

in the words as they fell from his lips, looked up gratefully. "Thank you, sir. Ain't afraid now. It don't seem lonely no more."

"Shall I read to you, old friend?" "Please." And he signed towards two shabby books lying near him—a Bible and a copy of the "Pilgrim's Progress." "I haven't been able to read them this long while. My glasses got broke and I couldn't afford to have 'em mended, and nobody who comes in cares to read to me. They'm shy, or something."

The minister took up the Bible and read. The clock struck eleven, then twelve. The dying man on the bed breathed with more and more difficulty; his face grew greyer and more pinched. Rupert Hadley knew the signs and noted them. He could not leave this poor pilgrim, so old, so forlorn, to finish his last journey alone. He rose and mended the fire: there were only a few small bits of coal in the box by the grate, and he put on most of them.

The old man opened his eyes at the sound. "Tis all I have, sir, and I must think of to-morrow." A pang stabbed at the minister's heart. To-morrow! The old man's to-morrow would dawn where there is no more cold, or hunger, or pain.

"I will read to you again," he said gently. "Perhaps then you'll be able to sleep a little." And he took up the "Pilgrim's Progress" and read, and as he read peace gradually entered his own breast.

"Now as he stood looking and unhappy, beheld three Shining Ones came to him, and saluted him with 'Peace be to thee,' so the first said to him 'Thy sins be forgiven'; the second stripped him of his rags, and clothed him with a change of raiment; the third also set a mark on his forehead, and gave him a Roll with a Seal upon it, which he bid him look on as he ran." He paused abruptly, for in on his reading burst a low, quivering voice: "Thus far did I come laden with my sin."

Rupert raised his head sharply and drew in a deep breath. What was that smell? Was it—it couldn't be of burning? He sniffed it in again, and yet again. Was it only a puff of smoke from the fire he had rekindled? He glanced at the old man to see if he, too, noticed anything, but he was lying quite unconcernedly, a word now and the escaping his lips, but scarcely consciously.

The smell grew stronger, and Rupert's uneasiness increased. Stepping to the door he opened it, and through the opening poured in a cloud of smoke, choking, blinding. In the distance he heard screams and shouts, the sound of crackling wood. A voice shouted peremptorily to someone, "You can't go up, the staircase is well alight! Turn back for your life!"

"The staircase is alight. Turn back for your life! Life! What about his life, and all it meant to him? Did no one care? Was no one coming to his help? He thought of Helen, of her mother, of their misery. His future, the possibilities it might hold, his work—all rose before him. Yes, it was his duty to save himself at all costs. The old man was dying. Any moment might be his last. He could not live. If Rupert could carry him down, he would probably die before he reached the street; the shock would certainly kill him.

Rupert stepped to the head of the stairs, thoughts pouring through his mind, all plausible, all tempting. Blinding his handkerchief around his mouth, he groped about to find the handrail.

"Then," said Apollyon, "I am sure of these now."

The words on which his eyes had rested but a few moments earlier came back upon him with all the force of a voice at his ear. It was a voice, Apollyon was at his elbow!

With a cry as of a man sore hurt, he ran back to the room. "Quick! quick!" he gasped. "The place is on fire! Trust yourself to me. I will try to carry you through."

Hastily rolling the bed-clothes about him, he raised the old man in his arms; but he was a weighty burden, heavy with the inertness of death. They reached the staircase, black and steep, full, too, now of smoke and the pungent smell of burning. Rupert, could not feel for the rail this time; he could only plunge blindly on. Down one flight he reached safely, his burden growing heavier with each step; then—crash! "This is death," he thought. "Father, into Thy hands I commend my guilty soul!"

Crash again, an awful rending and falling, then—

When next Rupert opened his eyes he was lying in a friendly doorway, with a doctor and a policeman bending over him. "Why, it is Mr. Hadley!" exclaimed the constable, but Rupert fainted before he could frame the question he had in his mind.

The next time he opened his eyes he found himself in a luxurious bed in a large room, with firelight playing on the ceiling, and subdued lights and voices somewhere near.

"Where am I?" he asked feebly; and from behind the curtains came Helen herself, pale and wan, but with a glad light in her eyes. "You are here, with us. You were brought here from that awful fire. Oh, my dearest, I thought you were dead!"

Rupert took her hand in his. "God has been good to me," he whispered, and fell back into sleep, or unconsciousness.

It was afternoon when next he opened his eyes, but there was life in them this time. Helen was still beside him, her hand in his, as he had held it all the time. "My dearest," he said softly, "I must tell you all—before—before—oh, how you will despise me!"—his voice trailed off brokenly. Helen looked at him, wondering. "You must take back the rose—the white rose—until I am worthy to wear it—"

Helen bowed her head on his outstretched hand. "The rose! Do you know where they found it? It was clasped fast in the hand of the old man you tried to save—so fast that they let him keep it."

