

SONG IN WINTER TIME

The hips of the haw are wizened,
Shrivelled the willow wand;
The north wind, long imprisoned,
Has broken each eye and bond.
The red rose garth is barren;
Fled is the golden-wing,
Till a hand like that of Aaron
Shall smite, and behold—the spring!

Buoyed by a hope eternal,
As old as the Eden-birth,
I can wait till the rupture vernal
Shall quicken the sleeping earth;
For mayhap when the sod is shaken,
When tingles the tip of the fir,
Love, like the spring, will waken
In the slumbering heart of her.
—Clinton Scollard, in *The Bohemian*.

MULLINS' RECOMMENDATIONS

By F. E. C. ROBBINS.

"What is a man to do in a case like this?" demanded Mr. Perham, head of the commercial department and bursar of Pine Grove Seminary, as he sat in his office the morning after graduation day, pen in hand and a sheet of paper before him.

"What is the case?" asked Mr. Clark of the classical department, who had just entered the room.

"Well, you know Mullins," began Mr. Perham.

"Mullins, the young giant? Yes, I know him slightly, of course, though he has never come under my instruction."

"Fortunately for you," declared the bursar. "Well, Mullins has finished here at last, and he wants me—"

"Why, he hasn't received a diploma, has he?" interrupted Mr. Clark. "Of course not. It is my belief that he couldn't get a diploma if he spent the rest of his natural life here. But he has wisely made up his mind to take his leave without one, and in lieu thereof he wants me to write him a recommendation."

"I hate to refuse him, but what can I say? He is a good fellow, honest as the day, and with plenty of muscle. I could recommend him for a place on a coaster or in a logging-camp. He has earned by hard labor the money to come here. But he wants a business career, and he would certainly be a failure in an office or a store, just as he has been in the school. I have tried to tell him as much in a delicate sort of way, but he doesn't take the hint. He will have to find it out for himself. Meanwhile, I suppose that I shall have to write something for him."

"You might take pattern by an old-time president of the college where I was graduated," said Mr. Clark. "In a somewhat similar case, so the story goes he wrote a testimonial after this fashion: 'This is to certify that Mr. So-and-so has finished his course at this college, with equal credit to himself and to the institution.'"

Mr. Perham smiled, but made no reply. He began his task, however, and soon completed it as follows:

"To Whom It May Concern: The bearer of this note, Mr. David Mullins, has been for some time past a student in the commercial department of Pine Grove Seminary, and I cheerfully commend him as a young man of irreproachable character and fine physique. While circumstances prevented his completing the course, the time that he spent here was amply sufficient to enable a student of industry and ability to acquire a substantial business education."

"Charles G. Perham."

"There," he said, after reading it aloud, "that is literally true, it can do no harm, and it will satisfy Mullins."

It certainly did satisfy Mullins. "Why, professor," he exclaimed, joyfully when he read the recommendation. "I didn't know you would feel like saying so much for me! I thank you kindly, professor." Then he added, with a little catch in his voice, "I hope I may have a chance to do as much for you some time."

Mr. Perham winced a little, partly, no doubt, but not wholly, on account of the grip of a strong right hand with which the honest youth had emphasized his gratitude.

Mullins had chosen a thriving city in a neighboring State as the scene of his business career, and the next week he was on the ground, ready to begin.

It seemed, however, that the business men of the city were just then very well provided with clerks, and he spent several days in visiting offices without once being invited to accept a position.

But at last, in a modest sixth-floor office, he found a man who was at least willing to talk with him. This was Mr. Ray, a young insurance agent.

"You were educated at Pine Grove Seminary, eh?" said Mr. Ray, with a show of interest. "I know one of the teachers there very well—Perham, head of the commercial department, I think?"

"Yes!" said Mullins, eagerly. "I have a fine recommendation from Professor Perham in my pocket."

"Ah, indeed!" said Mr. Ray, glancing at the paper that was offered him. "Yes, that is his autograph, fast enough. Perham was my roommate at college, and a right good fellow. I haven't seen him since we were graduated. Sit down, won't you, and tell me about him?"

