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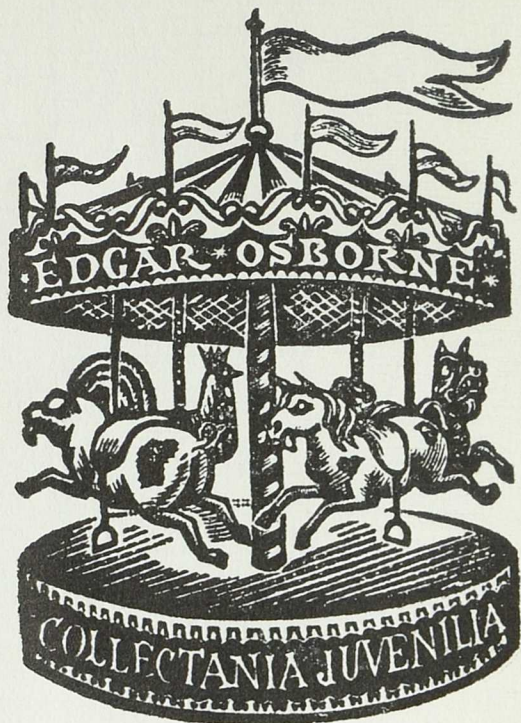
OLD
HUMPHREY'S
FIRE-SIDE
TALES

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RELIGIOUS TRACT
SOCIETY
LONDON

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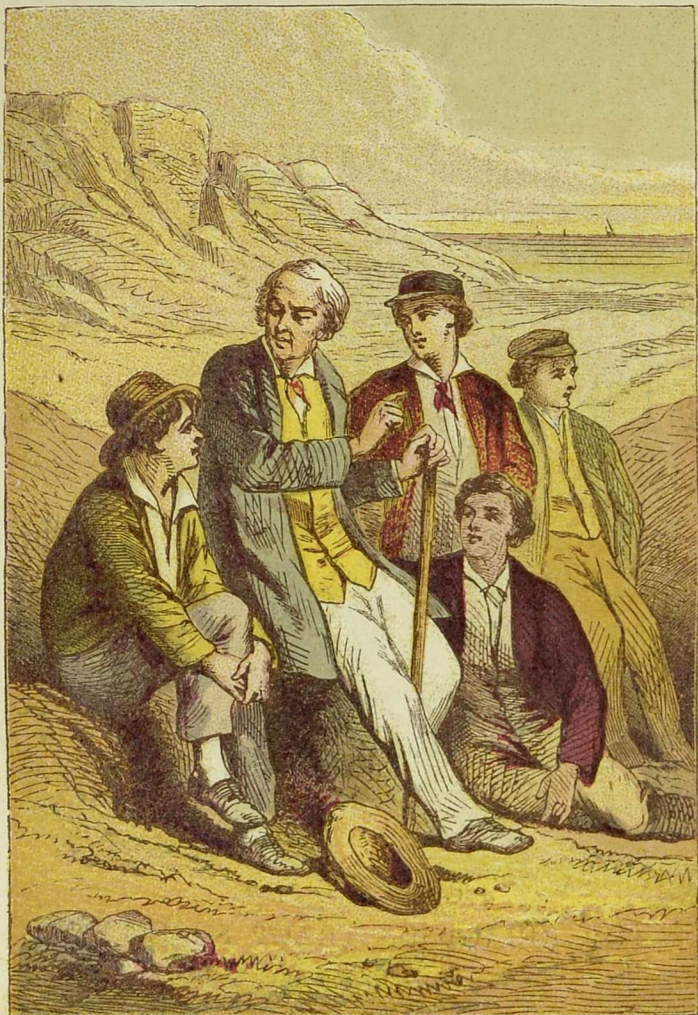
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FIRE-SIDE TALES.

OLD HUMPHREY'S

FIRE-SIDE TALES.



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Old Humphrey's
FIRE-SIDE TALES.

• PAUL ELLIS;

OR, GOD'S WAY IS BETTER THAN OUR WAY.



THERE is no greater error in the world than that of supposing that if we had our own way it would make us happy. "Guide me, O Lord, in thy way," is a better prayer than "Give me, O Lord, the desires of my heart." This truth will be set in a clear light by the following story about Paul Ellis.

"If I had but my new button clothes," said little Paul, "then I should be happy."

In a week after his new button clothes were sent home, and he was dressed up in them, and for two or three days he seemed to enjoy himself very much.

“If somebody would give me a pocket-knife, and teach me how to make a ship, how glad I should be.” His uncle gave him a pocket-knife; Abel Mike, who had been to sea almost all his life, taught him how to make a ship, and they sailed it together down the brook.

“If I was but as big as Fred Lauder, I should care for nothing.” Days, weeks, months, and years passed away, and he grew up to be as big as he had wished to be; but though he had been dressed up in new buttoned clothes, though he had made a ship, and also grown up to be as big as Fred Lauder, yet he was not happy.

“I wish I was an apprentice to a grocer, for I am very fond of figs and raisins.” This just suited his father's plans, so he put him

apprentice to a grocer; but he very soon made himself ill in eating what belonged to his employer.

“I wish that I was out of my time, that I might be a shopman.” No sooner was his apprenticeship passed than he became a counter-man; but his master kept him close to his work, and he did not like it.

“I wish I could set up in trade and be a master.” His father assisted him so that he set up in business; but, alas! his cares were greater than they were before. He had been an apprentice and a shopman, and now he was a master, but for all this he was very far from being happy.

“If I could but move into the shop at the corner of the street, I should do; that is the shop for business.” In a few months the corner shop was to let, and he took it, and his trade became better for the change.

“If I could but let my first floor to a good lodger, it would help to pay my rent, and

make me quite comfortable." It so happened that a good lodger wanted a first-floor, so he let it to him, and had his wish.

"If I could but get the lease of my house, it would be the making of me, for then I would put a new front to the shop, and have a door in each street; this is all I want." In another year his landlord let him have a lease, but when he had put up his new front he was not satisfied. He had now moved into the corner shop, secured a good lodger, and obtained a lease of his house; yet Paul Ellis was not a happy man.

"I only want a little more money, for then I could carry all the world before me." That very year his father died and left him five hundred pounds; but when he had received it he found out that he wanted five hundred more.

"I only want to live in a house of my own, but I cannot afford to buy this that I live in at present." As he thrived in busi-

ness he was soon able to purchase his house, and this for a time gave him great pleasure.

“I only want to set up a horse and gig, that I may have a drive now and then into the country.” They say, “Where there is a will there is a way.” He bought himself a horse and gig, and often rode into the country; but neither his money, his house, nor his horse and gig made him happy.

“I hope to meet one of these days with a partner, a steady, stirring sort of a man, who will attend to business, and leave me more at liberty.” He met with a partner at last, just such a one as he wanted, and then he had time to do what he liked.

“I hope I shall find a country-house some day, a few miles out of town, that will suit me, for then I shall be able to enjoy myself. No man has worked harder than I have done.” There were many country-houses to let, so he took one, but his time hung rather heavy on his hands.

“I hope to get the paddock and the hilly field at Christmas, for then I can keep a cow or two, as well as my horse, and make a little butter and cheese.” Christmas came, and he took the field and paddock into his hands, and bought two cows. He had now a partner, a country-house, a large field, a paddock, two cows, a horse. How was it that he was not happy?

“I should not care if it was not for that cobbler in the little stall that I pass by so often; but he works away with his awl and his hammer so cheerfully, and sings to himself so heartily, that I cannot help thinking he is happier than I am.” The cobbler went away, and he neither heard nor saw him any more.

“I should not care if I could get this speck in my eye cured, for I am afraid that if I do not, one day or other I shall be blind in my left eye.” His doctor was a skilful man, and he cured him of the

speck in his eye, but yet he was not quite easy.

“I should not care if I could retire from the grocery business, for I am quite tired of it; the thing must be managed one way or other.” He was not a grocer more than a year after, and away he went to his country-house. He had now got rid of the cobbler, and of the speck in his eye, and he had, too, retired from the grocery business; but he could not say with truth that he was happy.

