

## FROM THE EDITOR'S PEN

**R**EAD this, Pastors. It comes from a President in just such a place as many of you live in. Perhaps indeed, you know the officer who wrote it. I am sure you would like the first statement if she meant you.—“*Our Pastor is a splendid preacher.*”—that sounds like you, doesn't it? The next words are:—“*but he is unacquainted with Leagues.*”—“does that mean you? Perhaps not, but it might not mean the other man after all. And she continues,—“*So I find my work quite responsible.*”—Mind, Pastor, there is not a word of complaint in the letter. Not a whine is in it anywhere, but simple facts about pastor, president and league work. To be “a splendid preacher” is a good aim if only the adjective is correctly defined. But fine sermons do not make a preacher splendid, nor do they constitute the preacher's most effective ministry among the young people. Let me whisper in your ear, and through mine, what I learned long ago, and from which I have had much assistance in my work. It is just this, “*What the young people need is not more preaching, but more preachers.*” Is that will not detract one atom from the splendor of your preaching, but it will add immense brightness to the lustre of your influence. Get acquainted with your Leaguers, brother. Know them, not simply about them. Cultivate them. Lift them up to your level. Inspire them with your ideals. Fire them with your zeal. And all this not by preaching of them, but by living among them. Be “a splendid preacher,” indeed.

**H**ERE is another reference to the Pastor. It comes in a letter from the President of the Wicklow League. “*We are best in having a Pastor who has worked among us nearly forty years, and we have found in him a friend in every sense of the word. Our plans have met his approval, and by his help we have accomplished much.*” “Happy are the young people who know the minister not only as the circuit preacher, but as their friend.” And mark what the above extract implies. The “plans” were not the pastor's but the League's. Neither does the League depend on the pastor to carry out the plans, but to “help.” Such mutual friendship, consultation and co-operation between pastor and League are not only beautiful in principle but fruitful in practice, and even though, as in the case cited above, the parsonage may be “a number of miles away” from the appointment in question, no insuperable difficulty exists to prevent sympathetic and co-operative work being done by the pastor and his young friends working together. The ideal relation between the minister and his young people is so intimate that anything that generates a spirit of indifference in either towards the other is to be carefully and prayerfully avoided by both. Where a habit of “aloofness” is formed it is sure to breed distrust, and when such an atmosphere pervades the Church or community, anything like progress in League work is impossible. Pastors, be friends to your young people, and help them. Leaguers, be friends to your pastors and help them. Then you can sing “Blest be the tie that binds” with meaning.

**A**N old veteran who had accomplished much of value in his years of service, called it “The School of Hard Knocks,” when referring to the preparation he had received for his life's work. No matter how many advantages of school and college a youth may have, he must sooner or later take at least a few hard knocks in the wider sphere of practical experience. No education can be at all thorough without them, and to learn how to endure them heroically and bravely is an essential part of life's educational process. To be able to stand the brunt of unfriendly opposition, to compel success in spite of unfavorable conditions, to grow sturdy and strong even because of adverse influences and contrary storms—these are some things that must be learned in the practical school of “Hard Knocks.” I appreciated much the words of Charles Kingsley, when during the Christmas vacation I revolved in his entrancing story, “*Here-ville and the Wake.*” Referring to the long-sustained struggle of the English, who, though conquered by the Norman Invader, were not subdued, he writes:—“*Hard knocks, in good humor, strict rules, fair play, and equal justice for all, high and low, this was the old outlaw spirit, which has descended to their in-lawed descendants, and makes, to this day, the life and marrow of an English public school.*” The Anglo-Saxon all the world over, in youth and manhood, must gain and prove such rugged many vigor or become a weakling. “Hard Knocks” is the only school in which the process can be learned, and no coward may expect to be strong. We need still in every walk and employment in life, the Kingsley terms “the stupid valor of the Englishman,” that “never knows when it is beaten; and, sometimes, by that self-satisfied ignorance, succeeds in not being beaten after all.” It is out of such stuff that heroes have been made, and the persistence as he shows such dogged perseverance and inexhaustible grit, will any youth make of himself a strong man of achievement. Let none of my young readers, therefore, be afraid of what awaits them in the school of “Hard Knocks,” nor shrink fearfully from the essential experience that can be gained only in its daily grind. It makes men!

