

The Home Circle.

THE LABORER'S COMPLAINT.

Written for the Ontario Workman.

My heart is sick; I see such waste of time—
Time unimproved and lost to every good.
Men in their folly seem to think and say—
As other men have fallen I shall not fall,
I shall not stumble—tools only lose their way;
I see the landmark and I know the road,
I carefully have scanned the chart of life,
And know the path to wealth and happiness.
Give me but riches and all else is sure—
Lands, houses and barns, my whole desire,
Orchards and meadows, and the lowing herd—
To greet my gaze, when out at early morn
I wander to behold the beauties of the summer.
All these are mine by sharpest wisdom gained.
While others slept I labored on with might,
I counted not my dollars, but hoarded every cent,
And steadily my flocks and wealth increased.
And in the city, houses, terraces and blocks,
For those who are not able, and have not
The means to build and furnish for themselves;
On these I charge a small percentage, say from ten
To fifty—thus I generously provide houses
And homes, for persons not so clever as myself,
Who thankfully consent to pay my taxes,
Make repairs, and pay my rents beside,
For what have they to do with equal rights,
They who in poverty were born and nursed;
What right have they to look for competence?
Hewers of wood and drawers of water to such as me,
I to order, they to obey and do my bidding,
They seek no higher glory in this world,
Than, hat in hand, fulfilling my behests,
Anticipating every wish, look, gesture.
My farms are many and my hirelings legion;
I send my menials forth to fields and woods,
And from the plough, the sickle and the scythe
My wealth comes pouring in apace.
With best advantage to myself I rent my lands,
All tenants need is labor and the coarsest food,
And nothing more. What need have they to learn?
Or why should they the use of figures know,
And learn the secret way to wealth and happiness?
And thus be independent of my means.
My goods are much increased, my barns too small,
Become. I must not waste my goods,
What shall I do?
I am resolved to tear down all my barns,
And substitute much larger in their stead,
And when my goods are safely stowed away,
Then calmly to my soul will safely say—
Soul, thou hast much goods laid in store
For many years; eat, drink, take thine ease;
Of others take no thought—be happy in thyself—
Eat, drink and be merry!
But hark! methought I heard a voice:
"Thou fool."
I must have dreamt—I did not hear correct,
Surely none dare say "thou fool" to me,
I who have proved my wisdom by my acts,
And wealth have gained, and honor and a name;
Who gave the poor man all he ought to seek,
My cast off clothes to cover him, and bread to eat,
For which he cleaned my shoes, and tended flocks and herds,
And held my horses in the street on holy Sabbath day,
While I into the sanctuary went to thank the Lord,
That I am not as other men.
But he who built this wondrous universe, and counted
All the stars that shine and twinkle in the heavens,
Who said "Let there be light," and in majestic beauty,
That glorious orb of light, the sun, arose in splendor,
And lighted all this universe of God;
He who caused the vapors to ascend,
And watered mountains and the thirsty earth,
And brought abundant vegetation forth,
And bounteously supplied the wants of all,
Who feeds the lion and her whelps with meat,
And the young ravens when for food they cry;
But God the Father said to him, "Thou fool,
This night thy soul shall be required of thee,
Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided;
The life is more than meat and the body more
Than raiment, which of you can with
Talking that, add one cubit to his stature."
Thus unregenerated man goes on and proves
How seldom are his thoughts on heavenly things
Employed, and how he strives to reach what none have gained,
And none can ever gain by worldliness of mind,
Sweating and toiling by digging in the earth,
Or treasuring the ocean's might deep with care,
In search of riches soon to take their flight;
And though he gains his horses and his lands,
And money, and his flocks and herds increase,
Though fools may flatter him and hypocrites applaud,
Yet at the last it shall be said to him—
"Thou fool."
F. J. S.
St. Catharines, March 12, 1873.
I find it a very hard thing to undergo misfortune; but to be content with a competent measure of fortune, and to avoid greatness, I think a very easy matter.

