

GENERAL READING

THE SOWERS.

Ten thousand sowers through the land Passed heedless on their way;

The land a forest straightly grew, With plants of every kind,

Anon, as many a year went by, Those sowers came once more,

Then plucked they many a berry bright, None could their right deny;

Nor knew they in that tangled wood The trees that were their own;

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.

During a lengthened review which took place at St. Petersburg in the depth of winter, an officer gave his heavy fur pelisse to his servant to hold with strict injunction not to stir from his post.

During the burning of the winter palace in 1837, a soldier was on duty in a corridor which led to the chapel belonging to the building, when he heard loud cries of alarm outside, and soon saw that the passage was rapidly filling with a dense smoke, which quickly advanced toward the spot where he was standing;

At the time of one of those fearful inundations which frequently take place at St. Petersburg, the Empress Catherine was standing at one of the windows of the palace, contemplating the fearful sight. The river had stolen into the city like a thief in the night, without being perceived for hours.

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to guard the palace, and that he could not quit his post until his sergeant sent another sentry to relieve him. He had to be dragged into the boat by main force in order to save his life.

PREACHING.

BY J. C. DORMAN.

The need of the Church and the world to-day is a sanctified, fearless ministry. The people are looking for leaders. They want to be led to the Canaan of Perfect Love, and not commanded to go.

Very fine hair indicates evenness of disposition, readiness to forgive with a desire to add to the happiness of others.

Persons with fine light brown hair inclined to curl or friz, are quick tempered, and are given to resentment and revenge.

Light brown hair, inclined to redness with a freckled skin, is said to be a certain indication of deceit, treachery, and disposition to do something mean by a friend who can no longer be used to advantage.

All of which may be news for fortune-tellers.

LANGUAGE OF THE HAIR.

All our features have their languages—eyes, nose and mouth. And now come one discovers even the hair has its own indications.

Curly hair denotes quick temper. Frizzly hair set on ones head as if each individual hair was ready to fight its neighbor denotes coarseness.

Black hair indicates persistent resolution in accomplishing an object, also a strong predisposition to revenge wrongs and insults, real and fancied.

Brown hair denotes fondness for life, a friendly disposition, ambition, earnestness of purpose, sagacity for business, reliability in friendship, as the hair is fine.

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FAMILY READING.

THE PRAYER.

The way is dark, my Father! Cloud on cloud Is gathering thickly o'er my head, and loud The thunders roar above me. See, I stand Like one bewildered! Father, take my hand, And through the gloom, lead safely home Thy child!

The day goes fast, my Father, and the night Is drawing darkly down—my faithless sight Sees ghastly visions, fears a spectral band, Encompass me. O Father! take my hand And from the night lead up to light Thy child.

The way is long, my Father, and my soul Longs for the rest and quiet of the goal: While yet I journey through this weary land, Keep me from wandering, Father, take my hand, Quickly and straight lead to heaven's gate Thy child.

The path is rough, my Father, many a thorn Has pierced me, and my weary feet—all torn And bleeding—mark the way: Yet Thy command Bids me press forward. Father, take my hand, Then safe and blest, lead up to rest— Thy child.

The throng is dark, my Father: Many a doubt And fear, and danger compass me about, And foes oppress me sore: I cannot stand Or go alone. O Father! take my hand, And through the throng, lead safe along Thy child.

The cross is heavy, Father. I have borne It long, and still do bear it. Let my Worn and fainting spirit rise to that blest land Where crowns are given. Father, take my Hand, and reaching down, lead to the crown Thy child.

THE ANSWER.

The way is dark, my child, but leads to light; I would have seen thee walk by night; My dealings now thou canst not understand: I meant it so, but I will take thy hand, And through the gloom, lead safely home My child.

The way is long, my child, but it shall be Not one step longer than is best for thee. And thou shalt know at last, when thou shalt stand Safe at the goal, how I did take thy hand, And quick and straight lead to heaven's gate My child.

The path is rough, my child, but O! how sweet Will be the rest, for weary pilgrims meet When thou shalt reach the borders of that land To which I lead thee as I take thy hand: And safe and blest with me shall rest My child.

The throng is great, my child, but at thy side Thy Father walks, and he will not be terrified, For I am with thee—will thy foes command To let thee freely pass. Will take thy hand And through the throng lead safe along My child.

The cross is heavy, child, yet there was one Who bore a heavier for thee—My Son, My well-beloved. For Him bear thou and stand With Him at last, and from thy Father's hand, Thy cross laid down, receive a crown My child.

NOT FAR.

Not far, not far from the Kingdom, Yet in the shadow of sin, How many are coming and going, How few are entering in!

Not far from the golden gateway, Where voices whisper and wait; Fearing to enter in boldly, So lingering still at the gate.

Catching the strain of the music So sweetly along, Knowing the song they are singing, Yet joining not in the song.

