

Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

From the London Working Man's Friend.

SONG OF THE SHIP-BUILDER.

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

The sky is ruddy in the East,
The earth is gray below,
And, spectral in the river-mist,
The ship's white timbers show.
Then let the sounds of measured stroke
And grating saw begin;
The broad-axe to the gnarled oak,
The mallet to the pin!

Hark!—roars the bellows, blast on blast,
The sooty smithy jars,
And fire-sparks, rising far and fast,
Are fading with the stars.
All day for us the smith shall stand
Beside that flashing forge;
All day for us his heavy hand
The groaning anvil scourge.

From far-off hills, the panting team
For us is toiling near;
For us the raftsmen down the stream
Their island barges steer.
Rings out for us the axe-man's stroke
In forest old and still—
For us the century-circled oak
Falls crashing down this hill.

Up!—up!—in nobler toils than ours
No craftsmen bear a part:
We make of Nature's giant powers
The slaves of human Art.
Lay rib to rib and beam to beam,
And drive the trenails free;
Nor faithless joint nor yawning seam
Shall tempt the searching sea!

Where'er the keel of our good ship
The sea's rough field shall plough—
Where'er her tossing spars shall drip
With salt-spray caught below—
That ship must heed her master's beck,
Her helm obey his hand,
And seamen tread her reeling deck
As if they trod the land.

Her oaken ribs the vulture beak
Of Northern ice may peel;
The sunken rock and coral peak
May grate along her keel;
And know we well the painted shell
We give to wind and wave,
Must float the sailor's citadel,
Or sink, the sailor's grave!

Ho!—strike away the bars and blocks,
And set the good ship free!
Why lingers on these dusty rocks
The young bride of the sea?
Look! how she moves adown the grooves,
In graceful beauty now!
How lowly on the breast she loves
Sinks down her virgin brow!

God bless her! whoso'er the breeze
Her snowy wing shall fan,
Aside the frozen Hebrides,
Or sultry Hindostan!
Where'er, in mart or on the main,
With peaceful flag unfurled,
She helps to wind the silken chain
Of commerce round the world!

Speed on the ship!—But let her bear
No merchandise of sin,
No groaning cargo of despair
Her rosy hold within.
No leather drug for Eastern lands,
Nor poison draught for ours;
But honest fruits of toiling hands
And Nature's sun and showers.

Behers the Prairie's golden grain,
The Desert's golden sand,
The clustered fruits of sunny Spain,
The spice of Morning land!
Her pathway on the open main
May blessings follow free,
And glad hearts welcome back again
Her white sails from the sea!

From the London Working Man's Friend.

THE LITTLE HAND.

(A tale for the Young.)

BY THE REV. H. HASTINGS WELD, OF BOSTON, UNITED STATES.

THERE were once two little boys, whose names we will suppose to be George and Henry. They lived in a beautiful valley in Pennsylvania; the same where I am now sitting to write this sketch concerning them. The sun peeped over the hills at the East, to bid them good morning; and when he went to rest, he made his nightcap of mountains on the other side of this beautiful valley. A stream which comes through it, making a notch in the hills on both sides, joins another stream below, and the two with their tributaries form the Brandywine river, famous for the battle fought on its banks, in which the friend of our country, Lafayette, was wounded, many years ago.

When George and Henry rubbed their eyes open in the morning, the first thing they saw from the window was a famous old stone bridge, arched over the Brandywine. Across this bridge, long before they were born, there used to pass every day long trains of loaded wagons, jingling with bells, and carrying the merchandise of Europe, the products of the tropics, or the manufactures of New England, into the heart of Pennsylvania; or returning with the wheat and iron, and other mineral and agricultural products, of this fine rich State. But now you may look many times in a day, and see nothing upon the bridge; but every few minutes you hear a puff and a whistle, and turning at the sound, you see another, and more modern, but less romantic structure. Over this goes snorting and puffing the iron horses, drawing after them long and heavily laden trains, and waking the echoes of the quiet valley with their shrill music. Every hour in the day, from early dawn till dark, you may hear this music. I know nothing more beautiful than when, as where I now sit, you may see of a still cold afternoon the long mark which the railroad train seems to have left on

the side of the dark wintry hills—the white smoke and steam, puffed out of the locomotive, and hanging like a wire drawn cloud over the road, until the swift-moving cause of the appearance is far, ever so far away.