"That is first-rate," he declared, after listening to a glowing account of his friend. "I am delighted to hear from the old fellow. And now about your case. To tell the truth, I hadn't thought of any more office help. But—perhaps I might work you in to help on the books and to act as general utility man about the office. It will be small pay at first, but if you are adapted to the business it will lead to something better."

There was no difficulty about coming to terms, and Mullins at once made his start in the insurance business.

One evening some time later Mr.

Ray said to his wife, "I've got to get rid of my new clerk. I'm sorry about it, for he is a thoroughly good fellow—but stupid, stupid! I was getting along very well before, but I have certainly been overworked since Mullins came. It's queer, too. He took the commercial course at Pine Grove Seminary, under Charlie Perham, you know. And Perham gave him a first-rate recommendation. I hope he isn't a fair sample of Perham's graduates."

So the next day Mr. Ray, in a tactful manner as possible, explained to the young man that under the prevailing business conditions he should not need extra clerical assistance after that week. Mullins accepted his dismissal in good part, and just before leaving on Saturday he asked, quite as a matter of course, "Would you be willing to write me a recommendation, Mr. Ray?"

"A recommendation? Why—ah—certainly! By the way, will you let me look at the one that Mr. Perham gave you?"

As Mr. Ray read the letter through, with considerable care this time, a light broke in upon his mind. Then, in a spirit of emulation, he turned to the typewriter, his stenographer having gone, and produced the following:

"I am pleased to say that Mr. David Mullins, who has been in my employ, is an eminently worthy young man whose desire is to do well whatever he undertakes. I do not doubt that his services will be as satisfactory to any future employer as they have been to me."

"Henry Ray."

Mullins was much pleased with this, the more especially as he had secretly feared that he had not been entirely successful in the insurance business. He thanked his late employer heartily, and on Monday morning started on his search for another place.

His travels presently brought him to an office which bore the sign, "William Evans, Coal and Wood." The proprietor was in, and although his demeanor was far from gracious, he did listen to what his visitor had to say.

"I have just turned off one fellow who was of no earthly use," he declared, in a rasping tone that seemed to match a hard look in his eyes. "It is next to impossible to get any decent help nowadays. Recommendations? Oh, of course! They all have them." He accepted rather gingerly those that Mullins now offered, and glanced them over.

"Hum—irreproachable character—substantial business education—services satisfactory. Oh, they read well enough, of course! Well, I want a man at one of my yards to do the weighing and keep a lookout for things generally. I may as well try you as any one if you want the chance. You may start in at once, and I will give you a dollar a day until Saturday night. If you suit, I'll pay more after that. If you don't suit you leave. What do you say, yes or no?"

Mullins said yes, although the work was not quite what he had had originally in mind.

He was really much better adapted to this place than to his former one, and he easily learned his duties. Being of a practical turn of mind, he soon saw the need of improvements about the yard. For one thing, he became convinced that the scales were not accurate. Some of these matters he took the liberty to bring to the attention of his employer.

When Saturday night came he was well satisfied with his success in his new business, and he went to the office fully expecting a permanent engagement with a handsome increase in salary. The proprietor had gone home, but the bookkeeper handed Mullins an envelope, which contained a five-dollar bill and this note:

"Dear Sir, I find upon trial that you do not suit me, and I shall have no further use for your services. Enclosed please find five dollars, payment in full for five days' work. Your, etc."

"William Evans."

This was a cruel blow to poor Mullins, and he turned away in deep dejection, from which he had by no means recovered when, on Monday morning, he again started on his rounds.

It was indeed with very little hope that in the course of the forenoon he entered the office of "John Arkwright, Contractor." But there was something in Mr. Arkwright's shrewd, kindly face that encouraged Mullins, and he was able to make application with less than his usual awkwardness.

