

## Literature, &amp;c.

## THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

From Hogg's Edinburgh Instructor.

## THE WORD IN SEASON.

It was a calm frosty evening in the end of October. The crescent moon was high above the tall chimneys and church spires of Birmingham, though but faintly seen through the dense smoke which always overhangs that town of many forges. But forge and workshop were fast closing for the night; weary mechanics were pouring along the gas-lighted streets, to their respective homes or haunts in the lower part of the old town, while in the upper and fashionable wards, carriages, with curled and turbaned heads in high relief inside, and groups whose gay dresses peeped from under wrapping-cloak or shawl, were hurrying to the evening parties which had just commenced for that season in Birmingham. The din of the great thoroughfares came softened by distance to a small suburban street, which ran almost into the fields. Quiet people, who kept little gardens, lived there. It had two shops, and gin was sold in one of them; but, though every house was lighted, there was nobody just then in the street, but a solitary man and the family group of the Jenkinsons. The latter consisted of Mrs Jenkinson, a tall matronly lady, who walked with much precision in a black satin gown and Paisley shawl; her eldest daughter, Elizabeth, a pretty but rather stiff looking girl of eighteen, who hung on her mamma's arm, with the latest winter fashions of mantlelet and bonnet on; and her twin little girls, Mary and Anna, who were just turned of nine, and tripped along in fine hats and polkas, behind. Mrs Jenkinson left them entirely to the guardianship of their so-called governess Bessy, and her brother Jack, who brought up the rear, arm-in arm, at a respectful distance. They were Jenkinsons too, and had a distant relationship to the greater family, which poverty rendered still more remote, for the one wore the dress of an ordinary mechanic, and the other a well-worn cloak and a coarse straw bonnet. Their talk was nevertheless earnest and hopeful.

'I'll soon have the money gathered,' said Jack his tone rising unconsciously; 'then we'll have a house and shop of our own, and you and I will never part, Bessy.'

Here he stopped, for Bessy's glance directed his attention to the solitary man on the opposite side of the street. He had the figure and step of youth, but his air was worn and reckless; his clothes had a scuffed, shabby look—they and their wearer seemed as if their fortunes had fallen together; and his face was almost hidden by an old crazy hat, drawn down as it seemed for the purpose of concealment.

Bessy had observed him pacing along like one who had no object in his goings; he looked to neither house nor passenger, but kept his eyes bent on the pavement, as if lost in moody thought, till, approaching the gin shop, which chanced to be on that side of the street; he turned as if to go in, hesitated, and then, with a resolute movement, hurried by. It was but for a few steps, when the man came as quickly back; but again he paused at the door, and once more turned away, yet his walk had a wavering in it, and Bessy saw him look back.

'Speak to him, Jack,' said she, half drawing her brother across the narrow street; 'ask him not to go in.'

'He'll be angry, sister, and scold us,' said Jack.

'Ay, but it might save him, and with God's help, I'll do it myself,' said Bessy. 'Oh, sir,' she continued, as they now met the stranger full in the clear gas-light, 'don't go in. We had a father once, and he went into shops like that—'

'What do you say girl?' said the stranger, looking up with a haggard but handsome face, which, in spite of his assumed surprise, plainly indicated that Bessy's words had been perfectly understood. 'What do you say to me about your father?'

'That he went into shops like this, sir, and he is dead,' said Bessy, with an earnestness which her brother thought almost bold; 'and for all we learned by that, though I'm a poor girl, and we are both strangers, my brother and I take upon us to remind you this night of the old prayer, 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.''

'And what service would the remembrance of that prayer do me, my good girl?' said the stranger, moving along with them, like one whose mind had found some temporary diversion. 'One might go to worse places than a gin shop, you know.'

'Ah, sir, said Bessy, 'the use of that prayer might help one to go to better places.'

'Ay, girl, if one's fortunes would let him,' said the stranger; 'but where's the good in striving against wind and tide?'

'And where's the good in going to gin shops?' interrupted Jack, who had by this time got over his constitutional fear of scolding, though he perceived that the stranger had a manner and bearing considerably above their class, and was some years older than either himself or Bessy.

'If one finds comfort in it, why shouldn't one go to a gin shop or any where else, when things are as bad with him as they can be?' said the stranger, sullenly.

'Oh, sir,' said Bessy, 'it's a strange state that can't be made better or worse, if one sets his mind to it, and surely the gin shop is

not the best way. Besides, you know God has grace for us all, and we are warned not to be weary in well-doing.'

