

Choice Literature.

BOB AND HIS TEACHERS.

A GLASGOW STORY.

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CHAPTER XXXII.

BOB GROWING WEALTHY—HIS THRIFT AND PATIENT CONTINUANCE IN WELLDOING.

Warren Hastings belonged to a noble English family—a family that filled a great space in the public eye in the days of Oliver Cromwell, but like many in those revolutionary days they came to grief and lost their all.

Warren was born poor; he was sent to the neighbouring village school where he learned his first lesson in company with the peasant boys of the place; but no misfortune could damp the ardour of the brave young spirit on whom this shadow had fallen, or quench the ambition of one destined by heaven to rule. He loved to hear the story of his ancestors—their valour on the field and their services in the Senate; and one day, when little over seven years of age, he laid himself down on the bank of the stream that ran through those ancestral domains and said to himself: Is it not possible for me to recover all these houses and lands that once belonged to the family? By the help of God they shall be recovered, and seventy years from that time he did recover them and entered upon their possession!

"By the help of God I will." That was the resolution to which Warren Hastings came on that memorable occasion and he never lost sight of it. He entered the army, rose in the service, rose like a star, rose till he became Governor General of India and the ruler of two hundred millions. His income was immense and his gains from many sources were boundless. He had no difficulty in paying the lordly owner of the estate his price and settling down without a cent of debt.

Something like this seemed to be the secret of Bob's industry and great success in the work to which he had given himself. He and his mother had all along occupied a very humble position in life; but that had not been the case with all his ancestry as I gathered from certain memoranda in that old Bible over which his mother so often pondered. It appears that that Bible was originally the possession of her great grandfather, a gentleman that once held a high position in the royal navy and whose descendants took to the water as naturally as young ducks. The Bible had come into the hands of Bob's father as an heirloom and so was prized on that account as well as for its great treasures.

Now the question which I have often raised in my own mind is: Was Bob actuated with some such resolution as that of Warren Hastings? Did he really mean to raise the fallen fortunes of his family and win for himself a place equal to any of his kith or kin that had gone before? He had done well for the company whom he served since he had gone to the continent of Europe. He had succeeded in keeping the first place for them in all the great cities, Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Milan, Florence, etc. No chintzes like the Balfours'; no patterns more admired than theirs; and it was a great satisfaction to the young artist to see the fine ladies in the afternoons in those great cities arrayed in dresses the designs of which he had himself devised.

The profits of the company were immense though their expenses were great. Bob's income had been doubled and his prospects could not be brighter. It was easy for him to save money now without the least appearance of parsimony. His private expenditure was very moderate for his manner of life was extremely simple as might be expected from his early training. His mother had taught him thrift and the same lesson had often been presented to him by Miss Carruthers. She did so, she told me, as a means of grace—as a means of building up the character into a true manhood and quickening the pulse of an honourable ambition.

Here is the value of a thrifty habit in a young man—not simply that it saves him from spending needless money as on sweetmeats, cigars, drinks, treats, buggy rides, boat rides, etc., but that it saves him from the scorching fires of temptation or the dry rot of laziness or soft indulgence. There is a thriftiness which degenerates into meanness—a sort of cheeseparing thriftiness which begets contempt; but there is also a thriftiness which is perfectly compatible with all the elements of a manly independence; and not only so but a readiness to give as God has prospered. The man that spends needlessly on himself and has nothing to spare for the claims of Christ and his kingdom is the last man in the world to sneer at another for his godly habit of thriftiness and husbanding well his resources.

Miss Carruthers was right in insisting on the habit of thriftiness as a means of grace. There is a strange fascination which springs up in view of the humble gatherings or savings from one's own efforts. When a young man has saved one hundred dollars out of his earnings he feels that he is able to save another hundred; and when he has secured a small village lot on which he may erect a house some day he is comparatively safe. He has been faithful in little, and the chance is that he will yet stand on a higher plain and prove that he can be faithful in much. It is a pleasure to him to pass by his lot which by and by he fences and plants with the finest trees. He often takes a turn round that way and feels proud in its appearance. It is a pleasure to him to think of the home that he shall yet build and the life he shall yet live there, and so the future to him is golden. Taking a companion along with him he says:—

"Do you know whose lot this is?"

"Yes, it is yours. What are you going to do? Build?"

"Yes, and live there, too."

"Oh, I see! My, but you are a fortunate chap."

"Well, why have you not a lot; your wages are as good as mine?"

"Oh, those cigars, sweetmeats, treats and drinks and presents to friends and—play the mischief with a fellow."

"How much did you spend in that way last year?"

"Can't tell."

"Last month then?"

"Can't tell, too much any way."

"How much last week? Say, last Sunday?"