“If I were only worth enough to keep my carriage, then I should be as happy as a prince.” He made some good bargains with his money, and the time came when he did keep his carriage, and a very grand one; but then he was so sadly afflicted with the gout, that do what he could, he did not enjoy it.

“If I were only once made a magistrate, it would be everything that I could wish for; then, indeed, I should be a happy

man." Being very rich, and having plenty of time to spare, he was fixed upon for a magistrate; but he found in his office very little pleasure, and a great deal of trouble. Neither keeping his carriage, having plenty of money, nor being made a magistrate, had made him happy.

"I should be happy if I could get the better of the gout; but, as it is, I have no peace night nor day. For some years I have lived too freely, but I find that it will not do. I should be happy if I could get the better of the gout." If his doctor did not cure him, he at least made him a great deal better.

"I should be happy if I had made my will, but when I think about it it puts me in mind of dying; and yet I shall die none the sooner if I attend to it." He did attend to it, and left money to people in all directions, to whom he would not give a penny in his lifetime. What could he now desire?—his

gout gave him little or no trouble, and he had made his will. How can it be accounted for that he was not happy?

Paul Ellis had had his way when a boy, and when a man he had prospered in all he had engaged in, and became rich; but yet he was not happy. How could he be? He had not learned to remember his Creator in the days of his youth, and he had lived without God in the world.

Money he had, but riches make to themselves wings and fly away; and besides, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Matt. xvi. 26. "Better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure and trouble therewith," Prov. xv. 16.

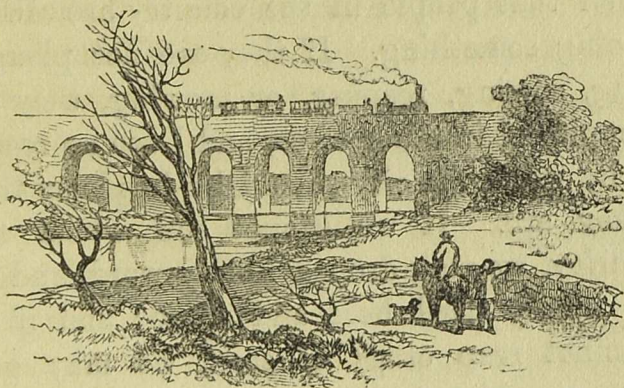
Paul Ellis speculated largely in the funds, and lost much. He had a law-suit that almost ruined him; and a fire that broke out burnt down his house to the very ground. All his property was destroyed, he had never

insured it, though he once determined to do it; and thus he was brought down to poverty and want.

Riches had been a snare to Paul Ellis, but poverty was made a blessing to him. A good man whom he had wronged when he was rich, came to him when he was in distress to assist and to comfort him. He told him of his errors, he read to him the word of God, and he pointed him to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

It was hard after being rich to set to work again as a poor man, but he was obliged to do so. At last he became used to it, and found that "the sleep of a labouring man is sweet," Eccles. v. 12. No longer troubled with the gout, he was diligent, and began again to prosper. By God's blessing he became a humble-minded Christian man, doing all the good he could to those around him, and looking to Jesus Christ as his only Saviour.

Riches cannot make us contented, poverty cannot prevent us from becoming happy ; for if ever there was a happy man in the world, that man was Paul Ellis. It is better to follow God's will than our own way.



FRANK AND THE FIVE WARRIORS.



I SHALL not soon forget one of the London walks that I once took with my father. "Humphrey," said he, "you know very well that people in the country are always doing something. If they are not ploughing, sowing, reaping, or mowing, they are employed in other ways, and I see no reason why we in the city should be less busy than they are. If we cannot sow wheat and barley, we may drop a kindly word, and do a kindly deed here and there; and if we cannot reap crops of corn, we may gain lessons of instruction from the things around us. Keep your eyes and your ears open. He who is on the watch to do good, or

to get good, will not be long without an opportunity."

Not a street's length did we go without my father giving some proof of the kindness of his heart. He turned to account the public buildings, the people, and the carriages. But I was about to speak of the Five Warriors.

When we came to the Horse Guards, he pointed to a soldier who was mounted on a noble black horse, under the gateway. The soldier was a fine-looking man, dressed in a blue jacket and a steel breastplate, that they call a cuirass. He had a brass helmet on his head, with a streaming plume of red horse-hair, and he had brass epaulets on his shoulders. He wore breeches almost as white as snow, with very high boots, and very high white gloves that half-covered his arms. "That man," said my father, "is a warrior."

"Well," thought I, "father need not have

told me that, for every one must see by his clothes and his weapons that he is a soldier ;” but I said nothing.

Presently we came to a place called the Admiralty, a large building that falls back from the street, with a court-yard before it. Just as I was looking up at the sculpture on it, a sailor, in his blue jacket and trousers, with a black silk handkerchief round his neck, went into the court-yard. “That man,” said my father, “is a warrior.”

Once more I thought that my father had given himself unnecessary trouble, for all the world knows that many sailors fight on board a man-of-war ; but still I kept my tongue still.

It so happened that my father had forgotten to make a call near the Parliament House, so he turned back again, and we had hardly reached the Hall of Westminster, before we saw somebody crossing over to the entrance of the place, dressed in a pow-

dered, curly wig, and a flowing black gown. I took him for a clergyman ; but to my surprise my father said to me, " Humphrey, that is a warrior."

At first I thought that my good father was joking with me ; but when I saw how grave he was, I altered my opinion. Still, the more I looked at the powdered wig and the black gown, the more was I puzzled.

Soon after this, as we passed by some large houses, a handsome gig stopped at the door of one of them. I looked at the spirited bay horse, and at the driver, a mere boy, with a gold band round his hat, and a pair of topped boots on his legs ; but my father looked at the gentleman who got out of the gig, and giving me a touch on the elbow while he spoke, he said to me, " Humphrey ! do you see there ? He is a warrior."

What was to be the end of all this I did not know ; for hardly had I got the better of my former surprise. I took a fresh glance

at the gentleman as he went up the steps of the house, who neither looked at all like a soldier, nor carried a sword, and thought to myself, "At any rate, I should never have taken him for a warrior."

There is a church within a stone's throw of Westminster Abbey, and as we went through the churchyard, an elderly gentleman, with grey hair, dressed in black, walked before us and entered the church. We were at one time so near him, that had we spoken loud, he would have heard every word we said; but my father bent down his head a little, and whispered to me, "The gentleman in black there is a warrior."

Never having supposed for a moment that there were any other warriors to be seen, besides soldiers and sailors, my wonder was greater than ever, and I made up my mind to ask my father, on our return, what he meant by calling a man in plain clothes a warrior? My father, however, who knew

what was passing in my mind, was not likely to let me be long at a loss.

“I want to speak a few words with you, Humphrey,” said he, “about the five warriors that I pointed out to you. The one at the Horse Guards you knew at once to be a warrior, by his dress. The time when swords will be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks is not yet come; but for all this, come it will, ‘for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.’”

“Everybody knows the dress of a sailor, and therefore you might suppose that the man in the blue jacket and trousers, at the Admiralty, was a warrior. The worst wish that I have towards sailors is this, that every honest Jack-tar may be engaged in the service of peace.”

“Now,” thought I, “my father will speak about the other warriors, and tell me what I want to know;” and sure enough he did, thus:—

“You were a little surprised to find a warrior at Westminster Hall, arrayed in a wig; but he was a barrister, and, as such, he was bound to contend against fraud and injustice. The business of a barrister is to advise others about the law; to maintain right and resist wrong; to defend the weak from the powerful oppressor, to clear the innocent, and bring the guilty to justice. An upright lawyer, though he wields no sword, and carries no fire-arms, is a warrior against disorder, and deceit, and wrong, and as such is entitled to high honour.

“The warrior that you saw alight from the gig was a doctor, and his duty is, so far as his skill will allow, to defend mankind from sickness, and resist disease.

