

BACKBONE AND GRIT

The Story of a Brave Boy's Struggle with Poverty.

The stage has gone, sir, but there's a widow lives here, and she's got a boy, and he'll drive you over. He's a nice little fellow, and Deacon Ball lets him have his team for a trifle, and we like to get him a job when we can.

It was a hot day in July. Away up among the hills that make the lower slope of the Monadnock Mountain a friend lay very ill. In order to reach his temporary home one must take an early train to the nearest station, and trust to the lumbering old coach that made a daily trip to K—

The train was late; the stage, after waiting some time, was gone. The landlord of the little white hotel appeared in his shirt-sleeves, and leaning his elbow on the balcony rail dropped down on the hot and thirsty traveller what comfort could be extracted from the opening sentence of my sketch.

"Would we not come in and have some dinner?" "Yes." "Would he send for the deacon's team?" "Yes." "And the boy?" "Yes." "And the deacon?" "Yes." "And the horse?" "Yes." "And the team?" "Yes." "And the door of a little brown house across the way opened and out rushed the "widow's boy."

In his mouth was the last morsel of his dinner; he had evidently learned how to "eat and run." His feet were clad in last winter's much-worn boots, whose wrinkled legs refused to stay within the limits of his narrow and faded trousers. As his legs flew forward his arms flew backward in an ineffectual struggle to get himself inside of a jacket much too short in the sleeves.

"There he is," said the hostler, "that's the Widow Beebe's boy. I told him I'd hold the horse while he went home to get a bite." The horse did not look as if he needed to be held, but the hostler got his dime, and the boy approached in time to relieve my mind as to whether he would conquer that jacket or the jacket would conquer him and turn him wrongside out.

He was sun-burned and freckled, large-mouthed and red-haired—a homely, plain, ruddy-faced little Yankee boy; and yet, as we rode through the deep summer bloom and fragrance of the shaded road, winding up the low hills in the glow of the afternoon sun, I learned such a lesson from the little fellow as I shall not soon forget.

He did not look much like a preacher as he sat stooping forward a little, whisking the flies from the deacon's horse, but his sermon was one which I wish might have been heard by all the boys in the land. As it was I had to spur him on now and then by questions to get him to tell about himself.

"My father died, you see, and left my mother the little brown house opposite the tavern. You saw it, didn't you, sir—the one with the lilac bushes under the window? Father was sick a long time, and when he could not work he had to raise money on the house. Deacon Ball let him have it, a little at a time, and when father was gone mother found the money owed was almost three hundred dollars.

Sometimes I wish I could have sprung all the way from a baby to a man. Its such slow work growing up, and it was while mother was waiting for us to grow up that she worked hard."

"But, my boy, you cannot expect to be a son and daughter and mother all in one. You cannot do the work for a whole family."

"Yes, I can; it isn't much, and I am going to do it and the work my father left undone. I'm going to pay that mortgage, if I live."

"Heaven grant you may," I said, fervently, under my breath, "for not many mothers have such a son."

"Mother don't know I mean to do it, and she is very anxious I should go to school, and the boys in my class are studying, and I get me out of the book while I am washing the dishes or doing her work, and we have great fun. I try to remember and repeat it, and if we come to anything we can't make out I take it over to the teacher in the evening; she is very kind—she tells me."

Very kind! Who wouldn't be kind to such a boy? I felt the tears coming to my eyes at such a sudden vision of this son doing girl's work, while his poor old mother held the book in her twisted hands and tried to help him to learn.

But all this does not earn money, my boy. How do you expect to save if you spend your time indoors?"

"Oh, I don't do girl's work all day; no, indeed! I have worked out our taxes on the road. It wasn't much, but I helped the men build a stone wall down by the river; and Deacon Ball let me do a great deal of work for him, and when I get a chance to take anybody from the hotel to ride, he let me have this team for almost nothing; and I pay to him whatever I make. And I work on the farm with the men in summer; and I have a cow of my own and sell the milk at the tavern; and we have some hens, too, and sell the eggs. And in the fall I cut and pile the winter's wood in the sheds for the people who haven't any boys—and there's a good many people about here who haven't any boys," he added, brushing a fly from the old horse with the tip of his whip.

