

feet and tracking up floors and she held out for years against the acquisition of animals. Perhaps it was because she usually had a small baby to love and pet that she did not realize the intense longing of her eldest son for a live belonging.

As he rode along he planned how he would teach Chuck to run along behind him and, when the dog was a bit older, he intended to have him carry packages in his mouth and pause when he said: "to heel." Already Chuck could beg and jump over a rope. Russell had taught him these accomplishments during his daily visits and the boy never went back home after seeing him without going to the back yard to inspect, from every angle, the kennel he had built from a packing box.

"I hear you are buying one of the Smith airdales," said the high school principal pleasantly as Russell placed the morning paper on the top step of the piazza. "Yes, sir, and he has a pedigree." "They're fine dogs. Come up some evening and I'll show you some pictures I took of a kennel in California. By the way, Russell, that theme you turned in on dogs was above the average. You evidently like animals."

Russell grew quite red. He was young to be in first year high and he had never before received any notice from the stern principal. Already his beloved Chuck was opening new possibilities. The principal possessed a fine library and was generous about lending his books to the pupils whom he liked. "I'll be glad to come. Shall I bring Chuck?"

"Of course," said the man, smiling into the earnest face, "that is understood."

At the next house, however, the paper-carrier was met with a storm of angry words. Mrs. Gathman had been out of town the evening before and her paper had blown out into the garden and had been spoiled by rain.

"Such carelessness. I shall speak to Ben Martin and have him get away that silly star. He ought to have grown boys deliver, not a fourteen-year old. You ought to be ashamed."

"I'm glad I shan't have to serve her again," reflected Russell, climbing slowly on his wheel and pretending not to hear the sentences drifting down from the tall gray house, "how could I know she was away? If she'd left a note in the screen door I would have taken her paper home and delivered it this morning. I always do that if I know."

At the next house, a tiny white cottage, half-buried beneath a splendid rose-vine, the owner hurried out when she heard the faint click of the bicycle.

"Wait a minute, Russell. I want to speak to you." He rode away an instant later, a delicious hot apple-turnover in his hand. Alice Brown was like that, always remembered that growing boys enjoyed something sweet and unexpected. "I baked early this morning," she smiled as he thanked her hastily before sampling the delectable bit of puffy crust.

"A fellow sees a lot of life," reflected Russell sagely, "some people have two sets of manners that they use at home and in company. Other people are just as pleasant early in the morning as they are on afternoon calls. Mrs. Gathman wouldn't speak like that to me before the family, it's just because she's cross from her long drive back from Aurora."

"I'll be over tonight to see your new dog. Russell, we'll teach him tricks," called Barrett, a young fellow in second year high who had never noticed Russell much before.

So, when the last dollar had been added to the dog-fund, Russell started for Mrs. Smith's place with a high heart. Life seemed to have a wider outlook now that the beloved dog was a dream come true, not just a hope without foundation. He no longer regretted the early rising and the careful hoarding of his money. There were many ways to spend money in town, and money earned by one's self is spent with augmented pleasure, but Chuck meant too much to him to risk any delay. Mrs. Smith was businesslike in her methods, and, as she had plainly told him, she raised dogs because she needed the money.

"I never thought you'd have your money on this date," she remarked candidly, "and I had an offer for the pup this morning. I said he was promised, of course, but, if you'd been late I could not have held him. Usually boys who have not earned much money cannot resist spending it when they get it into their hands."

"Oh, if you'd lost Chuck, I couldn't stand losing him now." The plump, motherly woman laughed: "Yes you could. There will be other dogs later on but I'm glad you kept your word. He'll have a good home with you."

"Never had the home town looked so beautiful to the boy. He whistled tunelessly as he watched the clumsy, shaggy pup frolic along, rushing after lazily floating butterflies, darting up gravel paths and sending bright, reflective glances after scurrying cats. If Russell felt that the world was his, he felt the same and the pair understood each other perfectly.

"Guess I'll stop in and see how Tom is getting along." "Tom's worse, Russell," answered the little maid who had been weeping in the window; "his dog was poisoned last night and he says he doesn't want to get well."

Soberly he followed her into the boy's room. Tom had a bad attack of pneumonia and Russell knew that the dietetics required for the lad's recovery had been mostly furnished by his mother.

"They are frightfully poor," Mrs. Bates had explained one day when giving Russell a basket to take them, "and I guess it is hard to get the plainest kind of food without buying expensive foods to tempt Tom's appetite. Just tell Tom that I overdid my baking and that I want him to help me out by eating some of it."