A MADAGASCAR PARABLE.

A missionary in the island of Madagascar thus writes:—
The following story was related to me by a Sakalava here at Vohimare, a regular attendant on our services. Since then he has been baptized, and is now aiding me in preaching the Gospel to his fellow-countrymen. My informant told me that his ancestors, in instructing their children, used often to relate it.
Now for the story or parable:
Once upon a time there were two friends, the one put his confidence in God, the other in man. One day, in conversation, the one said to the other—
"Friend, in whom do you confide to aid you, and help to feed and clothe you?"
"God," replied the other, "is my hope in everything."
Again he was asked—
"But, friend, supposing you went on a journey, would you trust in God to send you food to eat?"
"Certainly," replied the other, "the God in whom I trust is able to feed me."
"Ah!" responded the questioner, "in all my wanderings, my confidence is in people like myself."
Each holding his opinion, they set out together on a journey to a distant part of the country.
Arriving at a certain village, the people asked them their kabary or business. The man who trusted in his fellows, and whom we shall call Mr. Trust-in-man, promptly replied—
"My friend here trusts in God to feed him wherever he may go, but I place my confidence in my fellow-men."
The villagers, having consulted together, said—
"Let them both live in the same house, in order that we may see the God who will feed the one who trusts in Him."
As soon as food had been prepared, the head man of the village sent a servant to call Mr. Trust-in-man, but ordered him not to invite the other.
"Let the God in whom he trusts," they said, "give him food."
The orders given to the servant were—
"We invite you who trust in men like yourself, to come and dine with us."
Off went the servant, but on arriving at the house where the strangers dwelt, his words were changed and he said—
"You who trust in God, we invite you to dine with us."
So off went Mr. Trust-in-God—as we shall call him—with the messenger.
As soon as dinner had been finished, and the guest had taken his departure, the people were angry with the messenger, and said—
"Why did you call Mr. Trust-in-God, instead of the other?"
The next time food was prepared, they sent another person, charging him to follow implicitly the words of their message. As soon as he had left the house, fearing he should forget the words, he repeated them to himself—
"Mr. Trust-in-man, we invite you to dine with us."
But as soon as he had reached the door, his words were changed again, and he said—
"Mr. Trust-in-God, we invite you to dine with us."
Mr. Trust-in-God having finished his meal and taken his departure, the villagers were furious with the messenger for having invited the wrong person. Poor Mr. Trust-in-man, being by this time almost famished with hunger, was obliged to cook something for himself. Thinking that matters would not change in this village, they set out for another; but the same thing happened here as in the former, and so in every village they visited.
At last Mr. Trust-in-man, feeling that he was being worsted in the conflict, said to his friend—
"Let us take the matter before the king."
Mr. Trust-in-God having agreed to this they came before the king. On entering the king's presence, his majesty demanded their business. Mr. Trust-in-man spoke, and said—
"I put my trust, your majesty, in men like myself, while my friend here trusts in God, whom he has never seen; neither has he confidence in you, O king. This, our controversy, we have brought before all the wise men, and they not being able to decide it, we have brought the matter before your majesty."
"That which all my wise men have failed to settle," said the king, "how can I hope to decide? for I reign not alone, these men having been called to the throne."
His majesty, however, ordered food to be prepared for them both; and when they had eaten sent them away, giving them each a lamb or cloth, one green and the other white. On the way, the one who had the white lamb said to the one with the green—
"Let us exchange lambs, as my wife is fond of green."
"Oh, if that be the case," said Mr. Trust-in-God, "your wife can have this one."
So they exchanged then and there.
Shortly after they had left the king called his executioners, and ordered them to follow the two men, and kill the one with the green lamb.
"For," said the king, "he trusts only in God, and has no confidence in men."
The executioners set off, and overtaking the two men, laid hold of the one with the green lamb, and killed him on the spot, taking his lamb to the king to show that his will had been accomplished.

