

test was long and stubborn, for the "Invincibles" found the "Wayfarers" foemen worthy of their steel. But in the end they vindicated their name and the game was theirs with a score of 8 to 5.

When the conquerors and conquered left the grounds the excitement rapidly subsided. Ellis found himself next to Mr. Burgess, who had come down to see the game at Allan's request. He shook hands with Ellis in a friendly fashion, looking keenly at the lad from under his bushy eyebrows.

"Pretty well-played game, eh?" he said, good-humoredly.

Ellis nodded enthusiastically.

"The 'Invincibles' would look out for that," he said proudly.

"Well, I'm ravenously hungry," interjected Nelson Evans, the son of a Millboro millionaire and the "biggest swell," as the boys said, at the Academy. "Wonder where a humble fellow like myself can get a bite. The 'Invincibles' are to be lunched by their friends, the enemy, but we rag tag and bob-tail must forage for ourselves."

"Here comes Mother Bunch," exclaimed Bert MacDonald with a laugh. "She's got a big basket and I'll warrant there's something to eat it. Horrah?"

Ellis looked in the direction indicated with a face suddenly grown crimson. He knew what he would see—a little, stout old woman in an old-fashioned bonnet and shawl, selling cookies to the crowd as she plodded through it.

For a minute he turned away. All his cronies were there, as well as Allan Burgess, who had come up to speak to his father. For one brief instant Ellis was tempted to walk swiftly away. The "old cooky woman," as the boys were calling her, had not yet seen him.

"I believe I'll go and invest in some of those cookies myself," said Mr. Burgess. "They look good—like the ones my mother used to make when I was a little shaver."

Suddenly Ellis stepped forward and elbowed his way through the crowd. A flush of shame was on his face, but this time it was shame at himself. His voice was clear and steady when he reached the cooky woman's side.

"That basket is too heavy for you, mother," he said gently. "Here, let me take it."

He turned and faced the boys squarely.

"Come on, boys, I'm running this thing now. Mother you must go and sit down over there by the fountain. I'll sell your cakes for you."

The old woman, whose tired, lined face had lighted up with love and pride, tried to protest, but Ellis put her aside with a tender smile.

"You're tired out as it is. This is my place. I won't let them cheat you," he assured her, laughingly.

For a minute there had been an amazed silence around them. Then Neil Blair laughed aloud. Ellis heard and lifted his head a little higher. He did not see the furious look that Allan Burgess flashed at Neil Blair before he turned to him and said:

"Give me half a dozen cookies, Saunders, there's a good fellow. I'm so ravenous I can't wait until I get to the spread the 'Wayfarers' have for us. Thank you."

As Allan moved away, munching his purchase, the other boys crowded around again and bought their cookies. Ellis passed out cakes and changed quarters with his usual easy manner. In a few minutes the basket was empty, and he turned to the little woman by the fountain.

"Come now, mother, we'll go home. I want to spend the rest of my time here with you. You'll excuse me, won't you, boys?"

"Oh, certainly," said Neil Blair, with a faint sneer in his tones. But Nelson Evans walked up to Mrs. Saunders and held out his hand.

"I want to shake hands with the mother of the smartest boy at Millboro Academy," he said heartily. "He's going to carry off all the honors, and we're proud of him for it, Mrs. Saunders. He's my especial crony, and I'm glad to meet his mother."

Mrs. Saunders' face flushed with pride.

"Thank you," she said. "Ellis is a good boy, and always was. I'm glad to think he's a bit clever, too, and that his classmates like him."

When Ellis and his mother had gone the other boys hurried off in various directions, and Mr. Burgess, who had been a spectator of the whole affair, found himself alone. He nodded his head several times in a peculiar way. Any one of his business acquaintances, seeing that would have said:

"Burgess has made up his mind about something." The Millboro boys on the train that evening were even more hilarious than in the morning, if that were possible. One or two of Ellis Saunders' former friends avoided him significantly, but the others made no difference, and Ellis understood that most of his friends were worth having. For the first time since he had left the little bakery in Sheffield two years before he was rid of a vague feeling that he was sailing under false colors. He had never before been able to quite free himself of the belief, snobbish though he knew it to be, that if the Academy boys knew of the bakery and the queer, plain little woman who tended it, they would look down on him.

