

ing, 'The very happiest Thanksgiving of our lives, isn't it, John?'

'Indeed it is, and under God we owe it all to Nathan,' answered her husband, reverently.

Preparing for Success.

Nothing worth while is easily attained. The best results are the culmination of long processes. Two weeks ago we passed by an orchard that had been touched by the quickening breath of spring. Every spray held out a profusion of fragrant bloom. The orchard hung a white and pink cloud of marvellous beauty over the earth. A week before we passed by the same spot and the trees stood out against the sky gaunt and bare and gray. What a sudden transformation! Yet it was not sudden. Through all the dreary days of autumn, through all the bleak months of winter, through all the balmy days of the opening springtime, nature was busy making preparation for that hour of splendor. Silently and secretly and carefully, she wrought for the time of revelation.

That is a parable of life. No man blossoms into influence or honor or goodness all at once. There must be the preliminary deepening of the roots to seize great principles, there must be a reaching upward to things noble and true, there must be a branching outward of sympathy and thought, before the bloom and fruit are possible. Young people are apt to grow impatient because they do not win the battle at one stroke, because success does not come dancing to meet them when they choose to call. But the things most worth having are not caught in the swift chase of a few days. The sun, moon, and stars did not do obeisance to Joseph all at once. He had to pass through many a trial, he had to vanquish many a temptation, he had to overcome many a difficulty before his dream became a reality. Promotion does not come on swift wings, but often on leaden feet. The truest success, like the choicest fruits, requires much preparation. Make yourself worthy of the place you seek by earnest study and persevering effort, and the place will seek you by and by.

There is a tradition of a manufacturing firm in Scotland that carries its own lesson. Thirty years ago, a barefooted, ragged urchin presented himself before the desk of the principal partner and asked for work as an errand boy.

'There's a deal o' running to be dune,' said Mr. Blank, jestingly affecting a broad Scotch accent. 'Your qualification wud be a pair o' shoon.'

The boy, with a grave nod, disappeared. He lived by doing odd jobs in the market, and slept under one of the stalls. Two months passed before he had saved enough money to buy the shoes. Then he presented himself before Mr. Blank one morning, and held out a package.

'I have the shoon, sir,' he said, quietly.

'Oh!' Mr. Blank with difficulty recalled the circumstances. 'You want a place? Not in those rags, my lad. You would disgrace this house.'

The boy hesitated a moment, and then went out without a word. Six months passed before he returned, decently clothed in coarse but new garments. Mr. Blank's interest was aroused. For the first time he looked at the boy attentively. His thin, bloodless face showed that he had stinted himself of food for months in order to buy clothes. The manufacturer now questioned the boy carefully, and found to his regret that he could neither read nor write.

'It is necessary that you should do both

before we could employ you in carrying home packages,' he said. 'We have no place for you.'

The lad's face grew paler; but, without a word of complaint, he disappeared. He now went fifteen miles into the country near to a night school. At the end of the year he again presented himself before Mr. Blank.

'I can read and write,' he said, briefly.

'I gave him the place,' the employer said, years afterward, 'with the conviction that, in process of time, he would take mine, if he made up his mind to do it. Men rise slowly in Scotch business houses, but he is our chief foreman.'—*Endeavor Banner.*

His First Funeral Service.

(K. M., in 'Westminster'.)

One bright day in July, away in the western part of Ontario—so far west that Manitobans find it hard to believe that it does not belong to them—on one of the many rivers of this district, the little tug 'Ursula' was getting ready to tow one of the larger boats over the rapids. The men, as usual, were busy and happy, full of that free, careless happiness only found in the West. All but the engineer, and his heart carried a great burden, for Archie had heard that his baby was sick, his baby boy, four months old. But though love urged him to hurry home to his babe and his young wife, duty demanded his presence at his post. His home lay nine miles away through the woods. Whom could he ask to go with medicine for the wee sufferer?

Down to the boat came the one man whom he could ask, the young missionary, with his bright, happy face, and merry words of greeting for all. But the face grew grave and earnest, and Archie's trouble very soon became his.

