

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

THE "GRIT BARE-LEGGED LAD- DIE."

Nearly a hundred years ago, a stout freckled, awkward boy of eighteen years dressed in a ragged waistcoat and short breeches, without stockings or shoes, rapped one evening at the door of a humble cottage in northern England and asked to see the village school-master. When that person appeared, the boy said very modestly: "I would like to attend your evening school, sir."

"And what do you wish to study?" asked the teacher, roughly. "I want to learn to read and write, sir," answered the lad. The school-master glanced over the boy's homely face and rough clothes scornfully, and said, "Very well, you can attend, but a grit, bare-legged laddie like you would better be doing something else than learning his letters."

Then he closed the door in the lad's face. If that "grit bare-legged laddie" had said to the school-master, "I mean to become a great inventor, to be the friend of rich and powerful men, to hold conversation with kings, and to write my name among the great ones of the earth," it is likely he would have called the boy a fool to cherish such wild dreams. Yet this poor, ignorant lad, who did not know the alphabet at eighteen, accomplished all these things by hard work, and because he made up his mind to do the best he could.

He kept pegging away. His ignorance was a misfortune not a fault. His parents were too poor to send him to school. He was the son of a fireman at a pumping-engine in a Northumberland colliery. His birthplace was a hovel with a clay floor, mud walls, and bare rafters. When he was five years old he began to work for his living by herding cows in the daytime and carrying the gates at night. As he grew older, he was set to picking stones from the coal, and after that to driving a horse which drew coal from the pit. He went half-fed and half-clothed; but for "a" that he had a man's brave soul in his sturdy little body.

For several years he was assistant fireman to his father; then he was made fireman himself. Subsequently at the age of seventeen, he was plugman of a pumping engine, a post superior to his father's. But all this time, though ignorant of books, he had been studying his engine. Gradually he acquired so complete a knowledge of his machine that he was able to take it apart and make any ordinary repairs. The "grit, bare-legged laddie" was smarter than he seemed, and this fact his teacher was not long in finding out after he began to teach him.

At the end of two years, by attending evening school, he had learned all that the village schoolmaster could teach him. This brought his school life to an end, but he still kept on studying. He bought books on engineering, and mechanics, and spent his leisure in learning what they taught and in experimenting. At last he began to think about making better engines than those round him. Meanwhile he had secured the appointment of engineer at one of the great collieries of northern England, and he gradually applied his plans for an improved locomotive. He was not entirely successful at first, but he was not discouraged. He saw his mistakes and corrected them. Before he was thirty-five years old he had constructed several locomotive steam engines, and five years afterwards he had become known as a successful and energetic engineer, and was called upon to build long and difficult lines of railway. But his locomotives were too slow; he wanted them to run faster. He proposed to build one that would run at the rate of twelve miles an hour. Everybody laughed at him. Some thought he was going crazy. One gentleman, who considered himself very wise, said to him: "Suppose you invent an engine capable of running nine or ten miles an hour, and suppose, while it was running, a cow should stray upon the track; would not that be a very awkward circumstance?" "I should think it might be very awkward, indeed—for the cow," he answered.

It may be that she has a brother away from home on his birthday. He is at college or in a distant city entering on a business career. A letter and a birthday present should be sent to him as a sister's duty. Many girls do not realize how much their gentle, sisterly influence can help their brothers, but a girl who has been brought up to keep the dear family anniversaries knows how much the letter from home and the little loving gifts are valued by the brother who is far away.

A girl naturally looks forward to her own birthday as an event, but she will be happier if she does not become absorbed by a too great consideration of self. Not very long ago a girl friend of mine said, "I shall be eighteen next month, and I am to have a birthday luncheon. Mother is going to give me a ring, father a watch, Uncle Ned a desk and some books, and don't you think all the friends I invite to my luncheon will send presents?"

