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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XVIII.]

TORONTO, DECEMBER 10, 1898.

[No. 50.]

The Underland.

BY CATHERINE YOUNG GLEN.

When I was, oh, so much smaller,
And so much nearer the ground,
The dear, queer things I could hear
and see!

The wonderful things I found!
I mined on the mole-hill mountains,
I tolled in the valleys of sand,
And the gems untold and the
pebble-gold,
I shut away in my hand!

When I was, oh, so much smaller,
Whenever I chanced to pass
I saw the ants and the little brown
bugs
Climb up on the blades of grass!
I travelled, I and the little brown
bugs,
Through a forest vast and sweet,
Whose shadowy glades I know no
more,
Because it is under my feet!

When I was, oh, so much smaller,
And so much nearer the floor,
The leagues of its carpet prairie!
The flowers that scattered it o'er!
The lamps were moons hung in
heaven,
And the big folks giant-high;
Away up on father's shoulder,
I could reach clear into the sky!

I'm glad I am coming up taller!
We can't stay close to the ground!
Yet I think, oh, often and often,
Of the wonderful things I found!
Of the hills, and the pleasant
valleys,

Of the byways, memory-sweet,
The land that I left behind me,
When I grew away from my feet!

CHILD-LIFE IN JAPAN.

Japan is said to be the paradise of children. The Japanese fathers and mothers are very kind to their little folk. They will nurse them, caress them, and play with them by the hour. They provide all manner of games and entertainments for their amusement. It is quite a common sight to see grown men flying kites and playing with toys for the amusement of their children. We think none the worse, but all the better, of them for that. A people who are fond of children, and fond of flowers, as the Japanese pre-eminently are, are a people with noble traits of character, a people worth saving by the ministry of the Gospel of Christ.

Our General Superintendent, the Rev. Dr. Carman, during last summer paid a visit of several weeks to the Empire of Japan. He travelled a great deal, kept his eyes open, and his mind alert. He is one of the most wide-awake travellers we know. What he does not see and



"THEY DRAGGED HIM FROM THE CHAIR."

note is not worth seeing. Dr. Carman has kindly promised to write, for the benefit of the Methodist people of Canada, in our connexional monthly, his impressions of his recent visit. These will be very fully illustrated by a number of engravings like the above.

ROMANCE OF MISSIONS.

Few subjects are more full of romance and heroism than the story of Christian missions. The missionaries have been the pioneers not only of religion but of civilization in many of the dark places of the earth. They have braved the greatest perils with intrepid courage; they have endured hardness as good soldiers; and many of them have died as martyrs for the cause of God. We purpose making in Onward and our connexional monthly the stirring story of Christian missions a very prominent feature, and have arranged a programme of illustrated papers by Canadian writers on such heroic characters as Bishop Heber and David Brainerd and Griffith John. Also articles on Zenana Life and Child Widows in India, Women and Missions, etc. The accompanying cut is one

of the characteristic illustrations of this series.

IN THE PHILIPPINES.

The odd-looking animal in our picture represents one of the beasts of burden in use in the Philippine Islands. The tinkling bell on his back warns the people of the approach of this peddler of good things. Whether the odd-looking headgear of the animal is worn by way or ornament or not we will leave our readers to decide. "Among the Philippines" will, in The Methodist Magazine and Review, describe the interesting people of these islands, their manners and customs, and the possibilities of missionary work among them.

IF I WERE A BOY.

If I were a boy, says Bishop Vincent, with my man's wisdom, I should eat wholesome food and no other; and I should chew it well, and never "bolt it down." I should eat at regular hours, even if I had to have four regular meals a day. I should never touch tobacco or chewing-gum; never once go to bed without cleansing my teeth; never let a year go by without a dentist's inspection and treatment; never sit up late at night unless a great emergency demanded it; never linger one moment in bed when the time came for getting up; never fail, every day, to rub every part of my body with a wet towel, and then with a dry one; never drink more than three or four tablespoonfuls of ice-water at one time. All this takes will-power—and that is all it does take.

If I were a boy I should keep my own secrets, except as I revealed them to my father or mother, for the sake of securing their advice.

I should put no unclean thoughts, pictures, sights, or stories in my

memory and imagination, and no foul words on my tongue.

I should treat little folks kindly, and not tease them; show respect to servants; be tender toward the unfortunate—all this I should strive to do for the sake of being a comfort to people, a joy to my parents, and a help to the next century.

If I were a boy, I should play and romp, sing and shout, climb trees, explore caves, swim rivers, and be able to do all the manly things that belong to the manly sports; love and study nature; travel as widely and observe as wisely as I could; study hard and with a will when the time came for study; read the best literature—works of the imagination, history, science, and art, according to my taste and need; get a good knowledge of English; try to speak accurately and to pronounce distinctly; go to college, and go through college, even if I expected to be a clerk, a farmer, or a mechanic; spend my Sabbaths reverently; try to be a practical, everyday Christian; help on every good cause; never make sport of sacred things; be "about my Father's business," like the Boy of Nazareth; "use the world and not abuse it;" treat old men as fathers, "the younger men as brethren, the elder women as mothers, the younger as sisters, with all purity;" and thus I would try to be a Christian gentleman, wholesome, sensible, cheerful, independent, courteous.