'Good night my girl,' said the stranger wringing her hand. 'I'll go straight home.' And he had walked rapidly away in the direction he had come, Jack and Bessy watching him till far past the gin shop. They quickened their pace also, for by this time the family were some way in advance; and as the brother and sister reached the foot of the street, they found Mrs Jenkinson and her daughter taking each an arm of a small, fashionably dressed young man, whom they well knew to be Master George Frederick Jenkinson, the only son, now on his homeward way from the office of a Birmingham solicitor, whose business he was learning.

'What odd looking person was that you talked so long with, Bessy?' said the elder lady, for she was generally superior to addressing Jack. 'I did not think you made such acquaintances.'

'We never saw him before said Bessy, reddening, as she saw Master George Frederick's look grow strangely inquisitive, 'but he was hesitating at the door of the gin shop, and we persuaded him not to go in.'

'You really will have a strange time, if you preach to every low character you meet at the doors of gin shops. I don't think young women are called upon to take such an interest in strangers,' said Mrs Jenkinson; but she paused in the midst of her lecture, for a tall stout gentleman, in the best of broad cloth and gold seals, turned the corner full upon them, whom Miss Elizabeth at once saluted as Uncle Jones.

The attention of the whole party, including the twin little girls, was entirely devoted to this gentleman, who accepted their civilities in a grand patronising way. George Frederick was particular regarding the state of his health; Miss Elizabeth assured him that she had almost finished his Berlin slippers; and Mrs Jenkinson was delighted out of her wonted stateliness when he announced his intention of going home with them 'to have a trifle of supper.'

The Jenkinson family belonged to an order numerous in large British towns—people of limited income and rigorously genteel notions. Mr Jenkinson had been a worldly wise, and in some degree a prosperous man. He had commenced business early, and with a small capital; but he saved, married, and speculated prudently; laid by some money for his girls, purchased some beginnings of house property and being determined to raise his only son above shopkeeping, sent George Frederick to study the law. Next, Mr Jenkinson enlarged his shop, rose into higher branches of business, and began to find himself recognised by wealthier neighbours, when a sudden cold, caught by wearing a thinner coat than usual one wintry evening, brought on an attack of internal inflammation, by which his soul was summoned to that country where goods are neither bought nor sold.

Mrs Jenkinson had his virtues recorded on a handsome tombstone, his stock-in-trade disposed of the best advantage, and her own and children's mourning made in strict accordance with the last London fashions, after which, she retired with her family to the best house he had bought (it was situated in a decidedly respectable suburb), and the rest of her time was spent in endeavours to keep what she called her place in society and in reminding her girls of what they might have been, if poor, dear Mr Jenkinson had only been spared a little longer.

The young Jenkinsons grew up as might be expected under such influences. Master George Frederick was a useless clever young man on whom some small talents of the surface kind had been bestowed. He could make a witty remark, write an amusing letter and even rhyme very decent verses; but, having little depth or strength of mind, and a most superficial education, these accomplishments only served to foster a high opinion of himself, and make him despise what he called professional drudgery, namely, the business by which it was intended he should live. Indeed, any recognised occupation would have been equally despicable in the eyes of Master George Frederick. His ambition was to appear a poet and a gentleman, and the subject of his daily lamentations was, that either his father did not live long enough to make a fortune for him, or that he had not been born heir to a handsome estate, in which condition only, he averred, it was possible for a man of genius, meaning himself, to realise the aspirations of his soul.

Miss Elizabeth had been just finished at one of the most expensive boarding schools in town. Her friends knew her to be a good natured thoughtless girl, and her life had but two aims—to excel the Misses Smith and Brown, her recent schoolfellows, at all times and places, was one, and the other, to secure a respectable match as soon as possible. Mary and Ann were a pair of those premature little women one meets so abundantly in every street, with the airs, follies, and vanities of youth ingrafted on mere childhood. They could talk of 'Harry's attention,' Maria's figure, and 'Charlotte's flirtation,' exactly in the tone of grown up young ladies.

