

HOLIDAYS.

BY HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

The holiest of all holidays
Are these kept by ourselves,
In silence and apart—
The secret anniversaries of the heart.

When the full river of feeling overflows,
Those happy days unclouded to their close,
Those sudden joys that out of darkness start,
As flowers from ashes, swift desires to dart,
Like singing swallows down each wind that blows,
White as the gleam of a receding sail,
White as a cloud that floats and flits in air,
White as the whitest lily on a stream,
These tender memories are
A fairy-tale of some enchanted land,
We know not where, but beautiful
As a dream within a dream.

THE HEAVY BURDEN.

"Rather a heavy burden, isn't it, my boy?" Clarence Spencer to whom the words had been addressed, turned from the ledger and looked towards the speaker. Clarence was a young man—not more than five and twenty—and was book-keeper to Mr. Solomon Wardle. It was Solomon Wardle, a pleasant-faced, keen-eyed man of fifty who had spoken.

"A heavy burden, isn't it, Clarence?" the merchant repeated.

And still the young man was silent. His looks indicated that he did not comprehend. He had been for some time bending over the ledger with his thoughts far away; and that his thoughts were not pleasant ones, was evident enough from the gloom upon his handsome face.

"My dear boy, the burden is not only heavy now, but it will grow heavier and heavier the longer you carry it."

"Mr. Wardle, I do not comprehend you."

"Ah, Clarence!"

"I certainly do not."

"Didn't I call at your house for you this morning?"

Clarence nodded assent.

"And didn't I hear and see enough to reveal to me the burden that you took with you when you left? You must remember, my boy, that I am older than you are, and that I have been through the mill. You find your burden heavy; and I have no doubt that Sarah's heart is as heavily laden as your own."

And then Clarence Spencer understood; and the morning's scene was present with him, as it had been present with him since leaving home. On that morning he had a dispute with his wife. It had occurred at the breakfast table. There is no need of reproducing the scene. Suffice it to say that it had come of a mere nothing, and had grown to a cause of anger. The first had been only a look and a tone; then a flash of impatience; then a rising of the voice; then another look; the voice rose higher; reason was unhinged; passion gained sway; and the twain lost sight of the warm, enduring love that lay smitten and aching deep down in their hearts, and felt for the time only the passing tornado. And Clarence remembered that Mr. Wardle had entered the house and caught a sign of the storm.

And Clarence Spencer thought of one thing more—he thought how miserably unhappy he had been all the morning; and he knew not how long his burden of unhappiness was to be borne.

"Honestly, Clarence, isn't it a heavy and thankless burden?"

The book-keeper knew that his employer was his friend, and that he was a true-hearted Christian man; and after a brief pause he answered: "Yes, Mr. Wardle, it is a heavy burden."

The merchant smiled, and sat down. His face beamed with goodness, and an earnest light was in his calm blue eye.

"My boy, I am going to venture upon a bit of fatherly counsel. I hope I shall not offend."

"Not at all," said Clarence. He winced a little as though the probing gave him new pain.

"In the first place," pursued the old man with a quiver of emotion in his voice, "you love your wife?"

"Love her? Yes, passionately."

"And do you think she loves you in return?"

"I don't think anything about it—I know!"

"You know she loves you?"

"Yes."

"And you know that, deep down in her heart, she holds your love as a most sacred treasure?"

"Yes, I know it."

"Then you must admit that the trouble of this morning came from no ill-feeling at heart?"

"Of course not."

"It was but a surface squall, for which you, at least, are very sorry?"

A moment's hesitation, and then—"Yes, yes; I am heartily sorry."

"Now, mark me, Clarence, and answer honestly:—Don't you think your wife is as sorry as you are?"

"I cannot doubt it."

"And don't you think she is suffering all this time?"

"Yes."

"Is she not, probably, in the seclusion of her home, suffering more keenly than you are?"

"I doubt that, Mr. Wardle. At all events, I hope she may not be suffering more."

"Very well. Let that pass. You know she is bearing that part of the burden?"

"Yes—I know that."

"And now, my boy, do you comprehend where the heaviest part of this burden is lodged?"

Clarence looked upon his interlocutor wonderingly.