LOOK OUT.

The river is so still, smooth, glassy, that it seems frozen, but it is rough enough a little way ahead where the water goes over the dam in a turmoil, where the heavy logs are rushed along like chips. And, halloo! there are Tom Young and Will Frye, off in that clumsy, lazily drifting boat! Do they notice that the sleepy stream is not asleep after all? that it is headed for the dam, and it will whirl that boat with a crash on the rocks below as easily as a tornado would sweep a leaf away. Look out, boys! And Tom, Will, what about the other current you are trusting yourselves to, that beer-sipping habit? "A smooth stream and no danger," you cry; but the whole thing is wrong. The current is heading for the falls, and over will you go in a pitiful wreck. Turn about! drop the beer-mug! head the boat the other way!

A Tamil native Christian in Ceylon, "conductor" on one of the tea estates, recently invested 1,000 rupees in a magic lantern and slides representing the life of Christ, and goes about the tea plantations showing the pictures to the coolies and speaking to them of salvation.



CHILD-LIFE IN JAPAN.



BEAST OF BURDEN IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Opportunity.

A judgeship is vacant, the ermine awaits
The shoulders of youth, brave, honest
and true;
Someone will be standing by fame's open
gates;
I wonder, my boys—will it be one of
you?

The president's chair or a great railroad
maze
Is empty to-day, for death claimed his
due;
The directors are choosing a man for his
place;
I wonder, my boys—will it be one of
you?

A pulpit is waiting for someone to fill,
Of eloquent men there are only a few,
The man who can fill it must have
power to thrill;
The best will be chosen—will it be one
of you?

The great men about us will pass to their
rest,
Their places be filled by the boys who
pursue
The search for the highest, the noblest,
the best;
I wonder who'll fill them—I hope 'twill
be you.

—Ram's Horn.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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

TORONTO, DECEMBER 10, 1898.

CHRIST'S TEARS.

BY REV. P. B. COWL.

"Jesus wept."

Boys and girls are sometimes inclined to look down upon others when they cry, thinking them weak and babyish. But tears are not unmanly, and we often cannot help them. We should therefore never mock or slight tears. Remember also that Jesus wept. We are glad that he did, he would not have been altogether like us if he had not. Many joys came to him, but he had also some tears. And that is just as we are. There are many more glad days in life than sorrows, many more glad days than sad ones, but there are sad ones. Little children cry, young people and old people cry. This is a world of tears as well as smiles, of rain-drops as well as sunshine.

NEVER WEPT FOR HIMSELF

But when you read about Jesus you never find that he wept for himself. People were very cruel to him, very unfaithful, but he did not weep about it. You remember when he was going to the dreadful cross how the women bewailed and lamented. He said to them, "Weep not for me." He had not a single care about, or room for a single tear for himself.

This is wonderful, boys and girls. And we should try to think of it because we are liable to become very selfish in our tears.

But Jesus did cry. He must have wept many times, and many times had hard work to keep the tears from coming.

When people came to him weighed down with sickness. When he saw them unkind to one another. When they tried to keep little children from running to him, and the poor blind beggar from

calling. How sorry these things must have made him. But who can remember how many times we are told that he wept? Just twice.

First in Luke 19. 41. "And when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it."

THESE WERE TEARS OF DISAPPOINTMENT.

There was the lovely city, that should be the joy of the whole earth. To whom God had sent so many prophets; for whom he had done so much to make the people good. The city with its sweet homes and wonderful church, and yet so wicked that it would soon be destroyed. And Jesus wept because he loved it and would have liked to see it always happy. He was grieved that after so much done for it, still the people were not good.

Supposing that one of you should have spent much time and care on something—say making a very fine boat—and then some one who doesn't care a bit comes and stamps on it; breaking its slim mast, and making a ruin of your long, tedious work. I should not blame you if you wept over the ruin.

I read a funny story of a pet squirrel that used to run about its master's room. He had been writing many sheets of paper and left them on the table—glad that he had done the work. On his return he could not find them. There was the little pet on the top of a book-case resting in a nest of torn paper. He had taken his master's writing and carried it to his perch, tearing it into little bits to make a nest. How sad the master must have felt to see his work thus destroyed.

This is the kind of sorrow fathers and mothers feel when having loved and toiled for their children they do not become good.

And what do you think Christ must feel after all that he has done for us, in living for us and loving us (in his cross, and in all the blessings of our life). If we don't love him but let our lives become wicked? There are no tears so sad and dreadful as those of disappointed love.

The other time we are told that Jesus wept is in John 11. 35. He was at Bethany. Mary was crying very, very much because her brother was dead, and the Jews cried with her. Jesus was so sorry that they did not understand, and that they were in such grief, that he cried too.

THESE WERE TEARS OF SYMPATHY.

How much they mean for us, do they not? I think we all believe in the girl who seeing a little girl sobbing on a doorstep went and putting her arms round her cried too. She meant: "I am so sorry that you are crying. Let me help you."

A little child visited a neighbour whose baby had died, and came home and told her mother that she had been comforting her. Her mother asked her how she had done it, and she said: "I cried with her."

Dear little soul, that was really a very true way of comforting a sorrowing one. To know that somebody cares is a help to us. But to know that Jesus cares is the greatest help of all.

