

TRUST.

BY GEO. KLINGLE.

We do not see.
It was not meant for you and me
To look beyond the near, dim west
Dividing the present from the rest—
From the to-come.
Just one by one
The steps we take;
Just one by one the glories wake,
Or tempests beat. We go
Nearer and nearer to the setting sun, and know
But this, whatever is, is best—
Sweetest of words confessed
By love's warm breath
In life or death.

We go.
Led by his shielding hand and know
He will not make,
Except for love's sweet sake,
A single day
Shadowed, along life's bitter way.
When all is night;
We rest in this—No leadeth toward the light.
—Illustrated Christian Weekly.

IN READINESS.

BY MARY HUBBARD HOWELL.

Harvest time had come; Farmer Grant's beautiful field of red clover had been mown and all one sunny afternoon two boys, with the strong arms and tireless feet that made labor a delight, had been raking the fragrant swath and tossing it into low haystacks here and there about the field. Now at sunset, with the happy consciousness that their day's work was well done, they leaned their rakes against the fence, and then, in boyish fashion, seated themselves on the highest rail to rest a few moments before trudging home.

"Phil," said the youngest, a boy of fifteen, "do you ever dream about what you will be and do when you are a man?" Phil's Midas-like imagination was at that moment converting the sweet-scented hay before him into dollars and cents; but he paused in his pleasant task, and for a second looked thoughtfully at his brother.

"No," he said soon in contented voice, "I don't waste time in dreaming about my future, Edwin. I neither want nor expect to change much. I love every foot of this old place, and I hope to live and to die here where I was born."

Edwin nodded approvingly, "I am glad you want to stay," he said "for it would not be right for both of us to leave father, and I want to go away."

"For what, and where?" Phil asked in a low business-like tone.

"That is just what I don't know," Edwin slowly confessed. "I want to go—somewhere, and I want to do—something. But the world is so wide that I don't know where to look for a place; and neither do I know what kind of work I want to do, or can do."

"Until you do know I guess you had better stay here," Phil said in a matter of fact voice.

"On this fence, do you mean," Edwin asked with a laugh, as he jumped down and shouldered his rake. "Well, you may stay if you like, Phil, but I'm going home now, and some day—" the boy added soberly—"I am going from home. I am sure of that, though I cannot tell where I'll go, nor when."

"All right," Phil answered cheerfully. "Only, old fellow, before you go be sure that you are ready."

"The question is how, and for what, I am to get ready," he said as he led the way homeward.

That evening when he opened his little Bible, Edwin's eyes,—guided, perhaps, by him who orders all our ways—fell on this question, "Wherefore wilt thou run, my son seeing that thou hast no tidings ready."

With the quickness of a bright young mind the boy made his own application of that searching question. If it means anything for me, he thought, it means just this—that before I run I must be sure that I am sent; before I seek a great work I must be sure that I am fitted for it. When God's workers are ready for their tasks their places are always ready for them.

But how am I to get ready, was the boy's next thought; and then, like an inspiration, came the resolve: I will neglect no opportunity, however small, that is offered me for self-improvement; and I will

seek to acquire all the information possible on all subjects, even the simplest and most insignificant. I will begin to-morrow to pick up "learning's crumbs," and then I will wait patiently to see what use God will bid me make of them.

Edwin paused then; but soon another and a nobler thought stirred his soul. If I am a learner I must at the same time be a doer, he said to himself. While I am trying to get ready for some great work in the future, I must not forget or neglect the little duties of the present. Perhaps the little duties are the stairs by which we climb up to the heights where the great deeds are done. No, he firmly resolved, I will not slight or despise my little duties; and I will choose for my motto, Faithful in that which is least."

Edwin Grant had a strong will, as well as a bright imagination, and obstacles to him were like spurs urging him onward. A district school education was all his father was able to give him; and if Edwin was to be "a picker up of learning's crumbs" he had but a meagre feast to glean from. But he had a dictionary and an atlas; his father owned Henry's Commentary on the Bible and before the summer ended the boy, by dint of hard and unsparing labor, had earned money enough to purchase in cheap plain bindings Chambers' Encyclopedia in fifteen volumes; and possessed of these he felt—much as Columbus did about his three ships—that with them he could make wonderful discoveries, and acquire great treasures.

Two years went rapidly by, and left Edwin where they found him, still working on his father's farm. No door into the great world had opened yet for him, and no opportunity for more congenial labor had been offered to him. The wasting time tired his patience, but it did not weaken his determination. Quietly and firmly he adhered to his resolve, and sought in every possible way to make the most of his small advantages, and to get ready for the duties and responsibilities of manhood.

One October morning the old stage that connected the little village of Lonewood with the nearest railway station broke down opposite Farmer Grant's. There were but three passengers, a gentleman and his wife and young daughter, and Edwin was asked to take his father's team and drive them to the station. Cheerfully, with little thought of the consequences that would result from that drive, the boy complied.

"Let me see," the gentleman said suddenly, as they were driving leisurely through the beautiful forest that gave Lonewood its name, "this is the fourteenth of October, Lily" and he turned to his daughter, "here is a puzzle in history for you. Seven hundred and eighty years ago to-day a battle was fought that changed the fate of a great nation and wrought a lasting revolution in its language, manners and government. What was that battle?"

"O, I don't know," replied the young lady with much indifference, "perhaps it was Waterloo."

