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PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XIX.

TORONTO, AUGUST 26, 1899.

No. 34.



BERKHAMSTEAD RECTORY.

COWPER.

BY REV. W. I. SHAW, LL.D.,

Principal Wesleyan Theological College,
Montreal.

What an honourable record have the sons of ministers! The popular prejudice against them as useless incumbents on society has recently had a vigorous refutation in the facts presented by De Candolle, a French scientist and sceptic, who gleans from biography a most striking and significant list of sons of pastors eminent in scholarship and literature. Agassiz, Encke, Linnaeus, Hallam, Hobbes, Emerson, Whately, Robert Hall, Lightfoot, the Wesleys, Lowth, Stillingfleet, the Beechers, Spurgeon, Dugald Stewart, Cudworth, Reid, Bancroft, Kingsley, Young, Thomson, Coleridge, Montgomery, Heber, Tennyson, and Lowell, are samples justifying the assertion that "the sons of clerical families have actually surpassed, during two hundred years, in their contributions to the roll of eminent scientists and literati the similar contributions of any other class of families."

To this long list must be added the name of William Cowper, the son of the Rev. John Cowper, D.D., chaplain to George II., and rector of Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire, where William was born, November 15th, 1731 (O.S.) On both the father's and mother's side he was of noble descent—a circumstance which is no guarantee for moral character, but which still carries with it a presumption of the benefits of wealth and refinement. His mother, who was a Donne and a lineal descendant of Henry III., died in his sixth year. The bitter grief of his young heart he subsequently depicted in a poem in memory of his mother:

"Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wished, I long believed,
And disappointed still, was still deceived;
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of to-morrow even from a child.



THE LODGE, WESTON.

Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went
Till, all my stock of infant sorrows spent,
I learned at last submission to my lot,
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot."

From a motherless home to a still more cheerless position the child was soon sent, and the "little mass of timid and quivering sensibility" found himself amidst the bullying and cruel tyranny of the strong boys of a boarding-school. From this, after an interval of two years spent under the care of an oculist, he was sent to the hardly more congenial associations of Westminster school, where classics and cricket furnish the chief goals for the emulation and ambition of the pupils. The training thus given is to the average Englishman elevating and salutary, developing both mind and muscle, imparting both classic culture and chivalrous vigour. But to young Cowper, with his timidity and shrinking nervousness, there is no doubt these school-day associations brought those shocks and boyish trouble which permanently injured his mind, and to

fulness and hopefulness the best solace to a disordered mind. This harmonizes with the testimony of Dr. Workman when Superintendent of the Insane Asylum, Toronto, and with statistics showing that Methodism has proportionately fewer representatives among the insane than any other church. Its tone of Christian cheerfulness, associated with temperance and purity of life, is the best safeguard against mental derangement. When Cowper is spoken of as a Methodist, it is to be understood only that he was in full sympathy as an Anglican with the Wesleyan revival then in progress within the Established Church.

Labouring under his hypochondria, Cowper

BECAME AN INMATE OF A MAD-HOUSE

at St. Alban's, under the control of Dr. Cotton, who was a man of active and cheerful piety. At the expiration of eighteen months, giving his Bible and its promises, which he had sadly concluded were not for him, Cowper found peace and light for his disordered mind.

After his release from the asylum his brother John secured lodgings for him at Huntingdon, where he was welcomed



COWPER

which the tender child from Berkhamstead Rectory was by no means equal.

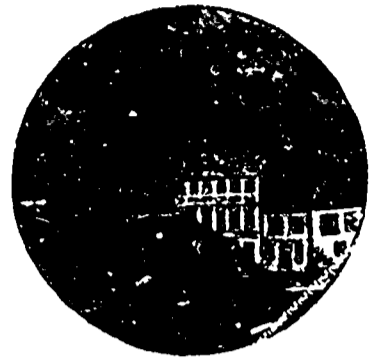
AT THE AGE OF EIGHTEEN

Cowper was articled with Mr. Chapman, an attorney in London. At the expiration of his three years' term he took chambers in the Middle and afterwards in the Inner Temple, and at length was duly called to the Bar. He entered upon the study and practice of law by the earnest desire of his father. However, his preferences were decidedly for literature, and from this time forward he is to be found engaged chiefly in literary work.

In 1756 Cowper's father died. With limited means, and with the law as a mere nominal profession, the despondency which overshadowed him increased. Major Cowper, a relative, secured for him an offer of the position of Clerk of the Journals of the House of Lords; but the labours of the office and his timidity at appearing at the bar of the House, led him to abandon the position. At the age of thirty-two, in the year 1763, he went mad and attempted to commit suicide. Having become a Methodist his hypochondria took a religious form. Says Goldwin Smith: "A votary of wealth, when his brain gives way under disease or age, fancies that he is a beggar. A Methodist, when his brain gives way under the same influences, fancies that he is forsaken of God." This author, however, freely admits that the same Methodism which gives this form to hypochondria also brings by its cheer-

to the heart and home of the Unwins, the Rev. William Unwin, the rector, being known as decidedly Methodist, and Mrs. Unwin becoming the life-long friend of Cowper. Daily life in the rectory at Huntingdon is described by Cowper as composed of a little amusement, at least four miles of walking, two hours of private reading of Scripture, two services in the church, "commonly the evening is finished either with hymns or a sermon, and last of all the family are called to prayers." Cowper adds, "I need not tell you that such a life as this is consistent with the utmost cheerfulness,"—a statement about which the ungodly, and perhaps some others, will be sceptical.