"Stop a moment, Ruth dear," I said. "I am sure it will be a happy time for you. Of course, your mother and all the dear ones love to give you pleasure, and it is right that they should, but you must not let your friends feel under any obligation to send presents simply because they are invited to your home on your birthday. That you would be a mere bargain, and you would be losing the true spirit of hospitality. You must show your hospitality by giving pleasure to your friends. No doubt you may receive some pretty gifts from friends. If you receive any presents, be sure to thank your friends warmly for thinking of you, and do not let any girl feel that her small present is less welcome than the gift of a richer friend. I think it would be a happy thought to give some thing yourself to each guest. A pretty box filled with bonbons and tied with a bright ribbon would be a nice souvenir of the day. On the ribbon you can paint in gold letters the date and your initials. Do not think only of yourself on that day. Begin your woman's life with the idea of what you can give—not what you can gain. I mean not only absolute gifts of things, but of kindly feelings, generous, unselfish thoughts. Find some poor children who never have fun or presents, or some children in a hospital and give something to them on your birthday—some toys, books, fruits or flowers. Make the day a joyous one for yourself by your loving interest not only in your intimate friends, but in those who are not so fortunate as you."

"I had never thought of all that," said Ruth, pensively. "Thank you very much for the idea." Some months have passed since then. A letter lies on my desk from my friend Ruth, who is now living in a far distant city. "My eighteenth birthday was the happiest day of my life," she writes; "I had lovely presents. The luncheon for eighteen of my girl friends was a great success, but the best part of the day was my morning visit to the children's hospital, when I carried to the children presents of flowers, toys, books and games. Ever since then I have visited the hospital regularly. There is a dear little lame boy who suffers much, but is so patient, and a crippled girl, who is very lonely because she has no mother to come to see her. All the children look for me one day in the week, and we do have such a happy hour with quiet games, picture books and stories. Life seems to me in it all I can bring some brightness to these suffering little ones."

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN. The man who does his work cheerfully without complaint rises steadily in the scale, while the growler slips man, notch downward each day, and, at last, lies flat on his back at the bottom of the bill. Had he spent half the energy in trying to be cheerful that he did in complaining, he might have sat on the top round of the business ladder.—The Chicago Independent.

Public Opinion Against It. Twenty years ago, a New York contemporary tells us, 25 per cent of the employees of the New York Central Railroad were discharged yearly for drinking. Now only about 1 per cent yearly are so dismissed. This register a decided advance in public opinion on the temperance question, at least where it comes to the employment of men in responsible engineering or commercial positions.

Should People Marry Early? A newspaper question, "Should People Marry Early?" was answered by Very Rev. William Byrne, D. D., V. G., of Boston, as follows: "It may be said that, as a general rule, early marriage is good for the great mass of wage-earners, who comprise the larger portion of society. But even in the case of these, marriage is early enough when it occurs after the parties have arrived at ripe manhood and womanhood. Twenty-one in the case of the woman, and from twenty-three to twenty-five in the case of the man are ages at which marriage is as early as generally it ought to be. To the wage-earner usually a wife is a helpmate in every sense of the word. By the practice of industry and economy she will reduce the cost of living to the lowest possible reasonable point. The man will find that it is no more, but sometimes is actually less expensive to provide for himself and his wife than it was to get on alone.

"This is because he is removed from many temptations to waste money. Usually he finds that what he saves in this way enables him to rear a family

which long before he has lost his own usefulness has developed earning capacity.

"In view of these conditions early marriage is good, but it is not true that early marriage, such as this, is quite generally practiced. I believe that statistics show that the great mass of wage-earners do marry at an early age, most of the men long before thirty and most of the women long before twenty-five. "There is another class, however, whose condition may be considered namely, the class of young professional and business men. It is very seldom that a young lawyer or doctor has at twenty-five a practice sufficient to support in the circumstances to which she has been accustomed the young woman who would make for him the most desirable companion. If such a young man waits a few years longer, and does not marry until he approaches thirty, there is no occasion for censure. "I believe that the figures in the case of this class also show that the great majority marry between the ages of twenty-five and thirty. "Under the circumstances I see no occasion for alarm that people do not marry early enough."

