

Sunday Reading.

THE DISGUISED KING.

Oh, dear! How shall I ever learn this lesson? yawned Oliver Gray as he sleepily bent over his arithmetic lesson. 'Well, I suppose I must begin to learn it.—Insurance is indemnity obtained by paying a certain sum against such losses of property or life as are agreed upon.' Pooh! I could give a better definition than that! Why don't the men who get up these books write our lessons so we can understand them? I am tired of the very name of school! I shall be so glad when I get grown up like papa and do not have an old school bell calling me to prison every morning.

Oliver had scarcely finished this mental conversation with himself when a gentle but distinct knock was heard at the inner door of the big school-house and Mr. Cole, the teacher, stopped the reading class to attend to his visitor. The door was opened in full sight of the whole school, and who should stand there in his usual genial and winning manner but Mr. Earl, the minister.

Now of all the visitors who came to the school the scholars liked Mr. Earl the best. He not only spoke to each cordially when he met them on the street and at church, but he always had something good to say whenever he was called for remarks of the school, and always illustrated his talk with a telling anecdote, usually from the lives of good and great men and women. In this way he fastened the truth on the minds of the young with hooks of steel.

That day Rev. Mr. Earle was unusually attentive to their recitations, and several times at the suggestion of the teacher made some knotty question clear with his usual bright and taking explanations. Mr. Cole closed the school fifteen minutes before the noon hour that day and pleasantly called on Mr. Earle for some remarks.

'Well,' said the minister, as he slowly yet impressively rose from his seat, 'I will tell you to-day about a disguised king.'

At this every eye and ear was intent on getting from the minister the secret of the disguised king, while the older scholars were busily guessing how he would apply it to the school.

'More than a thousand years ago, continued Mr. Earle, there lived a good and wise king called Alfred the Great, who ruled over the Saxons in England. The Danes, who were among the best warriors of Europe, made war on the Saxons and conquered them. Alfred the king was forced to fly from his palace for his life and sought refuge in the lonely hills and forests where he could not be found. At one time he disguised himself in old clothes and took refuge in a poor cow-herd's hut. Now with his old clothes on and not looking at all like a king, was Alfred the Great still a king? What do you think about it, boys and girls?' asked Mr. Earle in a questioning tone.

'Yes, he was,' responded several in chorus, and Oliver's voice could be heard above the rest.

'Yes, he was still the true king,' said Mr. Earle, 'for he very soon returned to his people the Saxons and collected a great army which conquered the Danes and drove them from the country. Then King Alfred put on his royal robes and returned to his palace. He lived many years and was a very wise and good king and built up his people in learning, riches, truth and prosperity.'

'Now,' continued the speaker in a forceful manner, 'you have here to-day a king in disguise, and who do you think it is?'

For the moment nobody could tell, and somebody whispered that perhaps Mr. Earle meant himself; but this could not be, as he was a very humble man and never anxious to call undue attention to himself.

'Well, I will tell you,' said the visitor. 'A great and learned man has named him for us. Thomas Carlyle, a great writer of England, has said, "To-day is a king in disguise." Boys and girls, do you see how to-day is a disguised king? Listen, and I will tell you. You are now young. You now have these school advantages. To-day is your time to work. By and by, sooner than you think, you will be grown to manhood and womanhood. Your time to work for an education will then be gone. Therefore work while you have to-day. To-day is your king in disguise who opens to you the golden door of opportunity which leads into the palace of usefulness and success. Learn to know this disguised king, pay him reverence, work for him and serve him. If the lessons seem hard and you think the school-house seems a prison, think of the disguised king in your midst called To-day. Never put off a hard lesson for to-morrow. Learn it to-day.'

Then when you have grown up you will more clearly than now see how all your school days were real kings in disguise, which in after years put on their royalty to rise up and bless you as they lead you into the wondrous palaces of knowledge, truth and prosperity.'

The school was then dismissed and the scholars crowded to the desk to greet the minister.

Oliver went home to his dinner that noon thinking very deeply. While Mr. Earle was speaking he had been going through a transformation. He saw how the minister was right. He was wasting his school life. Opportunities were slipping by him never to return. To-day was his king in disguise and he was just beginning to know him. From that day he would learn to reverence him and use all his school hours for work as he never had before.

That was a great day for Oliver Gray. The vision of a nobler, better life rose before him. On that day a great resolve came to his mind that was ever after as a guiding star on his sea of life. He never complained of hard lessons again or thought of the schoolhouse as a prison. From the foot of his class he soon went to the head and became the bright and promising scholar of Maywood school. Every day came to him as a disguised king to whom he paid highest reverence and lent his most loyal service. Every day he bent to his school tasks as never before. Every day he was looking for new opportunities for progress, knowledge and usefulness. Every day he has been growing better, truer, wiser, and laying the foundation for a strong and noble manhood.

