

the more of the world and many of its selfish ways than he did of the planet Mars.

The clerk of the steamer had given, as Rasmus said, his guests a 'room among the quality.' Rodney was evidently a refined, gentle boy. Rasmus, in the best suit of the late Andrews, albeit the suit was rather bizarre in taste, looked the well-to-do mechanic, and the tale of the loss of a good house and boat, had stamped the pair as comfortable people, tasting a sudden come-down in the world. Rodney seated himself on the side of the lower berth, and Rasmus established himself on a high stool. Said Rasmus: 'This is most as good as walking, so early in the season. But I tell you, pardner, a few such suns as we have today will bring out everything in a hurry. Spring will come booming along as lively as this rampageous river.'

But the mind of Rodney was so intent on what he had heard. He had read the title-page of some romance or tragedy of real life, and he wanted the rest of it. 'How did you come to lose your brother?' he demanded.

'I don't mind telling you, pardner,' said Rasmus. 'First place as ever I lived was New York City, and a beastly place it was, way down among the slums, with dirt and smells enough to make a dog sick. We lived—or starved—down there, 'cause my dad found he had to pour all he earned down his throat in the shape of whiskey. A mason's tender, dad was—he might have been a mason hisself, or even a master mason, for he was smart enough, as you could easy tell by me—but along of whiskey, tender he was, and not promoted higher. All he got of wages he used in getting drunk, of course. I never met a man yet but myself that didn't get drunk.'

Rod thought fit to challenge so sweeping an assertion: 'Mr. Andrews didn't—'

'I said, I met, brother. I never met him.' 'Nor yourself. Did you ever meet yourself?'

'You've got me there, pardner,' laughed Rasmus.

'And minister's don't get drunk,' said Rodney.

(To be continued.)

Contentment.

(Helen M. Richardson, in the 'Homestead.')
 'I'll be an apple,' said a seed, 'and hang upon a tree,
 It's better far to be up high where every one can see.'
 Then down again it sank into the ground away from human view,
 And from that little hidden seed an apple tree there grew.
 Fed by the sunshine and the rain its branches wide outspread;
 Some blossoms came—as time went on—some apples round and red.
 'My family has grown too large,' the apple tree complained,
 Then shook her arms till on the tree but one alone remained.
 This little apple whispered low, 'I'd rather be a seed;
 To hang here all alone, to me is very tame indeed.'
 'The world is full of those who strive high places to achieve
 Who when they've come to that estate see only cause to grieve.
 The one who longs to be admired finds, when alas! too late,
 The lowly born has joys that oft come never to the great.
 To fill one's place and be content yields happiness untold;
 Contented spirits at their feet oft find their pot of gold.'

Waiting on the Bank.

'When I was a little fellow I was a trifle inclined to hold back, and wait to be coaxed,' said Uncle Ben. 'I remember sitting beside the brook, one day, while the other children were building a dam. They were wading, carrying stones, splashing the mud, and shouting orders, but none of them paying any attention to me. I began to feel abused and lonely, and was blubbering over my neglected condition, when Aunt Nancy came down the road.'

'What's the matter, sonny? Why ain't you playin' with the rest?'

'"They don't want me," I said, digging my fists into my eyes. "They never ask me to come."

'I expected sympathy, but she gave me an impatient shake and push.'

'"Is that all, you little ninny? Nobody wants folks that'll sit round on a bank, and wait to be asked!" she cried. "Run along in with the rest, and make yourself wanted."

'That shake and push did the work. Before I had time to recover from my indignant surprise, I was in the middle of the stream, and soon as busy as the others.'

'I often feel that I'd like to try the same plan on some of the strangers who come into our churches. Some make friends at once. They go into the prayer-meeting, the mission circle, the Sunday school—wherever there is work—and they are at home at once. But there are many others who wait to be noticed, and invited here and there; they complain of coldness and lack of attention, and, maybe, decide that their coming is not desired. They need Aunt Nancy's advice: "Stop sitting round on the bank, and go in and make yourself wanted."—Selected.

Two Pictures From Life.

I.

A black-eyed baby lay moaning its young life away on the brick bed of a dreary mud-house in Peking, China.

The feeble voice, growing weaker and weaker, was now and then drowned in the sobs and groans of the young mother, who gazed in despair upon her dying child. She longed to press it to her aching heart, but she had always heard that demons are all around the dying, waiting to snatch the soul away, and so because it was dying she was afraid of her own baby.

'It is almost time,' said the mother-in-law, glancing at the slanting sunbeam that had stolen into the dismal room through a hole in the paper window; and she snatched up the helpless baby with a determined air. The mother shrieked, 'My baby is not dead! My baby is not dead yet.'

