

# Sunday Reading.

## THE ELDER BROTHER.

His Place is Not to be a Tryant, but an Honored Counsellor.

The older members of the community are naturally the most honored, and their judgment is regarded with favor by those of younger years. With age comes experience; experience brings wisdom, and wisdom begets responsibility. We may ignore the lessons of experience, bitter though they be, and fail to act wisely our part in life, but we cannot get away from the responsibility. It will follow us as sure as the years follow each other. The follies and errors of youth will bring disgrace upon the maturer years. The errors of early manhood will stamp with the weakness of second childhood, those who have passed beyond the bustle and bustle of active business affairs. In the evening of life, wisdom should characterize their acts and their words.

It is the province and duty of the older members of society to advise the younger. It is but reasonable to suppose that the judgment of those who have passed through the active scenes of life is better than that which comes from the midst of the struggles. They can look back upon times when they were sorely tried to know whether this was best or that; whether this course could bring the desired result, or that would prove a failure. They acted more or less blindly. About every step was the shadow of doubt, and the feeling of uncertainty. Tremblingly they approached the crisis, and sometimes made a misstep because of the timid fear that made unsteady their walk. Looking back how many see how a single error of judgment was fatal. If they had known that just before them was an open chasm, and that a single step forward meant ruin, they would have gone back and been saved.

All about the present, active duties of life are hedges that hide the path, and we must plunge forward to meet the consequences of the step we take. Should our feet strike the solid rock, we are fortunate, and success will crown our effort, but should a deceitful shadow lure us to the pit, we are a failure. Oh, for some hand to guide! Oh, for the wise counsel of those whose years and experience have taught them to locate the pitfalls of life and to show them!

Yes, every inch of your noble personality. be a man! Let no fellow, who conceives that he is wiser than you, because he has years and education and experience beyond yours, mold your ideas or change your opinions. Stand alone, if need be, but be a man! Be independent, unbending, cold, and brilliant as an iceberg. Then will you stand alone without influence or friends, but you will be a man!

We are all willing to give advice, but few are ready to accept it. Humanity is a sort of "independent order." Each member is separate, and individual in his likes and dislikes. We are proud of our individuality, and prouder still to assert our personal independence. The pride of independence is the ruin of many men. We listen to the wholesome advice of our friends, and act upon our own judgment, often to our great discomfort. Our "manhood," our proud noble "manhood," must not lose by yielding in any particular, to the criticisms of our fellows! Be a man! True manhood profits by the advice and lessons of others. True manhood cannot stand aloof from society. As the tender twig is shielded by the spreading branches of the sturdy oak, so is manhood protected by the larger experience and greater wisdom of the older members of the world's great brotherhood, and he is the greater man, the more successful man, the wiser man who heeds the danger signals of those who have passed along the way before him.

Age and experience do not give to man the right to be headstrong and obstinate. He must not demand obedience simply because of his years. He has no right to demand. His duty is to advise in a proper spirit, and let the younger member assume the responsibility of refusing his counsel. The headstrong, obstinate man, whether old or young, is an unsafe guide. He does not act from careful judgment, but jumps haphazard at a conclusion, and right or wrong he sticks to it, simply because it is his opinion.

## Food and Happiness.

Moral and intellectual, as well as physical character, remarks a philosophical writer, depend to a very large extent upon the character of our diet, and when pious women tell me they are so actively engaged in christian work that they have no time to attend to culinary matters, or look after the food that goes upon their home tables, I say to them: No church work, no temperance work, no benevolent work, no good work of any kind, can be done effectively without the aid of good food, and only through the aid of good, wholesome, well-prepared food, can the noblest results of christian effort be obtained in this world or the world to come.

The best of cookery will not prove a panacea for every human ill. It will not eradicate diseases and death. It will not even banish from the earth all social and political evil, but it will do much to increase the aggregate of earthly enjoyment.

It will add greatly to the comfort, health and happiness of the suffering humanity. It will develop more fully the physical, mental and moral vigor of men and women, enable them to realize that the world is full of joy and beauty, and encourage them to lead cleaner, sweeter and more effective lives.

## THE LEGEND OF EUPHRASIA.

Which Teaches How the Widow's Mite is Valued in Heaven.

A legend in connection with the church of St. Sophia is recalled by "An Idle Woman in Constantinople," and as it contains a moral fragment of truth, it may well be held in perpetual remembrance. When the basilica was finished the Emperor Justinian gave orders that an inscription in letters of gold should be placed about the dome: "Justinian dedicates this church to the glory of God." But on the day of the opening the emperor looked up at the dome, and saw with amazement that the inscription ran: "Euphrasia dedicates this church to the glory of God."