Lying and Dishonesty. These two vices seem to take root with many boys in their tender years. From whence do they come? Not from the home, assuredly not from the school? Certainly not. Then they must come from the great source of many evils—bad companionship. Mixing up with so-called "smart" characters, who spend the greater portion of their time in roasting the streets drinking in evil. Lying and dishonesty are unfortunately growing up and becoming quite an element with hundreds of our young folks. Be on your guard against these two vices before it becomes too late. Be courteous and manly, tell the truth at all times, and you will win the esteem and confidence of all. Keep nothing that is not your own. Be not light-fingered in school or at home. Very often dishonesty starts in the school with you by taking books, pens, pencils, etc., which are not yours; or at home by taking a few cents from the home by taking an opportunity arises. A visitor on one occasion was visiting a penitentiary, and chatted with a large number of unfortunate ones who were employed at different kinds of works. The visitor was particularly struck with one young man who possessed a charming countenance. He entered into conversation with this prisoner and obtained the following facts. The prisoner said: "I am to pass several years of my life in this dungeon, for I committed several robberies. In my young days I began to take five cent pieces from my mother's purse. Little by little the bad habit grew on me, and then I took large sums, but all was lost at different times, and was finally caught, and now I am paying for my folly. Young reader, do you see yourself through this mirror? You, too, will wind up like that unfortunate one, but then it will be too late to be wise in time. Carry truth and honesty with you through life, and you will be blessed with success, happiness and contentment."

Chronic Leavers. A large proportion of the failures in life are to be found in the ranks of the chronic leavers. Everywhere we go we meet earnest, conscientious workers, who are amazed that they do not get on faster. They are eloquent over their fancied wrongs, the injustice that confines them to inferior grades, while persons with no more education, ability, or perseverance than they possess, are advanced over their heads. To the casual observer, they seem to have cause for grievance; but, when we analyze these people, we find what the trouble really is. They are incapable of independent action. They dare not make the slightest move without assistance from some outside source, the advice or opinion of some one on whose judgment they have no confidence in themselves. They do not trust their own powers. They have never learned to stand squarely on their feet, to think up their own thoughts, and make their own decisions. They have leaned upon somebody from childhood, all through the formative period of character building, until a habit of leaning is chronic.

Any faculty which is unused for a long time loses its power. It is a law of nature that we must use or lose. If a man ceases to exercise his muscles, they soon become weak and flabby. The same inexorable law governs the mental powers. So, the man and woman who have never learned the fundamental lesson of self-reliance, who have never used their God-given faculties in reasoning with themselves, making their own decisions, and appealing, growing up weaklings, parasites. God intended them to stand alone, to draw upon His inexhaustible power without stint. He meant them to be oaks, but they have become vines. Not realizing that all growth is from within, they have reversed this fundamental truth, and endeavored to draw their strength from the outside. But the price we pay for this shifting of responsibility is a very heavy one—the loss of our kingdom. We voluntarily abdicate the throne of personality, resign the priceless privilege conferred upon every human being in the civilized land—the right to think, and speak, and act for himself. It is useless to try to help a person who leans, who cannot stand alone. Andrew Carnegie says that, if you

help a young man to climb a ladder who has not sufficient self-reliance to maintain his position after he has been boosted, he will fall back the moment you let go, and he finds he is alone.

"For every self-made man," says the author of a recent book, "there are ten self-runned men." Of the ten self-runned, it is safe to say that five or more belong to the numerous family of "leaners." The ranks of mediocrity, too, of the half-successful, are crowded with people of little natural ability. They never get beyond inferior positions, simply because they never acted independently. They were afraid to take the initiative in anything, to rely upon their own judgment, and they let the opportunity pass. They waited for advice from some one as to what course they would better pursue.

If you would be a man and not a parasite, stand erect, look up, grow upward. Do not look hesitatingly to the right or the left for some support, some prop to lean upon. You have within you all the elements of manhood, of womanhood, of success. Cultivate your strength. Increase your reasoning power, your will power, your power of initiative, by use. Do not, like the senseless lobster, remain high and dry on the sand or among the rocks, waiting for the sea to come to you, when, by your own native energy, you can plunge in and ride the waves triumphantly.—Success.

TO BREAK UP THE TREATING HABIT. The anti-treating proposition advanced by U. S. Deputy Supreme Knight Minahan in a suggestion at the recent Knights of Columbus banquet, has swept the country like wild fire, winning approval from all classes of people and commendations generally from the public press. Mr. Minahan, himself, has received a bushel basket full of letters and telegrams coming from all quarters of the union, one message from the Blue Grass State, of peculiar significance, running, "God bless Ohio, Kentucky tumbling over itself to get in."

