

The days dragged slowly by while Ned was waiting for an answer from home. Every day his eyes rested questioningly on the doctor as he entered the ward. School had begun long ago, and he did so long to be there studying with the others.

One day he lay with closed eyes thinking and neither saw nor heard Dr. Mitchell until the cool, quiet hand on his brow aroused him. He had taken a strange fancy to the lad. There was something peculiarly familiar about his face and movements.

'You've got a letter!' Ned cried, springing up.

The doctor smiled, 'You want it?' And taking it out of his pocket he gave it to the boy. Ned held it up and read the address, but his hand trembled so violently that the doctor took the missive.

'Sha'n't I read it to you?'

'Please.'

He cut it open, drew out the letter, and began: 'To Edwin Sherman:—Dr. Mitchell wrote that you want us to go after you and bring you home. We can't do it. You have lived with us for three years, but we can't—' Dr. Mitchell shut his teeth together with a snap. 'I can't see to read that next word,' he said, looking closely at it. Ned reached up his hand.

'Let me take it; I can read it,' he said, but the doctor held the paper firmly in his closed fist. A sudden knowledge flashed across the boy's mind. He realized that when he left the hospital no door would stand open to receive him—no roof would shelter him. Turning his sad, pale face away from the doctor, and throwing his arm over it, bitterly he sobbed.

Little by little the doctor eked out as much of his past life as the lad remembered. Among the vaguest recollections were those of a beautiful lady and a magnificent snow-white dog. When it was all told, the doctor, putting his hand on the lad's arm with more than kindness in his touch, bade him sleep, and Ned obeyed.

Two weeks passed quietly. One day the doctor approached Ned, who was now dressed and sitting up.

'My sister and her husband are downstairs waiting to see you.' He was so agitated that Ned noticed it. Quickly they passed through the long ward, down the broad stairs, through a hall, and into the reception room.

'This is Ned,' the doctor said quietly.

A tall and beautiful woman rushed forward and stopped before the boy. She brushed the long, dark hair from his brow and looked eagerly at the thin face and large grey eyes.

'It is Alex,' she cried breathlessly—the same broad brow, eyes, hair—everything! it is Alex, our baby, stolen from us eight years ago—our baby—our Alex!'

The man hurried forward.

'Alex!' he said hoarsely, and parents and child were recognized.

It was a happy party that drove home through the noisy city streets. As they entered the door of the mansion a magnificent white dog rose slowly from the mat. The boy stopped, grasping the doctor's arm convulsively.

'Look!' he cried excitedly, 'the great white dog I told you of.'

A few days later, when a Victoria, drawn by two noble bay horses, and a coachman in livery on the box in front, drove up to Deacon Trufont's door, and the banker and his wife alighted, followed by their son, the late Ned, the deacon forgot to tell them that he did it 'out of the abundance of his heart.'

What Charlie Lyell's Singing Did.

(By Ariana Herman.)

(A True Narrative.)

The streets of Steptoe village were bright with autumn sunshine, and the atmosphere had in it the sort of tonic that makes your blood tingle. Yet the young man whom this little tale has for its hero walked with a slow and lagging footstep, and his countenance was sad, in spite of the golden day.

'A whole summer lost,' he was saying to himself. 'I had expected to work so hard, to learn so much; I could have made progress enough to enable me to graduate in another year. Now it will take two, and that means an extra year of self-denial for mother and Grace. Well, God's will be done! I did not get this fever by wilfulness or neglect, and I must believe that it was all for the best.'

The convalescent turned into the Sunday school room of the village church, and took one of the seats allotted to visitors. The exercises were almost over, but the superintendent came at once to speak to him.

'Mr. Lyell, I am glad to see you out again, and glad to see you here. Will you take a class for the winter?'

'Thank you, no,' answered Mr. Lyell; 'I leave to-morrow for the university. I just wanted to take a last look at you home-folks.'

'Suppose you say a few words to the school when the lessons are done?'

