

I Wonder What I Would Do?

A. A. BRAGDON,

Out on the street there a beggar waits
In the driving storm so cold—
A homeless child with a famished look,
And garments thin and old,
I give from my bounty a meagre dole,
And pennies I spare her a few;
If I knew that my Saviour was standing
There,
I wonder what I would do?

In yonder attic so cold and bare
There's a woman that sits and weeps
For her children's shelter and scanty fare,
Till the weary midnight goes.
She is stitching her life in those seams for
me;
Am I giving her back her due?
If I knew that my Saviour was keeping
account,
I wonder what I would do?

There are fatherless children that cry for
bread,
There are widows old and poor,
And there is the sick man Lazarus
That lieth beside my door.
Shall I have all the luxuries here,
While theirs shall be so few?
If I thought that I was like Dives of old,
I wonder what I would do?

I have home and friends, and silver and
gold,
Far more than I daily need;
And I clothe myself in a costly garb,
While these for a pittance plead.
My house is full of beautiful things
That are only for taste and show;
If I knew that my Lord had need of these,
I wonder what I would do?

I have prided myself on my goodly deeds,
And my name's on the church's roll;
But I waste in some needless thing, per-
chance,
The price of a heathen soul.
I have told the world of my love of God,
And my love for His children, too;
If the Lord should ask me to prove my
word,
I wonder what I would do?

There comes a time in the future near,
When this life has passed away.
When these needy ones will stand with me
In the light of a judgment day,
When the Angel reads from the Book of
Life
My deeds for that great review,
If these should speak and accuse me there
I wonder what I shall do?

Then the Son of Man, with His angels
fair,
Will sit on the great white throne,
And out from the millions gathered there
He will know and claim His own.
If He saith to me those words I've read
In that Book so old and true,
"Inasmuch as ye did it not to these"—
I wonder what I shall do?

A Boy Misjudged.

"Don't be hasty with Charley,"
said Mary Thomas to her husband,
as she heard him sharply tell him
not to be late home from school.

"But I mean to let him know I
will be obeyed," was her husband's
reply, as he added: "Now, then be
off to school, and come straight
home, or I'll know why."

Charley started off with the tears
stealing down his cheeks. He was
a bright, manly fellow of some nine
years of age, full of health and vigor,
and therefore naturally disposed to
be on the move. His father, how-
ever, was rather disposed to forget
that "boys will be boys," or that it
would be unnatural in such a lad
not to be buoyant whenever an oc-
casion presented itself for the dis-
play of his youthful vigor.

He had, however, to learn it to
his cost. During the afternoon his
business matters had become some-
what trying, and he went home with
a vexed spirit. He was by no means
unkind, but easily annoyed if things
did not go exactly to suit him, es-
pecially little ones. Pomp and
exact himself, he could not put up
with the absence of such qualities
in others.

Sitting by the fire in rather an
unhappy mood, it was made worse
by his wife coming in and saying in
rather an excited manner:

"I do declare, Charley has just
come in a perfect mess. He is cov-
ered from head to foot with mud
and drenched to the skin!"

"Where is he?" asked the father,
sternly.

"In the kitchen shivering over
the fire. He was afraid to come in
because the servant told him you
were at home."

"I don't wonder at his being
afraid. Why, it was only yester-
day I told him to keep away from
the river, and that he was on no ac-
count to get near the edge on his
way home from school." So tell him
to come in this instant."

A moment after Charley entered,
perishing with cold and fright. One
glance at his father's face was
enough to tell him what to expect,
from experience.

"Did I not tell you never to go
near the river? It serves you right
and in the morning I'll let you
know what I think of your conduct
in such a way you won't forget."

"But, father," said the little fel-
low, "do let me explain and tell
you—"

"Not one word—go to bed at
once."

"I only want to tell you, father,
that—"

"I tell you, not a word," said the
father, and with a wave of his hand
he added, "go to bed or you will re-
gret it."

Slowly the boy obeyed, and crept
supperless to bed. When he had
left the room, his mother said gen-
tly:

"I think, father, you ought to
have heard what Charley had to tell
you. My heart ached when he turn-
ed away. You know he is generally
obedient, and if he does something
wrong, it is more from want of
thought than wilfulness of heart."