RIGHTS AND RIGHT.

One of the Grandest Things in Having Rights is in Giving Them Up.

One blustering day in midwinter a little woman thinly dressed, hailed a west-bound electric car climbed heavily upon the rear platform. She had evidently been laying in a stock of provisions, for a small bag of flour rested against her shoulder, bearing an odd resemblance to a rather shapeless infant, while on her arm was a basket of groceries. The interior of the car was crowded, and after one glance within she placed her burdens upon the platform and handed her nichol to the conductor, at the same time drawing her faded black shawl closely about her.

'You're going inside ain't you?' as the man, evidently surprised at her emotion 'There's room enough. I make 'em move 'No, I guess I won't go in,' laughed the little woman. She had one of those faces which poverty and hardship seem powerless to shadow, and the light in blue eyes was like June sunshine. 'You see I've been carrying that flour, an' it's sifted all over me. If I should go inside, it might get on somebody else.'

'But it's cold out here, the conductor urged. 'The wind blows freezin'. 'Tain't your business to think about their clothes.' He spoke with the bitterness that an over-worked man instinctively feels toward more prosperous people. 'You've paid your nickel like the rest of 'em; you've got as good a right inside as any.'

'Maybe so,' said the little woman, looking rather perplexed. 'But somehow it doesn't seem right. Now there's a lady standin' near the door in such a pretty silk dress. If I owned it I wouldn't want it rubbed over with flour. No!' She shook her head determinedly. 'I'm obliged to you, but I'll stay out here.'

The conductor was silent, but his expression was one of bewilderment. Such a look might a naturalist wear, who after a life spent in research, finds in his own dooryard a species of plant totally unfamiliar.

The passenger on the end seat, hearing the dialogue through a crack of the door, fell into a reverie. What a contrast between the shivering little woman on the rear platform, and that of the majority of us who count ourselves far her superior! How eager we are to get our rights, to exact full recompense for time or labor or money expended! How indifferent we become to the feelings of others, in our determination to gain justice for ourselves! How watchful we are lest we should be de-

frauded! How suspiciously we view the actions of those like-minded with ourselves!

She was not a philosopher, this little woman in the faded shawl. Perhaps she would have found it as difficult to give herself a logical reason why, although she had 'a right' to go as inside passenger, it was not right for her to do so, as in convincing the perplexed conductor. But her heart, wiser than her head, bade her follow a higher law than that recognized in monetary transactions—the law of doing as one would be done by, of gaining through giving of finding the bliss of possession through the joy of surrender. Quite unconscious of observers, she had acted the truth which some one has beautifully expressed: 'One of the grandest things in having rights is that, being your rights you may give them up.'

JUDGE NOT HASTILY.

Though Appearance may be Against one it Doesn't Always Mean Guilt.

A series of circumstances which all seem to point in the same direction and reach the same conclusion is oftentimes explainable in a totally different way. The following story of circumstantial evidence shows the necessity of avoiding hasty judgment in grave matters. Better to err on the side of mercy than to render to any man mistaken justice.

A prince who was visiting at Windsor Castle went one day to the Museum to see a famous coin, the only one of its kind known to be in existence. The keeper took him into a private room and with much solemnity drew forth the precious relic. The prince examined it with the liveliest interest, and a suppressed excitement which indicated that he, too, was a collector of coins.

The keeper turned away for an instant, and heard something fall.

'I have dropped it!' exclaimed the prince.

The keeper joined him in his search, but nowhere could the coin be found. Ten, twenty, thirty minutes passed. The prince looked at his watch.

'I am very sorry,' said he, 'but I have an appointment; I must go.'

The keeper walked to the door, locked it, put the key in his pocket, and said looking the prince straight in the eye:

'Not until you restore the coin I saw last in your hand. You cannot leave this room until you give it back!'

'What? One would think, from your manner, that—'

'Not at all,' interrupted the keeper. 'Come, let us find it.'

The prince bit his lip, turned pale, and resumed the search. At the end of an hour he declared his determination to leave the place.

'If you insist,' said the keeper, 'it will be my painful duty to call an officer and have you searched.'

The prince leaned against the wall overwhelmed.

'Do you mean that?' he gasped.

'I do.'

'Then we must continue the search.'

Every nook and cranny was re-examined. After awhile the prince sat down, the picture of despair, when suddenly he saw the coin, packed away against the skirting of the room, and lying as if glued to the wood.

'Oh! Oh!' cried the keeper, 'here it is!'

'Thank God!' exclaimed the prince.

'My dear sir,' said the keeper, 'can you forgive me?'

'Yes, certainly,' was the reply. 'I was never more frightened, I assure you. I never realized until now how circumstantial evidence might hang a man for a crime of which he was perfectly innocent. Stand a little away from me, please, and I will show you why I was so anxious to be gone. You say that coin in your hand is the only one in existence?'