"Waterloo! seven hundred and eighty years ago," her father said scornfully. Then, as his keen eyes detected the smile on Edwin's face, he asked,

"Do you know, my boy?"

"It was the battle of Hastings, was it not, sir?" Edwin answered modestly.

The gentleman nodded. "So you know something of English history, do you?" he said, "Well, now let me see what you know of the world's history, before the Normans were thought of. Answer this question, if you can. When, by permission of Cyrus, after their long captivity in Babylon, the Jews returned to Palestine, what were the other great nations doing?"

A little laugh, more expressive of ignorance than amusement, escaped from Miss Lily, but Edwin answered quietly.

"China was a great nation then, and in China Confucius was teaching the people to reverence their parents, and worship their ancestors."

"Humph," Mr. Maynard said, "some of Confucius' teachings might do good in America, I am thinking. Well, what were they doing in Greece?"

"Solon the Wise had died two years before. Pythagoras had recently invented the multiplication-table, and the first public library at Athens had just been founded."

"Pretty well advanced in civilization,

weren't they?" Mr. Maynard said dryly. "Well, what was the mistress of the world doing?"

"Do you mean Rome, sir?" She was hardly mistress of the world then, I think. Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed of the "kingdom as strong as iron," but at that time I believe the Romans were occupied chiefly with quarrels and wars among themselves."

Mr. Maynard smiled at the allusions to Daniel's prophecy, but continuing his examination, he asked next.

"What were they doing in the land of the pyramids?"

"The glory of the Pharaohs was waning I think," Edwin answered, "for soon after the return of the Jews to Palestine the Persians invaded and conquered Egypt."

"You have read history to some purpose, my boy," Mr. Maynard said in a pleasant voice, while his daughter asked eagerly, "How have you ever learned so much?"

"I haven't learned much," Edwin answered humbly, "I am only trying to learn."

"But how could you connect all those different events?" the young lady asked.

"O, that is easy," Edwin said, "I take a date and set it up like a flag staff for my centre, and then around it, like so many tents, I group all the contemporary facts about nations and peoples that I can learn."

"That is a good way, isn't it, papa?" the young lady asked.

Mr. Maynard did not answer. He was watching Edwin, and seriously considering the wisdom of a thought that had suddenly occurred to him.

Yes, he thought, you are intelligent, my boy, and you have disciplined your mind well; but now what is your character? A cultivated intellect unaccompanied by Christian principles is like a house of many stories built on a poor foundation, it is always dangerous to trust it; and I will wait a while, and learn what stuff you are really made of, my bright boy, before I form any plans for you.

Just as Mr. Maynard made this wise resolve a man on horseback galloped up to them.

"Hello, Edwin Grant," he called, "you are just the boy I want. My waggon's a little further on, and the wheels are locked for want of oil. Now have you your oil can with you?"

Edwin sprang up, raised the cushion of his seat, and revealed a small box containing rope, and twine, a hammer and nails, and several other articles; from among them he produced a small oil can, and handed it to the man.

Mr. Maynard looked on with much interest. "Do you always carry a tool chest on your drives?" he asked.

"Yes, when I am going on a long drive," Edwin answered. "I always like to be ready."

"Ready for what?"

"I don't always know, sir, for whatever I am needed."

"Humph," Mr. Maynard stroked his beard and rode on, busy with thoughts that would have astonished Edwin if he had known them.

They reached the station some minutes before the train was due, and as he waited on the platform, Mr. Maynard saw Edwin go to a small fruit stand that was near by. Curiosity, indeed, led him to follow; and as he stood near the boy, though unnoticed by him, he heard him say:

"The last time I was here I bought four lemons of you. You said they were thirty-six cents a dozen, but for the four you only charged me nine cents. I didn't think about it then, but after I got home I discovered that you had made a mistake, and ought to have asked twelve cents, and now I want to make it right." And as he spoke Edwin laid the three cents in the fruit seller's hand.

Mr. Maynard turned and walked away undiscovered by Edwin, but when a minute later the boy came to him to say good-bye, he asked:

"Do you intend to spend your days on your father's farm, my boy?"

Edwin's face flushed a little, as he answered "no, sir. My brother will stay with my father, I am only waiting—"

"For what?" Mr. Maynard asked, as the boy paused.

"Until a door opens," Edwin answered in a quiet but decided tone.

"Hum," Mr. Maynard soberly ejaculated, and then as the approaching train warned him to hurry, he said kindly:

"Good-bye, my boy, some day—perhaps—we will meet again."

A few days later a letter that changed and influenced his entire life came to Edwin Grant. It was from Mr. Maynard: he was engaged on an important historical work, he wrote, and wanted a young man to read to him, write from his dictation, and aid him in collecting facts from the valuable works stored in public libraries. Great thoroughness and faithfulness would be required, but there would be many hours of leisure and a good salary. Would Edwin accept the situation?

Would he? Two years of patience and unceasing effort had made him ready for it and prepared to appreciate its rare advantages; and with a glad heart the boy went forth to his new work.

Years passed. There came a time when all over the broad land Edwin Grant's name was known and honored. A time when great duties claimed him, when great tasks were laid upon him, and when the trust of a nation, in its hour of peril was safely reposed in him. And the foundation of all that greatness was laid the summer's night when he resolved before he aspired to great things to get ready for them, and in the least things to be faithful.—*Christian at Work.*

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