If you chance to be awake in the morning, or if the whistle wakes you, you may see a fiery car shooting along, and leaving a sparkling train like a comet. And as the train thunders over the bridge you shudder at the thought, that the careless movement of a piece of iron might hurl into eternity the hundreds of people who may be in those cars, quietly beguiling their journey with sleep. You are thankful that you are safe in bed; but if you keep awake long enough to remember it, you bethink yourself that the same good God who guards you knows, also, 'all who travel by land and by water,' and that his eye is watchful over all.

The iron road over which is carried at one draught a whole day's procession of wagon loads, has left the grass to grow on the turnpike. Cows feed along the roadside where the quick bustle of twenty-five years ago would have scared them from their feed, had the many heavy wheels left feed there for them. Our little friends, George and Henry, were not rich, nor of rich parents, but they were richer than many, whose turnpike stock melted from thousands down to hundreds, as horse power came on the rails, and thence to tens and fives, when the iron locomotive took their business away altogether from the quadruped. Old taverns are here, the ghost of 'entertainment for man and beast.' Small shops nestled in the corners of the great houses which used to be filled with people, and had every night a new set of inmates. Great piles of stone stabling would look quite romantic, if they had only turrets or battlements to make interesting ruins of their now uncomely walls.

A friend of mine came here about a dozen years ago, looking for a spot where he might establish himself to preach—for he was a minister of the Gospel. He looked with a poetic eye on those old stables—and thought how, with a Gothic arching to the doors, and the piercing of windows in the old walls, and the building of a tower, he might convert the now useless building into a church. But his friends were more practical, and built him a new, a commodious and very pretty building—small, but I am sorry to say, as yet almost large enough. And here on every Sunday I am at home. Here, on Sunday afternoon, the little children come from far and near, from the village and from the distant hillside, to learn those things in which, as an old writer expresses it, 'a Christian ought to be instructed for his soul's health.' A right pleasant thing it is to see this congregation of little people gather. George and Henry always came among them, and no two of the pupils were dearer to the teachers than they.

One Sunday afternoon neither George nor Henry was there; and you may all be sure that we were very sad indeed to hear that Henry had stayed at home, because little George was dead. The sun had risen unthought of that day by little Henry, for his bed-fellow was not there to look abroad with him, and he waked late to reach out his arms in vain for his brother, and bitterly to cry when he found that the pillow was untouched, and would no more be pressed by the curly head which he had so often hugged to his breast; and hugged the closer in his dreams, when the thunder of the train upon the bridge, or the shrill scream which seemed almost to sound under his bed, disturbed his sleep without awakening him from it. The last rays of the next day's sun kissed a little grave, and the golden glories of the sunset were full of happy promise for one of the little ones of whom Jesus said, 'Suffer them to come unto me, and forbid them not.' It is a sad thing to pay the last office to a little child—to commit his body to the ground until the general resurrection in the last day. It is sad because of the grief of sorrowing relatives and friends—of brothers, who, like little Henry, refuse to be comforted—of sisters who draw back with a shudder from the deep narrow pit—and of lesser children who look on with an air of grief and troubled wonder—too much perplexed to understand their bereavement, and yet sufficiently aware of the grief of the scene to weep, they know not why. The sorrow of the mother is not always spoken, perhaps because it is beyond words; and the father's heart aches to find his busy hopes thus suddenly cut short. But though mournful on account of the survivors, the 'light on little graves' is pleasant, if we will but see in it the reflection of the purposes of the kind Father who has taken the children away from the evil to come. Had George lived, he might have met much to sorrow for; and as he had a kind heart, we are sure that he would, even though his own personal lot had been free from suffering.