About two years subsequently Mr. Unwin was killed by falling from a horse. An indissoluble bond of friendship had been established between Cowper and Mrs. Unwin, of whom he spoke as his mother, and from henceforth they were to be associated in friendship till parted by death. Together they moved to Olney, on the Ouse, in Buckinghamshire. If Cowper was melancholy this place, one would think, would drive him to despair. The fact is, however, that here were the highest aspirations of his poetical genius and of his lofty spirit. Neither the dullness of the people nor of the place hindered his upward flights. The choice of this peculiar place is to be accounted for by the fascinating attraction of the evangelical curate, the Rev. John Newton, who has enriched our Canadian hymn-book with six beau-



OLNEY

tiful hymns, including the universal favourite,

"How sweet 'the name of Jesus sounds'"

At Olney, under Newton's direction, Mrs. Unwin and Cowper were quite active in holding prayer-meetings and helping the poor for both worlds. But the dark cloud of despair was again gathering, and amidst the gloom Cowper again imagined himself forsaken of God, and moreover entertained the inconvenient caprice that he must reside nowhere but in the vicarage where, under the care of Dr. Cotton, he was restored to sanity.

After a residence of over

TWENTY YEARS AT OLNEY

In the year 1759, the poet and Mrs. Unwin removed to the village of Weston, a short distance from Olney, where Mrs. Unwin became pained. This led to their removal to Norfolk, and then to East Dereham, where she died in 1796. About three years subsequently, after an interval of sadness and darkness, Cowper died, April 25th, 1800, aged sixty-nine years.

Southey designates Cowper as "the most popular poet of his generation and the best of English letter-writers." His leading poems: "The Task," "Truth," "The Progress of Error," and "Conversation," have gained a recognized place in English classics. His mind was fruitful and his pen was ready in the production of short poems chastened by sorrow or sparkling with humorous sarcasm, while his "Olney Hymns" are represented in the psalmody of all the churches by the immortal ode:

"God moves in a mysterious way."

In analyzing the elements of Cowper's genius the average reader acquires the impression that the majority of his productions are the language of despair; but this is not correct. In fact, a comparatively small proportion of them are clouded with despondency. Instances of sprightly and humorous delineations of character are very numerous. His "John Gilpin" seems inspired by a



THE CHESTNUT AVENUE.

heart, brimful of fun, and did more than anything else to popularize his name with the common people

Another element in Cowper's spirit, indeed the most prominent, is his ardent love for nature. Thomson, in his "Seasons," has an affected stiffness which is absent from Cowper. The marvellous beauty of rural scenery in England became common and familiar to him.

The whole being of Cowper was permeated with profoundest reverence for the Divine and his faith in God shone with steady lustre when not clouded by mental derangement. His Christian faith shines out of the gloom of despair and enables him to sing:

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace,
Behind a frowning Providence
He hides a smiling face."

A brave spirit in a weak, nervous body; a triumphant faith amid the darkness; despite the aberrations of mental disorder; an evangelical recognition of man as a sinner, and Christ as the only Saviour, at a time when the ideas were treated with aristocratic hauteur—these are qualities in Cowper which, associated with classic grace and literary excellence, gave him a high place in the mental and affective life of England, and explain the tenderness and sympathy inspiring Mrs Browning's poem of fourteen stanzas on Cowper's grave:

"It is a place where poets crowned may feel the heart's decaying,
It is a place where happy saints may weep amid the praying,
Ye who are grief and humbleness, as low as silence languish;
Earth surely now may give her calm to whom she gave her anguish."

"Oh, poets! from a maniac's tongue was poured the deathless singing!
O Christians! at your cross of hope, a hopeless life is praying,
O ye who sit in brotherhood, your weary paths beguiling,
Groaned ill while he taught you peace, and died while ye were smiling."

"And now what time ye all may read
How discord on the music fell, and darkness on the glory,
And how when, one by one, sweet sounds and wandering lights departed,
He wove no less a loving face because so broken-hearted."

"He shall be strong to sanctify the poet's high vocations,
And bow the meekest Christian down in meeker adoration,
Nor ever shall he be, in praise, by wise or good forsaken,
Named solely as the household name of one whom God hath taken."

"With quiet sadness and no gloom I learn to think upon you,
With meekness that is gratefulness to God whose heaven has won him,
Who suffered once the madness-cold to his own love to bind him,
But gently led the blind along where breast and bird could find him."

"And wrought within his shattered brain such quick poetic senses
As hills have language for, and stars, harmonious intonances,
The pulse of dew upon the grass kept his within its number,
And silent shadows from the trees refreshed him like a slumber."

"Wild, timid hares were drawn from woods to share his home-carresses
Uplinking to his human eyes with sylvan tendernesses,
The very world, by God's constraint, And sun falsest, with eyes removing,
His women and its men became, beside him, true and loving."