"Good recommendations, you say?" repeated Mr. Arkwright, as he swung round in his revolving chair and peered at his visitor through steel-bowed spectacles.

He read with some care those that were now put into his hands, and as he did so the pleasant smile that lighted up his rugged features gave Mullins considerable encouragement.

"This your last place?" asked the contractor, with his thumb on Mr. Ray's signature.

"No, sir. I was with Mr. Evans, the coal merchant, for a short time."

"That so? Did he give you a letter when you left?"

Mullins flushed painfully. "Yes, sir," he faltered, "but I guess you couldn't call it a recommendation."

"Oh, well, I'll be the judge of that. I'd like to look at it, if you don't mind."

Mullins did mind, but he produced the letter, which Mr. Arkwright, after adjusting his spectacles, read with deliberation.

"Come now," he said, as he handed it back, "that isn't bad. I know that man Evans, and what he requires, and I shouldn't want much to do with any one that did suit him. Sit down, if you are not in a hurry, and let's talk things over."

And soon Mullins was answering questions that covered not only his career at the seminary, in which he felt some pride, but more especially his experiences in earning money, to pay his way there, which he had never thought of as being of interest to any one.

"Well," said Mr. Arkwright, at last, "I rather like your appearance, and I think that there may be something in you. I don't need a book-keeper or a clerk, but I could use a young fellow who wasn't afraid to work, and whose knowledge wasn't confined to what he learned at school. I reckon most of yours is outside of that," he chuckled. "If you say so, I will give you a chance. It will be only day-laborer's pay, and not much different from day-laborer's work at first; but if you can learn to go ahead with a job and to handle men you may find it worth while by and by."

Then the contractor entered more into particulars, and Mullins once again accepted a position.

Some ten years may be supposed to have elapsed. Mr. Perham was still at Pine Grove Seminary, although he had often felt a desire for a wider field of usefulness, with a correspondingly better salary. He was therefore agreeably surprised one day to receive a telegram, asking him to meet the trustees of a flourishing school in another State, as a candidate for the position of principal, and he readily accepted the invitation.

After his interview he was taken by one of the trustees in his carriage to the railway station.

"I believe that I haven't told you how we happened to look you up," said the trustee, as they drove along. "The fact is, I became interested in you through one of your old pupils, who is now a partner of mine."

Mr. Perham could not have told why, but instantly there flashed before his mind's eye a scene in the bursar's office at the seminary, and he seemed to hear the words, "I hope I may have a chance to do as much for you some time."

"What is his name?" he asked. And he was not entirely surprised to hear the trustee answer, "Mullins."

"He was called out of the city to-day," added the trustee, "or he would have been on hand to meet you."

"He must have changed considerably since I saw him," remarked Mr. Perham, in default of anything else to say.

"Well, he isn't so green as he was, but he is the same simple-hearted fellow, after all. For instance, he is still proud of the testimonial that you gave him when he left school."

Mr. Perham had to blush before the quizzical glance that came to him through the steel-bowed spectacles.

"It was the best that I could do at the time, Mr. Arkwright," he said. "Probably it was. I presume he didn't shine at school. But I reckon that I could give him a better recommendation if occasion required. For one thing, I could say that I thought well enough of him to take him into my business—contracting, you know. He can get more work out of a crew of men and keep them better-natured than any one else I know. And he can see the ins and outs of a proposed job, and what it means in dollars and cents, better than I can, with all my experience. And let me tell you, he got more out of your instruction than perhaps you thought. The seed wasn't all lost, though it did take it a long time to sprout. To this day he is always quoting things that you said, and I must say that they have generally struck me as good, sound sense. That is how I came to think of you at this time. So, Mr. Perham, if you are elected—and I think you will be, though of course I am only one of the trustees—if you are elected, it will be largely on the strength of Mullins' recommendation."—Youth's Companion.

Rural Simplicity.

"It's dreadful queer," said the housewife, "that the potatoes you bring me should be so much bigger at the top of the sack than they are at the bottom."

