

able to help you than he was. You had better go to Him, and let Him help you.'

'How?' asked Jim in a low voice.

'Go away by yourself and pray to Him. Tell Him that you are a poor friendless boy, and that you want Him to forgive you, and to give you a heart to love and serve Him. Be in earnest, and He will hear you.'

That night Jim went into the barn and tried to find His heavenly Father. He came like the prodigal son of long ago, and I am glad to tell you he very soon found out he had still a Father living to care for him.—'Friendly Greetings.'

### My Elm Tree.

(Edward A. Collier in the 'Christian.')

Before my window stands a tree  
I planted on the very morn  
When Helen came, the last of three  
Within a happy household born.

My tree, when scorching suns would sere,  
Gives leaves to a kindly pall;  
But when comes autumn, cold and drear,  
To let the sunshine in, they fall.

My tree bears fruit the summer through,  
In swinging nests that orioles weave,  
In songs of birds of many a hue,  
In calls of katyids at eve.

All birds watch o'er my elm tree fair;  
The winter birds, that never roam,  
Go up and down its trunk so bare,  
To knock at every insect's home.

But why, ye birds, I fain would know—  
If I your secret thought may learn—  
Why guard my tree 'mid cold and snow  
Until the summer birds return?

'Because,' an answering nuthatch said,  
'Because all winter long we see  
A feast for hungry birds is spread  
Upon your near magnolia tree.'

'Oh, boys and girls, be ever kind  
To birds and every living thing;  
God made them all, and you shall find  
Your kindness His reward shall bring.'

### 'Thumbs!'

'Sorry, my lad, but you won't suit!'

Philip Dalton, with an air of reluctance, left the desk of the venerable merchant to make way for the next of a number of applicants, all of whom were eager for the coveted position.

'Won't suit!' he echoed, as, in passing through the general office, he was confronted by a large mirror. 'A bit of farce, too,' he muttered, as he recollected one clause of the advertisement: 'Applicants must be of respectable appearance.'

The bump of self-esteem was by no means undeveloped in Philip Dalton and he drew himself up to his full height as he chuckled: 'Respectable appearance, eh?' at the same time taking in a full survey of his dignified form, which, from the carefully parted hair to the highly polished footwear, proclaimed him every inch a gentleman.

'My appearance is not at fault, certainly. What's the trouble, then? Mr. MacKinnon complimented my fine penmanship, so that I passed muster in that line.'

Just then he heard the words, 'You'll suit' and gave a quick glance in the direction of the private office. 'Humph! Old Mac's evidently easily pleased, after all. That chap looks about as green as they grow—there's country stamped all over him. He'd be better employed, seems to me, in a cabbage patch than as invoice clerk here,' and with a sullen expression and dejected air he walked out of the office.

Philip Dalton had set his heart upon the situation in question, and his disappointment did not in any way mellow his temper. In fact, his good humor diminished to such a degree that his friends scarcely recognized him as he strolled homeward, so curt were his replies to their greetings.

He was half-way home when Dr. Seymour's buggy drew up, and a cheerful voice said: 'That you, Phil? Jump in, my lad! I'm just bound in your direction.' Phil reluctantly accepted the offer, then regretted

it when he perceived that the doctor was making a careful diagnosis of his mental state.

'Phil, my boy, what's up? You've evidently been in Dumpsland to-day.'

Phil tried in vain to bluff the question, but noticing the doctor's face wore an expression of the kindest interest and sympathy, he told his trouble. Then he looked the doctor full in the face:

'See here, Doc., do you see anything wrong with me, that would prejudice that old fellow against me? I want the truth, mind—point blank.'

'And won't be offended to hear it?' asked the doctor, earnestly.

'Not a bit! He's a sort of old woman with lots of whims, I fancy.'

Dr. Seymour paid no attention to the last utterance of his companion, but said, abstractedly, as if to himself: 'Thumbs!'

'Thumbs?' repeated Phil in a bewildered tone.

'Yes, thumbs. See here,' and the doctor took Phil's right hand as an illustration of the little sermon he was about to deliver.

'Do you think, Phil, that Mr. MacKinnon, or any other man of common sense, would prefer to employ a young man who is addicted to the cigarette habit? All the polished manners and good clothes in the world would not make up for lack of moral force. See that thumb? It's positively brown! The left is not quite so bad, but bad enough. That's what nicotine does, my dear fellow, and if you don't stop the habit, it will stop you. I know what I am talking about. You know that a watch that is not properly cared for wears out before one that is treated well. No man, if he has a grain of sense, wants a clerk whose brains are clouded with cigarette smoking. Only last week I was called in to see a young fellow about your age, who was a victim to the habit, in the last stages. I could do nothing for him—he died from the poison. That's what you are coming to. It's plain speaking, but I am in duty bound to tell you.'