After this we fell into silence and rode through the sweet New England roads, with Monadnock rising before us ever nearer and more majestic. It impressed me with a sense of his rugged strength—one of the hills, "rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun"; but I glanced from the mountain to the little red-headed morsel of humanity at my side with a sort of recognition of their kinship. Somehow they seemed to belong together. I felt as if the same sturdy stuff were in them both. It was only a fancy, but it came back to me the next day, for when I came back to town after seeing my invalid friend, I called on Deacon Ball. He kept the village store and owned a pretty house and was evidently very well to do. Naturally we talked of John, and the Deacon said to me with tears in his old watery blue eyes:

"Why, bless your heart, sir, you don't think I'm going to take this money, do you? The only son of his mother and she a widow, and all tied up into double book-knobs with the rheumatics besides! True enough, I let his father have the money, and my wife, she says, says she to me, 'Well, Deacon, my dear, we've not got a child, and shall be just as well off a paws cent; but, 'cording to my calculation, it's better to let the boy think he's payin'. She says I might as well try to keep a barrel of vinegar from workin' as to keep that boy from workin'.' It's the mother in him and it's got to work. We think a good deal of the widow, Mand and me. I did before I ever saw Mand, but for all that we hold the mortgage and Johnny wants to work it out. Mand and me, we are going to let him work."

I turned away, for I was going to sup at Johnny's house; but before I went I asked the Deacon how much Johnny had already paid.

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For the purpose of comparison the statistician has grouped the counties according to their geographical position, those contiguous to Lake Ontario being called the Lake Ontario group, those bordering on the St. Lawrence and Ottawa being denominated the St. Lawrence and Ottawa group, and so on. Of the fifty counties thus grouped, twenty-nine show increases and twenty-one show decreases. The Lake Ontario group has been the most prosperous, showing an increase of 88,631. Next comes the St. Lawrence and Ottawa group with a growth of 28,970. Close after this is the Northern group, whose population exceeds that of 1871 by 37,784. The Lake Huron counties have lost 1,444, while the West Central district suffers to the extent of 840. In the counties surrounding Lake Erie there has been a moderate growth of 6,594. The Eastern Central counties have an increased population of 7,883, while the counties adjoining Georgian Bay have grown by 10,675.

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The reasons given by the statistician for the decreases in the 21 counties in Ontario, which aggregate 42,800 since last census, are: 1. The difference in the mode of counting the people. 2. The movement of population along the lines observed in every civilized country, viz., (a) westward to the virgin soil, and (b) from the rural parts of the cities and towns. 3. The introduction of agricultural machinery, doing away to a certain extent with hired help. 4. The denatation of the forest covering. 5. The opening of new territory by railways. 6. The development of mining industry.

Arrested in Oshawa. William Duplex and Joseph Maroney, two of Gurney's maulers, were found guilty of intimidating their fellow-workmen in May, 1890. Duplex and Maroney ran across one of the jurymen while they were out on bail awaiting sentence. The jurymen, whose name is John Henry, was thrashed soundly. The affair took place at the corner of Simcoe and Adelaide streets. Maroney was arrested and sentenced to eighteen months in the Central Prison, but Duplex escaped. He was arrested yesterday in Oshawa, where his wife lives, and last night Detective Alf Cuddy brought him back to this city, and locked him up in No. 1 Police station for the night.—Toronto Mail.

Salt the Best Moth-Killer. For moths salt is the best exterminator. The nuns in one of the hospital convents have tried everything else without success, and their experience is valuable, as they have so much clothing of the sick who go there, and strangers when dying often leave there quantities of clothing, etc. They had a room full of feathers, which were sent there for pillow-making, and they were in despair, as they could not exterminate the moths until they were advised to try common salt. They sprinkled it around, and in a week or ten days they were altogether rid of the moths. They are never troubled now.—Chicago Herald.

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TOLD BY PERSONALS. The Pathetic Tale of a Domestic Quarrel Told in Little Ads.

"GEORGE'S" APPEAL TO "JULIE." (From Buffalo Sunday News.) New York, Oct. 17.—During the past ten days a series of peculiar personal advertisements has appeared in the World addressed to "Julie" and signed "George." The first appeared on October 7th. It was this:

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"Have it so if you wish." "If it were not for our children I would leave you," exclaimed Mrs. Payne. "I will take care of them," answered the husband.