Seeing the warmth and the beauty, The infinite love and the light; Yet weary, and lonely, and waiting, Out in the desolate night!

Out in the dark and the danger, Out in the night and the cold; Though he is longing to lead them Tenderly into the fold.

Not far, not far from the Kingdom, 'Tis only a little space; But it may be at last, and forever, Out of the resting place.

A ship came sailing and sailing Over a murmuring sea, And just in sight of the haven Down in the waves went she.

And the spars and the broken timbers Were cast on a storm-beat strand; And a cry went up in the darkness, Not far, not far from the land!

—English Congregationalist.

GOOD INFLUENCES.

"I suppose that you won't go to Sabbath School to-day, Lucy," said a mother one stormy Sabbath morning, settling herself to read. "Please let me go to-day, mamma; I want to go because it rains."

"Why, Lucy, that is my excuse for staying

at home. How can you make it a reason for going?" "Our teacher always goes, mamma, in all weather, although she lives so far away. She told the class that one Sabbath, when she went through the storm and did not find even one scholar, she was so discouraged that she could not help crying. She asked us, too, if we did not go to our day-school in rainy weather; and she said, while we must obey our parents, if we ask them pleasantly to let us go, they would likely be willing. Mamma, will you please let me go to-day?" "Well, I am willing my dear, if you wear your school-suit. Go and get ready."

But the mother no longer took any interest in her book, but said to her husband (a lawyer), who came in from the library, "Lucy is going to Sabbath School to-day because it rains, so that her teacher may be encouraged by the presence of at least one pupil. Suppose we go to chapel for the same reason, if not for a better."

"Agreed. I never could plead a cause to an empty court-room, and the minister must find it hard work to preach to empty pews."—Youth's Companion.

MILTON'S BOYHOOD.

He was sent at an early age to St. Paul's school, which stood then, as now, in the rear of the great cathedral, a few steps distant from his father's house; and in these daily walks it is quite probable that the school-boy sometimes saw Shakespeare and Ben Jonson on their way to those famous "wit combats" at the Mermaid tavern in Bread street. At school Milton studied Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and finally added Italian to the ordinary studies, in all of which he excelled.

I have said that the home influences of his childhood were of a gloomy kind, but there was one bright and cheerful element in the solemn household in Bread street—Milton's father loved Music; he had composed a great deal, for that day, and was a skilful performer on the organ and bass-viol. Young Milton learned them of his father, and the two passed many happy hours in the "sweet harmonies of sound" which Milton loved all his life.

Above the scrivener's shop was a room devoted to various domestic uses: there the father and son shared their music, and perhaps to this tuneful side of his boyhood he owed his first impulse to write verses. He must have begun very young, but his real fame came late in life.

In 1625 he was sent to Cambridge University, where his extreme beauty of person attracted immediate attention, and the students dubbed him "the lady." He must have been marvellously handsome at this time. He never lost a certain beauty, both of feature and expression, but in his early years he was more like a picture of beautiful, gentle youth, than its reality.

He was tall and finely made, though slender, with a fair complexion, perfect regularity of feature, and light brown hair parted in the centre and falling to his shoulders, according to the fashion of the day. His dress was simple, of black velvet with the broad linen collar, and up-turned wristbands of the period. He was soon known at college for his verses. Of his short pieces written at this time, one was on Shakespeare, with whose works, then recently published in book form, he was very familiar. Among his other pieces were: "At a Solemn Music," "On the morning of Christ's Nativity," etc., all showing the extreme delicacy and refinement of Milton's mind.

Indeed he is a striking figure when we look at the University of those days—most of the students led a colicking, lawless, self-indulgent life. Milton, with his gentle, pensive countenance, his grave demeanor, and his growing genius, seems to stand apart; does he not? When he left Cambridge, he says himself, he owns and rolling hills, with every variety of wild flower blooming in the hedgerows and fields. All this delighted young Milton, and he soon found congenial society in the neighborhood. Ludlow castle, the residence of the Earl of Bridgewater, was near by, and not only was the family of the Earl a pleasant one, but Henry Laws, the musician, taught music in the household, and came frequently as a guest to Milton's house. On one such occasion he told them of an accident which had happened to the young people of the Earl's family, while passing through Haywood forest on their way home.

Lady Alice and her brother were benighted, and the young lady was for some time lost in the wood. This incident suggested to Milton his masque of Comus. He wrote the poetry, Laws composed the music, and the Earl had it performed at the castle. The young people themselves taking part.—Mrs. LITTLE in October Wide Awake.

BE SOMETHING.

It is the duty of every one to take some active part as an actor on the stage of life. Some seem to think that they vegetate, as it were, without being anything in particular. Man was not made to rust out his life. It is expected that he should "act well his part." He must be something.

