

WRITING.

ON the wings of proud ambition
We may soar to lofty height,
On the page of worldly honour
But we strive our names to write;
But the blows of adverse fortune,
Soon have dashed them to the ground,
Till of hopes once fondly cherished,
Not a vestige now is found.

Or, with pencil and with paper,
Write our thoughts that men may read,
And with impulse, good or evil,
Sow the seed of evil deed.
Or upon the solid marble
Write our names with skillful hand,
Chisel words that through the ages
Of ensuing years shall stand.

Still we're writing, though unconscious,
Every hour and every day,
And it either helps or hinders,
As we traverse life's rough way.
Every sinful thought we cherish,
Every idle word we say,
Stamps its impress deep and lasting
On the heart, or moulds our clay.

Words are things we seldom measure,
Quickly said, we think they've flown,
For as light as down of thistle,
They to fruitful soil have blown.
But ere death, with ice-cold fingers,
Stops our journey o'er the earth,
They'll return in cruel vengeance,
Pierce the heart that gave them birth.

Of a word so quickly spoken,
Words of proud contempt and scorn,
Like an arrow swift and certain,
Leave its victim bruised and torn.
And some soul that late was striving
Hard, to rise to higher life,
Deeper sinks, from our injustice,
With fresh wrong and conflict rife.

What you've written, "you have written,"
Spend not time in vain regret,
Life was given thee for labour,
(Use it not to pine and fret;
From the ashes of past failures,
Rise to better life and true,
Live, that through succeeding ages,
Angels may write good of you.

—*Delia Rogers.*

HERBERT DEXTER'S ORDEAL.

A LADY entered a large dry-goods store in the city, and inquired for thibet. She was directed to the lower end of the store, where a young clerk awaited her order. He was a boy of fifteen, with a frank, handsome face that inspired instant confidence.

He at once displayed a variety of goods. One particular piece appeared to please the customer.

"Are these colors fast?" She inquired.

Herbert Dexter looked at it carefully.

"I am afraid not," he answered. "A lady came in a day or two since and complained that it had faded."

"Thank you," said the lady. "Then I must look elsewhere, as you have nothing else with a small figure to my taste."

The proprietor of the establishment was near enough to hear this conversation. The lady had scarcely left the store when he advanced toward Herbert, and said harshly, "What made you tell that lady that the cloth would not wash?"

"Because," said Herbert, looking up in surprise, "she asked me."

"Well, you simpleton, why couldn't you tell her it did?"

"Because it wouldn't have been the truth," replied Herbert, simply.

"Then you could at least have told her that you didn't know."

"But I did, sir."

"It seems to me you have a tender conscience," sneered his employer. "Since that is the case, I can't afford to have you here. It won't do to pay

for sending customers away; when your work is out you may leave my employ."

Herbert's heart sunk within him. To him the loss of the situation was a very serious matter. His mother was a poor widow, dependent upon her own exertions for a livelihood, and the three dollars which Herbert brought her weekly was of great consequence to her. He had only been in his place a month, it having been procured by the influence of his Uncle John, a man of property, who might have put his hand into his pocket and assisted his brother's son without feeling it. But John Dexter was not a man of that sort. His money was dearer to him than his nearest friend. He seemed to feel that in obtaining a situation for his nephew in the retail store of Messrs. Smith & Co., he had placed him under a great load of obligation.

In the midst of Herbert's sorrow, he did not for an instant doubt that he had done right, nor would he have acted differently if the opportunity had been given.

Yet it was with a heavy heart that he went home to supper and informed his mother that he had been dismissed from his place.

"I hope you have done nothing to deserve dismissal," said his mother, much disturbed.

Herbert thereupon related his story. "You did right my son," said Mrs. Dexter, emphatically. "The situation was not worth keeping at the expense of truth."

"I am glad you think I did right, mother," said Herbert, "but what shall I do?" he inquired anxiously. "I ought to get another situation immediately."

"Perhaps you'd better call on your Uncle John," suggested Mrs. Dexter. "He will no doubt be able to procure you another situation."

"I'll go to-night, mother," said Herbert, "for there is no time to be lost." Twenty minutes later Herbert rang the bell of a handsome house in a fashionable street in the city.

He was admitted by the servant and ushered into his uncle's presence.

Mr. John Dexter was a dignified looking man, having apparently a high opinion of himself, and comparatively a low opinion of everybody else who chose to come in conflict with him.

"Well, Herbert," said his uncle, patronizingly, "how are you getting on at your place?"

"Not very well, uncle," answered Herbert, rather nervously, for he stood a little in awe of his uncle.

"Not very well," repeated Mr. Dexter, surveying him through his glasses with displeasure. "How does that happen?"

"Mr. Smith expects me to do what I don't think is right."

"I don't understand you."

Hereupon Herbert entered into the explanation with which we are already familiar.

At the conclusion he looked into his uncle's face, and saw that it was unfavorable.

"Would you like to know my opinion of what you have done?" he demanded in tones of displeasure.

"If you please, uncle," faltered Herbert.