"Not at all, mem," said the honest farmer; "it's jest this a-way. Potatoes is growin' so fast jest now that by the time I dig a sackful of the last ones dug is ever so much bigger 'n the first ones."—Harper's Weekly.

Telephones in Theatre Boxes.

To enable young married women, if they become anxious, to telephone home and inquire as to the condition of their children, telephones are fitted in every private box at the Coliseum.

The Tax That Progress Pays to Death.

"There goes another lantern!"

"How very careless the workmen are. That is the third light lost tonight."

Two ladies living in Paris, France, about half a mile from the Eiffel Tower, were sitting at their window, where they seated themselves every night during the early summer of 1898, when work was being rushed on M. Eiffel's daring project. The great steel tower was to be completed in good season for the exposition, which was to be opened the following spring. Nothing like it had ever been seen—a giant of steel trusses, lattices and arches rising to a height of 300 metres. There were some who said the scheme was impossible of realization. But the engineer was determined. The tower should not only be finished, but the elevators would be running to the top when the gates of the exposition were thrown open. To do this in the short time allowed—only three years elapsed between the acceptance of the design and the completion of the work—it was necessary to put on night forces of workmen.

Night after night the two ladies took their station at their window and watched the lanterns moving about the high structure, "twinkling" or pulsating like fireflies. Across the Seine came the feeble humming of the riveters' hammers. And the ladies were entertained. The monotony of the fairy scene was broken occasionally by the fall of a lantern; the ladies were charmed. The falling lantern added a drop of excitement to their modest pleasure. Some nights no lantern was observed to fall, and on those evenings the quiet spectators retired to rest feeling disappointed.

Other evenings their patience was rewarded by seeing one, two, even three lanterns seek the earth by gravity. They counted them, compared notes and smiled with satisfaction. It was such an innocent treat. The lanterns did not cost above two francs fifty, and the sight of their spasmodic dropping was highly spectacular.

One evening while they were engaged watching the "flight of meteors" from the Eiffel Tower, as they called it, a physician, a friend of the pair, called. They had just counted the third lantern observed to drop that night. They were unwilling to keep secret the source of their nightly enjoyment, and informed their visitor how they spent their time at their window.

"Three, you say?" he replied in a voice of pity. "Is it possible?"

"You alarm us!" cried one of the ladies. "I am sure there were three."

Pausing a moment as if desiring to prepare the ground for his revelation, the visitor then spoke. "Did you know," he asked calmly, "that there is a man tied to each lantern? Every workman wears a belt around his waist. To this is attached a lamp so that the latter may not accidentally fall upon those working below. My dear ladies, it is not the loss of a common lantern now and then that has made your evenings amusing. Tonight, for instance, you have seen three souls enter eternity."

The ladies shuddered, and every evening thereafter they carefully drew the curtains of their windows so that the "flight of the meteors" might pass unobserved.

No wonder they shuddered; the tax progress pays to death is enough to make any thinking person uneasy. The cost in human lives of the wonders of modern civilization has never been compiled. The totals would be too appalling, and the world counts the cost in dollars, for money is the medium of exchange. There is something benumbing to the senses in the thought that every skyscraper is a monument to some unfortunate workman who has given his life that it might be built.

There are martyrs of peace. No grateful country remembers them; in fact, no extraordinary efforts are made to have their deaths recorded. Those who are killed in battle are heroes. They who give their lives in building a bridge, a tunnel, a railroad or a twenty-story building are the victims of progress, which, like a greedy giant, never fails to levy toll.

Efforts at Prevention.

Many efforts are made to prevent the awful loss of life which accompanies every huge engineering work. The generous expenditure of money and the employment of scientific devices and of such helps as the latest ideas in sanitation and hygiene suggest have had their effect. But the engineers grow more daring; sometimes too much reliance is placed upon the assistance new appliances and methods may give.