Still he ought to do as I told him,
as I did so plainly about not going
near the river."

Somehow a cloud seemed to come
over the home that night, and a re-
straint crept between them and their
usual method when alone.
When at length they retired to rest,
as they passed the bedroom of the
little fellow something prompted the
father to look in.

Creeping in and sheltering the
candle, he went in and gazed upon
his boy's face as he calmly and
sweetly slept. A feeling of regret
at his own harshness sprang up in
his mind, when he tried in vain to
suppress by saying that "a sense of
duty" required him to be firm. On
talking over the matter, however,
with the mother, he promised before
proceeding to extreme measures in
the morning he would listen to what
the boy had to say, and, if it was a
reasonable excuse, make amends to
his wounded spirit.

Alas! the opportunity never came,
for when they awoke in the morn-
ing it was to discover the lad toss-
ing with brain fever, from which he
never recovered, and in a few days,
although they watched and waited
in speechless agony and the most
intense desire for some recognition,
he passed away.

When the news reached the school
one of Charley's most intimate com-
panions called, and after awhile said:
"I was with Charley when he got
into the water."

"Indeed," said the father, "then
you can tell me how it happened."

"Yes. Two boys were fishing,
and somehow one slipped in and
raised a cry for help. Charley threw
off his cap and jumped in, and, after
a deal of trouble, got the boy to the
side of the river and waded through
the mud, where I helped them both
ashore. Charley told me not to say
anything about it, for you had warn-
ed him not to go near the water, and
all the way home he kept say-
ing: 'What will my father say
when he sees me? But I felt I
must try and save Tom.'"

"My poor, brave boy!" exclaimed
the father. "That was what he
wanted to tell me, and I cruelly re-
fused to hear him, owing to my
hasty temper. God forgive me."

Hot and bitter tears rolled down
his cheeks, and for years the sight
of Charley's toys, school-books and
other things sent many a pang to
his heart which might have been
saved if he had been willing to
listen before he condemned his poor
boy.—*Christian Commonwealth.*

The Tree and the Post.

I think any one can be just as
good without being a Christian,"
said Henry Wood, with a confident
air. "There's Tom; where will you
find a more reliable fellow than he?
I'm sure he's much more agreeable
than John, who joined the church
last week, and set himself up to be
better than the rest of us."

Is that quite fair, Harry?" asked
Uncle Harvey, with a smile. "Did
he set himself up to be better than
the rest of you?"

"Well, he said he was going to
try to be a Christian, anyway."

"Do you think he meant any
thing by it?" asked Uncle Harvey.

"O yes! he meant it. He'll try
to be good, I suppose, but Tom's
good enough for me just as he is."

And Harry walked off whistling a
lively air.

"Do you remember when this
maple was set out, Harry?" asked
his uncle the next day, as they stood
in the shade of a beautiful tree in
the corner of the yard.

"No, but I've heard father say he
planted it the spring we moved into
this house, and that must have been
ten years ago, for I was five then,
and now I'm fifteen."

"I remember it quite well, said
Uncle Harvey. "It was a mere
stick without leaf or branch, and
it was inclined to bend over to one
side; so your father tied it to a stake
to straighten it. It is a pretty good
tree now."

"Yes, indeed," said Harry; "we
wouldn't part with it for anything."

"It seems to me this post by the
gate needs a new coat of paint,"
continued Uncle Harvey.

"O! it isn't worth painting.
Father is going to put a new hitch-
ing post there. This one is unsteady
and is probably rotten at the base."

"Way, how happened that?" said
Uncle Harvey. "It was put there
at the same time the maple tree

was planted. A good, strong, reliable
post it seemed; a handsome post,
too, in its day—smooth, of good
shape, and nicely painted. In fact,
it looked much better than the tree.
I told your father so, but he only
said: Wait awhile. I've waited ten
years. There's the slender, awk-
ward sapling that we all laughed at,
and here's the reliable, handsome
post." As Uncle Harvey shook it
with his hand it cracked ominously.
What is the difference between the
tree and the post, Harry?

"Why, one's a tree and the other
is only a post," said Harry.

"But both are wood," pursued his
uncle. "Not unlike, apparently,
ten years ago; the difference being
in favor of the post. They were
planted in the same soil, only a few
feet apart. Yet one has grown
larger and more beautiful year by
year; the other, after remaining out-
wardly about the same for years,
now begins to show signs of weak-
ness and decay."