Russell could not quite account for the gloom that had taken possession of him. Of course, Tom would get well, whether he wished to or not. That was just nonsense on his part. Doctor Miller had said he would be up shortly. So it wasn't worry about Tom's condition that gave him such a sinking feeling. He felt strangely selfish, as he entered the shabby room and met Tom's bleak eyes. He, Russell, had so much. Tom, so little.

"Yes, he's dead," said Tom brusquely, his eyes hard but Russell sensed the grief that the curt manner concealed. To have a dog and watched him grow from a fat puppy into a real sure enough hound, a one man dog who cared mostly for his master, and then to lose him.

"It's hard luck, old man," agreed Russell grimly, "any one who would poison a dog—" he broke off, unable to adequately express his opinion.

"I'll not try to get well. No use. How can I get along without Don—" the young voice with its poignant tones of regret paused and, across the white face flashed a look of amazement.

Russell, standing by in uneasy sympathy, looked down at the narrow bed to see what was happening.

Chuck had leaped up and was licking the invalid's hand, his pink tongue making quick, loving darts as though trying to express his sympathy he could not voice.

"What a fine pup. An airdale is a one-man dog, too. Why Russell, you didn't—you couldn't—of course he's your dog? The one you were selling papers to buy."

There was a question in the weak voice that wrung the guest's heart. A tone of incredulous hope that only a genuine lover of dogs could comprehend.

The little girl, Nina, had wiped away her tears with a smudgy hand and now stood staring at the two boys. There was no hope in her wide blue eyes, only entreaty. She didn't believe that any one who owned Chuck could give him up. Gently she patted the wiry hair and put her fingers within range of the pink tongue. Chuck did not, however, lick her grimy little paw. He continued his occupation of comforting the invalid.

Gradually the hope vanished from Tom's face and he sighed: "Would you mind taking the pup away, Russell, I believe," he cleared his throat with a brave attempt to speak casually, "that I'll sleep a bit."

At the words the spell that kept Russell silent was broken. If he, Russell, could not bear the thought of losing a dog he had owned only a few minutes how could Tom stand losing his companion of years. Tom could not earn anything for some time and, when he could, that extra money must go for the house-keeping.

"Yes," he said at last, "try and sleep a bit, it will do you good. About the pup, though, he's for you."

And, as though Chuck knew and realized the sacrifice, he uttered a joyous little bark and snuggled down beside Tom, his soft, bright eyes fastened lovingly on Russell.

"You don't mean—it can't be true. Why, Russell, you've sold papers so long, your mother would never let you have a dog before—" "I'm keeping my paper-route, it's rather fun, you know. I—" for an instant Russell paused, if only Chuck would not look so wholly desirable. "I shall be looking about for another dog after awhile. I'm pretty busy just now."

The street seemed unduly wide—too wide—as Russell went home but there was no regret in his heart. Rather a triumphant sense of having found himself. He squared his shoulders, it was good to be able to earn and have the power to bring such radiance to another boy's face as he had seen flash across Tom's. He would be good to Chuck.

THE STORY OF CHRIST

BY GIOVANNI PAPINI Copyright, 1924, by Harcourt, Brace & Company Inc. Published by arrangement with The McClure Newspaper Syndicate

THE NARROW GATE

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in that way: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Those who will try to enter will fail, because the master of the house, when he has shut his door, will no longer recognize any one.

Until the great day, until it is too late, "Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." Even hard, slothful, obstinate men give way to persistent entreaty. If even men are not always insensible to pleading, how much surer will be the response from a Father who loves us?

A man at midnight knocks at the door of a friend and wakens him. Through the door he says to him, "Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him." But the other, still half asleep, replies, "Trouble me not; for I am tired, and I do not wish to arise. And here in my bed I have my children who are asleep and if I get up I will wake them and chill them." But the other will not give up, and knocks again on the door and raises his voice and begs with clasped hands that the other one will do him this service, for he has no other friends near, and the hour is late and his guest hungry and waiting for him. And he storms so at the door that his friend gets out of bed and lets him come in and gives him as many loaves as he needs. The friend was weak, but good-hearted. And even the bad hearted do as he does.

There was in a certain city a judge who cared for no one, a morose and scornful man who wanted to do everything as it suited him best. A widow went every day before him and asked for justice, and although her cause was just the judge always sent her away and would not do what she wished. But the widow patiently endured all his repulses and did not weary in her importunity. And finally the judge to get rid of this woman who wore him out with her supplications, pleadings, and prayers, gave the sentence and sent her in peace.

