocks them by setting aside laws  
they would lay down their lives rather  
than violate. He associates with those  
they consider unclean; and all his

"Why may not his prophet speak  
peace to Jerusalem as easily as he did  
the other night to the stormy sea? Why  
may not his power be multiplied even  
as the loaves and fishes?"

"Why may not the sins and back-  
slidings of the people be healed as well  
as Joel's lameness; or the glory of the  
nation be quickened into a new life, as  
speedily as he raised the daughter of  
Jairus?"

Isaiah called him the Prince of  
Peace. What are all these lessons, if  
not to teach us that the purposes of God  
do not depend on human hands to work  
out their fulfilment?"

Her low voice thrilled him with its in-  
spiring questions, and he looked down  
into her rapt face with a feeling of awe.  
"Abigail," he said, softly, "my soul's

brought back that his two sons were dead, and the Ark of the Covenant taken, here it was that he fell backward from his seat, and his neck was broken.

All these she told, and many more. Then she pointed to the gleaners in the fields, and told the children to notice how carefully Israel still kept the commandment given so many centuries before: "When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard, thou shalt leave them for the poor and the stranger."

At Jacob's well, where they stopped to rest, Joel lifted Jesse up, and let him look over the curb. The child almost lost his balance in astonishment, when his own wondering little face looked up at him from the deep well. He backed away from it quickly, and looked carefully into the cup of water Joel handed him, for more than a minute, before he ventured to drink.

The home to which Abigail was going was a wealthy one. Her father, Reuben, was a goldsmith, and for years had been known in Jerusalem, not only for the beautifully wrought ornaments and precious stones that he sold in his shop near the Temple, but for his rich gifts to the poor.

"Reuben the Charitable," he was called, and few better deserved the name. His business took him every day to the city; but his home was in the little village of Bethany, two miles away. It was one of the largest in Bethany, and seemed like a palace to the children, when compared to the humble little home in Capernaum.

Joel only looked around with admiring eyes; but Jesse walked about, laying curious little fingers on everything he passed. The bright oriental curtains, the soft cushions and the costly hangings, he smoothed and patted. Even the silver candlesticks and the jewelled cups on the side table were picked up and examined, when his mother happened to have her back turned.

There were no pictures in the house, the Law forbade. But there were several mirrors of bright polished metal, and Jesse never tired watching his own reflection in them.

Ruth stayed close beside her mother. "She is a ray of God's own sunshine," said her grandmother, as she took her in her arms for the first time. The child, usually afraid of strangers, saw in Rebecca's face a look so like her mother's that she patted the wrinkled cheeks with her soft fingers. From that moment her grandmother was her devoted slave.

Jesse was not long in finding the place he held in his grandfather's heart. The old man, whose sons had all died years before, seemed to centre all his hopes on this son of his only daughter. He kept Jesse with him as much as possible; his happiest hours were when he had the child on his knee, teaching him the prayers and precepts and proverbs that he knew would be a lamp to his feet in later years.

"Nay! do not punish the child!" he said, one morning when Jesse had been guilty of some disobedience. Abigail went on stripping the leaves from an almond switch she had broken off.

"Why, father," she said, with a smile. "I have often seen you punish my brothers for such disobedience, and have as often heard you say that one of Solomon's wisest sayings is, 'Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.' Jesse misses his father's firm rule, and is getting sadly spoilt."

"That is all true, my daughter," he acknowledged; "still I shall not stay here to witness his punishment."

Abigail used the switch as she had intended. The boy had overheard the conversation, and the cries that reached his grandfather as he rode off to the city were unusually loud and appealing. They may have had something to do with the package the good man carried home that night,—cakes and figs and a gay little turban more befitting a young prince than the son of a carpenter.

"Who lives across the street?" asked Joel the morning after their arrival.

"Two old friends of mine," answered Abigail. "They came to see me last

night as soon as they heard I had arrived. You children were all asleep. We talked late, for they wanted to hear all I could tell them of Rabbi Jesus. He was here last year, and Martha said he and her brother Lazarus became fast friends. Ah, there is Lazarus now!—that young man just coming out of the house. He is a scribe, and goes up to write in one of the rooms of the Temple nearly every day.

"Mary says some of the copies of the Scriptures he has made are the most beautifully written that she has ever seen."

