

The Secret

BY JAMES BUCKHAM

Men wondered why, in August heat,
A little brook with mule sweet
Could glide along the dusty way,
When all else parched and silent lay.
How stopped to think how every morn,
The splashing stream anew was born
In some moss-circled mountain pool,
Forever sweet and clear and cool;
A life that, ever calm and glad,
One melody and message had,
How keeps it so," men asked, "when I
Must change with every changing sky?"

Ah! if men knew the secret power
That gladdens every day and hour,
Would they not change to song life's care,
By drinking at the fount of prayer?
—The Advance.

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Pleasant Hours:

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 1, 1896.

GIRLS, HELP FATHER.

"My hands are so stiff I can hardly hold a pen," said Farmer Wilber as he sat down to balance some accounts.

"Can I help you, father?" said his daughter, L. C., laying down her crochet work. "I shall be glad to do so if you explain what you want."

"Well, I shouldn't wonder if you can, Lucy," he said reflectively. "Pretty good at figures, are you?"

"I would be ashamed if I did not know something about them after going twice through the arithmetic," said Lucy, laughing.

"Well, I can show you in five minutes what I have to do, and it'll be a wonderful help if you can do it for me. I never was a master hand at accounts in my best days, and it does not grow easier since I have put on spectacles."

Very patient did she plod through the long lines of figures, leaving the handsome gray worsted crochet work to lie idle all the evening, though she was in such haste to finish her scarf. It was reward enough to see her tired father who had been toiling all day sitting cosily in his chair enjoying his weekly paper.

The clock struck nine before her task was over, but the hearty "thank you, daughter," took away all sense of weariness she might have felt.

"It's rather looking up when a man can have a clerk," said Mr. Wilber. "It's not every farmer that can afford it."

"Not every farmer's daughter is capable of making one," said the mother, with pardonable maternal pride.

"Not every one would be willing if able," said Mr. Wilber.

This is a sad truth. Many daughters might be of use to their fathers in many ways, who never think of lightening a care or labour. If asked to perform some little service it is done at best with a reluctant step and an unwilling air that

robs it of all sunshine or claim of gratitude.

Girls, help father. Give him a cheerful home when evening comes, and do not worry him by fretting because he cannot afford you all the luxuries you desire.

Children exert as great an influence on their parents as parents do on their children.

BOBBIE REID'S LOST DIAMONDS.

BY M. E. L. L.

If you had seen Bobbie Reid on fine summer mornings, racing around, without shoes or stockings, and more than one patch on his clothes, you would never have suspected that he had any diamonds. The little white house on the hill did not look like the home of a boy who lost diamonds every day, and whose friends suffered as well as himself on account of it.

Although there were given to Bobbie every day twenty-four golden caskets each filled with tiny diamonds, you could not have purchased one of them if you had offered him all you owned; not that Bobbie valued them. "What difference does it make," thought he, "when I have so many, whether I lose a few or not?" but Uncle Jack said, "It did make a difference, every one was precious. He was not given one more than he needed for his own use and to help others." Mother said, "She could not see the use of a boy wishing and planning to be rich, who lost diamonds every day." Now these diamonds were not the kind that are worn in rings, much more precious, money could not buy them.

Behind Bobbie's house was an orchard, "which bore prime apples," so Bobbie said. At the foot of the hill was a small stream which kept running away winter and summer. On warm days Bobbie would stand in the water, trying to catch the little fish that darted in and out among the stones, or sailing little boats that always went with the stream. Bobbie would have liked them to have gone the other way for a change.

"Bobbie," said Mrs. Reid, one morning, "run and get me some apples for dinner." "All right, mother," and calling Rover off he ran. "I'll take Rover for a swim first," said he to himself, "I've plenty of time." An hour afterward Uncle Jack, coming through the orchard, saw him lying under the sweet apple tree, and Rover, panting and very wet, beside him.