We may always count upon his sympathy when we are in sorrow because we have lost something, or because lessons are difficult, or because we have done wrong, or because we are suffering. Christ knows and cares about it. And he will help us.

We sometimes say when things go wrong, "Nobody cares." Oh, yes, somebody does. There was the blind beggar by the wayside. He was glad when any one threw him a coin, but he wanted sight most of all. How loudly he called when Jesus came that way. But nobody cared. Who minded whether the beggar could see or not? And so they had him hold his peace. But One cared and called him, and said: "What wilt thou that I should do for thee?"

That One is the Jesus who loves boys and girls to-day, and cares whether they are sorrowful or happy.

Even Jesus wept!

ONLY ONE SCENE.

It was a dreary, miserable morning; a heavy fog hung over the wretched street; the rain had fallen constantly through the night, and still drizzled in a forlorn way. Pedestrians jostled along, occasionally hitting one another with their wet umbrellas and sloshing the mud right and left over the dirty pavement.

Crossing a filthy street where the thick black mud entered the soles of her sodden shoes and clung with tenacity about her thin ankles, was a young girl of thirteen or thereabouts. She breasted the driving wind and swerved not from a straight course as she went, though her weapons against the elements were only a ragged dress and a thin faded shawl, of many colours. Tied about her untidy mass of hair was an old hood, while

upon her feet an old one-sided shoe, unlaced and torn at the toe, did duty for one, while the other walked bravely on in a man's discarded boot, hard and unwieldy though it was. She seemed utterly indifferent to the rain. And why should she be otherwise? For when one is thoroughly wet and worn a few drops more or less either of water or trouble make no difference. She hurried around the corner, and a shiver passed through her frame with the cutting blast of wind. She shuffled on as fast as possible, considering her soaked feet, held her poor wet garments closely to her as if for protection, and soon turned up a dark court, opened a cracking door in a rickety tenement house, and entered. How cold and dark and damp! although just what she expected. A deep sigh escaped her. The "bundle of rags" (called father) on the straw in the corner did not move, and she softly opened the door into another smaller one and looked in. All was hushed and still. On a low couch of straw, covered with a thin, patched army blanket, lay a little girl of seven, pale and faded; but though a clammy sweat stood upon the fair brow, one could not but say, "How lovely!" Yes; though a drunkard's forsaken child, Lena Croft's pinched features were classically beautiful. Amy knelt down by her side, took the little thin hand in her own, and, poor child, although she did not intend to awaken her sick sister, the hot tears that fell from her eyes had that effect, and the blue eyes opened, and fastened upon her imploringly. She had begged her father with all the strength and pathos of her young voice to call a physician for Lena, even getting down upon her knees before the degraded man with her earnest pleading; but, no, this heartless father turned away from his eldest born's prayer and took the money that, with God's will, would have brought relief to his sick child, and gave it willingly to the cruel rumseller who was licensed to flood his home with poverty, and perhaps something worse.

"I am so glad you have come, Amy! I'm so hungry! Can I have something now?"

Amy looked at the thin cheek so touchingly white, at the blue eyes that had once beamed with laughter, and her heart sank within her. She felt such a weight of oppression that she could not speak. She had promised to get something for the sick child and had failed. She had rung at many basement doors, but the servants had bade her begone. "Shure," said one, "o'ive enough to do without waitin' on the loikes of yez." "You may, dearie; you shall, my little lamb! Just wait a minute." And out again she bounded (that freezing, wet, starving child), resolved that she would ring the front door bells and see the ladies themselves as a last resort.

Thinking only of Lena, her poor, tired feet seemed shod with wings. She hurried through the streets and rung the front door bell of the first respectable house. A tidy housemaid opened the door, and in answer to Amy's pleading, "Please may I see the lady?" she received, "You dirty girl, to come up these clean steps with your muddy feet. Begone this instant!" and the door slammed in her face. She turned despairingly but resolutely (the sad eyes at home haunting her) and pulled the next bell. As the servant opened the door, Amy said quickly, "My little sister is starving, please give me something for her."

"Beggars should go to the back doors," angrily answered the girl, and was about to close the door when a gentle voice called, "Let her step in on the oil-cloth so that I can see her."

"But, shure, she's drippin' wet, ma'am, an' covered with mud."

"Do as I say; let her in."

The door was opened reluctantly and Amy stepped in.

"Oh, how lovely!" thought the poor outcast. "How bright and nice everything is!" And her eyes wandered to the sweet-voiced individual lying upon the crimson hall couch.

"My poor girl, what can I do for you?"

"Oh, ma'am! something for my poor sister, my poor little sister is sick and dyin', and starvin'."

"Poor child, poor little girl! Katy, tell the cook to give her part of my beef tea in a bottle, a cup of jelly, and some bread and meat. And be quick about it." The poor girl received the package with a thankful heart, and the world seemed brighter as she ran to the hovel she called home, although the rain still fell pitilessly. As she entered her door the tattered heap in the corner moved, and the miserable father raised himself with difficulty to a sitting posture and looked at her with an ill-tempered leer. He had grown so bitter and revengeful in his dissipation that Amy shuddered with dread.

"What you carryin' so sneakin'?" he fiercely demanded.

"Something for Lena; she's starvin', father."

