

ONWARD.

Sometimes when the growing darkness
At the close of day,
To the stress of daily labor,
Brings a moment's stay.
All at once the mind will waver
Back to other years,
See, as in a panorama,
Youthful hopes and fears.
Once again upon the threshold
Of our life we stand,
And discern the future glowing
Like the Promised Land.
And the hopes of early manhood
Putting forth their leaf,
Green as are the leaves in Springtime,
And their life as brief.
With a pang do we remember
That we meant to be,
In the battlefield a hero,
Crowned with victory.
But, discredited and beaten.
Have been forced to yield:
Or at best are barely able
Still to keep the field.

On our brow no crown of laurel
Tells of victory won;
Not for us the song of triumph
When the day is done.

Other men have reaped the harvest
That we thought to reap;
Other men have gained the summit
Of the mountain steep.

And our hearts are bowed with sorrow,
Gazing on that scene,
For a moment, as we picture
All that might have been.

For a moment! Then our manhood
Puts the sorrow by,
Crushes down again the heart throb,
Quells the rising sigh.
And once more we set our faces
Sternly toward the front,
Brace again our nerves and sinews
For the battle's brunt.
Onward! With success or failure,
We have naught to do.
Ours to do our duty nobly
All life's journey through.

And, although success would cheer us,
As we onward go,
We can bear the doom of failure,
By the help of God.

—Alfred C. Shaw, in Good Words.

SICKIM'S REFORM.

BY MCPHERSON FRASER.

The police force is not the place for a man with much physical strength and little moral principle. His impulses will run riot and sometimes cause him to overstep his official authority, and commit perhaps, murder. That is a rule. Here is the exception to prove it.

Jim Sickim was a healthy built young fellow and possessed a vast amount of hidden genial blackguardism, and he dwelt in a section of the city which contained the concentrated essence of all the iniquity and all the vice in the universe.

One day—it was long before African gesses were deposited in Back Bay Park—one day this fellow Sickim was slouching up an alley in his neighborhood, swinging a big stone jug, which was to be charged, along with Mr. Sickim, at the handiest saloon. Suddenly there was a great hullabaloo in the street on which the alley opened. Sickim scented trouble and made tracks, but was disgusted to discover only a hot headed horse trying to turn a back somersault over top of a little fat man in a buggy. The little man was scared to death, and shouted and yanked at the reins hard enough to twist the beast's head off, but it was of no use. The horse had evidently made up his mind to slay him. Sickim enjoyed the fun for a while, then set his jug on the sidewalk, and went over and pulled the horse back to earth again. For which he expected a quarter, but when the little man got his breath he simply thanked Sickim profusely, and asked him to call next day at the office of the park commissioners.

"Are you one o' them?" asked Sickim.

"I am. My name is Smythe," said he who had been scared, and drove away.

Sickim picked up his jug and went on his way, deep in thought. He was thinking so hard that only the jug was filled at the saloon.

Now, it had often been truthfully said that Sickim liked many things better than he liked work, and, moreover, he was President of the Sons of Rest, a local society distinguished for its philharmonic principles. So he wondered whether the possible reward for saving the commissioner's life would pay for extreme trouble of going after it. A happy thought settled the whole argument. It occurred to Mr. Sickim that the street railroads granted—on the quiet—free passes over the city to all Sons of Rest. He decided to go.

Next morning Sickim increased his apparel by a white shirt and a collar, and presented himself before the commissioner. Who promptly rewarded him with a five-dollar bill.

"Now," said Mr. Smythe, as he looked his rescuer over, "what is your occupation?"

Sickim was dazed, for beyond an occasional impulse to get drunk he had but one view in life—he wanted to be a policeman. He said: "I am not doing anything now, sir, but I'm going to try for the police some day."

The commissioner put up his eyebrows. How would you like to try now? We require a good solid man like you for Back Bay Park. I think I can secure your appointment at an early date. You will be given a nice gray suit with brass buttons, and you will get invigorating, wholesome employment at good wages. What do you say?"

"I'm agreed, sir," Sickim answered, insincerely, and it was all over.

