

## "Wedge Drives Wedge"

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3.)

tion, it is latent unless it comes in contact with objects. As with a muscular effort, so is the mental, though it may not be measured in pounds or other units of weight.

I can appeal to you now with more surety of response, because this leave-taking time is a period when you will be seeking new paths for your feet, and it is in your power to make these new ways straight and wide, and the years ahead happy useful years, full of sweet records and bright with hope of better things to be won. I appeal to you also because you are young and your youth is very precious. We all know that early bad tastes, early peculiar habits and early defective training are often hindrances to growth; and first studies and first habits hold their trend throughout life.

Ruskin says that the "happiness of your life, and its power and part and rank, in earth and in heaven, depend on the way you pass your days, but they ought to be in the deepest sense solemn days, the deep and sweet solemnity that attends the dawn."

If you will think carefully and bravely over the matter, I believe you will admit that an intellectual life is greatly to be desired, and an intellectual nobility the highest and most useful rank. Read the same author along the line of being "kingly" where he affirms that well directed moral training, and well chosen reading lead to a possession of power, the purest kingship that can exist among men, the inevitable and eternal kind, crowned or not, the kingship of a stronger moral state, and a truer thoughtful state than that of others."

Piron the poet would never suffer this intellectual nobility to be lowered in his presence. Entering the apartments of a nobleman who was conducting another peer to the stables, the latter stepped aside to make way for Piron. "Pass on, my lord," said the host, "pass on, he is only a poet." "Since our qualities are declared I shall take my rank," replied Piron, and placed himself ahead of both noblemen.

Look over your list of friends and acquaintances, and consider whose life is most useful and attractive, one with mind bent wholly upon the gaieties of the hour, cares of the home, and events of the little world immediately surrounding her or one who without scorning these petty interests brings to them a well trained mind, alert for wide and broader outlooks, as cognizant of the annals of past and future as the fleeting present, and ever extending in sympathies and interests. Carlyle, in one of his early letters, in speaking of his wife's work in the world said: "I tell her sometimes, there is much for her to do, if she were trained to do it, her whole sex to deliver from the bondage of frivolity, dollhood and imbecility, into the freedom and valor of womanhood." We forgive to his choleric and dyspepsia the strong language, descriptive, of our condition, but there is assuredly a lack of intelligent women in our communities, in spite of the large classes each year graduated from the schools, and the fault must be, that we drop too soon this intellectual bent of school life, failing to exercise it in our homes. True education, like true charity, should begin at home. We must be able to patiently assume all duties and cares which come to our hand, but having done this, we are yet "lacking," if possessing education ourselves, we fail to exercise an educating force on all who come in touch with us, enriching and stimulating all life around us. That is the true scope and end of the higher education for woman.

This educating force is the basis or motive of all Institutions of learning. Someone with a desire to see the spread of knowledge, founded Harvard years ago, when New England was a colony of Old England, a Hampton in our days, for the Indian, a Spelman for the negro. What else but this longing to spread intelligence and learning, dominated the men who without remuneration traversed these Maritime Provinces, laboring with earnest appeals in public and in private, to awaken an interest in the building of Acadia College. What else responded in the hearts of our fathers, as they gave of their money, their lumber, their stores. What besides stirred the hearts of humble women, as they knitted socks and gloves, and spared eggs and butter from their scanty household fare to swell the asked-for fund? It is not only in old Scotia, and in Drumtochty parish, that they eat the oaten cake, and drink the cold water, to maintain the Institutions of learning and educate the children, but here in New Scotland our fathers set their lights upon the hills and kept them trimmed and burning! Through this great desire to give to others what she herself had obtained, Mt. Holyoke Seminary was founded, by that noble woman Mary Lyon, who has been justly called the "most original and influential educator." America has produced. Sixty years this school has been established, and today with more and best equipments, it is entering upon a larger field of usefulness than ever before. And in nearly every State in the Union there are colleges and other schools of high grade directly patterned after Mary Lyon's ideal of practical education for women, all the domestic duties of the college efficiently performed by the students. Read her biography, and see what an educating force she was.

You have weighty and grave responsibility because you have been here these years, tasting of the fruits of knowledge, drinking of the Pierean spring. Your faces ought to shine a little from the glory, your speech sound of it, your life be an impetus to urge others to the portals of this royal gateway. In a short time you will forget much of what you now know, but that need not be indication that you are retrograding, becoming dull. It is now generally admitted that education means teaching the mind to work well rather than filling with a certain amount of culled learning. And now that you are to be deprived of the systematic training of schools and the intellectual companionship and stimulus of your teachers who have tried to make this school life a wise preparation for the sterner world work of your lives, it rests with yourselves alone to keep sharp and bright and strong.