“The warrior dressed in black, who entered the church, was a clergyman, a minister of grace to guilty men, and he is by far the highest of all the warriors. He has, look-

ing up to God for aid, to wage war against ignorance, error, and sin, and to resist and persuade others to oppose the world, the flesh, and the devil.

“And now, Humphrey,” said he, looking at me solemnly, but very kindly, “though you and I are neither soldiers, sailors, barristers, doctors, nor ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ, I do trust that, through much mercy, we shall ever be found hardy warriors, fighting manfully against sin, and continue to be Christ’s faithful soldiers to our lives’ end.”

Till flesh shall faint, and life itself shall fail,
Let us fight on—through Christ we must prevail.



GREEDY GODFREY.



How hateful to the good and wise,
Are greedy hearts and greedy eyes.

“Now Godfrey,” said Uncle James, “you shall divide these nuts between you and your brother Peter. Put them into these two cups, and as Peter is absent I will choose for him. If you have the division, and I the choice, that will be acting fairly, and they say ‘Fair play is a jewel all the world over.’ ”

Uncle James was a shrewd and a wise man, and well knew Godfrey's sad failing of greediness, so, while the latter was dividing the nuts, he took out of his pocket a book, and began to read it.

Godfrey set about his pleasant task with right good will, but in a very unfair manner. "Now," thought he to himself, "I will have that bunch of six, and most of the bunches of five, and the big brown shellers that have fallen out of their husks, for I can manage my uncle, I know."

Uncle James, however, was not quite so easily managed as Godfrey thought; for while seemingly employed with his book, he was observing all that was going on.

Godfrey first placed the bunch of six, and three of the four bunches of fives, and the big brown shellers by themselves in one of the cups, adding to them almost all the best of those that were left, and covering them over with a few of the small ones, while at the top of the other cup he stuck the remaining bunch of fives. "That bunch will do the business for me," thought he, "for uncle will be sure to choose it."

As it happened, however, Uncle James

did not choose it; for when he made his choice he said, "These are very small ones in one of the cups, but I should not at all wonder if they have full kernels for all that, so I shall choose them for Peter at once."

Much astonished, and still more disappointed, was Godfrey; but as he had divided the nuts himself he could not complain. "I will manage better the next time," thought he, "and uncle shall be outwitted."

This is the way that young people often act, foolishly supposing that because their thoughts are not expressed, nobody knows them, whereas those around them, who are older than they, frequently know them almost as well as if they were written down.

"Now Godfrey," said Uncle James the next day, "you must again go through your pleasant task, for here are some more nuts, and Peter is again absent. He was quite satisfied with the division you made

the last time, so take the cups and see if you can manage the matter as well again."

"Yes, I can," thought greedy Godfrey, "and a great deal better; for if I had not the best of the nuts last time, I will this time," so he set to work at once, while his uncle, as before, took out of his pocket a book.

In a short time the worst of the nuts were in one cup, and the best in another, Godfrey taking care to put some small nuts at the top of the worst cup.

"All ready, uncle," cried he with great glee, feeling quite sure that this time he should have the lion's share. Alas! for poor Godfrey, he forgot that honesty was the best policy, and did not see that greediness in himself which was so plainly seen by his uncle.

"Oh," said Uncle James, when he came to look at the cups, "here are some nice small

nuts again, I see. I chose them last time for Peter, but it would hardly be fair to rob you of them every time, so I will now choose the other cup. As I said before, 'Fair play is a jewel all the world over.'"

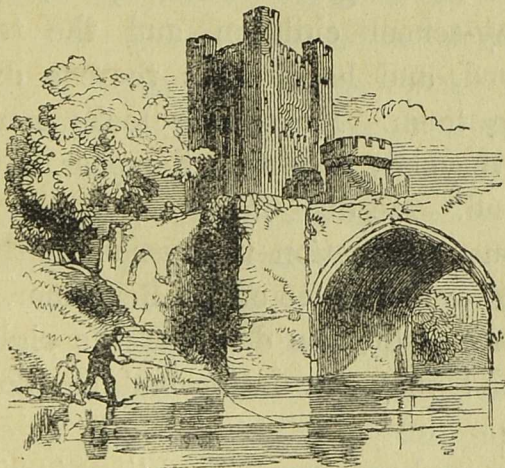
If greedy Godfrey was astonished and disappointed before, he was now much more so, and it was with a very ill grace that he took to himself the worst cup which he had so slyly provided for his brother.

Uncle James took care to give Godfrey another opportunity of exercising his talent in the way of division, and was happy to find that, not knowing how to secure the best of the nuts by deceit, he divided them honestly, so that hardly was there a pin to choose between his own and the cup that fell to the share of his brother Peter.

Uncle James failed not, afterwards, to point out kindly, but faithfully, to Godfrey, the folly and sin of greediness and deceit, and a great comfort it was to him in his

latter days to see his two nephews prospering in the fear of the Lord, and doing unto others as they would wish others to do to them.

No fairer sight our eyes engage,
In passing through life's pilgrimage,
Than virtuous youth and pious age.



A GOOD PASTOR.



THE good pastor is gone at last; he died a week ago, and to-day his body was committed to the grave. The squire, and the Sunday-school children, and the teachers followed, and hardly was there a dry eye among them. Every one looks mournful, and everybody says that the poor have lost a friend. He died in peace, looking for a glorious resurrection to eternal life through the mercy and grace of the Redeemer. And may we all die the death of the righteous, and oh! may our latter end be like unto his!

The good pastor was as patient in sickness as he had been cheerful in health, and we

all hoped that he would be raised up again to be a light among us, and to call up confidence and joy in our hearts ; but this was not to be. It was a dark day for the village when he died, and it is a dark day with us now. The old women at the almshouses are grouped together, talking of their loss, and the old men are walking about thoughtfully. I feel certain that we never valued the good man half so much as we ought to have done, but now it is too late to amend our error.

The good pastor came to the village when I was a child, and I remember it as well as if it were only yesterday. He had grey hairs on his head then, and his manner was full of meekness and gentleness. There was nothing that was high, or hasty, or angry about him. It was as if he had said to himself, " Who am I, that it should please my heavenly Father to set me over this people ? In my dealings with them, I must let my deeds speak louder than my words. I must

win them by my love, more than by my zeal." In this spirit he began, and in this spirit he went on, giving himself up to his work, trying to make all happy, guarding them from evil, and guiding them in the way to heaven.

The good pastor was attentive to all; the rich he treated with respect, and the poor with civility; the aged with reverence, and the young with kindness; but for children he had more than common affection. It was as though his heart was influenced by the gracious words that our Saviour spoke to Peter: "Feed my lambs." It was a pleasant sight to see him with a group of little ones, waiting for the words that fell from his lips.

The language that with gentleness
He spoke to all around,
Was like the morning dew that falls
So softly on the ground.

The good pastor used to say to the aged,

“You, my good friends, should regard yourselves as examples; for where shall others look for wisdom and piety, if they find it not in those who have grey hairs? You have lived longer than they, and, therefore, should be wiser; you have less time to live, and therefore should be less worldly-minded. You have had better opportunities of becoming acquainted with the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, and ought therefore to love God more ardently, and to serve him more zealously. By your example, you are either helping or hindering others on their way to glory. Let them see that you are in earnest for heaven.”

The good pastor always told the middle-aged to remember that as they stood between young disciples of our Lord and aged Christians, so they ought to lead the one, and to follow the other. “You are in the prime of your days,” said he; “now is the time,

before your eyes grow dim, your ears become deaf, and your strength fails you, to do all you can in your heavenly Master's service. Never think that you have done enough, and always strive to be doing more. Did not God give his own Son to die for sinners, and can sinners do too much for God? Pray, work, strive, and strengthen the hands of your minister."

