

## Sunday Reading.

### Christmas in the Old Study.

Old Connor lay in bed, for life, and little of that was left, the doctor said. All his years, he had followed a hope that kept just out of reach, smiled back at him, let him touch the edge of its moonshine mantle, and fitted away.

He was a painter. He had wanted to be a genius. He was an artist, but not a great one.

He had made a living, but he didn't want a living,—he wanted fame.

The palsy had taken him. His work was over, but not done.

So it seemed to him that his whole life was wasted.

'A failure, I am,' he said to his friend, —'a miserable failure. My life has been all for one thing, and here I've missed it. There's no hope. The doctor says I've not long to stay, and what's the hope hereafter for a man that's wasted his life? Tell me that!'

'Well, dear,—dear boy,' said the other softly, 'it'll be over then,—the sorrow and the pain and the hope that beckons and stabs,—the weariness and the longing.'

'Oh, bother! I don't mind that. Can't you see? The trouble is I haven't done anything.'

'Haven't you? Have you not, Joe? Are you sure of that? asked his friend. 'Well, I mustn't trouble you anymore now. I'll come again, soon.'

The next day, and the next, the broken man brooded and saddened.

Then one morning he woke and saw his friend beside his bed, and others with him, all men he had known well,—painters, too, who had outstripped him in the race and left him far behind. He had seen them but little of late. Each bore an easel and a picture.

'Come to crow over me?' asked Connor. 'Merry Christmas!' said they.

'So it is,' said he, with a sigh. 'I'd forgotten it. What's Christmas to me?'

Then one set his easel beside the bed and uncovered his picture, placing it so that Connor might see it in a fair light, without turning.

He saw a fair-haired, ruddy schoolboy, with a wholesome, earnest face, sitting in a cheerless room, at a table. Beside him sat another boy,—one of his hopeless, helpless kind,—uncouth, with tousled hair sticking up on one side and out on the other,—with an inky, bitten hand clasped hard to his pale forehead,—with scowling brows and lank, hollow cheeks, tear-stained, staring at a book. But the stare was not all blank; there was a dawn of understanding in the red-lidded eyes.

Before them on the table was one poor candle.

The glossy, goodly head, and fair, bright face, were close to the semblance of that early misery; the plump, rosy head lay gently on the thread bare shoulder. The frost gleamed thick on the panes of the window behind them. The steam of their breath rose, mingling in a little cloud.

The handsome face had, somehow, a boyish likeness to Connor's.

The other was like no one. But if the man who had brought it could have looked into one of those magic mirrors that show the face of him who looks as it has been long ago, that other is what he would have seen.

'Do you remember?' said he. 'All I am now, all I have done, I owe to those long, patient hours you gave me, when everybody else said I was a dunce, and you told me I had a will that would beat all their brains rolled into one.'

The sick man smiled, feebly, but very happily, and his eyes glistened.

'I had forgotten,' said he.

The next was a very different scene. The man who put it there had a wooden leg.

A young man, and again the face was Connor's, but with set, grinning teeth, savage jaw and deep vertical wrinkles down the brow, stood with his back to a red rock on a great plain, in a scorching light.

In his right hand was a long spear, in his shoulder the head of another, with the truncheon snapped.

His legs were wide apart. Between them, on the ground, a man leaned heavily against the rock, with agony on his brown face, one leg drawn up, the other lying inert, with a strange twist in the thigh.

All about, at a little distance, were dusky savages, with spears and knives. The two nearest lay dead. Two sketch books lay on the ground.

In the distance was a hurrying cloud of red dust, with a glint of arms in disciplined array shining through it.

'What do you say to that, my boy?' said the painter with the wooden leg, try-

ing to speak cheerily and keep the tears out of his trembling voice.

'That? That was something of a lark, now that you speak of it,' said Connor; but his face took on a slight color, and his eye kindled with a hard, dry light of pride.

The third painter was a tall, gray man, with the mark of a great sorrow on his face. His picture was metaphorical, and harder to understand. Only he and Connor knew just what it meant.

On the left stood Justice, white robed, stern-lipped, implacable, her scales cast tumbling at her feet, her left hand clenched at her side, her right uplifted, threatening with a rod that seemed to quiver in the air.

On the right, a woman knelt with clasped hands between his knees, clad in a hooded garment of sackcloth.

In the middle, between, upright, unflinching under the uplifted rod, calm and steady-eyed, stood a strong man in his prime,—from his outstretched right arm and his massive shoulder to the marble floor a gray cloak hung, hiding the woman from the angry Power,—the woman's face was lifted toward him with unutterable sorrow,—ineffable thankfulness.