"What is the meaning of this mockery?" he asked, pointing upward; and turning to the patriarch sitting beside the throne, he said, "Did I not command you to have my name engraved on the dome?"

"Who is Euphrasia?" called the patriarch. "Who knows a woman bearing such a name?"

From the priests to the lowest of the assembled thousands the question, "Who is Euphrasia?" ran round the church. No one answered. At length, while the emperor sat mute and amazed, a miserable fellow who cleaned the marble floor stepped forth and said, "Imperial Caesar, to whom I am unworthy to raise my eyes, I know a woman with such a name, but she is almost bedridden. She lives in a little house near one of the walls of the church."

"Bring her thither!" commanded the emperor; and straightway pages and chamberlains rushed out, and soon reappeared, carrying an aged woman, who trembled in every limb.

"Is your name Euphrasia?" asked the mighty emperor.

"Yes, mighty emperor, it is."

"What do you know of that inscription?"—and he pointed aloft to the large letters on the vault.

"Nothing, my lord—nothing."

"But you see your name on the church. It stands there instead of mine. What have you done toward the building of the church?"

"Great king, nothing. My lord mocks his poor servant."

"Not at all," replied the emperor.

"They tell me you live near. Think! Have you done nothing, spoken nothing, thought nothing to give you this claim?"

"Majesty," she said, "there is one little act, but I am ashamed to trouble my lord with its mention."

"Speak—I command you!" said Justinian. "Fear not. Tell me all."

Then she told how, as she lay on her bed in her little house, she heard with sorrow the travail of the oxen and mules carrying the marble and brick and beams up the steep hill, and her heart was sore within her; and how, when she grew better, the thought struck her, "Who knows if I cannot do something to ease their pain, the poor dumb brutes so patient in their woes? At least I will try." She took her bed and bore it into the road, and scattered the straw from it on the steep ascent. It was but a little, yet lo! as she worked the straw seemed to grow and multiply and cover the whole road; and from that time the oxen passed pleasantly to their loads, and she heard no more distress.

The tears were in Justinian's eyes, and he said, in a gentle voice, "Let the name of Euphrasia stand; she is more worthy than I, for of her little she gave all she had."

## THE SUNDAY AFTER MARRIAGE.

It Was a Great Day in the Old Puritan Times.

A marriage in the church was rare in the old Puritan days. Occasionally one took place in the new home of the young couple. This was held to be somewhat unlucky. Thanksgiving Day was a favorite time to choose to be married, as friends were then gathered from afar. The bride was universally advised to wear

Something old, and something new, Something borrowed, and something blue.

Though she could dress before a mirror, she must not look into the glass once her toilet is completed, else ill-luck, in vaguely defined, but positive form was the result. Sunday was really the exhibition day for the bride; indeed, she found at meeting the sole place in which she could appear before an assembled public, and for this exhibition the happy pair donned their fine bridal attire.

The bride and groom and bridal party opened the show by proudly walking in a little procession through the narrow streets to the meeting house on the Sabbath following the marriage.

Further public notice was drawn to the bride by allowing her to choose the text for the sermon preached on the first Sunday of the coming-out of the newly married couple. Much ingenuity was exercised in finding appropriate and sometimes

startling Bible texts for these wedding sermons. The instances are well known to the marriage of Parson Smith's two daughters, one of whom selected the text: "Mary Hath Chosen That Good Part;" while the daughter Abby, who married John Adams, decided upon the text: "John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say he hath a devil."

## THE GREATNESS OF SOLOMON.

The Truth of the Words, "Behold, a Greater Than Solomon is Here."

In Solomon, the much lauded king of Israel, we see not a very high type of human greatness. He came to the throne after the children of Israel had passed through centuries of bondage, poverty, persecution and hard fought battles. Under Saul and David they became brave and skilful soldiers and conquered all the tribes that disputed their right to the land which the Lord God had promised to their fathers. Having no war upon his hands and all the wealth of a great kingdom at his disposal, Solomon began his administration with the desire and purpose to eclipse in material display and in luxurious living all surrounding monarchs. Saul and David had lived in tents, but he built for himself a princely palace. The Israelites had worshipped in a moving tabernacle, but he reared for them a great temple whose magnificence was the wonder of the world. His household consisted of 300 wives, 700 concubines and an army of guards and servants. It is the verdict of history that it requires only about one such administration of government to bring ruin upon any nation. The bewildering splendor, extravagance and sensuality of Louis XIV was all that was needed to prepare France for a bloody revolution and a reign of crime and terror. The years which witnessed the exhaustion of a great surplus in the U. S. treasury, the enormous increase of taxation, the vast accumulation of capital in the hands of a few heartless monopolists and the unprecedented extravagance of those who were made rich by class legislation were the years which immediately preceded the present period of commercial prostration, social discord, strife and disintegration.

