

In the morning when the man opened the door. That must have been the way of it.'

Just as I Please.

I heard a girl say recently, 'I'm not going to take music lessons of Miss Hayne any more; she is too exacting. She is always trying to make me hold my hands a certain way and makes me play it over and over until I get it just so. I'm going to take lessons from Miss Brown. She lets you do as you please, and never worries you because you haven't your lesson.'

Do you suppose you will ever hear of her as a great musician—or any kind of a musician?

A lady of my acquaintance remarked, 'I will not study under Miss Harvey, for she criticizes me, and I won't stand it. I am just as intelligent as she is.'

Do you think you will ever hear of that lady as a great scholar?

I knew a bright boy who quit the school right in the middle of the term last Winter, and when asked the reason he answered, 'Oh, the lessons are gettin' kind of hard, and I don't see any use in a feller workin' so hard for nothin'.'

Do you ever expect to hear of that boy as a great lawyer or doctor, teacher or preacher?

I heard another boy who was hired to sweep the school-house say, 'I ain't going to sweep the dirt off the porch, 'cause I'm only hired to sweep the room.'

Do you imagine you will ever hear of his securing an important position?

Of course you do not. You never expect to hear of any of these people again. No one will ever amount to anything who is not willing to be taught, and to work hard after he is taught. The teacher who is most exacting is your best friend. Love and thank the one who makes you do your work over and over until it is right.

Perhaps you remember the story of Agassiz and the fish. When Agassiz was a boy, one day his teacher gave him a fish and told him to study it. In an hour or two he came back and reported that he was done. The teacher asked him what he had learned, and he described the arrangement of the fins and scales, and such other things as he had noticed. Without a word of advice the teacher ordered him to go and take that fish and study it. He kept it until the next day, dissected its flesh, studied its organs and came back and reported, what he had learned. The teacher again ordered him to study the fish. He took it home and studied the bones and studied the marrow. The next day when he reported, the teacher said, 'Very well, sir.' That was the real beginning of that careful system of study which made him one of the world's greatest naturalists.

A famous musician once said to the writer, 'Do you know that when I was at the conservatory I often practiced eight or nine hours a day!'

Hard work? Of course it is; but who that has a grain of pluck would not rather work hard and become skilful than to be such a poor workman that he never would have any work to do? It hurts to be criticized. I know it does; but who that has any spirit would not rather be criticized while learning than go on blundering all through life? The dead and useless limbs must be pruned away if the tree is to grow and be fruitful. When the pruning-hook comes to you, don't dodge and flinch, saying you would rather always be a scrub and bear sour, little, knotty fruit than stand some smarting just now.—'Good Cheer.'

Your Own Paper Free.

'Northern Messenger' subscribers may have their own subscriptions extended one year, free of charge, by remitting sixty cents for two new subscriptions.

Only a Husk.

(The 'National Advocate.')

Tom Darcey, yet a young man, had grown to be a very bad one. At heart he might have been all right, if his head and his will had only been all right; but these being wrong, the whole machine was going to the bad very fast, though there were times when the heart felt something of its old truthful yearnings. Tom had lost his place as foreman in the great machine shop, and what money he had now earned came from odd jobs of tinkering which he was able to do, here and there, at private houses, for Tom was a genius as well as a mechanic, and when his head was steady enough, he could mend a clock or clean a watch as well as he could set up and regulate a steam engine—and this latter he could do better than any other man employed by the Scott Falls Manufacturing Company.

One day Tom had a job to mend a broken mowing machine and reaper, for which he had received five dollars, and on the following morning he started out for his old haunt, the village tavern. He knew his wife sadly needed the money, and that his two little children were in absolute suffering from want of clothing, and that morning he held a debate with the better part of himself, but the better part had become very weak and shaky, and the demon of appetite carried the day.

So away to the tavern Tom went. For two or three hours he felt the exhilarating effects of the alcoholic draught, and fancied himself happy, as he could sing and laugh; but, as usual, stupefaction followed, and the man died out. He drank while he could stand, and then lay down in a corner, where his companions left him.

It was late at night, almost midnight, when the landlord's wife came into the bar-room to see what kept her husband up, and quickly saw Tom.

'Peter,' said she, not in a pleasant mood, 'why don't you send that miserable Tom Darcey home? He's been hanging around here long enough.'