"See!" exclaimed Joel, "he has dropped one of the rolls of parchment he was carrying, and does not know it. I'll run after him with it."

He was hardly yet accustomed to the delight of being so fleet of foot; no halting step now to hinder him. He almost felt as if he were flying, and was by the young man's side nearly as soon as he had started.

"Ah, you are the guest of my good neighbour, Reuben," Lazarus said, after thanking him courteously. "Are you not the lad whose lameness has just been healed by my best friend? My sisters were telling me of it. It must be a strange experience to suddenly find yourself changed from a helpless cripple to such a strong, straight lad as you now are. How did it make you feel?"

"Oh, I can never begin to tell you, Rabbi Lazarus," answered Joel. "I did not even think of it that moment when he held my hand in his. I only thought how much I loved him. I had been starving before, but that moment he took the place of everything,—father, mother, the home love I had missed,—and more than that, the love of God seemed to come down and fold me so close and safe, that I knew he was the Messiah. I did not even notice that I was no longer lame, until I was far down the beach. Oh, you do not know how I wanted to follow him! If I could only have gone with him instead of coming here!"

"Yes, my boy, I know!" answered the young man, gently; "for I, too, love him."

This strong bond of sympathy between the two made them feel as if they had known each other always.

"Come walk with me a little way," said Lazarus. "I am going up to Jerusalem to the Temple. Or rather, would you not like to come all the way? I have only to carry these rolls to one of the priests, then I will be at liberty to show you some of the strange sights in the city."

Joel ran back for permission. Only stopping to wind his white linen turban around his head, he soon rejoined his new-found friend.

His recollection of Jerusalem was a very dim, confused one. Time and time again he had heard pilgrims returning from the feasts trying to describe their feelings when they had come in sight of the Holy City. Now as they turned with the road, the view that rose before him made him feel how tame their descriptions had been.

The morning sun shone down on the white marble walls of the Temple and the gold that glittered on the courts, as they rose one above the other; tower and turret and pinnacle shot back a dazzling light.

It did not seem possible to Joel that human hands could have wrought such magnificence. He caught his breath, and uttered an exclamation of astonishment.

Lazarus smiled at his pleasure. "Come," he said, "it is still more beautiful inside."

They went very slowly through Solomon's Porch, for every one seemed to know the young man, and many stopped to speak to him. Then they crossed the Court of the Gentiles. It seemed like a market-place; for cages of doves were kept there for sale, and lambs, calves, and oxen bleated and lowed in their stalls till Joel could scarcely hear what his friend was saying, as they pushed their way through the crowd, and stood before the Gate Beautiful that led into the Court of the Women.

Here Lazarus left Joel for a few moments, while he went to give the rolls to the priest for whom he had copied them.

Joel looked around. Then for the first time since his healing, he wondered if it would be possible for him to ever take his place among the Levites, or become a priest as he had been destined.

While he wondered, Lazarus came back and led him into the next court. Here he could look up and see the Holy Place, over which was trained a golden vine, with clusters of grapes as large as a man's body, all of purest gold. Beyond that he knew was a heavy veil of Babylonian tapestry, hyacinth and scarlet and purple, that veiled in awful darkness the Holy of Holies.

As he stood there thinking of the tinkling bells, the silver trumpets, the clouds of incense, and the mighty songs, a great longing came over him to be one of those white-robed priests, serving daily in the Temple.

But with the wish came the recollection of a quiet hillside, where only bird-calls and whir of wings stirred the stillness; where a breeze from the sparkling lake blew softly through the grass, and one voice only was heard, proclaiming its glad new gospel under the open sky. "No," he thought to himself; "I'd rather be with him than wear the High Priest's mitre."

It was almost sundown when they found themselves on the road homeward. They had visited place after place of interest.

Lazarus found the boy an entertaining companion, and the friendship begun that day grew deep and lasting.

(To be continued.)

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.  
Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.  
TORONTO, JULY 18, 1896.

THE REWARD OF PERSEVERANCE.

At one of the mills in the city of Boston a boy was wanted; and a piece of paper was tacked to one of the posts, so that all the boys could see it as they passed by. The paper read: "Boy wanted. Call at the office to-morrow morning."

At the time named there was a host of boys at the gate. All were admitted; but the overseer was a little perplexed as to the best way of choosing one from so many, and said he: "Now, boys, when I only want one of you, how can I choose from so many?"

