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A STONE MASON WHO BECAME FAMOUS.

We wonder how many of our young people have read a book called "My Schools and Schoolmasters." It is, we fear, less known by this generation than by the previous one, but those who have not read it have missed one of the greatest treats that the world of books has in store for them.

Hugh Miller, who in it tells the story of his life, was born in the town of Cromarty, on the north-east coast of Scotland, in October, 1802. For many generations back his family had been sea-faring men, and though he was only five years old when his father was lost at sea, he had the clearest remembrance of the joy in the house over the father's home comings and early learned to distinguish his vessel when she was yet far from land. After his father's death he was brought up under the care of his mother's two uncles, and few boys have the privilege of being under the care of two such men. Young Miller did not take kindly to school, he was too fond of the open air, and the restraint was very irksome to him. The windows of the schoolhouse commanded a fine view of the Bay of Cromarty and not a vessel could enter or leave the harbor without his knowledge. He was intimately acquainted with every one of them, even to the smallest detail of their rigging, and much of his study time was spent in drawing them on his slate. When very young he revelled in such books as "Sinbad the Sailor," "Jack the Giant-Killer," "Beauty and the Beast," "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp," and, later on, "Pilgrim's Progress," Cook's and Anson's Voyages, and "Blind Harry the Rhymer's History of Wallace." The latter was especially his delight, rousing all his Scotch patriotism, which was further stimulated by the inexhaustible fund of stories dealt out to him from time to time by his "Uncle James." The tastes of his "Uncle Sandy" ran in another direction. Natural history was his hobby and young

Hugh being much with him soon learned to be as fond of it as he. "Together they explored caves, roamed the beach for crabs and lobsters, whose habits Uncle Sandy could well describe; he also knew all about moths, and butterflies, spiders and bees,—in short was a born natural-history man, so that the boy regarded him in the light of a professor, and, doubtless, thus early obtained from him the bias toward his future studies." Up and down the beach the boy would wander with a big hammer belonging to his great grandfather, John Feddes, the buccancer, chip-

ping away at stones which attracted his attention, unheeding the taunts of the passers-by who asked him if he was "gettin' siller in the stanes," and returning home laden with bits of mica, porphyry, garnet, etc., would exhibit with delight his treasures to his uncle, and learn from him all that the latter could teach him about them.

In this way was his boyhood spent, and it must have been somewhat of a shock to him to wake up when nearly seventeen years old to find that he was a boy no longer, but that he must begin to prepare for his man's place in the world, and to work for his own

The change in his life was a great one. His boyhood "had been happy beyond the common lot." "I had been a wanderer," he says, "among rocks and woods—a reader of curious books when I could get them—a gleaner of old traditionary stories; and now I was going to exchange all my day-dreams, and all my amusements, for the kind of life in which men toil every day that they may be enabled to eat and eat every day that they may be enabled to toil."

But did he look upon this as a misfortune? Telling long years afterwards of that first day's work he said, "To be sure, my

simple one. Keep your consciences clear, your curiosity fresh, and embrace every opportunity to cultivate your minds..... Learn to make a right use of your eyes; the commonest things are worth looking at—even stones and weeds, and the most familiar animals. Read good books, not forgetting the best of all; there is more true philosophy in the Bible than in every work of every sceptic that ever wrote; and we would be all miserable creatures without it!..... There is none of the intellectual and none of the moral faculties, the exercise of which does not lead to enjoyment, nay, it is chiefly in the active employment of these that all enjoyment consists; and hence it is that happiness bears so little reference to station."

He was none the less a good stone mason because his leisure hours were spent exploring the woods or the rocks on the seashore. He closely followed the example of his uncle David who "made conscience of every stone he laid" and of whom it was well known that no wall built by him ever bulged or fell. An advice of his uncle James which he also followed was, "give your neighbor the cast of the bauk—'good measure heaped up and, running over,' and you will not lose by it in the end."

If ever a man "learned to make a right use of his eyes" Hugh Miller did. His first day in the quarry, which many lads would have bemoaned as the beginning of a long life of hardship, was to him a veritable opening of Wonderland. He noted with keen delight, the situation of the quarry; the thick fir wood on the one side, the little clear stream running by on the other, and in front the noble bay which had been his playground all his life. He examined the high bank of clay which rose above the quarry where he was working, took the keenest interest in the preparation of the blast when wedge and lever failed, and although his hands were blistered and sore with the unaccustomed use of the shovel, examined with interest and pity the beauties of a

goldfinch and a woodpecker, which having taken shelter in the cliff above had been killed by the explosion, and fallen with a huge mass of clay almost at his feet. When the mass of rock they had been working at was raised he saw that the bed on which it had rested was "ridged and furrowed like a bank of sand that had been left by the tide an hour before," and knew from this that though now far above high water mark, the rock on which he was standing had in ages gone by, far beyond the reckoning of man, (Continued on eight page.)



living. His uncles were very anxious that he should be a minister, but he felt that that was not the work for which God had fitted him. Passionately fond of writing and study he looked about for some occupation which, while supplying him with food and clothing, would still leave him leisure to pursue them. He noticed that the winter frosts prevented stone masons from working during several months of the year, and looking forward to having all this leisure to devote to his studies, a stone mason he decided to be.

hands were a little sore, and I felt nearly as much fatigued as if I had been climbing among the rocks; but I had wrought and been useful, and had yet enjoyed the day fully as much as usual..... I was as light of heart next morning as any of my brother workmen." And how about the results of this labor?

Looking back over twenty years to this his beginning of a life of toil he says "My advice to young working-men, desirous of bettering their circumstances, and adding to the amount of their enjoyment, is a very

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