"And though, in blindness, he remained unconscious of that guiding,
And things he ded, came without the sweet sense of providing,
He testified this solemn truth, while phrensy desolated,
Nor man nor nature satisfy whom God only created."

"Like a sick child that knoweth not his mother while she blesses,
And drops upon his burning brow the coolness of her kisses,—
That turns his fevered eyes around—
"My mother! where's my mother?"
As if such tender words and deeds could come from any other!"

"The fever gone, with leaps of heart he sees her bending o'er him,
Her face all pale from a painful love!
The unwearied love she bore him!

Thus woke the poet from the dream his life-long fever gave him,
Henceforth those deep pathetic eyes, which closed in death to save him, blim,

"Thus? Oh, not thus! no type of earth can image that awaiting,
Wherein he scarcely heard the chant of seraphs, round him breaking,
Or felt the new immortal throbs of soul from body parted,
But felt those eyes alone, and knew,—
"My Saviour, not deserted."

"Deserted! who hath dreamt that when the cross in darkness rested,
Upon the victor's hidden face no love was manifested?
What frantic hands outstretched have o'er the anoning drops averted?
What tears have washed them from the soul, that one should be deserted?"

"Deserted? God could separate from his own essence rather,
And, ere the stars have swept between the righteous son and father,
Yea, once, Immanuel's orphaned cry his universe hath shaken—
It swept up single, echoless, "My God, I am forsaken."

"It went up from the holy lips amid his lost creation,
That, of the lost, no son should use the victor's words of desolation,
The earth's worst phrensies marring hope, should mar not hope's fruition,
And I, on Cowper's grave, should see his rapture in a vision."

OUR PERIODICALS:

Table listing various periodicals such as Christian Guardian, Methodist Magazine, and Wesleyan Herald, along with their prices and subscription information.

WILLIAM BRIGGS, Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto, S. F. HERRICK, Wesleyan Book Room, Montreal.

Pleasant Hours: A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, AUGUST 28, 1899.

WAS SUBJECT UNTO THEM."

One of the most touching and beautiful intimations that we have of the boyhood of Jesus is the impressive phrase, "And he went down with them (his parents) and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them." Many of the old masters have represented in their pictures their conception of what this meant with striking simplicity. In some cases the child Jesus is picking up the chips and shavings in the workshop of Joseph the carpenter, while Mary, spinning with her distaff, and his reputed father looked smilingly on. In other pictures he is represented as himself using the saw or the plane and assisting Joseph in his calling of carpenter. That he did this is undoubtedly from the exclamations of the people. Not unwisely, "I saw this carpenter's son!" For all the Jews—sensible people that they were in this respect, as are the Germans of the present day—were weakly parents, taught their children some honest trade or means of livelihood. Thus Paul, the highly cultured member of the Sanhedrim, and the disciple of Gamaliel, was instructed in the carpenter's trade, and was able afterwards to boast, "These hands ministered to my necessities."

As the mother of our Lord witnessed the expansion of intellect and growth of thought in the youthful Jesus, how often must that Scripture have been fulfilled over and over again, "Now Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart." How often would this be true after her finding Jesus in the temple and hearing his strange, soul-penetrating question, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

There is an ancient tradition that Joseph was at a somewhat advanced age at the birth of Jesus. The old Christmas carol says:

"Now Joseph was an old man, an old man was he,
And he married Mary, sweet Mary of Galilee."

The tradition further says that long before Jesus attained manhood Joseph died. We are doing no violence to probability in assuming that Jesus laboured with his own hands for the maintenance of his widowed mother. Certainly his first work of her. As he hung upon the cross he said to John, the beloved disciple, "Behold thy mother," and to Mary, "Behold thy son."

There is a beautiful picture by Holman Hunt, in which Jesus is represented as, worn and weary after a day's work in the carpenter's shop, stretching his arms in the doorway, while the mother stands on the opposite wall in the form of a cross. The strange shadow smites the heart of Mary with a pang of apprehension, as she seems to ponder the prophetic significance of her son's attitude on the expression of her face that the Scripture is being fulfilled, "Yea, a sword shall pierce thine own soul also."

Our Roman Catholic friends greatly reverence the mother of Jesus, applying to her such unwarranted expressions as "Theotokos," and "Mater Dei," the latter of the two, too, we think, is not sufficiently reverencing the character of her who was called "The blessed among women," and to whom our Lord himself paid such loving reverence. Certainly all of us, both young and old, those who have grown to the estate of manhood and womanhood, should learn from our loving Lord to be in youth and manhood, and womanhood to treat them with tender consideration and loving regard.

THE TELLTALE FOOTPRINTS.

"Eddy, O Eddy, where are you?" "Here, mother, came a shrill voice from the back door."

"Come here, Eddy; I want you to do something for me."

Then the back door opened, and Mrs. Taylor heard the soft patter of bare feet along the passage. But when Eddy entered the sitting-room, and stood by mother's sewing table, she only said, "Now Eddy, what's the matter?" "Why there, mother, are my pumps or brushes about the little boy. Why should the mother think anything was the matter? Because his brown eyes, which generally looked right up at you like two little birds lying out of a cage, now had an uneasy look; neither here nor there, but away."

