VARIOUS

STORIES WORTH REREADING

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Stories Worth Rereading

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Stories Worth Rereading:

Содержание

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PREFACE

All persons like stories. Children call for them from their earliest years. The purpose of this book is to provide children and youth with stories worth reading; stories relating incidents of history, missionary effort, and home and school experiences. These stories will inspire, instruct, and entertain the readers. Nearly all of these have appeared in print before, and are reprinted in this form through the courteous permission of their writers and publishers.

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THEIR WORD OF HONOR

The president of the Great B. railway system laid down the letter he had just reread three times, and turned about in his chair with an expression of extreme annoyance.

"I wish it were possible," he said, slowly, "to find one boy or man in a thousand who would receive instructions and carry them out to the letter without a single variation from the course laid down. Cornelius," he looked up sharply at his son, who sat at a desk close by, "I hope you are carrying out my ideas with regard to your sons. I have not seen much of them lately. The lad Cyrus seems to me a promising fellow, but I am not so sure of Cornelius. He appears to be acquiring a sense of his own importance as Cornelius Woodbridge, Third, which is not desirable, sir,—not desirable. By the way, Cornelius, have you yet applied the Hezekiah Woodbridge test to your boys?"

Cornelius Woodbridge, Junior, looked up from his work with a smile. "No, I have not, father," he said.

"It's a family tradition; and if the proper care has been taken that the boys should not learn of it, it will be as much a test for them as it was for you and for me and for my father. You have not forgotten the day I gave it to you, Cornelius?"

"That would be impossible," said his son, still smiling.

The elder man's somewhat stern features relaxed, and he sat back in his chair with a chuckle. "Do it at once," he requested,

"and make it a stiff one. You know their characteristics; give it to them hard. I feel pretty sure of Cyrus, but Cornelius—" He shook his head doubtfully, and returned to his letter. Suddenly he wheeled about again.

"Do it Thursday, Cornelius," he said, in his peremptory way, "and whichever one of them stands it shall go with us on the tour of inspection. That will be reward enough, I fancy."

"Very well, sir," replied his son, and the two men went on with their work without further words. They were in the habit of despatching important business with the smallest possible waste of breath.

On Thursday morning, immediately after breakfast, Cyrus Woodbridge found himself summoned to his father's library. He presented himself at once, a round-cheeked, bright-eyed lad of fifteen, with an air of alertness in every line of him.

"Cyrus," said his father, "I have a commission for you to undertake, of a character which I cannot now explain to you. I want you to take this envelope"—he held out a large and bulky packet—"and, without saying anything to any one, follow its instructions to the letter. I ask of you your word of honor that you will do so."

The two pairs of eyes looked into each other for a moment, singularly alike in a certain intent expression, developed into great keenness in the man, but showing as yet only an extreme wide-awakeness in the boy. Cyrus Woodbridge had an engagement with a young friend in half an hour, but he

responded, firmly:—

"I will, sir."

"On your honor?"

"Yes, sir."

"That is all I want. Go to your room, and read your instructions. Then start at once."

Mr. Woodbridge turned back to his desk with the nod and smile of dismissal to which Cyrus was accustomed. The boy went to his room, opening the envelope as soon as he had closed the door. It was filled with smaller envelopes, numbered in regular order. Infolding these was a typewritten paper, which read as follows:—

"Go to the reading-room of the Westchester Library. There open envelope No. 1. Remember to hold all instructions secret. C.W., Jr."

Cyrus whistled. "That's funny! It means my date with Harold is off. Well, here goes!"

He stopped on his way out to telephone his friend of his detention, took a Westchester Avenue car at the nearest point, and in twenty minutes was at the library. He found an obscure corner and opened envelope No. 1.

"Go to office of W.K. Newton, room 703, tenth floor, Norfolk Building, X

Street, reaching there by 9:30 A.M. Ask for letter addressed to Cornelius

Woodbridge, Jr. On way down elevator open envelope No. 2."

Cyrus began to laugh. At the same time he felt a trifle irritated. "What's father at?" he questioned, in perplexity. "Here I am away up-town, and he orders me back to the Norfolk Building. I passed it on my way up. Must be he made a mistake. Told me to obey instructions, though. He usually knows just about why he does things."

Meanwhile Mr. Woodbridge had sent for his elder son, Cornelius. A tall youth of seventeen, with the strong family features, varied by a droop in the eyelids and a slight drawl in his speech, lounged to the door of the library. Before entering he straightened his shoulders; he did not, however, quicken his pace.

"Cornelius," said his father, promptly, "I wish to send you upon an errand of some importance, but of possible inconvenience to you. I have not time to give you instructions, but you will find them in this envelope. I ask you to keep the matter and your movements strictly to yourself. May I have from you your word of honor that I can trust you to follow the orders to the smallest detail?"

Cornelius put on a pair of eye-glasses, and held out his hand for the envelope. His manner was almost indifferent. Mr. Woodbridge withheld the packet, and spoke with decision: "I cannot allow you to look at the instructions until I have your word of honor that you will fulfil them."

"Is not that asking a good deal, sir?"

"Perhaps so," said Mr. Woodbridge, "but no more than is asked of trusted messengers every day. I will assure you that the

instructions are mine and represent my wishes."

"How long will it take?" inquired Cornelius, stooping to flick an imperceptible spot of dust from his trousers.

"I do not find it necessary to tell you."

Something in his father's voice sent the languid Cornelius to an erect position, and quickened his speech.

"Of course I will go," he said, but he did not speak with enthusiasm.

"And—your word of honor?"

"Certainly, sir." The hesitation before the promise was only momentary.

"Very well. I will trust you. Go to your room before opening your instructions."

And the second somewhat mystified boy went out of the library on that memorable Thursday morning, to find his first order one which sent him to a remote district of the city, with the direction to arrive there within three quarters of an hour.

Out on an electric car Cyrus was speeding to another suburb. After getting the letter from the tenth floor of the Norfolk Building, he had read:—

"Take cross-town car on L Street, transfer to Louisville Avenue, and go out to Kingston Heights. Find corner West and Dwight Streets, and open envelope No. 3."

Cyrus was growing more and more puzzled, but he was also getting interested. At the corner specified he hurriedly tore open No. 3, but found, to his amazement, only the singular direction:

—

"Take Suburban Underground Road for Duane Street Station. From there go to Sentinel office, and secure third edition of yesterday's paper. Open envelope No. 4."

"Well, what under the sun, moon, and stars did he send me out to Kingston Heights for!" cried Cyrus aloud. He caught the next train, thinking longingly of his broken engagement with Harold Dunning, and of certain plans for the afternoon which he was beginning to fear might be thwarted if this seemingly endless and aimless excursion continued. He looked at the packet of unopened envelopes.

"It would be easy to break open the whole outfit, and see what this game is," he thought. "Never knew father to do a thing like this before. If it's a joke,"—his fingers felt the seal of envelope No. 4,—"I might as well find it out at once. Still, father never would joke with a fellow's promise the way he asked it of me. 'My word of honor'—that's putting it pretty strong. I'll see it through, of course. My, but I'm getting hungry! It must be near luncheon-time."

It was not; but by the time Cyrus had been ordered twice across the city and once up a sixteen-story building in which the elevator service was out of order, it was past noon, and he was in a condition to find envelope No. 7 a very satisfactory one:—

"Go to Cafe Reynaud on Westchester Square. Take a seat at table in left alcove. Ask waiter for card of Cornelius Woodbridge, Junior. Before ordering luncheon read envelope No. 8."

The boy lost no time in obeying this command, and sank into his chair in the designated alcove with a sigh of relief. He mopped his brow, and drank a glass of ice-water at a gulp. It was a warm October day, and the sixteen flights had been somewhat trying. He asked for his father's card, and then sat studying the attractive menu.

"I think I'll have—" He mused for a moment, then said, with a laugh,

"Well, I'm about hungry enough to eat the whole thing. Bring me the—"

Then he recollected, paused, and reluctantly pulled out envelope No. 8, and broke the seal. "Just a minute," he murmured to the waiter. Then his face turned scarlet, and he stammered, under his breath, "Why—why—this can't be—"

Envelope No. 8 ought to have been bordered with black, judging by the dismay its order to a lecture hall to hear a famous electrician, caused. But the Woodbridge blood was up now, and it was with an expression resembling that of his grandfather Cornelius under strong indignation that Cyrus stalked out of that charming place to proceed grimly to the lecture hall.

"Who wants to hear a lecture on an empty stomach?" he groaned. "I suppose I'll be ordered out, anyway, the minute I sit down and stretch my legs. Wonder if father can be exactly right in his mind. He doesn't believe in wasting time, but I'm wasting it today by the bucketful. Suppose he's doing this to size me up some way; he isn't going to tire me out so quick as he thinks. I'll

keep going till I drop."

Nevertheless, when, just as he was getting interested, he was ordered to go three miles to a football field, and then ordered away again without a sight of the game he had planned for a week to see, his disgust was intense.

All through that long, warm afternoon he raced about the city and suburbs, growing wearier and more empty with every step. The worst of it was, the orders were beginning to assume the form of a schedule, and commanded that he be here at 3:15, and there at 4:05; and so on, which forbade loitering, had he been inclined to loiter. In it all he could see no purpose, except the possible one of trying his physical endurance. He was a strong boy, or he would have been quite exhausted long before he reached envelope No. 17, which was the last but three of the packet. This read:—

"Reach home at 6:20 P.M. Before entering house, read No. 18."

Leaning against one of the big white stone pillars of the porch of his home, Cyrus wearily tore open envelope No. 18, and the words fairly swam before his eyes. He had to rub them hard to make sure that he was not mistaken:—

"Go again to Kingston Heights, corner West and Dwight Streets, reaching there by 6:50. Read No. 19."

The boy looked up at the windows, desperately angry at last. If his pride and his sense of the meaning of that phrase, "My word of honor," as the men of the Woodbridge family were in the

habit of teaching their sons, had not both been of the strongest sort, he would have rebelled, and gone defiantly and stormily in. As it was, he stood for one long minute with his hands clenched and his teeth set; then he turned and walked down the steps away from the longed-for dinner, and out toward L Street and the car for Kingston Heights.

As he did so, inside the house, on the other side of the curtains, from behind which he had been anxiously peering, Cornelius Woodbridge, Senior, turned about and struck his hands together, rubbing them in a satisfied way.

"He's come—and gone," he cried, softly, "and he's on time to the minute!"

Cornelius, Junior, did not so much as lift his eyes from the evening paper, as he quietly answered, "Is he?" But the corners of his mouth slightly relaxed.

The car seemed to crawl out to Kingston Heights. As it at last neared its terminus, a strong temptation seized the boy Cyrus. He had been on a purposeless errand to this place once that day. The corner of West and Dwight Streets lay more than half a mile from the end of the car route, and it was an almost untenanted district. His legs were very tired; his stomach ached with emptiness. Why not wait out the interval which it would take to walk to the corner and back in a little suburban station, read envelope No. 19, and spare himself? He had certainly done enough to prove that he was a faithful messenger.

Had he? Certain old and well-worn words came into his mind;

they had been in his writing-book in the early school-days: "A chain is no stronger than its weakest link." Cyrus jumped off the car before it fairly stopped, and started at a hot pace for the corner of West and Dwight Streets. There must be no weak places in his word of honor.

Doggedly he went to the extreme limit of the indicated route, even taking the longest way round to make the turn. As he started back, beneath the arc light at the corner there suddenly appeared a city messenger boy. He approached Cyrus, and, grinning, held out an envelope.

"Ordered to give you this," he said, "if you made connections. If you'd been later than five minutes past seven, I was to keep dark. You've got seven minutes and a half to spare. Queer orders, but the big railroad boss, Woodbridge, gave 'em to me."

Cyrus made his way back to the car with some self-congratulations that served to brace up the muscles behind his knees. This last incident showed him plainly that his father was putting him to a severe test of some sort, and he could have no doubt that it was for a purpose. His father was the sort of man who does things with a very definite purpose indeed. Cyrus looked back over the day with an anxious searching of his memory to be sure that no detail of the singular service required of him had been slighted.

As he once more ascended the steps of his own home, he was so confident that his labors were now ended that he almost forgot about envelope No. 20, which he had been directed to read in the

vestibule before entering the house. With his thumb on the bell button he recollected, and with a sigh broke open the final seal:—

"Turn about, and go to Lenox Street Station, B. Railroad, reaching there by 8:05. Wait for messenger in west end of station, by telegraph office."