The sick man looked long, and his face softened; his eyes grew moist and dim,—yet it was not an unhappy face.

'Dear lady,' said he, 'God rest her sweet soul!'

'You have forgotten her?' asked the painter of the picture.

'Forgiven her, sir? Forgiven her? It was the highest privilege, the greatest joy of my life to help her. When I meet her,—there,—God grant I may,—I'll tell her so, and that'll be the sweetest moment of eternity! Think, man, how grandly she atoned!'

Then the tall, grey man bent and blubbered like a child. 'My sister!' he whispered, and covered the picture with a crimson cloth.

There was a long silence:—suddenly the tall man started as if from a dream, and said, quietly,—'Now yours, Shandon.'

A jolly little man, with a merry eye that nothing could quite subdue, came forward and set before Connor a happier scene, where pathos and humor,—the grotesque and the beautiful,—were mingled with rare genius.

It was a little garret under a broken skylight,—a wretched bed,—a bowl much chipped and a pitcher, without a handle, on the bare floor,—a young man, thin as the rickety easel before him, long-haired and ragged, rising from a stool, his face transfigured and beautified with that look that comes only with the sudden realization of an abandoned hope unexpectedly come true.

One could see there reviving ambition,—returning courage,—a kind of sunrise glow, promise of a fair and happy day.

At the open door stood a man—rather stout,—extremely well dressed,—and the magic of the artist had given him two expressions,—the outward fictitious look of purse-proud, satisfied patronage,—and, beaming through it, the real, whole-hearted, mirthful benevolence of the man himself.

And even through the smug disguise one could recognize Connor—even in the rage, the very skeleton of Shandon.

And Connor in disguise held a fat pocketbook, subtlest disguise of all,—and was holding out a bunch of bills to Shandon in penury.

'My first commission,' said Shandon,—his lips quivering. 'Do you remember it, Connor?'

The sick man—weak as he was,—laughed out heartily. 'Do I remember?' said he. 'Do I remember you sitting there,—barring the rage on your bones and the eyes in your head, I'd not have known which was you and which was the easel,—you fairly rattled as you jumped for the bills,—there was only one thing on earth thinner than you, and that was myself,—stuffed out as I was with a pillow,—and you taking me for a fat and purse bondholder all the while,—and me in a get-up I'd borrowed from Desborough, and the money I got from Labarre here,—One o' the few debts I ever paid—but what am I saying? Who told? Labarre,—did not you pass me your word you'd never tell?'

'He never told till two days ago, Connor,' said Shandon,—'or you'd have heard of it before. Dear man,—it was my start in life; a day more and never a picture I'd have painted. Do you grudge me the unbounded pleasure of knowing that I owe it to you, and thanking you for it,—dear old friend?'

'No, boy, no,—not if you put it that way,' said Connor.

'Well, then, Joe,' said the man who had been there two days before,—'tell us,—is your life clean wasted?'

'It seem to have made some friends,' said Connor. 'Hang the glory I've missed,—the friends I've won are better.'

Then they took their leave, and, as they went out, he called the tall man to come

to him.

'Uncover her picture,' he whispered. 'I'll look at it,—till I can go and see her there.'

They left him with his memories around him.

Next day, one met the doctor and asked for Connor.

The doctor was a gruff old fellow. 'Dead,' said he. 'That picture party killed him.'

'Killed him?'

'Yes,—now, my good friend,' said the doctor, softening and taking the painter's arm,—'don't be foolish. The greatest happiness a man can have is to die of pure joy. It isn't given to many.'

A Light in the Window.

Several years ago a boy, who had given his mother years of anxiety by his wilfulness, ran away from his home in Jersey City and became a tramp, and worse. For a time things went merrily, and he was popular with his wild companions; but at length his money was gone, his health was breaking, and he was far from home. 'I found,' said he, 'that when a bad man's money is gone, he can put all his friends into his pocketbook and still leave it empty.'

After a period of sullen remorse, which he tried to conquer by such excesses as were still possible to his condition of poverty and broken health, he turned homeward.

He stole his way to Chicago, riding sometimes on freight-trains and sometimes on the trucks of passenger cars, and from Chicago eastward he rode in an empty stock-car to Binghamton, whence he walked most of the way to Jersey City, the latter part of it in great feebleness. He nerved himself to the utmost by the hope that he might reach his mother's door in time to ask her forgiveness before he died.

He came near his own city at midday, but had not the courage to go through the familiar streets by daylight. All the afternoon and until late in the evening he lay in a corn field.