He has a work to perform which it is his duty to attend to. We are not placed here to grow up, pass through the various stages of life, and then die without having done anything for the benefit of the human race. It is a principle in the creed of the Mohammedans that every one should have a trade. No Christian doctrine could be better than that. Is a man to be brought up in idleness? Is he to live upon the wealth which his ancestors have acquired by frugal industry? Is he placed here to pass through life an automaton? Has he nothing to perform as a citizen of the world? A man who does nothing is a mere cipher. A man who does nothing is useless to his country as an inhabitant. He does not fulfill the obligations for which he was sent into the world, and when he dies, he has not finished the

work that was given him to do. He is a mere blank in creation. Some are born with riches and honors upon their heads. But does it follow that they have nothing to do in their career through life? There are certain duties for every one to perform. Be something. Don't live like a hermit and die unregretted.—Tem. Union.

"MAN PROPOSES, BUT GOD DISPOSES."

Thirty-seven years ago, the eleventh day of March, the steamer "President" lay in New York harbor ready to start for Liverpool. Right beside it lay a sailing vessel, the "Sir Isaac Newton," also on the point of leaving, bound for Germany. A foreign gentleman and his family, who were going home to Hamburg, had engaged their passage on the sailing vessel, and their baggage was already on board. When, however, the family came on board, the gentleman noticed with surprise a large engine strapped upon the deck. It was a locomotive being sent to Australia, as the United States at that time supplied them with railroad engines; and this one, proving too large for the hold, had been secured upon the deck.

"I do not like the looks of that engine," said the foreigner, uneasily. "In case of a storm it might be loosened from its position and make trouble aboard."

There was but a moment to decide. He looked at the "President," a large fine-looking steamer, and made up his mind to embark on her. Instantly he gave orders for the transfer of his baggage, which was no sooner accomplished than the "President" was freed from her moorings, and, with a feeling of relief in having secured the change, he and his family gladly turned their faces homeward. No whispered oracle told of the coming doom: Just when the vessel yielded to the power of the terrific storm which two days later it encountered, whether suddenly or with prolonged agony its many passengers met their awful fate, no one was saved to tell. The vessel started. It never reached the destined shore. Between these two facts its terrible secret lies hidden until the day when "the sea shall give up its dead." The friend who recently told me this incident embarked on the sailing-vessel, which left at the same hour as the "President," encountered the same storm, but reached her destination in safety.

There are mysteries in life which it is in vain for us to attempt to explain. We call them providences, and we well may, for they are certainly not the work of man. We plan and act for what seems our best good, and the result proves the exact opposite of our intentions. It may be to our destruction—it may be to our salvation. Instances similar to this may come to the recollection of many who read it. I once stood with a mother as she bent in agony over the grave of her first-born son with a grief which found vent in the reiterated expression of her one thought, "I did it!" He was about leaving her after a vacation spent at home, and after the good-by was said, she followed him to the gate, and in the sorrow at parting, begged him to remain "one day longer." Although disturbing his plans, he yielded, staid one day longer, and left her the next morning to meet his fate before sunset—one among many victims of a fearful railroad disaster.

One other incident will never be forgotten. I was spending an evening many years since with a party of young people, when, in the midst of a game, the hilarity was hushed by the announcement, "The Monongahela has sunk!" Many faces turned pale, and, hurrying home, spent the night in bitter weeping. A party of friends, some of them brothers and sisters, had written that they would return on that boat, and were expected the next day. In this case the sorrow was turned into joy. The friends came home safely, and the singular explanation followed: "Our trunks were put on board the Monongahela and we had no other thought than to return by that boat, when some one of the party, almost thoughtlessly, proposed spending a day longer in P. After a little talking and laughing over it, this was decided upon, the baggage taken off, and the party saved." God, after all, is in the decision, "Man proposes, but God disposes."

While we tremble to take any such responsibility into our own hands, if we "commit our way unto him," we shall be led aright. It is a fearful thing to venture alone upon the great sea before us all; but here we may be sure of being brought into a safe haven. If God is our guide, even a wreck like that of the "President" will bring us into this port safely.

"What harm," said Archbishop Leighton, after having been barely saved from drowning in a boat on his way to Lambeth, when spoken to by a fellow-passenger on being so calm during the danger—"what harm would it have been if we had all been landed on the other side?" This faith is the "anchor" which "entereth into that which is in the veil."—Congregationalist.

Verse 11 addressed publicans of the "love of money, willingness his rejoices intensifies precious of A certain throughout even to the him. We let us not they were may republish races, or, are moral from the a home-infir one good soul make 12. The unclean the restraint outcast fr By the c younger as the older's Among s could claim of it, at shows an u 2. "See in Selfishness which have the record seeks to g self, regard his own mi off the yok Give a sha rest in reed 13. Not a will does n from God's the two is h his journey, father sou home irks heart, he s tory. A pict