It was a blow, but Cyrus had his second wind now. He felt like a machine—a hollow one—which could keep on going indefinitely.

The Lenox Street Station was easily reached on time. The hands of the big clock were only at one minute past eight when Cyrus entered. At the designated spot the messenger met him. Cyrus recognized him as the porter on one of the trains of the road of which his grandfather and father were officers. Why, yes, he was the porter of the Woodbridge special car! He brought the boy a card which ran thus:—

"Give porter the letter from Norfolk Building, the card received at restaurant, the lecture coupon, yesterday evening's *Sentinel*, and the envelope received at Kingston Heights."

Cyrus silently delivered up these articles, feeling a sense of thankfulness that not one was missing. The porter went away with them, but was back in three minutes.

"This way, sir," he said, and Cyrus followed, his heart beating fast. Down the track he recognized the "Fleetwing," President Woodbridge's private car. And Grandfather Cornelius he knew to be just starting on a tour of his own and other roads, which included a flying trip to Mexico. Could it be possible—

In the car his father and grandfather rose to meet him. Cornelius

Woodbridge, Senior, was holding out his hand.

"Cyrus, lad," he said, his face one broad, triumphant smile, "you have stood the test, the Hezekiah Woodbridge test, sir, and you may be proud of it. Your word of honor can be depended upon. You are going with us through nineteen States and Mexico. Is that reward enough for one day's hardships?"

"I think it is, sir," agreed Cyrus, his round face reflecting his grandfather's smile, intensified.

"Was it a hard pull, Cyrus?" questioned the senior Woodbridge with interest.

Cyrus looked at his father. "I don't think so—now, sir," he said. Both gentlemen laughed.

"Are you hungry?"

"Well, just a little, grandfather."

"Dinner will be served the moment we are off. We have only six minutes to wait. I am afraid—I am very much afraid "—the old gentleman turned to gaze searchingly out of the car window into the station—"that another boy's word of honor, is not—"

He stood, watch in hand. The conductor came in and remained, awaiting orders. "Two minutes more, Mr. Jefferson," he said. "One and a half—one—half a minute." He spoke sternly: "Pull out at 8:14 on the second, sir. Ah–"

The porter entered hurriedly, and delivered a handful of envelopes into

Grandfather Cornelius's grasp. The old gentleman scanned them at a glance.

"Yes, yes—all right!" he cried, with the strongest evidences of excitement Cyrus had ever seen in his usually quiet manner. As the train made its first gentle motion of departure, a figure appeared in the doorway. Quietly, and not at all out of breath, Cornelius Woodbridge, Third, walked into the car.

Then Grandfather Woodbridge grew impressive. He advanced, and shook hands with his grandson as if he were greeting a distinguished member of the board of directors. Then he turned to his son, and shook hands with him also, solemnly. His eyes shone through his gold-rimmed spectacles, but his voice was grave with feeling.

"I congratulate you, Cornelius," he said, "on possessing two sons whose word of honor is above reproach. The smallest deviation from the outlined schedule would have resulted disastrously. Ten minutes' tardiness at the different points would have failed to obtain the requisite documents. Your sons did not fail. They can be depended upon. The world is in search of men built on those lines. I congratulate you, sir."

Cyrus was glad presently to escape to his stateroom with Cornelius. "Say, what did you have to do?" he asked, eagerly. "Did you trot your legs off all over town?"

"Not much, I didn't!" said Cornelius, grimly, from the depths of a big towel. "I spent the whole day in a little hole of a room at the top of an empty building, with just ten trips down the stairs

to the ground floor to get envelopes at certain minutes. I had not a crumb to eat nor a thing to do, and could not even snatch a nap for fear I'd oversleep one of my dates at the bottom."

"I believe that was worse than mine," commented Cyrus, reflectively.

"I should say it was. If you don't think so, try it."

"Dinner, boys," said their father's voice at the door, and they lost no time in responding.—*Grace S. Richmond, in Youth's Companion*.

Heroism

A tone of pride or petulance repressed,
A selfish inclination firmly fought,
A shadow of annoyance set at naught,
A measure of disquietude suppressed,
A peace in importunity possessed,
A reconcilement generously sought,
A purpose put aside, a banished thought,
A word of self-explaining unexpressed,—
Trifles they seem, these petty soul-restraints;
Yet he who proves them so must needs possess
A constancy and courage grand and bold.
They are the trifles that have made the saints.
Give me to practise them in humbleness,
And nobler power than mine doth no man hold.

—*Selected*.

MURIEL'S BRIGHT IDEA

My friend Muriel is the youngest daughter in a large family of busy people. They are in moderate circumstances, and the original breadwinner has been long gone; so in order to enjoy many of the comforts and a few of the luxuries of life the young people have to be wage-earners. I am not sure that they would enjoy life any better than they do now if such were not the case, though there are doubtless times when they would like to be less busy. Still, even this condition has its compensations.

"Other people do not know how lovely vacations are," was the way Esther expressed it as she sat one day on the side porch, hands folded lightly in her lap, and an air of delicious idleness about her entire person. It was her week of absolute leisure, which she had earned by a season of hard work. She is a public-school teacher, belonging to a section and grade where they work their teachers fourteen hours of the twenty-four.

Alice is a music-teacher, and goes all day from house to house in town, and from school to school, with her music-roll in hand. Ben, a young brother, is studying medicine in a doctor's office, also in town, and serving the doctor between times to pay for his opportunities. There are two others, an older brother just started in business for himself, and a sister in a training-school for nurses.

So it was that this large family scattered each morning to

their duties in the city ten miles away, and gathered at night, like chickens, to the home nest, which was mothered by the dearest little woman, who gave much of her time and strength to the preparation of favorite dishes with which to greet the wage-earners as they gathered at night around the home table. It is a very happy family, but it was not about any of them that I set out to tell you. In truth, it was Muriel's apron that I wanted to talk about; but it seemed necessary to describe the family in order to secure full appreciation of the apron.

Muriel, I should tell you, is still a high-school girl, hoping to be graduated next year, though at times a little anxious lest she may not pass, and with ambitions to enter college as soon as possible.

The entire family have ambitions for Muriel, and I believe that she will get to college in another year. But about her apron. I saw it first one morning when I crossed the street to my neighbor's side door that opens directly into the large living-room, and met Muriel in the doorway, as pretty a picture as a fair-haired, bright-eyed girl of seventeen can make. She was in what she called her uniform, a short dress made of dark print, cut lower in the neck than a street dress. It had elbow sleeves, and a bit of white braid stitched on their bands and around the square neck set off the little costume charmingly.

Her apron was of strong dark-green denim, wide enough to cover her dress completely; it had a bib waist held in place by shoulder straps; and the garment fastened behind with a single button, making it adjustable in a second. But its distinctive

feature was a row of pockets—or rather several rows of them—extending across the front breadth; they were of varying sizes, and all bulged out as if well filled.

"What in the world?" I began, and stared at the pockets. Muriel's merry laugh rang out.

"Haven't you seen my pockets before?" she asked. "They astonish you, of course; everybody laughs at them; but I am proud of them; they are my own invention. You see, we are such a busy family all day long, and so tired when we get home at night, that we have a bad habit of dropping things just where they happen to land, and leaving them. By the last of the week this big living-room is a sight to behold. It used to take half my morning to pick up the thousand and one things that did not belong here, and carry them to their places. You do not know how many journeys I had to make, because I was always overlooking something. So I invented this apron with a pocket in it for every member of the family, and it works like a charm.

"Look at this big one with a B on it; that is for Ben, of course, and it is always full. Ben is a great boy to leave his pencils, and his handkerchiefs, and everything else about. Last night he even discarded his necktie because it felt choky.

"This pocket is Esther's. She leaves her letters and her discarded handkerchiefs, as well as her gloves. And Kate sheds hair ribbons and hatpins wherever she goes. Just think how lovely it is to have a pocket for each, and drop things in as fast as I find them. When I am all through dusting, I have simply to travel

once around the house and unpack my load. I cannot tell you how much time and trouble and temper my invention has saved me."

"It is a bright idea," I said, "and I mean to pass it on. There are other living-rooms and busy girls. Whose is that largest pocket, marked M?"

"Why, I made it for mother; but, do you know, I have found out just in this very way that mothers do not leave things lying around. It is queer, isn't it, when they have so many cares? It seems to be natural for mothers to think about other people. So I made the M stand for 'miscellaneous,' and I put into that pocket articles which will not classify, and that belong to all of us. There are hosts of things for which no particular one seems to be responsible. Is it not a pity that I did not think of pockets last winter, when we all had special cares and were so dreadfully busy? It is such a simple idea you would have supposed that any person would have thought of it, but it took me two years. I just had to do it this spring, because there simply was not time to run up- and down-stairs so much."

"You have proved once more the truth of the old proverb, 'Necessity is the mother of invention,'" I said. "And, besides, you have given me a new idea. I am going home to work it out. When it is finished, I will show it to you." Then I went home, and made rows and rows of strong pockets to sew on a folding screen I was making for my work-room.—*Pansy, in Christian Endeavor World. By permission of Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co.*

* * * * *

Just Do Your Best

Just do your best. It matters not how small,
How little heard of;
Just do your best—that's all.
Just do your best. God knows it all,
And in his great plan you count as one;
Just do your best until the work is done.

Just do your best. Reward will come
To those who stand the test;
God does not forget. Press on,
Nor doubt, nor fear. Just do your best.

ERNEST LLOYD.

THE STRENGTH OF CLINTON

When Clinton Stevens was eleven years old, he was taken very sick with pneumonia. During convalescence, he suffered an unexpected relapse, and his mother and the doctor worked hard to keep him alive.

"It is ten to one if he gets well," said Dr. Bemis, shaking his head. "If he does, he will never be very strong."

Mrs. Stevens smoothed Clinton's pillow even more tenderly than before. Poor Clinton! who had always been such a rollicking, rosy-cheeked lad. Surely it was hard to bear.

The long March days dragged slowly along, and April was well advanced before Clinton could sit at the window, and watch the grass grow green on the slope of the lawn. He looked frail and delicate. He had a cough, too, a troublesome "bark," that he always kept back as long as he could.

The bright sunlight poured steadily in through the window, and Clinton held up his hand to shield his eyes. "Why, Ma Stevens!" he said, after a moment, "just look at my hands! They are as thin and white as a girl's, and they used to be regular paws. It does not look as if I would pull many weeds for Mr. Carter this summer, does it?"

Mrs. Stevens took his thin hands in her own patient ones. "Never mind, dearie," she said, "they will grow plump and brown again, I hope." A group of school-children were passing by,

shouting and frolicking. Clinton leaned forward and watched them till the last one was gone. Some of them waved their caps, but he did not seem elated. "Mother," he said, presently, "I believe I will go to bed if you will help me. I—I guess I am not quite so—strong—now as I used to be."

Clinton did not pull weeds for Mr. Carter that summer, but he rode around with the milkman, and did a little outdoor work for his mother, which helped him to mend. One morning in July he surprised the village by riding out on his bicycle; but he overdid the matter, and it was several weeks before he again appeared. His cough still continued, though not so severe as in the spring, and it was decided to let him go to school in the fall.

Dr. Bemis told Mrs. Stevens that the schoolroom would be a good place to test Clinton's strength. And he was right. In no other place does a young person's strength develop or debase itself so readily, for honor or dishonor. Of course the doctor had referred to physical strength; but moral strength is much more important.

Clinton was a bright lad for his years; and, although he had not looked into his books during the summer, he was placed in the same grade he had left when taken sick. He did not find much difficulty in keeping up with any of his studies except spelling. Whenever he received a perfect mark on that subject, he felt that a real victory had been won.

About Christmas-time the regular examinations were held. The teacher offered a prize to each grade, the pupil receiving

the highest average in all studies to receive the prize. Much excitement, no little speculation, and a great deal of studying ensued. Clinton felt fairly confident over all his studies except spelling. So he carried his spelling-book home every night, and he and his mother spent the evenings in wrestling with the long and difficult words.