But no more must be asked than can be expected. He who has accomplished his task will eat and drink but will not have any special place of honor, nor will he be better served than his brother, and certainly not so well as his superior. When the servant, having been in the field sowing or pasturing the cattle, comes back to the house, the master does not call him to eat at his own table, but first is served himself and afterwards gives the servant the meal which is due him. This is a Parable which Jesus meant for His Apostles, who were already disputing about who would have the highest place in the Kingdom.

Doth he think that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which were commanded you, say: We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."

The only thing which counts is the actual doing. There are those who say "yes" to orders but who after this do nothing. Such men shall be condemned more severely than those who refused openly and then afterwards, repentant, obeyed. A father had two sons and said to the older: "Son, go work today in my vineyard." And the son answered, "I go, sir," but instead of going to work in the vineyard he lay down in the shade to sleep. And the father said to the second: "Go too and work with your brother." But the son answered, "No, today I wish to rest because I am not well."

But later, thinking of the old man who could not do the work himself, any longer, he took back his refusal, overcame his indolence and went to the vineyard and worked with a will till evening.

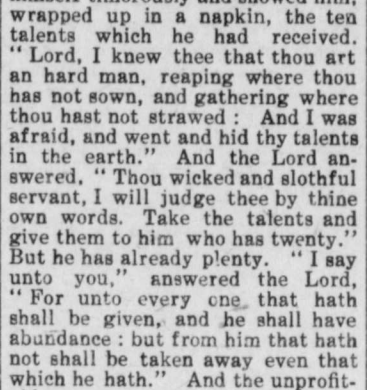
To listen to the word of the Kingdom is not enough. To consent verbally and to live just as before, without effort to change the heart, is less than nothing. Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like; He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock, and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great."

The same teaching is in the Parable of the Sowing. "A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it, and some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up and bare fruit a hundredfold." This is the Parable which the Twelve were

incapable of understanding. Jesus was obliged to explain it Himself. The seed is the Word of God. Those by the wayside are they that hear, then cometh Satan and taketh the Word out of their hearts lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they which when they hear receive the Word with joy, and these have no root which for a while believe and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they which when they have heard go forth and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart having heard the Word keep it and bring forth fruit with patience. But it is not enough to hear it merely, to understand it, to practice it. He who has received it should not keep it to himself. Who is the man who having a lamp hides it under the bed or covers it with a vessel? The light should stand high in the center of the room that they which enter in may see it and be lighted.

A Lord traveling into a far country left to each of his servants ten talents with the understanding that they should use the money to good purpose. And when he came back he reckoned with them. And the first delivered to him twenty talents, because with the first ten he had earned ten other talents. And the Lord made him steward over all his goods. And the second delivered him fifteen talents, for he had not been able to earn more than five more. But the third presented himself timorously and showed him, wrapped up in a napkin, the ten talents which he had received. "Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talents in the earth." And the Lord answered, "Thou wicked and slothful servant, I will judge thee by thine own words. Take the talents and give them to him who has twenty." But he has already plenty. "I say unto you," answered the Lord, "For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." And the unprofitable servant was cast into outer darkness, where there was weeping and gnashing of teeth. He who has received the Word ought to double his wealth. He has received so great a treasure that if he leaves it useless, he deserves to have it taken away from him. From him who does not add to it shall be taken away even that which he has, and unto him who has doubled his treasures shall be given even more. Those who do not use the treasure of the Word are not poverty-stricken men who need gifts because they are destitute, but faithless and slothful husbandmen, to whom was entrusted the most fruitful field in all the universe. Happy the steward whom the Master shall find attentive to act justly and to give to all their rightful part of the harvest. But if the steward begins to oppress the serving men and women and thinks only of eating and getting drunk he will be scourged and punished when the Master returns, just punishment for the faithless!

The servant who does not know what the Master wishes done, and so, not knowing, does not carry out His wishes, shall be less punished than he who knew, and still does the contrary, for he shall be driven out of the house where he gave orders. The bearers of the Word have no excuse if they are not the first to obey God's wishes. From him to whom much was given, much shall be required.



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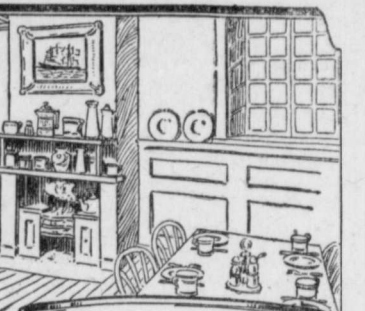
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