And so little George died and was buried. And Henry came on the next Sabbath to the Sunday school. There the sorrow of his young heart was opened afresh, for each of the brothers was a subscriber to the paper which is printed to circulate among Sunday-school scholars. George was a little fellow, and sometimes while he lived could not come to the church. And then Henry carried home his paper for him. On such occasions George looked with all anxiety for the return of Henry from school, eager to return of Henry from school, eager to receive Child's Gazette which he prized so much. On this Sunday, when the little form of George was wrapped in clay, Henry took his paper with a smile. For an instant he had forgotten his loss. For an instant he thought of George bounding to meet him; and a smile of expectation lighted up his face. Then he remembered that his brother would meet him no more in this world, and very sad he was indeed. All who saw joined with him in his grief; but we reminded them of the better land, where those who love God will meet, and as they listened, their sorrow became a pleasing melancholy. They were wiser if sadder, and it seemed as if their late schoolmate George, being dead, yet spake among them.

George and Henry were not born in America, but came with their parents from over the sea. Dearly they loved to wander together through scenes so new to them, and when George was gone Henry seemed to desire nothing but to ramble alone where his brother had so often accompanied him. He sought everything which could remind him of the friend he had lost, and thought of him not as dead, but only as separated a while from him. It was delightful to see so much true thoughtfulness in one so young; not the unavailing grief to which many older persons give way—but 'sorrow not without hope.'

Perhaps my young readers think that this sketch has in it already quite pain enough. But they must remember that I am telling them a true story, and cannot make my facts, but must

recount them as they happened. Before the house where Henry lived is a mill race, and upon it stands a woollen manufactory, in which lies his father's business. Little Henry very early learned to move unharmed among the machinery, and many parts he could adjust and direct as well as an older person. When not at school he often went in, unasked, to assist his father—until one evening when we heard that the poor lad had lost an arm. The constant sight of the machinery had made him too confident, and he paid the sad penalty.

He bore his sufferings like a hero. The limb was skillfully amputated, and Henry laid upon his bed, which was brought down stairs that he might not brood over his great misfortune in solitude. There we saw him. The minister may choose his companions among the well and the happy, and visit them or not, as his leisure serves; but his duty lies among the suffering and the sick, and such he must not neglect. If he would follow the example of his Heavenly Master. Well rewarded we were for that visit, for the glance of pleasure that lighted up the little hero's eyes was a something more grateful than the house of feasting could have offered. Again we were there when his mangled limb was dressed, and no soldier after the excitement of a hard fought field could have exhibited more courage—more fortitude we should say, which is the nobler effort of the mind.

The strangest little incident remains to be told. In a day or two there was a call for us, and we found the friends of Henry with his little amputated arm in a miniature coffin. They wished to obtain permission to place the arm which had so often encircled George alive, upon the dead lad's breast. But there now repose the body of the child who first died, and the arm of his brother: we dare say that there is not another such a grave like it in the world. It was a thought worthy the poetry of affection—that true poetry, which needs no rules of art, and no choice of words for its expression—which grows spontaneously in the palace and in the cottage—wherever 'little children love one another.' Often the one armed lad strays into the quiet cemetery, where the few who have died since the church was built sleep in its shadow. Who can tell what strange thoughts must gather in the mind of that boy as he gazes on the grave of his own flesh—who can tell what speculations that lad must indulge in, respecting the day when the grave shall give up its dead! He may, and most probably will die far away from this; for if he reaches man's estate he will probably wander hence. And when he dies, how strange will be the thought that he has left his brother such a pledge that in the resurrection they shall see each other!

This much is strict truth. Let us now take a story-teller's privilege, and look some years ahead. It happens often that the loss of a limb, or the disabling of the body, gives the mind larger scope; and that the forced curtailment of pursuits requiring physical strength or aptitude, develops the finer faculties of the mind. We are too careless of our thinking powers, and in the bustle of action leave them to rust inert. And oftentimes that which seems to our short sight a great calamity, proves a great good, controlling and directing our paths into higher pursuits than we should have thought of for ourselves; or our friends would have devised for us, under other circumstances.