After thinking a moment he invited them into the yard, and driving a nail into one of the large trees, and taking a short stick, told them that the boy who could hit the nail with the stick a little distance from the tree should have the place.

The boys all tried hard; and after three trials, each failed to hit the nail. The boys were told to come again next morning; and this time, when the gate was opened, there was but one boy, who, after being admitted, picked up the stick,

and, throwing it at the nail, hit it every time.

"How is this?" said the overseer. "What have you been doing?"

And the boy, looking up with tears in his eyes, said: "You see, sir, I have a mother; and we are very poor. I have no father, sir, and I thought I would like to get the place, and so help all I can; and, after going home yesterday, I drove a nail into the barn, and have been trying ever since, and have come down this morning to try again."

The boy was admitted to the place. Many years have passed since then, and this boy is now a prosperous and wealthy man; and at the time of an accident at the mills he was the first to step forward with a gift of five hundred dollars to relieve the sufferers. His success came by perseverance.—Exchange.

Outdone by a Boy.

He looked very small for a boy of ten. As he stood before a group of men, and asked for work with a modest air, "I will do your errands," he said, "with care."

They laughed, and with words that shall be unsaid they faked till his face with pain grew red.

"You are built," said one, "on a limited plan—

You never will make a full-grown man. Then another—"I'm sure it's not very wise

To expect much work from a chap of your size."

The youngster looked at the bearded men—

"I'm small," said he, "and I'm only ten. And you are grown up and know a lot. But I can do something that you cannot."

"What's that?" they cried, "It will strike us dumb,

To be cast in the shade by young Hop o' my thumb,

"I can keep from swearing," the boy replied.

And the little form grew dignified.

He turned, but he did not hear one say, "That's a sermon I'll not forget to-day."

PUMPING MACHINES.

"Two many pumping machines at Cousin Clara's," said a lady. "I cannot allow my little boy to go there alone; they quiz him like lawyers about our affairs. Of course we have our little secrets that we like to keep in the family, but what Henry knows they extract from him, merely out of idle curiosity."

"O, I hate to call there," said a young lady, alluding to a family in the town where she lived. "Mrs. G— and Madge are so inquisitive. They'll ask me where I got my dress, how much I paid a yard, how many yards I had, who made it, and a dozen other questions about that and anything else new that I chance to have on. And when they've exhausted my clothing they'll take up mother's in the same fashion. We only go there once a year. They haven't half so many friends as they would have if they weren't so inquisitive. People don't like pumping machines."

It is true that inquisitive people rarely have many friends. Idle curiosity, a desire to pry into the affairs of others, begets rudeness, which repels even a child.

"Aunt Caroline presses me awfully with questions," declared a little nine-year-old-girl the other day.

"How so?" inquired a friend.

"O, she asks if papa and mamma get cross, and if Aunt Frances is going to be married, and everything like that; and it makes me feel nervous-like. I don't like to go there."

Aunt Caroline had thought to quiz her with impunity. But the little girl was quick to discern a pumping machine.

We might say that the pumping machine is a gossip in training. Don't pry into other people's personal affairs. Don't "wonder" about them, don't think about them, don't talk about them. Pertinent curiosity is almost the sure mark of a vulgar mind.—Youth's Companion.

James Root.

The Hero of the Michigan Forest Fires.

BY J. W. HENCOUGH.

Folks 'at thinks thar ain't no heroes  
Livin' round here nowadays,  
But you've got to go to find 'em  
Back in hist'ry quite a ways;  
Or to story books and picters,  
Or else to theazter plays;  
Let sech folks step up an' listen,  
While my little horn I toot  
'Bout a real, livin' hero—  
Engin'-driver Jimmy Root.

That's his name, and don't forget it,  
Jimmy Root, the engin'-  
His address is White Bear Village.  
Yes, sir, he's a-livin' there  
If his burns an' wounds ain't killed him,  
(Which, please God, we need not fear)  
He's the chap 'at backed that engine  
And its train from Hinckley Town,  
While the fire fiends roared around 'em  
Mowin' home and forest down.

'Twas like this: Says Jack McGowan,  
(He was engine mate with Jim).  
"Pard, I'm goin' to set the headlight,"  
"Good idee," says Root to him;  
"This here afternoon's so smoky  
That my sight in mighty dim."  
So 'twas done, and then they started  
South from Carleton through the smoke,  
D' at 4 p.m. at Hinckley.  
And they made it on the stroke.