Examination day came at length, and the afternoon for the seventh grade spelling was at hand. The words were to be written, and handed in. Across the aisle from Clinton sat Harry Meyers. Several times when teacher pronounced a word, Harry looked slyly into the palm of his hand. Clinton watched him, his cheeks growing pink with shame. Then he looked around at the others. Many of them had some dishonest device for copying the words. Clinton swallowed something in his throat, and looked across at Matthews, who pursed up his lips and nodded, if to say that he understood.

The papers were handed in, and school was dismissed. On Monday, after the morning exercises, Miss Brooks gave out the prizes to the three grades under her care. "I have now to award the prize for the highest average to the seventh grade," she said. "But first I wish to say a few words on your conduct during the recent examination in spelling. I shall censure no one in particular, although there is one boy who must set no more bad examples. No one spelled the words correctly—Clinton Stevens the least of any—making his average quite low; yet the prize goes to him. I will tell you why—" as a chorus of O! O's! greeted her ears.

"Spelling is Clinton's hardest subject, but he could easily have spelled more words right had he not possessed sufficient strength to prevent him from falling into the way followed by some of you."

As Clinton went up the aisle for his prize, he felt like crying, but he managed to smile instead. A few days before, Harry Meyers had ridiculed him because he was not strong enough to throw a snowball from the schoolhouse to the road; now the teacher had said he was strong!

Clinton's Aunt Jennie came to visit the family in December, bringing her little daughter Grace with her. Now Grace had a mania for pulling other people's hair, but there was no one in the Stevens family upon whom she dared operate except Clinton. She began on him cautiously, then aggressively. Clinton stood it for a while, and then asked her, politely but firmly, to stop. She stopped for half a day.

One night Clinton came home from school pale and tired. Some of the boys had been taunting him on his spare frame, and imitating his cough, which had grown worse as the winter advanced. Sitting down by the window, he looked out at the falling snow. Grace slipped up behind him, and gave his hair a sharp tweak. He struck out, hastily, and hit her. She was not hurt, —only very much surprised,—but she began to cry lustily, and Aunt Jennie came hurrying in, and took the child in her arms.

That night after supper Clinton went into the sitting-room, and called Grace to him. "I want to tell you something," he said. "I

am sorry that I hit you, and I ask your pardon. Will you forgive me, dear?" Grace agreed quickly, and said, shyly, "Next time I want to pull any one's hair, I will pull my own."

Aunt Jennie was in the next room and overheard the conversation. "It strikes me, Sarah," she said to Mrs. Stevens, later, "that Clinton is a remarkably strong boy for one who is not strong. Most boys would not have taken the trouble to ask a small girl to forgive them, even if they were very much in the wrong. But Clinton has a strong character."

The year Clinton was thirteen, the boys planned to have a corn roast, one August night. "We will get the corn in old Carter's lot," said Harry Meyers. "He has just acres of it, and can spare a bushel or so as well as not. I suppose you will go with us, Clint?"

Clinton hesitated. "No," said he. "I guess not; and I should think if you want to roast corn, you could get it out of your own gardens. But if Mr. Carter's corn is better than any other, why can you not ask him–"

"O, come, now," retorted Harry, "do not let it worry you! Half the fun of roasting corn is in—in taking it. And don't you come, Clinton—don't. We would not have you for the world. You are too nice, Mr. Coughin."

Clinton's cheeks flushed red, but he turned away without a word. When Mr. Carter quizzed Billy Matthews, and found out all about it, Clinton was made very happy by the old man's words: "It is not every chap that will take the stand you took. You ought to be thankful that you have the strength to say No."

In the fall, when Clinton was fifteen, his health began to fail noticeably, and Dr. Bemis advised a little wine "to build him up."

"Mother," said the boy, after thinking it over, "I am not going to touch any wine. I can get well without it, I know I can. I do not want liquor," he continued. "'Wine is a mocker,' you know. Did you not tell me once that Zike Hastings, over in East Bloomfield, became a drunkard by drinking wine when he was sick?"

"Yes, Clinton, I believe I told you so."

"Well, then, I do not want any wine. I have seen Zike Hastings too many times."

In December Aunt Jennie and Grace made their annual visit. With them came

Uncle Jonathan, who took a great liking to Clinton.

"My boy," said he one day, placing a big hand on the lad's shoulder, "early in the new year Aunt Jennie and I start for the Pacific Coast. Should you like to go with us?"

"Well, I rather guess I should!" gasped the surprised boy, clasping his hands joyfully. "Very well, then, you shall go," returned Uncle Jonathan, "and your mother, too."

Clinton began to feel better before they were outside of Pennsylvania. When they had crossed the Mississippi and reached the prairies, his eyes were sparkling with excitement. The mountains fairly put new life in him. Uncle Jonathan watched him with pleasure. "Tell me," he said one day, when they were winding in and out among the Rockies, "what has given you so much strength of character?"

"Why, it was this way," said Clinton, bringing his eyes in from a chasm some hundreds of feet below: "one day when I was beginning to recover from that attack of pneumonia, I saw a lot of the boys romping along, and I felt pretty bad because I could not romp and play, too; then I thought that if I could not be strong that way, I could have the strength to do right; so I began to try, and–"

"Succeeded admirably," said Uncle Jonathan, approvingly. "And, really, my boy, I see no reason why you should not shout and play to your heart's content in a few months."

And Uncle Jonathan's words proved true; for Clinton, in a sun-kissed California valley, grew well and strong in a few months. But through all his life he will have cause to be glad that he learned the value of the strength that is gained by resisting temptation, controlling one's spirit, and obeying the Lord's commands.

BENJAMIN KEECH.

THE DOCTOR'S COW

"I am afraid she is done for," said the veterinary surgeon as he came out of the barn with Dr. Layton, after working for an hour over Brindle, who had broken into the feed bins, and devoured bran and middlings until she could eat no more. "But keep up the treatment faithfully, and if she lives through the night, she will stand some show of getting well."

The doctor walked down the driveway with the surgeon, and stood for a few minutes at the gate under the maple-trees that lined the sidewalk, talking earnestly. Then he went back into the house by the kitchen door. His wife met him, with the oft-repeated words, "I told you so; I said that boy would turn out of no earthly account."

"But he has turned out of some account," contradicted the doctor mildly. "In spite of this carelessness, he has been a great help to me during the last month. It was boyish ignorance more than mere carelessness that brought about this disaster. To be sure, I have cautioned him not to leave the door of the feed-room unfastened. But he had no idea how a cow would make a glutton of herself if she had a chance at the bins. You cannot expect a boy who was reared in a city tenement to learn all about the country, and the habits and weaknesses of cattle, in one short month. No, I shall not send him adrift again—not even if poor Brindle dies."

"You mean to say you are going to keep him just the same,

John Layton?" cried the doctor's wife. "Well, if you are not the meekest man! Moses was not anything to you! He did lose his temper once."

The doctor smiled, and said quietly: "Yes, and missed entering the promised land on account of it. Perhaps I should have done the same thing in his place; but I am sure that Moses, if he were in my place today, would feel just as I do about discharging Harry. It is pretty safe to assume that he, even if he did lose his temper at the continual grumbling of the croakers who were sighing for the flesh-pots of Egypt, never ordered a young Israelite boy whose father and mother had been bitten by the fiery serpents and died in the wilderness, to clear out of camp for not putting a halter on one of the cows."

"John Layton, you are talking Scripture!" remonstrated the perturbed housewife, looking up reprovingly as she sadly skimmed the cream from the very last pan of milk poor Brindle would ever give her.

"I certainly am, and I am going to act Scripture, too," declared the doctor, with the air of gentle firmness that always ended any controversy between him and his excellent, though somewhat exacting, wife. "Harry is a good boy, and he had a good mother, too, he says, but he has had a hard life, ill-treated by a father who was bitten by the fiery serpent of drink. Now because of his first act of negligence I am not going to send him adrift in the world again."

"Not if it costs you a cow!" remarked the woman.

"No, my dear, not if it costs me two cows," reasserted the doctor. "A cow is less than a boy, and it might cost the world a man if I sent Harry away in a fit of displeasure, disgraced by my discharge so that he could not find another place in town to work for his board, and go to school. Besides, Brindle will die anyway, and discharging the boy will not save her."

"No, of course not. But it was your taking the boy in, a penniless, unknown fellow, that has cost you a cow," persisted the wife. "I told you at the time you would be sorry for it."

"I have not intimated that I am sorry I took the boy in," remarked the doctor, not perversely, but with steadfast kindness. "If our own little boy had lived, and had done this thing accidentally, would I have been sorry he had ever been born? Or if little Ted had grown to be thirteen, and you and I had died in the wilderness of poverty, leaving him to wander out of the city to seek for a home in God's fair country, where his little peaked face could fill out and grow rosy, as Harry's has, would you think it just to have him sent away because he had made a boyish mistake? Of course you would not, mother. Your heart is in the right place, even if it does get covered up sometimes. And I guess, to come right down to it, you would not send Harry away any more than I would, when the poor boy is almost heart-broken over this unfortunate affair. Now, let us have supper, for I must be off. We cannot neglect sick people for a poor, dying cow. Harry will look after Brindle. He will not eat a bite, I am afraid, so it is no use to call him in now. By and by you would

better take a plate of something out to him; but do not say a harsh word to the poor fellow, to make it any harder for him than it is."

The doctor ate his supper hurriedly; for the sick cow had engaged every moment of his spare hours that day, and he had postponed until his evening round of visits a number of calls that were not pressing. When he came out to his buggy, Harry Aldis stood at the horse's head, at the carriage steps beside the driveway, his chin sunk on his breast, in an attitude of hopeless misery.

"Keep up the treatment, Harry, and make her as easy as possible," said the doctor as he stepped into his buggy.

"Yes, sir; I'll sit up all night with her, Dr. Layton, if I can only save her," was the choking answer, as the boy carefully spread the lap robe over the doctor's knees.

"I know you will, Harry; but I am afraid nothing can save the poor creature. About all we can do is to relieve her suffering until morning, giving her a last chance; and if she is no better then, the veterinary surgeon says we would better shoot her, and put her out of her misery."

The boy groaned. "O Dr. Layton, why do you not scold me? I could bear it better if you would say just one cross word," he sobbed. "You have been kinder to me than my own father ever was, and I have tried so hard to be useful to you. Now this dreadful thing has taken place, all because of my carelessness. I wish you would take that buggy whip to me; I deserve it."

The doctor took the whip, and gently dropped its lash across

the drooping shoulders bowed on the horse's neck as the boy hid his face in the silken mane he loved to comb. Indeed, Dandy's black satin coat had never shone with such a luster from excessive currying as in the month past, since the advent of this new little groom, who slept in the little back bedroom of the doctor's big white house, and thought it a nook in paradise.

"There's no use in scolding or thrashing a fellow who is all broken up, anyway, over an accident, as you are," the doctor said, kindly. "Of course, it is a pretty costly accident for me, but I think I know where I can get a heifer—one of Brindle's own calves, that I sold to a farmer two years ago—that will make as fine a cow as her mother."

"But the money, Dr. Layton! How can I ever earn that to make good your loss?" implored the boy, looking up.

"The money? O, well, some day when you are a rich man, you can pay me for the cow!" laughed the doctor, taking up the reins. "In the meantime, make a good, trustworthy, honest man of yourself, no matter whether you get rich or not, and keep your 'thinking cap' on a little better."

"You had better eat some supper," said a voice in the doorway a little later, as Mrs. Layton came noiselessly to the barn, and surprised the boy kneeling on the hay in the horse's stall adjoining the one where Brindle lay groaning, his face buried in his arms, which were flung out over the manger.

The lad scrambled to his feet in deep confusion.

"O, thank you, Mrs. Layton, but I cannot eat a bite!" he

protested. "It is ever so good of you to think of me, but I cannot eat anything."

"You must," said the doctor's wife, firmly. "Come outside and wash in the trough if you do not want to leave Brindle. You can sit near by and watch her, if you think you must, though it will not do a particle of good, for she is bound to die anyway. What were you doing in there on your knees—praying?"

The woman's voice softened perceptibly as the question passed her lips, and she looked half-pityingly into the pale, haggard young face, thinking of little Ted's, and wondering how it would have looked at thirteen if he had done this thing.

"Yes," muttered Harry, plunging his hands into the water of the trough, and splashing it over the red flame of a sudden burning blush that kindled in his ash-pale cheeks. "Isn't it all right to pray for a cow to get well? It 'most kills me to see her suffer so."