**A**INSWORTH, in his most interesting historical romance, “*The Tower of London,*” tells very vividly the sad experience of Lady Jane Grey, the nine days' queen, as she passed the months imprisoned in the Tower. I was impressed particularly with one of his statements, and suggest it as containing a prescription from the use of which many in less peril or distress than the fair prisoner of the Tower, might derive great profit to-day. After describing the sad situation of this royal lady, the author says:—“*Still, she maintained her cheerfulness, and by never allowing one moment to pass unemployed, drove away all distressing thoughts.*” And in another suggestive sentence he says:—“*She lived only in her books, and addressed herself with such ardor to her studies that her thoughts were completely abstracted.*” To be well employed, to devote one's thoughts with ardor to useful pursuits, herein lies the secret of superiority over unfavorable conditions, and the only way to dispel peace and tranquility of mind. Thebane

of many young people is mental indolence. They spend hours in criminal wastefulness; books are but for passing entertainment, and such a habit as arduous study is unknown by them. “An idle brain is the devil's workshop,” if a busy man has one, and a man to contend with, an idle man has a thousand,” are true sayings, even if they are trite and well-worn. “I have not time enough to be idle,” was the wise remark of one of the busiest men that ever lived. Would you know the most successful method for the realization of life's highest and best things? It is the old, old way of work, and besides it there is no other. The road may not be always easy, but true and abiding pleasure are to be found nowhere else, and thought to that may call for self-denial and heroic resolve, the attainments that lie ahead and to which this way alone leads are worth all they cost, and will repay the toll and application of the wayfarer. They are constituted of true and abiding riches of earth and add to the wealth of heaven.

**I**T was only a short sentence of four little words that caught my eye; but what abundance of meaning and suggestion they contained! “*She made home happy.*” That was all, but it was enough to set me thinking of the importance of learning the almost divine art of home-making by all our womankind. Whether as wife, mother, daughter or sister, the influence of woman to make or mar the home is almost omnipotent. I am not going to preach, but simply invite my women and girl readers to study this art until they become proficient in its practice. The saving influences of a good mother have been told over and over again in many and various ways, and numbers of men have given some such testimony as John Randolph, the American statesman, who said, “I should have been an atheist if it had not been for one recollection—and that was the memory of the time when my departed mother used to take my little hand in hers, and cause me on my knees to say, ‘Our Father who art in heaven.’” And many other men have, like Wordsworth, been deeply impressed by a sister's character and influence. Of Dorothy, whom he describes as a blessing to both his boyhood and manhood, he wrote:

“She gave me eyes, she gave me ears,  
And humble cares, and delicate fears;  
A heart, the fountain of sweet tears,  
And love, and thought, and joy.”

How happy a man must Edmund Burke have been when he was able to write, “*England is a nation the moment I enter under my own roof!*” How beautiful was the testimony of Luther to the worth of his wife in his words, “I would not exchange my poverty with her for all the riches of Croesus without her.” I have written enough for my present purpose. “*She made home happy.*” Of you, my sister, may this be truly said, as well as of her whose name, station, or residence I know not, but to whom this tribute of domestic worth was given by one who in life enjoyed the sweet presence, and after her departure, missed her helpful ministry and congenial companionship.

**T**HERE is a plaintive note in the following extract from a President's letter recently received by me. “That there are others laboring under similar discouragements I have abundant evidence. Surely the faithful young souls who are ‘holding the fort’ with heroic faithfulness for God deserve not verbal sympathy, but practical help. The letter says, ‘*Our League is small, as ours are the only country appointments.*’ There have been times when the older members of the congregation want-

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