After the death of Solomon the kingdom was divided, the temple was destroyed, and the Jews were carried captive into Babylon. When Jesus Christ began his ministry, he stood upon the very site where this Jewish king had reigned in such power and splendor and said to a people who were still boasting of the fame of the dead monarch, "Behold, a greater than Solomon is here." To those Jews, blinded by ignorance, superstition and prejudice, this declaration of the "son of a carpenter" was arrogant and offensive in the last degree. But looking at it today in the light of nearly 19 centuries of history we know that it was true—a greater than Solomon was there.

## The Use of Leisure.

This is money to him whose main purpose is to make money; but to him whose first aspiration is to acquire character, time is character. It is in leisure time that one feels the fullest freedom of the will. Our busy times are busy partly by a sort of compulsion of necessity or of habit. We are hardly conscious of a deliberate choice in the matter of their occupation. But in the disposal of our leisure time, we are conscious of a free, full and independent use of the will. It is this matter of willing that germinates and roots character. Says Herbert, the eminent German pedagogue:

"The will is the seat of character; the kind of decision of the will determines the species of character." It is in his leisure time, therefore, that a man gives the set to his character. Equally with the operation of breathing and the beating of the heart, the character-forming process is going on without leisure, without vacation, whether we would have it so or not. This is a thought for week-day and Sunday, for the winter evening, and consequently for the summer vacation.

## Missions of a Century.

A century of missionary effort has resulted as follows: Two hundred and eighty missionary societies have been organized, which have under commission 9,000 foreign missionaries, working in almost every un-angelized country on the globe, and 44,532 native assistants; nearly a million converts have been gathered into 7,800 organized churches, and 1,066,798 pupils into 9,000 Sabbath Schools; eighty Bible societies have given the Bible to the nations in ninety entire versions and 530 partial versions, the total circulation of the Scriptures during the century amounting to the enormous aggregate of 320,000,000 copies; hundreds of millions of pages of wholesome literature have been issued from mission presses; hundreds of thousands of patients have been treated by medical missionaries in hospitals and dispensaries 70,000; pupils have been gathered into higher educational institutions and 608,000 children in village schools.

## Mr. Gladstone's Liberality.

Churchmen of the strictest sort are not pleased with Mr. Gladstone's recent article in the Nine-cent Century on "The Place of Heresy and Schism in the Modern Christian Church." They say that its extreme liberality of tone leaves it doubtful whether the grand old man is an episcopalian or a baptist.

One of the hardest things to do sometimes, is to believe that the man is honest who doesn't look at things just as we do.

## Messages of Help for the Week.

"When ye see this your heart shall rejoice. And from one Sabbath to another shall all flesh come to worship before me." Isaiah 66: 14, 23.

"Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved." Matthew 10: 22.

"The very hairs of your head are all numbered." Matthew 10: 30.

Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them. Because of your unbelief." Matt. 17: 19, 20.

"Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Luke 22: 31.

"Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matthew 3: 2.

"Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. . . Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." Psalm 19: 13, 14.

## Growing Old.

Bishop Weaver, in a beautiful address in the presence of a number of intimate friends on the occasion of his seventieth birthday, not long ago, said: "Now they tell me that I am growing old. But it is no sin to be old, neither should anyone be ashamed of it. The grandest things in the universe are old—old mountains, old seas and stars. Unless one is older than these he need not be ashamed. No snow falls lighter than the snow of age, but none is heavier, for it never melts. One thing I know, that the days of the years of my pilgrimage must be nearing the end. From a rift in the clouds I now and then catch a glimpse of the sun, and know it is not where it was when I first saw it. I notice also, that the shadows, which for a time fell westward and then northward, now fall eastward, and putting this and that together, I conclude that the evening time of life is no longer coming, but is actually here. Did not some one at some time say, 'At evening time it shall be light?' If it please the Master, I could ask no richer boon than that it may be light to me when the sun goes down."



## A Bright Lad,

Ten years of age, but who declines to give his name to the public, makes this authorized, confidential statement to us:

"When I was one year old, my mamma died of consumption. The doctor said that I, too, would soon die, and all our neighbors thought that even if I did not die, I would never be able to walk, because I was so weak and puny. A gathering formed and broke under my arm. I hurt my finger and it gathered and threw out pieces of bone. If I hurt myself so as to break the skin, it was sure to become a running sore. I had to take lots of medicine, but nothing has done me so much good as Ayer's Sarsaparilla. It has made me well and strong."—T. D. M., Norcutt, Kans.

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