

"THE SONGS MY MOTHER TAUGHT ME."

In last month's issue of UPS AND DOWNS there is a paper written by one of the boys, Samuel Ling, on "The Government of the Tongue," in which he says:

"The young man and woman from home, who perhaps have not lived quite as they should, have often been brought to change their living to a better by hearing sung one of the songs mother used to sing."

These words set us thinking of a little story which has been sent to us for UPS AND DOWNS and with which we now present our readers:—
ED. OUR GIRLS.]

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A TRAVELLER'S STORY.

I am what the world calls a commercial traveller, one of that large class of men who, by good conversational and persuasive powers, carry on much of the business that is done in this busy country. A favourite maxim with my father was—"A well-oiled tongue makes a well-filled purse"; but at this my mother would shake her head, and turning to me would say, half-tenderly: "Pierce, my son, your father's preaching is not so good as his practising—do as he does, and not as he says, and you will grow up a worthy man and a gentleman."

My father's last words to me were:—"My son, let nothing divert you from right-doing." With such a father and mother, it is no wonder that I entered upon my business career determined to live up to that spirit of well-doing. Among many honourable men, I yet found that the chief religion believed in was the gospel of getting-on.

"Oh," one would say to me, good-naturedly, "you are only half alive to your own interests, Lambert." I soon made them understand that my interests, and those of my employer, were identical, and though I often had hard times with some of them, the knights of the road were, as a body, fair and kind to me. I travel for a large firm of drysalts, and one day as I was waiting to see the principal of one of our largest buying firms, a little boy with golden curls and a fair face, put his head in at the door.

"Oh, Mr. Lambert," he said, "mother is with father in his office—we had to come on business; but she has sent me to talk to you until father is quite ready."

The clerks stared, for the fresh young voice was not often heard in the dull city office, and the gentle tones were sweet to the ears of men accustomed to the scraping of pens and the checking of facts and figures. I confess I had heard nothing that so refreshed me for a long time. "I shall be most glad for you to talk to me," I said. "Are we to discuss the money market, and city news, or shall we talk about your pets and mine? I know you have a pet." The boy flushed up—he looked perplexed for a minute, and then he held out his hand to me, saying:—

"Are not you making fun of me? I know nothing about the city yet, and as for pet animals, I have no time to take proper care of them. But I have a pet, all the same." It was now my turn to flush—the open, manly gaze into my eyes made us friends at once. I said: "Yes, I was poking fun at you, but for the first and last time I will not do it again. Who is your pet?" "A boy—our gardener's son. He lives at our place, and he has no mother but my mother, and she and I take care of him. He is a cripple, and sits by the window all day, for he cannot walk. He and I are great chums, and we do all kinds of things together, as he is much more clever than I am and helps me ever so much," said the boy. "And how do you help him?" I asked.

"I sing to him—the songs my mother taught me—and he loves them and learns them, and they help him to bear his pain." We talked for some time, and then Mrs. Hudson called her son, and with a very cordial farewell between the boy and myself, we parted, having first exchanged addresses.

Some months passed before I saw Frank Hudson again, and when I did so, it was by the invitation of his mother. I was very busy, for it was close upon the Christmas season, and I was harassed on all hands by orders that ought to have been given months before, and were now wanted immediately. But the letter I had from Mrs. Hudson put everything else aside for a time. My own mother was ailing, but when that other mother wrote and told me that Frank was ill, and that he was constantly asking for me, I knew I must go and see the boy. And I went. I found him weak and ill, but happy, and the other boy was constantly on his mind and heart.

"Why did you want to see me when you were so ill?" I asked; "I fear talking will tire you." "Never mind," said he, "I wanted to see you, and mother has been so awfully good in letting me have my way. Have you thought anything more about what we talked of?" "Yes," I replied, "and not only *thought* about it, but I have been putting some of it into practice. I have told my mother." The boy's face beamed; he stretched out his hand to me. "Have you read the book I sent you?" he asked.

"Most certainly," I could say; "it has been a daily, dear companion to me, and I thank you for it. I bought a copy for my mother, who owns that he who wrote it is the solace of her life and the saviour of her soul. I cannot say all this yet, but it substantiates my highest theories and all my noblest aspirations, and shows me how to practice them. They were unpractical dreams to me, before." The boy smiled: "It does one good to hear you," he said, "and how you wished you could hear my mother sing! She is going to sing to us by-and-bye—you *shall* hear her." I heard Mrs. Hudson sing, "O Rest in the Lord," and the words and tender pleading of the song so won my heart that I felt as if I must devote myself to the attainment of this rest. I spoke to her about it, and she was glad for me to do so.