There Jim seed the platform swarmin'  
With a frantic, strugglin' crowd.  
And the cars was packed with people  
'Fore the train stopped, Jim allowed.  
And they cried and prayed and hollered,  
Hidden in the smoky cloud  
Black and hot; the fire was near 'em—  
Mighty near—Jim felt its breath,  
And he knowed another minute  
Meant a sure an' awful death.

So he jumped to pull the throttle,  
Meanin' for to go ahead,  
When a sheet of flame and fury,  
Yeller, blue, an' green an' red,  
Rose up like a wall afore him,  
An' his senses nearly fled;  
Quickly he reversed the engine—  
"Six miles north's a marshy place,  
'Tis our only hope," he whispered,  
"Jack, we've got to make the pace!"

Back she moved, and faster, faster,  
Grew the speed with every turn  
Of the drivin' wheels, and Jimmy,  
With a face so set an' stern,  
Stood right up an' held her to it,  
Knowin' it was beat or burn,  
While the flames like hell-hounds follered.  
Leapin', roarin' for their prey,  
Paintin' Jim infernal colours  
As the engine backed away.

One mile—two! Jim wraps his jacket  
Round his head, and Fireman Jack  
From the manhole, where he's sheltered,  
Douzes water on his back;  
Three miles—four! God help the hero  
Standin' firm an' roasin' black;  
Five miles—six! The race is ended—  
Stop her! In a trice 'tis done;  
Here's the shallow Skunk Lake marshes,  
Save your lives! plunge, every one!

Now the baffled flames roar madly  
Round about the scanty lake,  
In whose waters, wallowing gladly,  
All a speedy refuge take,  
Saved, because this homespun hero  
Did his duty for Christ's sake:  
And they bless him, oh, they'll hold him  
In their souls forever dear,  
And we all shall love and honour  
Jimmy Root, the engin'!

RULER OF THE PLANETARY SYSTEM—THE SUN.

BY MARY PROCTOR.

The sun is shining so brightly through my study window this morning, that its cheerful rays invite me to say something about them. They have travelled nearly ninety-three millions of miles, from the sun to the earth, in a little more than eight minutes. All these sunbeams have a mission to perform. When we see the budding leaves on the trees, we know that the sun's rays are slowly unfolding them, and the flowers are peep-

ing up from the ground and drinking in the sunbeams till at last they open their buds and adorn themselves with varied hues they have stolen from them. The flowers owe not only their beautiful colouring, but their very lives to the sun. Should the earth be placed very much nearer to the sun they would wither and die from the great heat, or should the earth be removed farther away from the sun, the poor flowers would freeze to death. But the earth is placed at a comfortable distance from the sun, so that the flowers are enabled to live and hold up their dainty heads, and we are able to love and admire them.

Yet there are many other things the flowers owe to the sun. It causes the gentle rain which sprinkles and refreshes them when they are thirsty, the hail that pelts them so roughly, the wind that sways them on their slender stalks, the cyclone which crushes them to the ground, and the frost and the snow which finally kills them.

But let us leave the flowers and listen to the noisy waves rolling in great billows upon the beach; or stand before the mighty Falls of Niagara, watching the water dashing headlong into the depths below. Let us ramble in the woods and listen to the babbling brook hurrying on its way to join the mighty ocean, or the slowly creeping stream winding its way in and out among the rocks and boulders. Here, again, the cheerful rays of King Sun are at work.

What a mighty King he is, and how much we owe to him! The sun's heat clothes the earth with flowers and trees and all kinds of vegetation, and were this source of heat and light suddenly withdrawn, every form of life on earth would die. The flowers would droop their gentle heads, and the trees would wither away and decay, and no one would be left to mourn their death.

The sun is so bright and dazzling that it is not easy to study his surface with the telescope. There may be much there which we cannot possibly see, because we are obliged to use dark glasses to keep off the blaze of the sun's light. But it sometimes happens that the moon gets directly between us and the sun and so hides his light. Now the moon, as we all know, looks about as large as the sun, and so she is able at times just to hide his face, except a very narrow rim around. Then we can look at parts close by the sun, where usually we can see nothing on account of his blazing light. When this is done very surprising objects are seen. They look like great red mountains or clouds of flame, only they must be very much larger than any mountains or clouds we have ever seen. In fact, some of them are so high that ten or twelve globes such as our own earth might be piled one on the top of another upon the sun's surface without reaching quite to the top. It has been found that they are in reality great masses of glowing gases, chiefly the gas hydrogen.