"Well, two dollars any way."

"That was one item, only one?"

"Yes, only one."

"Well do you think you are any the better, more healthy, more manly, more intellectual, more respectable in the eyes of the world?"

"Oh stop, stop, I get enough of that at home."

"Well I have only this to say that there is too much leakage in that for you to stand long. You are running to waste very fast, and you know it. There is not a ship in the harbour could put to sea or could fight one storm with so many leaks. One big hole in her bottom would not be more fatal, and one great vice like intemperance or unchastity or blasphemy could not be more ruinous to your character."

"Stop, stop, I tell you, I have enough of that at home, I hate such lecturing. I can't put a cigar in my mouth without raising a storm."

"The young man who has learned to say no to such temptations as those adverted to, has made a great step towards manhood. He gains money and that is but a small part of his gains. He gains health and strength and that too is but a small part of his gains. He gains time, many a precious hour that might otherwise be wasted but which he redeems and turns to good account. He builds himself in godly habit, in moral fibre, in a manly sense of honest independence, and lays up a good foundation for the time to come. In all these respects he gains immensely, and so I repeat that the young man who has learned to say no in such hours of danger has taken a great step towards manhood. He is not a milksop ready to take in, and ready to yield to every companion good or bad that may approach him. His mind is made up, his purpose is fixed, his path is plain and along that path he holds on his way 'waxing stronger and stronger.'"

Pat Heenan is an illustration of the virtue of thrift. It was one of the principles which his employers propounded and encouraged among their apprentices to the utmost extent of their power. He passed seven years under this kind of discipline and during those years saved over two hundred dollars besides interest, all which the masters held at his command.

Two hundred dollars and interest? Is that all? No! What are we to say of his gains in other respects? What about the quickening of the pulses of ambition, the cultivation of moral habits, the saving of precious time for useful ends, the enlarged capacity of enjoyment, the purity of his tastes, the delicacy of his affections which resulted in this line of action?

This habit of thrift is good for the individual and good for the nation. There is no country where this habit prevails that is not strong. No fear of bankruptcy there. Take as an example France. During the Franco-German war she contracted a debt of two hundred million sterling. This was the indemnity which she had to pay the conqueror, but such was the thrift of her peasantry that the whole sum could have been paid from their savings alone! One day's expense for strong drink alone on the part of the British Empire would go a long if not the entire way, to evangelize the whole heathen world? There is certainly a dreadful leakage going on of the nation's strength. Who does not know that the waste of time, money, reputation, character, strength, health that takes place on the part of our young men, students, apprentices, clerks, is immense? Who does not see that the temptations which every young man has to face, that is, if he has to face them in his own strength, are all but irresistible and that in yielding—in coming under their power he comes under a burden too heavy to be borne.

Now, from all this Bob was saved by his habit of thrift. He made money, made it fast, but without anyone ever being able justly to charge him with meanness. No one could be more independent, gentlemanly in his deportment, generous in his disposition than he. It was in him, a native thing, and not put on for the nonce. He carried within him a thankful heart, for God had prospered him in all his ways, turned his sorrow into joy, opened up a door of usefulness when his way was hedged up, quickened his spiritual nature and touched his heart with a grace which made all his future golden. He may never have formed for himself any such resolution as that which Warren Hastings did. His ancestors may at one time have been in the possession of houses and lands that had passed away, and the idea may, for aught we know, have haunted him of recovering them and reinstating himself in the position of honour from which he had fallen. This may have been the case, and certainly he was in the fair way to honour and houses and lands; but as to whether he had any distinct, well-shaped purpose of the kind we have no knowledge. But of this we are certain, that there was an inheritance which he sought, which once was his—was ours, but which was lost—"an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, unfading in the heavens reserved for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."

(To be continued.)

THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

THE DUFF LECTURESHIP.

Speaking of the Duff Lectureship, the *Missionary Review* for May says: We give somewhat extended reference to it as it commends itself for imitation in certain advantages in which it stands alone, not to say unrivalled.

This "Duff Lectureship" was founded in 1879 by Mr. William Pirie Duff, in pursuance of the will of his father, Rev. Alexander Duff, D.D., "for the establishment and endowment of a quadrennial course of lectures on some department of foreign missions or cognate subjects. A Board of Trustees was created, consisting of eight leading men, viz.: Baron Polwarth, Rev. William Lindsay Alexander, Principal of the Theological Hall of the Congregational Union of Scotland; William Pirie Duff, Rev. Robert Gordon, of the Free Church; Rev. J. Marshall Lang, D.D., of the Established Church of Scotland; Hugh M. Matheson, Duncan MacNeill, Rev. Andrew Thomson, D.D., United Presbyterian, and their successors, as provided for. Here it will be seen that some of the foremost men of the leading evangelical bodies are put in charge of this Fund, with Mrs. Rebecca J. Duff Watson as consulting member.