"Bring me what you've got; I'm starvin' and thiratin' too."

"O father! I can't; Lena's dyin'," moaned Amy, trying to pass the miserable wreck on the floor; but he raised himself slowly and uttered a threat so terrible, ending with the words, "Pity ye wan't both dyin'; ye better look out or ye will; bring me the basket, I say;" and Amy tremblingly handed it to him. Snatching it from her, he swallowed the beef tea and as much of the bread as he could possibly eat; then he rose with difficulty, and, wrapping the cup of jelly in a paper, tottered to the door. Amy stood looking with horrified eyes, but with great effort asked: "Where are you goin' with the jelly, father?"

"To Washburn's for a drink."

"Oh, father! leave me the jelly or Lena will die." And poor Amy wrung her hands in agony.

"Pick up the crusts that I left; they're good enough for such brats as ye are." And the brutal father turned away.

Amy opened the bedroom door tremblingly. How could she face her little sister without food again and tell her there was none? But there was no need; Lena had heard all. Through the little broken window came a feeble ray of light revealing a smile on the white lips sweeter and lovelier than sunlight. She held out her thin hand to Amy, and the heartbroken girl caught it between her own and covered it with scalding tears as she broke forth into convulsive sobbing.

"Don't cry, Amy, my good Amy. I'm sleepy; but I love you, sister Amy. Kiss me, Amy, for I'm goin' to mamma. I won't be hungry any more, nor cry any more, will I, sister?" Amy's tears were falling faster than the raindrops outside, but her heart was too full to speak.

"I'll ask God to come for you, sister, soon—soon. No tears there—mamma." And the little sinless sleeper was at rest.

One little tired heart had found peace; up the golden stairs her little feet have gone. But, oh, Father, the other!—National Temperance Advocate.

JUNIOR EPWORTH LEAGUE.

PRAYER-MEETING TOPIC.

DECEMBER 18, 1898.

**THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH.
HIS FORERUNNER PREDICTED.**

"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts."—Mal. 3. 1.

Four hundred years before the birth of Jesus, Malachi uttered this marvellous prediction—a prophecy not only of the coming of Christ, but of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ. To this passage St. Mark refers in the very beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "As it is written in the prophets, behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee."

For long centuries there was no prophet nor seer in Israel. It seemed as though God had forsaken his people Israel. Their land was overrun by the Persians and the Greeks. The foot of the conqueror trod in the holy place. Alexander the Great penetrated even into the sacred precincts of the temple of God. Then came the Romans, and the sacred places were trodden under foot of the Gentiles.

But devout souls still waited for the coming of the Son of God. Anna, the prophetess, and Elizabeth, and Simeon, from the study of God's Word felt that the time was nigh at hand when all these prophecies and promises should be fulfilled. In our next Christmas topic we shall find how God was faithful to his promises, was faithful to his word.

Coal-Dust Firing.—Fine dust of coal or of flour mixed with air forms an explosive agent which has been the cause of many a mine and flour-mill disaster. Advantage is taken of this property of combustible dust in a new process of boiler-firing. The fuel reduced to dust is fed by machinery to the furnace in which a fire must constantly be maintained. The instant the dust falls into the furnace chamber it burns with a flash, almost explosively, and the production of smoke is absolutely prevented and the firing becomes economical as regards consumption of fuel. It would seem that it might lead to the utilization of the enormous mountains of coal slack which cover so many square miles of land in the mining districts.

A Prayer for Missions.

BY MISS REBECCA ROWE.

"Righteousness shall cover the earth as the waters cover the deep."

God bless the mission toilers
In every heathen land;
O crown their hallowed labours
With blessings from thy hand!
O bless them while uplifting
The banner of the cross;
And strengthen them while preaching
Salvation from great loss.

From Greenland's snowy region
To Africa extend
The knowledge of salvation:
Till each benighted land
That bows the knee, and honours
Its gods of wood and stone,
Shall worship thee, our Saviour,
And bow before thy throne!

On China's many millions
Let heavenly manna fall;
May Fiji's sea-girt islands
Obey the Gospel call;
O hasten, Lord, O hasten
That glad and glorious day,
When every tribe and nation
On earth shall own thy sway!

On India may thy blessing
In copious showers descend
As dew, the earth refreshing,
O help us, Lord, to send
The message of salvation
To those in heathen gloom.
And may each Christian nation,
Lord, help thy kingdom come!

Oh, what a day of gladness,
When every Japanese,
And all who sit in darkness,
To thee shall bow the knees;
When o'er the world thy banner
Shall float in every breeze,
And every one shall honour
Thee, Saviour, "Prince of Peace."

Ride on, victorious Conqueror!
Triumphantly ride on,
Till righteousness shall cover
The earth from zone to zone;
Till o'er each land and nation,
Thy praises shall resound,
Till peace and full salvation
In every heart abound!

THE CAPTIVE MAID.

BY REV. A. J. MOWATT.

I want to tell you the story of the little captive maid. It is a sweet story, if I can tell it right, and it will interest and instruct you. And so I will begin with telling you about her when she was

AT HOME,

for she was not always a captive. There is no place like home, you know, no place on earth so sweet. But we do not always think so when we are at home. There are errands to run, baby to mind, lessons to learn, and so it is not so sweet. Not until we get away from home, and so far away that we cannot get back—not till then do we know how sweet home is, and how good mother is.

