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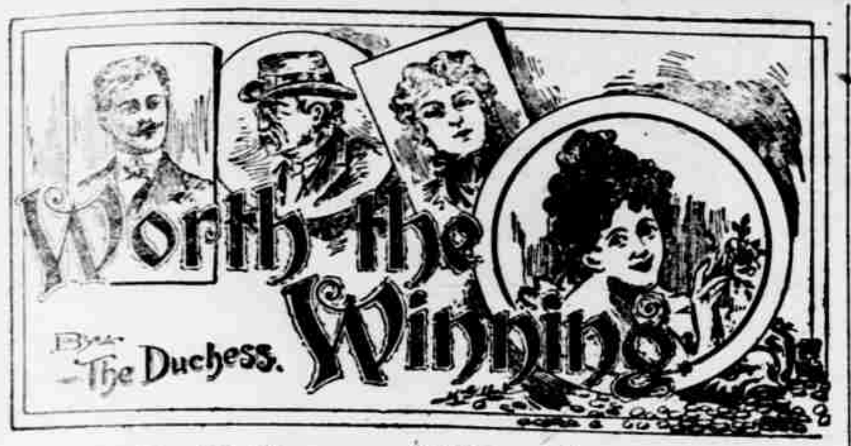

Worth the Winning

By The Duchess.

CHAPTER VI.

The last stroke of eight dies out from the old clock in the hall as Seaton Dysart enters the drawing room. The extreme darkness and gloom of that melancholy apartment sinks into him as he moves rather discontentedly, but with a man's unerring instinct, toward the hearth-rug. It is not all gloom, however, as he presently discovers, in this dreary place. Some one rises languidly from a low chair—a girl, a lovely girl, as he instantly admits—and advances about the eighth part of an ordinary foot toward him.

They are wonderfully alike, the father and son, and yet how wonderfully unlike. It seems impossible that with expressions so utterly at variance so strong a resemblance can exist, yet it is there. The one, the old face, mean, cringing, suspicious, wicked; the other, cold, honorable, earnest and beautiful. The girl, watching him with distrust in her eyes, reluctantly acknowledged this last fact.

"I'm extremely sorry if I've kept you waiting for dinner," he says, advancing at a quicker pace, once he sees the pretty girl in white, and holding out his hand. "But the fact is I was dreadfully tired when I arrived, and I'm rather afraid I fell asleep."

"The day is warm," says she, coldly. The likeness to his father seems clearer to her as he speaks, and kills for her all the charm of his face.

"Very; but I don't fancy my absurd fit of laziness arose from that. Rather from the fact that I haven't had a wink of sleep for the last two nights."

"Two nights!" says she with a faint accession of interest. "Toothache? Sick friend?"

"Oh, no. Ball—cards," returns he, concisely.

"Ah!" says she, this time rather shortly.

"You are Griselda, I suppose?" says he, pleasantly.

"Why should you suppose it?" asks she, with a faint smile.

"True. Why should I?" returns he, laughing. "Perhaps because," with a steady look at her, "I have been told that my cousin Griselda is a person possessed of a considerable amount of—of character."

"By that you mean that you have heard Griselda is self-willed," says she, calmly. "And as it is evident you think I look the part also, I am afraid you must prepare yourself to meet two self-willed cousins—I am not Griselda."

If she had fancied that this announcement would have put him out, she is undeceived in a moment.

"No?" says he, looking distinctly amused. "There is comfort in the thought that I cannot again fall into error, because you must be Vera."

"Yes, I am Vera," slowly.

"I fear you will find it very dull down here."

"Your father has been very good to us; more than kind," interrupts she, gently, but with decision. "He has given us a home."

"I should think he would be very glad to get you here," says he. At this moment Griselda enters the room. A charming Griselda, in white, like her sister, and with a flower in her sunny hair. She trips up to Seaton and gives him her hand and a frank smile, that has just the correct amount of coquettish shyness in it. A man, to Griselda, no matter out of what obnoxious tribe he may have sprung, is always a creature to be gently treated, smiled upon and encouraged.

"So you've come at last to this Castle of Despair," says she, saucily. "I must say, you took time to look us up. But I don't blame you; life down her is too lively for most. It has quite done up Vera and me."

The dismal sound of a cracked old dinner gong breaks in at this instant on Griselda's speech. They all rise and cross the hall to the dining room, but just inside it a momentary hesitation takes place. Dysart going to the foot of the table, Vera stops short, as if in some surprise, to look at him, question in her eyes.

"You will take the head of the table, I hope," says he, in a low tone, divining her perplexity.

"But——" quickly, and then a pause. "If you wish it, of course," she says, with a swift uplifting of the brows and an almost imperceptible shrug.

Her manner somehow irritates him.

"I wish it, certainly," says he, coldly. "But I wish still more to see you do only that which you like."

"I have few likes and dislikes," replies she, still in that utterly emotionless tone and sweeping past him, she seats herself at the head of the table.

As for Griselda, the little jar in the social atmosphere around her goes by unnoticed, so overcome is she by the unwonted magnificence of the sight before her, a decent dinner table at Greycourt.

