

JEM'S SUNDAY.

Jem Spinks is always glad when Sunday comes round. Jem likes Sundays, and wouldn't mind if there were two or three of them in the week. He wouldn't mind either if each Sunday consisted of forty-eight hours instead of twenty-four. He is glad when they come. He is sorry when they are ended.

Well done, Jem! do I hear my readers say? Wait a bit. Don't give master Jem an approving pat on the back just yet. Listen, first of all, to the why and the wherefore of Jem's approval of Sundays.

Well, Jem Spinks likes Sunday, in the first place, *because he can enjoy an extra snooze.* Oh, the joy to wake up on a Sunday morning, and suddenly to remember that he hasn't to go to work—that he hasn't to turn out of bed until he likes! How delicious the feeling! Is it any wonder that master Jem turns round on the other side, and goes to sleep again? and is it any wonder that after he wakes up again he should lie on his back and watch the flies upon the ceiling? No wonder at all. This is one good reason why Jem Spinks likes Sundays.

Then, in the second place, he likes Sunday *because he can lounge about in his shirt sleeves.* Behold him watching his cocks and hens with all the pride of a man of property! Behold him poking his fat pigs in the ribs to discover the depth of the fat! Behold him leaning on his garden railings and having a bit of chat with his neighbour Tom! That is what Sunday brings round. None of that sort of enjoyment on Monday. Hard work then. But on Sunday, hurrah for the shirt sleeves, for the cocks and hens, the pigs, and neighbour Tom!

Then, in the third place, Jem Spinks likes Sunday *because he can improve his mind.* It is true his only literature is the newspaper; but there is plenty of good reading in a penny newspaper, isn't there? There are murders, and suicides, and bigamies, and burglaries, and forgeries, and executions and a host of other intellectual treats. And then, after all the other choice bits have been digested, there are politics. And what about that funny column which makes you split your sides with laughing? Newspapers! Why, they're prime reading; at least, so Jem Spinks thinks.

Then, in the fourth place, he likes Sunday *because he can enjoy a peep at the green fields.* Green fields seem ever so much greener on a Sunday, somehow, and sweet flowers seem to smell sweeter, and it is grand to hear the church bells ringing merrily out. Church bells, Jem thinks, are best heard from a distance, because the sound is more mellowed. And so he gets away from them as far as possible.

In the fifth place, Jem likes Sunday *because he can then have a bit of quiet.* Children are all very well when they are in bed or out of the way. And as sure as Sunday comes round they are packed off to Sunday School. Jem admires Sunday Schools, because they enable him to get a bit of quiet on Sundays. The children get good there, no doubt, but that is a minor consideration. He gets some quiet. That is the chief reason.

In the sixth place, Jem likes Sunday *because he likes his friends.* His friends like to see him, and he likes to see them. And Sunday is the day for his likings to be satisfied. Never mind if he keeps them away from church, or if they keep him. He can hardly be expected to meet God in His house if he has to meet friends in his own. To have a few friends is to Jem the best part of Sunday.

I say, Jem, I'd like a word or two about this Sunday of yours.

Sunday is God's day, isn't it, Jem? It isn't yours, although you treat it as if it were. It is God's day, sure enough, and you have no right to steal it.

And what about the house of God, Jem? Churches were built for you and such as you. It is your house. It is hard lines, surely, for a man never to set foot in his own house, isn't it?

And what about the Bible, Jem? Do you ever read it? It's your Bible too, your very own. Sunday is a nice quiet day for reading the Bible. Why don't you read it? It would do you more good than a newspaper.

And what about eternity, Jem? Where are you going to spend it? You won't spend it in heaven if you go on as you are doing now. Eternity is worth thinking about.

And what about your sins, Jem? Green fields and newspapers are all very well in their way, but they won't tell you how to get your sins forgiven. The Lord Jesus who died for you is the only one who can save your soul. God help you to think about it!

And I say, Jem, what about next Sunday? Don't live like a heathen any longer. Think a bit about your soul. Shut up your newspaper, and open your Bible. Go to church morning and night. Prepare to meet your God. Flee to the Saviour of sinners, whose precious blood cleanseth from all sin.

Rev. Charles Courtenay.

THE LAME AND THE BLIND.

The blind did bear the lame upon his back—

The burden did direct the bearer's way:
With mutual help they served each other's lack,
And every one their friendly league did praise:
The lame lent eyes, the blind did lend his feet,
And so they safe did pass both field and street.

Some land abounds, yet hath the same her want—

Some yields her lack, and wants the other's store:
No man so rich but is in some thing scant—
The great estate must not despise the poor;
He works, and toils, and makes his shoulders bear—
The rich, again, gives food and clothes to wear.

So without poor, the rich are like the lame;

And without rich, the poor are like the blind.
Let rich lend eyes—the poor his legs will frame.
Thus should it be; for so the Lord assigned,
Who at the first, for mutual friendship's sake,
Not all gave one, but did this difference make.

