

Tired Mothers.

A little elbow leans upon your knee,
Your tired knee, with that touch to bear;
A child's dear eyes are looking lovingly
From underneath a thatch of tangled hair.
Perhaps you do not heed the velvet touch
O warm, moist fingers, folding yours so tight—
You do not prize this blessing over-much,
You are almost too tired to pray to-night.

But it is blessedness! A year ago
I did not see it as I do to-day—
We are so dull and thankless; and too slow
To catch the sunshine till it slips away.
Ah! now it seems surpassing strange to me
That, while I bore the badge of motherhood,
I did not kiss more oft and tenderly,
The little child that brought me only good.

And if, some night when you sit down to rest,
You miss this elbow from your tired knee;
This restless, curling head from off your breast,
This lisping tongue that chatters constantly;
From your own dimpled hands have slipped,
And ne'er would nestle in your palm again;
If the white feet into their grave had tripped,
I could not blame you for your heartache then.

I wonder so that mothers ever fret,
At little children clinging to their gown;
Or that the footprints, when the days are wet,
Are ever black enough to make them frown.
If I could find a little muddy boot,
Or cap, or jacket, on my chamber floor;
If I could kiss a rosy, restless foot,
And hear its patter in my home once more;

If I could mend a broken cart-to-day,
To-morrow make a kite to reach the sky—
There is no woman in God's world could say
She was more blissfully content than I.
But ah! the dainty pillow next my own
Is never rumpled by a shining head;
My singing birdling from its nest has flown;
The little boy I used to kiss is dead!

Beside a Grave.

The time was six o'clock, a May evening. The place was the stone wall, something crumbled and lichen mottled, just at the spot where barberry bushes of fifty years' growth hid the country graveyard from the highway. An old man sat on the wall, his blue-jeans overalls tucked into the tops of boots bent, roughened and trodden side wise in many a long tramp over the furrowed field, but row dangling against the gray stones in one of their numerous rests which their owner found it necessary to take. The hand resting on his left knee held a short black pipe, which had gone out; his felt hat, torn in crown and brim, was pushed back from a face seamed and reddened by hard work and coarse fare; his eye brows were bushy and white, and cheeks and chin were covered with a beard of a week's growth. This was Saturday night, and it was part of Luke Ford's religion to shave at eight o'clock on Sunday morning, and at no other time.

Leaning his elbow on the wall, watching the splendors growing in the West, was a tall, straight, square shouldered young fellow, with close cut yellow hair and a broad brow; he was descended from ancient Norseman who had scoured the seas piratically several hundred years gone by, but whose blood had been subdued in the nineteenth century to the peaceful ways of a young theologian, teaching a summer district school.

As Luke Ford took his pipe from his mouth, he looked curiously into the bowl as if surprised that it had gone out, and then rested it against his knee, two women entered the place of graves by a gate opposite the thick clump of barberry bushes. The gate was open, as their carriage had left it in passing out that morning; alike in height and appearance, their new bombazine gowns trailed senseless over the grass as they moved slowly to a flat gray stone under the barberries, and sat down to contemplate a new made grave, the newest there, only eight hours since the sexton had rounded up the clay, loam and pebbles, and thrust a time-worn bit of board at head and foot.

Silence between the two women; silence between the two men; the bushes hid each from each.

Finally the old man, hopeless of his pipe, spoke: "Well, school master, I reckon that the dominie sent James Thrall straight to glory, didn't he?"

"How could he?"

"'Twould only have been politeness to such a fine coffin, and the best hearse in the country, eh?"

"He spoke for the benefit of the living, and did not remark upon the dead. These funeral sermons put a minister in a hard place, many times, between sympathy for the mourners regard for the morals of the community, and knowledge of the character of the dead. You did not go, Mr. Ford?"

"No; I'm terrible late plowin' for corn, and then I hadn't no use

for old Jim Thrall; he's ruled this community; he's got more sins to answer for than any a man I know; he had blood on his hands, plenty of it, and I tell you what, though it is three days since he died, the judge of all must be a master hand getting through with his docket, if he's gone through with all the indictments against Jim Thrall yet, I reckon his trial is still moving on, but I ain't no manner of doubt about the sentence." Luke Ford looked up into the blue sky, and spoke without thought of irreverence.

"No long time for trial will be needed in that court," said the school-master. "I make no doubt that one flash of omniscient light from the mind of God upon the soul, will bring forth every item in the record of the past, and aroused conscience will pronounce the verdict. Who can tell what may be the possibilities of memory and conscience?"