The home of this little girl was in Northern Israel. I think of it up among the romantic hills and streams and woods of Gilead, the land of the balm. I see a cottage of the better sort embosomed among trees, standing back from the village a little way. There is a pretty garden with flowers in front, and down at the foot a brook runs. Behind the cottage are grand old hills with woods to their very tops. This is the little girl's home. Here she was born. Here she lives with her parents. Her father is the principal man of the place, a most worthy man, and her mother a pious woman. They have every comfort, and there is not a happier home in all the land.

The little girl herself is clever and wise for her years. I take her to be ten or twelve, a bright little thing with a mass of black hair flung back over her shoulders, and keen glancing dark eyes that seem to see all there is to be seen. She can sing, and play on the lute, and her favourite songs are the songs of Zion, and the sweetest of them to her is the shepherd song. You know it well.

And then she likes Bible stories just as you do. She knows the story of the Garden of Eden with the serpent among the flowers and fruit-trees. She knows, too, so well the story of the brothers Cain and Abel and their altars. She never wears hearing about the flood and the ark, the story of Sodom's burning and Lot's flight, the cunning little ark-boat among the paper-reeds on the banks of the Nile and the beautiful boy-baby in it, and many another. But the story she likes best of all is that of the slave-boy Joseph. How she hates his brothers for they way they treated him!

How she weeps for him shut up in the prison! How glad she is when he comes to be the great man in the land, and everybody goes down on their knees before him! Oh, the happy Sabbath afternoons to her when the Bible stories come to be told!

On rare occasions, too, great men come to her cottage-home, the great men from Samaria. But the greatest to her is the prophet Elisha, the man with the bald head and the hair-mantle. Oh, a dear old man he is, so wise and good! At first she was afraid of him. She likes to hear him tell how Elisha was taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot. Oh, what a wonderful man to her is Elisha! And he can do such wonderful things. But he cannot stay long, for he is at the head of three colleges, and he must go to them. And then his home is in Samaria, the capital of the country, and he must go home. The little girl is sorry. But then he will pay another visit to the Gilead village up among the hills, and see her again.

Thus I think you will agree with me when I say that this little Jewish girl of the long ago had a happy home. And she felt so herself. If you have a happy Christian home, thank Jesus for it, and learn all you can. You may need the sweet hymns you are singing to-day just as she did. And you may need your Golden Texts and Bible lessons and stories. Learn them well.

THE RAIDERS.

I turn now to tell you of a dreadful thing that happened. I am happy to say we do not know anything about such things in our own happy country. But it was not so where this little girl lived. Her country was at war with the country next to hers, Syria, and sometimes bands of armed men, raiders, would come and burn the unprotected villages, and kill the people, and carry them off as captives.

Think of a beautiful spring morning. The sun rises over the hills. The birds sing in every tree. The flowers bloom. Oh, it is just a lovely morning! The little girl wakes up, and she is glad it is fine. She dresses quickly. Then she kneels down, and prays her little prayer, asking him who has kept her through the night to keep her through the day. Her mother wants some water from the brook, and she runs to bring it. Then she goes out to the fields to gather flowers. I see her with her apron full of them. I hear her singing this, or something like it:

"The King of Love my shepherd is,
Whose goodness falleth never;
I nothing lack if I am his,
And he is mine forever."

But, hark! what can that be? Suddenly a band of Syrian raiders rush out of the woods with their wild war-whoop, and brandishing their weapons. Some of the men try to defend their homes and loved ones. But they are soon overpowered and slain. The women and children run screaming to the hills and woods, trying to get away. But a good many are killed. Others are taken captive, and that is almost worse. Soon the village is all in flames.

The little girl tries to get away too. She sees where the others run, and she runs where they run. But being little she cannot run as fast as some of the bigger people. A great rough Syrian soldier sees her, and chases her. She runs as fast as she can, and cries for help. But it is no use. She is soon a captive. Oh, it is dreadful!

What becomes of her father and mother? She never knows. Most likely slain with so many others. She cries. But her tears are all naught with the rough Syrian. Along with others she is led away through woods, and over mountains, and across deserts, to Damascus, a great and beautiful city in those days, the capital of the Syrian Empire. Poor little captive! But although the King of Love seems to have forsaken her, he watches over her still, and so no harm will come to her.

HER NEW HOME.

With hundreds of others she finds herself offered for sale in the slave-market of Damascus. The people come to buy. But nobody seems to want her, she is too little. They want their money's worth, and she is dear at any price. By-and-by a great Syrian nobleman smiles down upon her, and she looks up so sweetly that he says her as a present for his wife.

Her new home is a palace on the banks of a beautiful river. She is lady's maid to Naaman's wife. Lady Naaman is kind to her. But then she is a captive, a poor little slave girl, and she finds it hard to like that. Still it is the will of God, and she accepts his will, and prays for grace and strength to do it. It is no use quarrelling with her lot.