She looks round her and loses herself a little in the touch of fairyland the room presents. It is, as it were, an echo from the past, a glimpse into the old life when her father still lived, that she hardly knew was dear to her until she had lost it. The glitter of the silver, the glass, the intense perfume of the glowing flowers, the rich tint of the fruits, all seem part of a dream; a sweet one, too.

Mr. Dysart is wondering why both girls should have taken so instantaneous a dislike to him. As a rule, women were civil enough; yet here were two to whom he was an utter stranger, and aggressive was the only word he could apply to their looks and words, though both were studiously polite.

"Do you stay long?" asks Griselda presently, looking at her cousin.

"I don't know how you may view it. I return to town the day after to-morrow—very early on that day. Whether I must or must not work for my living is a thing that does not concern me. I work—you will hardly believe it in this prosaic age—but I actually seek after fame. I should like to get on in my profession; to be more than a mere trifler."

"You are charming," says Griselda, sweetly. "You talk like a book—a blue book. But you have not told me why your father will not let us see anyone, why——"

"Griselda!" says Miss Dysart, a little sharply. She rises as she speaks, and Dysart opens the door for her. As Griselda passes him he says, easily:

"I cannot tell you everything at once, you see; but I dare say there will be time given me. As for my father, he is eccentric, and, I fear, hard to live with. But if ever I can help you, call on me."

Griselda gives him a smile for this, and follows her sister into the drawing room.

"After all, he isn't half bad," she says, with a little nod.

"I was right, however. Did you ever see a father and son so like?" asks Vera, coldly.

CHAPTER VII.

"Well, I'm off," says Griselda, poking her pretty head into the summer house, where Vera sits reading. It is next day, and a very lovely day, too."

"For your ramble," says Vera, laying down her book. "So you won't take my advice? Very good. Go on, and you'll see that you won't prosper." Her tone is half gay, half serious. "And don't be long," entreats Vera, with a sudden rush of anxiety. "Don't, now. Yes, I'm in deadly earnest. There is that man all over the place, let loose, as it were, for my discomfiture, and if he turns up in this part of the world I suppose I shall have to talk to him."

"What a calamity!" says Griselda, with a little feigned drooping of her mouth. "In this barren wilderness even manna may be regarded with rapture—even Seaton! Better any man than no man, say I."

"So say not I, then," with great spirit. She has leaned forward upon her elbow, and her eyes are brilliant with a little suspicion of anger. "Give me a desert Island rather than the society of a man whom I know it will require only time to teach me to detest. And how you can call him so familiarly 'Seaton,' passes my——"

A pause! An awful pause. Who is it that has turned the corner of the summer house, and is looking in at them with a curious expression round his mouth? Griselda is the first to recover.

"Isn't it absurd?" she says, smiling rather lamely. "But I assure you, Seaton, your sudden appearance quite took away my breath. You should stamp when you come to a house like this. The grass all round is so thick."

"Too thick!" says Dysart, with a swift glance at Vera, who has lost all her color. "For the future I shall try to remember. I am very sorry I startled you." He has addressed himself entirely to Griselda, unless that one lightning glance of contemptuous reproach cast at Vera could be counted. "But I was on my way to one of the farms, and this is the lowest, the nearest path to it. I shall never cease to regret"—here he stops dead short, and turns his eyes unreservedly on Vera—"that I did not take the upper one."

He makes both girls a slight bow, and walks swiftly onward on the unlucky path he had chosen.

"Oh, Vera, do something!" cries Griselda, in a small agony of consternation, clasping her hands. Vera, thus admonished, springs to her feet, and, driven half by honest shame and half by impulse, rushes out of the summer house and runs after Dysart as he is fast disappearing through the shrubs. Reaching him, panting and pale with agitation, she lays her hand timidly upon his arm.

"I am so grieved," she says, her charming face very pained, her lips white. "There are moments when one hardly knows what one says, and——"

"There are such moments, certainly," says he, interrupting her remorselessly. "But they can hardly be classed with those in which the calm confidences of one sister are exchanged with the other. And why should you apologize? I assure you, you need not. I do not seek for or desire anything of the kind."

It almost seems to her that he has shaken her hand from his arm. Drawing back, she sees him proceed upon his way, and then returns to Griselda.

"I really think I hate him," says Vera, vehemently. The recollection of his contemptuous glance, the way in which he had disdained her apology—above all, that slight he had offered her when he had displaced her hand from his arm—all rankle in her breast, and a hot flow of shame renders her usually pale face brilliant. "There, never mind him," she says, with a little frown. "He is not staying long, fortunately, and this episode will bear good fruit of one sort at least. He will not trouble me with his society while you are away. Now hurry, Griselda, do."

Griselda, with a light laugh, drawn irresistibly by the gorgeous loveliness of the lights and shadows of the land below, runs down the pathway and is soon lost to view.

When she returns over an hour later she discovers to her amazement, that Vera is still in it.

"You are miserable about that wretched affair of the morning," cries Griselda. "Never mind it. If you will come to dinner I promise you to do all the talking, and as it has to be endured I do entreat you to keep up your spirits."

