

'Harm! I'll starve before I beg! I'm a gentleman,' said the angry Rodney, falling back on his usual plea.

They had seated themselves on a stone wall to eat the bread.

'Rodney,' said Mr. Llewellyn, 'give him a more sensible answer.'

Thus driven to define himself, Rodney pulled his ideas together. 'It is not honest for a man who is well and strong and able to work, to try and live without working. You have no right to expect strangers to earn your bread for you. The Bible says, "If any man will not work, neither let him eat," and every man "must work, and eat with quietness his own bread," and all decent people look down on idleness and begging.'

'I'm sorry you look down on me that way, brother,' said Rasmus, much crestfallen, 'for I've never done much else. So I ain't company for you two, and I'd better leave, gentry.'

This was other than Rodney expected. He liked Rasmus.

'See here, Rasmus, there's no reason you should go on so, just because you began that way. You can work.'

'I don't think I like work,' said Rasmus.

'No one does out of the habit of it. We get to like it by practice. But now you'll most likely find your little brother by advertising, and how are you going to take care of him? You wouldn't take him up and down the country, asking for things?'

'No, I wouldn't,' said Rasmus. 'Do you think I'll find him? I'd turn to then, and work like a horse. It was along of him I stopped; from I was six years old I worked like a good fellow, till I ran away from the farmer. Ask that farmer if I didn't do fair by him. But going up and down the country, looking for Robin, I couldn't settle to anything. I didn't think it so bad to ask for what I wanted. I got used to it.'

'There is much to be said in behalf of Rasmus,' said Mr. Llewellyn. 'If I manage this trip, he will find things can be done in a different way, and by the time we get to New York he will be ready to settle down. You're young yet, Rasmus, and there is no reason why you should not yet have a happy life.'

'Mr. Andrews said no one had a happy life,' said Rodney.

'What makes a happy life?' asked Rasmus.

'A Russian nobleman has given five points as needful to a happy life,' said Mr. Llewellyn. 'I will give them to you, and see what you think of them. The first condition of happiness he gives, is, that we must live close to nature. That is, we must have freedom and enjoyment of the light, the sunshine, the fresh air. Then he says, the next condition of happiness is work. That no person is really happy who is doing nothing. A man should work, and love his work, to be happy; and I think he is right, for God meant us to work, and when we lead idle lives, our consciences must be unsatisfied, and if they are not reproaching us, at least they are not approving. The third condition which he gives for happiness is family life. He says man was made for family life; to have about him those he loves, and help them, and be helped by them. The fourth condition he makes is friendliness; that we should feel brotherly and kindly to every one. Not be cold and selfish, and stiff in our ways; but all be like brothers, and help each other. And lastly, he says we must have bodily health if we would be happy.'

'Well, I've got that—loads of it. Seems I lack only two things to be happy—work and family. If I get Robin, I'll set to and work, and then I'll have all.'

'All that the Russian mentions; but I should say there is another condition of happiness, greater than all these, and that we should have first of all; and that is God's love. I saw a poor, sick man in a Cincinnati hospital, shut out of every one of these five conditions; and yet he was very happy; he had great peace.'

'Now, dad—professor—you're gettin' way outside of my depth, entirely,' said Rasmus, getting down from the wall.

'About two miles from here,' said Mr. Llewellyn, 'is a place where I usually stay all night, the first day's walk from Pittsburg. An old man and his wife have a little old house, of three small rooms below, and one above. The upper one has four cot beds in it, and each bed is ten cents a night. The old folks make their living from an a-

ground. They are worth visiting, and you will see how they are happy.'

They moved along, Rodney lagging far behind the other two. He was sure he should never get to New York. His legs ached; his feet were sore; he was so tired he thought he should drop dead. Thinking over his miseries, and prognosticating worse, helped to pass the time, and before he expected it he saw before them the little, low house, ancient and red, a trumpet honeysuckle climbing over one side, a wisteria, just ready to bloom, on the other; and in the garden, very busy, an old man and an old woman, both seventy. They recognized Mr. Llewellyn as a friend. He told them his party had had supper, and would need only to refresh themselves with a wash at the pump behind the house.

'But the boy's feet are sore,' said Mr. Llewellyn; 'he is not used to the road, and if you have a basin of warm water handy, it might be a relief to him.'

Mr. Llewellyn then took a chair from the kitchen, placed it near the old man, who was thinning and setting lettuce plants, and sitting down, began to talk to him. Rasmus stretched himself at full length on a bench by the back door, and put his hands under his head; he was resting every inch of him. The old woman brought Rodney a wooden pail of warm water, and he put his swollen feet in it, as he sat on the kitchen door-step. The old lady sat beside him, talking cheerfully.

The twilight deepened. The old man finished his planting; the old lady lit the lamp. The old man said:

'We'll have worship, so you can all get to bed.'

He took the Bible, read a chapter, and as all knelt, he prayed, praying for each one. Rasmus was amazed. He had never, to his knowledge, been prayed for before. An awe fell over his daring, careless spirit. What was this potent Presence, to which this old man talked in ordinary and earnest tone, as one confident of being heard? The little house seemed mysteriously full. He went to bed in silence.