"Nothing's the matter," said Eddy, looking out of the window. "What did you call me for, mother?" "She had wanted him to run down to the village post-office to mail a letter, but the letter was forgotten now. Mother was silent for a few minutes, then seeing nothing out of the way between her table and the back door she spoke:

"I am sorry my little boy has disobeyed me about going to the apple bin without leave. Eddy gave a little start. The reason, as God put me here, as your mother Eddy, is because he thinks I know better what you ought to do, and ought not to do, than you do yourself."

Eddy did not answer. He was asking himself how mothers knew everything a fellow did."

"I am specially sorry that you should disobey me by sneaking through the coal-room window," said Mrs. Taylor. "I won't mind you, and go in before my eyes, than go in by telling a lie."

"Why, mother, I didn't say—" began Eddy, glad of a chance to defend himself. "Do you think you only talk with your lips?" interrupted his mother. "What do you suppose has whispered to me that you have been in the apple room, and that you went through the coal room?" "I can't imagine," said Eddy, honestly. "Look behind you."

The little boy turned, and there, between him and the door, were five, closely footprints on the white matting. Mother could not help smiling at the look of surprise and dismay on the little face, but it was a rather mournful smile.

"Do you think we can ever do wrong, Eddy, and not leave marks of it somewhere?" she asked. "And, oh my little boy, the marks which ought to be clean and white for God's eyes, instead of being all tracked over by wrongdoing?"

"Won't they come out?" asked Eddy. "They mean that the footprints on the matting, but it was a rather mournful smile about other marks when she said:

"The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseeth from all sin." You must ask him to forgive you, my Eddy, and to take away your guilt, and to make you hate sin, which leaves such ugly footprints on your little life."

And then for a punishment, and for a reminder, mother kept the footprints on the sitting-room floor that whole day, so that Eddy might see them and remember how every wrong deed left dark stains on his little heart."

THE PRINCESS AND THE TRAMP.

When the grand old lady who has been Queen of England for sixty years was a child, she had no idea that she was one of the great good queens of the world to keep her simple and gentle, and so denied her many things which other rich men's daughters had for the asking. When she was seven or eight years of age, her best work was in a certain doll which she had seen in a shop window. She had to wait, however, until she could save the price, six shillings, out of her pocket money. At last the day came when the coveted doll was paid for and received. The story proceeds as follows:

And now, with the precious treasure upon her arm, the little lady bade the king and queen good afternoon, and was about to step from the door when a poor, miserable-looking man met her eye. He was standing but a couple of feet away and seemed as if he was going to speak to her, but he was so frightened by the innocent kindness of her expression and the tenderness of her blue eyes. But though his lips moved, no sound came from them.

"Ho stood aside to let her pass, a mute agonized appeal in his sunken cheeks and quivering chin."

"Did you wish to speak to me?" asked the little lady, stung by her eyes.

"Yes, my lady, I wish to speak to you, the poor tramp—for such he was—said, in trembling accents:

"I am very hungry. I would not ask for help if I were not ready to sink with hunger."

"He looked famine from his eyes. "I am so sorry; I have no money or else—"

"His lips trembled forth a humble prayer, "My lady, then he shuffled on his way."

"Stay!" murmured the little owner of the new doll. There was a quiver in her childish voice and a moisture in her eyes as she spoke. "Wait a minute, please."

She stepped back into the shop, approached the lady behind the counter, and said:

"Oh, please, do you mind taking the doll back and keeping it for me for a few days longer?"

"Certainly I will," replied the shopkeeper; "and you wish me to return you the money?"

"Yes, if you please."

This was done, and the little lady, hurrying out of the shop, placed the whole of the money in the hands of the aged woman who spoke.

He was like one thunderstruck. Never had bounty rained upon him in such profusion before. The object of her bounty murmured in a low voice, though loud enough to reach her ear. "If the Almighty made you a queen it would not be more than your goodness deserves."

When he hobbled away to satisfy his hunger.—The Quiver.

Bishop Potter and several of the women of his diocese are planning a method of Sunday transportation for the poor people of the pro-cathedral in Stanton Street, New York. They are to collect in the morning from the Divine, on Springdale Heights. It is to be the spiritual home of the poor, as well as the rich, the bishop says, and they are to feel that the bishop is with them in their cellars. In the evening will be taken free on Sunday to the church, and, as the grounds around the cathedral will be used for a park, the people can enjoy an hour or two in the open air.

The Sea.

BY BERNARD BARTON.

The sea! the sea! the glorious sea!
What has the earth so fair,
Hill or valley, grove or lea,
Which may with it compare!
I could sit for hours to look
Upon its wide expanse,
And read in its unwritten book
Fresh charms at every glance!

The sea! the sea! the solemn sea!
It has a voice for all,
And o'en to hearts of happiest gleo
May sober thoughts recall.
Come it speaks of distant days,
Of vanished hopes and fears;
How silently can o'er it gaze
With eyes undimmed by tears?