Henry learns to love his book, and it is remarkable to see with what dexterity he can manage to turn over the leaves of a pretty large volume, steadying it upon his knee with his other arm, since other hand he has none. And we must not forget to mention that he learns better to love his mother and his little sister; that is to say, he gives more evidence of his love in thoughtful attention. His young heart is moved with ambition to show how useful he can be with only one hand, and he accomplishes more with that—more of serviceable help—than most other boys can do with two. His baby sister is his constant companion, a gentle little playmate, from whom he need fear no rough usage. And the loss of his arm has made him gentle too. She thinks, and well she thinks, there was never so kind a brother. His father, also, finds him more than ever useful. Upon errands he is invaluable, for now he has not the distraction of the temptation to run wild and play, which he might have, if that hand were still his which used to help him so nimbly over walls and fence and up the highest, and to use it would seem the most inaccessible trees. Poor fellow! There is a shade of sadness in the glance which he casts up at the high swinging seats which he used to perch upon among the branches; but a smile comes over his face as he stoops to examine the beautiful little mosses at the foot of the tree, which a boy with two arms would never think of heeding.

Years pass. The thoughtful boy has become a youth, and even men of reading listen with pleased surprise at the light which he can throw upon such topics of village conversation as may be elucidated by quotations from books. There is a very good old library in the village, to which the lad has access; and there are nice old books which came to America just after William Penn, and have remained as heir-looms in families, generation after generation. The quaint old type, and the long s's particularly like an f trimmed, plagued the boy a little at first—but perhaps there is an advantage in the printing which compels you to pause as you read, and a better opportunity is given for marking, learning, and inwardly digesting. At any rate the lad thrives in his learning. The pursuit of knowledge under difficulties often secures the attainment. The verdict of the neighbour is, that 'the young man ought to be educated,' and the 'Squire gives his sanction with as much dignity as he would give to the acknowledgement of an affidavit.

But how is this education to be had? It has been apparent for two or three winters that Henry has 'learned out' all the country school-masters are prepared to teach; and indeed he has become rather an assistant—an assistant superior to his principal—than a pupil. The minister gives Henry a peep into the Latin Rudiments, and Liber Primus is left behind. The surveyor is glad that he should carry the chain, and Henry walks around and looks over and under and into the theodolite, until with his reading he has mastered that mystery, and could survey himself if he had only two hands for the adjustment of the instrument. He has puzzled out all the Latin abbreviations on the old bottles in the apothecary's corner of the village grocery. He has looked behind 'one, two, three, one,' in the village choir, till he knows more of the theory of music than the leader. He has attempted the solution of the mysteries of the lit-

tle instrument in the church, and talks about stops and pipes with such aptness, that we are sure he might build an organ, if—that cruel if—he had only two hands!

What is to be done with the young man? The school committee talk in corners, looking over their shoulders at his thoughtful face, till he feels sure they must be saying something in which he is interested, and he hopes—but vainly darts to hope. At length the secret comes out—he is not disappointed, but almost staggered at the undertaking—he may be schoolmaster, if he dare undertake it. 'What is the use,' the committee have well asked, 'that strangers should be paid and Henry do their work?' Certain of the older folk, who remember school days for their striking incidents, and recollect how some staid citizen, now one of the 'heads of meeting,' actually whipped the master in his teens—some of these cautious old men who think the world has stood still, or rather retrograded, since they were boys, have their doubts whether a one-armed teacher will do. But the trial is made, and the silent appeal which that armless sleeve makes to the pupils, touches a firmer magnanimity, and Henry proves a better teacher than the village ever knew before, or quite as good as any. Even the academy in the country town has not a more thorough one in the primary branches.

