

I can assure you. The prodigal son felt nothing [to what I experienced. We entered a huge basket and were being slowly drawn toward the mouth of the pit when I saw the old rope was about to snap under the strain. It was a perilous, a horrible, a critical moment, The weight of two men was too great, and your father was a broad, bulky man. Self-preservation is the first law of nature. An instant more and we were both lost. We seemed to be about fifty feet from the top. I hastily called your father's attention to something; implored him, in fact, to look down the mine. He did so, and as I gently tipped him over he went whirling and crashing to the bottom. It was rough on him, but I saved myself. I ciphered it out on the instant like this: He is an old man, nearly bald, deaf in one ear, two teeth gone in front, with only a few years to live. I am half his age, strong and healthy, the father of a young family, with a career before me, a comedy to finish for the Haymarket, and a burlesque accepted at the Strand. Now, I ask you, under the circumstances, did I not behave nobly?"

"You did, you did," sobbed Artimus. "I would have acted that way myself."

"I am glad to find you so intelligent. You ate my brother and found him tough, and I am the assassin of your dear old father," continued Byron, keeping up the farce of pretended emotion. "We are both avenged. Let us draw a veil over the past, and never allude to these heartrending incidents again."

"Agreed. We cry quits. Shake!" roared Artemus, extended both hands, and dramatically dashing a flood of imaginary tears from his eyes. Then he summoned a waiter, glasses round were speedily ordered, and everybody was full of congratulations upon the ready manner in which the two wits had conducted their impromptu chaff.

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James Russell Lowell has written:

O small beginnings ye are great and strong,  
Based on a faithful heart and weariless brain!  
Ye build the future fair, ye conquer wrong,  
Ye earn the crown, and wear it not in vain.

It is a reader inexperienced indeed in life, who does not grant this great truth. "Small beginnings—great and strong—ye earn the crown." Bear it in mind and act on it. Remember, too, that there is no help so sure in the fostering of the small beginnings as a policy in *The Sun Life of Canada*.

SLEEP.....*Archibald Lampman.*

Behold I lay in prison, like St. Paul,  
Chained to two guards that both were  
grim and stout;  
All day they sat by me and held me thrall;  
The one was named Regret, the other  
Doubt.  
And through the twilight of that hopeless  
close  
There came an angel shining suddenly  
That took me by the hand, and as I rose,  
The chains grew soft, and fell away from  
me,  
The doors gave back and swung without  
a sound,  
Like petals of some magic flower un-  
furled—  
I followed, treading on enchanted ground,  
Into another and a kindlier world.  
The master of that black and bolted keep  
Thou knowest is Life; the angel's name  
is Sleep.

#### A LARGE RETURN FOR A SMALL PAYMENT.

DINNINGTON, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE,  
December 13th, 1898.

WATSON YOUNG, Esq.,  
District Manager,  
Sun Life of Canada.

DEAR SIR,

As executors under the will of the late Ralph Tate Robson, we beg to thank the Company, through you, their representative, for the prompt payment of the amount due under the policy No. 56200 for £1000. Unfortunately Mr. Robson, deceased, only lived to pay two premiums of £70 2 0.

We sincerely wish the Sun Life of Canada and your district in particular, unprecedented success in the future, which we are sure the Company, as well as yourself, duly merits.

Yours very truly,

JOSEPH DAVIDSON  
GEORGE ROBSON.

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Professor Sellar, of Edinburgh University, was generally patient with dull students; but one day a blockhead exhibited such terrific stupidity in translating Horace that the professor at last exclaimed: "Sir, in translating that passage you have made more mistakes than the words admit of."