Mr. Trust-in-God then resumed his journey alone, and having reached his wife and family in safety, related to them God's providence toward him.
"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his aim, and whose heart departeth from the Lord."
HAPPINESS—WHAT IT IS, AND WHAT IT IS NOT.
Plato declared happiness to consist in the contemplation of abstract ideas of beauty and excellence. This may be a good definition of the word, as understood by men with such minds as this great philosopher had, but it would apply to but few persons. Indeed, nine-tenths of the race would be miserable in any such pursuit, or mental occupation. A young lady defined happiness to consist in the possession of a true and beautiful lover, and no doubt she spoke the truth as far as she could speak it; but her grandmother at seventy would give quite another definition. To her it would consist in the contemplation of a well-spent life, and the hope of joy in the world to come. The truth is, each individual will define happiness in his own way. One man finds it in the pursuit of wealth, another in the pursuit of culture, another in the possession of religion. The philanthropist finds it in doing good. The hungry man seeks it in food; the cold man in warmth and shelter, the man of poverty seeks it in wealth. Probably, however, perfect health is the fountain source of more happiness than any other. With a good digestion, tough skin, and a sound mind in a splendid body, who could not be happy? There are probably more happy men and women than unhappy ones, more joy than sorrow.
Many people think they are unhappy when they are not. Real unhappiness cannot exist without a cause. It is a shame and a disgrace to complain of being unhappy when we are only lazy and unoccupied. Such people are like the fox who had a deep wound somewhere on his body, but he could not tell where. Let them be ashamed to own it, unless they can show good reason.
Happiness consists in loving and being loved. There is enough to love in the world, but to be loved we must deserve it. We may be admired for our beauty or talent, courted for our influence or wealth, but we can only be loved as we are good. Therefore, happiness consists in goodness. The sacred writer had it right when he said, "The kingdom of heaven is within you."
NEATNESS.
In its essence, and purely for its own sake, neatness is found in a few. Many a man is neat for appearance sake; there is an instinctive feeling that there is power in it. When a man consults a physician for the first time, or comes to rent a house or borrow money, he will come in his best dress; a lady will call in her carriage. A man who means business and honesty comes as he is, just as you will find him in his store, his shop, his counting-house. The most accomplished gamblers dress well; the most enterprising swindlers are faultlessly clothed; but countless multitudes are but white washed sepulchres. Too many "don't care, as long as it will not be seen." Washington Allston, the great artist, the accomplished gentleman, suddenly left his friend standing at the door of a splendid Boston mansion as they were about entering for a party, because he had just remembered that he had a hole in his stocking. It could not be seen or known, but the very knowledge of its existence made him feel that he was less a man than he ought to be, gave him a feeling of inferiority.
As persons are less careful of personal cleanliness and tidy apparel, they are infallibly and necessarily less of the angel, more of the animal; more under the domination of passion, less under the influence of principle. Said a poor servant girl: "I can't explain what change religion has made in me, but I look more closely under the mat, when I sweep than I used to." Intelligence, cultivation, elevation, give purity of body as well as purity of sense and sentiment.
Where you see a neat, tidy, cheerful dwelling, there you will find a joyous, loving, happy family. But if silt and squalor, and a disregard for refining delicacies of life prevail in any household, there will be found in the moral character of the inmates much that is low, degrading, unprincipled, vicious and disgusting. Therefore, as we grow in years, we ought to watch eagerly against neglect of cleanliness in person, and tidiness in dress.—Hall's Journal of Health.
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At an examination of the College of Surgeons, a candidate was asked by Abernethy: "What would you do if a man were blown up with gunpowder?" "Wait until he came down," he coolly replied.—"True," replied Abernethy. "And suppose I should kick you for such an impertinent reply, what muscles should I put in motion?"—"The flexors and extensors of my arm, for I should knock you down immediately." The candidate received his diploma.

NO CHANGE.