Bessy was ostensibly their governess, but in reality general maid to the establishment. She dressed Mrs and Miss Jenkinson on great occasions, made pancakes and puddings when they were wanted, washed the china, clear-starched the laces, heard the little girls their lessons, kept them from destroying their clothes, and mended for the entire household. By these varied duties, Bessy was in the receipt of seven pounds a year, besides her board, and the undisturbed possession of a closet in the garret. Mrs Jenkinson told all

her friends in confidence that 'Mary and Anna ought to have a superior governess, though Bessy was a clever creature; but she had taken her partly for charity, because the girl was an orphan, poor thing, and a very distant relation to Mr Jenkinson.' Bessy's father had been the deceased gentleman's cousin-german, and rather looked up in his humbler days, because he carried on a promising business, and was considered one of the cleverest tradesmen in Birmingham. Old neighbours still spoke of poor Jack Jenkinson, how unlucky he was, and how friendly he had been. All his employed people spoke well of him, and till her dying day, his wife averred that there were few men like Jack. But he was one of those who hastened to be rich, and grasped at more of this world than what he could hold. Some said it was disappointment in his speculations, some that it was bad company, which led him to early and habitual intemperance. But the man died at middle life, of what the doctor called an utterly broken constitution, leaving a sickly, worn out widow, and seven children, with scarce a wreck of provision. Yet the elements of better things were in that family. Jack's wife had been a sensible and pious woman, though latterly of feeble health, and always of gentle ways. She had taken Jack for better, for worse, and borne kindly with him through all his reformations and relapses, for they were many. What loving counsels and earnest prayers she had spent upon the man, were known only to themselves and their God!

Energetic wives around believed that the measures were not sufficiently strong; but, though unable to prevent the ruin of her husband's business, she had economised, kept peace at home, and trained up her children in habits of industry. That training was the heritage of the orphans. They were of course obliged to look far below their early prospects, but by degrees the boys came to find work and wages in the factories of their native town, while the girls, of whom there were but two, assisted their mother in house-keeping for the common good, and taking in the finer descriptions of washing.

Thus the poor family contrived to live, but little was saved; and as years passed, they gradually scattered away from the old home. According to the common, but fatal custom of artisans, brother after brother married as soon as he was fairly grown, and his earnings overtopped his own wants by the merest trifle. The eldest sister Sally was in haste to get a house of her own with one of her companions under similar circumstances.—The mother died after a long sickness, in which their little savings were consumed. They had no lodgers that season, and Jack and Bessy found themselves alone in a poor house, which the landlord wanted from them. Jack was at this time a tall robust youth of twenty, with hair hands, dark brown hair that clustered in thick curls and a fair honest face, to which early toil and forethought had given the look of graver years. He was an active and industrious mechanic; prudent beyond his age, zealous in all his undertakings, and just, in the ordinary sense of that term in both thoughts and actions; but there was a leaven of worldly ambition in the young man's mind, a latent desire to look and be thought great, which gathered strength with time, and might be known already by their invariable attendants—a restless fear of what people might think or say, and a liability to be influenced by all he thought superior.—Bessy was two years older than her brother and strangely like though in many respects differing from him. She had the same dark brown hair, though hers was long and soft, and she constantly wore it turned up in smooth bands; the same fair complexion, but the girl was thin and pale, and apt to be troubled with a cough in cold evenings.—From her position in life, Bessy had labored less than her brother, but she had read and thought more, and though no less prudent and industrious for this world, she had early learned from her gentle and pious mother, to look above it, and not fix all her hopes on things that must perish in the using. They were the youngest of the family, and had been from childhood attached to each other more than all the rest. The gradual diminution of the household only served to strengthen that invisible bond, till in the language of Scripture, 'their souls were knit together.' Both were more thoughtful and better informed than the generality of their years and station, and having seen the trials of their seniors with increasing families and fluctuating wages, the brother and sister were warned against the course they had taken. In the present crisis, Jack proposed a long-cherished project of his, to which Bessy at once agreed. It was that they should store up their old house furniture with a kind neighbor, who had offered to spare room for it, and both work and save till they were able to take a small house in some quiet decent street, where they should keep a little shop together, and as Jack said, 'may be get rich some day.'

The furniture was accordingly intrusted to their old neighbor, and the house given up to the landlord. Jack found the cheapest possible lodgings for himself and Bessy, quite unconscious of Mrs Jenkinson's boasted benevolence, accepted at that lady's request, the situation in which our story found her.—Patiently and cheerfully had she performed its many duties; Jack too had worked hard and earned well in a button manufactory, and a year of the probationary time had just closed with some prospect of success.