"One had life and the other had
not," said Harry. A thing must
have life in order to grow.

"Do you think your father will
make the new hitching-post out of
the maple tree, Harry?"

Why, of course not, uncle. He
wouldn't cut down that tree for any
thing.

"But he needs a new post.
O! he can get plenty of posts,
but it takes a good many years to
get a tree like that."

You remind me of what the min-
ister said last Sunday in speaking of
the difference between a merely
moral man and a Christian. His
text was those words of Christ: In
me ye have life; and he said: "You
can make a post out of a tree, but
you can never make a tree out of a
post. Suppose you give John and
Tom ten years before you decide
which is the better fellow."—*Sunday
School Times.*

Runaway Marriages.

A good many years ago was heard
the remark made by a person of
long and careful observation, that
runaway marriages rarely turn out
to be happy ones. Since then ob-
servation has confirmed the truth
of the remark. In so important a
matter as marriage, affecting the
families of both parties, no less than
their posterity, the fundamental
principles and elements entering
into the marriages should be well
considered and be perfectly sound
and just, or there may be, and like-
ly will be, very serious trouble
afterwards. "Marry in haste, and
repent at leisure" is an aphorism
well worth taking to heart. "Love,"
says Milton, "hath his seat in reason,
and is judicious." Among the
French, where marriages are arranged
by the parents of the contracting
parties, there is said to be very little
domestic unhappiness. Perhaps the
joy of the wedded pairs may not
reach so high a point as in our
country, where personal choice
enters so largely into the marriage
contract, but there is, if printed
statements may be trusted, far less
disruption of the marriages tie in
France than in this country.

When the bridegroom marries his
bride with the full consent of her
nearest relatives and in their pres-
ence, his pledges to her mean a great
deal more to him, usually, than when
they are made in a corner, so to
speak, and she has a sense of secur-
ity in the bond that can never be
hers when it is secretly and furtive-
ly assumed.

Opposition to marriage of sons
and daughters is doubtless often
unreasonable on the part of parents,
and may seem so more frequently
than it is to those who see every-
thing through the rosy mists of
love. But it is certainly true that
where both families unite in hearty
approval of their union by the mar-
riage of two of their members, the
likelihood of domestic concord is
very great, if at the same time the
contracting parties are thoroughly
in love with each other.

One of the most eminent men in
his profession that this country has
produced had an unfortunate love
affair in his youth—unfortunate
only because he was poor, and on
this sole ground was rejected by the
parents of his sweetheart. She pro-
posed a runaway match, but he
calmly said, "When I marry you,
it shall be with the free consent of
your parents and in their presence.
I will never run away with any
woman."

Before he had gained money
enough to marry she died, and he
lived unmarried through a life
reaching to fourscore—a life of re-
markable purity, honor, and upright-
ness, no less than of success in
reaching wealth and fame. Was he
happy? Yes. For he never for-
feited his own self-respect or be-
trayed a trust reposed in him.

Child Conversion.

Becoming a Christian is like
crossing a river from bank to bank;
passing from the worldly country to
Immanuel's land. Now, if we fol-
low a river up beyond its affluents,
we find it keeps getting smaller and

smaller, and at last it is only a sil-
ver thread winding through the mea-
dow. You have to part the grasses
to find it. Like Jean Ingelow's
streamlet—

"A tiny bright beck it trickles
between."

Only a step will take you across,
and you may even pass from
bank to bank without knowing it.

Child conversion is like that. The
change of position is imperceptible,
but there is a world-wide difference
in the ultimate result. Now, sup-
pose a person does not cross the
river near its source where it is so
slender that the grasses touch each
other about it—in other words is
not converted in childhood, but
travels along down the stream on
the wrong bank, pursuing the nat-
ural course of the worldly life. By
and by the river becomes wide and
deep and arrowy. He says at last
to himself, "I must cross the river."
He plunges in. He buffets the
waves. At last he gains the oppo-
site shore. Drenched and panting,
but full of joy, he clammers up the
bank. There he meets a person
who crossed the river when it was a
tiny stream, and has been travelling
down the right bank in Immanuel's
land. These people are sure to mi-
understand each other. The one
who has forded the stream lower
down will have a long and stir-
ring experience to relate of the
anguish he endured while wrest-
ling with the flood, of the
joy which he felt upon arriving at
the bank, and which he can scarce-
ly find words to express. The other
who crossed the stream near its
source, will reply: "I never experi-
enced anything of that kind. In
fact, I hardly know of the exact
time when I crossed the stream."