Then came doubts that almost persuaded him to turn back. Would he be welcome? To return to die, and perhaps by his return bring to the knowledge of the neighbors the story of these last bitter years, and with the story fresh sorrow to his mother, already bent beneath the load of affliction he had brought upon her? He could not, he could not do it! He would turn back and die alone!

So he said to himself; but the desire was strong upon him to see his mother's house again, and he resolved to go into the city, look at the house, and then turn back. Almost to weak to walk, he made his way at last to his mother's gate. The streets were dark and silent, but a light burned in the same window where it used to burn long ago whenever he was out late.

In the five years that had been gone it had burned every night, the whole night through. And his mother had never sat down at her lonely table without laying a plate and setting a chair where his place had been. He saw the light and knew full well that it had been burning all those years for him. He could not turn back; he opened the gate and crept toward the house, and although he shut it softly she heard the gate click, and met him at the door.

For weeks he lay with typhoid fever, and his mother nursed him back to health. When his recovery began, he faced the question of his future. 'You have come back to your mother,' said she to him. 'Come back to your Heavenly Father and be His son.'

And so his life began anew. 'I should have doubted God's willingness to take me back,' he said afterward, 'but I could not forget the light in my mother's window, and I crept back into the love of my Father.'

A Young Man's Advice to Young Men.

A young man usually leaves school or college with an idea that he is worth a great deal to the world. In other words, if he is at all bright, he is conceited. He won the first prize in this or that subject, or was graduated first in his class. This is the natural, and, in my opinion, not discreditable condition of a healthy and ambitious young mind,—not silly conceit but good high opinion of himself.

But how different it is when he finally secures a position! Instead of the 'big salary' he expected, he usually finds that he must begin at a 'moderate' one, or, in many cases, a mere pittance. However, his opinion of himself does not suffer in the least, for he imagines he can quickly convince his employers of what he considers—their mistake, and that they then will give him his just deserts. Herein the danger lies.

Five months pass, but there is no change. He is in the same position, and at the same salary. In the sixth month, however, his employers,—if the young man has proved himself punctual, regular, and

painstaking,—add, perhaps, one dollar per week to his income. Now, this certainly should be an encouragement; but, in nine cases out of ten, it has the opposite effect. Especially is this the case with a college graduate. He thinks he is not being treated 'squarely,' and so becomes discontented.

His paramount thought is then to secure another position. Each morning he rises early, and buys a newspaper. He answers advertisements, and, in time, perchance, receives two or three replies.

At the first place he calls, he is offered the same salary he is at present receiving; but he will have none of that.

At the second place, he is probably offered one or two dollars more, and he at once clinches the 'opportunity,' without troubling himself as to whether the business will be congenial with his tastes. This is but a secondary thought with him; the money is the main question. How foolish! In a very short time he becomes aware that he has made a great mistake. He does not like his new position; the business is not congenial, and so, for the second time, he becomes restless. He secures another, and still another position, with the same result. And so it goes, until he has grown to be quite a disappointed and discouraged young man. It is then but a step to utter hopelessness, which finally leads to despair.

This is what is responsible for most of the failures in life, and, many times, of the suicides that daily occur.

So, young men, take timely warning! If you are in a business which you thoroughly like, which harmonizes with your tastes, and, in a word, in which you find yourself 'at home,' stick to it; learn it thoroughly; make yourself indispensable to your employers, and, in time, they will reward you according to merit. It will not then be an increase of one dollar per week but many, many times that amount.—Success.

Love and Fear.

A poet has written:

A pity beyond all telling  
Lies hid in the heart of love.

Aut it is not pity only; it is fear lest misfortune come to those who make our happiness. Rev. C. T. Brady, in his 'Recollections of a Missionary in the Great West,' gives an instance of such natural panic over the possibilities of life. He says:

One day I was writing a sermon, when my little son came tiptoeing into the room. 'I won't 'sturb you, papa,' said he, and clasped his hands about my left wrist lying on the desk, while he rested his curly head upon my arm. I wrote on and on in silence. Presently his hold relaxed, and the little body slipped gently down to the floor. The hands shifted from my arm to my foot. He laid his head upon it, and went fast asleep.

The room was very still. There was a little clock on my desk, and its ticking was the only sound. As I watched my laddie, the clock suddenly stopped. We whose duty it is to wind them know that clocks often stop; but when that busy ticking died away, and left no sound to stir the silence, I almost felt my heart stop with it. I looked down at the trail life beginning at my feet, and I thought of the stopped clock a moment since quick with life. I thought of the many lives ticked out with each recurring minute. The lad lay very still. In a panic of terror I awakened him.

GREAT METEOR FELL TO EARTH.

Startling Experience of Two Baltimore Hunters on Sideling Hill.