Beyond these flames and extending all around the sun, is a pearl-coloured misty light which surrounds it like a halo, and this is called the corona. It is very bright indeed close by the sun, and fades away into the dark tint of the sky farther off. We learn, then, that the sun is not merely a very large body giving out an enormous supply of light and heat, but a body surrounded by masses of glowing gas, and outside these again by a halo of glory extending millions of miles in all directions.

Now let us consider the size of the sun. If a tunnel could be made through the centre of the sun, a train going at the rate of a mile a minute would take six hundred days in reaching the other side. Or, if a railroad were made around the edge of the sun, a train going a mile a minute would take five years in completing the journey. If we suppose the sun hollowed out and the earth placed in the centre of it, Professor Young tells us that the sun's surface would be four hundred and thirty-three thousand miles away. Now, since the distance of the moon from the earth is about two hundred and thirty-nine thousand miles, she would be only a little more than half-way out from the earth to the inner surface of the hollow globe. This gives us some idea of the size of the sun compared with our earth.

THE HONEY POTS OF FLOWERS.

BY J. ARTHUR THOMPSON, M.A.

"You will find," Mr. Ruskin says, "that in fact, all plants are composed of essentially two parts—the leaf and the root—one loving the light, the other darkness; one liking to be clean, the other to be dirty; one liking to grow for the most part up, the other for the most part down; and each having faculties and purposes of its own. But the pure one which loves the light has, above all things, the purpose of being married to another leaf, and having child-leaves and children's children of leaves to make the earth fair forever. And when the leaves marry they put on wedding robes, and are more glorious than Solomon in all his glory, and they have feasts of honey, and we call them flowers."

So much for the flower. What of its insect visitors? These are of two sorts, welcome and unwelcome. But the insects we are interested in just now are such as bees, who, while visiting the flowers in search of food for themselves, are usually of very great benefit to the plants, since they carry the fertilizing golden dust from flower head to flower head, and thus enable the "possible seeds" to become "real seeds." This is, perhaps, the most important partnership in the world.

Long ages ago men knew in a dim sort of way the importance of the golden dust which you may brush off on your finger if you touch the stamens in the centre of a flower. Thus they used to dust the flowers of one date tree with the pollen from another. About two hundred years ago some old botanist observed that when they cut off all the stamens from a whole set of inclosed plants no seeds were formed. But still no one had any idea of the part which insects play as pollen carriers. It was plain that the bees came to the feasts of honey, but it was not seen that their coming and going was necessary for the scattering of the golden dust.

Sprengel, a German botanist, discovered how many flowers were honey flowers, and observed that the insects which came to help themselves often helped the plants also. He showed that, though there are many plants without honey, such as anemones and clematis, poppies and roses, which usually have very abundant pollen, enough and to spare for the pollen-eating insects which visit them, and though there are others, such as grasses, in which the pollen is scattered by the wind, yet this is not the case with the majority. For most flowers are honey flowers, with a gland or nectary, where the sugar oozes out; often with a receptacle in which the overflow is stored; often with some arrangement to protect the treasure from the rain, or to hide it from unbidden guests; and in many cases certain hints, such as brightly coloured spots, which seemed to Sprengel to point the way to the hidden sweetness. He detected that for a great number of flowers the visits of insects are all but necessary in order to carry the fertilizing dust from plant to plant. Darwin and others have since proved that the flowers and insects are in close partnership.

Some insects like bright colours, and the flowers have unfurled gay flags to attract them; some have a keen sense of smell, and to them many flowers offer incense; some have a large appetite for honey, and to them every flowery bank is a spread feast.

Thus attracted, whether by flags or incense, or by a recollection of a previous feast, bees and butterflies and the like pay a daily round of visits, and it is important to notice, as Aristotle observed two thousand years ago, that "a bee, on any one expedition, does not pass from one kind of plant to another, but confines itself to a single kind for instance, to violets—and does not change until it has first returned to the hive." This habit makes it the more certain that the pollen is scattered in a useful way.

