

IN MEMORIAM.



HE blue-eyed month, the dryad of the year, May, palpable, half-visible, is here! She lives, encompassed by her leafy screen. To peep with laughing eyes, herself unseen.

She lingers in the lanes or ferny wood Or where the meadows bloom in solitude. Or listens on the river's sedgey brink To the glad song of her own bobolink. Her swift foot pauses where the grasses wave Above some half-forgotten soldier's grave. She stoops above war-dimmed spots To seal for veterans with forget-me-nots, And writes with mosses on the crumbling stone Heroic names recalled by her alone.

O May, so prodigal in memories! Hast thou forgot the battles on the seas? Hast thou forgot the seamen that went down Without a pang to blanch the cheek of brown? No violet or primrose ever roasts Its fitted leaves upon these warrior-breasts. No friendly hand has decked their ocean grave Nor sorrow's tribute reached them through the wave.

Perchance the drifting seaweed drops a spray In the unrolled arm, then floats away; Perchance those crystal corridors below Are lighted by a faint and shifting glow Where passing birds, with soft and sheeny wings, Shed gleams of glory in their wanderings.

Not for their age alone the brave old ships Set thundering trumpets to their iron lips! They poured that awful eloquence of fire To right the wrong, and lift the right still higher.

The ocean or the shipyard claims the wrecks, And shadowy crews invest the rotting decks. A ghostly canvas flutters to the breeze. Hast thou no garlands, May, for such as these? Bring thy deep urn filled with a nation's tears: Sing thy sweet psalm sprung from our happier years.

And where a warship moulders on our shore, Worn like a grandiose horse long work is o'er, Yet on whose rough cheek long fingers stray, Give the grim graven the blossoms of to-day!

—Curtis May, in Youth's Companion.

The distant rumblings of war at last penetrated the little western village where they lived, and women's hearts failed them, knowing that the call for their loved ones would surely come. Then Drusilla awoke from the blissful dream in which she had indulged to the reality of a heartache and a startling consciousness of the fact which is either fraught with much joy or sorrow to a woman, viz., that her heart was no longer in her own keeping—irrevocably given to another. The call for men came even sooner than was anticipated, and Hugh was one of the first to offer himself. Notwithstanding her grief Drusilla would not have had it otherwise. Her ideal was a brave man, stalwart and fearless—but oh, the misery of it! Her father and young brother were likewise going; the one on the extreme limit of age permissible, and the other almost too young for service, but they were ready and willing, and the women were too loyal to their country to say them nay.

The last night before the men started, the two families of the Mannings and Dexters met at the latter's house for a farewell supper. Beneath the pleasant flow of genial neighborly chat there lay the deep current of turbulent thought and sad forebodings to which none would give voice lest the others should be disheartened. Drusilla waited on the table with a white face and a compressed look about her mouth, telling of a speechless grief harder to bear because it must not find voice.

It was an evening in June. The roses were in full bloom and filled the air with their sweetness. The scent of roses reminded Drusilla of that evening for many years after. Weary of the strain of keeping up appearances the girl went for a breath of air down the garden path between the rose bushes. A sense of desolation, too undefined for language, lay like a heavy burden on her heart. Hearing a footstep on the walk she hastily turned, dreading the interruption to these few stolen moments of freedom from restraint. A glance at the supposed intruder sufficed to bring the color to her white lips.

"What did you run away for, Drusilla?" said Hugh, cheerily. "Why, you surely are not crying because we go to fight our country's battles and, please God, to return with honor to our friends. You must exercise faith and courage, Drusilla, it is the only way to endure these separations."

"I cannot, Hugh. It is far easier for you to go than for us who remain to stay at home and weep," replied the girl, tearfully.

"How do you know that, Drusilla?"

There was no opportunity for further speech, the rest of the family joined them and the conversation became general. The summons came earlier than was expected in the morning and leave-takings were of necessity brief. Faith and courage—those two words burned themselves, as it were, into Drusilla's

very soul. First in her God and then in Hugh, and courage to take up boldly the duties of each long sad day, and to wait for the tidings of loved ones that might never come.

Some time after the departure of the men from Leigh Valley a distant relative visited the family and brought for Drusilla, as a present, a beautiful white dress. In an instant the thought occurred to her that it might serve as a wedding dress if Hugh should return and ask her to be his wife.

"He meant to do so that night, I am sure," she frequently said to herself. "Oh, if he had only spoken, it would have been easier to bear now."

