

THE web of our life is of mingled yarn, good and ill together.—Shakespeare.

## My First Hundred

By ISAAC LEVI TOTTEN

I AM just an ordinary farm laborer, and, at the present time, I am just one hundred dollars rich. I had nearly a hundred once before—that was before she came. Yes, I have a little girl. I've been married five years to one of the sweetest little women that ever sat across the table in any man's home.

We lived in the city when she came. I remember the day as though it were only yesterday. Forty dollars "Doc" Wadding taxed me. Of course, it did go hard with my wallet, and I couldn't help thinking of what a jump prices had taken, even in the medical profession. Dollars' worth every cent she cost, though. I wouldn't take forty million dollars for her to-day. Here she comes now to have me read to her about "Little Boy Blue" and "Curly Locks."

No, I didn't lose my job in the city; I was never out of work while I lived there. One of the valves on the pump of my circulatory system refused to work properly, and that put me out of commission, or I suppose that I would be there still, with the hundred as far away as it was when I left. Like all the rest of my class, I wasn't prepared when the rainy day came. Just what I was prepared isn't so very difficult to explain. Twelve hundred and fifty dollars a year was my salary—a little less than a hundred and five dollars a month. All it disappeared as fast as, and a little faster than, it appeared. I suppose that I should have saved, and no doubt I could have done so on that salary, had I thrown off that desire to live in as well a neighborhood as my associates and to appear as prosperous as they were trying to appear. There are a few in the middle class in the city who do save, but I never did, nor do I now, envy them their existence.

The flat that I had in the city was nothing fancy, yet it cost me thirty dollars a month. Do you know, though, I always paid the rent willingly, and often wished that some of the old-time associates down in the country would drop in to see how swell I lived. Did you ever feel anything like that? Of course, I could have lived where rents were cheaper; but the neighborhood would have been less desirable, and I am not of such a nature that I can derive pleasure from mingling steadily with those whose tastes are so much different from mine.

It was necessary that I appear as well dressed and as prosperous at the office as the rest of the force. No shiny, baggy, threadbare suits and soiled linen were permissible. Even on the street and in the cars I had the feeling that I must appear prosperous, although I seldom came in contact with anyone but strangers.

We paid just as much for our little girl's English as we did our neighbor, who couldn't afford one any

more than we could. We also had to get a mountain-robe for her, equal to the one our other neighbor, who could afford it, had for their baby, even though we had to get ours at an installment house and pay two prices for it—that is the impression spirit every time. There is a feeling about spreading it all over the place, that is rather pleasing. But what is the use of going into any more details about city life; it's the same old story over again, and I wouldn't have had a cent more than I did when I left the city, if my salary had been three times as much as it was.

## THE HEAVENLY SPIRIT

Once, so runs the legend, there lived in far Judean hills two affectionate brothers, tilling a common farm together. One had a wife and a household of children; the other was a lonely man. One night in the harvest time the older brother said to his wife: "My brother is a lonely man. I will go out and move some of my side of the field over to his, so that when he sees them in the morning his heart will be cheered." And he did it. That same night the other brother said to his workmen: "My brother has a household and many mouths to fill. I am alone, and do not need all this wealth. I will go and move some of my sheaves over on his field, so that he shall rejoice in the morning when he sees how great it is." And he did it. And that night and the next, in the sheltering dark. But on the third night the moon came out as they met face to face, each with his arms filled with sheaves. On that spot, says the legend, was built the Temple of Jerusalem; for it was esteemed that there earth came nearest heaven.—*Green Graves' Guide.*

After Doctor Lemon, the heart specialist, had thumped and pounded and listened to the action of my pump with his stethoscope, he did a bit of artistic sketching on my anatomy with a blue pencil, then stepped back, cocked his head like our canary and said: "That's the size of it." So it was. I had always imagined that I was big-hearted; but never knew before that possessing those qualities would interfere with one's working mechanism. It did though. The specialist said that I must take a two-weeks' rest, and maybe a longer one. There was no doubt I needed it.

When the two weeks rolled around, I went back to work; but I couldn't stand it. The specialist's second advice was that I should give up the city work entirely, and take a good long rest. That was very encouraging, surely. No money on hand and none to come in when the work stopped. What did I do? I did the only thing that I possibly could do under the circumstances. I drew the ten dollars' pay I had coming, packed bag and baggage, and went down on the farm to my wife's folks—to the very ones I had always been glad to have come to see how swell I lived in the city. Maybe you think that didn't take some of the wind out of my impression sale. Part of our furniture was stored in a spare room of the farmhouse and the rest in the loft over the cow-stable. My condition was such that it was practically impossible for me to go to my parents' home; they lived at too great

a distance from the city. Did you ever think what you would do under similar circumstances? It is pleasant to think that they would have to do a little sponging, isn't it?