Saturday morning at about 4 o'clock the people living along the west side of Sideling Hill, Hancock, Md., were awakened by a terrific crash, followed by an explosion resembling the firing of many cannon, and a quivering of the earth resembling an earthquake. It was all over before anybody could see what had happened except two early gunners, James McClare and Joseph H. Fiske, of Baltimore, who were on the summit of Sideling Hill at the time.

To a representative they said: 'We were riding leisurely along, talking about the large number of shooting stars that were falling, when our attention was attracted to a large ball of fire in the west that seemed to be coming directly toward us.'

'A rumbling sound, as of thunder, accompanied the ball and gradually increased to a deafening roar as the ball, about as large as an ordinary barrel, sailed directly over us, giving out a sulphurous odor and buried itself in a rock cliff about four hundred yards north of the pike on the summit.'

'An explosion followed that tossed rocks and bits of meteoric iron all over Sideling Hill and made the forest ring as though a heavy bombardment was taking place. We tied our horses and went on foot to the exact spot where the meteor struck.

The surface, rocks and trees were all upside down over about a half acre of steep mountain side, but we could find no trace of anything except bits of meteoric iron scattered over everything.

'Distant trees were so plugged with these fragments that they resembled targets. When the meteor struck the earth trembled and we have since learned that all the glass in a farmhouse two miles distant was broken.'

The farmers and people living in the neighborhood at the foot of the mountain thought the millenium had come and gave themselves up to prayer.

Whole families got down on their knees and prayed till daylight. Many of them believe that the end of the world is near at hand and expect every day to be the last. Thousands of Leonids followed in the trail of the meteor, exploding in the atmosphere before reaching the earth.

Tasted Like Itself.

Lord Wolseley, the retiring commander-in-chief of the British army does not tell this story, but somehow or other it got abroad, and is generally credited as strictly true, says the Chicago Chronicle.

On one occasion the famous field marshal's zeal for the welfare of his men got the better of his discretion. Dinner was being served to the soldiers, and orderlies hurried backward and forward with steaming pails of soup. Lord Wolseley stopped one of them. The man was at attention in a moment.

'Remove the lid.' No sooner said than done.

'Let me taste it.'

'But, please yer—'

'Let me taste it, I say.'

'And taste it he did.'

'Disgraceful! Tastes like nothing in the world but dishwater.'

'Plaze, yer honor,' gasped the man, 'and so it is.'

PAIN-KILLER is the best, safest and surest remedy for cramps, colic and diarrhoea. As a liniment for wounds and sprains it is unequalled. Avoid substitutes, there's but one Pain-Killer, Perry Davis'. 25c. and 50c.

Lucky to be Alive.

'Haven't seen you for a long while,' suggested the friend.

'No,' replied the cripple; 'I made a slight error of judgement election day.'

'How did it happen?'

'I was a republican challenger in a tough democratic precinct, and I neglected to wear armour.'

'Jenson has developed into a confirmed kickor, but his wife can handle him every time; he kicked last night because his dinner was cold.'

'What was his wife's play?'

'She made it hot for him.'

## What You Pay For Medicine

Is no Test of its Curative Value—Prescriptions vs. Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills.

Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills are just as much a doctor's prescription as any formula your family physician can give you. The difference is that Dr. Chase's Kidney Liver Pills were perfected after the formula had proven itself of inestimable value in scores of hundreds of cases.

Dr. Chase won almost as much popularity from his ability to cure kidney disease, liver complaint and backache, with this formula, as he did from the publication of his great recipe book.

The idea of one treatment reaching the kidneys and liver at the same time was original with Dr. Chase. It accounts for the success of Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills in curing the most complicated ailments of the filtering organs, and every form of backache.

Mr. Patrick J. McLaughlan, Beauharnois, Que., states: 'I was troubled with Kidney Disease and Dyspepsia for 20 years and have been so bad that I could not sleep at night on account of pains in the back, but would walk the floor all night and suffered terrible agony.'

'I tried all sorts of medicines but got no relief until I began using Dr. Chase's Kidney Liver Pills. They made a new man of me, and the old troubles seemed to be driven out of my system.'

Mr. John White, 72 First Avenue, Ottawa, writes: 'I used Dr. Chase's Kidney Liver Pills for deranged liver and pains in the back, with excellent results.'

'My wife used them for stomach trouble, and pains about the heart, and is entirely cured. They are invaluable as a family medicine.'

Scores of hundreds of families would not think of being without Dr. Chase's Kidney Liver Pills in the house. They are purely vegetable in composition and remarkably prompt and effective in action. One pill a dose, 25 cents a box, at all dealers, or Edmanston, Bates and Company, Toronto.