"Oh, yes. There isn't a decent chance of escape," says Vera, wearily.

"'Sh!" cries Griselda, softly, putting up her hand; the sound of coming footsteps, slow, deliberate footsteps purposely made heavier, smites upon their ears.

"oGod heavens! Here he is," says Griselda, and indeed they have barely time to put on a carefelly unconscious demeanor, when Seaton Dysart darkens the door of the summer house, and looks coldly down on them.

"They told me I should find you here," he says, speaking to Vera. "I have come to say good-by."

"But surely you are not going so soon—not before dinner, not to-night!" cries Griselda, thunderstruck by this solution of their difficulty, and a little sorry, too.

"I am going now. Good-by," holding out his hand to her with a determination not to be changed. Griselda takes it and shakes it genially, nay, warmly. His humor is decidedly hostile, and if he acquaints the old father of their incivility—anything to propitiate him, she tells herself, will be the correct thing, and she grows positively friendly toward him, and beams upon him with gentle entreaty in her eye.

"If you must go, do us one service first," she says. "Do you see that rose?"—a rather unkempt and straggling specimen of its kind that trails in unadmired disorder just outside the door. "It has baffled me many a time, but you are tall, oh, taller than most; will you lift these awkward tendrils, and press them back into shape?"

She is smiling divinely at him, a smile that Tom Peyton would have given several years of his life to possess; but Dysart is disgracefully unmoved by it, and, refusing to return it, steps outside, and, with a decidedly unwilling air, proceeds to lift the drooping tendrils and reduce them to order.

Griselda, naturally a girl of great resource, seizes the opportunity she has herself provided. Catching Vera's arm, she draws her back out of sight.

"Now's your time!" she says. "Say something. Do something. It doesn't matter what, but for heaven's sake smooth him down one way or another! If you don't you'll have the old man down upon us like——"

"I can't," gasps Vera, fearfully.

"You must," insists Griselda, sternly. "It's impossible to know what sort of man he is. If revengeful, he can play old Harry with us!"

Without waiting to explain what particular game this may mean, or the full significance thereof, she steps lightly outside and gazes with undisguised rapture upon Dysart's work.

Dysart returns to the summer house with all the manner of one in mad haste to be gone. It is merely a part of an unpleasant whole, he tells himself, that he must first say a chillingly courteous word or two of farewell to the girl who has openly declared toward him such an undying animosity.

"I am afraid," says Vera, speaking with cold precision, as one delivering herself of an unloved lesson, "that you are going away thus abruptly because of what you heard me say this morning."

"You are right. That is why I am going," replies Dysart, calmly.

"Yes?" in a chilling tone, and with faintly lifted brows. "I regret exceedingly that I should have so unfortunately offend you, but to go for that—it all sounds a little trivial, don't you think?"

"Not by going, I think. I don't see how I can do otherwise. Why should I make you uncomfortable? But you may call it trivial if you like, to talk of detesting a man you have only seen for an hour or two, and who in those hours——" He pauses. "Did I make myself so specially objectionable?" demands he, abruptly, turning to her with something that is surely anger, but as surely entreaty, in his eyes.

"As I told you before," indifferently, "one says foolish things now and then."

"Would you have me believe you did not really mean what you said?"

"I would not have you believe anything," returns she, haughtily. "I only think it a pity that you should curtail your visit to your father because a chance remark of mine that cannot possibly affect you in any way."

"Is that how you look at it?"

"Is there any other way? Why should you care whether or not I detest you—I, whom you saw for the first time yesterday?"

"Why, indeed!" He regards her absently, as if trying to work out in his own mind the answer to this question, and then, suddenly:

"Nevertheless, I do care," he says, with a touch of vehemence. "It is the injustice of it to which I object. You had evidently determined beforehand to show me no grace. I defy you to deny it! Come, can you?"

Miss Dysart is silent. The very impetuosity of his accusation has deadened her power to reply, and besides, is there not truth in it? Had she not prejudged?

"By the bye," he says, "I am afraid you will have to put up with me for a few hours every week. I shall promise to make them as short as I possibly can. But my father likes to see me every seven days or so, and I like to see him. Do you think," a slight smile crossing his face, "you will be able to live through it?"

"I have lived through a good many things," says Vera, her dark eyes aflame.

"That gives you a chance here; practice makes perfect. I am sorry to be obliged to inconvenience you so far, but if I stayed away, I am afraid my father might want to know why. He might even be so absurd as to miss me."

"Why should you take it for granted that I desire your absence?" cries Vera, her voice vibrating with anger. "Come, remain, or stay away forever—what is it to me?"

And it was thus that they parted.

(To be continued.)

Dwarfs Famous in History.

Marcus Antonius possessed a dwarf, Sisyphus, not quite two feet tall, and yet the possessor of a remarkable wit.

King Charles II. had in court a pigmy, Richard Gibson. This mite married Anne Shepherd, the Queen's dwarf, each being forty-six inches in height. Gibson was a skilled artist, and his miniatures and portraits are much valued.