The good pastor used to say to children, "You should look upon yourselves as lambs. Now a lamb becomes wilful, or thoughtless, and rambles away from the fold. If he meets with danger, or loses his way, or suffers hunger, or shivers with cold, there is no one to protect him, to guide him, to feed him, or to defend him from the weather. Jesus Christ is the good Shepherd. Love him, fear him, obey him and trust him, and all will be well; but if you wander from him, all will be ill with you, for temptation and sin and sorrow will beset your paths,

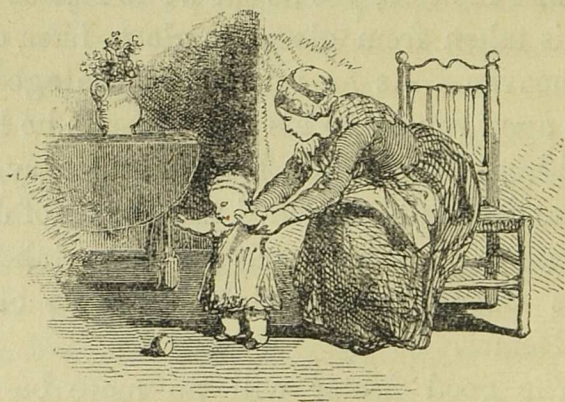
and yours will be a dark future. Love the good Shepherd,

“ ‘And he will keep you every day
Secure from all alarms ;
And gently lead you on your way,
And bear you in His arms.’ ”

The good pastor was a shining light in the pulpit, a guide in the school-room, a comforter at the sick bed, and a friend in all places and at all times. We cannot but mourn his loss, yet ought we to rejoice that he is taken from gloom to glory, from earth to heaven. As he revered the aged, let the aged reverence his sayings. As he loved children, let children love his memory, and as he faithfully preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all, let all strive to be partakers of that Gospel, and faithful followers of the Redeemer.

The good pastor will no more be seen among us here ; let us look onward, then, in humble hope to meet him in the mansions

of the blest, remembering the words of the apostle in which he delighted, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them, also, that love his appearing." 2 Tim. iv. 8.



STEPHEN ARCHER;

OR, FATHER SAYS WHEN HE WAS A BOY.



“WELL, Stephen Archer, I see that you are going home from your Sunday-school, and I hope you are taking away something that will be of use to you. A sad pity it is that the parents of Sunday scholars do not help their children more than they usually do, by setting them a good example, and by carrying on the work of instruction; and thus it is—

That so many young people adopt a bad rule,
And forget all at home that they learn at the
school.

“I know, Stephen, that your parents are of a different sort. I know that your father

is an upright, thinking man, and your mother a pious woman; and that is one reason why, with God's blessing, you are going on so well as you are. If all parents were like yours, it would strengthen the hands, and be a cordial to the hearts of many who now have discouragements. I dare say, Stephen, that your father often talks to you kindly, and points out the changes that have taken place in the world, as well as the only way to a better. Tell me, Stephen, in what way he talks to you."

"Father says when he was a boy—but that must be a long while ago, for his hair is grey now—there used to be bull-baiting, and badger-baiting, and cock-fighting at wakes and fairs; but these cruel sports are seldom engaged in now. He has not heard of a bull-baiting for many years."

"I dare say not. That is just the way I should have expected your father to talk, Stephen."

“Father says, when he was a boy, in many places they used to send out a press-gang, to lay hold of those who had been at sea. Many a young fellow who was living at home with his father and mother, his sister and brother, was taken by force, hurried on board a king’s ship, and kept there for years against his will ; but who hears of such things now ?”

“Who, indeed ! We can hardly think now that such things could have ever happened.”

“Father says, when he was a boy it was a common thing to see a man stand in the pillory, or to sit in the stocks ; but he says, common as it was then, it would be a very uncommon thing now.”

“It would, indeed, and attract great attention.”

“Father says, when he was a boy the streets and shops used to be lighted up with oil-lamps, which gave but a feeble light ; but

that now the streets are lit up with gas-light, and in some of the first-rate shops you may almost see to pick up a pin."

"Yes, that you may; and a good light by night is not only a great comfort, but also a great protection."

"Father says, when he was a boy he once went up to London by the waggon in four days, and now he could go up by railroad in less than four hours. He says he used to pay a shilling postage when he had a letter from his uncle, and that now a dozen letters would only cost the same money."

"These changes are very much for the better, and very thankful should we be for them."

"Father says, when he was a boy the quickest way of sending a message a long way was to write a letter by the post, or tie it under the wing of a pigeon that had been brought from the place, and let the bird at liberty; but now you may send it by the

telegraph in a few seconds, and thereby save more than as many days."

"Yes, the electric telegraph is a wonderful invention, and confers great benefits on mankind."

"Father says, when he was a boy Bibles were scarce, that Sunday-schools were but just beginning to show themselves; and as for a ragged-school, you might have looked about from John o'Groat's to the Isle of Wight, and not found one after all. He says he should not like to be obliged to count the Bibles now, nor the Sunday scholars, nor the ragged-school boys and girls either."

"It would be rather a difficult task."

"Father says, there are two texts in the Bible that ought to be written on every heart. 'All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,' Rom. iii. 23; and, 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,' 1 Tim. i. 15. He who truly believes these two texts, and has a living faith in Jesus

Christ as his Saviour, enjoys a peace which otherwise he cannot know. And he says, too, that if he had a dozen young children, and was about to die, he would leave them all this piece of advice for a legacy, 'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.' Eccles. xii. 1. Father is not a rich man, nor a great man, but he is a good man, and that is worth the other two put together."

"You are right, Stephen, you are right."

"Father says, that now bull-baitings and press-gangs are done away with; that now the streets are lighted with gas; now we can send a letter to the Land's End for a penny, and go there ourselves, if we like, for a penny a mile, to say nothing of sending messages by the telegraph; and while young people can get Bibles for a few pence, and go to the Sunday-school for nothing, there ought to be ten times more good boys among us than there ever were. I think so, too; and

what is more than that, I will try to make one."

"That is the very thing, Stephen. I wish all fathers were like yours, and that we had in our Sunday-schools a thousand scholars of the same mind as Stephen Archer."



DOUBTS AND FEARS.



MANY a pleasant hour have I had in talking with Job Masters, and many a wise lesson has he given me, though he dealt much in doubts and fears, usually giving me a text from the book of Proverbs at the end of them.

“Do you think,” said I, “that Thomas Bates will ever have a farm of his own? He has won the first prize for ploughing, and is as proud as he can be.”

“There is room for doubt, Humphrey,” said Job; “for, if he is really proud, he will most likely strive less than he did before; and besides, ‘Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.’ Prov. xvi. 18.”

I told him that I had just heard of one

who had come home from the gold diggings, and people said that he was as rich as a Jew, and as happy as the day was long.

“I rather doubt that,” said Job, shaking his head. “Riches and happiness are different things; ‘Better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure and trouble therewith.’ Prov. xv 16.”

“Did you hear,” said I, “what the baker says of Alderman Hartshorne? He says that he is the best, the kindest, and the most generous man in the world. Do you think that he really believes all that he says?”

“It may be so; but I certainly doubt it,” said Job. ‘A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet.’ Prov. xxix. 5.”

“I have been reading,” said I, “of a man who was said to have more wisdom and understanding than any one else in the parish, and yet he never read his Bible. Do you believe that?”

“On the contrary, I very much doubt it,” said Job, in a firm tone of voice; “for ‘The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.’ Prov. ix. 10.”

Ralph Harding one day met Job, and asked if he might have a day's work at gardening. “I have tried you many times,” said Job; “but you have never mended since I knew you, and I fear you never will. Give up your Sabbath-breaking, and go to the house of God; avoid your idle companions, and labour honestly and industriously, and with God's help you will be a different and a better man. The wise man says, ‘Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.’ Prov. xix. 15.”

When Job heard that “Angry Hopkins,” as he is called, on account of the quickness of his temper, had entered on a new situation, and was likely to keep it; “I am not without fears,” said he; “for if some control is

not obtained over the temper in youth, it is not easy to restrain it in manhood. 'He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.' Prov. xxv. 28."