Charlie Lyell hesitated.

'I don't feel prepared to make an address, Mr. Boylston, but, if you say so, I will teach the children a hymn which I have just learned.'

And in the few minutes between bell-taps the young man hastily wrote on the black-board the words of a hymn, well known since, but new then (this was forty years ago).

'What a meeting, what a meeting there will be,

What a meeting there will be,
When our Father's face we see,
And we all meet around God's white throne.
'King Jesus, O King Jesus will be there!
King Jesus will be there,
And a crown of glory wear,
When we all meet around God's white throne.'

The verses went on counting up a long array of happy ones who would be at that meeting, ending softly (the bright tune dropping into a tender cadence):

'I, too, oh, I, too, shall be there!
I, too, shall be there,
And my Saviour's glory share,
When we all meet around God's white throne.'

The school quickly learned and sang the new hymn; the morning's session closed; the young man left his native village for a distant university. And here my story would seem to end for Charlie Lyell never came back to Steptoe, never again saw the young faces into which he had looked that Sunday morning. In a few months he had met that glorious company before the great white throne.

But upon one young life, certainly,—perhaps upon many others,—he had made an undying impression. One careless, pleasure-loving child suddenly and silently realized that this religion was a beautiful and precious thing. Hitherto it had seemed a matter for grave elders, for heavy books, for rather tiresome learning of catechism and verse; but there was something about

this winsome young fellow, the tone of his rich voice, the joyous expression with which he sang of Jesus and of being with him, that aroused in the heart of the child a desire for holiness, for pardon of naughtiness, for Heaven! The desire grew with her growth, until, some years later, she also sang, with happy assurance, 'I, too, oh, I, too shall be there!'

I am sure the young hymn-singer realized, when he stood in the presence of his Lord, that, if he had learned that summer all the law in the books, it would have been as the dust of the balance compared with the impression for good, for God, and for eternity, which it was given him to make on the heart of a child!—'Sunday School Times.'

Presence of Mind.

(By James F. Gray.)

The real meaning of presence of mind is to have your mind always with you. When this quality is most required is at a time of great peril or of extreme excitement. How often does one hear the ungrammatical, but truthful statement, 'I knew just what to do, but never thought.'

The mind should be alert, trained to quickly recognize conditions, and having recognized, to choose the best.

I once knew a boy fourteen years of age, who was in a position of extreme peril, and was saved only by his inborn presence of mind.

His mother had sent him on an errand, and asked him to return as quickly as possible. They lived in the country. In order to save time, instead of going around by the road, he took a short cut, and walked on the railway track. Having accomplished his errand, he returned the same way. Part of this track was laid on a long trestle, underneath which ran a swift river.

The boy was walking over this trestle, whistling as he went, happy in the thought that he would surprise his mother by returning a full half hour earlier than it was possible that he could be expected. When suddenly he heard a noise, which startled him. He stopped to consider it. For a second his heart seemed to cease beating. He had not calculated the time of the train, and the locomotive was rapidly approaching. He turned to measure his chances, and saw it would be impossible to get over the trestle before the train would be upon him. He had to act at once. Delay was madness. Almost mechanically he put the package for which he had gone into his pocket.

The track was single, the beams extended but a few inches beyond the rails; therefore there was no place for him to stand while the train passed by. He could swim, and his first thought was to leap into the water. But his heavy clothing would be an impediment, and he would have a long distance to make before reaching the bank.

However, he did not lose his presence of mind. Though the powerful engine was approaching nearer and nearer, he quietly thought out his means of safety. A second later he was slipping between the beams, and thus suspended by his hands, he hung over the water. And while he was in this position the train passed over his head.

Relating the incident afterward, he said it seemed to him as if the train was miles long, and was hours in passing. When the last car was over, and he had crawled up again, he did not seem to himself to be the same boy. He did not feel like whistling, but hurried along as quickly as he could, and was very glad when he reached solid ground.—'Christian Intelligencer.'