Troubles came thickly to the Dexter family after the first year of absence. Occasionally letters from the field told of wounds and suffering, and finally they ceased altogether. From Hugh there were two or three communications to his family, and then he too was silent. At the close of the war the father and brother returned. Careful nursing restored the latter, but no loving care could bring health to the shattered constitution of the former, and in a few months he was laid to rest in a soldier's grave. Hugh's whereabouts was a mystery. He was heard of as wounded and a prisoner, and the opinion of his relatives was that he too had fallen a victim to the horrors of the war.

guardian to the little girls, Myrtle and Myra. "He has had about time to get here."

"Hush, Myra, don't you hear aunt crying? What can be the matter?" A strange stillness had fallen over the occupants of the sitting-room after that one loud sob of sorrow—or rather joy.

The little girls waited in vain for their aunt to come and finish their toilet, so they concluded to wait upon each other, as they usually did, and then go and see what ailed their aunt. This was soon executed, so eager were they to solve the mysterious coming of this stranger. On entering the room they found the G. A. R. man occupying a seat very near their aunt, who appeared to be in too happy a state of mind to warrant that sob. On seeing the children Drusilla held out her hand to Myrtle, who happened to be foremost, saying, with a smile in which there was a mingling of various emotions:

"These are poor Heber's children, Hugh. They are all that is left of my old home."

"This little lady's likeness to you was the means of my finding you, Drusilla, after my long search. I only intended remaining here a week, so that my chances were small of meeting with you."

A few words will suffice to explain Hugh's silence and long absence. He had written to Drusilla, asking her to be his wife, soon after wishing her good-by, but unfortunately the letter was lost. He was injured in the head during one of the first engagements. On his apparent recovery from the wound it was discovered that his memory was a blank, and without being exactly insane, he came very near it. For several years he continued in this condition. Finally, however, he recovered under skillful treatment, and then set on a quest for his loved ones. No one in his native village knew Drusilla's latest move, and the search seemed hopeless.

By the will of his father, who had died recently, he had come into considerable property, and, as he told Drusilla, there would be no further need for her to be a breadwinner.

"I am afraid, Hugh," she answered, with a loving smile, "that with so much happiness in prospect I shall be tempted to forget my daily prayer for faith and courage!"—Mrs. W. L. Sanders, in Chicago Standard.

HER OPINION OF IT.

A Curious Couple and the Congressman from Their District.

"Once when I was in one of my back counties," said a Tennessee congressman, "I stopped at a small hotel where I was an object of curiosity to a couple of natives, evidently man and wife. I was sitting out on a little porch in front of the house reading a newspaper, and they were watching me as if I were some kind of a new creation, but I tried to remain unconscious of it, behind my paper. Finally they began to talk."

"Who'd you reckon he is?" queried the woman in a half whisper. "Dunno; s'posin' I ax him?" he ventured, quite as curious as she was. "You don't," she said in a tone implying that she hoped he would, and he did, and I told him I was the congressman from that district. He went back to her smiling.

"Guess who?" he said. "Some kinder drummer or other," she replied, peeping at me cautiously. "The man shook his head. 'He ain't no preacher, I'm shore,' she said, 'but he might be a sewin' machine agent.' 'No, he ain't,' said the man, 'he's the congressman from this district; that's what he is.' 'Did he tell you so?' she asked, incredulously. 'In course.' 'My,' she exclaimed, 'I wouldn't a' thought it. It's bad enough to be one without goin' 'round tellin' everybody.'"

FOR SUNDAY READING.

UNDERSTOOD.

I know I do not trust Thee, Lord, enough. To-morrow, if the pathway grew too rough For my weak feet to travel, I should pause, And murmur that Thy face was hid because I can not see Thee in a darkened place. I need the sunshine to behold Thy face. I do not trust Thee, Lord. Then patient, mild, He answered lovingly: "I know it, child."

My heart is cold against Thee, then I cried, If Thou to-day wert walking by my side, If Thou and I were walking by the sea, And Thou shouldst whisper softly: "Follow me." Those words the centuries have found so sweet. I think that I should rise with laughing feet. My heart would feel no rapture quick and wild. Again He answered: "Yes, I know it, child."

I am not constant, Lord, I am not true. The things I would not are the things I do. I am so weary, there are clouds between, My words are harsher, wilder than I mean. Not over pastures smooth, but rock and stone, I walked to-day and I have weary grown. More softly, tenderly than angel's call, The Saviour answered: "Child, I know it all."