Mrs. Layton smiled unwillingly; for the value of her pet cow's products touched her more deeply than a boy's penitent tears, particularly when that boy was not her own. "There is no use of your staying in there and watching her suffer, you cannot do her any good," she insisted. "Stay out here in the fresh air. Do you hear?"

"Yes, ma'am," choked Harry, drying his face on the sleeve of his gingham shirt. He sat down on a box before the door, the plate of food in his lap, and made an attempt to eat the daintily cooked meal, but every mouthful almost choked him.

At about midnight, the sleepless young watcher, lying on the edge of the hay just above the empty manger over which a lantern swung, lifted himself on his elbow at the sound of a long, low, shuddering groan, and in another moment, Harry knew that poor Brindle had ceased to suffer the effects of her gluttonous appetite. Creeping down into the stall, he saw at a glance that the cow was dead, and for a moment, alone there in the stillness and darkness of the spring night, he felt as if he were the principal actor in some terrible crime.

"Poor old boss!" he sobbed, kneeling down, and putting his arm over the still warm neck. "I—I have killed you—after all the rich milk and butter you have given me, that have made me grow strong and fat—just by my carelessness!"

In after-years the memory of that hour came back to Harry Aldis as the dominant note in some real tragedy, and he never again smelled the fragrance of new hay, mingled with the warm breath of sleeping cattle, without recalling the misery and self-condemnation of that long night's watch.

In the early dawn, Dr. Layton found the boy lying beside the quiet form in the stall, fast asleep from exhaustion and grief, his head pillowed on the soft, tawny coat he had loved to brush until it gleamed like silk.

"Child alive!" he gasped, bending over and taking the lad in his arms, and carrying him out into the sweet morning air. "Harry, why did you not come and tell me, and then go to bed?" he cried, setting the bewildered boy on his feet, and leading him to the

house. "Now, my boy, no more of this grieving. The thing is done, and you cannot help it now. There is no more use in crying for a dead cow than for spilled milk. Now come in and go to bed, and stay there until tonight; and when you wake up, the new heifer, Brindle's daughter, will be in the barn waiting for you to milk her. I am going to buy her this morning."

* * * * *

Five years after that eventful night, Harry Aldis stood on the doctor's front porch, a youth of eighteen, bidding good-by to the two who had been more to him than father and mother. He was going to college in the West, where he could work his way, and in his trunk was a high-school diploma, and in his pocket a "gilt-edge recommendation" from Dr. Layton.

"God bless you, my boy! Don't forget us," said the doctor, his voice husky with unshed tears as he wrung the strong young hand that had been so helpful to him in the busy years flown by.

"Forget you, my more than father!" murmured the young man, not even trying to keep the tears out of his eyes. "No matter how many years it may be before I see you again, I shall always remember your unfailing kindness to me. And can I ever forget how you saved me for a higher life than I could possibly have lived if you had set me adrift in the world again for leaving that barn door unfastened, and killing your cow? As long as I live, I shall remember that great kindness, and shall try to deserve it by my life."

"Pshaw, Harry," said the doctor, "that was nothing but

common humanity!"

"Uncommon humanity," corrected the youth. "Good-by, Mrs. Layton. I shall always remember your kindness, too, and that you never gave me any less butter or cream from poor Brindle's daughter for my grave offense. You have been like an own mother to me."

"You have deserved it all, Harry," said the doctor's wife, and there was a tear in her eye, too, which was an unusual sight, for she was not an emotional woman. "I do not know as it was such a great calamity, after all, to lose Brindle just as we did, for Daisy is a finer cow than her mother was, and there has not been another chance since to get as good a heifer."

"So it was a blessing in disguise, after all, Harry," laughed the doctor.

"As for you, you have been a blessing undisguised from that day to this.

May the Lord bless and prosper you! Write to us often."

* * * * *

Four years passed, and in one of the Western States a young college graduate stepped from his pedestal of oratorical honors to take a place among the rising young lawyers of a prosperous new town that was fast developing into a commercial center.

"I am doing well, splendidly," he wrote Dr. Layton after two years of hard work, "and one of these days I am coming back to make that promised visit."

But the years came and went, and still the West held him in its

powerful clutch. Success smiled upon his pathway, and into his life entered the sweet, new joy of a woman's love and devotion, and into his home came the happy music of children's voices. When his eldest boy was eight years old, his district elected him to the State senate, and four years later sent him to Congress,—an honest, uncompromising adherent to principle and duty.

"And now, at last," he wrote Dr. Layton, "I am coming East, and I shall run down from Washington for that long-promised visit. Why do you write so seldom, when I have never yet failed to inform you of my pyrotechnic advancement into the world of politics? It is not fair. And how is the family cow? Surely Madam Daisy sleeps with her poor mother ere this, or has been cut up into roasts and steaks."

And to this letter the doctor replied briefly but gladly:—

"So you are coming at last, my boy! Well, you will find us in the same old house,—a little the worse for wear, perhaps,—and leading the same quiet life. No, not the same, though it is quiet enough, for I am growing old, and the town is running after the new young doctors, leaving us old ones in the rear, to trudge along as best we can. There isn't any 'family cow' now, Harry. Daisy was sold long ago for beef, poor thing! We never got another, for I am getting too old to milk, and there never seemed to come along another boy like the old Harry, who would take all the barn-yard responsibility on his shoulders. Besides, mother is crippled with rheumatism, and can hardly get around to do her housework, let alone to make butter. We are not any too well off

since the Union Bank failed; for, besides losing all my stock, I have had to help pay the depositors' claims. But we have enough to keep us comfortable, and much to be thankful for, most of all that our famous son is coming home for a visit. Bring your wife, too, Harry, if she thinks it will not be too much of a drop from Washington society to our humble home; and the children, all five of those bright boys and girls,—bring them all! I want to show them the old stall in the barn, where, twenty-five years ago, I picked their father up in my arms early one spring morning as he lay fast asleep on the neck of the old cow over whose expiring breath he had nearly broken his poor little heart."

* * * * *

"Yes, father, of course it has paid to come down here. I would not have missed it for all the unanimous votes of the third ballot that sent me East," declared the United States senator at the end of his three days' visit. Long ago, the Hon. Henry Aldis had fallen into the habit of addressing Dr. Layton, in his letters, by the paternal title.

"It does not seem possible that it is twenty years since I stood here, saying good-by when I started West. By the way, do you remember what you told me that memorable night when the lamented Brindle laid down her life because of my carelessness, and her own gluttony? I was standing at the horse's head, and you were sitting in your buggy, there at the carriage steps, and I said I wished you would horsewhip me, instead of treating me so kindly. I remember you reached over and tickled my neck with

the lash playfully, and told me there was no use in thrashing a fellow who was all broken up, anyway, over an accident."

The doctor laughed as he held his arms more closely about the shoulders of

Senator Aldis's two eldest boys; while "Grandmother Layton," with little

Ted in her lap, was dreaming again of the little form that had long, long

ago been laid in the graveyard on the hillside.

"Yes, yes," said the doctor, "I remember. What a blessed thing it was I did not send you off that day to the tune the old cow died on," and he laughed through his tears.

"Blessed!" echoed Mrs. Layton, putting down the wriggling Ted. "It was providential. You know, Harry, I was not so kind-hearted as John in those days and I thought he ought to send you off. But he declared he would not, even if you had cost him two cows. He said that if he did it might cost the world a man. And so it would have, if all they say you are doing out West for clean government is true."

Senator Aldis laughed, and kissed the old lady.

"I do not know about that," he said modestly. "I am of the opinion that he might have saved more of a man for the world; but certain it is, he saved whatever manhood there was in that boy from going to waste by his noble act of kindness. But what I remember most, father, is what you told me, there at the carriage step, that when I became a rich man, I could pay you for that

cow. Well, I am not exactly a rich man, for I am not in politics for all the money I can get out of it, but I am getting a better income than my leaving that barn door open would justify any one in believing I ever could get by my brains; so now I can pay that long-standing debt without inconvenience. It may come handy for you to have a little fund laid by, since the Union Bank went to smash, and all your stock with it, and so much of your other funds went to pay the poor depositors of that defunct institution. It was just like you, father, not to dodge the assessments, as so many of the stockholders did, by putting all your property in your wife's name. So, since you made one investment twenty-five years ago that has not seemed to depreciate in value very much, —an investment in a raw young boy who did not have enough gumption to fasten a barn door,—here is the interest on what the investment was worth to the boy, at least a little of it; for I can never begin to pay it all. Good-by, both of you, and may God bless you! Here comes our carriage, Helen."

When the dust of the departing hack had filtered through the morning sunlight, two pairs of tear-dimmed eyes gazed at the slip of blue paper in Dr. Layton's hand,—a check for five thousand dollars.

"We saved a man that time, sure enough!" murmured the old doctor softly.—*Emma S. Allen in the Wellspring.*

* * * * *

Brotherly Kindness

A man may make a few mistakes,
Regardless of his aim.
But never, never criticize
And cloud him o'er with blame;
For all have failed in many things
And keenly feel the smarting stings,
Which haunt the mind by day and night
Till they have made offenses right.

So liberal be with those you meet
E'en though they may offend,
And wish them well as on they go
Till all the journey end.
Sometimes we think our honor's hurt
When some one speaks a little pert;
But never mind, just hear the good,
And ever stand where Patience stood.

Look for the good, the true, the grand
In those you wish to shun,
And you will be surprised to find
Some good in every one;
Then help the man who makes mistakes
To rise above his little quakes,

To build anew with courage strong,
And fit himself to battle wrong.

JOHN FRANCIS OLMSTED

HONEY AT THE PHONE

Honey's mama had gone to market, leaving her home with nurse. Nurse was up-stairs making beds, while little Honey, with hands behind her, was trudging about the sitting-room looking for something to do.

There was a phone in the house, which was a great mystery to Honey when it first came. She could hear voices talking back to mama, yet could not see a person. Was some one hidden away in the horn her mother put to her ear, or was it in the machine itself?

Honey never failed to be on hand when the bell rang, and found that her mother generally talked to her best and dearest friends, ladies who were such frequent callers that Honey knew them all by name.

Her mama wrote down the names of her friends, with the number of their phones, and, because the child was so inquisitive about it, she very carefully explained to her just how the whole thing worked, never thinking that Honey would sometime try it for herself; and, indeed, for a while Honey satisfied herself by playing phone. She would roll up a piece of paper, and call out through it, "Hullo!" asking and answering all the questions herself.

One day, on finding herself alone, she took down the receiver and tried to talk to one of her mama's friends, but it was a failure. She watched mama still more closely after that. On this

particular morning, while mama was at market, she tried again, commencing with the first number on her mama's list.

Taking down the receiver, she called out, "Hullo!" the answer came back,

"Hullo!" "I wants A 215," said Honey, holding the receiver to her ear.

"Yes," came the reply.

"Are you Miss Samor?" asked Honey.

"Yes," was the reply.

"We wants you to come to our house tonight to supper, mama and me."

"Who's mama and me?" asked the voice.

"Honey," was the reply.

"Honey, through the phone, eh?" laughed the voice. "Tell mama I will come with pleasure."

Honey was not only delighted, but greatly excited. She used every number on her mother's list, inviting them all to supper.

About four o'clock in the afternoon the guests began to arrive, much to mama's amazement and consternation, especially when they divested themselves of their wraps, and proceeded to make themselves comfortable. What could it mean? She would think she was having a surprise party if every one had not come empty-handed. Perhaps it was a joke on her. If so, they would find she would take it pleasantly.

There was not enough in the house to feed half that crowd, but she had the phone, and she fairly made the orders fly for a while.

When her husband came home from his office, he was surprised to find the parlors filled with company. While helping the guests, he turned to his wife, saying, "Why, this is a sort of surprise, is it not?"

Mama's face flamed, and she looked right down to her nose without saying a word.

"Why did you not tell me you were going to invite them, and I would have brought home some flowers?" said Honey's papa.

Honey, who sat next to her papa, resplendent in a white dress and flowing curls, clutched his sleeve, and said: "It's my party papa. I 'wited 'em frew the phone. Honey likes to have c'ean c'o'es on, and have comp'ny."

