

THE BOY AND HIS CHANCES.

Many a boy dreams of the great things he would do if only he "had a chance." A dozen homely duties are crowding about him, but he wants a chance to show that he is of different stuff from ordinary boys; and so he dreams and chafes at his commonplace surroundings until his opportunities are gone and he takes up the wail of, "if only I had a chance!"

The boys who succeed in life are the boys who make their own chances, or who see in every little thing about them a chance for faithful, conscientious work. Are you poor? Poverty is a stern teacher, but her lessons have been prized by many great men who have passed through her school. Have you no influential friends to help you along? Turner, the painter, was a barber's son; Pridaux, the scholar and theologian, scoured pots and pans while working his way through college. Sir Isaac Newton, the greatest astronomer of his time, once peddled cabbage on the streets. Martin Luther when a boy at school, sang in the street for the pence which passers-by might give him. The late Judge Bradley, of the United States Supreme Court, was the son of a charcoal burner.

There is more in the boy than the chance. A thousand chances may pass unheeded by a careless, unobservant lad, where the boy with the right sort of stuff in him would seize the first one. Patience, faithfulness, truthfulness and downright honesty count for more than chances.

A STORY OF MODERN MARTYRDOM.

She was always fond of books and study, and, as she grew older, she became more and more eager for education. She determined to go to college and to study law. She was not like other girls, and I never saw the least sign of pity, tenderness or weakness about her. I used to think she must have been given a double allowance of brains and no heart.

She was a ready and brilliant speaker, even at that time; and I suppose she never used her powers of argument and eloquence more earnestly than when she persuaded the old folks to furnish the money to carry out her plans. They had a good farm and a few hundred dollars, but of course they didn't see how they could possibly educate her as she desired.

But she told them that they could mortgage the farm, and in a few years, when she had finished her education, she could earn plenty of money for them all. "I am sure to succeed; there isn't even a possibility of failure for me," she said proudly, with a fine flash of conscious power in her eyes.

She was their only child, both beautiful and gifted; and as the old folks looked at her and listened they felt that it must be as she said. Nothing that life might hold for them was too great or good to lay at her feet. And so they mortgaged the farm and she went to college.

I was a near neighbour and friend, and I knew all about the years of sacrifice that followed. They had to make out the interest money and save what they could for her extra ex-

penses, for she must not be pinched. The first winter they bought themselves no new clothing, but made their partly worn garments do extra service; they sat in the kitchen to save an extra fire; they used skimmed milk that they might sell more cream, and they used no eggs but sold them all. Still it was very hard to make out the interest money.

The next winter they sold their chickens and pigs and went without meat, rigidly observing all their other economies. They shivered around their one fire in the big cold house, clad in the thin worn flannels of two winters ago, and I often found them sad and despondent, although they never complained. Yet how quickly mention of her progress and her successes would light up their pale, worn faces!

The next winter was a cold, hard one. We had a big snow early, and it drifted us in for a couple of days. When the roads were open I went over to them, for I had been anxious about them of late, they had grown so feeble and aged.

I found them both very sick in bed. They had taken cold; and somehow, they said, a great weakness had seized them, so that they could not get out for help.

Well, we did all we could, but they both died of typhoid pneumonia within a week. They had become too much enfeebled, through insufficient food and warmth, to have a chance of recovery. She came home and stayed a few days after the funeral to direct the settlement of their affairs. It was wonderful how well she managed. She sold the farm and all the personal property, so that, after paying off the mortgage, she had money enough left to carry her through to success.

Yes, it was as she had said. She did succeed, and is making money now. Once she came down from the city and spoke at a public gathering here, and all the great city papers sent down reporters to get her speech and artists to sketch her face and poses. They gave her columns next day.

They said it was a wonderful speech, brilliant, magnetic, irresistible. At its close the great audience rose and shouted in wild enthusiasm. But, although I was present, I did not hear the speech, nor see the speaker. I could see and think only of those two gentle and unselfish lives that had been sacrificed to the achievement of this intellectual ambition. Was it worth



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while? Her influence might be like a great light illuminating the minds of mankind, but theirs would have been a gracious warmth, stealing into the hearts of humanity.

She placed a costly monument over their graves, but she had no tears or flowers to offer. I transplanted thither from their own garden the sweet, common flowers they had loved, and I used to go there often and tend them. It was like a holy shrine and a pilgrimage to me.

Once I met her there. She had come to see if the workmen had set the monument straight.

"They suffered much for you," I ventured after a little.

She looked surprised.

"Suffered? Well, I suppose there was some difficulty about meeting the interest, and no doubt it worried them. But, you see, it was quite unnecessary. Even if they had been obliged to give up the farm it would not have mattered, since they could not live. And if they had lived, I would have provided well for them. I told them so."

Then I saw that she had not comprehended their sacrifice and their great love had made it a happiness to them, so that only within my heart had its simple pathos been written. And I went my way and said no more.

—To love God is our happiness, to trust in Him is our repose, to surrender ourselves entirely to His will is our strength.—Charles Beard.

—We shall never be sorry afterwards for thinking twice before we speak, for counting the cost before entering upon any new course, for sleeping over stings and injuries before saying or doing anything in answer, or for carefully considering any business scheme presented to us before putting money or name into it. It will save us from much regret, loss, and sorrow always to remember to do nothing rashly.

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