

True Victory.

He stood with a foot on the threshold
And a cloud on his boyish face,
While his city comrade urged him
To enter the gorgeous place.

"There's nothing to fear, old fellow!
It isn't a lion's den;
Here waits you a royal welcome
From lips of the bravest men."

'Twas the old, old voice of the tempter
That sought in the old, old way,
To lure with a lying promise
The innocent feet astray.

"You'd think it was Blue Beard's closet
To see how you stare and shrink!
I tell you there's nought to harm you—
It's only a game and a drink!"

He heard the words with a shudder—
It's only a game and a drink!
And his lips made bold to answer:
"But what would my mother think?"

The name that his heart held dearest
Had started a secret spring,
And forth from the wily tempter
He fled like a hunted thing.

Away! till the glare of the city
And its gilded halls of sin
Are shut from his sense and vision,
The shadows of night within.

Away! till his feet have bounded
O'er fields where his childhood trod;
Away! in the name of virtue,
And the strength of his mother's God!

What though he was branded "coward!"
In the blazoned halls of vice,
And banished by his baffled tempter,
Who sullenly tossed the dice.

On the page where the angel keepeth
The records of deeds well done,
That night was the story written
Of a glorious battle won.

And he stood by his home in the starlight—
All guiltless of sword and shield—
A braver and nobler victor
Than the hero of bloodiest field!

"FOR CONSCIENCE" SAKE.

THE ENGINEER'S STORY.

"There is a matter that lies heavy on my conscience, dear wife," said John Evershed, as they sat at tea after the duties of the day were done. "I have pondered it long and anxiously, and thought to speak to you about it, but have hesitated through fear of causing you anxiety, but am driven to the point at last."

John Evershed was an engineer, and ran an express passenger upon a trunk-line road. Steady and reliable as the sun; always at his post, with his hand upon the throttle and his eyes upon the track; with the steam at a higher or lower pressure, as the road wound up or down a grade; the shriek of the steam-whistle ringing out for down brakes never a moment too late and never a moment too soon; he had gone out with his train daily for the past ten years. Those who knew him best relied the most implicitly upon his prudence and sagacity, and committed their lives and property the more readily to his care and foresight. He had run upon the same engine all the time he had been in the company's employ, and regarded it almost with the affection he would have done if it had been a sentient being. Often, when the day's run was over, he would drop into the engine-house to look after the "rooming of his iron steed, and see that it had, not good oats and hay, but good oil for its supple joints and iron sinews, and clean boxes and tubes for its water and fire.

And now, this bearded and stalwart man, grim

and grimy when upon his engine, but clean and well-kempt at the tea-table with his own family, "had a matter lying heavy on his conscience."

"What is it, my dear?" rejoined the wife. "Perhaps, if you confide in me, the matter can be more readily disposed of than if you carried it alone."

"It is this matter of running a Sunday train. While you and the children are at the church and Sabbath-school, I am driving over the road with a shriek and a roar that breaks in upon the quiet of the day, and banishes from the mind all devotional thought. Since we stood up together in the broad aisle of the dear old church, and together consecrated ourselves to God, this thought has troubled me more and more. Suppose, dear wife, from some Sunday catastrophe I should be brought home dead. Would not the thought that it occurred on such a day render the calamity all the more bitter for you to bear?"

"God spare us!" exclaimed the wife.

"Amen!" responded the husband; "but such a thing might be."

"Ask our pastor what he thinks about it."

"I have done that already, and laid the case fully before him; but after a long conference, he answered:

"I must refer it back to you. Solve the problem for yourself, with prayer to God for light and guidance with his holy will. He will give you no supernatural revelation, but in the light of reason and conscience it will be impressed upon your own mind what is the right course for you to pursue. Somebody," he added, "must run the Sunday trains. Is there any man on the road more steady and reliable than you? and would the lives of travellers be safer in other hands than yours?"