A week later Ellis Saunders was notified that the Steel Manufacturing Company had accepted his application for the vacant position. He would expect him to begin work immediately after his graduation. Allan Burgess met him the same afternoon on the campus.

"Congratulations, Saunders. Father has informed me that they've taken you in Wallace's place. Good for you!"

"It is good for me," said Ellis, frankly. "But I don't understand how I came to get it. That man from Shattuck now—and Neil Blair."

Neil Blair's chances faded out finally the football day," answered Burgess, with his characteristic shrug, "and by the same token yours went up. Father took a fancy to you that day—said that you were a man after his own heart. When he came home from Sheffield you had as good as got the place then. And look here, Ellis, will you ask your mother for her recipe for those cookies? I never tasted such delicious ones, and father says so, too. My mother never can make good cookies, bless her, but she says she'll try to learn if yours will give the recipe."

"I can give it to you myself," said Ellis, with a laugh. "For I've helped mother make them hundreds of times."

—Good Cheer.

## The Young People

EDITOR

W. L. ARCHIBALD.

All communications for this department should be sent to Rev. W. L. Archibald, Lawrence town, N. S., and must be in his hands at least one week before the date of publication.

### Daily Bible Readings.

Monday.—Jesus calling and teaching sinners. Mark 2: 13-17.  
Tuesday.—Jesus forgiving a sinful woman. Luke 7: 36-50.  
Wednesday.—Parable of the great supper. Luke 14: 15-24.  
Thursday.—Parable of the lost sheep and the lost coin. Luke 15: 1-10.  
Friday.—Parable of the lost son. Luke 15: 11-32.  
Saturday.—Parable of the marriage feast. Matthew 22: 1-14.  
Sunday.—God's great love. John 3: 14-16; Romans 5: 1-11.

### Prayer Meeting Topic—May 3.

What does the Parable of The Prodigal Son Teach Us? Luke 15: 11-32.

This, the third of the parables on the saving of the lost, is given, it would seem, to reveal the heart of the Saviour and the saved. Not now sympathetic care, only as revealed in the Shepherd and his sheep, not now extreme value alone as illustrated by the woman and the lost drachma; but now a parent's love as revealed by father and child.

The two sons represent two types of human character, each of which is common enough. The parable is concerned, however, mainly with the younger son, the elder serving mainly as a background for the illustration of the one sublime fact, the Father's love for the lost.

In a general way the parable may apply to either un-saved or saved, for God's children sometimes become prodigal and go "into a far country." Even God's children may waste their substance, property, ability, position, opportunity—in carelessness, if not "riotous living." The Father will welcome them back.

Our Lord, however, intended the prodigal son to represent the gentle, and hence the sinner in all ages. His salvation is the thought of Jesus. In this there are three stages:—

#### I. HIS HUMILIATION.

(a). Destitute, he joins himself to a citizen of that "far country,"—one of the companions of sin with whom he had found his pleasure and lost his money. For such companions see Rev. 22: 15.

(b). He "filled himself with husks"—the so-called pleasures and satisfaction of sin. Evil can never permanently satisfy a hungry soul. Pro. 2: 11.

#### II. HIS RESTORATION.

(a). He recognized his fall—"came to himself." A man in sin is not himself, but an enemy to himself. Rom. 7: 24.

(b). He represented—"I have sinned." There is no salvation without repentance for Christ said so. Luke 13: 3.

(c). He called upon his will—"I will arise." Repentance alone is not sufficient. Judas repented. Matt. 7: 7-8.

#### III. HIS EXALTATION.

(a). The Father's welcome—"saw him a great way off." He ever watches for his own. Rom. 10: 21.

"Had compassion and kissed him."

For the love of God is greater  
Than the measure of man's mind  
And the heart of the Eternal  
Is most wonderfully kind.—Isaiah 1: 18.

(b). His restoration—properly clad; "put the best robe on him." Our robes of righteousness will be a beautiful life the Saviour will give us.

"A ring on his finger,"—a position of kingly authority shall be ours. Rev. 1: 6.

"I'm the child of a king."

"Shoes on his feet"—no longer a servant. Jno. 15: 15.

(c). The household joy, "bring hither the fatted calf." God has his banqueting house (song 2: 4) and ever feeds his people.

