

STORIES  
POETRY

## The Inglenook

SKETCHES  
TRAVEL

## HOW THE LESSONS HELPED.

By Linnie Hawley Drake.

They had learned only a few weeks before how the Master had gone into the wilderness to be tempted of evil. And Miss Helen had bade them remember how soon it was after his baptism. It was Harry—Harry Spence who said, "hardly anything could be a temptation so soon, just after one had felt that he was truly God's son." Miss Helen had asked him if he remembered how little time it was after Peter had told his Lord that he loved him before he was tempted, and so sadly sinned. "Better keep the prayer forever in your heart, 'Lead us not into temptation,' dear Harvey, so little sometimes causes us to fail."

Harvey Spence was one of the youngest of disciples—only fourteen; but so earnest was he in his desire to be admitted into the church that the kind pastor and the elders could not say him "nay." So he had stood and confessed the Christ and partaken of his first communion, with such a look of exaltation upon his boyish face. "A very Samuel," Helen said, speaking of her joy to a friend. And here, but three days after, the same face, troubled and downcast, appeared at the street corner near his home.

There was no use talking, he was very much disappointed. He felt that he must be earning something to help his mother, and now that he was God's child he had expected some place to be opened for him. He had prayed about it, and had then gone from store to store, office to office, only to be refused. One or two had openly sneered when they learned his name.

"I am not to blame for what my father did," he had flashed out to the last inquisitor; and then crept away, ashamed that he should have asked at all.

He was brooding over all this as he turned the corner, conscious of a jacket there so far outgrown as to leave him to choose between several inches of bony wrist or faded shirt sleeve. Deciding in favor of wrist, he proceeded to tuck the offending calico, never heeding its careful polish, out of sight, thinking all the time how he'd like to run away from this hateful old place, only there was mother.

"Boy! boy! Boy, I say, catch that car!" Harvey turned and by a motion the approaching car stopped for the puffing wheezy, corpulent gentleman, who, with suit case in hand, was wildly making for it. In an instant Harvey had grabbed the case, lifted it to the platform and experienced the pleasant sensation of a coin in the middle of his palm.

"What in the world? It's a twenty-dollar gold piece!" And Harvey turned the shining thing over and over in his hand in utter bewilderment. "My, but it will buy a lot o' things." And as he thought of them he turned down his shirt cuffs, smoothing them out. "Mommey'd look stunnin' in a hat like Miss Helen's and a black, shiny dress—an' I might pay the rent."

"It isn't yours! It isn't yours!" whispered a little voice.

"Of course it's mine." She said aloud, looking around as if expecting to find some one at his elbow.

"It isn't yours! It isn't yours!" kept up the irritating voice.

"See here, I didn't steal this money; he gave it to me. He is probably some very rich man."

"Nobody but a fool would give a twenty-dollar gold piece to stop a car."

"Well, it's mine. I probably never shall see him again. I shall keep it anyway." And Harvey, after ascertain-

ing that there were no holes to be feared, put his treasure down at the very bottom of his pocket.

He didn't go home at once as he thought of doing; neither did he find work that day. To think that he had the whole of twenty dollars ought to have made him very happy; but it did not. He thought it was the fear of losing it. Once he believed he had, and he gave such a clutch at his pocket that he carried a black and blue mark for weeks. "I'd hate to carry around a million or so o' these," he told himself. "Though maybe, I'd get used to it."

At night he tried a dozen times to tell his mother.

"I stopped a car for a man to day," he began. "He was a very jolly old gentleman. I don't believe he could have caught his train if I hadn't been there."

"I'm glad you were of use, deary. I don't see what else you could have done if you saw him hurrying and he called you."

How could he tell her about the gold coin after that?

"I'll just buy her the things, for the money is really mine. But then, she'll want to know every bit about it. Mothers are so anxious."

He did not know where to put it, when at last he went up to his bare little room over the kitchen. For the first time in his life he thought of the possibility of some one crawling up the sloping roof and stealing away his wealth. There had never been a fastening to his windows. So, slipping down to the wood-box, he sized a piece of kindling, and with his pocket knife whittled out a strong wedge, which, inserted between the two sashes, prevented the lower from being raised. Then he took his Bible, and as his chapter for the day was about Solomon, he felt that he knew more about the golden candlesticks, all shiny like this, and wondered how it would feel to have a house with gold on the walls, instead of old dingy paper, and gold on the floors—walking on gold—where! 'Twasn't any wonder his son was so stuck up, living in a house with gold floors, and as his eyes closed his mind was more filled with the greatness of Solomon than of Solomon's God, who had said to him, "If thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them, I will perform my word with thee."