It was the visitors' turn now to blush, but Honey's papa and mama laughed so heartily it made them feel that it was all right even if Honey had sent out the invitations. And not one went home without extending an invitation to her host and hostess to another dinner or supper, and in every one Honey was included.

"Just what she wanted," said her papa, as he tossed her up in his arms and kissed her. Then, turning to his wife, he said, "Never mind, mother, she will learn better as she grows older."—*Mrs. A. E. C. Maskell.*

ONE OF FATHER'S STORIES

When children, nothing pleased us more than to listen to father's stories. Mother Goose melodies were nothing beside them. In fact, we never heard fairy stories at home; and when father told of his boyhood days, the stories had a charm which only truth can give. I can hear him now, as he would reply to our request for a story by asking if he had ever told us how his father tried to have a "raising" without rum. Of course we had heard about it many times, but we were sure to want our memories refreshed; so we would sit on a stool at his feet or climb upon his knee, while he told us this story:—

"My grandfather, George Hobbs, was one of the pioneers of the Kennebec Valley. He had an indomitable will, and was the kind of man needed to subdue a wilderness and tame it into a home. He was a Revolutionary pensioner, having enlisted when only twelve years of age. He was too young to be put in the ranks, and was made a waiter in camp. When I was a boy, I can remember that he drove twenty miles, once a year, to Augusta, Maine's capital, to draw his pension. Snugly tucked under the seat of his sleigh was a four-gallon keg and a box. The keg was to be filled with Medford rum for himself, and the box with nuts and candy for his grandchildren. After each meal, as far back as father could remember, grandfather had mixed his rum and water in a pewter tumbler, stirred in some brown sugar with a wooden

spoon, and drunk it with the air of one who was performing an unquestionable duty.

"Grandfather was a ship-carpenter by trade, and therefore in this new country was often employed to frame and raise buildings. Raisings were great social events. The whole neighborhood went, and neighbors covered more territory than they do now. The raising of a medium-sized building required about one hundred and fifty men, and their good wives went along to help in the preparation of the dinner. The first thing on the day's program was the raising, and not a stroke of work was done until all had been treated to a drink of rum, the common liquor of the day. After the frame was erected, one or two men, whose courage fitted them for the feat, had the honor of standing erect on the ridge-pole and repeating this rhyme:—

> 'Here is a fine frame,
> Stands on a fine spot;
> May God bless the owner,
> And all that he's got.'

Men would sometimes walk the ridge-pole, and sometimes one, more daring than the others, would balance himself on his head upon it.

"Then followed a bountiful dinner, in which meat and potatoes, baked beans, boiled and fried eggs, Indian pudding, and pumpkin pies figured prominently. Often as many as one hundred and twenty-five eggs were eaten. After dinner came

wrestling, boxing, and rough-and-tumble contests, in which defeat was not always taken with the best of grace.

"This was before the subject of temperance was agitated much in the good old State of Maine. The spirit of it, however, was awakening in the younger generation. My father was enthusiastic over it, and announced his intention of raising his new house without the aid of rum. To grandfather this was no trifling matter. It was the encroachment of new ideas upon old ones—a pitting of the strength of the coming generation against his own. To his mind, no less than to father's, a principle was involved, and the old soldier prepared to fight his battle. With some spirit he said to father, 'It cannot be done, Jotham; it cannot be done.' But father was just as sure that it could. It was grandfather's task to fit the frame. He went industriously to work, and father thought that he had quietly yielded the point.

"The day for the raising came, the first in that part of the country to be conducted on temperance principles. There were no telephones to spread the news, but long before the day arrived, everybody, far and near, knew that Jotham Hobbs was going to raise his new house without rum. The people came, some eager to help to establish the era of temperance, and some secretly hoping that the project would fail. A generous dinner was cooking indoors; for the host intended to refuse his guests nothing that was good. The song of mallets and hammers rang out, and the timbers began to come together; but the master framer was idle. Over by the old house door sat grandfather. He

positively refused to lend a hand to the enterprise unless treated to his rum. For a time the work progressed rapidly; then there came a halt. There was a place where the timbers would not fit. After much delay and many vain attempts to go on with the work, father asked grandfather to help; but he only shook his head, and grimly replied that it was ten to one if it ever came together without rum. There were more vain attempts, more delays. Finally, father, seeing that he must yield or give up the work, got some rum and handed it to grandfather. The old man gravely laid aside his pipe, drank the Medford, and walked over to the men. He took a tenon marked *ten* and placed it in a mortise marked *one*. The problem was solved. He had purposely marked them in that way, instead of marking them alike, as was customary. With a sly twinkle in his eye he said, 'I told you it was ten to one if it ever came together.'

"But the cause of temperance had come to stay, and grandfather met his Waterloo when Squire Low built his one-hundred-foot barn. Three hundred men were there to see that it went up without rum. Grandfather and a kindred spirit, Old Uncle Benjamin Burrill, stood at a safe distance, hoping to see another failure. But section after section was raised. The rafters went on, and finally the ridge-pole. The old men waited to see no more. They dropped their heads, turned on their heels, and walked away."

These events occurred between 1830 and 1840. Since then the cause of temperance has made rapid progress.

In the State Capitol at Augusta, Maine, is a petition sent to the legislature in 1835 by one hundred and thirty-nine women of Brunswick, Maine. It is a plea for a prohibitory law, and is, probably, the first attempt made to secure a legislative enactment against the liquor traffic. One paragraph, which is characteristic of the whole document, is worth quoting:—

"We remonstrate against this method of making rich men richer and poor men poorer; of making distressed families more distressed; of making a portion of the human family utterly and hopelessly miserable, debasing the moral nature, and thus clouding with despair their temporal and future prospects."

This petition met with no recognition by that legislature. There were many customs to be laid aside, many prejudices to be overcome, and it was not till 1851 that Maine became a prohibition State. Since that time her health and wealth have steadily increased, in greater proportion than other States which have not adopted temperance principles; and public sentiment, which is a powerful ally, is against the liquor traffic.

ETHEL HOBBS WALTERS.

WHAT RUM DOES

I was sitting at my breakfast-table one Sunday morning, when I was called to my door by the ringing of the bell. There stood a boy about fourteen years of age, poorly clad, but tidied up as best he could. He was leaning on crutches; for one leg was off at the knee.

In a voice trembling with emotion, and with tears coursing down his cheeks, he said: "Mr. Hoagland, I am Freddy Brown. I have come to see if you will go to the jail and talk and pray with my father. He is to be hanged tomorrow for the murder of my mother. My father was a good man, but whisky did it. I have three little sisters younger than myself. We are very, very poor, and have no friends. We live in a dark and dingy room. I do the best I can to support my sisters by selling papers, blacking boots, and doing odd jobs; but Mr. Hoagland, we are very poor. Will you come and be with us when father's body is brought home? The governor says we may have his body after he is hanged."

I was deeply moved to pity. I promised, and made haste to the jail, where I found his father.

He acknowledged that he must have murdered his wife, for the circumstances pointed that way, but he had not the slightest remembrance of the deed. He said he was crazed with drink, or he never would have committed the crime. He said: "My wife was a good and faithful mother to my little children. Never did I

dream that my hand could be guilty of such a crime."

The man could bravely face the penalty of the law for his deed, but he broke down and cried as if his heart would break when he thought of leaving his children in a destitute and friendless condition. I read and prayed with him, and left him to his fate.

The next morning I made my way to the miserable quarters of the children. I found three little girls upon a bed of straw in one corner of the room. They were clad in rags. They would have been beautiful girls had they had the proper care. They were expecting the body of their dead father, and between their cries and sobs they would say, "Papa was good, but whisky did it."

In a little time two strong officers came bearing the body of the dead father in a rude pine box. They set it down on two old rickety stools. The cries of the children were so heartrending that the officers could not endure it, and made haste out of the room.

In a moment the manly boy nerved himself, and said, "Come, sisters, kiss papa's face before it is cold." They gathered about his face and smoothed it down with kisses, and between their sobs cried out: "Papa was good, but whisky did it! Papa was good, but whisky did it!"

I raised my heart to God and said, "O God, did I fight to save a country that would derive a revenue from a traffic that would make a scene like this possible?"—*Youth's Outlook*.

MY MOTHER'S RING

I am living now on borrowed time. The sun of my allotted life-day has set, and with the mellow twilight of old age there come to my memory reflections of a life which, if not well spent, has in it enough of good at least to make these reflections pleasant. And yet, during all the years in which I have responded to the name Carter Brassfield, but a single fortnight of time, it seems to me, is worth recounting.

We were living in Milwaukee, having recently moved there from York State, where I was born. My father, a bookkeeper of some expertness, not securing a position in our newly adopted city as soon as he had expected, became disheartened, and, to while away the time that hung so heavily, took to drinking beer with some newly acquired German friends. The result was that our funds were exhausted much sooner than they should have been, and mother took it upon herself to turn bread-winner for the family by doing some plain sewing.

A small allotment of this money she gave to me one day on my return from school, and sent me to Mr. Blodget, the grocer, to purchase some supplies. After giving my order to one of the clerks I immediately turned my attention to renewing my acquaintance with Tabby, the store cat.

While I was thus engaged, I heard my name repeated by a stranger who was talking with Mr. Blodget, and erelong the man

sauntered over, spoke to me, and after some preliminary remarks asked if I was Carter Brassfield. He was dark, had a sweeping mustache, and wore eye-glasses. Upon being assured that I was Carter Brassfield, he took from his pocket a gold ring, and, turning it around carefully in the light, read the inscription on its inner side.

"Is your mother's name Alice?" he asked.

I told him that it was.

"And your father's name Carter?"

"Yes, sir," said I.

Then he showed the ring to me and asked if I had seen it before.

I at once recognized the ring as my mother's. Since I could remember she had worn it, until recently. Of late she had grown so much thinner that the ring would no longer stay on her finger, and she was accustomed, therefore, to keep the circlet in a small drawer of her dresser, secure in an old purse with some heirlooms of coins; and I was greatly surprised that it should be in the possession of this stranger. I told him that it was my mother's ring, and asked him how he came by it.

"Your father put it up in a little game the other day," said he, "and it fell into my possession." He dropped the ring into his purse, which he then closed with a snap. "I have been trying for several days to see your father and give him a chance at the ring before I turned it in to the pawnbroker's. If your mother has any feeling in the matter, tell her she can get the ring for ten dollars,"

he added as he turned away.

I did not know what to do. I was so ashamed and hurt to think that my father, whom I loved and in whom I had such implicit confidence, should have gambled away my mother's ring, the very ring—I was old enough to appreciate—he had given her in pledging to her his love. My eyes filled with tears, and as I stood, hesitating, Mr. Blodget came forward, admonishing me not to forget my parcels. He evidently observed my tears, although I turned my face the other way, for shame of crying. At any rate, he put his hand on my shoulder and said very kindly:—

"It's pretty tough, Carter, my boy, isn't it?"

He referred, I thought, to my father, for father was uppermost in my thoughts. Then, lowering his voice, he said:—

"But I will help you out, son, I will help you out."

I forgot all about hiding my tears, and faced about, attracted by his kindness.

"I will redeem the ring, and keep it for you until you can get the money. What do you say? You can rest easy then, knowing that it is safe, and you can take your time. What do you say?"

With some awkwardness I acquiesced to his plan. Then he called the stranger, and, leading the way back to his desk, paid to him the ten dollars, requiring him to sign a paper, though I did not understand why. He then placed the ring carefully in his safe.

"There, Carter," said he, rubbing his hands together, "it is safe now, and we need not worry."

I held out my hand to him, then without a word took my

parcels and started on a run for home.

That evening father was more restless than usual. He repeatedly lamented his long-enforced idleness. After retiring that night, I lay awake for a long time evolving in my mind plans whereby I might earn ten dollars to redeem the ring. Finally, with my boyish heart full of hope and adventure, I fell asleep in the wee hours of morning.

After breakfast I took my books, as usual, but, instead of going to school, I turned my steps toward a box factory where I knew a boy of about my own age to be working. I confided to him as much of my story as I thought advisable, and he took me to the superintendent's office and introduced me. I was put to work, at five dollars a week, with the privilege of stopping at four each day. Every afternoon I brought my school-books home and studied as usual till bed-time, and took them with me again in the morning.

