

when we get into too bad a scrape. How 's that, Chapin? The night you were in that Brownville wreck you prayed for once, now didn't you? But I never heard you give the Lord much credit because you escaped all safe and sound. There's Parsons, I heard that he almost lost his little girl. Parsons, how much time did you spend on your knees after the doctors had given her up? The little girl got well, but you never heard Parsons around praising the Lord, did you? I warrant there's not one of you that hasn't been helped out of trouble at some time and yet you look embarrassed and foolish if any one happens to mention the Lord in earnest."

"But to return to the original question, Mr. Gray; how did you come to be such a—a—"

"Don't say it," laughed Mr. Gray, pretending to roll up his sleeves.

The 'Dude' subsided, but Mr. Gray went on; "I happened to spend the night in a little town in Pennsylvania some time ago. It was a very quiet place, and I was having a dull time of it, I can tell you. I was walking down the street just to kill time, and passed by a church, where I heard such good singing, that I decided to go in and take a back seat and listen. But, bless you, a young fellow met me at the door and shook hands as if he had been on the road for ten years, and before I knew what he was up to, there I was sitting half-way up the church, both amused and provoked at myself for being there. I liked the singing, but I didn't pay much attention to the rest of the service. There was a sweet-looking girl beside me, as frail and beautiful as a lily. I couldn't help noticing her earnest face.

"My wandering thoughts were recalled when the girl bowed her head and I heard different voices leading in prayer. By and by I heard her speak. She was asking the Lord to be allowed to work in his harvest field, and all of a sudden the thought came to me that it was a shame for a little girl like that to be working in the fields while there are plenty of men sitting round with their hands in their pockets. After that I listened to everything that was said.

"When the meeting was over she turned to me and gave me her hand, and said she was glad I came. I only thanked her, but inside I was saying, "Well, little girl, I'm not much used to harvesting, but if the Lord will show me how, I'll help you a little in this business." I'm not much of a Christian, gentlemen, but I read my Bible, and sometimes I think the Lord is especially good to me for the sake of that little girl I'm trying to help. The harvest field is pretty big and she'll never know about me in this world, but I hope that some day she'll find an extra sheaf to her account.

"Hello! here comes Davidson. Well, old man, how are you? What's the news from Philadelphia?"

Grace Maynard was a consecrated girl, the beauty of whose character was written on her face and shone from eyes simply trustful and yet strong appealing. The battle is not always to the strong and she, so slight and fragile, was her pastor's most energetic helper. "Only to be allowed to labor," was the great prayer of her heart.

A week later Grace was not among those who met for prayer, for she had gone to her heavenly home. Her every look and word and action had become sacred to her friends, and her simple prayer was long remembered by those who loved her. "We cannot understand," her pastor said, "why God, in his wisdom, saw best to leave her great wish unfulfilled. We hoped that she might long be one of his reapers here, but I am sure she is satisfied, for she has gone to be with him, which is far better."

In the smoking room of a hotel in one of our western cities was gathered a group of travelling men. They were enjoying themselves, for was not 'old Gray' there? and his very presence gave assurance of a good time. Every one knew Mr. Gray. He had been 'on the road' thirty years, though he was scarcely past fifty. He was a little over six feet tall, with a fine physique and a kindly face. Indeed, it did one good to look at him. His eyes twinkled under his bushy eyebrows and when he laughed his whole frame shook with

merriment till his companions laughed from very sympathy.

The fun was at its height when some one said, "Well, Gray, I suppose you'll be the first to set up the drinks."

"Gentlemen," he said, "I've given 'em up. I neither set them up nor take them."

This answer was greeted by an uproarious laugh in which all joined with the exception of a young man in the corner, who added, after a time, "I don't drink myself, boys."

"Well, now, you don't say!" exclaimed Mr. Gray, heartily. "I'm glad to hear it. I'm real glad to hear it."

"Oh, pshaw! what's this you're giving us?" asked one of the men.

"I'll tell you if you like," said Wilson. "You see, when I started out on the road I never meant to drink. I didn't think much of it, to tell the truth. But I was persuaded that a man couldn't get along without a social glass occasionally, and so I began. I never drank much, but when I met Mr. Gray in Iowa not long ago, and found that he could make his way without it I thought I'd try. He told me that a man is always respected who stands up for his principles, and that a glass of beer weighs less in a man's favor than most people think."

"It's worked first-rate, Mr. Gray," he said, turning with a nod to the older man. "People laugh sometimes and say that I'm young and will get over such notions. There is only one man who ever said much, and I just happened to know that his son had been drinking too freely for some time."

"Mr. Aken," I said, "now really, if I were your son, wouldn't you be just as glad if I left the stuff alone?" He looked startled for an instant, and then he said: "My boy, you're right. I would give my fortune to-day if my George had never touched a drop."

This was rather an unusual turn for the conversation to take, and the men looked at each other in some surprise.

"What ever made you turn milksop, Gray?" asked 'the Dude,' facetiously.

"Just stop a minute," laughed Mr. Gray as he stood up to his full height.