"Hello, Bobbie! What have you been doing? Getting apples for dinner?" Uncle Jack looked seriously down at the little boy, and said, "Bobbie you have been losing diamonds this morning. Take the apples to your mother." Bobbie at once picked up the apples and took them to the house. "Put them into the pantry," said Mrs. Reid, "I cannot use them this morning." Bobbie obeyed, thinking of what Uncle Jack had said. He was sure a swim was good for Rover. They could have the apples for supper.

And now for the worms to go fishing, and calling Rover, he threw a stick in the direction of the garden. Rover, always ready, ran and brought it back. What a clever dog Rover was! Bobbie tried it again and again. Listen! There's mother calling me to dinner. "I'll get them after," he said to himself, but before dinner was over, there came a knock at the door, and "Is Bobby ready?" could be heard in the dining-room. "Not quite," called Bobbie, "I've got to dig worms."

"Bobbie," said Uncle Jack, "the worms will stay in the garden this afternoon and you at home. You need to be taught a lesson." Very much disappointed, Bobbie leaned out of the window, and watched his friends out of sight.

"Mother! I wish Uncle Jack was not so particular, he makes such a fuss if I am not always ready on the minute. He has spoiled my afternoon's fun. It is too bad."

"It is not through any fault of Uncle Jack's that you have to stay at home, Bobbie," said his mother.

"Old Mrs. Lee is very ill again and wants me to come over. Will you take care of Bobby May while I am gone? It is warm for her to walk so far. I shall not be long away."

"Why, yes," said Bobbie pleased at the thought of something to take the place of his afternoon's fishing. "You need not hurry. I'll take good care of everything."

"There is one thing I want to warn you about, do not take her near the mill. I am sorry I ever let Uncle Jack take her there. Instead of being frightened at the noise of the saw, she clapped her hands and wanted to go nearer it. She is sleeping now."

Bobbie stood at the gate and watched his mother over the hill.

"Mother shall see that 'tis quite safe to leave me," he thought. "I guess I'll go out to the orchard for a while until May wakes up—the house is so hot—it is always cool under the trees, and I can watch the house while lying on the soft green grass."

He would have been quite happy if he could have forgotten about the fishing. "Just wait till I'm a man," thought Bobbie, "I'll have a net and go to a big lake and haul them up by the dozens, and sell them for a lot of money, and then what won't I buy—horses, dogs, and beautiful things for mother and little May," and so the time slipped away and Bobbie forgot all about his charge.

In the meantime May woke up and not seeing her mother in the room, slipped off the lounge and started out to find her. Easily pushing open the wire door, she finds herself in the yard—no mother; no Bobbie and the gate open. Here was a chance to get to Uncle Jack. It did not take very long for the little feet to walk down the hill, across the bridge to the mill. Pausing at the door for a moment to pat Rover, who was following her very closely, into the mill she goes. What a noise the saw made! May seemed to think it fun, and, clapping her hands, stepped nearer and nearer the cruel saw.

Uncle Jack, looking up, saw his little niece's danger, and hastily crossing the floor, caught her up in his arms. A minute more and he would have been too late. With a white face, and clasping the little girl tightly in his arms, he carried her back to the house and found Bobbie hunting all over for the little runaway.

"Bobbie," said Uncle Jack, "where is your mother? May has been into the mill."

"I am tak'g care of her," faltered Bobbie.

"You mean that you are not taking care of her," said Uncle Jack. "Where were you when she got out of the house?"

"Out in the orchard," said Bobbie.

"What's the matter?" asked Mrs. Reid, coming in. "What are you both looking so serious about?"

"Bobbie has been losing diamonds again," said Uncle Jack, going away to the mill and leaving Bobbie to explain to his mother. Mother's "O Bobbie! How could you," went to his heart.

Perhaps Uncle Jack was right after all. It did make a difference losing diamonds, and he shivered when he thought what might have happened while he was losing them this afternoon.

Doncaster, Ont.

KEEPING BACK A PART.

BY S. JENNIE SMITH.

"Say, Ted, let's earn some money."

"How?"

"Don't you see that coal on the sidewalk?" and Jim pointed down the street to a place where a ton of coal had just been deposited. "That's in front of Mrs. Lange's house, and we can go and offer to put it in for a quarter."

