

ing. We do not say, "Read no fiction," but approach it with care. Use it as you do luxuries of food. Who could support a healthy, vigorous life on bon-bons and cake? And as well may you expect to be noble, right-minded, efficient men and women if you read nothing but the light, miserable stuff which flows in a broad current from the printing presses.

And do not spend all your leisure in reading. Read good, wholesome, instructive books and papers at suitable times, never allowing even good reading to conflict with your religious, domestic or other practical duties. Read to live; do not live to read.—*Phil. Pres.*

### NO RECOMMENDATION.

"Please, sir, do you want a boy?"

It was a low, clear voice, with just the faintest tremor of apprehension in it. He stood at the door of the counting-room, his hat in his hand, his clothing neat and clean, his attitude waiting and deferential.

The long, well filled counters in the narrow room were lost in dim perspective. Clerks hurried hither and thither. In the rear of the store was heard the sound of hammers and the creaking of the elevator. Though it was but nine o'clock in the morning, and the sun shining brightly outside, it was so gloomy in the store-room that the gas had to be lit.

"Do I want a boy?" asked the owner of the store, turning round in his chair, and looking sharply over the top of his spectacles. "What can you do?"

"Make myself useful, I hope," replied the boy.

"O, a general utility man!" And Mr. Lansing laughed. "Can you write?" "I am a graduate of the high-school, sir."

"Are you? That speaks well for you. What is your name?"

"Gabriel Winchester."

"Is your father living?"

"He died in Libby Prison."

Mr. Lansing eyed him more keenly when he said that, and also more kindly.

"I am the only support of my mother," the boy said, his voice husky, "almost the only support. She manages to secure work one day in the week."

The merchant was pleased with the boy's preciseness.

The head book-keeper, an old grey-haired gentleman, with a benign face, had turned from his desk, attracted by the boy's voice and the character of his replies.

"Where were you last employed?" Mr. Lansing asked.

"At the office of the *Argus*."

"As a compositor?"

"No, but I had expected to be. I was copyholder, sir."

Mr. Lansing took off his glasses and wiped them.

"Have you recommendations?" he asked.

"No, sir."

"Why not?"

The lad's lip trembled.

"I—was—discharged," came at last, in a faint tone.

"O, that is it, eh?" And Mr. Lansing frowned. "No wonder they gave you no recommendation. It strikes me you do not lack assurance. No, I do not want a boy."

He spoke with needless acrimony, wheeled round in his chair, and resumed his paper. He was a church member and admired nothing so much as integrity of character. Capacity, reliability and a stainless reputation were three things upon which he insisted in the selection of his employees.

The boy's face fell, and he turned to go; but the book-keeper threw him a sign to wait for a few moments.

He had been strangely drawn toward the boy. There was something manly in his face, something self-contained in his bearing, much that was frank and fearless in his glance.

"Mr. Lansing," the book-keeper said respectfully, "perhaps it was unfair to the boy, and not assurance. Will you allow me to ask him a question?"

"O, a dozen of them," replied Mr. Lansing, crustily, not lifting his eyes from his paper.

"Perhaps you should have made one more inquiry," the book-keeper said.

"My lad, why were you discharged?" he asked, as he approached the boy.

"Because I would not work on Sunday," came back in reply, steadily and bravely.

"What is that you say?"

It was Mr. Lansing that spoke, and in a tone more quick and loud than was usual with him. He had thrown down his paper and fixed his keen eyes on the boy.

"I was discharged because I would not work on Sunday," the lad repeated.

"They started a Sunday paper in the office last week. The men and boys laughed at me; but I did not care. I could not work on that day, sir."

There was a resolute look on his face.