It is further provided, That the lecturer shall be a minis-

ter, professor, or godly layman of any evangelical Church and shall hold the said lectureship for four years; That the lecturer shall choose his own theme, subject to the approval of this Board of Trustees, one year before time of delivery; That the lectures, at least six in number, shall be delivered in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and at such other times and places as the trustees may determine, between January and April of the second year of the lecturer's term; That the lecturer shall publish not less than one hundred copies of his lectures within one year following their delivery, to be distributed according to a list furnished by the trustees; and beyond these the published lectures become his own property; Out of the income of this trust fund the trustees first defray all necessary costs not falling to the lecturer to defray; then, on delivery of the course, the net proceeds of two years go to the lecturer; and upon the publication of the lectures he is entitled to the income of the remaining two years.

All other matters connected with the lectureship are left at discretion of this Board of Trustees, who become final judges in every matter pertaining thereto under these provisions. Rev. Thomas Smith, D.D., Dr. Duff's colleague in Calcutta, became the first lecturer, Rev. William Fleming Stevenson, D.D., the second, Sir Monier Williams, the third, and the editor-in-chief of this *Review*, the fourth.

The special features of this lectureship, which seem to us to be unique in their desirableness, are these: It is practically impossible that this trust fund should ever be perverted, abused or wasted; Though undenominational and Catholic in character, the evangelical standing and teaching of the lecturers is assured; Ample time is secured for the preparation and delivery of the course. The lecturer has at least two years from the date of his appointment to get his course ready, and one year more to complete its issue in printed form; Ample provision is made for the expense incidental to such preparation and publication. But one series of lectures is called for, but the lecturer holds his incumbency for a four years' term, during which the net income from the investment inures to his benefit. He is thus enabled to purchase any books, or bear any other needful expense of time and strength incidental to preparation; The repeated delivery in the great centres of population ensures a large and representative hearing, and brings the course before both the educated university students and the popular assemblies; The infrequency of the course allows an opportunity to the trustees to act with deliberation. It would not always be easy to secure for each current year a lecturer who had made the subject of missions a specific study, nor would it be always practicable even for such persons to prepare a special course at short notice.

If any other lectureship of missions has been established whose provisions are equally sagacious and foresighted, and generous, the writer knows not of such; and the details of this Scottish plan are presented somewhat fully in hope that the essential features may be largely and extensively copied in other parts of the Christian world.

BUDDHISM.

Buddhism is not the religion of any independent power on the earth at this hour except Siam, but it is prevalent in all the countries which have come under review in this study. In Bangkok alone there are ten thousand priests who are dependent on the people for daily food. Nowhere are the living force and the deadening influence of Buddhism more felt than in Siam.

We have little disposition and less space to attempt a presentation of Buddhism as a system of belief; but as it is the latest "fad" among a class of persons who dislike Christianity, because of its rigorous demands upon them, to prate about "beautiful Buddhism," we beg to remind our readers of its practical output. It may have tamed barbarians and helped to maintain order and discipline among some peoples, but it has not supported any people in their efforts to recuperate after disaster nor in their endeavours after progress. The mission of Buddhism is not to root out what it holds to be deadly errors, nor to proclaim truths, nor to build up a righteous kingdom. It seeks not to convert but to rescue from delusion and desire; the moral life is not the end but a means; morality is sheer mechanism; the end, the aim is not to be good for the sake of goodness, nor righteous for the sake of righteousness. It aims at no ideal excellence for the sake of the excellence. The realization of the moral idea is a blank which Buddhism cannot fill. Its conception of the kingdom of God is radically other than holiness, or ultimately holiness itself. Buddhism knows no sin, hence it can know no punishment of sin and, of course, it can know no pardon; nor can it know any prayer, nor sacrifice, nor thanksgiving. It has no parable of the prodigal son, or story of "the dying thief," because it has no God, no soul, no Saviour.

Sir Edwin Arnold, author of "The Light of Asia," who has been esteemed a foremost champion of the beauties of the Buddhist legends, and as exalting Buddhism at the expense of Christianity, in a conversation with Rev. Dr. Ashmore, on the *Belgia*, between San Francisco and Yokohama, said: I have been criticized for an implied comparison between Buddhism and Christianity in regard to doctrines derived from them and principles contained in them respectively. No such object was in mind. For me Christianity, rightly viewed, is the crowned queen of religion, immensely superior to every other, and though I am so great an admirer of much that is great in Hindu philosophy and religion, I would not give one verse of the Sermon on the Mount for twenty epic poems like