The favorite of Queen Henrietta Maria, Sir Jeffery Hudson, was presented to her majesty in a pie, completely armed as a knight. He proved a gallant, fiery little fellow, and of considerable service to the royal family. He became a captain of horse in the civil wars and followed his mistress to France.

The page of honor to Mary Tudor, John Jervis by name, was one of the tiniest dwarfs of his day.

Julia, the niece of the famous Augustus, had in her service two pigmies—Canopus, twenty-nine inches high, and Andromeda, her freed maid, who measured just the same height.

Poland in the fourteenth century had a pigmy king, Ladislas the Short, who is said to have won more victories than any other monarch of his time, and who left a great name as a jurist, statesman and ruler.

Christian II., of Denmark, had a wee dwarf to attend him, who was faithful to his master even in adversity. He went to prison with the king, planned, and almost effected the royal escape.

—Albert H. Golley, of Rome, N. Y., while bird hunting with W. P. Baylow near Glenmore, was accidentally shot in the eyes by his companion, and will lose his sight. The wife of Mr. Golley is also blind, both of her eyes having been removed some months ago by Dr. Wilbut H. Booth.

—It is a good plan to occasionally clean the tires and fill up the cracks and small holes with rubber solution. This prevents moisture from working through to the inner fabric.

—Fishing is the favorite pastime of a Rock Rapids (Ia.) dog. It swims out into the water and catches the fish in its mouth.

—A novelty is the cold storage of hops. This is done in several places in England.

—Some naturalists believe that hares never drink, but get enough liquid for their needs in the dew on the grass they eat.

—According to a chemical analysis 15 parts of the flesh of fish have about the same nutritive value as 12 parts of boneless beef.

Prompted from the Gallery.

IN the "third floor back" of a dismal-looking lodging-house in a street near Waterloo bridge, a man was standing, singing. In a dilapidated armchair by the window, his audience—one wee, pretty lassie—was curled up, wrapped about with an overcoat, for it was the afternoon of Christmas Day, and there was no fire in the cheerless grate.

"Shall I light the lamp, daddy?" she asked, as he ceased to sing and began to execute a grotesque dance, still whistling the refrain of his song. "It has grown so dark that I can't see to give you your cues," and she held up some tattered manuscript as she spoke.

"No, Babsie; that will do for to-night. Don't try your eyes. Shall we have our usual chat in the dark, pet? There is no rehearsal to-night. Ugh how cold it is. Have we no coal or wood, dearie?"

"No, dad; but it isn't very much colder without fire, because the silly smoke won't go up the chimney, somehow, so I have to keep the window open when we do have a fire."

IN A DILAPIDATED ARMCHAIR ONE WEE PRETTY LASSIE WAS CURLED UP.

"My poor little frozen baby," he said sadly, taking her in his arms. "We will find lodgings where the smoke does exit the proper way—after boxing night."

"Dad," she said, as she nestled close up to him in the armchair, "shall we have a Christmas pudding some day?"

"Shall I sing to you, Babsie?" he interrupted hastily. And, gently stroking her soft curls, he broke into a lively music hall ditty.

Babsie was soon fast asleep. He lifted her up and placed her on the bed.

"Heaven help her!" he murmured sadly, as he gazed upon the sweet white face. "If I had only been a laborer you would not have gone hungry on Christmas Day, my pet. I wonder how many poor mummers are waiting eagerly for Boxing night? I have looked for work without ceasing. I wonder if the noble army of bogus managers with whom I've been so closely acquainted of late are dining well to-night while she is starving. I'll spend every penny I earn this pantomime upon her comfort. Oh, if I can only make a hit, now my chance has come! Oh, my Babsie, my brave little Babsie!"

"Daddy, it's the glorious Boxing day at last!" cried Babsie, dancing round him in her excitement, as he was preparing to go to the theater.

"Everything wasn't quite smooth at dress rehearsal," he had explained to her; "so I shall be at the theater all day."

The latter part of this statement was not true; but he saw that there was barely food for one in the cupboard, and his pocket was quite empty.

As he ran down the stairs a little shoe came clattering after him, and a saucy, smiling face peeped over the balusters.

"That's for luck, dad," she called out.

He noticed the little shoe had a hole right through the sole, and he sighed.

When he reached the theater he found only a few shivering nobodies assembled on the stage. They all waited for about two hours for the stars, who had never intended to appear, and then the stage manager dismissed them. Halliday met his manager as he turned out of the stage door with the intention of strolling about the streets until evening.

"Hallo!" said that individual, genially. "Hope all the plum pudding you had yesterday won't affect your top notes. I think your song will fetch 'em upstairs. There's money in it——"

Halliday uttered an exclamation, and, stooping down, picked up a quarter.

"There, what did I tell you?" laughed the manager, as he slapped him on the back and went on his way.

Halliday hugged the little coin in his palm. It meant so very much. It meant a little Christmas for Babsie, and it had entirely changed his plans for the day. He hurried homeward with a lighter heart than he had carried for months, only stopping at a coster's barrow on his way to invest some of his treasure in rosy-cheeked apples.

He sprang lightly up the stairs to his home, calling "Babsie!" as he ran, so anxious was he to see her astonishment and delight. But no answer came; no patter of little feet. The dreary room was empty. He sat down chilled and uneasy, and the apples rolled unheeded to the floor.