Then the other may say, "Then you
never have crossed the stream at all."
"But," the answer will come, "I
seem to be on the same bank you
are on. I am conscious of forgive-
ness. I am living in the Christi-
an life. I love the people of God. His
word is sweet to my taste." "Well,"
the other will say, "that makes no
difference. Unless you have passed
through experiences similar to mine,
you are not a Christian."

What a mistake this is! The fact
is, that many of the best Christians
in our churches crossed the stream
in early childhood, and so cannot
tell you the exact date of their con-
version. Those who are converted in
mature life, and have such wonder-
ful experiences to tell, are prone to
bring with them, into the church,
worldly habits; they are less docile,
more worldly wise. Happy the church
in which the children are growing
up whose second birth follows close
on the first! Bless the garden in
which these tender plants are spring-
ing up like willows by the water-
courses.—*S. S. Times.*

Whiskers that are prematurely gray
or faded should be colored to prevent
the look of age, and Buckingham's Dye
excels all others in bucking brown or
black.

TRUE CONSECRATION.—There was
never a more impressive or touching
expression of consecration to Christ
and his work than is contained in
the words of a brilliant young Ox-
ford student who was about to set
out as a missionary to Africa. "I
think it is with African missions as
with the building of a great bridge,"
he said: "You know how many
stones have to be buried in the
earth, all unseen to be a foundation.
I think wants me to be one of the
unseen stones lying in an African
grave. I am content, certain, as I
am, that the final result will be a
Christian Africa." He died in about
a year after reaching his field of
labor; but in learning his story, one
seems to gain a better idea of what
is meant by these words of the
Master: "Except a corn of wheat
fall into the ground and die, it
abideth alone; but if it die, it bring-
eth forth much fruit." (John xii. 24.)

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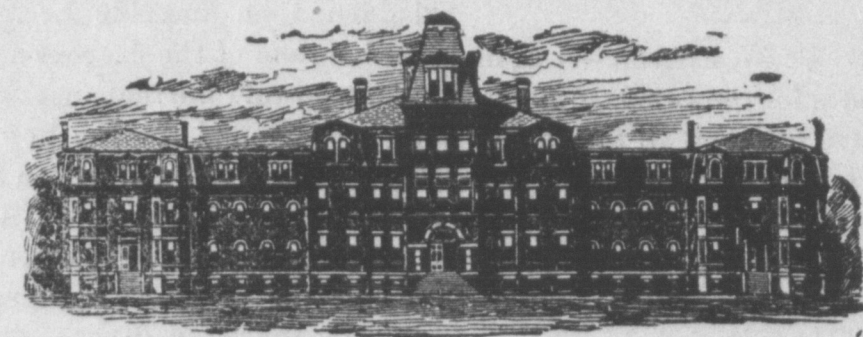
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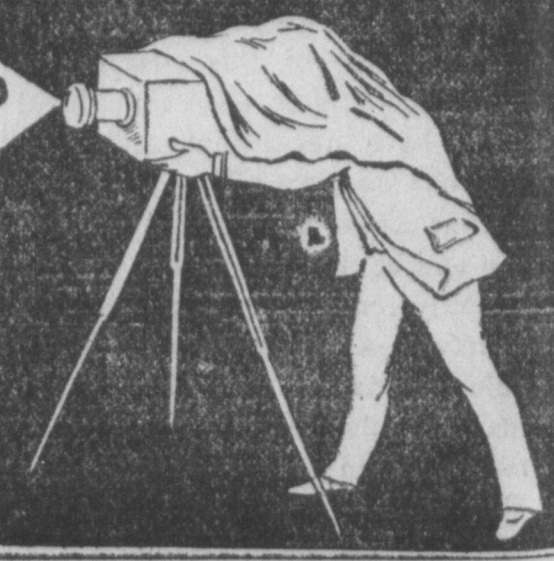
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