In the morning they all had as much bread and milk as they could eat, and Rasmus paid a quarter for that.

'Let us have worship before you go,' said the old man.

It was daylight now, and Rasmus felt less alarmed; he looked round narrowly, to see if the little house were different from other houses, or the old man had anything supernatural about him.

After this little service was over, the party set out with a cheery 'Good-morning.' Rasmus felt as if he had been dismissed on his way by angels. If he had known anything of the little book with pictures in it, he would have said that he had tarried at the House Beautiful, been laid to sleep in a fair chamber, called Peace, and been sent forward on his way by the sisters, Prudence, Piety, and Charity. However, he knew nothing of these things, and he was greatly subdued and overawed, and it was two hours before he recovered his dash and elasticity. By that time, Rodney, who, at beginning his journey, had felt singularly stiff, and as if each of his legs was an unwieldy and jointless tower, began to get limber, and more cheerful. Getting relieved in mind and body, Rodney picked up interest in what was around him.

'What is this growing in the field?' he asked.

'Barley,' replied Rasmus; 'don't you know barley?'

'I thought it was some sort of grass,' said Rodney; 'how did it get to be so high so soon in the spring?'

'Cause it was sowed, and got started last fall,' said Rasmus; 'don't you know nothing?'

'I know about digging coal out of a bank, and about boiling salt, because they did those things where I lived.'

'It's nice-looking barley,' said Rasmus, gazing over the field, 'but what's the good of it? They'll turn it into beer, that's all.'

About three o'clock they came near a district school-house. On a hill above it was a large farm-house, and in the yard of the house a well. Beside the well, brandishing a club, stood a huge man, with heavy hair and beard, gray and unkempt. He wore a thick canvas garment, shaped like a carter's frock, to his ankles, and on his feet carpet shoes. He was roaring and threatening in an unearthly

manner, while down the hill from him fled, shrieking, two boys of twelve; the bucket which they had carried up the hill for water, fallen from their hands, was trundling down the ascent like a hoop. The noise had brought teacher and pupils to the school-house door. The teacher, wringing her hands, seemed in great agony, and the children were screaming, 'Ammi's out! Ammi will kill some one! Ammi's broke loose!'

'What's wrong?' demanded Rasmus, as the flying boys gained the school-house porch.

'Oh, he's out! My, he came near killing us. He'd brain us in a minute! He was hid all crouched behind the well, waiting, and just so soon as we got hold of the handle, he pounced out, and brought down his club, whack! most on my head. You'd better believe we run!'

'But the house—the house!' cried the teacher. 'What has he done at the house?'

'Dunno—they're yelling like mad, and shuffling it up.'

'I guess he's killed them,' said a ghoul-like girl, in a tone of deep conviction, and enjoyment of a horror.

'There's no one there,' said the teacher, turning with tears to the travellers; 'they're alone, the men are all away; can't you help, could you catch him?'

'We can do anything,' said Rasmus the bold, 'if you'll tell us what is wanted. Who is he?'

'He's my father' cried the poor teacher, a very pretty girl, in great distress, 'and he's crazy, and he's broken out of his cage. My mother and sisters are alone in the house. If he is not caught, he will kill some one.'

Rasmus took in the situation at once.

'He hides behind the well and jumps out, does he?'

'Yes.'

'Then all get inside here till he drops back again. Make your children still, missis, so we can plan a bit.'

The children became very quiet, and all eyes hung on Rasmus.

'Does that stone fence run pretty near up to the well?'

'Yes, and he hides between the fence and the well.'

'Now all of you keep quiet, and we'll capture him,' said Rasmus.

In the centre of the school-room hung the bell-rope. Rasmus climbed up and cut off nearly the whole length, and made a slip-noose, and waiting till the maniac was reported in hiding, so he could get over the wall unobserved, set a boy to watch at the window.

'Been crazy long?' he asked.

'Four years.'

'What made it?'

'Hard cider,' said the poor school-teacher. 'He was a hard-cider drunkard, and it has made him crazy. There were five brothers of them, and all have gone the same way. One cut his throat while drunk; one died of consumption brought on by drink; one is in an asylum; one is paralyzed; and my poor father is the fifth, as you see him. All big, strong men; all destroyed by cider.'

'He's hid!' cried the watcher at the window.

'Now, Rod,' said Rasmus, as if asking Rodney to do the easiest thing in the world, 'we'll catch this man. You give me four minutes by the school clock, then you go as calm as a cucumber, and pick up the pail, and start up the hill, whistling or singing to attract him. He'll out of his hiding to bellow at you, and dash his club about, and before he has a chance to brain you, I'll whirl the slip-knot over his shoulders, and have him pulled on his back, with his arms to his sides close. You draw him out and I'll catch him.'

(To be continued.)

Keep Still.

Many a man whose life has had in it a good deal of trouble and opposition would have saved much if he had learned in his childhood the lesson of 'keep still.' If the hard words hurt, it will not make it easier to make an angry reply. If you do not answer at all, it stops right there; if your tongue cannot be restrained, nobody knows what the result may be. You will find again and again that the way to keep out of trouble is to keep still.—'Argus.'