Tom's stupefaction was not sound sleep. The dead coma had left the brain and the calling of his name stung his senses to keen attention. He had an insane love for rum, but did not love the landlord. In other years Peter Tindar and himself had loved and wooed the sweet maiden—Ellen Goss—and he won her, leaving Peter to take up with the vinegary spinster who had brought him the tavern, and he knew that lately the tapster had gloated over the misery of the woman who had once disregarded him.

'Why don't you send him home?' demanded Mrs. Tindar, with an impatient stamp of the foot.

'Hush, Betsy! He's got money. Let him be, and he'll be sure to spend it before he goes home. I'll have the kernel of the nut, and his wife may have the husk!'

With a sniff and a snap Betsy turned away, and shortly afterward Tom Darcey lifted himself upon his elbow.

'Ah, Tom, are you awake?'

'Yes.'

'Then rouse up and have a warm glass.'

Tom got upon his feet and steadied himself.

'No, Peter, I won't drink any more to-night.'

'It won't hurt you, Tom—just a glass.'

'I know it won't,' said Tom, buttoning up his coat by the only solitary button left. 'I know it won't.'

And with this he went out into the chill air of the night. When he got away from the shadow of the tavern he stopped and looked at the stars, and then he looked down upon the earth.

'Ay,' he muttered, grinding his heel in the gravel. 'Peter Tindar is taking the kernel and

leaving poor Ellen the husk, and I am helping him to do it. I am robbing my wife of joy, robbing my children of honor and comfort, robbing myself of love and life—just that Peter Tindar may have the kernel and Ellen the husk! We'll see.'

It was a revelation to the man. The tavern keeper's brief speech, meant not for his ears, had come upon his senses as fell the voice of the Risen One upon Saul of Tarsus.

'We'll see,' he replied, setting his foot firmly upon the ground, and then he wended his way homeward.

On the following morning he said to his wife: 'Ellen, have you any coffee in the house?'

'Yes, Tom.'

She did not tell him that her sister had given it to her. She was glad to hear him ask for coffee, instead of the old, old cider.

'I wish you would make a cup good and strong.'

There was really music in Tom's voice, and the wife set about the work with a strange flutter in her heart.

Tom drank two cups of the strong, fragrant coffee, and then went out—went out with a resolute step, and walked straight to the great manufactory, where he found Mr. Scott in the office.

'Mr. Scott, I want to learn my trade over again.'

'Eh, Tom. What do you mean?'

'I mean that it's Tom Darcey, come back to the old place, asking forgiveness for the past, and hoping to do better in the future.'

'Tom!' cried the manufacturer, starting forward and grasping his hand, 'are you in real earnest? Is it really the old Tom?'

'It's what's left of him, sir, and we'll have him whole and strong before very long if you will only set him to work.'

'Work! Aye, Tom, and bless you, too. There is an engine to be set up and tested to-day. Come with me.'

Tom's hands were weak and unsteady, but his brain was clear, and under his skilful supervision the engine was set up and tested, but it was not perfect. There were mistakes which he had to correct, and it was late in the evening when the work was complete.

'How is it now, Tom?' asked Mr. Scott, as he came into the testing house and found the workmen ready to depart.

'She's all right, sir. You may give your warrant without fear.'

'God bless you, Tom. You don't know how like sweet music the old voice sounds. Will you take your place again?'

'Wait till Monday morning, sir. If you will offer it to me then, I will take it.'

At the little cottage Ellen Darcey's fluttering heart was sinking. That morning, after Tom was gone, she had found a two-dollar bill in her coffee cup. She knew that he left it for her. She had been out and bought tea and sugar and flour and butter, and a bit of tender steak; and all day long a ray of light had been dancing and skimming before her—a ray from the blessed light of other days. With prayer and hope she set out the tea table and waited, but the sun went down and no Tom came. Eight o'clock—and almost nine. Oh, was it but a false glimmer after all?

Hark! The old step! strong, eager for his home. Yes, it was Tom, with the old grime upon his hands and the odor of oil upon his garments.

'I have kept you waiting, Nellie?'

'Tom!'

'I didn't mean to, but the work hung on.'

'Tom, Tom! You have been to the old shop.'

'Yes, and I'm to have the old place, and—'

'Oh, Tom.'

And she threw her arms round his neck and covered his face with kisses.