

Our Story Page.

The Money That Did Not Belong To Him.

The quiet of Franklin Street was broken in upon one day last summer by a raft of noisy boys, who, finding a little stretch of shadow thrown by Mr. Foster's tall, new house, took advantage of it for their game.

I don't know just what the game was; but it kicked up a great deal of dust and a great deal of noise, and seemed to be very exciting. One thing I could not help seeing from my window that disquieted me. It was that pennies were passing from one pocket to another. When the whirling top reeled and fell on one side of a certain mark made in the dust, there would be a whoop among one side of the crowd, and pennies tossed from hand to hand. I didn't like the looks of that.

Presently a rather grim-looking old fellow, with a gray moustache and a patch over one eye, came along, walking slyly on a wooden leg. He stopped long enough to see what the boys were doing, and then I heard him call out in a resonant voice,—

"George Maxwell!"

"Sir," answered a young voice, promptly; and a handsome, straight little fellow stepped out from the crowd.

"There's a little story I've been wanting to tell you for a long while, and I think this is a good chance."

A look passed among the boys which seemed to say that they didn't agree with him about this being a good chance, but he took advantage of their silence to begin his story.

"When we were all surrounded at Appomattox," began the old Confederate, "a friend of mine had several hundred dollars in gold belonging to the Confederate government, which had been put into his hands to buy ordnance stores abroad.

"What am I going to do with this gold?" said he.

"Why, colonel," said I, 'come with me. We'll look up what's left of the Confederate government, and turn it in.'

But almost before we had gotten out of Virginia Davis had been captured,

and the Confederate government was a thing of the past.

"Now, what am I going to do with this gold?" said the colonel.

"Well, colonel," said I, 'you are as much the Confederate government as anybody else now; and I advise you to keep the money, and use it to get a start somewhere.'

"He didn't seem to like this idea," said he wasn't in the habit of using money that didn't belong to him. But everybody he consulted gave him the same advice; and so after a while he gave it to two friends of his, young soldiers, who had come out of the war without a cent, and set up in business in a small way.

"We'll make you partner in the concern, colonel," they said; and so they used his name, though he never touched a cent of money after he turned over to them that Confederate gold. They failed, poor fellows, and lost all the money, and got in debt besides.

"Meanwhile the colonel was earning his living by his wits, and going right on to success. I don't mean to say that he was getting rich; but he was serving his country and her broken fortunes and her discouraged people, and was everywhere relied upon as a man of men.

"Just before he married the woman he had been waiting for, I saw him, and congratulated him on his good fortune. 'That Confederate gold gave you the first start, didn't it colonel,'" said I.

"Then he told me what had happened to it. 'But do you know, major,' said he, 'I've never felt right about that money? It wasn't mine to give away or lose, and I've made up my mind to take it out of my own pocket and give it to some State institution.'

"Oh, come now," said I jeeringly, 'the day for Don Quixotes is past.'

"I didn't see this old comrade again until a few months before his death. Yes, boys,"—the old soldier's voice grew husky—"he's gone into camp with old Stonewall and 'Mars' Bob' and the rest. 'Well, colonel,' said I, 'I hope you didn't steal that money from the fine boy I hear you are growing at Fairhoks;'" for I knew he was ready to brag about his baby.

"Well," said the colonel, 'when I

came to think about the fair and square man I wanted George to be, that Confederate gold bothered me. I knew in my secret soul, after the heat of the war cooled, that that money belonged to the United States government; and so a few months ago I spent some hard work finding out the compound interest on it. And I paid it to the United States Treasury, interest, compound interest, and all. Money is rather scarce with me now; but, if I had but one shirt to my back, I'd enjoy looking that boy squarely in the face and daring him to touch a cent of money that wasn't honestly his!

"George, did you ever hear that story before?"

"Yes, sir," said the lad, proudly; "that was my father."

"Certainly, it was your father,—the bravest man, the best friend, and the truest Christian I ever knew."

"And is it possible that you are putting pennies into your pocket by betting, by gambling? George Maxwell's boy handling dirty money!"

The soldier stumped away, and there was a dead silence out on the shady sidewalk. Then I saw several coins flung down in the dust; and, as the boy sprang after the halting steps, I heard him say:—

"Never again, sir! Never!"—Elizabeth P. Allen, in Independent.

A Great Plan.

Rev. Dr. Broadus recently related the following incident during a Sunday school talk in Detroit:

An old man used to sweep the street-crossings for gratuitous pennies near the House of Parliament for many years. One day he was absent. Upon inquiry, he was found by a missionary ill, in a little attic chamber, barely furnished with cot and stool.

"You are lonely here," the missionary said. "Has anyone called upon you?"

"Oh, yes," he replied, "several persons have called—Mr. Gladstone for one. He called and read to me."

"Mr. Gladstone called? And what did he read?"

"He sat on the stool there and read the Bible to me."

What a beautiful position! The greatest statesman in the world sitting on a stool, in an attic, reading the word of God to a street sweeper! Great men lose none of their greatness by kindness to God's poor.—Our Church Homes.