But one hour—two hours—three hours passed, and still no Babsie. The fog was growing denser and denser. The anxious father paced up and down the little room. At every footfall on the stairs he rushed out and called her name.

The callboy at the Regal Theater was calling out "Overture and beginners" as he made his way along the passages when a man rushed past him and disappeared into one of the dressing-rooms. It was Nigel Halliday, white and trembling, and with huge beads of perspiration on his brow.

"He'll never be on!" said the performers in chorus. But he was at the side dressed and made up, fully five minutes before his first entrance. The other performers were looking at him curiously, for his face was twitching and he spoke to no one. "Nervousness or drunkenness," they all agreed.

There was a ripple of laughter as he made his first entrance. It acted like an electric shock upon him. He knew what was expected of him, and he worked desperately. "He'll do," said the anxious manager, sagely, as he watched his grotesque exit and listened to the applause that followed it.

As soon as Halliday was off the stage after the fourth scene he caught the assistant manager by the arm.

"I'm not on until the palace scene," he said, eagerly. "How long is my wait?"

"Oh, about an hour to-night," was the reply.

Halliday rushed down the passage to his dressing room, removing his kingly robes as he ran.

"What the deuce are you doing?" cried one of the men, as he watched him struggling into his overcoat. "Are you drunk to-night, or what?"

"Don't stop me!" panted Halliday. "Hands off, I say! It's my long wait. I'll be back in time. My child is lost—missing since morning. I'm crazy with anxiety; she's my only one."

Through the streets he ran, threading in and out the traffic, heedless of the shouts of drivers. The fog had cleared away, and the night was starry.

"Babsie! Babsie!" he panted, as he tore along. "Babsie! Babsie!" as he vaulted up the dark staircase to his home. All was silent in the desolate room. He stood there one moment and threw up his hands in voiceless prayer, and then he hastened back to the theater.

Just before his entrance in the palace scene the doorkeeper made his way through the crowd and said something in a low tone to the stage manager. He saw them glance toward him, and in a moment he was beside them.

"In heaven's name, tell me, Grahame! Is it news for me? Don't lie; I know it is!"

"When you come off, Halliday—after your song. There's your music playing now. Go on, old man."

"Tell me first," Halliday replied hoarsely, "and I give you my word I'll go on!"

"A little girl—run over—taken to Faith Hospital. Don't know who she belongs to. Died unconscious," Grahame replied hastily.

"Thank you," was all the wretched man said as he staggered past them onto the stage.

A child in the gallery laughed gleefully at his grotesque entrance. It sounded just like Babsie's laugh. Babsie now, perhaps, lying a little mangled corpse in the Faith Hospital. Why was he there, he asked himself, if his darling lay dead? What did he care for money now?

WAS BEING CLASPED IN HER FATHER'S ARMS.

But Babsie had been so fond of his "drinking song." She had looked forward to hearing him sing it. He would sing it for her sake.

Then his voice began to falter—he swayed slightly. "He's breaking down," was the terrified whisper. "Won't some one step in to fill the gap?"

And some one did. Right from the very back of the gallery it came—a child's voice that caught up the refrain just as the wretched singer was about to rush from the stage, and the astonished artists, looking up to the "gods," beheld the singer, a little girl, perched upon the shoulders of a stalwart coster. It was Babsie—Babsie alive and well.

By the time the little girl had got through the chorus and the gallery had shown their appreciation by applause and whistling, Halliday had regained his self-possession, and he sang the remainder of his ditty with such joyous vigor that he carried his audience along, and the infection of gayety from all the smiling faces on the stage made itself felt all over the house.

"That kid in the gallery is an old music-hall dodge," said one petite to another.

"Yes, but this was jolly well worked. I thought the chap had really broken down," replied his friend.

Behind the scenes the "kid in the gallery" was being clasped in her father's arms amid a group of sympathetic people in motley attire.

Babsie's story was soon told. She had been offered a quarter by a neighbor to mind her babies while she went out. The temptation to see her "dad" perform had been too strong, and the little girl, with her precious coin in her hand, had patiently waited outside the gallery door for many hours. As she had not expected her father home all day she had not been in the least uneasy.

Then Manager Vaughan and Stage Manager Grahame claimed her attention, and the former slipped a brand-new dollar bill into her hand.

"It's what I owe you for that unrehearsed effect," he said, laughing.—Forget-Me-Not.

SAMUEL GOMPERS.

Some Characteristics of the Famous American Labor Leader.

Samuel Gompers, the American labor leader, is as conservative as the English leader, Burns, is radical. Where the latter says strike, Gompers says arbitrate. "I cannot," he once said, "much as I hate oppression, endure the sight of hunger."

The nation owes a bigger debt of gratitude to Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, than most people imagine. Had it not been for the rock-like firmness with which, for nearly a fortnight, this man stood against a continent-wide strike of sympathy with the Pullman men, there might have been an uprising of organized labor, compared with which the strikes and riots that really did occur would have been mere child's play.