During the two weeks I was employed at the factory neither father nor mother suspected that I had not been to school each day. In fact, I studied so assiduously at night that I kept up with my classes. But my mother observed that I grew pale and thin.

At the end of two weeks, when I told the manager I wanted to stop work, he seemed somewhat disappointed. He paid me two crisp five-dollar notes, and I went very proudly to Mr. Blodget with the first ten dollars I had ever earned, and received that gentleman's hearty praise, and my mother's ring.

That evening father was out as usual, and I gave the ring to

mother, telling her all about it, and what I had done. She kissed me, and, holding me close in her arms for a long time, cried, caressing my hair with her hand, and told me that I was her dear, good boy. Then we had a long talk about father, and agreed to lay nothing to him, at present, about the ring.

The next evening, when I returned from school, father met me at the hall door, and asked if I had been to school. I saw that he had been drinking, and was not in a very amiable mood.

"I met Clarence Stevenson just now," he said, "and he inquired about you.

He thought you were sick, and said you had not been to school for two

weeks, unless you had gone today." I stood for a moment without answering.

"What do you say to that?" he demanded.

"Clarence told the truth, father," I replied.

"He did, eh? What do you mean by running away from school in this manner?" He grew very angry, catching me by the shoulder, gave me such a jerk that my books, which I had under my arm, went flying in all directions. "Why have you not been to school?" he said thickly.

"I was working, but I did not intend to deceive you father."

"Working! Working! Where have you been working?"

"At Mr. Hazleton's box factory."

"At a *what* factory?"

"*Box* factory."

"How much did you earn?" he growled, watching me closely to see if I told the truth.

"Five dollars a week," I said timidly, feeling all the time that he was exacting from me a confession that I wished, on his account, to keep secret.

"Five dollars a week! Where is the money? Show me the money!" he persisted incredulously.

"I cannot, father. I do not have it."

I was greatly embarrassed and frightened at his conduct.

"Where is it?" he growled.

"I—I—spent it," I said, not thinking what else to say.

A groan escaped through his shut teeth as he reeled across the hall and took down a short rawhide whip that had been mine to play with. Although he had never punished me severely, I was now frightened at his anger.

"Don't whip me, father!" I pleaded, as he came staggering toward me with the whip. "Don't whip me, please!"

I started to make a clean breast of the whole matter, but the cruel lash cut my sentence short. I had on no coat, only my waist, and I am sure a boy never received such a whipping as I did.

I did not cry at first. My heart was filled only with pity for my father. Something lay so heavy in my breast that it seemed to fill up my throat and choke me. I shut my teeth tightly together, and tried to endure the hurt, but the biting lash cut deeper and deeper until I could stand it no longer. Then my spirit broke, and I begged him to stop. This seemed only to anger him the more,

if such a thing could be. I cried for mercy, and called for mother, who was out at one of the neighbor's. Had she been at home, I am sure she would have interceded for me. But he kept on and on, his face as white as the wall. I could feel something wet running down my back, and my face was slippery with blood, when I put up my hand to protect it. I thought I should die; everything began to go round and round. The strokes did not hurt any longer; I could not feel them now. The hall suddenly grew dark, and I sank upon the floor. Then I suppose he stopped.

When I returned to consciousness, I was lying on the couch in the dining-room, with a wet cloth about my forehead, and mother was kneeling by me, fanning me and crying. I put my arms about her neck, and begged her not to cry, but my head ached so dreadfully that I could not keep back my own tears. I asked where father was, and she said he went down-town when she came. He did not return at supper-time, nor did we see him again until the following morning.

I could eat no supper that night before going to bed, and mother came and stayed with me. I am sure she did not sleep, for as often as I dropped off from sheer exhaustion, I was wakened by her sobbing. Then I, too, would cry. I tried to be brave, but my wounds hurt me so, and my head ached. I seemed to be thinking all the time of father. My poor father! I felt sorry for him, and kept wondering where he was. All through the night it seemed to me that I could see him drinking and drinking, and betting and betting. My back hurt dreadfully, and mother put some ointment

and soft cotton on it.

It was late in the morning when I awoke, and heard mother and father talking down-stairs. With great difficulty, I climbed out of bed and dressed myself. When I went down, mother had a fire in the dining-room stove, and father was sitting, or rather lying, with both arms stretched out upon the table, his face buried between them. By him on a plate were some slices of toast that mother had prepared, and a cup of coffee, which had lost its steam without being touched.

I went over by the stove and stood looking at father. I had remained there but a moment, my heart full of sympathy for him, and wondering if he were ill, when he raised his head and looked at me. I had never before seen him look so haggard and pale. As his eyes rested on me, the tears started down my cheeks.

"Carter, my child," he said hoarsely, "I have done you a great wrong. Can you forgive me?"

In an instant my arms were about his neck—I felt no stiffness nor soreness now. He folded me to his breast, and cried, as I did. After a long time he spoke again:—

"If I had only known—your mother has just told me. It was the beer, Carter, the beer. I will never touch the stuff again, never," he said faintly. Then he stretched out his arms upon the table, and bowed his head upon them. I stood awkwardly by, the tears streaming down my cheeks, but they were tears of joy.

Mother, who was standing in the kitchen doorway with her apron to her eyes, came and put her arm about him, and said

something, very gently, which I did not understand. Then she kissed me several times. I shall never forget the happiness of that hour.

For a long time after that father would not go downtown in the evening unless I could go with him. He lived to a good old age, and was for many years head bookkeeper for Mr. Blodget. He kept his promise always.

Mother is still living, and still wears the ring.—*Alva H. Sawins, M.D., in the Union Signal.*

* * * * *

The Lad's Answer

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

"I wonder why," his aunty said,
"This little lad always comes here,
When there are many other homes
As nice as this, and quite as near."

He stood a moment deep in thought,
Then, with the love-light in his eye,
He pointed where his mother sat,
And said: "Here she lives; that is why '"

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

ARTHUR V. FOX.

THE BRIDAL WINE-CUP

"Pledge with wine! Pledge with wine!" cried young and thoughtless Harvey

Wood. "Pledge with wine!" ran through the bridal party.

The beautiful bride grew pale; the decisive hour had come. She pressed her white hands together, and the leaves of the bridal wreath trembled on her brow. Her breath came quicker, and her heart beat wilder.

"Yes, Marian, lay aside your scruples for this once," said the judge in a low tone, going toward his daughter; "the company expects it. Do not so seriously infringe upon the rules of etiquette. In your own home do as you please; but in mine, for this once, please me."

Pouring a brimming cup, they held it, with tempting smiles, toward Marian. She was very pale, though composed; and her hand shook not, as, smiling back, she gracefully accepted the crystal tempter, and raised it to her lips. But scarcely had she done so when every hand was arrested by her piercing exclamation of "O, how terrible!"

"What is it?" cried one and all, thronging together, for she had slowly carried the glass at arm's length and was fixedly regarding it.

"Wait," she answered, while a light, which seemed inspired, shone from her dark eyes—"wait, and I will tell you. I see," she

added slowly, pointing one finger at the sparkling ruby liquid, "a sight that beggars all description; and yet, listen! I will paint it for you, if I can. It is a lovely spot. Tall mountains, crowned with verdure, rise in awful sublimity around; a river runs through, and bright flowers grow to the water's edge. But there a group of Indians gather. They flit to and fro, with something like sorrow upon their dark brows. In their midst lies a manly form, but his cheek, how deathly! His eyes are wild with the fitful fire of fever. One friend stands before him—nay, I should say, kneels; for see, he is pillowing that poor head upon his breast.

"O, the high, holy-looking brow! Why should death mark it, and he so young? Look, how he throws back the damp curls! See him clasp his hands! Hear his thrilling shrieks for life! Mark how he clutches at the form of his companion, imploring to be saved! O, hear him call piteously his father's name! See him twine his fingers together as he shrieks for his sister—his only sister, the twin of his soul, weeping for him in his distant native land!

"See!" she exclaimed, while the bridal party shrank back, the untasted wine trembling in their faltering grasp, and the judge fell overpowered upon his seat—"see! his arms are lifted to heaven—he prays—how wildly!—for mercy. Hot fever rushes through his veins. He moves not; his eyes are set in their sockets; dim are their piercing glances. In vain his friend whispers the name of father and sister—death is there. Death—and no soft hand, no gentle voice to soothe him. His head sinks back; one convulsive shudder—he is dead!"

A groan ran through the assembly. So vivid was description, so unearthly her look, so inspired her manner, that what she described seemed actually to have taken place then and there. They noticed, also, that the bridegroom hid his face in his hands, and was weeping.

"Dead!" she repeated again, her lips quivering faster and faster, and her voice more broken. "And there they scoop him a grave; and there, without a shroud, they lay him down in that damp, reeking earth, the only son of a proud father, the only idolized brother of a fond sister. There he lies, my father's son, my own twin brother, a victim to this deadly poison. Father," she exclaimed, turning suddenly, while the tears rained down her beautiful cheeks, "father, shall I drink it now?"

The form of the old judge was convulsed with agony. He raised not his head, but in a smothered voice he faltered:—

"No, no, my child; no!"

She lifted the glittering goblet, and let it suddenly fall to the floor, where it was dashed in a thousand pieces. Many a tearful eye watched her movement, and instantaneously every wine-glass was transferred to the marble table on which it had been prepared. Then, as she looked at the fragments of crystal, she turned to the company, saying: "Let no friend hereafter who loves me tempt me to peril my soul for wine. Not firmer are the everlasting hills than my resolve, God helping me, never to touch or taste the poison cup. And he to whom I have given my hand, who watched over my brother's dying form in that last solemn

hour, and buried the dear wanderer there by the river in that land of gold, will, I trust, sustain me in that resolve."

His glistening eyes, his sad, sweet smile, were her answer. The judge left the room. When, an hour after, he returned, and with a more subdued manner took part in the entertainment of the bridal guests, no one could fail to read that he had determined to banish the enemy forever from his princely home.—"*Touching Incidents and Remarkable Answers to Prayer."*

A MOTHER'S SORROW

A company of Southern ladies, assembled in a parlor, were one day talking about their different troubles. Each had something to say about her own trials. But there was one in the company, pale and sad-looking, who for a while remained silent. Suddenly rousing herself, she said:—

"My friends, you do not any of you know what trouble is."

"Will you please, Mrs. Gray," said the kind voice of one who knew her story, "tell the ladies what you call trouble?"

"I will, if you desire it; for, in the words of the prophet, 'I am the one who hath seen affliction.'

"My parents were very well off; and my girlhood was surrounded by all the comforts of life. Every wish of my heart was gratified, and I was cheerful and happy.

"At the age of nineteen I married one whom I loved more than all the world besides. Our home was retired; but the sun never shone upon a lovelier spot or a happier household. Years rolled on peacefully. Five lovely children sat around our table, and a little curly head still nestled in my bosom.

"One night about sundown one of those fierce, black storms came up, which are so common to our Southern climate. For many hours the rain poured down incessantly. Morning dawned, but still the elements raged. The country around us was overflowed. The little stream near our dwelling became a

foaming torrent. Before we were aware of it, our house was surrounded by water. I managed, with my babe, to reach a little elevated spot, where the thick foliage of a few wide-spread trees afforded some protection, while my husband and sons strove to save what they could of our property. At last a fearful surge swept away my husband, and he never rose again. Ladies, no one ever loved a husband more. But that was not trouble.

"Presently my sons saw their danger, and the struggle for life became the only consideration. They were as brave, loving boys as ever blessed a mother's heart; and I watched their efforts to escape, with such an agony as only mothers can feel. They were so far off that I could not speak to them; but I could see them closing nearer and nearer to each other, as their little island grew smaller and smaller.

"The swollen river raged fearfully around the huge trees. Dead branches, upturned trunks, wrecks of houses, drowning cattle, and masses of rubbish, all went floating past us. My boys waved their hands to me, and then pointed upward. I knew it was their farewell signal; and you, mothers, can imagine my anguish. I saw them perish—all perish. Yet that was not trouble.

"I hugged my baby close to my heart; and when the water rose at my feet, I climbed into the low branches of the tree, and so kept retiring before it, till the hand of God stayed the waters, that they should rise no farther. I was saved. All my worldly possessions were swept away; all my earthly hopes were blighted. Yet that was not trouble.