When Job was told that drunken Donald was come out of prison, and had promised to turn over a new leaf, "Ay," said he, "he may promise, and mean what he says; but I have strong fears that his promise will be broken. Very seldom those given to drink ever get the better of the practice: ruin is at the end of it. 'The drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty.' Prov. xxiii. 21."

When I asked Job if he thought that Jonas Hardy would be cured, at his new school, of his habit of telling falsehoods, he said that his fears were much greater than his hopes. "Falsehood," said he, "is more difficult to cure than the plague; for it corrupts the very soul. 'Lying lips are an abomination

to the Lord: but they that deal truly are His delight.' Prov. xii. 22."

I never could make it out how it was that Job remembered so many texts of Scripture, but I suppose it was his love of his Bible that enabled him to remember them.

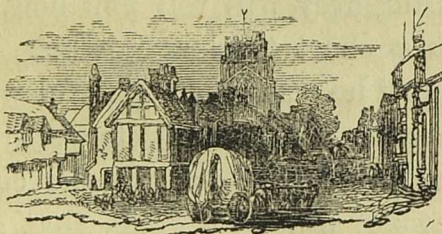
"Doubts and fears," said he, "may subject us to grief; but they may be a means of protecting us from evil. We should doubt everything that would deny God's holy word, and fear everything that would oppose His holy will."

Job Masters doubted whether any good could come from pride, love of riches, flattery, and wordly wisdom; and he had fears in abundance for idleness, anger, drunkenness, and falsehood. But only put something hopeful before him, and his face would beam with brightness. "Let us not dwell on our own weakness, Humphrey," said he one day to me, "but look to the hills whence cometh our strength; and let us leave the shadows

of earth, and look to the sunshine of heaven ;
for the time will soon come,

“ When pain and grief will all be o’er,
And doubts and fears be known no more.”

There are men in the world of all kinds,
but in my opinion it would be a good thing
if there were a thousand more in it like Job
Masters.



OLD HUMPHREY AND THE VIOLIN.



OLD HUMPHREY will give you one word of advice. Be cheerful, and never give way to discontent and repining. We should meet what annoys us with cheerful courage, and neither allow it to distress us, nor to hinder our usefulness.

Old Humphrey will tell you how he was set right a short time ago, when he was wrong—how he was made cheerful when his heart was sad : listen to his story.

He had been kept late in the city, and heard news of different kinds that afflicted him, so that he began to brood on worldly trouble with a gloomy brow. He gave way to discontent, and thought more of his mis-

haps than of his mercies. This was bad, very bad: he ought to have known better, but the truth is the truth. He was sadly cast down in his mind.

The clock of St. Paul's Cathedral had long since struck eleven, and the hubbub of Cheapside had passed away. The city was almost silent, though now and then the rumbling of wheels was heard, as well as the shrill whistle of the engines on a distant railway. The dark clouds hurried through the sky, and the gusty wind seemed to blow from all quarters at once, for it met the passers-by at every corner. On went Old Humphrey.

When the spirit is cast down, a stormy night is not likely to raise it. By the time that he had walked half the way home, his heart was, as we say, as heavy as lead:

Above, below, and all around,
There seemed to spread a gloom profound.

At last he came to a narrow street with

hardly a lamp in it, where, all of a sudden, the merry strains of a violin burst on his ear. He looked round him, thinking that some party had met together in a well-lighted room; but, no! the cheering sound came from a dark apartment under-ground, that appeared like a cellar. He stopped a moment; but, as there was no light visible, he could not see the player of the violin.

But though he saw not the musician, he felt very sure that he was a poor man; for, if he had been a rich man, he would not have been playing the violin in the dark cellar of a narrow street. "Most likely," said Old Humphrey, "he has not half my comforts, and yet here is he, fiddling away right merrily, while I am giving way to gloom and discontent. Shame! Shame upon me! I ought to hide my face with both my hands."

Saying this, on he went in a different spirit. As he looked upwards, he saw in

one part of the heavens two or three stars, and he might have seen them before if he had looked for them. Soon after this he came into the broad and well-lighted road, and the night seemed to be less stormy than before. The change, however, was not in the night, but in himself. His gloom had been turned into gladness, and he could have sung for joy. Oh what a gilder of gloom is a sunny spirit!

It may be that you are of a hopeful, cheerful, and grateful temper; but, if you should ever find yourself giving way to gloom and discontent, it may do you no harm to call to mind Old Humphrey and the violin.



THE RED AND THE YELLOW.



“HAVE a care, Humphrey,” said my father, “of the red and the yellow,” and I have never forgotten his words: but I will tell you on what occasion it was that he spoke them.

We were passing the union workhouse just as three persons, who I suppose had been out for a little while, were going in at the gate, and wretched enough they appeared, though their clothing was neat and clean. The first was a tall man with one arm; the next was a short man, who walked with great difficulty, making wry faces at every step; and the third was a young woman, very thin and pale, with a little flush of red

on the middle of each cheek: her cough troubled her sadly.

“Look at them, Humphrey,” said my father, as they went in at the gate; so I did look at them, and no sooner were they inside with the gate shut, than my father gave me the following account:—

“If it should please God, Humphrey, that you should ever be brought so low, either by infirmity or misfortune, as to take shelter in the poor-house, I hope that you will do it in a humble and meek-minded spirit, bowing down to the will of your heavenly Father, and feeling thankful that there is such a place provided to take care of those who are not able to take care of themselves. Still, I trust that this will never be the case, but rather that, by God’s blessing on your industry, you will not only be able always to provide honest bread for yourself, but also to lend a helping hand to some of the afflicted poor around you. I was going, how-

ever, to tell you of the people you have just seen.

“In this world, Humphrey, what from the evil that is in our hearts, and the temptations which are around us, we are ever in danger, and great need have we to put up the prayer continually to the Father of mercies, ‘Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe,’ Ps. cxix. 117. As the moth is caught by the flaring taper, so are the young apt to be led astray by outside show. This was the case with those who have just passed into the poor-house. Whatever you do, have a care, Humphrey, of the red and the yellow.”

I perceived by this remark that my father meant to signify by “the red and the yellow,” gaudiness and outside show of every kind: he went on thus:—

“We should learn not to be led away by appearances, but to judge soberly. The peacock is a fine bird in his green and gold feathers, but he does not sing like the lark

in his russet plumage. The tulip is a fine flower, but it has not the scent of the violet and the wild thyme.

“Frank Hollis, the man with one arm that you saw go in at the gate, was born in one of the cottages by the green, and worked at one of the farms. He was sober and industrious till a recruiting sergeant entered the village, and then there was soon an end to his industry and sobriety. The red coat of the sergeant, and the yellow sovereigns jingling in his purse, that he shook in his hand, caught the eye and the heart of poor Frank, and when the sergeant told him he saw at a glance that he was a fine spirited young fellow, and born to be covered with glory, he could hold out no longer. He enlisted, spent his sovereigns in folly and vice, and soon found that his red coat did not fit him half so comfortably as his old brown one. He went abroad, took to drinking, and broke his arm so badly in a drunken frolic that he

was obliged to have it taken off. At last, with one arm and a broken-down constitution, he came back to his native village.

“Wat Taylor, the short man, was caught too, but in a different way. Idle and thoughtless as he was, no wonder that he should go to the neighbouring fair; but reason enough had he to repent of his folly, for so taken was he with the droll tricks of a merry-andrew, and with his red cap and tawdry yellow jacket, spangled all over with tinsel, that he joined the show-people, and in time became a merry-andrew himself. Oh! it was a wretched life, full of sin and sorrow. Often was his cheek pale enough before he rubbed on it the red paint, and frequently, when he made the crowd laugh, was he himself ready to cry. At last, he injured himself so much on one occasion in throwing himself head-over-heels, that he became a cripple for life, not being able to walk without great pain and difficulty. Frank Hollis and Wat

Taylor are now companions in the poor-house.