"I did not say no to that, for it might look like boasting; but I did say there were safe and reliable men who did not make any professions of Christianity, and did not have any scruples, who would be glad to have my place; but then, ought I to lead these men into temptation to deliver myself from evil? And besides, dear wife, if I throw up my place, what will you and our children do for bread? I am at home on my engine, and no man can be more so; but I am a mere child in any other place. I am a locomotive engine driver, and nothing else!"

"Yes, you are," responded the wife, emphatically. "You are a Christian man who would become a martyr for conscience' sake, and you are a tender and considerate husband and father. Do in this matter what you think is right; and any sacrifices you may be called upon to make, we will share cheerfully together."

Evershed did not rest that night upon a down-couch, for he was troubled with anxious thoughts. His comfortable but modest home was still encumbered for half its value, and he relied upon what he could save out of his salary to meet the instalments as they were due. If his house was only paid for, he thought, how speedily he would settle this vexed question! But in that case, would there be any sacrifice for conscience' sake? He settled in his mind, at last, to see the superintendent, and ask to be relieved from running a Sunday train. "For," he added, "be the consequences what they may, I cannot and will not run another on that day." And in accordance with that determination, he called at the superintendent's office. That officer was a splendid business man, quick of perception, ready in execution, and never-over-scrupulous nor choice in his language or expression. But he knew his men thoroughly, and all the working of the road he managed.

"I have a request to make of the company," said the engineer, respectfully.

"Well, what is it? Is your salary too small, or your work too hard, or your engine not good enough?"

"No, nothing of that kind. I am satisfied with everything but one, and that is the running of a Sunday train."

"A mighty tender conscience you must have," responded the official. "Must the road stop running, or break its connections, because some tender-footed sheep of a fanatical shepherd refuses to leap the bar of conscience? Can a train lay over for prayers when the United States mail and an express car and three hundred passengers must be brought through on time? Railroad employees with your scruples would ruin my corporation in a year, and I am quite sure you have mistaken your calling in becoming an engineer."

"I have served this company faithfully for ten years," responded the other, indignantly; "and no man before ever told me I had mistaken my calling. I have stood at my post through storm and peril, and at any time of collision with my engine I would go down with the wreck; but as to running a Sunday train, I am resolved to stop it here and now. I am willing to work for lower wages and take a lower grade in the company's service; and I do most earnestly hope, since you cannot fail to see it is a sacrifice on my behalf, that you will favourably consider my request."

"I can say no more at present; come next Saturday in the afternoon and get your orders."

The time dragged heavily through the week, and on Saturday the engineer called at the office of time. The superintendent was busy at his desk but soon looked up and said: "Ah! you have called for a solution of the Sunday question. I have solved your problem by a short formula. You may turn over your engine to the train despatcher forthwith. Another engineer will take out your train to-morrow, and you can go to church with your wife and children."

The poor man was completely overcome, and, in spite of all his efforts to restrain his feelings, burst into tears; but, rallying in a moment, he said:

"I have tried to do my duty, and had hoped for better things, and that I might live and die in the company's service. I trust the dear old engine will fall into good hands, for I have loved and petted it; have almost felt, sometimes, as if it had a soul, and knew as I did, the responsibility imposed on it and me. But we must part company now, and I am not ashamed to say it wrings my heart and takes the bread out of my children's mouths."

The superintendent wheeled around on his pivot chair and responded, sharply:

"Who said you were to leave the company's service? I have inquired into your antecedents and know you to be one of the most reliable men. We can not afford to part with such, even if they have consciences too tender for some necessary portions of our service. You will, therefore, report with your own old fireman at seven o'clock Monday morning, at the station, to take out the special express with a new, first-class engine that never ran on the road before, and your salary is increased twenty-five per cent. from the old rate, for the increased responsibility of the fastest train upon the line. Although I do not take much stock in your scruples of conscience, yet I do not think either the property of the company or the lives of its passengers are in any greater peril under the care of a man who acts on his convictions of duty, even at the risk, as he thinks, of losing his head. As I mind you," added the official, as he hastened to suppress the engineer's expressions of gratitude and waived him to the door, "the special express is not a Sunday train."—*N. Y. Evangelist.*