'What!' gasped Philip. 'Is that the brilliant future for me?'

'It is certainly, if you keep on at this rate, young man. Better make a right-about-turn now, before it is too late.'

Dr. Seymour's concern was so great for his young friend that he drove fully a mile further than necessary to administer this ample dose of advice and to secure Phil's promise to make a start in the right direction.

It was a very different Philip Dalton who entered Mr. MacKinnon's office a year later and expressed a wish to see that gentleman. He was soon ushered into his presence.

'It seems to me I recollect your face,' said Mr. MacKinnon, rising.

'You certainly should do so,' replied Philip, pleasantly. 'You gave me a start in life.'

'Yes, sir, when you sent me about my business a year ago.'

'How's that? I have no recollection.'

'Don't you remember? I'm the first young fellow you refused when you were receiving applications for an invoice clerk.'

'Well, to be sure! But I fail to see why you are indebted to me, since I didn't employ you.'

'If you had employed me,' remonstrated Philip, 'I might not be here now. I would probably have kept along in the same old way and succumbed to bad habits. Tell me, sir, did my thumbs prejudice you against me?'

'They did. Why?' asked the merchant in a tone of agreeable surprise.

Then Philip related the whole story of his disappointment, his chat with the doctor, and his resolution.—'Evangelical Visitor.'

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### A Rain-time Prayer.

(Frank O. Moyer, in the 'Sunday School Messenger.')

O Father kind, who sendeth from above  
These gentle drops of rain  
To cheer the earth, and haste the birth  
Of buds, and grass, and grain  
O Father, like these rain drops make my  
love,  
That every heart I know  
May gain from me some strength to be  
And learn, and love, and grow.

### How 'His Name Shall be in Their Foreheads.'

'How will God write it, papa?' asked little Eva.

'Write what?' asked her father.

Eva got up from the low stool where she had been sitting with her book, and came across to him.

'See what it says,' said she, resting the book on his knee, and pointing. Then she read it out. "'And His name shall be in their foreheads.'" It's out of the Bible, added she; 'and I know it means God, because of that big H. How will God write it, papa?'

Her father put down his book and took her on his knee. 'God will not write it at all,' said he.

'Not write it!' exclaimed Eva in astonishment. 'Then how will it come there?'

'Some things write themselves,' said her father.

Eva looked as if she didn't understand. But of course it must be true, since father said it; so she waited for him to explain.

'When you look at grandfather's silver hair,' began her father, 'what do you see written there? That he is an old, old gentleman, don't you?' continued he, as Eva hesitated, 'Who wrote it there?'

'It wrote itself,' said Eva.

Father nodded.

'Right,' said he. 'Day by day and year by year the white hairs came, until at last it was written quite as plainly as if somebody had taken pen and dink and put it down on paper for you to read.'

'Now, when I look in your mouth, what do I see written there? I see, "This little girl is not a baby now, for she has all her teeth, and can eat crusts." That has been writing itself ever since the first tooth that you cut, when mother had to carry you about all night because it pained you so.'

Eva laughed.

'What a funny sort of writing!' said she. 'When little girls are cross and disobedient,' her father went on, 'where does it write itself? Look in the glass next time you are naughty, and see.'

'I know,' said Eva. 'In their faces doesn't it? And if they are good, in their faces, too. Is that what the text means?'

'That is what it means,' said father. 'Because if we go on being naughty all our lives, it writes itself upon our faces so that nothing can rub it out. But if we are good, the angels will read upon our foreheads that we are God's. So you must try, day by day, to go on writing it.'—'Presbyterian Witness.'

### Why the Sermon was Dull.

'The dullest sermon I ever listened to!' exclaimed Sam, petulantly, as he came home from church.

'Yes,' replied grandpa, a twinkle in his eye. 'I thought so myself.'

'Did you, grandpa?' exclaimed Sam, glad to have some one stand by him.

'I mean to say I thought you thought so,' replied his grandpa. 'I enjoyed it, because my appetite was whetted for it before I went to church. I noticed it was just the other way with you.'

'Just the other way! How?' Sam demanded.

'Why, before you went,' answered grandpa, 'instead of sharpening your appetite for the sermon, you dulled it by reading that trashy paper. Then, instead of sitting straight up and looking at the minister, while he preached, as though you wanted to catch every word he said, and every ex-