The importance of the insect visitors to the plant is now plain enough. There are, indeed, some flowers which can get on without them; but we are quite safe in saying that the majority depend upon their insect visitors for pollen scattering; and the visitors are all the more important, because they carry the pollen from one flower to another, and thus secure

what is known as cross fertilizing. In a few cases this work is discharged by birds, and even bats and snails have been known to help.

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

JULY 26, 1896.

The Red Sea, which the children of Israel crossed.—Exodus 14. 14-31.

CRITICAL POSITION.

Difficulties to the right of them, difficulties to the left of them, and difficulties behind and before them. Can you conceive of a more trying position? Surely there could not be any worse? Time of man's extremity is God's opportunity. He sees the end from the beginning, and is too wise to err. None can stay his hand, nor say What doest thou? Blessed is the man who has the Almighty for his friend, for "he is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

GOD WORKS BY MEANS.

The people were alarmed. At this you need not wonder. Their complainings to Moses were unreasonable, but perhaps we would have acted as they did had we been in their place. Moses was truly a man of amazing meekness, or he could not have endured their upbraidings. What a noble sentence he uttered in verso 13. His faith must have been strong. He was always a man of great faith. This was the anchor of his soul. How important to be like him in this respect. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

HOW VIVIDLY THE SCENE IS DESCRIBED.

Verses 14-21. God could have prevented all these calamitous circumstances had he seen proper so to do. But he was educating the people, and through them those who would serve him to the end of the world. He can work a miracle when it is necessary. Men must do their part. Exercise their reason. Do what they believe to be right, and at the same time act in all things so that they may do that which they believe to be well pleasing to God. A good old Christian was accustomed to advise young people, especially when difficulties might befall them, "Always do the best you can, and pray to God to help you."

HOW SIMPLE THE MEANS.

Verse 21. Moses stretched out his hand and touched the waters, and what a scene was then witnessed! Moses acted as he was commanded to do. Obedience is the duty which will be sure to bring its reward. Moses might have questioned the propriety of such a course, but to obey is better than sacrifice. Christians deprive themselves of many blessings by their disobedience. Indeed, disobedience was the first sin man committed, and surely the bitter consequences have been such that men should ever be deterred from ever acting in a similar manner again.

MARVELLOUS DELIVERANCE.

The waters divided. A road was made in a moment, and all the Israelites went over in safety. Their enemies pursued them, but to no purpose, for the waters returned to their course, and the enemies of Israel perished in the midst of the sea. How many deliverances has God wrought out for you? They may not have been so striking, but certainly not less real. He who regards a Providence, will never lack a Providence to regard. If you will observe carefully, you will ever and anon have occasion to say, "This is the finger of God." He never forsook his ancient people. He will never leave nor forsake you. His word tells you that "he is a sun and shield," Psalm 84. 11.

The man who is willing to serve God will not long be kept waiting for a chance to begin.

To grow in grace, there must be a genuine case of conversion to begin with.

There is a good deal of unmistakable selfishness radiating up and down in the world under the name of religion—Ram's Horn.



## The Drink Store.

BY REV. WELLINGTON FRIZZELLE.

There is a store in Monmouth town  
Men call it Jones' saloon;  
Jones sells the queerest articles,  
Each morn', and night, and noon.

He has the windows painted brown  
To shut out heaven's light;  
I wonder if the storeman thinks  
His business is not right?

He often lights the gas inside,  
And shuts the shutters tight;  
For many of his customers  
Prefer to buy at night.

I never see the women go  
Ashopping there at all;  
Jones never sells their line of goods,  
And so they never call.

Sometimes the men who go there buy  
Some things they do not need;  
They often purchase eyes so black,  
They cannot see to read.

And, frequently, they buy a nose  
That's large and very red;  
They bought it probably at night  
To light them home to bed.

Some patrons buy old, ragged clothes,  
And hats without a crown.  
They buy the meanest kind of goods,  
The vilest in the town.

And, strange to say, yet men ofttimes,  
While visiting this store,  
Will get a weakness in their knees  
And fall upon the floor.

Sometimes most startling sounds are  
heard;  
Harsh words and cries and groans,  
And men rush forth with bleeding face,  
And some have broken bones.

The men who buy at Jones' saloon,  
Buy articles too dear;  
For nothing costs so much, on earth,  
As whiskey, wine and beer.