"All right. I will go away so far you will never see me." "I would make her life so happy she would not leave. It was all my fault in answering her so roughly as I did."

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All the real estate and bank deposits are in Payne's wife's name, and he cannot touch a dollar. His business necessitates the use of collateral security, and now he finds he has nearly \$4,000 in notes to pay without any money to pay them. The day before his wife left he deposited \$2,000 in the bank, but this, of course, he cannot touch, as it is deposited in his wife's name.

The financial part of the matter George cares but little about. He has lost his wife. His father, A. T. Payne, a prominent lawyer of Long Island City, takes a different view of the matter. He hates to see his son become a bankrupt, a thing which seems inevitable, unless Julie returns, or help comes from some quarter. Mr. Flower, who has great confidence in Mr. Payne, was informed of the circumstances, and promptly sent word to him that he fully sympathized with him.

A strange feature of the case is the secrecy with which the affair has been kept. Not even Payne's next door neighbors know that Mrs. Payne has run away. They think that she is on a visit to the country.

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"I shall continue my search for my wife until I find her," he said to a World reporter.

The reporter called at the Payne residence yesterday afternoon. The interior of the house is elegantly furnished. The two little girls were there. "I want my mamma," the elder one said. Mrs. Payne is described as tall and stout, with dark hair and eyes. The Paynes do not believe she has committed suicide, but are inclined to think she has gone into service in some family in the suburbs of New York.

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A History Behind Three Lines.

St. Catharines Standard: A three line item in yesterday's issue of the Standard had hidden beneath it a story which is seldom met with in real life. The item read:

Miss Galt, daughter of Judge Galt, conducted the meeting of the Salvation Army here yesterday afternoon.

That is all it said, yet it might have given the lady's history in columns. She is the daughter of Chief Justice Sir Thomas Galt, and was reared and educated like any other young lady of her station. She is still young, 26 or 27, handsome and refined. Several years ago, while other girls of her age were still thinking of balls and parties she decided to give herself up to the Master. She at once acted on that decision and entered the ranks of the Salvation Army as a soldier. All she had she gave to the work and in the service she had entered she labored and lived as those more humbly born. She was sent to Montreal, and during the cold winter following her conversion, she who had been raised in luxury, lived in a fireless uncarpeted room, cheered only by the grand work she was doing. And ever since she has lived and worked as she began, dead in earnest in the work of Him whose call she answered.

Paid in Kind. A Hoosier lad of 12 years was industriously at work upon a pile of wood in his mother's back yard, when he was approached by a playmate.

"Hello, Ben," said the youngster, "do you get anything for cuttin' the wood?" "Well, I reckon I do," replied Ben. "Ma gives me a cent a day for doin' it."

"What you goin' to do with yer money?" "Oh, she's savin' it fer me, and when I get enough she's goin' to get me a new ax."

The Kid and the Wolf. A wolf was one day standing high on the roof of a shed when a kid came trotting by. The wolf thought the kid would make a nice dinner. "I think," said the wolf complacently, "that you may as well say your prayers." "Come off de roof," replied the kid jeeringly. At this the wolf abandoned the idea of killing him. "A kid as tough as that," he reasoned, "would certainly be very poor eating." Moral: A judicious impudence is often useful in this wicked world.—Seattle Soundings.

Slight Acquaintance. Mrs. De Riche (who has been trying to snub Trotter)—Are you really going to the Schuyler Van Pelts' dinner? Why, I didn't imagine that you knew them.

Trotter (carelessly)—Aw—yes—know them slightly. Going to marry their daughter, you know.

When Queen Victoria's head gardener left her service recently the Queen presented him with a superb silver tea service as a token of the esteem in which she held him. Great Britain and Ireland last year drank 567,000,000 gallons of beer, 42,000,000 gallons more than were consumed in Germany. An English religious paper recently printed the following remarkable advertisement: "A cultured, earnest, godly young man desires a pastorale. Vivid preacher, musical voice, brilliant organizer. Tall, and of good appearance. Blameless life. Very highest references. Beloved by all. Salary, \$120.