"You cannot have the rest without the conquest and the submission," she told me. "Before you can rest in the Lord you must have given yourself to Him. That is an experience every Christian must pass through."

She gave me the score before I left, and I learned it and sang it to my mother, who grew to love it.

"Pierce," she would say, "it was a blessed day when you first met little Frank Hudson, for through him both you and I can rejoice in God, our Saviour. How I wish your father had known Him; he would have made such a thorough Christian, for he was a right thinker." Then I had to tell mother that that had not so much to do with it as she thought; for that the religion of Jesus Christ turned a man inside out, and completely round, and made the vilest even as acceptable as the least hardened and sinful. Mother wanted to know how I knew this, and then I told her about Sam Grainger, one of our men, who from being a drinker, swearer, wife-beater and thief, had become a sober man, a loving husband, and an honest and trusted servant in the course of a year.

"Who brought about such a change in Grainger? It seems hardly possible," my mother said, in wonder.

"God's Holy Spirit touched his heart." I said, "and I have never had such joy as I had when he came to me and told me that my prayers, my words, but above all my changed life, had led him to enquire into the way of sal-

vation." "Ah, my son, it was you, then, whom God used to bring Sam to Himself! I thank Him!" said my mother, fondly.

Every day I was with Frank Hudson and his young friend, the gardener's son. They were beautiful together—the rich boy taking devotion and love from the poor boy, and the poor boy owing all his joy and peace to the other who had taught him all he knew of the love of God, and to sing the songs his mother taught him—songs of God and Christ, and love and home. They were such manly boys, too. We used to talk of life—life as it is in the world's great mart, on the battle field; in the humbler spheres of business, such as my own, and then the boys would ask me if I did not wish to be a missionary. I had health—why was I not one? "I am," I replied; "I am as much a missionary (among the men and women I know) as I should be if I were sent into the islands of the South Seas to preach the gospel." And then I told them that I sang to many who cared to hear me sing, and I gave them instances of help and comfort derived from the singing of a few words in His name. "I always ask them if they would like to hear one of 'the songs my mother taught me,' that being the name I give to the little collection of songs I have learned, the best being 'O Rest in the Lord'—it is always a favourite. There was the wife of Peter Mackennal, one of our men, and I heard she was ill, and went to see her, about three months ago. Peter had let out something of the misery of his home, caused by his wife's drinking habits. We were all dreadfully sorry for Peter, but it seemed there was nothing we could do for him. I was praying about it one night, when the thought came into my heart, 'Go and sing one of Mrs. Hudson's songs to her!' I went, and sang her 'Come to Me, O ye children,' and 'O Rest in the Lord,' and I read her out of the wonderful Book the beautiful words that end the twenty-eighth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel. The woman listened eagerly, then she said, 'You are not one of the goody sort, Mr. Lambert, are you? If you were I should not listen to you, but something tells me that what you sing is an experience; I wish I could say it was mine, but I am not a good wife to Peter, though I ought to be.' I told her that my experience of the saving, keeping power of God might be hers, and that I was sure the desire for salvation was one which would be answered. I had to leave her, promising I would call on her again soon; but before I could do this Peter himself came to tell my mother and me of the happiness that had come to him in the changed conduct of his wife and the difference in his home. He wanted to know the history of the songs I had sung, and then I told him of Mrs. Hudson, and promised I would send her to see his wife one of these days, for I knew that where God's work was to be done, your mother would gladly go."

"That I know she will," said Frank, gladly.

Then I told them of Mr. B——, a merchant upon whom I called on business. We fell to talking of various things, and he remarked that I seemed very hopeful and happy. "I am very happy," I replied, "for my heart is at rest." "Those words remind me of my daughter," he said; "she tells me she shall never be happy till she finds peace. I laught at her, but she says it is true." I told him I could quite understand what his daughter felt, and I asked him if he knew Mrs. Hudson, for she would be able to tell her where to get comfort. "But," said her father, "Don't you know anything about it?" I replied that I did, and that one of the songs Mrs. Hudson had given me was "O Rest in the Lord," and I repeated to him the words your mother had said to me about the conquest before the rest. He seemed interested, but as he was busy, he had to wish

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