That is not the way to help what cannot be helped. She thinks of Joseph sold down into Egypt, and how he did there; so she will try and be in Syria what he was in Egypt. The Lord that helped him will help her. So, very soon she dries her tears and begins singing the old sweet songs she learned at home, but very softly to herself. But she is heard, and Lady Naaman asks her to sing sometimes to her; and as she sings, she notices the tears in the lady's eyes, and it troubles her to see them. Yes, the rich lady weeps, while her poor little captive maid sings. The great have more trials often than the poor that serve them. It was so yonder: it is so here too. Envy not the rich and great, but be happy and good just where you are.

THE GOOD THE CAPTIVE WAS ABLE TO DO.

You say: "I am little; I cannot do any good!" Or you say: "They have wronged me; why should I return good for evil? Let me wrong them, for they have wronged me."

But the captive maid, though little, was able to do good. And although she was only a slave girl, and wronged by being made a captive, she found out how she could do good, and she did it. Oh, it is so easy to do good if we only want to!

This was the way the little captive maid did her good. Coming to know what it was that troubled Lady Naaman so much, she began to think how she could be of any service. It was the dreadful leprosy that had fallen upon Naaman. Nobody could have anything worse than the leprosy. Great as the great man was, and honoured as he was, the poorest slave in his vast establishment, and the humblest soldier in the army, would not exchange places with him. He was a leper—that spoiled everything, took the heart out of everything. So the little maid said to Lady Naaman, as she fanned her, and saw the tears still coming and filling her eyes: "Wou'd God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! then would he recover him of his leprosy." It was said so earnestly and so kindly, and it was meant too. So the child's words were carried to the sick nobleman and to the king, and their counsel was taken.

A few days later there is something unusual taking place in the streets of Damascus. All the city is excited. What does it mean? It is the setting out of Captain Naaman to go to Samaria to see Elisha. You see a splendid cavalcade, horses and chariots and armed men. Many do not like it. They think the prophets of Damascus, and the gods of Damascus, can do more for the leprous Naaman than the one prophet and one God of Israel. But it is the little captive maid's good counsel that is taken, not that of the wise men of Syria. Ah, she has a Gospel, and they have none. She speaks for the Lord, and they speak for dumb idols.

I cannot take time to tell you the story of Naaman's arrival at Samaria, and the consternation it created there. To make a long story short, he was cured of his leprosy. After a month's absence or so, it was noised in the streets of Syria's capital that Naaman was returning cured, and all the people turned out to welcome him. The city is gay with bunting. The streets are alive with people. He stands up in his chariot, and receives the city's splendid ovation, and everybody can see that he is well, and the joy knows no bounds.

By-and-by he reaches his palace. A great reception awaits him there. His friends are gathered to meet him. Lady Naaman is brilliantly attired. She is attended by the captive maid. Lord Naaman, taking her stand with her on a dais, thanks all his friends for the welcome home they have given him. And then, holding the little captive maid's hand, and the great man looking down upon her so proud like, he tells all the people, that, under God, he owes his recovery to her. And so the little captive maid, whose name even we do not know, is honoured with a nation's gratitude.

My story is told. And has it no lessons for you, little girls, no inspiration for you, little boys, this anniversary day? I think it has. You are little. So was she. But she was not too little to do good. I hope you are not too little to do good. Some little folks are not too little to do evil, but they think they are too little to do good. Ah! do the little good you can, for you do not know how much good may be in it before God is done with it.

The little captive did not know she was doing the good she was doing. But God knew, and so we have the story of it told here for all the ages with their ten thousands of little ones to learn lessons from. Go home, then, and out of the kindness of your heart do good, no matter how little it is. God will not despise your little word or little deed any more than he despised the little word or little deed of that poor fellow. Some day you will find it

again grown up to his great blessed good. Jesus was little once, and he did the little good of his little years, and so the day came when he did the good that filled the world with its wonder. And with him to help you, you too may bless the world; you may be a little foreign missionary as the little captive maid was.

"Little drops of water,
Little grains of sand,
Make the mighty ocean,
And the beautiful land.

"Little seeds of mercy,
Sown by youthful hands,
Grow to bless the nations,
Far in heathen lands."

DON'T TOUCH.

"I was always inclined when a child to get at the inside of everything that I saw," said a man recently. "Drawers, boxes, bundles, trunks, closets, always disturbed and fretted me (ill I could get them open. In my home I usually had free range; but sometimes I was forbidden to meddle, and then was unhappy. One cupboard, especially, I was told to keep away from. The door of it was always open, and I could see bottles and packages on the shelves. One large black bottle was very attractive; I was more and more inquisitive every day to see what it contained.

"One day, when I was alone in the kitchen where this troublesome cupboard was, I let the spirit of investigation conquer me, and, mounting on a bucket before the shelves, took down the black bottle. I shook it, but could hear nothing. I could not see within, though I pulled out the cork, I would turn it upside down far enough to get the fact that it was empty made certain. So I tipped the bottle, and a stream of black ink ran down my clothes and into the bucket, on which I had placed a narrow board. I quickly put the bottle in its place; I had found out for myself what it contained. But down my white blouse lay an ugly streak, while I gazed with a bitter foreboding of consequences at the bucket full of cooking salt that furnished still more evidence that I had meddled with ink.

"My lesson was a permanent one. And I often say to myself now, 'Keep clean, though you remain ignorant, rather than purchase knowledge at the cost of purity!'"