Mr. Gompers' diplomacy was not less striking than his wisdom. He at no time said that he would not advise a strike. He simply, by delaying action, gave his followers time to think. When they had thought, they saw the masterfulness of his course. Mr. Gompers proved himself to be a general worthy of leading so great an organization as the Federation.

Samuel Gompers is an American by adoption. He is of German descent, as his name indicates, though of English birth. Thirty-eight years ago he was apprenticed to a shoemaker in London. Then he was a lad of 10, with no brighter prospects, no greater advantages than those of ten thousand other apprentice boys of the world's metropolis. To-day he is the executive head of the most extensive combination of labor unions in the world. In this capacity he wields a constant power by th[illegible] of which that of other labor leade[illegible] nothing.

SAMUEL GOMPERS.

The lad did not like the shoemak[illegible] trade, and, his release being secu[illegible] he learned to make cigars, becomin[illegible] proficient by the time he was 13. Then with his father's family, he came to America. Down to the time he began to work in the shoe shops, he attended day school regularly. After that he continued his studies at a night school where he applied himself so eagerly as to excite the especial attention of his teachers.

Upon his arrival in America he joined a New York cigarmakers' union, and his gift of common sense and his power to express his thoughts logically and clearly quickly made him a prominent member. Later he was repeatedly sent as delegate to the international union.

When David B. Hill was Governor he wished to make Mr. Gompers a member of the State Board of Arbitration at a salary of $3,000. The tender was courteously declined.

"If I should accept a political appointment," said Mr. Gompers, "my usefulness in labor organizations would be entirely and permanently destroyed."

In 1882 Mr. Gompers was made president of the American Federation of Labor, and now holds that office. His salary is but $1,000 a year, less than he could earn at his trade in good times and a far smaller sum than could be commanded by a man of his unusual natural abilities and self-won acquirements in the business world.

A Matrimonial Lottery.

Every three months in the province of Smolensk, Russia, husbands and wives are chosen by the chance drawing of a lottery ticket. The tickets cost 1 ruble (60 cents) each. There is only one prize to be drawn, and it consists of the entire sum yielded by the sale of the tickets, amounting to 5,000 rubles ($3,000), together with a woman described as being of noble blood. The tickets are sold only to men, and the lucky winner of the prize will have to marry the damsel if he takes the 5,000 rubles. If, however, he be already married he is at liberty to turn over the money and the woman to any friend whom he may wish to put in for such a good thing. If the winner should be willing to marry, but is not found to be to the damsel's taste, then they are to be excused from matrimony and permitted to divide the rubles.

Society for Sock-D rning

In a neighboring Long Island village the young men have a new privilege. On paying ten cents a week they can have their socks darned by the belles of the village, who have organized themselves into the "Giddy Girls' Darning Club." One of the young ladies noticed a hole in the hose of a young man who was paying her a social visit the other night, and, on comparing notes, it was found that many of the other girls of the village had been impressed by the fact that the beaux of the place needed help in keeping their socks in order. The young man who was admitted to the privileges of the club must not be in the habit of smoking, drinking, playing cards, or doing anything real naughty. All he has to do then is to pay ten cents a week and wear his socks into as many holes as pleases him.—New York Cor. Pittsburg Dispatch.

The first thing the members of a women's club do, after electing a new member, is to appoint a club meeting at the new member's house, in the hope of getting something elaborate in the way of refreshments.

SERMON BY Rev. Dr. Talmag

Subject: New Year Thoughts—We Should Make the Most of Our Brief Lives—Infidelity the Source of Much Woe—Christ's Matchless Stories.

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WASHINGTON, D. C.—In this discourse Dr. Talmage takes the opportunity of offering some very practical and useful suggestions; text, Psalms xc., 9, "We spend our years as a tale that is told."

The Israelites were forty years in the wilderness, and during thirty-eight years of the forty nothing is recorded of them, and, I suppose, no other emigrants had a duller or more uninteresting time than they had. So they got to telling stories—stories concerning themselves or concerning others; stories about the brick kilns of Egypt, where they had toiled in slavery; stories about how the waters of the Red Sea piled up into palisades at their crossing; story of the lantern hung in the heavens to guide them by night; story of ibises destroying the reptiles of the wilderness; stories of personal encounter. It must have been an awful thing to have had nothing to do for thirty-eight years except to get lost every time they tried to escape from the wilderness. So they whiled away the time in story telling. Indeed, there were persons whose one business was to narrate stories, and they were paid by such trifles as they could pick up from the surrounding listeners. To such instances our text refers when it says, "We spend our years as a tale that is told."

At this tremendous passage from the year 1899 to the year 1900 it will do us all good to consider that our whole life is a story told—a good story or a bad story, a tragic story or a mirthful story, a wise story or a foolish story, a clean story or a filthy story, a story of success or a story of failure. "We spend our years as a tale that is told."