The engineers of the Simplon tunnel, just opened by the King of Italy, have been cheered by the fact that "only eleven deaths occurred in the works." The Simplon is more than eleven miles long, and required seven years to drill. The railroad tunnels in New York, little more than a mile in length, have lost more than that number of men in an afternoon.

The statement of the engineers of the Simplon tunnel that only eleven men were killed in the works, while it undoubtedly is truthful, fails to take into consideration the number of workmen who contracted phthisis during the first year the work was progressing. The contractors used every device to preserve life that seemed to promise success, yet many of the workmen fell ill. The Brandt

drill was substituted, and as this suppressed dust, the dreadful disease peculiar to men who delve in the bowels of the earth was reduced to an inconsiderable quantity. How many workmen returned to their homes in Italy, Switzerland and France, only to waste away with the dread consumption contracted in the tunnels will never be known.

Victims of "the Bends."

At present seven tunnels—really fourteen—are being driven under the Hudson and North Rivers in New York, and the loss of life so far has been appalling. A short time ago the crew working in one of the headings were killed by the air pressure, which hurried them into the river. Such fatalities one hears of, but without publicity every day several men are removed from the high pressure air locks suffering from "the bends." They used to call it caisson fever, but by any name it remains one of the most dreadful forms of debilitating disease that a workman may endure.

All of those who are attacked by this dread disease do not die from its effects. Many think they recover fully. They return to work in the chamber and become accustomed to slight attacks. But if they remain long at the work the disease claims them. They either die a very painful death or are crippled for the rest of their lives, going about with twisted limbs. One who has experienced the shock likens it to a jumping toothache or "the worst rheumatism you ever felt."

It usually attacks a man as he leaves the lock, where the pressure is maintained at from thirty to thirty-five pounds per square inch. The normal atmosphere pressure is only fifteen pounds per square inch, so that ill effects upon the human system from two atmospheres are only to be expected when the men emerge from the compressed chamber into the normal atmosphere. The sudden release of pressure sometimes causes the men to fall unconscious from the "bends."

But Men Must Work.

In the Pennsylvania Railroad tunnels in New York some of the worst accidents have occurred. In the locks used on these tunnels the compressed air escapes through the soft mud of the river as the heading is pushed forward. Every now and then an airhole is found and a "blowout" follows. This instantly reduces the pressure of the air in the chamber, and a fresh supply of air has to be introduced at great speed to catch up with the escape. During this short time the pressure may reach forty pounds or more, and the effects of the violent fluctuations tell terribly upon the workmen. But the task must go on. As some men are borne off to a hospital others are ready to take their places. Both the Panama Railroad and the Panama Canal have collected their heavy dues of death. They will tell you at Panama that every rail in the railroad, which is forty-seven miles long, represents a life lost in the building. As for the canal, under the French management the deaths amounted to as high as 112 per 1000 in a year. The price in human life was staggering. That particularly deadly miasmatic disease known as Chagas fever, the same that made fearful inroads on the argonauts who crossed the Isthmus to the Pacific on their way to San Francisco before the building of the Pacific Railroad, was responsible for the enormous loss of life. Since the Americans have taken charge of the Isthmus it is reported that "yellow jack" and malaria are kept at a minimum, and that the former has almost disappeared.

—Philadelphia Ledger.

Advertising Pays.

It was a surprise to the summer boarder to learn that one of the group of graduates from the seminary, to the "farewell exercises" of which she had listened the year before, was married and settled in a home of her own.

"I remember her," said the summer boarder, when the name was mentioned, "but she did not strike me as being as attractive as most of the other girls."

"Um-m!" said her informant. "Well, I guess 'twas her graduating essay that carried her off so quick, maybe. Her subject was, 'How to Keep House on Six Dollars a Week,' and it fetched most every young fellow in town, they tell me. By what I hear, all she had to do was to sit at home and pick and choose."—Youth's Companion.

Complete Depravity.

"We've often heard about the meanest man, but I happen to know the meanest woman."

"Who's she?"

"The one who goes to weddings and slyly removes the cards from the presents, so 'that the bride can never know which of her friends it was who gave her the plated butter-knife."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Byron's Grandson.

