

The Beat of All

BY EDWIN L. RADIN.

Had I my wish, no powerful throne, In truth, would I occupy, Nor wealth possess, nor title own, Nor ho has done it well—not I.

A boy, it wd be, whose treasures are In the guise of ball and kite, Whose rambles by day may take him far, But back to his mother at night.

A boy, with a long, long look ahead, And a past so short and near, That at night, while drowsy-eyed in bed, All he has done is think of her.

The brook he waded, the fish he caught, The fun in the wind and cold— With a morrow at hand which surely ought Fresh pleasures in store to hold.

So short a past, that the rosy hours Quite blot from the sight the gray. And the future is only a mass of flowers Growing to-day.

While the world of the present has won ders more, Than eyes have time to see, With crook and meadow and wood to ex plore, And cities beyond the sea.

Tis reserved for a lad of ten, indeed, To encounter lion and pard, And Indians fight, and rescues lead, In the depths of his own back yard.

With any other source of joy No older head may ken— I'm certain it's better to be a boy Than then the greatest of men

OUR PERIODICALS:

Table listing various publications and their prices, including 'The Best, the cheapest, the most entertaining, the most popular.' and 'Christian Guardian, weekly.' with prices ranging from 10¢ to 2.00.

WILLIAM BRIDGES, Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto. C. V. COATES, S. F. HURDIS, 2172 St. Catherine St., Montreal.

Pleasant Hours: A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

REV. W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, DECEMBER 8, 1900.

LITTLE NEIGHBOURS.

My observation teaches me that birds, especially, are perpetually hungering for and seeking the love and companionship of man.

Last fall there was a sparrow that came two or three times a day and perched on the sill of the open pantry window. Last winter it came to my wife. He was not physically hungry for he seldom touched the crumbs we throw him—it was his little heart that was hungry.

A friend of mine, while tramping along some of our roads last summer, sat down to rest on a log by the wayside. Presently a bright-eyed red squirrel came "hitching" down the trunk of a spruce near by, stopping to bark questioningly at my feet.

the man on the log, the squirrel presently made a dash from the tree, scurried up on my friend's shoulder, bounded to the earth again, and ran off laughing. My friend says distinctly and merrily as ever I heard any human being laugh.

"WRITE TO MY MOTHER." When we arrived at the tenement in Catherine Street that night, we found him in a miserable bed, in the fifth floor, back under the roof.

He had been knocked down by a truck on Canal Street that afternoon, and the ambulance had borne him to his lodgings—so soon as it appeared—to die.

The detective trimmed the candle, rearranged the clothes on the bed, and shook up the feather in the pillow. "You are so kind, he whispered faintly, and I know you will grant my wish?"

"Write—a letter to—?" Then he sat himself down behind the table, and beneath the splutter of the candle, held his sheet of paper and his pen.

"Say," he murmured, "say that—?" Then we went and a little later—"Say that I never for—forgot—them." "That you have never forgotten them," and the pen raced on with death.

"He stared into the air and a glassy look grew in his eyes." "And that—I—am—coming—home—." "And that you are coming home again. Yes, my boy, yes."

The pen raced on, but swifter still sped death. "And that—my mother—should—not—weep, but—"

"Yes, yes," he said, with death so near his hand. "And the address—where does your mother live?"

"She lives in—." Then he died—death-rattle in his throat, we heard the sobbing of the wind outside, we felt that strange glamour, the creeping lack-lustre in his vacant glance, and we knew that another soul had slipped forth, but numbered with his God.

Next day he was buried in Potter's Field. The unfinished letter to his mother was placed upon his breast.

BREAKING HOME TIES.

BY ALICE S. FREEMAN.

"The train leaves at 9.02. Better hurry breakfast, Meg."

"Somewhat I care to do a thing this morning, but in the pantry and when I get there forget what it is I want. Where is mother?"

"Upstairs, packing the satchel." "Poke the fire a little, will you, father, and for a minute mix some Johnny-cake for Dick. It is the last he'll have for goodness knows how long." And Meg brushed away a tear with the corner of her apron.

"What is another?" "Out in the barn."

Yes, Dick was out in the barn, with his arm around the neck of a little gray colt, Nan.

