

very handsome and noble, in spite of his ragged shoes and patched clothing.

'And I give to the Lord a life that shall for evermore be free from the vile tobacco habit,' he said courageously.

Richard and Joe fidgeted and felt guilty and uncomfortable, while Miss Wayne's face was beaming.

'These are true Easter offerings! How many more of you young people are willing to sacrifice some cherished fault, as these two have done?'

No one stirred for a while, then Richard got up.

'I am! I give up smoking. I coaxed Ben into it. I'm sorry. I'm ashamed of myself. Somehow it seems different from what it did before—' Richard got no further and sat down in confusion, but very earnest in his new purpose.

'Me, too!' piped up a faint voice, but Joe's legs were too weak to support him.

'You've forgotten your grammar, Joe, but your resolution is beautiful,' Miss Wayne said encouragingly.

So it spread—the boys giving up their drinking and swearing, the girls making temperance pledges and casting aside their worst faults—until it seemed as if the old log church would be filled with the chrysalides of their sins, while the beautified new lives would go out into the world to illuminate and help make it better.

Towser's Failing.

'The poor dog is tired out,' said Mary, as the waggon drove into the yard, and Towser, covered with the dust of the road, dropped lolling and panting upon the grass.

'Tisn't the journey he had to take that's tired him,' laughed the farmer. 'He's used himself up by zigzagging from one side of the road to the other and tendin' to everything that didn't concern him. He couldn't pass a gate without runnin' right through it to see what was on the other side, nor see a hen anywhere along the road without feelin' called on to chase her. Every dog that barked started him to barkin' and everything that moved took him out of his way to find out what it was and where it was goin'. No wonder he's tired! But you'll find plenty of human bein's that are travellin' their lives through in just that same way. They ain't satisfied with the bit of road that's marked out for them, but are always watching their neighbor's goin's and doin's, and take charge of no end of things that they can't either help or hinder. They're like old Towser; it wears 'em out. If they'd follow straight after the Master and not invent so many extra cares for themselves, the road wouldn't be nigh so long nor hard.'—'Waif.'

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The Easter Blossom.

(Emma J. Gray, in the 'Christian Intelligencer'.)

We were walking, my friend and I, on a strongly defined trail in the Adirondack woods, when suddenly she motioned towards a bed of moss, through which partridge vines now gay with scarlet berries ran riotously, then she thoughtfully said: 'The partridge vine means more to me than it does to many people.'

'What does it mean?'

'It means Easter morning and it talks to me of the resurrection of our dear Lord, and also the resurrection of lost faith, the resurrection of all that is good in a young man that I once knew.' I was so surprised at these words that I quietly asked: 'Will you not tell me the young man's story?' And for answer she threw the shawl she was carrying on a log near by, with the action saying, 'I guess we are each tired enough to rest a while,' and motioning for me to choose my place on the log. As nearly as I can remember my friend said:

'I am very happy now whenever I think of Robert Wendell as I shall name him, though I was not always happy about him; my heart often seemed too full of anxiety, too full of sorrow for utterance.'

'But,' I interjected, 'you make everybody's trouble yours.'

'Oh, no, my heart is no more easily touched than are others; anybody's heart could not fail but ache who really understood Robert Wendell's condition. He had lost his way, just as entirely as we would lose our way in this great forest if we went too far from the trail. Robert Wendell was trying to find happiness without the Bible and without God.'

'I did not meet him until he was in this perilous condition, and about that same time, I met a cousin of his, who told me of Robert's early youth. His cousin explained that Robert was a continual student of the Bible, and seemed to have unusual interest in all matters pertaining to theology, and when but twelve years of age he made a confession of his faith in Christ and united with the Church. That Robert was such an earnest Christian soldier, his parents had frequently expressed the thought that he might become a minister of the Gospel. This was also Robert's own desire when he entered college. And then what a sad change came.'

'Why, how could that happen?'

'It was all the work of one of the professors; he had noticed the peculiar trend of the boy's mind, and as a professor was more of a follower of Spencer's writings than of the sacred Scriptures, he enjoyed talking with Robert, not so much to undo the boy's faith as to enrich his own thought with Robert's fresh replies, and youthful logic, and Robert enjoyed talking with the professor. But while Robert did not understand the terrible precipice on which he stood, he did understand that the thoughts the professor gave him were altogether new, very different from those he had received from his mother and father. However, Robert had a love for mysticism, and his mind would pleasantly revel in the new ideals which the professor inculcated, and though Robert asked for bread and his admired professor gave him a stone, he took it and hugged it to

his heart, and would go to Darwin, Huxley and many skeptical writers for further explanation of the stone which the professor had given, and only too soon Robert Wendell was a complete unbeliever. He believed neither in the Bible, nor Heaven, nor Hell. He thought that his life ended all, that there was no hereafter for man any more than for the beast that perisheth.

'The Wendell household was very unhappy when they learned that the boy on whom so many hopes were centred, had given up his trust in God, had lost all his faith in the Bible; in fact, was a thorough skeptic. Indeed the entire family were all heart-broken, and all but his grandmother were discouraged when a year followed year Robert showed no sign of return to his old faith. Robert's mother died during this period; indeed, some people went so far as to say that her son's skepticism had caused his mother's death, and Robert though loving his mother beyond words to describe, said good-bye to her believing that he would never again see her, that she would no more enter eternal life than would his dog who had died but the week before her. But his grandmother would say to the family, when they would talk about Robert's great loss: "Keep on praying, God is above and beyond Spencer, God is able to save to the uttermost; some time our Robert, like the prodigal son, will return to his Father."'

'And did he?' I again interrupted. 'Oh, tell me quick, I cannot endure the awful thought of the young man wandering in the dark.'

'Yes, he came back, and now no little child has a more perfect trust—a truer love for the Lord Christ, and I will tell you just how this change happened. Robert had had an attack of bronchitis which left his throat and lungs considerably weakened, but the physician said, there is no reason why Robert should not regain complete health, provided he will remain for a year in the Adirondacks. Therefore an arrangement was made for him to live with a family who kept a summer hotel, but as they made the hotel their home the year round, they were willing to have Robert with them. The family who kept this hotel were true Christian people, and while they were altogether without the knowledge of Robert's skepticism, they would often make remarks about the Bible that were difficult to set aside, and as Robert knew that these remarks were not made on his behalf, he was willing to receive them.

'One evening the hotel proprietor handed Robert the book "Ben Hur," asking him at the same time if he knew that Lew Wallace had once been a skeptic. To this question Robert told me he simply said, "Yes." But the proprietor insisted on repeating the well known incident of how "Ben Hur" came to be written; that Robert Ingersoll had asked Lew Wallace to write a book denouncing God and the Bible, and that he had replied, he would think about it. And when Lew Wallace went to the Bible so as to learn how best to overthrow its doctrine, and after spending six years in the study of the Old and New Testaments, and travelling throughout Palestine to learn if the geography part was correct, he was convinced that skepticism was wrong and he emphatically stated, not only is God a true God, but