Luke Ford waited until returned from his little excursion into philosophic regions, to him unknown, then he said: "But I always did feel main sorry for the ladies, Miss Faith and Hope. I've knowed 'em since they was dragged around in their baby carriage. They was always good, like their mother before them. I was a young feller when she came here, just married she was, and I went into her Bible class at Sunday school, mostly because she was as pretty as a pink, and wore a mighty nice bonnet. She was a master hand at Scripture teachin'. In them days we learned a string of verses for a lesson. I ain't forgot the verses I learned for her, and she explained 'em wonderful. I mind one lesson had in it 'Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.' Why, the way she went for that verse and followed it up was prodigious. It made me a sober man all my life, so I wa'n't one of those led astray by Jim Thrall's distillery."

"I don't see how such a woman as that could have married a distiller," observed the master.

"Why, bless your bones, master, he wa'n't no distiller when she married him, but as thrivin' a young farmer as there was. Old Peter Thrall had three sons, 'Siah and Jim and young Peter. 'Siah wanted to go to the city, and old Peter set him up handsome in business; then young Peter died and finally old Peter left his six hundred acres clear of debt, and a lot of cash besides to Jim, seeing as 'Siah had been portioned, and Jim held to the farm, and had married a wife that old Peter set great store by. Then them twins Faith and Hope, was born, and after a while another girl named Peace. Faith and Hope is the ones at the funeral this morning, but many years ago Jim fell out with Peace, and drove her off on account of her marrying a young feller like you, a theologian, as taught our district for a couple o' year."

"So Peace left the home," said the schoolmaster with intention. But the old man without afterthought, responded, "And a bad thing it was for them all, too; Peace had consid'able grit in her. You see, schoolmaster, when Peace was about three years old, a boy was born, and Jim Thrall was just daft over that boy. He set up to make him the richest man in the State. Farmin' and stock raisin' was too powerful slow for Jim in them days; the more he got, the madder he was to get more. He was wild on maki' and savin'."

"But that date Siah did unmarried leavin' Jim his fortune, and Jim up and put the hull twenty thousand into erectin' a distillery. Pretty nigh broke his wife's heart. He got to be a leadin' distiller. His boy died when he was about twelve; then the missis died, of clear discouragement, I take it, and then Peace, after a while, got drove out, 'cause she held to the theologian. By then Jim Thrall had such a craze for rollin' up money, that he just lived for it and died for it! He kep' things awful close up there to the home. Talk of funerals; I account all their lives has been funerals to Miss Faith and Hope; they've just lived lonely, never gone nowhere, nor handled any more'n if Jim had been poor. And what good would they have got out of his money? It was money with a curse on it. Jim owned a thousand acres when he died, four hundred got by foreclosin' mortgages on small farmers he had ruined with drink. He got a tavern set up at the big forks, and a saloon in every village in the county. Of course he had to have places to sell his goods. In the city he had a drinking place for rich fellers, so set up with stained glass, statues, marble, gilt and looking glasses, as would surprise you; and velvets carpets to kill! Yes, I seed it; I went to the city ten year ago, to sell Martin's hogs, when Martin had typhoid, and I met a feller from this way, and he showed me the place. Then he says, 'He owns two of a different kind; per'aps you'd better look at them, an' he took me down to a place called Kimball Street and Plum Tree Row

and he showed me hell on earth; you bet your life he did! Why, master, the dirt and beggary, and rags, and crying babies, and lean, miserable, red-eyed women, the broken winders, the rowing, the men like brutes, called it a slum, and slum it was; and there was two drinking places owned by Jim Thrall, gathering in every cent from that poor population, and makin' men into devils, day in and day out. I seed it."

"It is fearful," admitted the master.

"I don't know that it was any more fearful than what was done here. See that tumbled-down house beyond the pascher? Nobody would hire it after a man shot himself and his wife there; one of Jim's distillery hands. That big stone house near the church has had a man hanging in the garret, gone wild with Jim's drink. I couldn't count ye the young fellers that's gone to the dogs here along of Jim's business. Twenty-five years he had been a curse to the community. I should think he'd go deaf with the accusings of folks in the next world. I don't account he's having a very pleasant time. You know old Miss Robb; don't she do your washing? She had a boy, Charley, as pleasant a boy as ever you see, jolly and hearty and kind and honest; Jim Thrall set his eye on him for them qualities, and invigiled him off to the city to keep bar in one of his places. Big pay and persuasion did it, in spite of his old mother. What you might expect come from it; Charley got spoiled from the company he kep'. He tripped and he played, and by degrees he helped himself to the old man's cash. Then Jim Thrall was mighty mad, and Charley was 'rested, and got years in the pen. Far as I can see, Jim just reaped the crop he sowed for; what better could he expect than just what come of it? An', sir, sure as I'm sittin' on this wall, you could tell dozens of such stories about Jim's victims; an' it's goin' on and on, to their children and their children's children to the end of time, and I don't reckon I'm stretchin' my subject, when I say at the judgment day, Jim's likely to have as many victims, to answer for as there are blades o' grass in von pascher. Well, he's gone, but his 'stillery is goin' it same as ever. They do say he left to them two ladies an awful sight of money. If there is any fun in havin' money, I hope they'll find it; for up to now they have had no much good of their lives, not since their mother died about twenty-three year ago. They ain't to blame, and I don't know as they understood the full evils the old man did; they've kep' mighty close. Far as me and my old woman is concerned, we'd rather be poor, as we are, than handle that kind of cash. If I had Jim Thrall's dollars clinkin' in my pocket, I'd think they was waitin' and cursin' and cryin' out for vengeance, the whole endurin' time. The ladies is very good ladies, and mebbe they will improve on their father's doin's. But what kin they do? They got a 'still'ry and an' some whisky shops on their hands. What kin they do?" says I.