The sea! the sea! the changeless sea!
Of tears I take my leave;
I half recall a smile from me
To think for what I grieve;
The hopes and fears I sorrowed o'er,
Were hopes and fears of time;
You art the type of something more,
Unchanging and sublime.

A BOY OF TO-DAY

BY

Julia MacNair Wright.

Author of "The House on the Bluff," etc.

CHAPTER X.

SITTING ON A RAIL-FENCE.

If there had been other people living on that low acre near the railroad where the Sinner had come to dwell, they would have heard very early in the winter mornings, before daylight, a boy singing and whistling. That was Heman, as by the gleam of a lantern he fed and milked the cows, fed the pig and chickens, and set the poor little barn in as neat order as if it had been the fine big barn where as a child he had played. After that there was wood to carry in to fill Aunt D'rexy's wood-boxes for the day, water-pails to be filled and set in a row; and so off to Lawyer Brace's office to kindle fires, sweep, and dust. When Heman came back from that work he must wash, change his working clothes for his school suit, and then have breakfast. After breakfast, putting on a canvas apron and a pair of sleeves, Heman worked in the shop with Uncle Rias until the bell rang for school.

Thus far the shop had not been a very profitable venture, but as Aunt D'rexy and Heman said to each other, "It did Rias a power of good to have it, and made him feel as if he was doing something." Rias and Heman made stands, sleds, ironing-boards, clothes-racks, pie-boards, and other small wares, and ticketing them "For Sale," set them in front of the shop. One by one they were sold, and so trade was creeping up.

After school in the afternoon Heman was still busy; more milking and feeding; milk to carry to two or three families who bought their daily quart of Aunt D'rexy; wood to saw and split to keep the two or three fires going, for Aunt Espey's room must be heated, and sometimes the shop as well as the kitchen.

Heman was not condemned to "all work and no play." Many a merry evening he was off skating or coasting "with the other fellows." They had fires by the river bank, and baked potatoes and apples, or roasted chestnuts to be ready to warm them up when they were tired and cold.

Aunt D'rexy and Uncle Rias liked to talk; they carried the old neighbourly country ways to town with them, and the boys were largely welcomed in the evening, the elders entering into the fun and gossip as heartily as any one. Sometimes they made molasses candy, or popcorn balls, or nut-taffy.

Heman made a checker-board and a fox-and-geese board, and taught Uncle Rias these games. The boys who came in the evening played them also, and the schoolmaster showed them how to make a geography game, a history game, and a game of birds, which became very popular. At Christmas Heman earned a dollar by making fox-and-geese and checker boards. He felt almost the cares and interests of a millionaire as he laid out three binding quarters on Christmas presents for his "home folks," and divided the last one between the collections for the Sunday-school Christmas-tree and a present for the schoolmaster.

Heman was not in the village a boy more alert and jolly than Heman; it was his work trying to conciliate with him. Fred Knapp tried it. He was leaning

over the fence watching Heman at his evening work, which seemed to Fred interminable. "How can you whistle and sing over it, especially in the cold mornings when you have to turn out so early?" he asked.

"As long as I have to turn out, it wouldn't make it any easier to glump and gloom over it, would it? You wouldn't advise a fellow of my size to go crying and whining round, sucking his fingers to keep them warm, would you?"

"Oh, not that," admitted Fred; "but 'pears like I'd hate it so. I couldn't be jolly over it the way you are."

"But I don't hate it at all. I've been used to getting up early, and so long as I have sleep enough what would be the use staying in bed? I always worked, and I don't see but I like it. When folks have to work it makes it easier to like it, and get out of it all the fun there is in it."

"I don't see any fun in it," said Fred. "I think it is a real pity for you to have so much to do morning and night."

"Who would do it if I didn't?" demanded Heman wrathfully. "Would I leave it to Uncle Rias, crippling round on a wooden leg? What kind of a fellow do you take me for, to see women folks carrying in wood and water, and milking, out in the cold? You talk about 'too bad.' I think when a man has a good home, good meals, some decent clothes, some friends, and knows where he belongs, he is pretty well off. I've seen people dragging about the country with none of these comforts, I can tell you."

When Heman took this tone, and alluded more or less darkly to his experience, his boy friends were full of awe and veneration. They had concocted many myths about the world as Heman had seen it. They had tales about the tawny-haired Heman having lived for a month with an ex-penitentiary convict; that this ill-chosen comrade had tried highway robbery, and Heman had gallantly delivered his victim. They hinted to one another that Heman had carried on "a great lawsuit, and won it, sir, won it as you'd win a game of checkers, don't you know?"

It was said that Heman knew all about "circus men" and prestidigitateurs and their tricks, and could tell, too, only he was deeply pledged never to unfold these dark oracles. When Heman was deferentially approached about these tremendous adventures, he laughed openly, showing all his strong white teeth, and said, "Sho! I never told such things as that; guess some of you fellows must have made it." All the same the boys believed it steadfastly, and felt sure that these denials were only a part of Heman's pledged secrecy. By reason of these legends and his big bulk Heman was rather a king among the boys.

One spring afternoon Heman, busy at his desk, suddenly asked leave to go away from school.

"Is it necessary?" asked George Renfrew reluctantly.