The brother and sister met by accident, for Bessy had no holidays, but the family spent that evening at the house of Miss Timmins, a maiden aunt of the late Mr Jenkinson, who

resided in an out-of-the-way corner of the town, and invited them regularly once a quarter to tea, and a very early turn out. Miss Timmins was past sixty, and had some money in the bank at her own disposal. The Jenkinsons could not, therefore, think of dis-obliging her, and she was pleased to insist on Bessy's always accompanying them, because the girl was a relation, though her generosity never extended farther than that acknowledgement.

When returning from this entertainment as usual by the most private way (for though Miss Timmins was a little rich, the Jenkinsons considered her by no means genteel), Bessy met her brother, and being allowed to walk with her, notwithstanding his artisan dress, as far as the great people's door, they had discussed their humble hopes and prospects, till interrupted by the occurrence we have just related.

(To be continued.)

From the London Working Man's Friend.

## HONESTY AND INDUSTRY.

A NARRATIVE FOR THE YOUNG.

SOME years ago, a poor boy about ten years old entered the warehouse of a rich merchant in Dantzic, named Samuel Richter, and asked the book keeper for alms. The man did not raise his head from his hand, but grumbled out, 'you will get nothing here, be off?' Weeping bitterly, the boy glided towards the door, at the moment that Richter entered. 'What is the matter here?' he asked, turning to the book keeper. The man scarcely looked up from his work, but answered 'a worthless beggar boy!'

In the mean time, Richter looked towards the boy, and observed, that when close to the door, he picked up something from the ground. 'Ah, my little lad,' said he, 'what is that you picked up?' The weeping boy turned and showed him a needle. 'And what will you do with that?' asked the merchant. 'My jacket has holes in it,' was the answer, 'I will sew up the big ones.'

Richter was pleased with this reply, and still more with the boy's innocent, handsome face. He said, therefore, in a kind though serious tone, 'but are you not ashamed, you so young and hearty, to beg? Cannot you work?'

'Ah, my dear sir,' replied the boy, 'I do not know how. I am too little yet to thrash, or to fell wood. My father died three weeks ago, and my poor mother and my little brothers have eaten nothing these two days. Then I ran out in anguish, and begged for alms. But, alas! a single peasant only gave me a piece of bread yesterday; since then, I have not eaten a morsel.'

It is quite customary for those who make a trade of begging to contrive tales like this, and this hardens many hearts against the claims of general want. But the merchant trusted the boy's honest looking face. He thrust his hands into his pocket, drew forth a piece of money, and said, 'there is a shilling; go to the bakers, and with half the money buy bread for yourself, your mother, and your brothers; but bring back the other half to me.' The boy took the money and ran joyfully away.

'Well,' said the surly book keeper, 'he will laugh in his sleeve, and never come back again.'—'Who knows?' replied Richter. As he spoke, he saw the boy returning, running quickly, with a large loaf of brown bread in one hand, and some money in the other. 'There, good sir,' he cried, almost breathless, 'there is the rest of the money.' Then, feeling very hungry, he begged for a knife, to cut a piece of the bread. The book keeper reached him in silence, his pocket-knife. The lad cut off a piece in great haste, and was about to eat it. But suddenly, he bethought himself, laid the bread aside, and folding his hands, uttered a silent prayer, and then fell to his meal with a hearty appetite.

The merchant was moved by the boy's unaffected conduct. He inquired after his family and home, and learned from his simple narrative that his father had lived in a village, about four miles distant from Dantzic, where he owned a small house and farm. But his house had been burned to the ground, and much sickness in his family had compelled him to sell his farm. He had then hired himself out to a rich neighbour; but before three weeks were at an end, he died, broken down by grief and excessive toil.—And now his mother, whom sorrow had thrown upon a bed of sickness, was, with her four children, suffering the bitterest poverty. He, the eldest, had resolved to seek for assistance, and had gone, at first, from village to village, then had struck into the high road; and, at last, having begged everywhere in vain, had come to Dantzic.

Richter's heart was touched. He had but one child, and this boy appeared to him as a draft at first sight, which Providence had drawn upon him as a test of his gratitude. 'Listen, my boy,' he began; 'have you a wish to learn?—Oh, yes! I have, indeed,' cried the boy. 'I have read the catechism already; and I should know a good deal more, but at home I had always my little brother to carry, for my mother was sick in bed.'

The merchant at once formed his resolution. 'Well, then,' said he, 'if you are good, honest, and industrious, I will take care of you. You shall learn, have meat, drink, and clothing, and in time, earn something besides. Then you can support your mother and your brothers.' The boy's eyes flashed with joy. But in a moment he cast them again to the ground, and said sadly, 'My mother all this