“Sophy Hinds, the young woman with the cough, was a nursemaid at the white house on the hill, where she had a comfortable place; but this was not to last. A London servant, who had friends in the village, made her appearance one Sunday at church with red ribands in her cap, and yellow earrings in her ears. This was enough. Sophy gave notice to leave, and soon, to the great grief of her poor widowed mother, set off for London. Sophy, being a smart girl, obtained good wages, but her career was short. She wore red ribands in her cap and yellow earrings in her ears, formed bad acquaintances, and lost her character and her place. When sickness had brought her to want she was passed to her parish, where, her mother being dead, she was taken into the poor-house. Think, Humphrey, of the evil career of Frank Hollis,

Wat Taylor, and Sophy Hinds ; take warning by their unhappy course, and have a care of the red and the yellow."

My father remained silent for some time as we walked on. This was done, no doubt, to give me an opportunity of thinking on what he had said ; but when we came to the churchyard he spoke thus :—

"I hardly suppose that Frank Hollis, Wat Taylor, and Sophy Hinds ever stopped to read the lines on the grave-stone yonder by the little gate, for if they had read them and heeded them, they would never have set their hearts on a red coat, a red hat, and red ribands. The lines are these :—

Judge not thy hopes by what they now appear ;
What will their worth be when thou liest here ?

"Were we to act up to this standard, instead of being deceived by outward show, and pursuing trifles that will soon fade away, we should assuredly be led to follow after

things which will endure for ever. By this time, Humphrey, I doubt not that you fully understand my meaning when I say, Have a care of the red and the yellow."

Many years have now passed since the conversation I have described took place, but so well do I remember it, and so deep is the impression that it made upon me, that if any one were to talk to me for an hour of the folly of finery, the weakness of being influenced by gaudy colours, and the sinfulness of permitting ourselves to be led away by the pomps and vanities of the world, hardly do I think it would convey half so much to my mind as the plain, simple remark of my father, "Have a care, Humphrey, of the red and the yellow."



WORLDLY WISDOM;

OR, THE MICROSCOPE AND TELESCOPE.



I MUST tell you about Old Michael, for he is a great favourite of mine, and I think that you would like him as well as I do.

“And so,” said I, “you paid a visit to the squire up at the old hall did you?”

“I did, sir,” said he, “and what is more, the squire paid me a visit at my cottage. If it would not take up too much of your time, you should have the whole account.”

As this was the very thing that I wanted, it just suited me to listen; so the old cottager brought out a chair for me, and seating himself on the little bench at the door, began his story in the following manner:—

“Squire Parrot, sir, is a man who has

travelled much in foreign parts, and got together a deal of knowledge, though not exactly of that sort which is likely to help him on his way to heaven. Not that I ought to speak a word against him, for he is a kind-hearted man ; but this is not enough. God requires the heart, and squire Parrot does not give it him.

“ You must know, sir, that the squire has a large library : whether the word of God is among the books I cannot say, but I hope so. He has, too, a very excellent microscope, and a powerful telescope, of which instruments he is not a little proud. What a thing it is that those who look up so much at the stars, should have so little desire to get above them !

“ Well, sir, it happened one night when I had to call up at the hall to speak to my granddaughter, who is a nursemaid there, that the squire caught sight of me, and asked if I was in a hurry ; ‘ for,’ said he, ‘ I should

like to show you my microscope and telescope.' I told him that showing such things to an ignorant man like me, would be sadly throwing time away; but he seemed to think otherwise. 'Where there is one who knows as much as you do, Michael,' said he, 'there are ten who do not.'

"I was pleased with what the squire said, for pleasant words tickle the ears of most of us, even when the grey hair is on our heads. A little praise goes a great way with silly people. Solomon says, 'Meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips;' but I hardly think that the squire meant to flatter me.

"Squire Parrot, taking his microscope out of the case, and placing it on the table before him, began to talk about optics; simple, compound, and solar microscopes; lenses, object-glasses, and refraction; so that he was soon out of my depth. 'We,' said he, 'who cultivate science, live as it were in

a new world.' 'Oh,' thought I, 'many a man have I met, who was an I-by-itself-I; and I see now, that men of science are We-by-themselves-we's.' At last the squire put the tip of my little finger under the glass, and bade me look at it.

"To tell you, sir, how surprised I was when I saw that my finger was all over ragged scales would be impossible. I wondered still more on seeing a gnat's leg covered with bristly hairs; but hardly could I contain myself on beholding in a drop of water, about the size of a pin's head, large creatures swimming about, with smaller ones riding on their tails: and then the large ones began to eat up the little ones. I was dumb with astonishment, and the squire seemed delighted.

"After recovering myself a little, I ventured to ask if such wonderful knowledge was turned to any good purpose? 'Oh,' said he, 'it proclaims the victories of science,

it expands our minds, and shows us what nature can do.'

" 'Will you please to tell me what nature is, sir?' said I. 'Nature,' says he, coughing, 'is the regular course of things. It is the system of the universe. It is the first cause. It is—' but as his cough brought him here to a stand-still, I asked him whether, instead of saying nature made things, there would be any great harm in saying God made them. I cannot tell if the squire is a little deaf in the ear that was next me, or not, but he went on turning about his microscope, without giving me any reply.

"It seemed odd to me that the squire should say so much about God's works, and so little about God himself. Surely those who know more than their neighbours about the greatness and goodness of our heavenly Father, ought more than other people to set forth his glory.

"After a while, the squire took me into

an upper room, which he called his Observatory ; and there he ran on so much about suns and systems ; magnitude, space, orbits, and occultations ; eclipses, attraction, and phenomena, that he was almost as much lost to me as if he had been up in the clouds. That he did it to puzzle me I had little doubt, and puzzle me he did ; but that was no hard matter, for I had never heard before many of the words that he spoke.

“ It took some time before he could set the instrument right, so that I could have a full view of the moon ; and all this time I was thinking of the snare that worldly wisdom must be to a man when it occupies all his thoughts, and keeps him from communion with his Maker. That was an awful state, sir, that the people of old times were in, when, in spite of their wisdom and knowledge, they fell into idolatry. ‘ When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful ; but became vain in

their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things; who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever,' Rom. i. 21-25.

“You may be sure, sir, that when directed by the squire, I peeped through the telescope at the moon, while he described the mountains, the caverns, and volcanoes that I was looking at; you may be sure too, sir, that I was strangely affected. The psalmist says, ‘The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork,’ Ps. xix. 1; but I was not prepared to see the face of the moon with its rocks and mountains, as plain as if I had been only thirty or forty miles off it. Whether the power

of the microscope or that of the telescope was the more wonderful, I could not tell.

“‘I call my telescope a “bring-em-near,”’ said the squire, for that is the name that sailors have given to a spy-glass.’ Oh, thought I, that it may be a means of making known to you, not only the greatness and glory of God, but also the abundance of his goodness and grace !

“After looking at the moon, and some of the planets, I humbly thanked the squire, as in duty bound, for his kindness, and was about to take my leave, when he said to me, ‘Michael, you shall come again.’ Surprised as I had been, squire Parrot was as much surprised in his turn, when I told him, again thanking him for his condescension, that I had an excellent microscope and telescope of my own, quite equal to those he had shown me ; and that they had called forth my wonder, and given me pleasure for many an hour together.

“‘But how comes it,’ said the squire, ‘that I have never heard of this before?—a telescope too! I should hardly have taken your cottage for an observatory, or you, Michael, for an astronomer.’

“‘Perhaps not, sir,’ I replied, ‘for I know but very little about the stars, but my cottage suits my telescope, just as well as if it stood on the top of the Ridgeway Hills.’ He then asked me who made my instruments, and if I kept them carefully covered over. ‘They were made by the very best maker, sir,’ said I, ‘but I never keep them covered over, for they are on a different construction to yours; and then, sir, I like to have them handy to use.’

“I half suspect that the squire thought I was joking with him; he bore with my familiarity, however, very good-naturedly; for though he is a rich man, he is not proud, unless it be about his science, his library, his microscope, and his telescope. ‘You must

show me these instruments of yours,' said he, as he bade me good night, 'and you shall have my opinion about them.'