"Yes, sir," responded Heman promptly.

A little later the boys who sat where they could overlook Miss Polly Drew's place saw Heman over there, darting about, busily getting in certain flocks of young chickens and callow broods of turkeys. Various significant winks, head-shakes, and pointed fingers conveyed information that Heman, instead of shining in the history class, was making Miss Polly's little place and poultry ready for a thunder-storm that was rapidly rolling up. As he ended his task he saw Bob Henden dashing along on his pony.

"Hello, Bob! As you go by Lincoln's, stop and tell Miss Polly Drew not to worry about her chickens and little turkeys, because I've put 'em all up for her!" cried Heman.

"All right!" said Bob.

"I say, Heman," asked Fred, "what'd you do it for? You're real good in history, and you lost your marks going out of class to-day."

"Why, I had to," said Heman; "I couldn't let Miss Polly Drew lose all her poultry, could I? I saw the storm coming up, and I knew she was out at Lincoln's sewing. You see, Miss Polly makes a lot of her living out of her fowls—couldn't let her lose 'em, of course. My, I know she was glad when Bob Henden told her they were all shut up right; Miss Polly makes her living by hard knocks. Aunt Espey says she's terrible thankful she isn't alone in the world, like Miss Polly."

"Yes, Miss Polly does have it hard; but say, Heman, why don't you try for one of the prizes? The history one, say. You might as well get it as anybody, you're just as smart." Heman modestly admitted that he wasn't deterred by any fears based on a lack of smartness, but explained:

"You see, Fred, I just came to school to learn a lot of things I needed to know. I couldn't stir myself up trying to get prizes, for I knew to begin with that if any one was sick at our house, or anything bad happened there, I'd have to stay at home and see to it. Then if I had a good price offered for a day's work, I'd need to stay out of school and do it I need the money. The lessons I could make up at night, and come in all right for examinations, but I can't go in for prizes. Don't know as I want to. School prizes aren't in my line, you see it's work I'm bent on."

Plodding along in this fashion, doing what he individually must, and not measuring himself by the doings of other boys, Heman reached May and the last week of school. He had been out in the country for a day's ploughing. Aunt D'rexy had undertaken to clean the church for him that he might go and earn his dollar. He had earned it and was coming home. Master Renfrew met him.

"You're early, Heman, it is not six yet."

"We finished the field," said Mr Weeks did not care to begin earlier. He always knocks off work a little early Saturday night."

"If you're in no hurry, come and sit here on the fence with me, and let's have a talk," said the school-master.

The two perched on the top rail, each with his knees drawn up, because his heels were stuck in the third rail, and each took a stick to whittle. Said the schoolmaster:

"What a delightful place is a rail fence! Here the raspberries and blackberries make a mat with their red and purple stems that shine of fiercer colour in the sun; pretty soon along these brilliant stems there will be thousands of white flowers, and then the berries. I've heard folks talk of 'ugly rail fences'; they simply don't understand where to look for beauty! Heman! school is nearly over, and I suppose you are not expecting to come back to books next year. What are you going to make of yourself, my boy? You should have a plan and pursue it. Have you a plan?" Thus the school-master, quickly changing the tenor of his remarks.

"Well, sir, I've got to stir around pretty lively and do something," said Heman, sedately. "You see, I've a family on my hands. My folks are growing old; time'll come when they can't help themselves much, and when I won't want them to feel forced to do anything. Aunt Espey's quite old; Uncle Rias has been dreadfully broken up by losing his leg. They took care of me when I was little, and they meant to give me all they had. That's all lost, so they haven't anything for themselves or me either; but they meant it all the same. Why, school-master, when I came to them I was a baby about three years old, without parents or a penny, nothing but a little carpet-sack full of clothes!"

"Poor little fellow!" said the school-master, impulsively.

"But they never let me know that I was a poor little fellow! They loved me and I loved them, and they gave me all the good times that were a-going. They saw to it that I had all I needed, that I was healthy, and made much of. I don't know as my fix was different much from any other child's. When children come to their own folks, you know, they're littler than I was, they can't get about on their legs, and they haven't any sack of clothes. Yes, sir, my people have loved me for all I was worth and have done their level best for me, and now I must do for them."

"What?" asked the school-master.

"I don't know," said Heman.

"You don't want to be a day labourer, or odd-jobs man, all your life. You can be more and better than that, and if you are only that, you'll get but a poor living for your family. You need to have a trade or some business or profession, some regular thing to begin at and keep at and be proficient in. One gets to a journey's end quickest by going straight on, not by zig-zagging all over the country. Is your mind made up as to your life work?"

Heman shook his head.

"It is time it was," said the master, incisively. "Let me see if I can help you to a conclusion. What do you think of clerking, or book-keeping? You've done nicely in book-keeping."

"I wanted to know how to keep books for myself if I had a business, but there's not the making of a book-keeper or a clerk in me, Mr. Renfrew. I'd use a yard-stick as if it was a club, and put the scissors through a piece of cloth like a rip-saw going through a plank, and I'd wish it was the rip-saw, too! No, I never craved to stand in a store all day."

"What about a profession? Have you thought of that?"