The death of Lord Lovelace cannot be a matter of indifference to any Englishman, indeed to any one who speaks the "land's language." There is happily still a granddaughter, an Ada too, but with the next generation we get further away from Byron, who seems to recede a step back into the past.—London Saturday Review.

SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY



Leadon tobacco boxes are apt to cause lead colic and paralysis, the metal impregnating the tobacco with acetate of lead.

A remarkable botanical specimen of Japan is a hollow tree-trunk sixty-five feet in circumference containing a living tree nine feet in circumference. The older tree was destroyed about 130 years ago, leaving thirty feet of trunk, and the inner tree is about 110 years old.

A French company has commenced the manufacture of a product called hydrolithe. It is obtained by the reaction of metallic calcium on a metallic salt. This hydride of calcium gives, under the action of water, pure hydrogen, just as calcium carbide gives acetylene. The industrial product gives 1000 liters per kilo.

Snake venom, says a British physician, has been shown by recent research to be a highly composite substance, containing various poisonous proteid bodies, which are variously affected by heat and fluorescent solutions in sunlight. That it has so little toxic effect when taken by the mouth is due to its slight absorption by the stomach and alteration by the bile and pancreatic juice.

Steel wharves with concrete piers will be built at Manila by the United States Government. There will be two of these; one 650 feet long and 110 feet wide, and the other 600 feet long and seventy feet wide. Transverse plate girders will rest on the piers and carry between their webs longitudinal lines of eighteen-inch rolled steel joists for the floor framing. The floor will be of reinforced concrete in the form of a slab four and a half inches thick, with expanded metal or wire netting embedded in it.

A new respiratory apparatus which has resulted from late experience in French mining, consists externally of a rubber bag, which is worn in front about waist high, and is supported by a strap over the shoulder. The miner breathes from and into the bag through a mouthpiece. The exhaled gases pass through two tubes containing grains of oxydith, which retains the moisture and carbonic acid and renews the air for breathing by setting free a corresponding quantity of oxygen. The circulation through the bag is sufficient, and enables the miner to work in suffocating gases an indefinite time.

In German some interesting experiments have recently been made in the protection of orchard trees against night frosts by means of fumigation. A part of an orchard in bloom was thus successfully guarded against an April frost by the dense smoke of naphthalene. But the experiment was very expensive, fifty kilograms of naphthalene being consumed by seven flames in one hour. Later a new preparation of chemicals was tried, producing a comparatively huge volume of smoke with the expenditure of only two kilograms of the material per hour. These trials are under the direction of an experimental gardening association.

Should Man Live 200 Years?

Mrs. Henderson, in her volume, *The Aristocracy of Health* (Harpers), takes up the question of longevity.

"Life is too short for the attainment of highest purposes," she says. "The season is ended before the natural harvest is begun. In a life of fifty years, twenty are simply preparatory—learning how to live. Five years out of fifty are spent in that famous occupation alleged by a French officer as his cause for suicide. On his prostrate form was found a paper on which was written, 'The reason for his weariness of life—he was tired of buttoning and unbuttoning.' Ten years out of fifty are consecrated to the nourishment of the inner man—the time for eating and drinking. Not that any of these duties are unpleasant—quite the contrary; yet, all the same, they consume the years, and how much time is left for the contribution to the world? In the majority of human lives such time is never reached."

Full two hundred years, Mrs. Henderson believes, are clearly our due, and she quotes a number of scientists—Oswald, Virchow, Nicola Tesla, and others, who hold similar views. In conclusion, Mrs. Henderson gives seven admirable rules for prolonging life.

When All is Lost.

When wealth is lost, nothing is lost. When health is lost, something is lost. When character is lost, all is lost. —Motto over the walls of a school in Germany.

By completing the passage from Father Point, Quebec, to Liverpool in five days, twelve and a quarter hours the Canadian Pacific liner Empress of Britain has established a record.