Men pay their money, all they have,  
Their houses, and their lots,  
Their food and clothes, and household  
goods,  
For drinks, that make them sots.

Men sell their children's happiness;  
Their love for home and wife.  
The drunkard breaks the heart of her  
He vowed to love through life.

He sells his noble character,  
His manliness as well;  
He sells his hope, his life, his soul,  
To buy the right to hell.

## LESSON NOTES.

## THIRD QUARTER.

STUDIES IN OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.

## LESSON IV.—JULY 26.

## GOD'S PROMISES TO DAVID.

2 Sam. 7. 4-16. Memory verses, 12, 13.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust.—  
Psalm 71. 1.

Time.—B.C. 1042.

Place.—The royal palace in Jerusalem.  
Connecting Links.—David removed the  
ark into the tabernacle. His proposal to  
build God a house was approved by  
Nathan the prophet.

## DAY BY DAY WORK.

Monday.—Read the Lesson (2 Sam. 7.  
4-16). Answer the Questions. Prepare  
to tell the story of the Lesson.Tuesday.—Read a response to good  
news (2 Sam. 7. 18-29). Fix in your  
mind Time, Place, and Connecting Links.Wednesday.—Read how a promise was  
remembered (1 Chron. 17. 1-10). Learn  
the Golden Text.Thursday.—Note how the promise was  
kept (1 Kings 8. 12-21). Learn the  
Memory Verses.Friday.—Read another account of this  
story (Psalm 132).Saturday.—Read the conditions upon  
which God will do his part (Jer. 33. 14-  
26). Study Teachings of the Lesson.Sunday.—Read of the greatest of all  
thrones (Heb. 1. 1-12).

## QUESTIONS.

## I. David's Work, verses 4-11.

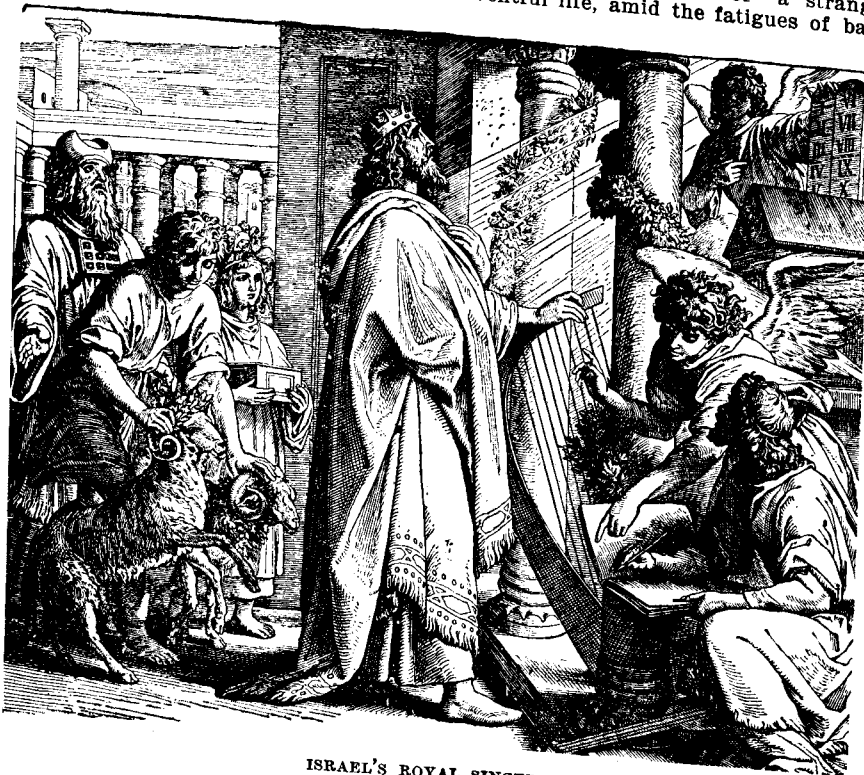
4. What night is meant in this verse? Why did God send his message so promptly? 6. Why did God prefer a tent to a temple? How long did he dwell in the tabernacle? 7. Had God asked for a temple up to David's time? 8. Why did God tell David of his early life as a shepherd? 9. How did God show he was with David? From what enemies had he shielded him? How great had he made him? 10. Why did they move from Canaan into captivity? How did God punish them? 11. What promise was made to David?