"Oh, yes, I've thought; but they take too much time and money, and there are no prompt returns. It can't be done."

"Why have you thought about a professional life, Heman?"

"Well—it seemed—more honourable like—I would like to be worth something in the world."

"Can't you be worth something in a trade?"

"Yes; but somehow, as I thought of it, a profession seemed to be more high-toned."

"A man must love a profession for itself before he is fit to pursue it, Heman. He must desire it so much that he would be willing to purchase its ideal for double the usual term of years, as Jacob served his seven years twice told for Rachel. He must feel that cold, hunger, poverty, weariness, are all as nothing for the love wherewith he loves the profession of his choice; as if, prince or peasant, he would or could be nothing else but master of his profession."

"Oh, but master, it's not in me to care for anything in the study way like that. I don't love study much. I like books, magazines, newspapers. I like to sit at home in the evening and read a little, partly because I want to know what other folks know and talk of; partly because I'm sure I'm safe and out of mischief; and partly because the folks like to have me there, and it cheers them up if I read a little to them. I get asleep over it often, and if I were studying a profession I'd get asleep over it always!"

"Come, come, we're getting on! You don't want clerking or indoor mercantile work, and evidently the Lord has not called you to the ministry, medicine, or the law. You don't like books particularly; you will not be a "mute, inglorious Milton," or a Shakespeare spoiled. I doubt if ever there are any such. If genius for letters is in a man, it will come out, but family pride, a craving for the "high-toned," as you just said, has dragged many a boy from a useful, honourable, manly handicraftsman to be a miserable, inefficient dabbler at some profession. Now, Heman, you've made it clear that you want a trade—what trade?"

"Do you know, Mr. Renfrew almost any trade that I can give good hard knocks at, do something at, looks fine to me! I don't really think I care for bricklaying, or stone-cutting, but there was a time when I was pretty sure I would like to be a blacksmith. I liked to hear the hammers ring, and see the fire glow and the sparks fly! On the whole, I want carpentry for my business. I like boards, and nails, and tools. I always did! I want to learn the trade well and go on to house building. Why, I might, you know, get so far as to build not only houses, but churches, court-houses, school-houses, colleges. I could go on and on, by doing well, to fine work, if I was a house carpenter, just the same as I could go up in any other business, if I knew enough."

"That's the right spirit," said the master; "wish to excel, to rise, by deserving to rise, in whatever work you choose for your life occupation. Whether you are a tailor, a shoemaker, a baker, a merchant, artist, or teacher, whatever you are, be thorough and make your mark in it. You have no time to lose, Heman, if you are to learn house carpentry thoroughly, you cannot spend further time in cleaning offices or in ploughing. You must say, like Paul, 'This one thing I do.'"

"I know it," said Heman; "it has worried me lately as I thought about it. If Uncle Rias had not hurt himself I could have learned with him; he's first-rate. I do know something, I have lathed, and shingled, and boarded, and put on clap-boards; I could earn my way now with a builder."

"Then this very evening talk it over with your uncle and aunt, and see what plans you can make for beginning at once on your life-business. Some day you and I will plan how you can study mechanical drawing. You need more mathematics, too, for making estimates."

The two dropped the sticks they had whittled and got down from the rail-fence; slowly they turned toward the village, and soon in the purple evening light Heman saw the flat acre, the little house, the little barn and the beds newly arrayed of Aunt D'rexy's garden.

(To be continued.)

No temporal blessing is too great to expect from a God whose love was so infinite as to give his own Son for the salvation of mankind.—Saurin.

The Man Behind the Plough.

BY S. E. KISER.

There's been a lot to say 'bout the man behind the gun,
And folks has praised him highly for the noble work he done,
He won a lot of honour for the land where men are free,
It was him that sent the Spaniards kiltin' back across the sea;
But he's had his day of glory had his little spree, and now
There's another to be mentioned—he's the man behind the plough.

A battleship's a wonder and an army's mighty grand,
And warrin's a profession only heroes understand;
There's somethin' sort o' thrillin' in a flag that's wavin' high,
And it makes you want to holler when the boys go marchin' by;
But when the shoutin's over and the fightin's done, somehow
We find we're still dependin' on the man behind the plough.

They sing about the glories of the man behind the gun,
And the books are full of stories of the wonders he has done;
The world has been made over by the fearless ones who fight;
Lands that used to be in darkness they have opened to the light;
When God's children snarl the soldier has to settle up the row,
And folks haven't time fer thinkin' of the man behind the plough.

In all the pomp and splendour of an army on parade,
And all through the awful darkness that the smoke of battle made:
In the halls where jewels glitter and where shoutin' men debate,
In the palaces where rulers deal out honours to the great,
There's not a single person who'd be doin' bizness now,
Or have medals if it wasn't fer the man behind the plough.

We're a-buildin' mighty citles and we're gainin' lofty heights;
We're a-winnin' lots of glory and we're settin' things to rights;
We're a-showin' all creation how the world's affairs should run,
Future men'll gaze in wonder at the things that we have done,
And they'll overlook the feller, jist the same as we do now,
Who's the whole concern's foundation—that's the man behind the plough.
—Chicago News.