"My baby was all I had left on earth. I labored day and night to support him and myself, and sought to train him in the right way. But, as he grew older, evil companions won him away from me. He ceased to care for his mother's counsels; he sneered at her entreaties and agonizing prayers. He became fond of drink. He left my humble roof, that he might be unrestrained in his evil ways. And at last one night, when heated by wine, he took the life of a fellow creature. He ended his days upon the gallows. God had filled my cup of sorrow before; now it ran over. That was trouble, my friends, such as I hope the Lord of mercy will spare you from ever knowing."

Boys and girls, can you bear to think that you might bring such sorrow on your dear father or mother? If you would not, be on your guard against intemperance. Let wine and liquors alone. Never touch them.—*Selected*.

* * * * *

"Ah, none but a mother can tell you, sir, how a mother's heart will ache
With the sorrow that comes of a sinning child,
with grief for a lost one's sake,
When she knows the feet she trained to walk have gone so far astray,
And the lips grown bold with curses that she taught to sing and pray!
A child may fear, a wife may weep, but of all sad things none other

Seems half so sorrowful to me as being a drunkard's mother."

THE REPRIMAND

At the sound of Mr. Troy's bell, Eleanor Graves vanished into his private office. Ten minutes later she came out, with a deep flush on her face and tears in her eyes.

"He lectured me on the spelling of a couple of words and a mistake in a date," she complained to Jim Forbes. "Anybody's liable to misspell a word or two in typing, and I know I took the date down exactly as he gave it to me."

Jim looked uncomfortable. "I would not mind," he said awkwardly. "We all have to take it sometime or other. Besides," he glanced hesitatingly at the pretty, indignant face, "I suppose the boss thinks we ought not to make mistakes."

"As if I wanted to!" Eleanor retorted, stiffly.

But she worked more carefully the next week; for her pride was touched. Then, with restored confidence, came renewed carelessness, and an error crept into one of the reports she was copying. The error was slight, but it brought her a sharp reprimand from Mr. Troy. It was the second time, he reminded her, that she had made that blunder. At the reproof the girl's face flushed painfully, and then paled.

"If my work is not satisfactory, you had better find some one who can do it better," she said.

Whirling round in his swivel-chair, Mr. Troy looked at her. He had really never noticed his latest stenographer before, but

now his keen eyes saw many things that showed that she came from a home where she had been petted and cared for.

"How long have you been at work?" he asked.

"This is my first position," Eleanor answered.

Mr. Troy nodded. "I understand. Now, Miss Graves, let me tell you something. You have many of the qualities of a good business woman; you are punctual, you are not afraid of work, you are fairly accurate. I have an idea that you take pride in turning out a good piece of work. But you must learn to stand criticism and profit by it. We must all take it sometime, every one of us. A weakling goes under. A strong man or woman learns to value it, to make every bit of it count. That is what I hope you will do."

Eleanor braced herself to meet his eyes.

"If you will let me, I will try again," she said.—*Youth's Companion*.

* * * * *

The Kingfisher

A kingfisher sat on a flagpole slim,
And watched for a fish till his eye was dim.
"I wonder," said he, "if the fishes know
That I, their enemy, love them so!
I sit and watch and blink my eye
And watch for fish and passers-by;
I must occasionally take to wing

On account of the stones that past me sing.

*

"I nearly always work alone;
For past experience has shown
That I can't gather something to eat,
And visit my neighbor across the street.
So whether I'm fishing early or late,
I usually work without a mate,
Since I can't visit and watch my game;
For fishing's my business, and Fisher's my name.
Maybe by watching, from day to day,
My life and habits in every way,
You might be taught a lesson or two
That all through life might profit you;
Or if you only closely look,
This sketch may prove an open book,
And teach a lesson you should learn.
Look closely, and you will discern."

CHAS. E.E. SANBORN.

AN EXAMPLE

Stealing away from the ones at home, who would be sad when they found out about it; stealing away from honor, purity, cleanliness, goodness, and manliness, the minister's boy and the boy next door were preparing to smoke their first cigarettes. They had skulked across the back pasture, and were nearing the stone wall that separated Mr. Meadow's corn-field from the road; and here, screened by the wall on one side and by corn on the other, they intended to roll the little "coffin nails," and smoke them unseen.

The minister's boy, whose name was Johnny Brighton, and who was an innocent, unsuspicious child, agreed that it would be a fine, manly thing to smoke. So the lads waited and planned, and now their opportunity had come. The boy next door, whose name was Albert Beecher, saw old Jerry Grimes, the worst character in Roseland, drop a small bag of tobacco and some cigarette-papers. The lad, being unobserved, transferred the stuff from the sidewalk to his pocket, then hid it in the wood-shed.

At last their plan seemed about to be carried out. Albert's mother was nursing a sick friend, and the minister, secure in his study, was preparing a sermon. Johnny's mother was dead. His aunt Priscilla was his father's housekeeper, and she was usually so busy that she had little time for small boys. Today, as she began her sewing, Johnny slipped quietly from the house and joined his

chum.

The boys reached the stone wall and sat down, with the tobacco between them, to enjoy (?) what they considered a manly deed. After considerable talk and a few blunders, each succeeded in rolling a cigarette, and was about to pass it to his lips, when a strange voice, almost directly above their heads, said, pleasantly, "Trying to kill yourselves, boys?"

With a guilty start, Johnny and Albert turned instantly, and beheld the strangest specimen of humanity that either had ever seen. An unmistakable tramp, with a pale, sickly face, covered partly with grime and partly with stubby black beard, stood leaning with his arms on top of the wall, looking down at them. Although it was summer, he wore a greasy winter cap, and his coat, too, spoke of many rough journeys through dirt and bad weather. His lips were screwed into something resembling a smile; but as he spoke, his haunted, sunken eyes roved restlessly from one upturned face to the other.

As the only answer the boys gave him was an astonished, frightened stare, the man continued: "I would not do it, boys. It is an awful thing—awful! I was trying to get a little sleep over here," he continued, "when I heard your voices, and thought I would see what was going on. Did not any one ever tell you about cigarettes? Why, each one contains enough poison to kill a cat; if it was fixed right, I mean." He passed a thin, shaking hand over his face, and went on: "Do you want to fool with such things? —Not if you are wise. You see, the cigarette habit will kill you

sometime, by inches, if not right away, or else drive you crazy; and no sane person wants to kill himself or spoil his health. That is what I am doing, though," he admitted, with a bitter smile and a sad shake of his head. "But I cannot stop it now. I have gone too far, and I cannot help myself. I am a wreck, a blot on the face of the earth."

Both lads had thrown their cigarettes to the ground, scrambled to their feet. Johnny, sober-faced and round-eyed, was gazing intently up at the man; but Albert, feigning indifference, stood digging his toe into the earth. He was listening, however.

"It is this way with me," the stranger went on, seeing he had an audience: "I have gone from bad to worse till I cannot stop, no matter how hard I try. Why, I was once a clean little chap like you, but I got to reading trash, and then I began to smoke, and pretty soon I had drifted so far into evil ways that I had no control over myself."

Here Johnny and Albert exchanged a painful glance.

"The worst thing about cigarettes," the man continued, "is that they usually lead to something worse. I am a drunkard and a thief, because of evil associations. Tramps never have any ready money; so when I have to have cigarettes, which is all the time, I either steal them or steal the money to buy them with. Besides," with another sad shake of the head, "I am what is known as a drug fiend, and—yes, I guess I am everything bad. If your folks knew who was talking to you, their blood would run cold.

"And it is all principally due to cigarettes!" he broke forth,

savagely, emphasizing his words with his fist and speaking more excitedly. "Just look at me and behold a splendid example of the cigarette curse. Why, I was naturally bright; I might have been a man to honor. But a bad habit, uncontrolled, soon ruins one. My nerves are gone. I am only a fit companion for jailbirds and criminals. I cannot even look an honest man in the face, yet I am not naturally bad at heart. The best way is never to begin; then you will never have to suffer. Cigarettes will surely hurt you some day, though you may not be able to see the effects at first."

The speaker's manner had changed greatly during the past few moments. At first he had spoken calmly, but he was now more than agitated. His eyes rolled and flashed in their dark caverns, and he spoke vehemently, with excited gestures. Johnny and Albert stood close together, regarding him with frightened eyes.

"I wish I could reform," he exclaimed, "but I cannot! The poison is in my veins. A thousand devils seem dragging me down. I wish I could make every boy stop smoking those things. I wish I could warn them of the horrible end."

With a sudden shriek, the man threw up his hands, fell backward, and disappeared. After a second's hesitation, both lads ran to the wall, climbed up, and looked over. In an unmistakable fit, the man was writhing on the ground. Johnny and Albert ran quickly across lots and into Rev. Paul Brighton's study. After learning that the boys had found a man in a fit, Johnny's father hailed two passing neighbors, and the little party of rescuers

followed the lads to the scene of the strange experience.

It was a sorry spectacle that greeted them. The poor fellow's paroxysm had passed, and he lay still and apparently lifeless, covered with dust and grime. The minister bent over him, and, ascertaining that he was alive and conscious, lifted him up; then, with the help of the two men, took the outcast to the parsonage.

That evening, before the minister had asked his boy three questions, Johnny broke into convulsive sobs, and made a clean breast of the matter from the beginning. Blaming himself for not having won the child's heart securely long before this, the minister did not censure him severely. He knew that after such an example, the sensitive lad would never go wrong as far as cigarettes were concerned.

Aunt Priscilla took her nephew in her arms, and, kissing the lips that were yet sweet and pure, said, "If I have neglected you, Johnny, I am sorry; and after this I am going to spend considerable time being good to my precious laddie."

Johnny slipped an arm around Aunt Priscilla's neck. "That is just what I want," he said, happily.

"I hope this will teach you a lesson, Albert," said Mrs. Beecher to her son, when he, with the help and advice of the minister, had made a full confession of his share in the matter. "After such an example, I should think you would never want to see another cigarette."

"I do not," said Albert, soberly, "and if I can help it, I am not going to;

I will fight them. Cigarettes certainly did not make a man of that fellow.

They *unmade* him."

For several days, during which the minister thought of what could be done for him, the outcast stayed at the parsonage. He was invited to try the gospel cure. "If you will put yourself unreservedly in the hands of God, and remain steadfast," said Mr. Brighton, "there is hope for you. Besides, I know of some medical missionaries who can help doctor the poison out of your system, if you will let them."

At last the poor fellow yielded. And after a hard, bitter struggle, during which a higher power helped him, he won the victory. He joined a band of religious people whose work is to help rebuild wrecked lives; and although weak at first and never robust, he was still able to point the right way to many an erring mortal. He did much good; and Johnny and Albert, at least, never forgot the practical example he gave them of what the cigarette can accomplish for its slaves. BENJAMIN KEECH.

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

A number of years ago, at an orphan asylum in a Northern State, there lived a boy whom we shall call Will Jones. He was just an ordinary boy. No, he was not so in one respect, which I must point out, to his discredit. Will Jones had a temper that distinguished him from the general run of boys. Will's temper might have been inherited from a Spanish pirate, and yet Will was a boy whom every one loved; but this hair-trigger temper at times terribly spoiled things. It would be tedious to recount his uprisings of anger, and the direful consequences that often followed.

Mr. Custer, the superintendent of the asylum, had hopefully striven to lead

Will to the paths of right; but it was a difficult task.

Sometimes it needs but one small breach to begin the overthrow of a giant wall. One small key, if it is the right one, will open the most resisting door. One small phrase may start a germ-thought growing in a human mind which in after-years may become a mighty oak of character. So Will Jones, the incorrigible fighter was to demonstrate this principle, as we shall see.

On a Sabbath evening, as the hundred or more orphans met at vespers and sang, "Onward, Christian Soldiers!" they saw a stranger seated at the speaker's desk in the home chapel. He was a

venerable old Wan, straight and dignified, his hoary head a crown of honor; for he was all that he appeared—a father in Israel.

In a brief speech he told the boys that he had once been a Union soldier, and had fought in the battles of his country. He told of the courage it required to face death upon the battle-field. He described the charges his company had made and met, the sieges and the marches, the sufferings they endured, and, lastly, the joys that victory and the end of the conflict brought.