"But likely the man himself is going to put it in."

"Oh, no, he isn't! Can't you see that he's getting ready to go away? Come, let's hurry," and Jim rushed down the street, followed quickly by his companion.

They paused to take breath in front of Mrs. Lange's door, and then Jim ventured inside of the house to his offer.

"Why, yes," said the lady, pleasantly; "I'll be glad to have you put it in. I thought the man himself would do it, but I see he's gone off."

So, armed with shovels and pails, the boys set to work to get in the ton of coal. It was a work for such little fellows; they had to carry the coal around to the back of the house where the coal-shed was, but they went at it bravely, and before long the pile on the sidewalk had grown considerably smaller.

Once Ted looked up and said:

"Say, Jim, that quarter won't divide even."

"No more it won't," was the reply.

"Twelve for you, and twelve for me. Ted went on; but what about the other cent?"

"I don't know," Jim said, thoughtfully; "we can't divide a cent, and it don't belong to one any more than to the other."

"There's your baby," suggested Ted.

"Yes, but there's yours, too, and they both can't have it, and giving it to one more than to the other wouldn't be even."

"I say, Jim!" Ted suddenly exclaimed, as if a new and bright idea had occurred to him, "there's the old blind man corner Manhattan Avenue."

"That's so," assented Jim, "and he's both of ours. He don't belong to me any more than to you, nor to you any more than to me. We both kinder own him, don't we?"

"Yes, we both helped him pick up his money the day he slipped,—didn't we?"

"Of course; so he'll have the extra cent."

Having arranged that important matter, the two little fellows went to work again with such a will that inside of an hour the coal had entirely disappeared from the sidewalk.

"Now, we're done," cried Jim, triumphantly.

"Yes, we're done," echoed Ted.

But had they finished? Down in the gutter was lying at least-half a pall of coal, and Jim asked himself this question as he happened to glance at it.

Ted came along, and saw too. Looking at Jim he read his thoughts, and said:

"Oh, pshaw! Let's don't bother about that little bit; we're both too tired."

"There's the dust on the sidewalk, too," remarked Jim, slowly; "the putter-in always cleans that off."

"But we're not regular putter-ins," argued Ted, as he straightened up to rest his aching back.

But Jim stared at the gutter, and did not reply.

"What's the matter? What are you thinking of?" asked Ted.

"Why, I was thinking about that story that we heard down to mission-school,—that one about the man and woman who was struck dead for lying."

"Nias and Sophia?" asked Ted.

"Ananias and Sapphira," corrected Jim, who was two years older than his companion, and could more easily remember hard names. "Yes, that's them."

"Well, what have we got to do with them? We ain't lying, nor we ain't keeping anybody's money back,—are we?"

"No, but"—and Jim looked as if he scarcely knew how to express what he meant.

"But what?" said Ted, with wondering eyes.

"You see, it's just like this," Jim went on, thoughtfully, "that man down to mission-school said it was the same if you kept back anything, even some of the work that you ought to do, and we're going to be paid for this, Ted, and it ain't done."

"Well, then, let's take up the coal," and Ted started for his shovel.

"All right, and I'll get the broom to sweep the sidewalk. It's better that way,—ain't it, Ted?"

And Ted gave a wise little nod by way of reply.—S. S. Times.

The boy who smokes saps his physical strength. In boat-races and games of baseball, cricket, bicycling and other athletics the habitual smoker stands no chance against the young man of pure, cleanly and temperate habits. Some investigations have recently been made which convey a startling warning to smoking boys. From measurements of one hundred and eighty-seven students in Yale College it was found that those who let tobacco alone gained over those who used it during the college year 1892 twenty-two per cent. in weight, twenty-nine and one-half per cent. in height, nineteen per cent. in girth of chest, and sixty-six per cent. in lung capacity. Measurements at Amherst College showed even greater difference in favour of those who did not use tobacco. With such evidence as this before him, no sensible boy is likely to try to cultivate the tobacco habit or to cling to it if he has already acquired it. Give the boys more opportunities for athletics, and they will require less tobacco.—Troy Times.