LESSON NOTES.

THIRD QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

LESSON X.—SEPTEMBER 3.

REBUILDING THE TEMPLE.

Ezra 3. 10 to 4. 5. Memory verses, 10, 11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.—1 Cor. 3. 17.

OUTLINE.

1. Holy Sorrow and Holy Joy, v. 10-13.
 2. Temptation and Resistance, v. 1-5.
- Time.—About 535 B.C.
Place.—Jerusalem.

LESSON HELPS.

10. "Laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord"—An important national event. The people gathered in Jerusalem to set up the altars, keep the feast of tabernacles, and to offer the burnt offerings. The years of captivity had ended. The religious revival was essential to the revival of patriotism, and that essential to national growth in power. Wickedness is weakness in a man or in a nation. Moral strength is a mighty force. "Priests" were many in the sacred services. The music was resounding and impressive in the ears of the ancient Jews. "After the ordinance of David"—Using the psalms of his composition, and with proper musical notation. David the poet outlives David the king and warrior.

11. "Sang together by course"—Sometimes chanting together, sometimes responsively. "Giving thanks unto the Lord"—Prayer and praise should be joined together. "Because he is good"—The Jews were at times rebellious, but at other times they were penitent and grateful for divine mercies. God was in their thoughts. Because of this fact they became, with their many faults, still the teachers to the world of high

spiritual truths. "The people shouted"—Eastern and early nations were demonstrative.

12. "The first house"—The former temple. The poor, returning exile could not reproduce it. Could they have done



so it would have lacked the sacred relics, now destroyed; as the ark of the covenant, the mercy seat, the pot of manna, the rod of Aaron. "Many shouted . . . for joy"—At being in their own land, in the holy city, and seeing the new temple arising from the ruins of the old.

13. A vivid description. So it is now in human society—cause for sorrow and for joy. Some weep who think of the past and feel a sense of loss. Others sing aloud, for they call up present mercies and are inspired by bright hopes.

1. "The adversaries"—Mainly the Samaritans, and partly others who had settled in the land while the Jews were in captivity.

2. "Let us build with you"—Friendly words were on their lips, but a hostile purpose in their hearts. A concealed enemy is more to be dreaded than an open one.

3. "Ye have nothing to do with us"—The Samaritans had borrowed Jewish rites, but were heathen still. In later days it was still said, "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans" except to trade with them. We should not be

good to work with God. He will take care of his workmen.

5. "Hired counsellors against them"—To hire was in this case to bribe. Fine words sometimes cover foul deeds. Through bribes the orders of Cyrus were not executed, or executed with difficulty. The friends on whom we lean sometimes fall, and so we learn a most valuable lesson—that of self-reliance.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Daily offerings.—Ezra 3. 1-7.
- Tu. Rebuilding the temple.—Ezra 3. 8-13.
- W. Rebuilding the temple.—Ezra 4. 1-6.
- Th. Enemies prevail.—Ezra 4. 11-24.
- F. Charge of the Levites.—1 Chron. 23. 24-32.
- S. Enduring mercy.—Psalm 136.
- Su. God's temple.—1 Cor. 3. 6-17.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Holy Sorrow and Holy Joy, v. 10-13. Who were appointed to lead in song? What instruments did they have? How was the singing conducted? What was their song of praise? How did the people respond? What exception was there to the general joy? Between what two sounds could the people not discern?
2. Temptation and Resistance, v. 1-5. To whom did the enemies of Judah and Benjamin go? What led them to go to Zerubbabel? What request did they make? What reason did they give? Was this the truth? What did Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest say to them? Was this right? Why was it right? What did the people of the land do against Judah? What else did they do? How long did their opposition continue?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson are we taught—



RESTORING THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM.

indifferent to those who are in religious errors. Liberty is a good word, but a bad cloak for evil men to wear, Christians are to be a "separate" people. 4. "Weakened the hands of the people of Judah"—By ridicule, by threats, inducing fear (verse 3) by petty annoyances. Those who labour in upbuilding God's kingdom must expect opposition and must not be disheartened. It is



1. That we are not to look on things that are in the past, but press forward?
2. That we cannot serve God without opposition?
3. That God's sympathy is always at our command?

STRANGE USES FOR DOLLS.

Although in civilized countries dolls are associated with childhood and the nursery, there are not a few places on the globe where they are used for quite a different purpose. Rev. A. Findlater has gathered from numerous sources all the available information on this subject, and the compilation is one of peculiar interest. In many barbarous nations the women continue to carry dolls long after they have passed their youth. Among the Bechuannas and Basutos in Africa it is customary for the women to carry dolls until they have children of their own. When twins are born it is customary in certain tribes to slay the younger, in the superstitious belief that there can be but one soul between the two, and that nothing but evil can come if both are permitted to live. A doll is substituted in place of the murdered babe. Most of the dolls used by the savages are of wood, although some are of ivory, an elephant's tusk being utilized for the purpose.



Marmaduke—"My papa's in the mining business."
Henery—"So's my paw, too."
Marmaduke—"My papa's is gold-mining—what's yours?"
Henery—"Kalsominin'!"

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