Whereby, with trade, and intercourse, in space,
And borrowing here, and lending there again;
Such love, such truth, such kindness, should take place,
That friendship with society should reign:
The proverb saith, "One man is deemed none,
And life is death where men do live alone."

—Whitney.

BREAD UPON THE WATERS.

In the church of Methley, a town near Leeds, in Yorkshire, there is an oval slab to the memory of the Rev. George Goodwin, around which there hangs a brave and noble story, and one which singularly illustrates the promise that bread (seed-corn) cast upon the waters is indeed found after many days.

The famous Mrs. Delany, who died in 1788, had a friendship with most of the celebrities of her day—John Wesley, Swift, &c.—and Mrs. Vigor. This Mrs. Vigor was the daughter of the Rev. George Goodwin, and was first married to Thomas Ward, Consul-General of Russia, in 1781. On the death of her husband she returned to England, leaving St. Petersburg in a sledge, and passing through Livonia and Courland until she reached Memel in Polish Prussia. Here, though in a very delicate and critical condition of health, she was obliged to take up her residence in a small inn full of rude soldiers.

A gentleman in whose company she had travelled went out in the afternoon to visit certain merchants to whom he had business credentials, and in the course of conversation he spoke of the situation of the English lady, and asked if there were no private rooms to be obtained for one in so lonely and unfortunate a condition.

A person present said he knew of such lodgings, and would attend to the matter at once; and about an hour afterwards Mrs. Vigor received a very polite letter from a Mr. Meyer, placing such apartments as she needed at her disposal, and urging her to take immediate possession, the sooner the better.

Accordingly her servants were instructed for her removal, and a coach having been procured, she went to the house indicated. It was found

to be spacious and stately; the best rooms were given her and she was served with an excellent supper. Nothing was said to her that night, but in the morning, at breakfast, the gentleman of the house made his appearance, and with him was a young person who seemed to be his son.

Mrs. Vigor rose, and mentioned how greatly she was obliged to him for his goodness, but at the same time told him how much she was embarrassed, as it was out of her power to make any return for these civilities.

Mr. Meyer begged of Mrs. Vigor and her friend to be easy on that head; for, says he, "All I do is a return; it is in consequence of favours received, so that your debt is cancelled before it is incurred."

As they did not understand him, he proceeded to explain his meaning.

"You must know," says he, "that I have a great esteem for the English nation in general; but I have certain obligations which enhance my regard. You see here this young man, who is my son. He was last year upon his travels in England, and passing from the north towards the capital he was taken very ill. His disorder was so violent that he was forced to take refuge wherever he could find shelter; and this was not easily procured, for his disease was the small-pox, and he was housed in a small, dirty inn, where he must have perished for want of care and accommodation."

"A gentleman of the place heard that a stranger was ill, and he was so humane as to make him a visit. When he found the nature of his disorder he ordered him to be wrapped up securely, and conveyed him in his own coach to his own house. To this gentleman's goodness, and the goodness and cares of those about him, my son owes his life, and I am indebted for my son. Hence I make it a rule that no person from England shall come to this place without meeting from me every mark of regard I can possibly show."

"Pray, sir," says Mrs. Vigor to the son, "whereabouts was it in the north of England that you met with this civility?"

"It was," says he, "at a place called Methley, near Leeds, in Yorkshire."

"And pray, sir, may I ask what was the gentleman's name?"

"His name, madam, was Goodwin."

"Sir," says Mrs. Vigor, "it is my own father!"

We may imagine Mr. Meyer's delight at this information. What was before general civility was now heightened into the warmest gratitude, and the son came up with great politeness to Mrs. Vigor, and told her he ought not to have waited for any previous discovery; he ought to have known her at once; for, said he, "No daughter can be more like to a father than you are to Mr. Goodwin."

Mr. Meyer begged of them now to be no longer under any difficulties on account of the little civilities which he might offer them; for Mrs. Vigor had a claim to everything. He sent the next day to his daughter, who was married to a person of consequence, and desired that she would come and keep Mrs. Vigor company; she accordingly came with her husband, and there was a renewal of civilities.

Mrs. Vigor remained with her friends until her health was recruited, and then passing through Hanover to Holland took shipping to England. This happened in the year 1740.

Goodwin's pedigree is poor beside those of the nobles whose crests surround his simple stone; but none of them can show an action more truly noble and chivalrous than to bear a wretched infectious stranger from a poor inn to his own house, to nurse back to health and life again. His action imitated that of the Good Samaritan. Many would have been willing to give the oil and the twopence, and leave the man in the miserable inn; but few would have done as the Rev. George Goodwin did.

We must remember, also, that as he was born in 1666, and was forty-three years old when he became rector of Methley in 1709, he was seventy-three years old when he did this deed of Christian charity in 1789.

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