The commissioner complimented himself on his usefulness to the park department, and then pulled the string which woke up the other commissioners and the police department. Whereupon Sickim underwent "mental and physical examination" and "qualified." The machine moved very smoothly, you see, and made the man who was being run through feel that the softest lot of his life was before him. That was as it is a day—a big illusion, and Sickim found it out in less than a week—it to his sorrow. But it made a man of him.

He was put into a uniform that might have fitted an elephant, given a little advice on matters of courtesy and a great deal on matters of discipline, and then he was turned over to the policeman at the Stonybrook Bridge. From that time on he got a taste of a sort of life that did not at all agree with him. On the first day—a beastly hot one—he had to tramp all over the park a dozen times so that he might know his bearings. On the second day—also very hot—he had to repeat the rules and regulations

forward and backward, chase loafers and unleashed dogs, and practice throwing a big life-preserver at a stump half way across the marsh. On the third day—still hot—he was told to polish his boots and clean up generally,—and to hurry up about it, too; then he was assigned to a lonely night beat in a corner of the park, far away from everything except a couple of spooklike poplars and the memory of his own checkered career.

Sickim travelled back and forth like a pendulum over that gloomy beat until a few thin pencils of gray light began to steal up from the eastern horizon. He had no sleep for forty-eight hours and he was as hungry as a wolf. He would have gladly given his new helmet for a doughnut and a drop of whisky. Often during the night he felt like taking French leave and jumping on a passing freight train bound for anywhere. He could easily cut off his buttons and jam his helmet into some unrecognizable shape. But something—perhaps just the least trace of inherent manliness made him change his mind.

He took a chew of tobacco, and was about to leave up against a tree when he heard something with a noisy voice coming down the road toward him. He drew his club, determined, if he got a chance to club his feelings on some kind of a hand. A man's form shambled into sight, followed by something that cried and resembled a small shadow.

The man was beastly drunk, and cursed and waved his fist at the shadow, and remarked that he would like to break the shadow's neck.

"Perhaps I'll take a hand, too," said Sickim as he stepped out from under the tree.

The man pulled himself up and stopped his bellowing, but the small shadow behind him gave a little cry of glee, and, assuming the form of a girl of nine, raced by him, and threw herself sobbing into Sickim's big hands.

"Leave that young one be!" growled the man.

"Shut up your snivelling jaw," said Sickim, "or I'll—"

"Yer not big enough!"

Sickim's pride boiled. He pushed the crying child aside and sprang at the man and gripped him like a vise. "Don't you talk that way to Jim Sickim if you want to live any more," and he shook him till his teeth rattled. The man knew that his game was up, and pleaded for mercy.

"Now, Sissy," said Sickim, "who's this man, and who are you?"

She whimpered between her sobs that he was her father, John Muggins, and she was Kitty Muggins.

"Ain't yer got no mother, Sissy?"

"No, sir," she whined, "an' he beat me 'cause I didn't stay to home."

Sickim held out at arm's length the snarling, growling object under discussion and frowned at him. Then he said to him:

"Aint yer got no respect for yer own young one, y' drunken fool. Ef it wasn't for this little one I'd learn yer somethin' you wouldn't forg!" And he punctuated his remarks with a shake or two.

"Now, Sissy—er—Kitty," said Sickim.

Meantime, yed haddan' m'le take a walk. Now, don't you cry any more."

With that he tightened his grip on Mr. Muggins's arm, and the two moved away in the darkness. When they suddenly reached the border of the Park stream, Muggins mumbled that he would like to know the rest of the programme.

"Yer face is kind of dirty-like," said Sickim, "and yer boots wouldn't look so bad if they was cleaned a bit. So I'm goin' to give yer a free bath before we go up to the station."

Then Sickim caught him by the coat collar, and doused him in the water until he began to get sober and weep pathetically. Which took about twelve minutes, for the water was quite chilly.

About twenty minutes later there was a great hurroo up at the police station.

Sickim had just marched in with a cute little blue-eyed girl in one hand and something that looked like a bundle of wet rags in the other, and now stood in the middle of the room with a smile on his face that was fully five inches long.

Then the sergeant inspected the bundle, and said: "Old Muggins again! Well, I'll be—this is the sixth offence, Muggins, me boy. I guess you had better go down on the Island for a couple of months and give this child a chance to grow. Lock him up, Sickim."

