

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PAGE

"Let no man despise thy youth"—I. Timothy 4-12

Editor: REV. B. COCHRANE, Marysville, N. B.

"ALL THINGS ARE LAWFUL BUT ALL THINGS ARE NOT EXPEDIENT"

By Rev. W. Edmund Smith

In the year 490 B. C. there was fought upon the plains of Marathon in Greece, one of the decisive battles in world history. Miltiades, the Grecian general, defeated a great Persian horde under Darius, and the news of victory was carried to Athens, a little more than twenty-six miles away, by a Grecian youth, who having announced the victory fell dead.

For many years this notable event has been commemorated in Boston by the assembling of many young men from New England especially, and from different parts of Canada, on what is called Patriot's Day. These young men have endured rigorous training for many months and come prepared to cover the exact distance the Greek messenger covered in his epochal run from Marathon to Athens—twenty-six miles and 188 yards.

This event has always drawn immense crowds to witness the contest. But they do not stand in crowds; the more than half million people are strung along the entire course. Although I had lived in Boston for more than twenty years, I had never attended a Marathon. In fact, I had conscientious scruples about the matter, for I believe the atmosphere of such a place would not be conducive to spiritual blessing any more than would be a prize-fight or a hockey game.

But Marathon day had rolled around again, and the question was asked, "Are you going?" My reply was "No." It comes on Saturday and attendance at the race with the smoking, betting, swearing throng that will gather there would be a poor preparation for the Sabbath, if I expect to get a real blessing from the Lord. Besides I am utterly opposed to horse-racing, dog-racing and the like. Some of the young men who will run will fall exhausted on the course, and others will finish under such a terrific strain from which they may never fully recover."

But then something said, "You had better reconsider the matter; you may be getting 'unco gude.' Many good people, even holiness people, attend this great event. They feel the need of a little relaxation. Preachers attend and they get through Sunday all right. They are just as devout as you are. You hadn't a better place yourself upon a pedestal of seeming superior piety. And besides you can go and witness for the Lord."

This led me to feel that perhaps I had been too Puritanical about the matter, and so I resolved to go once anyway and try it out.

The Saturday dawned beautifully clear; the atmosphere was cool—an ideal day for the race. It was to begin at 2 p. m. and half past two found me, New Testament in my inside coat pocket, standing with the crowd about a half mile from the goal.

To tell the truth I did not feel comfortable, for looking around I failed to see anyone of my crowd—I mean holiness folks. The people were in a very happy mood as the world would describe it, smoking, joking, swearing and some drinking. I felt much out of place, and seeing a nice grassy spot somewhat isolated, I made my way there, pulled out my

New Testament and began to read. Would you believe it, I opened immediately to John 17th chapter and read: "Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world! If ye were of the world the world would love its own, but because ye are not of the world, I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." I said to myself, "I don't like that passage; it makes me feel condemned," so I turned the pages and again read: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, for all that is of the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the father but of the world."

I closed my Testament and resolved that if I had any opportunity I would do some personal work and say a good word for my Lord to take the harm off. I saw a group of young men, five in number, sitting on the grass nearby. They looked very respectable and quiet and so I drew near, with some trepidation I confess, and said nonchalantly, "Well, boys, it's a great day for the race!" "You're D—right," was the response from one. "It is an ideal day." "Well, boys," I said, there is another great race far more important than this, I hope, you are interested in."

They all looked at me in surprise and one said, "What do you mean, buddie?"

I replied, "The race for eternal life and salvation."

"Oh, you are a preacher, are you?" one chimed in with a chuckle. "I tell you right now, buddie, you have come to a poor place to sell such stuff today."

"Give him a chance," a big fellow interposed. "Tell us what you mean by salvation. If it's a good thing I may want it."

"Yes, boys, it is the best thing that I have ever found. It has taken all sin out of my life and heart and saved me completely from the love of this old world. There is not a thing that looks like the world that I want."

At this they all set up a wild laugh, and one fairly shouted: "Buddie, you have your wires crossed today! You have gotten out of your crowd someway. If this is not of the world, then I am Hitler. I tell you this is no Sunday school picnic! The same crowd is here that goes to prize-fights, hockey games, base-ball and all that. Tomorrow is Sunday and I presume you have come here today to get inspiration for the Sabbath." At this they all laughed loudly and they knew the laugh was on me.

"Say, Buddie," asked another, "what church do you attend?" "I go to the holiness church," I timidly replied. "O, the holiness church! Well, there must be some holes in their holiness to have let you through today. My old mother was a Free Methodist, and she was really a Methodist free. She was of the shouting kind and took me to church and Sunday school and prayer meeting too. She was full of joy but straight on every line. She was so particular that she would not work so hard on Saturday so she would be better able to enjoy the services of the Lord's Day. Many things she said were not of so much harm but they led you into the spirit of the world, and put you on wrong ground to meet the enemy.

Yes, friend, let me tell you I was what you call saved once. I was happy, or thought I was; I had given up the old gang and said all I need is old-time religion.

But a worldly preacher came my way and told me I was too narrow; that I could go to base-ball games and hockey games as a means of grace. I began going, but still taught my Sunday school class. But one day at a base-ball game a fellow blew tobacco smoke on my face, and stepped on a corn on my little toe. I was so enraged that I swung and let him have it on the jaw. He came back at me and we mixed it for a little while, till finally a cop broke in and led us both off. I came up in court and was fined ten dollars for disorderly conduct. It hurt our church terrible. It was too much for me to stand. I left the church and said if I am going with the world I might as well get all there is out of it. I am telling you, buddie, not to insult you, but to warn you. You are not on God's territory when you are here with this milling, betting, swearing, godless crowd"

All the time this young man was talking, the others kept respectfully silent. The one to change the conversation, said, "Buddie, have you any bet on this race? I'll take you ten to one that Pawson will win. Come on now, here is your chance for a little easy money." But just then the cry was raised, "Here comes the leader!" What a shout there was and what excitement! But I was too humiliated and ashamed to take any notice of the ending of the race. I hastily took a car, rushed back to my room and fell upon my knees and thanked God for the rebuke of that back-slidden young man. I said, "Lord, forgive me and never again will I compromise my convictions." Just then the ringing doorbell aroused me from my reverie and I was so glad that it was only a day-dream.

BEULAH

A thousand thousand memories
Awake at mention of that word.
Here burdened hearts have found release;
These grounds are sacred to the Lord.

The daylight fades from azure skies.
A red-brown dusk is on the hills.
Across the tide the risen moon,
A path of liquid silver spills.

A little lake, a rustic bridge,
A small ravine, and winding ways;
These grounds are sacred to the Lord:
The very stones spell out His praise.

Green are the sacred groves of prayer;
Here Zion's harmonies abound.
"Remove thy shoes from off thy feet,"
The place thou treadest is holy ground.

A Bethel to the pilgrim soul,
A feast of fat things all the day;
A tabernacle where the Word,
Is spoken in the old-time way.

Oh, house of prayer! Oh groves of song!
Oh place where heaven seems so near!
Our hearts begin to feel the pull,
For Beulah time will soon be here.

—Judson Sanders