The prince put his hand in his pocket and drew out its fellow.

'I came in possession of this a year ago. Ever since I have had a burning desire to see the British Museum coin. But had I been searched what would you have thought of my explanation that there were two such coins, and that I had come to compare mine with yours. Would you have believed me?'

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'I am bound to say, sir, I should not.'

'What should you have done?'

'I should have been guided by the police.'

'Of course, and I could not have blamed you. Good-evening. I have missed my engagement, but I am no longer afraid to look you in the face.'

THE REASON FOR IT.

The Ranks Must be Filled by Competent Men not Careless Ones.

To those of our young people who are just starting out on some particular line of work, we would recommend that they read the following, which shows one reason why many do not make a success in their chosen calling. Says the writer:

Among my acquaintances is a young man of wonderful tact and ability, who is employed in a large manufacturing establishment. He understands every part of the machinery in use so well that the foreman acknowledges him to be the best in the shop. Notwithstanding all this, others with less tact are promoted again and again, while he still holds the same place with the same low wages that he did when he first entered upon his duties.

My curiosity was aroused by this, and meeting the foreman one day I asked him, 'Why do you not promote young—, who is so remarkable for his knowledge of machinery?'

'Well,' he said, 'it's just this way. The trouble is, you cannot depend upon him. If you gave him an important position, even though he has the ability to fill it, he would not attend to his duties. He talks with the other boys and forgets his work. That, in some more important position, might prove very detrimental to his employers and even fatal to some of the other workmen. It is very unfortunate for him, but he is entirely too careless.'

I also knew once an amiable young lady who taught school. She had the good-will and confidence of all her scholars. She was a model of neatness and took great pains to implant the same in the minds of her pupils. She always wanted a school in her home township. One year, after the spring term had closed, she went to the trustee for her pay. He said to her: 'Miss L., this is the last money that I shall ever pay you for teaching school unless you get a better certificate. You have been teaching in this township for seven or eight years, and all that time you have taught with the lowest grade certificate. If you were very poor and had to spend all your means to support your parents, it would be entirely different. You go to normal school each year from six to ten weeks and have ample time besides to study. You have the ability to learn but you don't care. You are bent on having a good time. Don't come to me again for a school unless you can come with a better certificate. I am tired of such commonplace teachers. I want special teachers. Raise your grade and you will be satisfactory.'

These are plain words, but they are full of meaning. The lower ranks are full, and the call is now for careful thorough, competent workers not for careless, commonplace ones.—Young Peoples Weekly.

HOW FEAR WAS CAST OUT.

'The Lord our Righteousness' Brought Peace and Light.

'He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness,' wrote Isaiah long ago, as if in anticipation of the time when Christ should become unto all who believe on him 'wisdom and righteousness and redemption.' Mrs. Bottom in the 'Ladies' Home Journal' tells an incident which beautifully illustrates the simplicity of accepting Christ's gift.

I remember once visiting a young woman dying of consumption. She lived just opposite my house. She was the daughter of a dear old minister; she had been a most exemplary Christian, a dutiful daughter, and so helpful to her father in his church; she had been a teacher of a Bible-class for many years, but she was now slowly dying, and she had no joy, and she told me she feared death—not the dying, but standing unclothed, her real self before God. She said she had tried to do right so far as she knew how. I could tell her nothing that she did not know. I remember going home one day, having had an unsatisfactory visit with her, because the gloom never lifted from her mind.

After I reached home I opened quite a

large Bible that stood on a table near which I happened to be standing, and my eye rested on a passage of Scripture in the Old Testament, and the sentence is in the largest type of any in every Bible—'The Lord our righteousness.' I took the Bible over to my friend, though it was heavy to carry, and I held it up before her without saying a word, and she saw the words 'The Lord our righteousness,' and in less than a minute she had the 'robe of righteousness'. Her face was lighted up as she exclaimed, 'I see it! And from that moment she was another person; not a shadow ever fell on face again, not the slightest fear of meeting God.'

A Good Sign.

Respect for the aged is a very good indication of the quality of the material in a young heart. An old man, leaning on a cane, recently entered a crowded city car, and he pushed his way along in hopes of finding a seat.

He had gone more than half way without securing one, when a boy of about ten years old caught sight of him, and was on his feet in a moment.

'Here, sir,' he said kindly, 'take this seat, if you please.'

'But what will you do?' the old man asked.

'I'll stand,' was the smiling answer, which he did.

'Well bless you, my lad!' said the old man as he sank down in the comfortable seat. 'I'm a thousand times obliged, and I'm sure when you get lame and old there'll always be a seat for you.'

Do You Intend Making Your Rooms Look Brighter and Cleaner?

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