Some days ago a man accustomed to travel, and one who understands how to get how out of a tight place, took the train at Detroit for this city. His pocket-book was pretty flat—nothing in it to defray expenses for some days to come but a ten dollar bill. He must keep moving, or else he would find himself bankrupt in a strange city. Standing in the depot and looking at the train which was about leaving, his eye fell on the placard, "This car to Rochester without change." An idea which never occurred to him before, although he had seen a like piece of pasteboard a thousand times, came into his head. He stepped on board the car, took a seat and sustained himself in a most dignified position. The signal was given for the train to start. Out of the depot it passed in a few moments, along the suburbs of the city, and then the conductor announced his appearance by the word "Tickets." Passengers began fumbling for their little pieces of paper, or overhauling their wallets for their fare. Our dignified passenger never made a move. The conductor approached, and said shortly and quickly, "Tickets!" No attention was given by the cool passenger.
Conductor, with a sharp look—Your ticket, sir.
Cool gentleman—Have none.
Con.—Then I'll take your fare.
Cool gent.—Can't pay it.
Con.—Do you expect to ride without paying for it?
Cool gent.—Yes, sir.
Con.—Tell me why.
Cool gent.—Your advertisement says so.
Con.—Where?
Cool gent.—That placard on the car says, "This train to Rochester without change."
The conductor, with a look of astonishment at the individual's assurance and cheek, passed him by with a smile, thinking to himself, "This is a new wrinkle in the confidence dodge."
ARTEMUS WARD.
No more amusing anecdote is told of Artemus Ward than the following:
One day while traveling in the cars, and feeling miserable, and dreading to be bored by strangers, a man took a seat beside him and presently said:
"Did you hear the last thing on Horace Greely?"
"Greely? Greely?" said Artemus. "Horace Greely? Who is he?"
The man was quiet about five minutes.
"George Francis Train is kicking up a good deal of a row over in England. Do you think they will put him in a Bastille?"
"Train? Train?—George Francis Train?" said Artemus, solemnly, "I never heard of him."
This ignorance kept the man quiet for fifteen minutes; then he said,
"What do you think about General Grant's chances for the Presidency? Do you think they will run him?"
"Grant? Grant? Hang it, man," said Artemus, "you appear to know more strangers than any man I ever saw."
The man was furious; he walked up the car, but at last came back and said,
"You confounded ignoramus, did you ever hear of Adam?"
Artemus looked up and said, "What was his other name?"
Sawdust and Chips.
Intelligent Boy: "Pa, I'm sorry you've got the 'Fluenza'!"—Papa: "Why, Laddie?" Boy: "Cause I might catch it, you know!"
There is a man down our way so fond of money, that it is said, after paying a man's bill, he walks down home with him, so as to be near the money as long as possible.
"Is that marble?" said a gentleman, pointing to the bust of Kentucky's great statesman, recently, in a New York store. "No, sir, that's Clay," quietly replied the dealer.
A bluff old farmer declined the other day to take a sandwich with a friend at a refreshment buffet. Not for him! He had observed that the young ladies behind the bar positively handled 'em with a pair of tongs!
A gallant was sitting behind his beloved, and being unable to think of anything else to say, asked her why she was like a tailor. "I don't know," said she, with a pouting lip, "unless it is because I'm sitting beside a goose."
Here we have a good example of French wit: A doctor, like everybody else at this season, went out for a day's sport, and complained of having killed nothing. "That's the consequence of having neglected your business," observed his wife.
Lawyer: "How do you identify the handkerchief?"—Witness: "By its general appearance, and the fact that I have others like it."
Lawyer: "That's no proof, for I have one just like it in my pocket."—Witness: "I don't doubt that. I had more than one of the same sort stolen."
"If you had avoided rum," said a wealthy though not intelligent grocer to his intemperate neighbor, "your early habits, industry and intellectual abilities would have permitted you to ride in your carriage." "And if you had never sold rum for me to buy," replied the