"If the storm had all blown over, and you knew that the sun would shine when you next entered your home, you would not feel so unhappy?"

Clarence assented.

"But," continued Wardle, "you fear that there will be gloom in your home when you return?"

The young man bowed his head as he murmured an affirmative.

"Because," the merchant added, with a touch of parental sternness in his tone, "you are resolved to carry it there!"

Clarence looked up in surprise.

"I—I carry it?"

"Aye—you have the burden in your heart, and you mean to carry it home. Remember, my boy, I have been there, and I know all about it. I have been very foolish in my lifetime, and I have suffered. I suffered until I discovered my folly, and then I resolved that I would suffer no more. Upon looking the matter squarely and honestly in the face, I found that the burdens which had so galled me had been self-imposed. Of course such burdens can be thrown off. Now you have resolved that you will go home to your dinner with a heavy heart and a dark face. You have no hope that your wife will meet you with a smile. And why? Because you know she has no particular cause for smiling. You know that her heart is burdened with the affliction which gives you so much unrest. And so you are fully assured that you are to find your home shrouded in gloom. And, furthermore, you don't know when that gloom will depart, and when the blessed sunshine of love will burst in again. And why don't you know? Because it is not now in your heart to sweep the cloud away. You say to yourself, 'I can bear it as long as she can.' Am I not right?"

Clarence did not answer in words.

"I know I am right," pursued the merchant; "and very likely your wife is saying to herself the same thing. So your hope of sunshine does not rest upon the willingness to forgive, but upon the inability to bear the burden. By-and-by it will happen, as it has happened before, that one of the twain will surrender from exhaustion; and it will be likely to be the weaker party. Then there will be a collapse, and reconciliation. Generally the wife fails first beneath the galling burden, because her love is keenest and most sensitive. The husband, in such a case, acts the part of a coward. When he might, with a breath, blow the cloud away, he cringes and cowers until his wife is forced to let the sunlight in through her breaking heart."

Clarence listened, and was troubled. He saw the truth, and he felt its weight. He was not a fool, nor was he a liar. During the silence that followed he reflected upon the past, and he called to mind scenes just such as Mr. Wardle depicted. And this brought him to the remembrance of how he had seen his wife weep when she had failed and sank beneath the heavy burden, and how often she had sobbed upon his bosom in grief for the error.

The merchant read the young man's thoughts; and after a time he arose and touched him upon the arm.

"Clarence, suppose you were to put on your hat and go home now. Suppose you should think, on your way, only of the love and blessing that might be; and with this thought, you should enter your abode with a smile upon your face; and you should put your arms round your wife's neck, and kiss her, and softly say to her, 'My darling, I have come home to throw down the burden I took away with me this morning. It is greater than I can bear.' Suppose you were to do this, would your wife repulse you?"

"Repulse me?"

"Ah, my boy, you echo my words with an amazement which shows that you understand me. Now, sir, have you the courage to try the experiment? Dare you be so much of a man? Or, do you fear to let your dear wife know how much you love her? Do you fear she would respect, esteem you less for the deed? Tell me—do you think the cloud of unhappiness might thus be banished? Oh, Clarence if you would but try!"

* * *

Sarah Spencer had finished her work in the kitchen, and in the bed-chamber, and had sat down with her work in her lap. But she could not ply her needle. Her heart was heavy and sad, and tears were in her eyes.

Presently she heard the front door open, and a step in the passage. Certainly she knew that step! Yes—her husband entered. And a smile upon his face. She saw it through her gathering tears, and her heavy heart leaped up. And he came and put his arms around her neck and kissed her; and he said to her, in broken accents, "Darling, I have come home to throw down the burden I took away with me this morning. It is greater than I can bear!"

And she, trying to speak, pillowed her head upon his bosom, and sobbed and wept like a child. Oh! could he forgive her? His coming with the blessed offering had thrown back the whole burden of reproach back upon herself.

She saw him noble and generous and she worshipped him.

But Clarence would not allow her to take all the blame. He must share that.

"We will share it so evenly," he said, "that its weight shall be felt no more. And now, my darling, we shall be happy."

"Always!"