Silence reigned in the room, broken only by the sound of Helen's sobs; tears were in Rupert Hadley's eyes too.

"Perhaps," he murmured, "when God sees the rose, He will take it as a token of my repentance—and forgive."

#### OLD FRIENDS.

The old friends are the dearest,

For strong are memory's ties,

The distant are the nearest,

When memory magnifies.

The dear old days, the well-worn ways,

By friends together trod,

Awake sweet lays, inspire glad praise,

And turn the heart to God.

—Selected.

#### THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE.

If we were to examine a list of the men who have left their mark on the world, we should find that, as a rule, it is not composed of those who were brilliant in youth, or who gave great promise at the outset of their careers, but rather of the plodding young men who, if they have not dazzled by their brilliancy, have had the power of a day's work in them, who could stay by a task until it was done, and well done; who have had grit, persistence, common sense, and honesty. It is the steady exercise of these ordinary, homely virtues, united with averasability, rather than a deceptive display of more showy qualities in youth, that enables a man to achieve greatly and honorably. So, if we were to attempt to make a forecast of the successful men of the future, we should not look for them among the ranks of the "smart" boys, who are anxious to win by a short route.

To inherit without personal endeavor is apt to be too easy for the development of character. Muscle grows by toil.

#### CHILDHOOD INDIGESTION MEANS SICKLY BABIES.

The baby who suffers from indigestion is simply starving to death. If it takes food it does the child no good, and it is cross, restless and sleepless, and the mother is worn out caring for it. Baby's Own Tablets always cure indigestion, and give the little one healthy, natural sleep. Mrs. A. P. Daigle, Lower Sabin, N.B., says: "For severe cases of indigestion I think Baby's Own Tablets are worth their weight in gold. My little one suffered terribly from this trouble and the Tablets was the only thing that removed the trouble." Sold everywhere at 25c a box or by mail from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

#### BUSHY'S DREAM.

By Louise M. Ogleyee.

Mother Squirrel was busy, so was Father Squirrel; and so were all the squirrels that lived in Hickory Grove—all but Bushy, and Bushy was playing. He wanted his mother to stop and play with him, but she said she hadn't time and ran on past him with her cheeks full of nuts which she put into a safe hole in their tree home.

After a while he frisked off after Father Squirrel and asked him to stop and play, but Father Squirrel said that he hadn't time. "When will be here soon and then we can't get any nuts to eat, for the snow will have covered them all up," he said. "You will want nuts to eat then, so you ought to be helping gather them now," but Bushy didn't want to gather nuts.

He saw his cousin, one of the gray squirrels, going along and ran after him. The gray squirrel's mouth was full of nuts, too, and he looked very much surprised when Bushy asked him to stop and play. "Oh dear no," he said, "I'm afraid now that it will snow before I get nuts enough for winter" and off he ran.

Bushy was lonely for some one to play with, and he was tired from running about so much so he sat down on a branch of one of the nut trees to rest, and pretty soon he fell asleep.

And almost as soon as he fell asleep he began to dream. He thought that it was cold dreadfully, dreadfully cold, and the ground was covered with wet white stuff that he knew must be snow. He began to feel hungry but there were no nuts or acorns to be seen anywhere, so at last he thought he would run home and ask his mother or his father for some of the nuts they had gathered, but he couldn't find his home. He dreamed he had asked back and forth among the still white trees, and he grew so cold and frightened that he shivered until he nearly fell off the branch, and of course that woke him up.

A cold wind had begun to blow but how glad he was to find that the sun was still shining and that there was no cold white snow on the ground. He ran down the tree as fast as he could and ate a nut just to make sure that he was really awake, and then what do you suppose he did? He began gathering nuts. He worked and he worked and he worked until night, and the next morning he worked again, and he had such a happy sociable time doing what everybody else was doing that he wondered how he could have thought that it was so much more fun to play all by himself.

At last when winter really came, and the deep white snow lay on the ground, and the cold north wind blew day after day, Bushy was safe and warm in his tree house, with plenty of nuts to eat.—Sunday School Times.

We do not need to defend the truth. Truth is its own defence. Not many years ago merchants and bankers, when they left their places of business, turned off the lights and put up great heavy shutters. To-day they pull aside the blinds and turn on a strong light. The greatest protection the truth of God can have is to expose it so that every one may see what it does. Let us give up trying to guard our faith. It is better far to live it.