"Young man, do I look like a milksop. Stand up."

"The Dude" obeyed.

They looked so much like 'the long and the short of it,' that every one laughed, and Mr. Gray gave this bit of advice with a twinkling eye and a grave voice: "When you want to call a man names, pick on one of your size."

"I'd believe 'most anything now," said another man. "Yes, Gray, I think you must have left that Bible and note in Room Sixteen in the Overland at X—. The note was signed O. V. Gray, but I never thought of you."

"Did you read it?—the Bible I mean," asked Mr. Gray.

"Ye-es."

"Found it pretty good reading, didn't you?"

"Well, I confess I did get interested. I declare, boys, I've felt like a missionary ever since. You see the book was new and wouldn't stay open, so I just cracked the thing back at the place where I was reading, and after that when you picked up the book it opened to that place."

The men were interested. They drew their chairs closer. "Left the hotel," continued the speaker, "and went south for a couple of weeks. When I came back I asked for the same room. You all know old George Washington at the Overland. He was around there and happened to be in the room when I was reading the Bible. "Mars Stokes," he said, "you's a mighty good man. Yas, sah, and de Lord's a-goin' to gib you a big reward, suah nuf."

"Oh, come off, George," I said. "What are you givin' us?"

"Yas, sah, dat's de truf," he said solemnly, rolling his eyes, "an' it comes all along ob you readin' de Scriptuabs. I seed you crack dat Bible open whar it tells 'bout de Prodigal Son. I picked it up atah you left, and it opened to de identically place. Well, sah, las' week a young man come here, Mars Ellis, dat war his name. He saw de note Mars Gray lef' an' he pick up de Book. It opened right to dat place. He read it an' he cried; he really did. I saw de teahs in his eyes an' I'm suah it took conviction to his soul."

"I met young Ellis in New York a few weeks later. Perhaps some of you know him. He travels for Owens, of Pittsburg. Ellis looked bright as a sunflower."

"Hello," I said "you look like you'd been on a vacation."

"I have," he said; "I've been up home in Maine. I ran off when I was quite a lad and haven't been back since. Found the folks all well. The place hadn't changed a bit since I was there, only folks have changed. Well, how are you, anyhow?"

"I'm glad to hear that of Ellis," said Mr. Gray. "He was a good-hearted fellow, but he was getting to be pretty fast—pretty fast for a youngster."

"Since we seem to be having an experience meeting," suggested one of the older men, "you might tell us, Gray, what this Bible scheme is."

"Oh, that's not much. When I strike a place I usually buy a Bible, nothing elaborate, you know, but with good type. Sometimes I mark the place I have been reading, sometimes I leave a little note. That's all."

"You never see them the second time you come round, do you?"

The Bag-of-Beans Test.

(By Adelbert F. Caldwell.)

"Very well," remarked Mr. Henry Thurston, looking up from his desk, where he was just signing a check. "So they've passed the punctual and honesty tests! Now try them on the bag of beans. A fellow will never make a success in our business if he gets cross and shows temper over trifling mishaps and unavoidable accidents. And one is always meeting with just such annoyances in work of this kind. The one who proves himself good-natured at the bursting of the bag—either does—may be told that he is engaged at seven dollars a week."

Mr. Thurston paused, and took up his pen. "Wait a minute," quickly, after a moment's reflection. "Be sure there's enough water on the counter to thoroughly wet the bottom of the bags. Then, too, try one of them this afternoon, and the other at the same time to-morrow. It might hardly be a fair test of their dispositions to make use of it on either of the two boys in the morning. One sort of feels better-natured then, you know, anyway!"

Mr. Nelson, head clerk in the big wholesale and retail establishment of Thurston & Lincoln, left the comfortably furnished office of the firm and went back to the busy delivery department.

There were three qualifications which the head of the establishment insisted that each employee of the company should possess and strictly live up to. These were honesty, punctuality, and wholesome good nature. Boys had been known to lose their positions there, owing to their getting angry over mere trifles. Mr. Thurston felt that a boy's usefulness to the firm depended on an unruffled disposition quite as much as it did on punctuality and honesty!

The constant growth and enlargement of Thurston & Lincoln's business made it necessary, from time to time, to increase their working force accordingly. And it was the custom of the company to promote, at such times, the men and boys already in their employ, leaving to be filled by the new hands only the 'bottom down' places, as the clerks characteristically called them.

One of the men had just now been sent out on the road as a travelling salesman—the firm did a large wholesale business—causing, after a re-arrangement of the force, a vacancy in the delivery department.

Harold Stephenson and his cousin, Willis Fuller, had both applied for the position, and they of all the many applicants had passed the punctuality and honesty tests; and now it lay between the two boys as to which one would be successful in obtaining the desired situation.

Thurston & Lincoln had the reputation of being the most desirable firm with which to hold a job, in the large and thriving village of Muncie.

"I s'pose it's selfish—I admit it—but I hope old man Thurston will give me the place," declared Harold Stephenson, with an air of careless disrespect. He was talking with