"Read good books, diligently, rightly; go to them for help, appeal to them when your own knowledge and power of thought fails, and be led by them into wider sight." The master minds of the world are at your call for instructors and friends. It is a hurrying, busy era of human life. The manifold demands of church and society and home are apt to absorb us. "The world is too much with us, striving and getting we lay waste our powers."

We are growing to have an incapacity for thought, and no greater calamity can befall us, mentally, to pervert our usefulness than this loss of the lofty and pure elements of continued thought. If you make it a habit of your young life to be alert in this direction it need never befall you. There is a government of thought. To a certain extent the mind can be trained to take a particular disposition of ideas. Having an early bias that way will do much toward the habit's continuance. We have many instances of men and women in advanced life beginning new studies and engaging in research, with pleasure and relish as keen as that with which more youthful students commence.

"Cato learned Greek at eighty; Simonides bore off the prize of verse from his competitors when he had numbered more than four score years; Chaucer, at Woodstock with the nightingales."

At sixty wrote his "Canterbury Tales." These are indeed exceptions, but they show how far the gulf-stream of our youth may flow, into the arctic region of our lives. Where little else than life itself survives."

It is the continued stimulus of the effort which makes these possible—an impulse and instinct always working in our character.

"One with our being and our powers  
And rather part of us than ours."

Not all of you, not many of you will have special opportunity for courses of higher study, but this high thinking and earnest living need never be discontinued.

You are returning now to your homes from which, with short intervals of vacation, you have been absent for the years of your school course. The first exercise of your power lies there. If the home life is not just what you desire for a helpful stimulus, do not too easily adapt yourself to it, but endeavor to bring it to you. You need not organize the family into a Browning Club, nor give table talks on ethics and psychology, nor in any measure assume the prig and pedant air. That is not the "tool's true play." We must watch for an opening and then exercise our potent activity in pushing,—press in where there is little space,—crowd in also among opposing objects. We should not shrink from a little opposition; part of the power of a wedge depends upon friction. I need not enumerate to you opportunities, for to each of us come special ones born of our surroundings. Let this educating stress be upon all our doings. Have it the sign and seal of our individuality, our personality—the force a resident force, "the very pulse of the machine."

Nor could I be true to my convictions and not tell you that I believe to have this intellectual life patterned after Christ's and His teachings will make you more powerful than without it. The true spirit of the incentive for thus spreading your knowledge is His "Go tell my brethren." His "Freely ye have received, freely give." The strongest reason why we should aim to be full of vigorous, lofty thought, is because we are His temples—and to say as each added information each new intelligent awakening enlarges beautifies our building.

"The house is not for me

It is for Him.

His Royal thoughts require many a stair,  
Many a turret, many an outlook fair,  
Of which I have no thought  
And need no care.

Over and over—the house is not for me,  
It is for Him—and watch our lips

As they were palace doors—the King within."

I cannot better illustrate my thought of you being wedges to make way and room for others than to tell you a story of one of Acadia's "boys" of the long ago. I know there are many such, like it in character, but I choose this because I know it in detail, and it has been in my heart since I first heard it.

On an autumn morning of 1830, in one of the sparsely settled districts of Nova Scotia, a little lad of ten years was starting away from home for his first school. The rudiments of letters and figures had been learned at his mother's knee, and now he was leaving his first fond teacher for sterner instruction. There was great interest and excitement in the home farm-house. The father had travelled on horseback a distance of forty miles to the shiretown to procure the necessary school books. A sister, then a lass of five, still remembers how shining and wonderful they looked, and how carefully the mother sewed over the bright covers strong white cloth, attaching to each book four tapes to tie when not in use.

The boy's new school-master was Angus M. Gidney, a school man well remembered in the southern counties of Nova Scotia for his love of learning, his wit and poetic talent and his genial personality. For years the lad sat under his instruction. He took to study like a duck to water.

"He should go to college," advised the school-master. "He is going, some day," said his mother. "You must send him to the new school at Horton," said a kindly man, ever a friend to education, with the scent of a Domsie for a "lad of pairs." "Let him prepare for Horton, I will get him a Latin grammar." And the mother and father, and this friend who loved him dearly, and the boy himself all took the new hope to their hearts and cherished it. Soon he obtained a license and taught in the district schools about his home. The salary was small but it was a beginning for the College fund, and patiently he kept at the work. A sickness laid him aside for over a year.