In the first place, I remark that every person's life is a very interesting story. My text does not depreciate "a tale that is told." We have all of us been entertained by the story teller when snow bound in the rail train, or in the group a winter's night in the farmhouse, or gathered around a blazing hearth with some hunters at the mountain inn. Indeed, it is a praiseworthy art to impersonate a good story well. If you doubt the practical and healthful and inspiring use of such a story, take down from the library Washington Irving's "Tales of a Traveler" or Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Twice Told Tales." But as interesting as any of these would be the story of many an obscure life if the tale were as well told. Why do we all like biographies and autobiographies? Because they are stories of eminent human lives. But the story of the life of a backwoodsman, of a man who looks stupid, of one about whom you never heard a word, must be just as thrilling on a small scale as on a large scale is a life of a Cyrus, or a Cæsar, or a Pizarro, or a Mark Antony, or a Charlemagne.

If you get the [illegible] plai[illegible] an just come out of [illegible]

[illegible] with no one but hims[illegible] tering pulses.

Oh, yes, while "we spend ou[illegible] tale that is told," it is an interest[illegible] It is the story of an immortal, [illegible] makes it interesting. He is launc[illegible] ocean of eternal years, in a vo[illegible] will never terminate. He is striking the keynote of an anthem or a dirge that will never come to its last bar. That is what makes the devotional meetings of modern times so much more interesting than they used to be. They are filled not with discourses by laymen on the subject of justification and sanctification, which lay discourses administer more to the facetious than to the edifying, but with stories of what God has done for the soul—how everything suddenly changed; how the promises became balsamic in times of laceration; how he was personally helped out and helped up and helped on. Nothing can stand before such a story of personal rescue, personal transformation, personal illumination. The mightiest and most skillful argument against Christianity collapses under the ungrammatical but sincere statement. The atheistic professor of natural philosophy goes down under the story of that backwoodsman's conversion.

All that elaborate persuasion of the old folks of the folly of giving up active life too soon means nothing as compared with the simple incident you may relate to them of the fact that Benjamin Franklin was Governor of Pennsylvania at eighty-two years of age and that Dandolo, of Venice, at ninety years of age, although his eyesight had been destroyed through being compelled by his enemies to look into a polished metal basin under the full blaze of the sun until totally blind, yet this sightless nonagenarian leading an army to the successful besiegement of Constantinople! When an old man hears of such incidents, he puts aside his staff and ear trumpet and starts anew.

The New Testament suggests the power of the "tale that is told." Christ was the most effective story teller of all the ages. The parables are only tales well told. Matchless stories: That of the traveler cut up by the thieves and the Samaritan paying his board bill at the tavern; that of the big dinner, to which the invited guests sent in fictitious regrets; that of the shepherd answering the bleat of the lost sheep and all the rural neighbors that night helping him celebrate the fact that it was safe in the barnyard; that of the bad boy, reduced to the swines' trough, greeted home with such banqueting and jewelry that it stuffed the older son with jealousy and disgruntlement; that of the Pharisee full of braggadocio and the publican smiting his breast with a stroke that brought down the heavens in commiseration; stories about leprosy, about paralysis, about catalepsy, about dropsy, about ophthalmia—stories that He so well told that they have rolled down to the present and will roll down through the entire future.

I heard Daniel Baker, the wonderful evangelist of his time, preach what I supposed was a great sermon, but I remember nothing of it except a story that he told, and that, I judge from the seeming effect, may that afternoon have brought hundreds into the kingdom of God. I heard Truman Osborne preach several sermons, but I remember nothing of what he said in public or private except a story that he told, and that was, among other things, the means of my salvation. The lifelong work of John B. Gough, the greatest temperance reformer of all time, was the victory of anecdote, and who can ever forget his story of Joel Straton touching him on the shoulder or of Deacon Moses Grant at Hopkinson, or of the outcast woman nicknamed "Hell Fire," but redeemed by the thought that she "was one of us?" Dwight L. Moody, the evangelist of worldwide fame and usefulness, who recently passed to his great reward on high, during his valuable labors in the pulpit wielded the anecdote for God and heaven until all nations have been moved by it.

If you have had experiences of pardon and comfort and disenthrallment, tell of it. Tell it in the most pointed and dramatic way you can manage. Tell it soon, or you may never tell it at all. Oh, the power of "the tale that is told!" An hour's discourse about the fact that blasphemous behavior is sometimes punished in this world would not impress us as much as the simple story that in a town of New York state at the close of the last century thirty-six profane men formed themselves into a club, calling themselves "Society of the Druids." They met regularly to deride and damage Christianity. One night in their awful meeting they burned a Bible and administered the sacrament to a dog. Two of them died that night. Within three days three were drowned. In five years all the thirty-six came to a bad end. Before justices of the peace it was sworn that two were starved to death, seven were drowned, eight were shot, five committed suicide, seven died on the gallows, one was frozen to death and three died accidentally. Incidents like that, sworn to, would balk any proposed irreverent and blasphemous behavior.

In what way could the fact that infidelity will not help any one die well be so powerfully presented as by the incident concerning a man falling ill in Paris just after the death of Voltaire, when a professional nurse was called in, and she asked, "Is the gentleman a Christian?" "Why do you ask that?" said the messenger. The nurse replied, "I am the nurse who attended Voltaire in his last illness, and for all the wealth of Europe I would never see another infidel die." What discourse in its moral and spiritual effect could equal a tale like that?