"Then I think you have made a fool of yourself. What business have you to frighten away customers? I think your employer did just right. I should have done the same in his place."

"But was it right to deceive the lady?" asked Herbert, perplexed.

"I have no disposition to enter into any discussion on that point," said his uncle, coldly. "The upshot of it all is, that you have lost your situation. How do you expect to get another?"

"I thought perhaps you might interest yourself for me, uncle," said Herbert, his heart sinking within him.

"It's no use to help you," said Mr. Dexter, taking up his paper and beginning to read. "You'd lose the best situation I could procure for you in less than a month. I can't be at the trouble of continually finding situations for one who doesn't choose to keep them."

"Then what shall I do?" exclaimed Herbert, much troubled at his refusal. "You ought to have taken this into consideration before you chose to throw away your place at Smith & Co.'s."

"For my mother's sake, uncle, I hope you will interest yourself for me. I shall be thrown as a burden upon her, and she has to work hard enough as it is."

"Very well, I am sorry. Whatever further privations she is subject to will proceed entirely from your perverseness."

Herbert was too manly to plead further. His uncle's evident injustice made him indignant.

"Very well, sir," said he, rising, "if you choose to deal so harshly with me because I have done what I consider to be right, I must bear it. I don't think God will let me starve."

Mr. Dexter turned red in the face. "Leave the house, and don't let me see you here again."

Herbert without another word, took his hat and left the house with a heavier heart than he had on entering.

"What success?" asked his mother, as he re-entered the humble room where he called home.

"None at all, mother. I am about discouraged."

"Don't be down-hearted, Herbert," she said, tenderly. "When earthly friends forsake you, the Lord will take you up, and make your cause His own."

"I will try to think so, mother," answered Herbert, "but it's hard. I must help myself now, for my uncle has refused to do anything more."

He acquainted her with the particulars of his interview with Mr. Dexter.

"He has been very unjust," said Mrs. Dexter. "Perhaps he will some day see this. In the meantime don't be disheartened. I feel as if everything will turn out well, if we only have patience."

The remainder of the week wore away. On Saturday night Herbert received his week's wages and his dismissal.

On Monday he commenced seeking for a situation. He looked over all the advertisements in the daily papers which he got a chance to look over in one of the hotels, and made applications in many quarters. Not a single one had always got the start of him. Everywhere he was unsuccessful.

So Friday came. For four days he had been searching for a situation, and searching in vain. Should he to-morrow successful to-day? He feared not.

He had just made one unsuccessful call when he chanced to meet on the street the lady he had served at Smith & Co.'s. The recognition was a mutual one.

She stopped, and said with a smile,

"Are you not the clerk who waited upon me at Smith's a week ago?"

"Yes, madam."

"Do you like your place?"

"I have left it."

"Left it!" said the lady, in surprise.

"How did that happen?"

"He dismissed me," said Herbert, in a low voice, "because I told you the thibet you inquired about would not wash."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the lady indignantly. "If that is their way of doing business I shall buy nothing of them hereafter. Then you are without a place?"

"Yes, madam. I have been trying for several days to obtain one, but I find it very difficult."

"Come home with me," said the lady, "my husband is a commission merchant, and I think he can find room for you in his counting room. If not, he shall find you a place."

Herbert began to express his gratitude, but the lady stopped him. "It is only right," she said, "since I was the occasion of your losing your place that I should supply you with another; what did you receive at your former place?"

"Three dollars a week."

Herbert went home with Mrs. Fairbanks, for such proved to be her name. Luckily her husband had come home on an errand. No sooner had his wife explained the circumstances than he promptly engaged Herbert as an additional clerk in the counting-room, at a salary of five dollars per week, with a promise of more at the end of the year.

"Show the same integrity and fidelity in my employ that you exhibited in your former situation," he said kindly, "and you may always count me your friend."

Herbert's face was fairly radiant when he reached home and told his mother of his good fortune. Henceforward his course was onward and upward. At present, he is head clerk in the extensive firm of Fairbanks & Co. His old employer, Smith, after a few years, became bankrupt, and is now living in poverty and obscurity. His ill-gotten gains have not prospered.

THE GENEROUS BROTHERS.

THERE is a charming tradition connected with the site on which Solomon's temple was erected. It is said to have been occupied in common by brothers, one of whom had a family, the other had none. On the spot was a field of wheat. On the evening succeeding the harvest, the wheat having been gathered in shocks, the older brother said to his wife:

"My younger brother is unable to bear the burden and heat of the day. I will arise, take of my shocks and place them with his, without his knowledge."

The brother, being actuated by the same benevolent motives, said within himself: "My elder brother has a family, and I have none. I will contribute to their support. I will arise, take of my shocks and place them with his, without his knowledge."

Judge of their mutual astonishment when on the following morning they found their respective shocks undiminished. This course of events happened for several nights, when each resolved in his own mind to stand guard and to solve the mystery. They did so, when on the following night they met each other half-way between their shocks, with their arms full.—*Young Days.*