"For Christian people they are in a hard position," said the schoolmaster. "To state the matter broadly, they have come into possession of a large amount of dishonestly obtained property. They had nothing to do with the obtaining, and they have no means of finding out the original owners, from whom it was taken without fair equivalent. If the money were mine, I should not know what to do with it; one thing is sure, I should hate to keep it. Yes, it is a difficult, a nice case of conscience."

Two brindle cows which had been moving in a stately way across the opposite pasture, now reached the fence, and laying their heads against the top rail, regarded Luke Ford with a low moo. Luke slid from the wall, dislodging a stone, which rolled down among the tangle of wild rose and blackberry vines beside the road. Then he opened the pasture gate, and turning the cows westward, followed them along the turnpike. The schoolmaster entered the pasture, taking a short cut to his boarding place.

As the conversation by the wall had gone on, the two women in black, seated on the grave stone, had now been red, now pale, and tears had silently rolled from their eyes. So exactly alike were they in appearance, and in their indications of emotion, that they seemed two bodies animated by one soul. They rose and in silence recrossed the grassy places of sunken graves, and then went out through the gate.

"We have heard bitter truth," said Miss Faith.

"All the more bitter for being true," said Miss Hope.

"I think we never understood it before."

"But now that we do understand it, that is some duty laid before us. What is it?"

"I can not tell; but we must find

it out. The hard case of conscience which the schoolmaster stated, now lies on my conscience."

"And on mine."—*National Advocate.*

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Triumph of a Tract.

I read an incident some time ago that illustrates the power of a single tract. A society was some years ago established to distribute tracts by mail in the higher circles. One of these tracts entitled, "Prepare to Meet Thy God," was enclosed in an envelope, and sent by post to a gentleman well known for his ungodly life and reckless impiety. He was in his study when he read this letter among others.

"What's that?" said he. "Prepare to meet thy God." "Who has had the impudence to send me this cant?" And with an imprecation on his unknown correspondent, he arose to put the paper in the fire.

"No, I won't do that," he said to himself. "On second thought I know what I will do. I'll send it to my friend B——. It will be a good joke to hear what he'll say about it." So saying, he enclosed the tract in a fresh envelope, and in a feigned hand directed it to his boon companion.

Mr. B—— was a man of his own stamp, and received the tract as his friend had done, with an oath at the Methodistical humbug, which his first impulse was to tear in pieces.

"I'll not tear it, either," said he to himself. "Prepare to meet thy God" at once arrested his attention, and smote his conscience. The arrow of conviction entered his heart as he read, and he was converted. Almost his first thought was for his ungodly associates.

"Have I received such blessed light and truth, and shall I not strive to communicate it to others?" He again folded the tract, and enclosed and directed it to one of his companions in sin. Wonderful to say, the little arrow hit the mark. His friend read. He also was converted; and both are now walking as the Lord's redeemed ones.—*Moody.*

How to Get Rich.

Enoch Pratt, the Baltimore millionaire and philanthropist, wrote, "My advice to a young man just starting in life and ambitious to become wealthy is to take good care of his health, to shun all bad habits and to save at least \$1 out of every \$5 he earns, and immediately get that \$1 out at interest. A man must have good health to put forth his powers to the best advantage. To make money his brain must be clean and not clouded by rum or tobacco. I have spoken of the importance of getting your savings out at interest immediately. Few people have any idea of the rapidity with which money at interest grows, and there is no better, safer way to get it out at interest than to buy some small piece of real estate that is improved and pays rent sufficient to yield a surplus that will pay the taxes; the interest on the mortgage you will have to give and something on the principal each year. Continue to work hard and save all you can from your earnings, and apply all you save to paying off the mortgage. In this way you will soon have a good and perfectly safe investment."—*New England Homestead.*

There are two freedoms—the false, where one is free to do what he likes, and the true, where he is free to do as he ought.

Still Another Triumph.—Mr. Thomas S. Bullen, Sunderland, writes: "For fourteen years I was afflicted with Piles; and frequently I was unable to walk or sit, but four years ago I was cured by using Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil. I have also been subject to Quinsy for over forty years but Electric Oil cured it, and it was a permanent cure in both cases, as neither the Piles nor Quinsy have troubled me since."

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