Another great thing to learn is how to say no. You can spell "yes" with two letters, by your tone. Say it so that everybody will know what you mean by it. A young man who roomed in a certain building where there were many other young men, was asked how he kept clear of their "fast" ways. They did many things that he had not been brought up to do, and that his mother would have grieved to have him do.

"Don't those fellows invite you to their beer suppers and card parties?" he was asked.

"Oh, yes," he answered, "they would not think it was good fellowship not to ask me."

"I suppose you never go?"

"Of course not," he replied.

"Then how do you get along without being continually persecuted by them? I should think that you must yield or be driven away."

"So I should if I said, 'N-o-o,' or, 'I guess not,' when they asked me to go with them, but I give them a decided 'No!' and that settles it. The same fellow never asks me a second time. He knows I mean what I say."

The lesson is not learned if you have not understood that it warns you against simply keeping company with foolish and wicked persons. In the first psalm we are told who may be called blessed. It is a description of a good man. He will not walk nor stand nor sit in the way of evil-doers. Bad company is like dogwood or poison ivy. You may not touch it, but you are likely to be poisoned if you pass by where it grows. A boy learned a good lesson about that lately. He came to breakfast with a badly swollen face; his cheek was puffed out, and his eye nearly hidden.

"You have taken hold of dogwood!" said his father.

"I have not put my hands to anything that I know of," said the poor fellow. "What does dogwood look like?"

"At this season of the year you can tell it by its red berries. Have you noticed bushes with such berries lately?"

"Why, yes, I walked along a path through the woods yesterday where red berries grew; but I never touched one of them."

"They poisoned you while you were where they grow. The air around them is full of poison."—Pilgrim Teacher.

The Snowstorm.

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow; and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems somewhere to alight; the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end,
The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the house mates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

Come, see the north wind's masonry,
Out of an unseen quarry, evermore
Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer
Curves his white bastions with projected roof
Round every windward stake or tree or door;
Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work
So fanciful, so savage; naught cares he
For number or proportion. Mockingly
On coop or kennel he hangs Persian wreaths;
A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn;
"Kills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall,
Mingles the farmer's sighs; and at the gate
A tapering turret overtops the work,
And when his hours are numbered, and the world
Is all his own, retiring as he were not,
Leaves when the sun appears, astonished art,
To mimic in low structures, stone by stone,
Built in an age, the mad wind's night work,
The frolic architecture of the snow.

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF JUDAH.

**LESSON XII.—DECEMBER 18.
THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH.**

Jer. 52. 1-11. Memory verses, 9-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.—Jer. 29. 13.

OUTLINE.

1. King Zedekiah's Folly, v. 1-3.
2. The Fall of Jerusalem, v. 4-7.
3. King Zedekiah's Fate, v. 8-11.

Time.—About July 1, B.C. 588 or 586.

Places.—Jerusalem, the capital of the little kingdom of Judah; Riblah, a city in the northern part of Syria.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Captivity of Judah.—Jer. 52. 1-11.
- Tu. Complete destruction.—2 Kings 25. 8-21.
- W. Sin and its punishment.—2 Chron. 36. 11-21.
- Th. Refusing to be warned.—Jer. 32. 1-5.
- F. Prophecy of captivity.—Jer. 32. 26-35.
- S. Cry of the captive.—Lam. 1. 1-11.
- Su. Christ's warning.—Luke 20. 9-18.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. King Zedekiah's Folly, v. 1-3.
Who was the last king of Judah?
What had been his name, and how did he become king? 2 Kings 24. 17.
How long did he reign?
What was the character of his rule?
Whose example did he follow?
How was his folly especially shown?
How did the Lord regard Zedekiah and his people?
How does God regard the wicked? Psalm 7. 11.
What is the Golden Text?
2. The Fall of Jerusalem, v. 4-7.
Who besieged Jerusalem?
How long did the siege last?
What were the sufferings of the people?
How are these stated in Lam. 4. 4?
What was the result of the siege?
What was done to the city? 2 Kings 25. 9.
What became of the people? Psalm 137. 1.
3. King Zedekiah's Fate, v. 8-11.
What did King Zedekiah undertake to do? Jer. 39. 4.
Was he successful?
Where was he taken prisoner?
What was done to Zedekiah's children?
What was done to Zedekiah?
What was done to his princes?
Would all this have happened if he had obeyed the Lord?
Against what, then, are we warned by his history?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- Where in this lesson do we learn—
1. That sin unrepented brings sure destruction?
 2. That God has instruments to accomplish his purpose?
 3. That people suffer for their rulers' sins?

THE DIAMOND CHARACTER.

The beauty of character is to reflect God; and just so far as we colour this reflection of God with anything of self, so far do we fall of that clarification of inward thought and outward life which makes us like him.

The diamond is like the perfect type of character. Every other precious stone reflects the light coloured by its own texture. Only the diamond reflects light in its essential purity. This is the secret of its superiority among gems. Other gems may be beautiful, but the diamond is transcendently beautiful.

Young Christians, be diamond characters! Catch the divine light, and give it forth again uncoloured by selfishness of any sort. Be so simple and so sincere that all the beauty and all the truth coming to you out of the God-life and the Christ-life shall shine through you into the lives of others, and help to make them also transmitters of light.