Mr. Wardle had no need, when Clarence returned to the counting-house, to ask the result, he could read it in the young man's brimming eye, and in his joy-inspired face.

It was a year after this—and Clarence Spencer had become a partner in the house—that Mr. Wardle, by accident, referred to the events of that gloomy morning.

"Ah!" said Clarence with a swelling bosom, "that was the most blessed lesson I ever received. My wife knows who gave it to me."

"And it serves you yet, my boy?"

"Aye; and it will serve us while we live."

We have none of those old burdens of anger to bear now. They cannot find lodgment with us. The flash and the jar may come, as in the other days—for we are but human, you know—but the heart, which has firmly resolved not to give an abiding place to the ill-feeling, will not be called upon to entertain it. Sometimes we are foolish; but we laugh at our folly when we see it and throw it off—we do not nurse it till it becomes a burden."

HEARTH AND HOME.

SERVANTS.—When you perceive a servant's faults, guard against being at once set against her. Weigh her good and evil, and be sure that you are fortunate if you find the most essential good qualities. Think how many are worse than she is, and consider how to amend her faults, which very likely are the results of bad training. As to the infirmities of natural temperament, do not expect to cure them; be satisfied with softening them, and then bear patiently with all such. If you persist, in spite of experience, in trying to correct a servant of some failing which is as the marrow of her bones, it will be less her fault for not being cured than yours for attempting the cure.

ORIGIN OF QUARRELS.—The sweetest, the most clinging affection is often shaken by the slightest breath of unkindness, as the delicate rings and tendrils of the vine agitated by the faintest air that blows in summer. An unkind word from one beloved often draws blood from many a heart which would defy the battle-axes of hatred or the keenest edge of vindictive satire. Nay, the shade, the gloom of the face familiar and dear, awakens grief and pain. These are the little thorns which, though men of a rougher form may make their way through them without feeling much, extremely incommode persons of a more refined turn in their journey through life, and make their travelling irksome and unpleasant.

AN IMPORTANT FACT.—Exercise for the body, occupation for the mind—these are the grand constituents of health and happiness, the cardinal points upon which everything turns. Motion seems to be a great preserving principle of nature, to which even inanimate things are subject; for the winds, the waves, the earth itself are restless, and the waving of trees, shrubs, and flowers is known to be an essential part of their economy. A fixed rule of taking several hours of exercise every day, if possible in the open air, if not, under cover, will be almost certain to secure an exemption from disease, as well as from the attacks of low spirits, or ennui, that monster who is ever waylaying the rich and indolent. "Throw but a stone, and the giant dies." Low spirits can't exist in the atmosphere of bodily and mental activity.

WORLDLY WISDOM.—In vain does man try to content himself with material enjoyment; the soul recoils dissatisfied with its own pride, self-love and ambition. But, on the other hand, what a miserable existence is that of cold, calculating men, who deceive themselves nearly as much as others, and who repel the generous inspirations which may be born in their hearts, as a disease of imagination which needs to be dissipated to the air! What a poor existence also is that of men, who, not satisfied with doing evil, treat as folly the source of those beautiful actions, those great thoughts! They confine themselves in a tenacious mediocrity; they condemn themselves to that monotony of ideas, to that coldness of sentiment, which lets the days go by without drawing from them either fruit, progress, or remembrances; and if time did not wrinkle their features, what marks would they retain from its passage? If they had not to grow old and die, what serious reflections would ever enter their minds?

ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE.—It is a fine thing to know that which is unknown to others; it is still more dignified to remember that we have gained it by our own energies. The struggle after knowledge, too, is full of delight. The intellectual chase, not less than the material one, brings fresh vigour to our pulses, and infinite palpitations of strange and sweet suspense. The idea that is gained with effort affords far greater satisfaction than that which is acquired with dangerous facility. We dwell with more fondness on the perfume of the flower that we have ourselves tended than on the odour which we cull with carelessness and cast away without remorse. The strength and sweet-

ness of our knowledge depend upon the impression which it makes upon our own minds. It is the liveliness of the ideas that it affords which renders research so fascinating; so that a trifling fact or deduction, when discovered or worked out by our own brain, affords us infinitely greater pleasure than a more important truth obtained by the exertions of another.