The man on the river would tell you that their missionary was 'just a young fellow about twenty-one.' But he is, in spite of his bright, boyish face, almost the age of his Master when he began his ministry among men. One who needs the help and sympathy of a strong man, find both in him. Archie knew that his sympathy was genuine when with an off-hand 'That's nothing' in response to the words of thanks, he started on his nine-mile tramp.

Arriving at the house, the missionary found the mother worn out, not so much with fatigue, as with that awful anxiety and heartache that make a mother old before her time. Thankful, indeed, was she to give her suffering babe into the strong arms of the young missionary. All night long he held the little one striving to give him ease in his pain, and when morning came was rewarded by seeing a look of rest on the baby face. Then saying good-bye to the grateful mother, promising to call on Sunday if she was not at service, he went off to visit among his people—happy that he had been able to help some one.

Sabbath day in this part of the world is certainly no day of rest for the missionary, with three sermons to preach and a nine-mile walk between each preaching place.

As the missionary came within a mile of Archie's home he heard the baby had died, and they were waiting for him to bury it. Dead! A funeral! He had not even read through the burial service, that lay in his trunk miles away. An older minister might have thought of the possibility of having to bury the dead, as well as preach to the living, but the young man thought only of the living, for death had not met him before in his field. What could he do? Pray for help—and hurry on.

About fifty people were gathered at the house awaiting his arrival. Silently he shook hands with the mother; with Archie, bidding him bear up for his wife's sake; looked at the little one, sleeping so peacefully, then began the service. Began—but what could he say? What words of comfort, of hope? Ah, but the heart of sympathy can soon prepare such a funeral sermon, when one relies on the God of sympathy himself.

Taking from his breast pocket his little bible—the faithful companion on all his journeys—he read a part of John xiv., and I Cor., xv., those grand old chapters, that ever contain the balm and comfort for broken hearts. A hymn was sung, a few words spoken about the Resurrection, then the missionary led in prayer, striving to bring them all to the feet of the Lord, to understand that an all-wise Father had sent this sorrow. But even to him it seemed hard to understand. What wonder if his voice trembled in spite of himself? Had he not a few days before watched over the wee babe by the hour? Had he not toiled for him and prayed so earnestly for his recovery; and was his heart not aching for the young mother and father before him?

The simple service done, they started for the burial ground five miles away, and over an awful road. Nothing but carts and waggons were in that procession, and many walked. The mother wished to go also.

They placed the body gently in the ground. Such a rough-looking, lonely spot it is, and this is the first grave. A fire had swept through, and no green trees are left. Two tall poplars, sixty feet high, stand beside the grave, but they are dead.

Hard enough to leave one's treasure in the cool, sweet churchyard, with the green trees above, and the grass and flowers growing about the grave. But what token of the Resurrection was here given to that young mother and father, as they leave their darling, their first-born son, alone, the first to sleep in that lonely spot?

It will now be cleared, for is it not in truth God's acre; consecrated ground. One of the little ones of Christ's kingdom has made it a sacred spot. Many others, old and young, will, doubtless, come to sleep here, but, verily, a little child shall lead them.

The service here was very impressive. What if there were no burial service read? The missionary meant what he said; right from his heart.

Poor Archie! When the grave was finished, the last stroke given, he said, in a voice which he strove to keep firm, 'Thank you. I thank you all, friends, for your kindness in coming.'

Then with silent and submissive hearts they turned away, and left the child with God.

Onward, Christian Soldiers.

In an interesting review reported in 'The Methodist Recorder,' Mr. Baring-Gould was asked, 'What was the origin of your great hymn, 'Onward, Christian Soldiers?'' 'I'll tell you that,' he replied. 'When I was a curate, I had charge of a mission at Horbury, one mile from Wakefield, and one Whitsuntide my vicar wanted me to bring all the Sunday-school children up to the mother church for a great festival. "Well," I thought, "there's that mile to tramp, what shall I do with them on the way?" All of a sudden it struck me, "I'll write them a hymn." And I did. It was all done in about ten minutes. I set it to one of Haydn's tunes, and the children sang it on the way to church. I thought no more about it, and expected the hymn would be no more heard of.'