At the regular meeting of Council No. 400, the measure was taken up and following the discussion, this resolution was adopted without a dissenting vote: Resolved, That Council No. 400 of the Knights of Columbus adopt as a by-law of this council the abolition of all gatherings, the custom of treating to distilled or vinous or malt liquors; further, that the individual members of this council use their best endeavors at all times, by example, to abolish the American habit of treating. While the resolution is somewhat narrow in scope, it does very well to pave the way for a general law binding the Knights on their honor to refrain from treating everywhere. Among the many communications or the movement read at the meeting was the following from the Right Rev. Bishop Moeller: "I regret exceedingly my inability to attend this evening's meeting. I hope to have the pleasure of being with you Friday, July 26. One of the subjects to be considered this evening is the senseless and anti-Christian practice of treating. Good sense dictates that you ought not to urge a man to drink nor permit yourself to be forced to drink when he or you do not need it to quench thirst. This canon of common sense, the practice of treating, violates in most instances. One of the charming virtues of Christianity is charity, the doing good to your neighbor. What good do you do to fellow-man by the practice of treating? Usually none; on the contrary, you contribute to his discomfort, and prepare the way for his downfall, and make him the victim of that vice which is one of the curses of our country, drunkenness. "I sincerely hope that the Knights of Columbus will take up the suggestion. Let it be one of the requirements for being a Knight of Columbus that he will neither treat nor be treated by treating or accepting an intoxicant. It is a step in the right direction; it has not only my entire approval, but will receive my hearty co-operation. Wishing the movement success and asking the Father of all good gifts to bless you, I remain sincerely yours, "HENRY MOELLER, "Bishop of Columbus."

Nothing that the order has ever done has brought it so conspicuously before the American people, and it now devolves on the Knights themselves to vindicate the promise of the leaders in the praiseworthy movement.—Catholic Columbian.

THE MAGDALEN'S DREAM. But the dream that used to dawn out of the shadows of sleep most frequently was this. She thought she walked in a great garden, beneath the umbrage of trees, and brushed by the great beautiful flowers, that leaned toward her, to touch her feet, her hands and her garments. And in the garden was a mighty palace, always lighted for a festival; and she saw a long procession of the white-robed immortals entering slowly, but with uplifted faces, on which the lights of the banquet hall shone. And, when all had entered, and the doors were about to be shut, a Figure came to the portals, and shading His eyes with His right hand, looked long and lingeringly into the darkness. And Mary knew it was herself was the desired one; but she dared not come out of the darkness into the light, be-

cause the robes of humiliation were around her; and the blue serge of sorrow was not a fitting garment for the splendors of the King's Hall. So she turned away from the questioning eyes, and sought the shadows again.

Then she was suddenly aware that a Voice, quite near, called her; and that she was sought out among the shadows. For she heard, ever and again, the whisper: "Veni, Sponsa! Veni, Immaculata! Veni, Sponsa mea!" and then a hand was laid gently upon her.

She was found and reproached. But she could only point to the blue garment of penitence and weep. And then she found herself in the hall of King, and with His own wounded hands, He put on the bridal robes—the soft, white habit, and the veil, and drew around her the blue cincture and let the scapular fall; and He hung the Silver Heart on her breast and tied the rosary to her girdle; and lo! she was a Sister of the Good Shepherd. And He led her trembling into the lighted hall; and all her Sisters gathered around her and kissed her—and then—well, then, she would wake up in her narrow bed in the gloom of a winter's morning, with just a yellow gas jet above her head; and, ah, yes! here was the blue serge mantella and skirt; and here the huge, frilled, Norman cap—the badge of penitence and shame. No wonder that her head sank like lead and that a film crossed her eyes, as she went about her weary work, for yet another day, until, perhaps at Mass or afterwards in the hushed silence of the afternoon, she would study and watch the white figure of her crucifix; and then, with one swift aerial flight, as a mother-bird swoops on her nest, she would fly on the wings of love and fold herself and nestle in the big gaping wounds of the torn side of Christ; and then all was peace again, until another dream.—Rev. P. A. Sheehan: Luke Delmege.

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