You might argue upon the fact that those fallen are our brothers and sisters, but could we impress any one with such a truth so well as by the scene near Victoria Park, London, where men were digging a deep drain, and the shoring gave way and a great pile of earth fell upon the workmen. A man stood there with his hands in his pockets, looking at those who were trying to shovel away the earth from those who were buried, but when some one said to the spectator, "Bill, your brother is down there," then the spectator threw off his coat and went to work with an agony of earnestness to fetch up his brother. What course of argument could so well as that incident set forth that when we toil for the salvation of a soul it is a brother whom we are trying to save?

A second reading of my text reminds me that life is not only a story told, but that it is a brief story. A long narrative stretched out indefinitely loses its interest. It is generally the story that takes only a minute or half a minute to rehearse that arrests the attention. And that gives additional interest to the story of our life. It is a short story. Subtract from our life all the hours of necessary sleep, all the hours of incapacity through fatigue or illness, all the hours of childhood and youth before we get fairly to work, and you have abbreviated the story of life so much that you can appreciate the psalmist's remark when he says, "Thou hast made my days as a hand's breadth," and can appreciate the apostle James' expression when he compares life to "a vapor that appeareth for a little season and then vanishes away."

It does not take long to tell all the vicissitudes of life—the gladness and the griefs, the arrivals and the departures, the successes and the failures, the victories and the defeats, the ups and the downs. The longer we live the shorter the years. We hardly get over the bewildering fatigue of selecting gifts for children and friends and see that the presents get off in time to arrive on the appropriate day than we see another advancing group of holidays. Autumnal fruit so sharply chases the summer harvest, and the snow of the white blossoms of spring time come too soon after the snows of winter. It is a remark so often made that it fails to make any impression and the platitude that calls forth no reply "How rapidly time goes."

Every centu[illegible] which mak[illegible] breaks do[illegible]

[illegible] nd private [illegible] The story of our life, however insignificant it may seem to be, will win the applause or hiss of a great multitude that no man can number. As a "tale that is told" among admirers or antagonists, celestials or pandemoniacs, the universe is full of listening ears as well as of gleaming eyes. If we say or do the right thing, that is known. If we say or do the wrong thing, that is known. I suppose the population of the intelligences in the air is more numerous than the population of intelligences on the earth. Oh, that the story of our life might be fit for such an audience in such an auditorium! God grant that wisdom and fidelity and earnestness and truth may characterize the "tale that is told."

Through medical science the world's longevity may be greatly improved in the future, as it has been in the past, but it would not be well for the people to live too long. Some of them would, through their skill at acquisitiveness, gather too much, and some multimillionaires would become billionaires and trillionaires, and some would after awhile pocket a hemisphere. No. Death is useful in its financial limitations, and then all have enough sorrows and annoyances and sufferings by the time they become nonagenarians or centenarians to make it desirable to quit. Besides that, it would not be fair so long to keep so many good old people out of heaven. So it is well arranged that those who stand by the deathbed of the nineteenth century will not be called to stand by the deathbed of the twentieth century.

Oh, crowd this last year with prayers, with hosannas, with kind words, with helpfulness. Make the peroration of the century the climax of Christlike deeds. Close up the ranks of God, and during this remaining twelve months charge mightily against the host of Abaddon. Have no reserve corps. Let swiftest gospel cavalry gallop, and heaviest moral artillery roll, and mightiest evangelistic batteries thunder on the scene. Let ministers of the gospel quit all controversy with each other and in solid phalanx march out for the world's disenthrallment. Let printing presses, secular and religious, make combined movement to instruct and emancipate the world. On all the hills let there be Elijahs praying for "a great rain," and on every contested field Joshuas to see that final victory is gained before the sun goes down, and every mountain become a transfiguration, and every Galilee a walking place of Him who can hush a tempest. Let us be jealous of every month, of every week, of every day that passes without something significant and glorious wrought for God and this sin cursed world. Let our churches be thronged with devout assemblages. Let the chorals be more like grand marches than requiems. Let the coming year see the last wound of Transvaal and Philippine conflict, and the earth quake with the grounding arms of the last regiment ever to be marshaled, and the furnaces of the foundries blaze with the fires that shall turn the last swords into plowshares.

And may all those whose lives shall go out in this last year of a century, as many will, meet in the heavenly world those who in the morning and noonday of this hundred years toiled and suffered for the world's salvation to tell them how much has been accomplished for the glory of Him whose march through all the coming centuries the Scriptures describe as going forth "conquering and to conquer." Oh, the contrast between that uplifted spectacle of eternal triumph in the presence of God and the Lamb and these earthly scenes, where "we spend our years as a tale that is told."

Give neither counsel nor salt until you are asked for it.

Economical wives make fond and indulgent husbands.

All evils are easily managed if they are nipped in the bud.

The development of the best within us is oftener due to our failures than to our successes.

To bear disappointment bravely is to disconcert the fates.

We paint love as a child, when he should sit a giant on his clouds, the great disturbing spirit of the world.

—It is not generally known that Rudyard Kipling's full name is Joseph Rudyard Kipling.