bacchanal, "you would have never been my briber."
"Are you going to make a flower-bed here, Judkins?" asked a young lady of the gardener. "Yes, mum, them's the horders," answered the gardener. "Why it will quite spoil our croquet ground." "Can't help it, mum, them's your pa's horders; he says as 'ow to hev it laid out for 'orticultural, not for 'asbandry."
A Quaker gentleman, riding in a carriage with a fashionable lady decked with a profusion of jewellery, heard her complain of the cold. Shivering in her lace bonnet and shawl as light as a coloweb, she exclaimed, "What shall I do to get warm?" "I really don't know," replied the Quaker, solemnly, "unless thee should put on another breastpin!"
While a vendor of greens in Boston was endeavoring to dispose of his stock in trade his poor old nag balked and refused to budge an inch. The driver finally commenced belaboring the animal with a stick, when an old lady thrust her head out of a window and exclaimed: "Have you no mercy?" "No, ma'am," replied the pedlar; "nothin' but greens."
In a letter to his friends at home, an intelligent foreigner states that "when a great man dies in the United States, the first thing done is to propose a fine statue in his honor; next, to raise part of the necessary money; next, to forget to order any statue, and last, to wonder what became of the money." The remark shows close observation and clear judgment.
In a night school, the teacher was trying to make his class understand the meaning of subtraction, and, to illustrate his subject, said, "Supposing a farmer had four hundred sheep, and he sold fifty of them, by what process would he understand how many he had left? What would he do?"—A raw-boned lad of seventeen replied, as soon as he caught the teacher's eye, "Ask the shuppard, sir."
Dean Alford tells of a Scotch lad in a military school who went up with a drawing of Venice, which he had just finished, to show it to the master. Observing that he had printed the name under it with two "n's" ("Vennice"), the master said: "Don't you know that there's only one 'hen' in Venice?" "Only one hen in Venice!" exclaimed young Sandy with astonishment; "I'm thinking they'll no hae many eggs then."
An inhabitant of a suburban town, after spending a convivial evening was discovered among the carrots and cabbages of his humble garden wrapped in slumber.—"Well, Bill," said an admiring friend, as he shook the prostrate youth, "What are you doing here!"—"Watching for a hen that's stole her nest," was the sententious answer.—"But what are your eyes shut for, Bill?"—"Don't want the old hen to see me," gruffly replied the sleeping philosopher.
A sailor on one occasion applied to a sea-captain for relief for cramp in his stomach. The captain had a household medical book, with the diseases and remedies each numbered. He found the sailor's complaint under No. 15, and prescribed the medicine. Unfortunately, however, there was a run upon No. 15, and the bottle was soon empty. But the skipper made up a dose by combining Nos. 8 and 7, saying "8 and 7 make 15;" and the sailor, to whom the calculation seemed quite natural, felt for a week afterward as if he wanted to die and be out of his misery.
A paper tells us this story, for the truth of which it vouches:—"A professional gentleman, well known in this district, had not seen his son for a long period of time, owing to the fact that the latter had retired to bed ere the former returned home, and in the morning the father always left before the son got out of bed. One morning the lady of the house managed to get the father and son together at the breakfast table, and by way of a joke, remarked, 'Son, let me introduce you to your father.' 'How do you do, father?' said the hopeful; 'I don't remember ever having met you before, but I have heard ma speak of you.'"
MISSING.—An eminent judge used to say that in his opinion, the very best thing ever said by a witness to a counsel was the reply given to Missing, the well-known barrister, at the time leader of his circuit. He was defending a prisoner charged with stealing a donkey. The prosecutor had left the animal tied up to a gate, and when he returned it was gone. Missing was very severe in his examination of the witness. "Do you mean to say, witness, the donkey was stolen from the gate?"—"I mean to say, sir," giving the judge and then the jury a sly look, at the same time pointing to the counsel, "the ass was Missing."

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