The minister drops to Henry's parents a quiet hint. Why cannot he take the money which he receives for teaching the young idea to shoot in that season when other vegetation ceases—why cannot he take his winter wages and educate himself in the summer months? The suggestion is acted upon, and the interest of the clergyman places him where the most can be made of his little capital. Bye-and-bye he does more, and makes the one armed student the beneficiary of an institution where provision is made for the cases of those who have more mind to learn than means to pay.

Shall we follow this flight of fancy farther? Shall we make him preacher or lawyer? Doctor he cannot be; for a one armed man could not have dressed his mangled limb, and doctors must be ready for all emergencies.

There are many years before him yet, before he can realise what we have already imagined for him, if the rest of body does not follow the arm already laid down to its rest. But we do think that for him and such as him, God opens a privileged instead of a difficult path. They are sure of the sympathies of their fellow men. Through them, as instruments, our Heavenly Father works good for those who love him, who have 'heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.'

From Dickens's Household Words.

WHAT SAND IS

'So,' says Manship, 'this sand, by diffusion of tides, did by little and little lift its head above the waters; and so, in short time after sundry fishermen, as well of this kingdom, as also of France, Flanders, and the low countries, yearly about the feast of St. Michael the Archangel, resorted thither, where they continued in tents made for the purpose by the space of forty days, about the killing, trimming, salting and selling of herrings, to all that thither came for that purpose.' Yarmouth, therefore, could bear on her shield no more appropriate device than three glittering herrings, not even when the decapitated them, and reheated them, in the first or second Edward's reign, with portions of the lions from the arms of England. Spelman tells us, that 'at the first they built painted tents and huts against the inclement air; but by the King's (Edward the Confessor's) permission soon more comely habitations, and shortly after superb ones.'

This point of our history brings out the fact that Yarmouth had a Government before it had a fixed foundation. The moral essentials of a town preceded the material ones. 'Order is heaven's first law'; it was Yarmouth's fundamental principle. No Socialism, or Red Republicanism here. 'To regress and prevent disorders arising among the multitude upon the sale and delivery of the herrings brought ashore there,' observes Jaques in his charters of the Cinque Ports, 'for want of a settled government in that town, or as hereafter noted, for want of a town built; the (Cinque) ports used to send thither yearly certain men as their bailiffs, that during the time of the herring fair they might abide there, and govern all that fishing season.' Disturbances do arise, but are soon put down. 'One of the port bailiffs doing his office there was killed; for which the offender was deservedly hanged.' Even the newly risen and is not free for whoever will to take possession of; for, quoth Swinden—'The original of Great Yarmouth was a sand in the sea; and as then none but the King had any right or title thereto, hence 'tis called in the book of Domesday terra regia, i. e., the King's Demesne.'

Of the herring—the rich ore dug from a watery mine—of a little fish which could thus lay the foundation of a prosperous community, very marvellous tales have been told, and credited. Jaques speaks of the 'herrings, which, by a wonderful and rare providence, having their constant course once a year round this island, about the autumnal equinox begin to keep their quarters on these coasts.' Pennant, however, established of natural history. His idea that their grand army, starting from the Arctic Circle is split by the Shetland Islands in two divisions, one of which traverses the east, and the other the west coast of Great Britain, has been quietly met by the statement of Mr Yarrell, that the herring does not abound in the Arctic Ocean—It is true that herrings are catchable and eatable later and later in the season, (with several exceptions however,) as we run our eye southwards down the map; but the theory thence deduced by Pennant only shows us the danger of forming too hasty conclusions from a regular consecutiveness of any set of events; or indeed from any series, whether of forms or actions. Fishermen have long and well known, that the herrings taken off the north of Scotland late in spring, off Yorkshire in summer, and on the Norfolk coast in autumn, are quite different fish; permanently different as varieties of the species, and not portions of the same, or similar shoals. They do migrate, it is true, but it is from the deep to the shallow waters of their respective stations, on each of which the catch is peculiar, and also unchangeable in its characteristics.

They who deny a God, either in theory or practice, destroy man's nobility.