"As I walked home, I thought much of what had taken place. 'Here have I lived in the world,' said I to myself, 'till the grey hair is on my head, ignorant of what has now been made known to me; for if I have ever heard of such things, I only half gave credit to them. Seeing, however, is believing. What a speck am I in the great universe around me! Well may I be humble! Well may I be lost in wonder, love, and praise! 'Lord! what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him?' Ps. viii. 4.

"The squire failed not to pay me a visit the next day, and hardly knew what to make of it, when, after begging him to be seated, I placed my large Bible before him, telling him that it was both my microscope and telescope, and that God was its maker.

“ ‘Make it out, Michael,’ said he, ‘make it out, for it is all a riddle to me. What likeness can there be between your Bible and my microscope?’ Here he sat himself down in the chair by the clock to listen to what I had to say.

“ It is not often, sir, that a poor man like me, has a rich man like squire Parrot in his company as a listener. He was wise in worldly wisdom, and knew a hundred things about which I knew nothing; but he was ignorant of Him whom to know is life eternal, so I thought I would make the most of my opportunity. ‘For once,’ said I to myself, ‘I will speak freely, though not disrespectfully, to the squire.’

“ ‘If, sir,’ said I, ‘I had not looked at that drop of water through your microscope, I never could have believed that it contained, as it did, so many creatures, and if I had not seen my heart through the word of God, I could never have been persuaded that it

had in it such a swarm of evil things. Why, sir, the Bible shows us that the heart is "deceitful above all things;" and we may judge what is in it, by what comes out of it. "Out of the heart of man proceed evil thoughts," and all manner of evil. Now I think, sir, begging pardon for the freedom of my speech, that if all these evil things are in our hearts, we cannot be too anxious to get rid of them, to be cleansed from our sins, and purged from our iniquities. There is a fountain, sir, open for all uncleanness, even the precious blood of Christ, and to that fountain we should all go, whether instructed as you are, or ignorant as I am. We are sinners, sir; but blessed be his holy name, "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him." Your microscope has opened my eyes, so that I see what I never saw before; and if you, sir, will look through mine aright, it may, with God's blessing,

show you what you never saw before. At any rate you will now acknowledge that my Bible is much more of a microscope than you had imagined.'

"The squire appeared to be almost as much puzzled as I was, when he talked so learnedly about 'optics, lenses, object-glasses, and refraction;' and, more by way of relief, perhaps, than from conviction, owned that I had certainly made out my Bible to be a microscope. 'But now,' said he, 'for the other part of your story, Michael—how is it that you prove your Bible to be a telescope?'

"'In this way, sir,' replied I; 'you called your telescope a "bring-em-near," and I can hardly give a better name to mine; for it brings near so many precious things, that would look a long way off without it, that I can never be thankful enough for being the owner of it.'

"'What is it that it brings near?' cried

out squire Parrot, earnestly, as if he really wanted to know; 'tell me, Michael, tell me!'

" 'I will, sir,' said I, 'as well as my plain words will let me, and sorry am I that I have not your gift of speech, that I might do it better. When the Holy Spirit enables us by faith to read the Bible aright, it brings near to us God's truth, God's promises, and God's grace.'

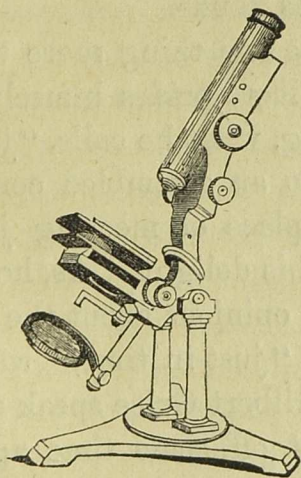
"Here I suppose I was as much lost to squire Parrot as he was to me, when he ran on so fast about 'systems, magnitude, and orbits;' but I went on thus, 'If mankind had looked through all the microscopes and telescopes in the world, from the creation until now, they would never have found out God. "Canst thou by searching find out God?" says Job; "canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" All the "bring-em-nears" that ever were made, leave the Almighty at a distance, till he is brought near by his holy word. It is his revelation

alone that brings him near to us, and without this we know nothing of his dealings with mankind. "Thou art near, O Lord, and all thy commandments are truth," Ps. cxix. 151.'

"I saw clearly enough that the squire had rather I should go on than that I should stop, not having a reply ready that would answer his purpose, so I spoke as follows: 'God's holy word brings to us a knowledge that we could never have had without it. It tells us of the creation of the world, and all it contains; of the fall of man, of God's judgment to the wicked, and his mercies to them that fear him; of the sacrifice of the Saviour on the cross for sinners, and of the promise of eternal life unto all that through faith believe in him, and trust in him for salvation. In a word, if I had to sum up all I would say, your microscope, sir, shows the hidden wonders of creation, and mine exposes the hidden evils of the heart. Your telescope brings near the

mountains of the moon, and mine brings near the glad tidings of salvation.' ”

Old Michael did not say what effect his words had on the squire, for I suppose that was not known to him ; but he did say that he longed to do him a kindness, and also, that he had put him in his prayers, that, through God's grace, he might think more of heavenly things, and less of his worldly wisdom, his microscope, and his telescope.



GILBERT GRICE;

OR, JUST IN TIME.



GILBERT GRICE, who lives in the country, often moves about from one place to another. Having property enough to maintain him, and not keeping a farm, he has a good deal of time on his hands.

If there be one thing more than another in which Gilbert prides himself it is in the habit of being, what he calls, "just in time." To pop in to an assembled company, or to arrive at a place of meeting just as he is given up is his delight. As, however, there are different opinions about the exact meaning of being "just in time," we will let the conduct of Gilbert Grice speak for itself.

Gilbert set off, some time ago, to visit a

cousin who is very particular in retiring to rest at ten o'clock, and of course he should have been there, at latest, a full hour before bed-time. His cousin's house was as much as thirty miles from his own. Instead of leaving his dwelling in proper time, he delayed his departure till seven o'clock at night, and then mounted his bay mare to ride to his cousin's at the highest speed. Not having a moment to lose, he spared neither whip nor spur, and did not so much as give his bay mare a feed of corn nor a ten minutes' rest all the way. He arrived, as he said, "just in time"—that was, just as his cousin had taken up his chamber candlestick to retire for the night.

"Just in time!" We say he was just too late; for had he been in time, there would have been no necessity to have called up the servant-man, who was in bed, to attend to his jaded, overriden beast; nor to have kept up the servant-girl to put supper

before him ; nor to have soured the temper of his cousin by preventing him from retiring at his usual hour.

Not long after this visit he set off by coach to see an uncle ; and as he had with him two heavy boxes, he ought to have been at the coach-office a little beforehand, that they might have been properly fastened on the coach ; but he arrived at the moment the guard was blowing his horn, and the coachman mounting the box. "That is right," said he ; "I am just in time."

"Just in time !" He was in time, certainly, to get into the coach, but he was not in time to have his luggage fastened, nor to pay his fare in the office, nor to prevent himself riding backwards, which he hated. Again we say that he was not "just in time," but just too late.

About a month ago he had to attend a dinner party, and sadly late he was ; for though he had two or three miles to walk

across the fields, he did not set out till the time when he ought to have been there. As he passed by the dining-room window, he saw the company taking their seats. "That is lucky," said he, "for I see that I am just in time."

"Just in time!" Why, he had kept them waiting a full hour. When he entered the room, he made great disturbance, for they had given him up; and the lady of the house did not recover her good temper for an hour, for part of her dinner had been spoiled. Gilbert may call this what he likes, but if it is not being just too late, we do not know what is.

A fortnight ago, as Gilbert Grice entered the parish church on the morning of the Sabbath, the service was just beginning. "I am glad that we are just in time," said he, in a whisper to a friend who was with him, "for I cannot bear being too late."