It is self-consciousness that spoils the beauty of character. The secret of true living is to lose the intermediate sense of self, and think only of that wider relationship of God and neighbour. "Keep thou thy soul translucent, that thou mayest never see its shadow."—Zion's Herald.

LIFTING HIS HAT TO HIS HORSE.

BY ANNIE WESTON WHITNEY.

Beth flew out of the house, her cheeks red and her eyes very bright. It was evident she was very much excited as she went across the street to a man with an ash cart who was beating his horse. The horse had stopped suddenly, and the man was sneezing at it as well as beating it.

"Stop! stop!" cried Beth, "you frighten your horse, and he does not know what you want him to do. Why do you do it?"

The man looked at her a moment curiously, and then lifting his hat said: "Beg pardon for swearing in the presence of a lady, but I've stood it ever since I had him. Sure as I get to this house he stops as still as a door nail. It's pure devilment, for he never stops anywhere else without command. I was trying to get the devil out of him, miss, and I was that worked up."

"How long have you had him?" asked Beth.

"Two weeks, miss; but if there's one thing I can't stand, it's a stubborn, balky horse."

"Perhaps he's been taught to stop here," said Beth; "have you tried to find out?"

"Tain't that, miss," said the man, "for I bought him from the car company when they put on the 'lectrics, and they never had cars on this street. I bought him cheap, but I'll sell him cheaper."

"Why did you ring that little bell?" asked Beth.

"There's a boy in the next house who's sick all the time, and he likes to see me

ing those of the great King and knowing better all the time. And the little bell, miss, it'll mean duty to him, but it'll remind me how a young girl taught me not to judge others hastily."

The Question.

BY ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

However the battle is ended,
Though proudly the victor comes
With fluttering flags and prancing nags
And echoing roll of drums,
Still truth proclaims this motto,
In letters of living light—
"No question is ever settled
Until it is settled right."

Though the heel of the strong oppressor
May grind the weak in the dust,
And the voices of fame with one acclaim
May call him great and just,
Let those who applaud take warning,
And keep this motto in sight—
"No question is ever settled
Until it is settled right."

Let those who have failed take courage;
Though the enemy seems to have won,
Though his ranks are strong, if he be in
the wrong,
The battle is not yet done;
For sure as the morning follows
The darkest hour of the night,
"No question is ever settled
Until it is settled right."

O man bowed down with labour!
O woman young, yet old!
O heart oppressed in the toiler's breast,
And crushed by the powers of gold!
Keep on with your weary battle
Against triumphant night;
"No question is ever settled
Until it is settled right."

Fathers and Mothers

Have you watched the faces of the children at Christmas, as you handed them a bright new book? If so, why not see that face brightened oftener by an occasional presentation of one of the many beautiful volumes that are now being issued. Do not wait until the child has a liking for pernicious literature; commence with good picture-books, read them the stories, and as they grow up they will appreciate and thank you for your efforts. Peruse carefully the subjoined list.

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SUNDAY MORNING IN NORTH HOLLAND.

PEASANT LIFE IN HOLLAND.

The attention of the world has recently been very conspicuously called by the coronation of the young Queen of Holland to the sturdy little Dutch republic. It has a most heroic and romantic history. The great ancestors of the young queen, William the Silent and William of Orange, bear a very prominent part in the history of civilization, of the Reformation, and of liberty. The people are exceedingly picturesque in their dress, and their houses and home life are remarkably quaint. The engraving shows the odd headgear worn by the women in North Holland, the clumsy wooden shoes of the children, and the odd garb of the men, which makes them look like grown-up little boys, if it is not a Hibernicism to say so. The Dutch housewives are the neatest people in the world, almost painfully neat, as many a good "house-father," as they call them, finds when he has to take off his shoes before he enters the house. Indeed, in some streets horses are not allowed to pass. The women scrub the stones and pick out the grass in the crevices. This interesting people will be treated more fully than there is room in this paper, in *The Methodist Magazine and Review*, with many fine illustrations, during the coming year.

Of the annual output of about 4,000,000 Bibles, it is estimated that from 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 are in English.

pass, so I ring that bell, and if he's able to come to the window, he does. He's not there to-day."

"I'm glad he didn't see you beating the horse," said Beth. "Is this the only place you ring that bell?"

"To be sure," said the man. "Then I wonder if he doesn't think it's the car bell and you want him to stop. Won't you take him up the street and ring it and see?"

The man looked at Beth in astonishment, then at the horse, and then started him forward, murmuring to himself, "Ef I don't believe the horse has more sense than his master."

Beth smiled as she saw the horse stop when the bell rang again. The man tried it two or three times, and then turned and came back, and as he did not ring the bell at the usual place the horse went on until told to stop.

"Blamed if I don't begin to wonder if I've any sense at all, miss," he said to Beth. "You and the horse having so much between you, and he attending so strict-like to orders, and me disobeying mine that tells me to be merciful to the dumb beast. Ef you'll excuse me, miss, this time, I reckon there won't be no occasion again."

Then turning to the horse, he said: "I can't ask you to shake, old fellow, but," lifting his hat, "there ain't no money can part us now. I reckon you've taught your master a lesson he won't soon forget—you obeying orders and not knowing the meaning, and me disobey-

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