Saturday night came, Harvey had earned a dollar that day by cutting grass and weeding flower beds. This he had given to his mother in a very shamefaced way, thinking of the twenty that he was keeping back.

"It isn't that I wouldn't like to—and I'd like to give a whole dollar of it to-morrow." But Harvey sat still and drummed on the corner of the table, whistling softly to himself.

"Mother couldn't you fix yourself up an' go to church to-morrow? You'd just like it, I know," he said, in a coaxing tone. "It's Children's Day, and all those little kids in the baby-room speak—some of 'em are awfully cute."

"I couldn't to-morrow, deary, but we'll have the lesson anyway. It'll be something to think about all night. I shall be too tired most to sleep after I get these gowas all ironed. And you'll have to take 'em to-night, Harvey, over to Mrs. Henry's. There's sickness there, and they need 'em."

"It's about Rehoboam, mother," said Harvey soberly, for that little voice was nagging and irritating him so—"You know she'd tell you to take it back—you know—you know—"

"I've been reading back 'bout Solomon—Miss Helen told us to. He was

Solomon's son—Rehoboam, you know."

"I forget," said his mother. "I never knew as much about the Old Testament as I did the New. Some way, when I go to read, I turn to the comfortin' things—they're mostly in the gospels an' epistles an' those."

"But there are some awful comfortin' things in the Old Testament. You know that one 'bout the 'everlasting arms'? That's in the Old Testament, mother—Moses said that. And 'bout God bein' our Refuge?"

"Yes, yes, so 'tis—I know now. You must find it for me. An' I'll read it while you're gone to-morrow. Now, what about Rehoboam? What did he do?"

"Why, he just broke up the kingdom of Israel with his high an' mighty ways. The people were awful sore 'bout the way Solomon had made 'em pay taxes an' things, an' they asked him to make 'em lighter. An' first he talked to the old men, and they told him to do it—it would make the people like him an' stick to him. An' then he went an' talked to the young men, an' they said, 'Make it harder for 'em.' And he did what the young fellows said, and this is what he answered the people: 'My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke. My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.' I s'pose he thought 'cause his father was Solomon, he could do anything he pleased an' know more'n all those wise men put together."

"There's plenty of youngsters like that, child, and their fathers aren't Solomon's, either."

"Mother, if God made Rehoboam hateful and mean, just so the people would go off and have another king, was it wicked in him?"

"God never makes anybody do evil, Harvey. Never think that for a minute."

"But God told Solomon that he was going to take away ten tribes, an' he sent a prophet to that other man, yes, a somebody. Here it is, right in this other chapter."

"Yes, and Solomon tried to kill that man Jeroboam, didn't he? You see, he didn't believe it was a fixed thing. An' I believe if Solomon had turned right square about an' lived as he ought to have done, an' served God with his whole heart, even then God would have repented himself as he did with those same Israelites when Moses was leading 'em along. I never could see how Solomon, with all his learning—Well, he had too much of this world's goods, that's it. And see what came of it; he disobeyed God and died in his sins, and here's his son."

"Oh, mother!" The cry was so sharp that Mrs. Spence turned in alarm. "Must a son be bad because his father is?"

The question seemed to have pierced to the woman's soul.

"No," she said, hoarsely. "God is too merciful for that. 'No, deary,' she sobbed, going over to the boy and putting her arms close about him. "I wasn't thinking of you—no one dare think you bad, Harvey boy. But maybe temptations will be harder for you—some temptations. You know don't you, what. Then you get down and pray, deary—the first time. There's always a first time, and don't you give in."

The mother went back to her ironing, and forcing back the tears tried to speak cheerfully, until at last every snowy piece lay folded in the basket, and Harvey took his hat to start upon his errand.

"I may be a little longer, mother, than you think, but I'll hurry."

Mrs. Spence smiled and nodded, and taking Henry's vacant seat beside the lamp, resumed the unfinished lesson.

"We're always coming to turning