NATURALNESS OF CHARACTER.—Plenty of people are transparent—we can read their motives at a glance—whom yet we do not call natural, either because what nature reveals is not to our mind, or because there is nothing distinctive or forcible enough to attract our notice. Naturalness of character, to be praised at all, must be superadded praise. Nor is it a quality to be consciously aimed at; we must lay ourselves out to be honest and true, but naturalness, as a characteristic, is not to be got by striving after. It is a gift as well as a grace—a gift, we might almost add, of fortune. For are not the people we single out as examples favoured persons, favoured in circumstances? Was not their youth a happy one? Were they not, as children, tenderly treated, considered, listened to, encouraged to express their thoughts, driven to no subterfuges, rarely snubbed, set down, or disparaged? Have they not a charm in their candour, beyond the candour itself, derived from a well-founded reliance that whatever they say will be well taken? In fact, those whom we thus distinguish among our acquaintance have escaped the dangers incident to prosperity, which in inferior minds are fatal to simplicity of character.

NOTICE TO LADIES.

The undersigned begs respectfully to inform the Ladies of the city and country that they will find at his retail Store, 196 St. Lawrence Main Street, the choicest assortment of Ostrich and Vulture Feathers, of all shades; also, Feathers of all descriptions repaired with the greatest care. Feathers dyed as per sample on shortest delay. Gloves cleaned and dyed black only.

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OUR CHESS COLUMN.

Solutions to Problems sent in by Correspondents will be duly acknowledged.

All communications intended for this department to be addressed Chess Editor, Office of CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, Montreal.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

J.W.S., Montreal.—Letter received. Contents very acceptable. They shall appear shortly. Correct solution of Problem No. 125.

C.H., Montreal.—Correct solution of Problem No. 125, received.

A.S., Montreal.—Correct solution of Problem No. 125 received.

Chess has a history and a literature to some extent peculiarly its own, and now the fashion is manifesting itself of connecting the game and its associations with the ordinary affairs of every day life. In this way tales, poetry, and anecdotes, to a great extent *Chessical*, are found in other pages than those originally devoted to Chess studies. We see that prizes have been offered by the *Hartford Times* for the best literary productions, either in the shape of a story, or poem on the subject of Chess, and we will endeavour in a future Column to give fuller particulars of this Tourney. In the meantime we are glad to be enabled through the kindness of a friend to give the following incident in connection with the game which will, we doubt not, be interesting to some of our readers.

A GAME OF CHESS FOR A HEART.

Improbable though this may appear, yet such a game has actually occurred, and has been played in Berlin, at the "Café Kaiserhof."

The story runs as follows:—The beauty and amiability of a young lady had completely infatuated two young artists, a painter and a sculptor. The attachment of both for the young lady was apparent, and both were unremitting in their attentions, but appeared somewhat undecided what course to pursue. Recently, however, the sculptor, in all courtesy (they were intimate friends), suggested to the painter that he should desist from his attentions to the young lady, as he was strong in the assurance of her preference. At this, the painter expressed the greatest amazement, and declared he was at least as certain of being the one of her choice, and was determined not to relinquish his claims. But both friends soon saw that it was embarrassing to continue in this obstinate course, and it was at length proposed to decide their fate by a game of Chess. It was accordingly arranged that the loser should leave Germany for two years! One evening a few days ago, there stood in front of the "Café Kaiserhof," about an hour and a half before the departure of the train from Cologne to Paris, two cabs laden with the personal effects of the two artists; while within the Café the two lovers sat before the Chess-board, and in an excitement greater than was perhaps good for their play, conducted the game which was to deprive the loser of all right to his heart's treasure, and to consign him to an exile from the Fatherland. The young painter was at length mated. He immediately arose, pressed the hand of his friend, and without uttering a word, jumped into the cab, and directed his way to the train. The young sculptor repaired to his home.

The fair lady, who was the Queen of this game of Chess has to-day no knowledge of the reason for the sudden departure of the young painter.

We can assure our readers that the story here told, did, in actual fact, occur, as related, a few days since, and the names of the young artists are in certain circles well-known.

"SCHACHZEITUNG."