The pure air of the country, the wholesome food, the good water and the absence of the city nervous tension was the medicine that I needed to put me on my feet again; yet I recuperated slowly. It was nearly a year before I could do anything like a man's work. When I finally reached the point where I was able to take up my own burden again, my wife and I decided that we would not go back to the city. She said, "If the city is not the place for a sick man, it isn't the place for a well man." And she is right.

The following advertisement appeared in the want ad column of a daily we received on the farm:

WANTED—Man with small family to live in city and do farm work. Address X. Y. Z.

I decided to answer the advertisement to see what kind of a proposition I could get. As to the requirements, it was doubtful whether I could fill all of them. I knew I could fill two of them anyway; my family was small and I could live in a tenant-house. In regard to doing the farm work, I was not so sure; but I gave the chance, I was determined to try.

My letter answering the advertise-

ment brought a reply, and it didn't take very long after that to get in direct touch with Mr. X. Y. Z. The result was that I landed the job.

It took every cent I earned the first two months to pay expenses. After that, however, my rise from poverty began, and time gradually dimmed my receding days of misfortune. My services for that portion of the day known as between-chimes are valued at one dollar. I have, up to the present time, averaged about twenty-two dollars a month—quite a difference between that and a hundred and five dollars, isn't there? But, I got a whole lot more in addition to the money that doesn't make me twenty-two dollars so bad after all. I am provided with a house that has four-room-flat furniture gets dismy in trying to fill the rooms. I don't have to pay anything for fuel; get half the milk from three cows; have the chickens and eggs, and I am provided with a garden-patch of sufficient size to raise enough truck for the family, and some to sell, besides. Not so bad, is it, when you think about the prices one must pay for all these necessities in the city? Of course, I have to work about as hard here as I care to work, and sometimes I have imagined, along toward the close of an extra hard day's work, that I would surely drop. My endurance is not as great as that of a man possessing a right-working pump.

At four-thirty every morning I roll out and take a four-mile ride; then comes the currying and the live-

cleaning out of the stables. After that light exercise, I feed about eighty head of hogs in four different pens. It is breakfast-time when I get the hogs fed, and I am always ready for it, too. Breakfast over, I milk three cows, pump water for the hogs, feed two calves and a few other chores; then I am ready to begin my day's work. When the day's work is done, I take some more light exercise similar to that of the morning. Do you know of hogs one with a few tires put in the morning until long after sunset in the evening? But, in spite of the hard work, I like to live and work on the farm better than in the city. I wouldn't exchange place to-day with any city toiler of my acquaintance who works only from eight to five.

After the first two months here, as I said before, we began to climb upward toward our hundred. At the end of the third month we found that we had eleven dollars over and above our expenses. Out of my pay for the fourth month, we saved sixteen dollars. Think of that, and I can save a cent in the city out of a monthly salary of one hundred and five dollars. I can live better out here than we did in the city, too; but there is the cows and chickens that go right on helping out with their good will whether I work or not.

I asked my wife the other day what she thought some city dippy who eats from the arm of a chair in a dairy-lunch room, would give for my appetite. She said that she didn't know, but she was positive he would get his money's worth, who ever he paid.

At the end of the next six months we rounded out the even hundred. There was something that seemed to draw me toward the hundred as though it possessed a magnetic pull.

Here comes the little girl to ask for a penny, but she will not get one until I have earned some money. I want to keep that home-dressed just as I am, and I know so that I can stock up a farm in a few more seasons, and be my own boss. You see, I am determined to stay away from the city. I have fallen in love with the freedom of rural life where I can shout, sing a whistle without restraint. The absence of that nerve-racking strain here appeals to me and mine, and used to like the city, even though I wasn't permitted to say my prayer in the flat unless it was so precise in the lease; but now, when I look back and see the narrowness of my old life, I realize the wisdom of the law of impression. I am for the land of the farmer.—*Farm and Poultry.*

## It's up to you

Royal A. Dixon

It's up to you, just what you do. Or where you go, or what you do. In toil or strife, through all your life, it's up to you.

It's up to you to choose your way. In daily tasks, at work or play. Through all the years that come and go, it's up to you.

It's up to you to choose your way. In joy, sorrow, pain or strife. To scatter sunshine every day, To make your very toll a play, To give to every one you meet. To love, to lead, to be a great. A brother's hand in all they do. So choose your way, it's up to you.

It is good work when we do something that makes our community pleasanter, safer place in which to live.

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