"Just in time!" He was in the church,

to be sure, when the service began, but he was not in time to take his seat without disturbing others, nor to get his books without making an unseemly noise, nor to compose his mind by a moment's reflection on the place in which he was, and the object that had brought him there. We cannot help once more giving it as our opinion that he was just too late.

It was but last week that he had to attend a funeral. On so solemn an occasion it might have been expected that he would have run no risk of being too late; but bad habits are not soon broken through. The mourners came, the bearers came, the minister came, but Gilbert Grice did not come at the time appointed. At last, however, he did come. "I see," said he to the undertaker, "that I am but just in time."

We may call things by strange names. The mournful procession had been sadly delayed; the minister had another funeral

at a distance to attend, and some of the party had expressed themselves angrily. We cannot but think that in this, as well as in all the other instances we have mentioned, Gilbert was "just too late."

Whether travelling on foot, or horseback, or by coach; whether paying a visit, attending a dinner party, Divine worship, or a funeral, Gilbert Grice is equally careless how much he annoys others in following out his customary habit. He will have it that he is "just in time," when every one else is fully convinced that he is just too late.

If we have neither spoilt our tale
Nor been misunderstood,
Our youthful readers cannot fail
To get a lesson good;
For this plain truth, in prose or rhyme,
Is clear beyond debate,
That he who is but *just in time*,
Must *always* be *too late*.

VIRTUE AND VICE.



You may tell me that the fresh bud on the tree is lovely, that the blossom on the thorn is lovely, and that the flowers of the field are lovely, and so they are; but neither bud, blossom, nor flower is half so lovely as a youthful heart devoted to virtue and to God.

Not fairest blossoms, buds, nor flowers,
So fresh and fragrant shine,
As youthful hearts with all their powers,
That cleave to things Divine.

You may tell me that the eagle and vulture are fierce and fearful in the air, and that the lion and the tiger are fierce and fearful in the forest, and so they are; but

neither the one nor the other is so hateful
or so terrible as a human heart set on evil.

The birds of prey and savage beasts
Are not so fierce and fell,
In all their rage, as human breasts
Where evil passions dwell.

This being the case, how earnestly should
the young love and pursue holy thoughts
and deeds, and how heartily should they
hate and avoid all things that are evil !

Love then the Lord, to him thy breath
And thy young heart be given ;
That when thy body sinks in death,
Thy soul may rise to heaven.



THE WALNUT.



As William Walters and his sister Fanny sat together at table, where their parents had for a short season left them after dinner, they began talking about the plate of walnuts which lay before them. The walnuts had been gathered from the walnut-tree which grew in the corner of the meadow next the garden, and one of the nuts was still enclosed in the green husk in which it grew.

“Let us ask father to say something about a walnut,” said William, “for he says a good lesson of some kind or other may be gathered from everything. I wonder what sort of a good lesson he can get from a walnut?”

“Yes, let us ask him,” replied Fanny, “for I feel sure he will say something worth listening to. Perhaps he will say that there is some trouble in cracking the shell, but that the kernel rewards us for our pains.”

Hardly had Fanny done speaking before Mr. Walters returned to the table, and taking up the nut-crackers, began to crack some of the walnuts for his children.

“We want you to tell us something about the walnut, dear father,” said Fanny; “and I have been guessing what you will say. See, here is one with the green husk upon it, so you can speak about that, or about the others, just which you like.”

“If you had asked me to tell you about the walnut-tree,” said Mr. Walters, “I might have explained to you its growth, and the several uses to which its timber is applied by the joiner, the cabinet-maker, the turner, the millwright, the coachmaker,

and the gunstock maker, for to all these the timber of the walnut-tree is very useful. When walnut-trees have been very scarce, a fine tree has been sold for a very great price; but as you wish me to say something about the nut, and not about the tree, I will begin at once."

"Yes, it must be about the nut," said William, "and then we shall see whether Fanny has guessed right or wrong; but I wish you would first please to tell me how it is that so hard a shell is formed inside so soft a rind?"

"In asking me to tell you that," replied Mr. Walters, "you ask me to tell you what I do not know myself; it is one of the many wonders which are to be observed in the works of our heavenly Father. It is not of the walnut only, but of almost all other kinds of nuts, that something like the same question might be put. The common hedgenut grows in a husk; the chestnut,

the horse-chestnut, the beechnut, and the cocoanut, are all surrounded by a hull or husk of some sort or other. The fruits of the trees naturally call forth our wonder, for we can neither fully understand how they are formed, nor how they are ripened. But see here; I will take up the walnut with the husk on, and make a remark or two, which, perhaps, you will afterwards remember."

"Now, Fanny," said William, "we shall see what sort of a guesser you are."

"There has been supposed by some," said Mr. Walters, "to be a close resemblance between a walnut, when in the rind, and a human head. Some see likenesses where others cannot discern them. Do either of you see the resemblance that I speak of?"

Fanny thought there was a likeness in the form, but in nothing else; and William said, that if his father would let him make eyes, nose, and mouth on the rind with a pen and ink, it would be a great deal more

like a head than it was then. As this proposal did not seem to promise much advantage, William was not required to set forth his skill in drawing, and Mr. Walters went on to point out the resemblance of which he had spoken.

“The human head,” said he, “has a brain, white in colour, and divided into two lobes, or parts; the walnut has a white kernel of much the same form as the brain, and divided in much the same manner.”

“Well, that is odd,” said William, “and very odd too.”

“The brain in the human head,” continued Mr. Walters, “is covered with a skin, and the walnut kernel is covered with a skin also, as you well know. The one, in this respect, is very much like the other.”

Both Fanny and William looked at each other with much surprise, as Mr. Walters went on thus:

“The lobes, or parts of the brain, occupy

irregular-shaped cavities, or holes; and the parts of the walnut kernel occupy, as you see in the nuts that I have cracked, odd-shaped holes just in the same way. There is in the human head a lining between the brain and the skull, and you may observe here is a lining also, inside the shell of the walnut."

The further Mr. Walters proceeded in his remarks the greater was the wonder seen in the faces of his children; of this he was quite aware; but, making no remark upon it, he continued his description in the following manner:

"The skull of the human head is hard, and seamed, or joined together, as though one part had been applied to the other; the shell of the walnut, also, is hard, and it is seamed together in a similar way. Look at the walnuts that have not been cracked; there is a seam, or joining, round every one of them. There look at it well."

Here William and Fanny seemed almost ready to burst out in cries of wonder, and it was quite as much as they could do to refrain from it while their father thus went on with his remarks.

“The skull of the human head is covered all over with a softer substance than itself; it is exactly the same with the shell of the walnut.”

Here William and his sister, being unable any longer to remain silent, burst out together, expressing their wonder at what had been told them by their father. Fanny admitted that she was altogether wrong in the guess she made about what her father would say; and William was equally ready to own that had he put eyes, nose, and mouth to the walnut, he should not have made it so much like a human head as his father had done.

“But now, my dear children,” said Mr. Walters, “if I have pointed out a few things

in which the human head and the walnut appear to agree, let me point out one in which they altogether differ. The walnut contains only what in a little time will perish; but the human head is the seat of thought and is connected with a soul that shall live for ever. When compared with the value of the soul, the whole world is as nothing. Its silver and its gold, its precious pearls and glittering gems, are as dust. If, then, there be one thing more than another that should engage our attention; one thing more than another that should be the object of our desires; one thing more than another that we should seek after with all our hearts, it is the welfare of the soul. The word of God says, 'What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' Matt. xvi. 26.

"One of the most sorrowful things concerning the soul is, that 'all have sinned,

and come short of the glory of God,' and that 'the soul that sinneth it shall die;' and one of the most joyful things concerning the soul is, that God has 'found a 'ransom' for sin, and that 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.' This being the case, avoid the evil and secure the good. 'Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near;' for 'he (Christ) is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them.' Heb. vii. 25."

William and Fanny listened very attentively to all that fell from the lips of their father, and from it they obtained both pleasure and profit; for though it must be acknowledged that they remembered the former part of it more than the latter, yet they could not think of the one without being reminded of the other.

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