"That being the case," said Sickim, if the court has no objections, I'll take the young one round to my house. I got a sister that'll take good care of her."

Two weeks later Muggins died down at the Island. After that, Sickim moved away from his old neighborhood, for somehow or other he took a dislike to it. He has been transferred from Back Bay to a suburban town and made sergeant. If you ever meet him and mention this story, perhaps he may tell you what a fine cook and piano player Kitty Muggins is.—[Boston Cultivator.]

Two Miles a Minute by Rail.

Engineers are always, like the great Alexander, seeking new worlds to conquer. A. B. Behr, associate of the Institution of Civil Engineers, finds steam locomotion on the surface of this planet too slow at a more or less dangerous maximum of sixty miles an hour and he proposes to whirl the man of the twentieth century at the rate of two miles per minute. Under the title of "Lightning Express Railway Service" he publishes a full statement of his plans with all the necessary technical details. The motive power proposed is electricity and the method which is known as the Lartigue single-rail system which, in a rudimentary form, is now at work on a short line of nine miles and a half from Listowel to Ballybunion, in Ireland, and from Feus to Panisieres, in the department of the Lot, France. There are many advantages claimed for this idea, including the absolute impossibility of a train leaving the metals, its cheapness of construction as well as a speed that brings Edinburgh within three hours of London. The King of the Belgians has accepted the dedication of Mr. Behr's interesting little work.—[London Telegraph.]

The Stamp Collecting Hobby.

The expenses and eccentricities of the stamp collecting hobby were illustrated at the Portland, Me., postoffice the other day, in the receipt of a registered letter bearing a postage stamp of the four-dollar denomination. The fees due on the letter only called for ten cents postage, and the reason for using so costly a stamp was that it was cancelled. It is of much greater value to the collector than an uncancelled one, and he took this method of attaining his end. It is not an uncommon thing for a collector thus to use a rare and costly stamp on an ordinary letter, registering the letter as a safeguard against its going astray. [New York Sun.]

SOMEWHAT STRANGE.

ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS OF EVERYDAY LIFE.

Queer Facts and Thrilling Adventures which Show That Truth is Stranger Than Fiction.

EVERETT CHAUNCEY BUMPUS, of the freshman class at Harvard, has been totally blind since he was six years of age. He is a son of Judge E. C. Bumpus of Quincy, and is twenty years of age. He has been a student at the Perkins Institute for the Blind in Boston and at the Thayer Academy in Brattleboro, Vt., and took high rank in his class at the latter, where he prepared for college.

An English pickle dealer, described as a hearty, strong man, recently became the victim of a comic tale. He was at a tavern one evening, and laughed uproariously over a story told by one of the company. The laughter brought on a fit of convulsive coughing, in the course of which he fell to the floor, striking against a wooden bench. It was found that all his ribs on the right side were broken, and that one lung had been injured. He died, and the jury returned a verdict of "Death from suffocation."

A LARGE and curious white owl held captive on board the Red Star line steamer Pennsylvania, which recently arrived from Antwerp, creates a great deal of interest among all having any business on board the ship, and has become quite a pet among the sailors. The strange visitor came on board the Pennsylvania when about 1,400 miles off from the English coast. It flew into the rigging of the Pennsylvania early in the morning in an exhausted state, and had, no doubt, been carried off from the coast in a gale of wind.

The Bank of France is not entirely free from apprehension regarding the ability of the burglar, and guards itself in a very careful manner. Every day, when the money is put into the vaults in the cellar, masons are waiting, and at once wall up the doors with hydraulic mortar. Water is then turned on and kept running until the cellar is flooded. A burglar would thus have to work in a diving suit and break down a cement wall before he could even start to loot the vaults. When the officers arrive next morning the water is drawn off, the masonry is torn down and the vaults opened.

The people of Manitou, Col., were entertained by the spectacle of a man carrying a stone around a triangular track, letting it drop, and shouldering it again at every turn. The performer was a man who has a reputation for a disinclination to labor, and the incident was the outcome of a wall he was making about the hard times and his inability to get work. A citizen told him he would not work if he got a chance, and offered him fifty cents an hour as long as he would carry the stone. To the surprise of all he accepted the offer, and held out for five hours.

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