"I wish I wasn't going," he muttered, looking through the barn window at his dovecot. "I didn't think it would be so hard. But I can't stay out here, for my time is almost gone. Good-bye, Nan, and for a minute mix some Johnny-cake for Dick. It is the last he'll have for goodness knows how long."

Nothing seemed forgotten, and he had just completed the rounds when Meg called him to breakfast.

"How much time have I, father?" asked Dick as he entered.

"I suppose so." "Why, papa, I know so. There are lots of 'em running around without any home."

Just then Mrs. Warren entered with the satchel. There was a look of suffering on her face as she crossed the street, and she crossed the street.

"What do you think of that?" asked Dick thoughtfully, as he stroked the soft neck. "Pretty bossy," he murmured.

But he must hurry on, for Dick loved every living thing on the farm, and his time was short—in fact he said good-bye. Nothing seemed forgotten, and he had just completed the rounds when Meg called him to breakfast.

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choked voice, while Meg gently pushed a chair close beside Dick's. "For a moment now, when I think of these last moments were too dear to the mother's heart for her to give way to grief now, so she took Meg's chair with a smile."

After all, breakfast is quite a every meal, and Meg brought blushing out to Dick's cheeks as she gave him hints about designing girls.

Then the neighbours dropped in, each with a word of advice or of good will, and when they had gone, Old Aunt Martha was the last to come, and Dick was loath to let her go again, for he felt in the happy days of his return Aunt Martha would not be with them. Her visit was most in the haven, and Dick's heart was heavy as he watched her picking her way across La Cade toward her home.

At last they were all gone, and nothing was left but to say good-bye. The trunk had already been carried to the wagon. Meg sits by the window with her hand on Gussie's head. Poor Gussie, who with a look of grief on her face, all the morning he had been Dick's shadow, and his eyes fastened on Dick's face with a look which plainly said:

"Take me with you."

"Well, no, go, Dick," said Mr. Warren, as he picked up the satchel. Mrs. Warren looked quickly at the clock. "Why, no, father; not for ten minutes yet."

"And you must go now?" She was at his side in an instant, and, putting her hands on his shoulders, gazed up into his face as if to read his mind.

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kinds of nice things for me—and I could do nice things for him, too, couldn't I? He could go to school and I could help him with his examples and Latin."

"Examples and Latin? God bless the boy, what is he aiming at?" an Judge Rodding wiped the sweat from his bald head.

"I know," laughed James. "He's always up to something like that. I'll bet a dollar he wants to adopt old drunken Pete."

"Is that so, John?" "Yes, papa; cause he is running about the streets as dirty and ragged as he can be, and old Pete don't care a cent about him, and he's a splendid boy, father. He's just as smart as can be, only he can't go to school half the time, 'cause he hasn't anything decent to wear."

"How long do you want to keep him?" "Until he gets to be a man, father."

"And turns out such a man as old Pete?" "No danger of that, father. He has signed the pledge not to drink intoxicants, nor swear, nor smoke, and he has helped me, father, for when I have wanted to do such things he has told me that his father was once a rich man and just as promising as James and I."

"Do you mean to tell me that you ever feel like doing such things as drinking, swearing, smoking and loafing?" asked the minister.

"Why, papa, you don't know half the temptations boys have nowadays. Why boys of our set swear and smoke and drink right along when nobody sees them."

"Don't let me ever catch you doing such things."

"Not now, father, I think, for I am trying to surrender all—every vice, every bad habit, unnecessary pleasure. I don't see how I could enjoy a dog or a pony when I knew a nice boy suffering for some of the good things I enjoy."

"You may have the boy, John, and may God bless the gift."

And God did bless the gift. John Rodding grew up to be a much better man because of the almost constant companionship of drunken Pete's son, and so the little minister's boy, ever since he was touched seemed to prosper. John and James' mother said it was because God had said, "When your father and mother forsake you, then will the Lord take you up."

John had taken up drunken Pete's son and he couldn't help prospering.

Fred Rodding not only lifted up his own fallen family, but became as much of a man as his father's boy, ever since he was touched seemed to prosper. John and James' mother said it was because God had said, "When your father and mother forsake you, then will the Lord take you up."

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