He grew better and was able to again assume his school

charge, though not in full health. Strength increased slowly, but not so slowly as the Horton tuition fee. His father was a prosperous owner of farm and mill. But a farm in that district, at that period of settlement, and a farm in this present Cornwallis, was as garden and wilderness. The bread stuffs grown and manufactured were needed to feed the hungry boys and girls, the wools and linens to clothe them; little was left for market purpose. Money was "heavy to get and light to hold," and ten pounds sterling was the tuition fee of Horton Academy. The parents often talked it over. "He must go," they said wistfully, and they two and the young man were ever contriving to save toward the fund. A failure of grain crop and consequent idleness of the mill for most of the season, at length discouraged them. They lost hope, and the father and son had a talk in the old mill one day at close of work. It hurt the man to so decide it, and he was glad of the friendly shadows that he might not see his boy's clouded face. "We must give up the college," he said. It is only spoiling your future as well as your present, having it in view and being balked of it. The farm is large and can be divided in acres and stock, and the mill needs a younger hand. You shall have a share in each. Give it all up now and take to the thing nearest your hand; it is best so." And the younger man assented, though the struggle of his life was in the decision. But after the word was once spoken it was easier to further plan. "We are going to move the mill to a better site, wife," said the father as the two entered the house a little later. "The lad is going to take it up for his position, and we have agreed to give up the College course."

"He has a better position waiting him," said the mother. "He will get to College yet, a door will open."

In a few days laborers were employed to dig the canal for the new site of the mill, and all on the farm were busy over the unwonted task, some zeal and interest, in spite of the bitter disappointment, coming even to the young man as they made the plans and settlements.

While they were all at work, came the kind friend, the "Domsie" who so loved this youth. He had heard of the new project.

"It is a poor plan," he said, "you are going to Horton, stop the work three days until I pass this way again."

Work on the mill was suspended, the mother went about with shining eyes, the young man, with hope upspringing in his heart. On the evening of the third day back came the fairy godmother with ten pounds sterling, a gift from self and friends. The mill was not moved, and the young man made ready for Horton.

I wonder if we cannot understand his joy, as he and his father started away from the old home. Off for college at last!

It was a long drive of a hundred miles, to this Classic Hill, over a road unbroken by settlement for most of the way, shadowed by wide spreading branches of primeval forest, lined with thickets of smaller growth where rustled the whirr of partridge wings, deep ravines, high hills, bordering lakes that mirrored the lonely lovely scene, but the "narrowest, rockiest" most crooked road in all the country, a highway that would baffle even the Liberal Government's most generous grants to better, this old post road, now growing grassy and a route of the past.

With them they took a load of provisions, wheat and rye flours, butter and sweets, from the well stocked home larder and implements for cooking the simple foods, for the young man was going to board himself. So they entered Wolfville, as so many of our brightest old country students did, in November of 1843.

The new college, that wonderful storied structure "built without money," whose history has been told in prose and poem was just completed. Its imposing front of Ionic column and cupola, adjoining halls, the students in cap and gown, the elegant and stately Principals and Professors, were all new sights to the youth, before this never so far from the scenes of his quiet home.

I have seen this young man, when he was old, his face grave, thoughtful, "uplit by the old sweet look of it." I have seen him here on the platform, an honored member of your College-Board of Governors, I have seen him in one of our First churches, over which he had been a loved and esteemed former pastor, and heard him preach of the "fulness of the gospel of Christ" which he espoused. And when I think of these occasions and of his long effort of waiting to get here for the first term, I wish he could have "so forecast the years" for his enjoyment that November morning.

But the vision was not vouchsafed, and unknowing he set himself bravely at work, remained throughout the year, spent the vacation on the home farm, returned for the next term, and at the beginning of the succeeding year, was appointed tutor in the Academy, boarded there, and continued his own studies.

He had now forced his way far enough to make room for others. Three brothers were at home, they must all be brought to Acadia. In the summer holidays he supplemented their school studies with special Academy work, inspired them with his own zeal and love of learning, and at the beginning of his Sophomore year brought back with him the eldest, a boy of sixteen, the father driving them as before.

On the return drive the faithful parent who had made the long journey to and fro for four years took a heavy cold, which resulted in his death. The sons were called home. But board and lodging were at Acadia, so the elder brother took the two younger ones again over the long way, established them at the Academy, and bravely took his father's place on the farm.

At the beginning of another year he was again at College, with him one of the brothers. Late in November of this year he heard of a position which would earn a young man his board and tuition at the Academy. Room for another brother! He must be brought!

The vacancy would be open for a week only, Post was slow in those days, so on a Friday morning this valiant junior, with muscle undeveloped by football or bicycle,

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