## II. Solomon's Work, verses 12-16.

12. Did David's eldest son succeed him? How was the nation established? 13. What house did Solomon build? 14. As a Father what does God do for us? What should we render him in return? 16. How long did David's family continue?

## TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

It is right to make some public acknowledgment of great mercies. In the count of God desires are deeds. God has wise reasons for putting aside his servants. What we are not allowed to do will yet be done. We should trace the hand of God in the events of daily life. Correction may be a proof of love. No good deed is lost.



ISRAEL'S ROYAL SINGER.

## ISRAEL'S ROYAL SINGER.

BY FANNIE ROPER FEUDGE.

David, the son of Jesse, was one of the most eminent kings of Israel, and one of the most renowned characters mentioned in the Bible. As shepherd, courtier, warrior, and king, David was distinguished alike for his piety, his talents, his dignity, and the ultimate success that crowned his undertakings in the various walks of life.

Most of the Psalms were written by him, and it seems even more natural for us to think of him as a great musician, "singing and making melody," not only in his heart, but "upon the harp and many stringed instruments," giving "praise to God," than as a king in royal robes seated on his throne of gorgeous Oriental workmanship, or an invincible warrior at the head of his great armies. When it was said of him while yet a youth among the sheepfolds, that he was a man "after God's own heart," the meaning is that God chose him to be king over Israel, and would qualify him for that position.

Our Saviour, when he was born as a man, came as a lineal descendant of King David's royal race, and so is frequently called in the New Testament "the son of David." Like David, he too

fills the varied offices of prophet, priest, and king, but unlike the King of Israel, Jesus is "a priest forever," and has once for all made atonement for the sins of his people.

David was the youngest son—probably the youngest child in a family of ten, and born when his father, Jesse, was already a very old man. His mother's name is not known. His great-grandmother Ruth was a Moabitess; and he seems to have had respect to this kinship, when, taking refuge in the cave of Adullam, he left his aged parents under the care of the king of Moab till he should know what the Lord would do for him.

This tender solicitude for the safety of his aged father and mother at a time when he was himself being hunted down like a wild beast by Saul and his men, is one of the most beautiful incidents in the life of the Royal Singer, as his memory of the "well of Bethlehem" during his later years, and his longing for "water to drink of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate," is one of the most touching. How vividly his the sweet joys of his boyhood, when as a "beardless youth," keeping his father's flocks, he was chosen of God and anointed by Samuel to be king of Israel.

As "the beloved," "the darling," the well-remembered synonyms of those early days, his heart was swelling up with tender emotions, and all through the many vicissitudes of a strangely eventful life, amid the fatigues of battle

a slender little fellow, not more than seven years old, and with a pale but decided face, held out his hand, saying as he did so, with the clear, firm tone of a hero: "Mr. Walters, sir, do not punish him. I whistled. I was doing a long, hard sum, and in rubbing out another I rubbed it out by mistake and spoiled it all, and, before I thought, whistled right out, sir. I was very much afraid, but I could not sit there and act a lie, when I knew who was to blame. You may cane me, sir, as you said you should." And with all the firmness that he could command he held out the little hand, never for a moment doubting that he was to be punished.

Mr. Walters was much affected. "Charlie," said he, looking at the erect form of the delicate child who had made such a conquest over his natural timidity. "I would not strike you a blow for the world. No one here doubts that you spoke the truth; you did not mean to whistle. You have been a truthful hero."

## PARTNERS.

A sturdy little figure it was, trudging bravely by with a pail of water. So many times it had passed our gate that morning that curiosity prompted us to further acquaintance. "You are a busy little girl to-day?"

"Yes'm." The round face under the broad hat was turned toward us. It was freckled, flushed, and perspiring, but cheery withal. "Yes'm; it takes a heap of water to do a washin'."

"And do you bring it all from the brook down there?"

"Oh, we have it in the cistern mostly, only it's been such a dry time lately."

"And there is nobody else to carry the water?"

"Nobody but mother, an' she is washin'."

"Well, you are a good girl to help her." It was not a well-considered compliment, and the little water carrier did not consider it one at all, for there was a look of surprise in her gray eyes, and an almost indignant tone in her voice, as she answered: "Why, of course I help her. I always help her to do things all the time; she hasn't anybody else. Mother'n me's partners."

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