Then, when the boys were at the height of interested expectancy, he skilfully drew the lesson he wanted them to learn. He told of a greater warfare, requiring a higher courage, and bringing as a reward a larger and more enduring victory. "Boys," he said, "the real soldiers are the Christian soldiers; the real battle is the battle against sin; the real battle-ground is where that silent struggle is constantly waging within our minds." Then he told of Paul, who said, "I have fought a good fight." "Did any of you boys ever fight a bad fight?" Every head but one turned to a common point at this juncture, and the eyes of only one boy remained upon the speaker. Will Jones had the record for bad fights, and that is why about ninety-nine pairs of eyes had involuntarily sought him out when the speaker asked the question, which he hoped each would ask himself. And the reason Will Jones did not look around accusingly at any of the other boys was because he had taken to heart all that had been said; and, because of this, the turning-point had come; his conversion had begun. Henceforth he determined so to live that he could say with Paul, "I have

fought a good fight."

No sooner does a boy determine to fight the good fight than Satan accepts the challenge, and gives him a combat such as will seem like a "fiery trial" to try him. These struggles develop the moral backbone; and if a boy does not give in, he will find his moral courage increasing with each moral fight. Just let that thought stay in your mind, underscored in bold-faced italics, and printed in indelible ink; and if you have a tendency to be a spiritual "jelly-back," it will be like a rod of steel to your spine.

The fear of Will Jones's knuckles had won a degree of peace for him. He had lived a sort of armed truce, so to speak. Now he was subjected to petty persecutions by mean boys who took advantage of his new stand. He did not put on the look of a martyr either, but kept good-natured even when the old volcano within was rumbling and threatening to bury the tormentors in hot lava and ashes. The old desire to fight the bad fight was turned into the new channel of determination to fight the good fight. Today Will Jones is still a good fighter, and I hope he always will be, and some day will be crowned with eternal victory; for he who fights the good fight is fighting for eternity.

Will you not try so to live each day, subduing every sinful thought, that at night when you kneel to pray you can say to the Lord, "I have fought a good fight today"?

S. W. VAN TRUMP.

* * * * *

Our Help Is Near

Temptations dark and trials fall
On all who labor here;
But we have One on whom to call:
Our Lord is ever near.
So let us when these trials come,
Lean on his strength alone,
Till we have reached the promised home
Where sorrows are unknown.

MAX HILL.

TIGHTENING THE SADDLE-GIRTH

A time of grave crisis; upon the events of the next few minutes would hang the issue of a hard-fought battle. Already at one end of the line the troops seemed to be wavering. Was it indeed defeat?

Just where the fight was most fierce, a young officer was seen to leap from his horse. His followers, sore pressed though they were, could not help turning toward him, wondering what had happened. The bullets flew like hail everywhere; and yet, with steady hand, the gallant soldier stood by the side of his horse and drew the girth of his saddle tight. He had felt it slip under him, and he knew that upon just such a little thing as a loose buckle might hinge his own life, and, perhaps, the turn of the battle. Having secured the girth, he bounded into the saddle, rallied his men, and swept on to victory.

Many a battle has been lost on account of no greater thing than a loose saddle-girth. A loose screw will disable the mightiest engine in the world. A bit of sand in the bearing of an axle has brought many a locomotive to a standstill, and thrown out of order every train on the division. Lives have been lost, business houses wrecked, private fortunes laid in the balance, just because some one did not tighten his saddle-girth!

Does it seem a small thing to you that you forgot some seemingly unimportant thing this morning? Stop right where you are and go back and do the thing you know you should have done in the first place.

One of the finest teachers in the leading school of one of our cities puts stress day after day on that one thing of cultivating the memory so that it will not fail in time of stress. "Do the thing when it should be done," she insists. "If you forget, go back and do it. You have no right to forget; no one has."

Tighten up the loose screw the moment you see it is loose. Pull the strap through the buckle as soon as you feel it give. Wipe the axle over which you have charge, clean of dust or grit. If your soul is in the balance, stop now, today, this very moment, and see that all is right between you and God.—*Kind Words.*

* * * * *

If You But Knew

O lad, my lad, if you but knew
The glowing dreams I dream of you,—
The true, straight course of duty run,
The noble deeds, the victories won,
And you the hero of them all,—
I know that you would strive to be
The lad that in my dreams I see;
No tempter's voice could make you fall.

Ah, lad, my lad, your frank, free smile
Has cheered me many a weary mile;
And in your face, e'en in my dreams,
Potent of future manhood beams,—
Manhood that lives above the small;
Manhood all pure and good and clean,
That scorns the base, the vile, the mean,
That hears and answers duty's call

And lad, my lad, so strong and true,
This is the prayer I pray for you:
Lord, take my boy, and guide his life
Through all the pitfalls of the strife;
Lead him to follow out thy plan,
To do the deeds he ought to do,
To all thy precepts ever true;
Make him a clean and noble man.

MAX HILL.

"HERRINGS FOR NOTHING"

I want you to think of a bitter, east windy day, fast-falling snow, and a short, muddy street in London. Put these thoughts together, and add to them the picture of a tall, stout man, in a rough greatcoat, and with a large comforter round his neck, buffeting through wind and storm. The darkness is coming rapidly, as a man with a basket on his head turns the corner of the street, and there are two of us on opposite sides. He cries loudly as he goes: "Herrings! three a penny! Red herrings, good and cheap, three a penny!" So crying, he passes along the street, crosses at its end, and comes to where I am standing at the corner. Here he pauses, evidently wishing to fraternize with somebody, as a relief from the dull time and disappointed hopes of trade. I presume I appear a suitable object, as he comes close to me and begins conversation:—

"Governor, what do you think of these yer herrings?"—three in his hand, while the remaining stock are deftly balanced in the basket on his head. "Don't you think they're good?" and he offered me the opportunity of testing them by scent, which I courteously but firmly declined, "and don't you think they're cheap as well?"

I asserted my decided opinion that they were good and cheap.

"Then, look you, governor, why can't I sell 'em? Yet have I walked a mile and a half along this dismal place, offering these

good and cheap 'uns; and nobody don't buy none!"

"I do not wonder at all at that," I answered, to his astonishment.

"Tell us why not, governor."

"The people have no work, and are starving; there are plenty of houses round here that have not a single penny in them," was my reply.

"Ah! then, governor," he rejoined, "I've put my foot in it this time; I knew they was werry poor, but I thought three a penny 'ud tempt 'em. But if they haven't the ha-pence, they can't spend 'em, sure enough; so there's nothing for it but to carry 'em back, and try and sell 'em elsewhere. I thought by selling cheap, arter buying cheap, I could do them good, and earn a trifle for myself. But I'm done this time."

"How much will you take for the lot?" I inquired.

First a keen look at me, then down came the basket from his head, then a rapid calculation, then a grinning inquiry, "Do you mean profit an' all, governor?"

"Yes."

"Then I'll take four shillin', and be glad to get 'em."

I put my hand in my pocket, produced that amount, and handed it to him.

"Right, governor, thank'ee! Now what'll I do with 'em?" he said, as he quickly transferred the coins to his own pocket.

"Go round this corner into the middle of the road, and shout with all your might, 'Herrings for nothing!' and give three to

every man, woman, or child that comes to you, till the basket is emptied."

On hearing these instructions, he immediately reproduced the money, and examined it. Being satisfied of its genuineness, he again replaced it, and then looked keenly and questioningly at me.

"Well," I said, "is it all right and good?"

"Yes," replied he.

"Then the herrings are my property, and I can do as I like with them; but if you do not like to do as I tell you, give me back my money."

"All right, governor, an' they are yours; so if you say it, here goes!" Accordingly, he proceeded into the middle of the adjoining street, and went along, shouting aloud: "Herrings for nothing! Good red herrings for nothing!"

Out of sight myself, I stood at the corner to watch his progress; and speedily he neared the house where a tall woman stood at the first-floor window, looking out upon him.

"Here you are, missus," he bawled, "herrings for nothing! A fine chance for yer! Come an' take 'em."

The woman shook her head unbelievingly, and left the window.

"Vot a fool!" said he. "But they won't be all so. Herrings for nothing!" A little child came out to look at him, and he called to her, "Yer, my dear, take these in to your mother. Tell her how cheap they are—herrings for nothing." But the child was afraid

of him and them, and ran indoors.

So down the street, in the snowy slush and mud, went the cheap fish, the vender crying loudly as he went, "Herrings for nothing!" and then adding savagely, "O you fools!" Thus he reached the very end; and, turning to retrace his steps, he continued his double cry as he came, "Herrings for nothing!" and then in a lower key, "O you fools!"

"Well?" I said to him calmly, as he reached me at the corner.

"Well!" he replied, "if yer think so! When you gave me the money for herrings as yer didn't want, I thought you was training for a lunatic 'sylum. Now I thinks all the people round here are fit company for yer. But what'll I do with the herrings, if yer don't want 'em and they won't have 'em?"

"We will try again together," I replied. "I will come with you, and we will both shout."

Into the road we both went; and he shouted, "Herrings for nothing!" and then I called out also, "Will any one have some herrings for tea?"

They heard the voice, and they knew it well; and they came out at once, in twos and threes and sixes, men and women and children, all striving eagerly to reach the welcome food.

As fast as I could take them from the basket, I handed three to each eager applicant, until all were speedily disposed of. When the basket was empty, the hungry crowd who had none, was far greater than those that had been supplied; but they were too late; there were no more herrings.

Foremost among the disappointed was the tall woman, who, with a bitter tongue, began vehemently: "Why haven't I got any? Ain't I as good as they? Ain't my children as hungry as theirs?"

Before I had time to reply, the vender stretched out his arm toward her, saying, "Why, governor, that's the very woman as I offered 'em to first, and she turned up her nose at 'em."

"I didn't," she rejoined passionately; "I didn't believe you meant it!"

"Yer just goes without, then, for yer unbelief!" he replied. "Good night, and thank'ee, governor!"

You smile at the story, which is strictly true. Are you sure you are not ten thousand times worse? Their unbelief cost them only a hungry stomach; but what may your unbelief of God's offer cost you? God—not man—God has sent his messenger to you repeatedly for years, to offer pardon for nothing! Salvation for nothing! He has sent to your homes, your hearts, the most loving and tender offers that even an Almighty could frame; and what have you replied? Have you not turned away, in scornful unbelief, like the woman?

God says, "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;… I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh." Prov. I:24-26. But he also says, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Isa. 55:1. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his

only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3: 16.

Answer him. Will you have it?—*C. J. Whitmore*.

Come

Ho, every one that thirsteth,
Come to the living stream,
And satisfy your longing soul
Where silver fountains gleam.

Come, weary, faint, and hungry;
Before you now is spread
A rich supply for all your needs;
Receive the living Bread.

Why do you linger longer?
Come while 'tis called today.
Here's milk and honey without price;
O, do not turn away!

Why feed on husks that perish?
Enter the open door.
Thy Saviour stands with outstretched hands;
Eat, drink, and want no more.

MAY WAKEHAM.

THE POWER OF SONG

My Own Experience

Near the summit of a mountain in Pennsylvania is a small hamlet called Honeyville, consisting of two log houses, two shanties, a rickety old barn, and a small shed, surrounded by a few acres of cleared land. In one of these houses lived a family of seven,—father, mother, three boys, and two girls. They had recently moved from Michigan. The mother's health was poor, and she longed to be out on the beautiful old mountain where she had spent most of her childhood. Their household goods had arrived in Pennsylvania just in time to be swept away by the great Johnstown flood of 1889.

The mother and her two little girls, Nina and Dot, were Christians, and their voices were often lifted in praise to God as they sang from an old hymn-book, one of their most cherished possessions.

One morning the mother sent Nina and Dot on an errand to their sister's home three and one-half miles distant. The first two miles took them through dense woods, while the rest of the way led past houses and through small clearings. She charged them to start on their return home in time to arrive before dark, as many wild beasts—bears, catamounts, and occasionally a panther—were prowling around. These animals were hungry at this time of the year; for they were getting ready to "hole up," or lie down

in some cozy cave or hole for their winter's nap.

The girls started off, merrily chasing each other along the way, and arrived at their sister's in good time, and had a jolly romp with the baby. After dinner the sister was so busy, and the children were so absorbed in their play, that the time passed unheeded until the clock struck four. Then the girls hurriedly started for home, in the hope that they might arrive there before it grew very dark. The older sister watched until they disappeared up the road, anxiously wishing some one was there to go with them.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.