"Be merry." God's children are the happiest people in the world. Salvation brings only joy. Phil. 4: 4.

The leader should previously select those who will read the proof texts.

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### The Prodigal Son.

This parable teaches that it is a good thing to have a good father, and that it is a bad thing to run away from him. This father's home was a good place for a boy, and he was never as happy elsewhere as he was there. If duty calls a boy away from a good home he must go, but the streets or the far country are very wretched and dreary in comparison with the home of a wise and good father.

And this father was wise. The time had come when there was no way for the son to learn save by experience. Doubtless his father had told him everything that he subsequently learned by bitter trial, but it was not real to him. He must see for himself. So his father let him go, with a prayer and an anxious heart. Some boys go out so and walk upright, but they are not those who go off into far countries with their patrimony to "see life." Still, the discipline must be got in some way. God has let us get ours, though at terrible cost, when he might have denied us freedom, and, as we think, have saved us from the pain of our evil deeds. What God has sought, however, has been, not a world of men who could not go wrong if they would, but a world of men who could go wrong and would not.

Sin is never as sweet at the bottom as at the top. It looks fair far away, and very foul when we are near enough to see through the cheap tinsel and gilt with which its decks fluff out. The prodigal saw the smooth side of sin while his money lasted. Then he saw its seams, and from the princes he went down to the pigs.

At last the boy came to himself. It was not himself that had been running his life hitherto. It was a usurper. Now the true nature within, something of the inheritance from his father which had been buried under his sensuality and sin, began now to assert itself. The trouble with young men is that they are not themselves. Somebody else's sneer, somebody else's selfishness, overshadow and controls their independent opinions and bottom convictions, and they go into slavery. But one day the true self wakes up. The man comes to it and then he crashes through his bonds and impediments, and does the heroic and true thing. But why did he not do it at the beginning? Is it not nobler to be one's self in purity than to come back to one's self in shame?

The prodigal saw that he had done wrong. He confessed it to himself. He was filled with shame. He saw what the manly course was. He resolved to follow it. "I will arise. I will go. I will say." Up from this. On from this. Out with this. When the true life awakes in men it drops all cowardice, all furtive concealment, all weak apologies. It confesses. It rises up out of sin. It falls down at the father's feet. The boy did not say, "I'll see it through. I'll stay in this till I die. I have brought it on myself, and will play the man." There would have been a sort of bravado in that. But he did the brave thing. He went home. He preferred heroism to hardihood.

And the father was waiting. It is never too late. That is true, as that it may be too late. The father saw him and took him in.

"There's a wideness in God's mercy,  
Like the wideness of the sea."

"And the heart of the Eternal  
Is most wonderfully kind."

As for the older brother, he had a bad temper. Read in Professor Drummord's "The Ideal Life" the chapter on the elder brother entitled "Ill Temper." How pitiable his wretched temper appears, set against the noble forgiveness of the old father!

And some of us are the prodigals. In whole or in part. Have we risen?

And God is our Father, waiting. He will receive all who come.

Is any one of us the elder brother?

Malice always misconstrues.—(Selected.)

### Illustrative Gatherings.

The bitterest rod may drive to the sweetest comfort.  
The evil of the world lies in sin and not in suffering.

A look the fainting heart may break  
Or make it whole;  
And just one word, if said for love's sweet sake,  
May save a soul.

The Great Physician never lacks patience, and he knows that the bitterest medicine often cures the quickest.

What news in heaven do the angels tell  
Because I tolled for the Master well?  
What wasted life to the truth has come?  
What lost one found has been brought back home.

It is not unworthiness, but unwillingness that bars any man from God. Thousands have missed him by their unwillingness, but he never put off one soul on account of unworthiness.—Flavel

Only a word of sympathy spoken  
To hearts overburdened with care;  
Only the clasp of the hand as a token  
That we in their trouble would share;  
Only a pause to render assistance  
To those overcome by the way.  
These are the deeds that ennoble existence,  
And turn the world's darkness to day.

God will help to regain lost virtue, to repair wasted energies, and to grow into fresh innocence of thought and feeling, a new strength to deal with daily problems, a new trust in the moral meaning and ends of life, a new joy in working a new patience in suffering and a new and abiding peace.

When the heart of the church is with her Lord, her hands will be with his lost.—Baptist Union.