'But it has only one mouthful of breath left,' said the old woman; 'the cart will soon pass, and then we shall have to keep it in the house all night. There is no help for it; the gods are angry with you.'

The mother dared not resist and her baby was carried from her sight. She never saw it again.

An old black cart, drawn by a black cow, passed slowly down the street, the little body was laid among the others already gathered there, and the cart drove on through the city gate. Outside the city wall he laid them all in a common pit, buried them in lime, and drove on.

No stone marks the spot; no flower will ever blossom on that grave.

The desolate woman wails, 'My baby is lost; my baby is lost; I can never find him again.'

The black-eyed baby's mother is a heathen.

II.

A blue-eyed baby lay moaning on the downy pillow of its dainty crib, and it was whispered softly through the mission, 'Baby is dying.'

With sorrowing hearts we gathered in the stricken home, but the Comforter had come before us.

'Our baby is going home,' said the mother, and though her voice trembled, she smiled bravely and sweetly upon the little sufferer.

'We gave her to the Lord when she came to us. He has but come for his own, said the father, reverently, and he threw his arms lovingly around his wife.'

As we watched through our tears the little life slipping away, some one began to sing softly,

Jesus, Lover of my soul,
 Let me to thy bosom fly.

The blue eyes opened for the last time, and with one long gaze into the loving faces above, closed again, and with a gentle sigh the sweet child passed in through the gate to the heavenly fold.

'Let us pray,' said a low voice. We knelt

together, and heaven came so near we could almost see the white-robed ones and hear their songs of 'welcome.'

There are no baby coffins to be bought in Peking, so a box was made; we lined it with soft white silk from a Chinese store. We dressed baby in her snowy robes, and laid her lovingly in her last resting place. We decked the room with flowers, and strewed them over the little one.

The next day we followed the tiny coffin to the cemetery.

With a song of hope, and words of cheer and trust, and a prayer of faith, we comforted the sorrowing hearts.

Now a white stone marks the sacred spot where we laid her, and flowers blossom on the grave that is visited and often tended with loving care.

'The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord,' says the baby's father; while the baby's mother answers, 'Our baby is safe; we shall find her and have her again some glad day.'

The blue-eyed baby's mother is a Christian.—'Gospel in All Lands.'

To love is better than to be great, it is better than to be refined, it is better than to be wise. Love takes precedence of all prophecy, of every kind of knowledge, and of the gift of tongues; love is higher than hope or faith, and is the very loyalty of God.—Selected.

A Gold Medal.

I shall never forget a lesson I received when at school at A—. We saw a boy named Watson driving a cow to pasture. In the evening he drove her back again, we did not know where, and this was continued several weeks.

The boys attending the school were nearly all sons of wealthy parents, and some of them were dunces enough to look with disdain on a scholar who had to drive a cow.

With admirable good nature Watson bore all their attempts to annoy him.

'I suppose, Watson,' said Jackson, another boy, one day—'I suppose your father intends to make a milkman of you?'

'Why not?' asked Watson.

'Oh, nothing. Only don't leave much water in the cans after you rinse them—that's all.'

The boys laughed—and Watson, not in the least mortified, replied: 'Never fear. If ever I am a milkman, I'll give good measure and good milk.'

The day after this conversation there was a public examination, at which ladies and gentlemen from the neighboring towns were present, and prizes were awarded by the principal of our school, and both Watson and Jackson received a creditable number, for, in respect to scholarship, they were about equal. After the ceremony of distribution, the principal remarked that there was one prize, consisting of a gold medal, which was rarely awarded, not so much on account of its great cost as because the instances were rare which rendered its bestowal proper. It was the prize of heroism. The last medal was awarded about three years ago to a boy in the first class who rescued a poor girl from drowning.

The principal then said that, with the permission of the company, he would relate a short anecdote.

'Not long since, some boys were flying a kite in the street just as a poor lad on horseback rode by on his way to the mill. The horse took fright and threw the boy, injuring him so badly that he was carried home and confined some weeks to his bed. Of the boys who had unintentionally caused the disaster, none followed to learn the fate of the wounded lad. There was one boy, however, who had witnessed the accident from a distance, who not only went to make inquiries but stayed to render service.'

'This boy soon learned that the wounded boy was the grandson of a poor widow whose sole support consisted in selling the milk of a cow of which she was the owner. She was old and lame, and her grandson on whom she depended to drive her cow to the pasture was now helpless with bruises. "Never mind, good woman," said the boy; "I will drive the cow."

'But his kindness did not stop there. Money was wanted to get articles from the apothecary—'