—Bertha G. Davis in New York Observer.

FOLLOWING CONSCIENCE.

It Needs Education and Then to Be Implicitly Obedient.

People are constantly met with showing an unlovely disposition who claim to be governed by conscience. Undoubtedly they speak the truth, but they do not understand that a conscience may be defective or warped. On the contrary, they hold their consciences to be infallible. Yet that conscience may be far from right is abundantly manifest. Paul was not more conscientious as a preacher than he was as a persecutor. He declares: "I verily thought with myself I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth," and so, many of us and when they were put to death he gave his voice against them. He declares, "he was exceeding mad" against the disciples, but it is evident that he was conscientious throughout. Many papal persecutors were conscientious when they committed Protestants to the flames. Doubtless the Puritans had a good conscience when they put witches to death. It need not excite surprise that some people now who are denunciatory of all who differ from them in the interpretation of Scripture, or in doctrine or conduct, are impeached by their consciences to say very severe things. Some of our churches have members whose consciences are a perpetual menace to the peace of their brethren. They know just what a minister should preach, and what methods of worship should be followed. They have discovered the exact line between the church and the world, and woe betide their fellow-members who dare to cross the boundaries they prescribe.

Many of these good people, however, could scarcely give a sensible reason for their convictions. They may not think it possible that they can be mistaken, but still their consciences may not have been properly educated. For conscience needs education. The conscience of a heathen is very different from that of a Christian, and Christians may differ in consciences almost as much as they differ in countenances. While conscience is the supreme standard of duty it needs enlightenment. There are requirements for its illumination and education which are indispensable. There must be love and desire for a knowledge of the right, and that sanctification of heart that will determine to follow the right.

Much of this knowledge must grow out of the Bible. If we are not convinced of its inspiration and authority we shall not heed its teaching. If, however, we make it the man of our counsel, we shall have great clearness of vision. With this, it may be hoped, we shall be emancipated from regard to mere tradition or fashion. The one thought will be of what is God's will. As the apostle expresses it: "Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto Him." If we possess Paul's spirit we shall hesitate to proscriber others, if their belief or conduct does not harmonize with ours, but we shall be careful to obey from the heart whatever we believe God's word teaches.

Conscience ought to be implicitly obeyed by all Christians. It is not for us to sit in judgment on others, but it is difficult to escape a conviction that, with many professed Christians, conscience has not the regal authority it ought to have. In these days when changes are so frequently made from one denomination to another, when so many extend their liberty to the widest latitude, and there seems so little evidence that they are valiant for the truth, it may at least be wise for all who name the name of Christ to consider whether they are giving conscience that loyal obedience which becomes a Christian.—Christian Inquirer.

TOO LATE.

A Worthy Incentive for Being Kind to Those About Us.

About twenty years ago a vicious, unruly boy was the terror of the community in a quiet town in Alabama. Neither parents nor teachers were able to control him. One day his father, a feeble old man, asked him to drive a stake in the garden to hold up a grapevine.

He refused, and when his father insisted the son struck him, uttering a fierce oath, and that night left the village. A few months later, in a neighboring state, he was arrested for burglary, convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for sixteen years.

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As the end of his term approached he wrote again and again to his father, telling his story and begging for forgiveness, promising, in agony of soul, when he was a free man, to live a different life. He received no answer, and when released did not seek his home, but became a wanderer.

One day he appeared in his native village, a middle-aged man with gray hair, and eyes long used to look upon trouble. Few of the people knew him. The home of his childhood was owned by strangers. His father had long been dead.

He made his way through the drizzling rain to his grave. Only God

knows the story of the man after that. Beneath the grass his father lay dead to his cries. He would never speak to say that he forgave him.

The next day the villagers found, driven into the ground at the head of the grave, a heavy stake, as for a tombstone, and written on it: "I will obey you, father." The man was gone, and never returned.

Once a year in Jerusalem, in the old days, we are told that the high priest lifted the curtain before the sanctuary and went in, hearing the prayers of the people for Divine forgiveness.

There is no curtain now between us and God. He always hears us; but the veil which hangs between us and our dead is never lifted. They do not say they forgive us, cry never so loudly. He is wise who gives to the loved ones at his side nothing but love and tenderness to carry in memory into the unending life that lies behind that dark curtain.—Youth's Companion.

TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF.

The Purifying Touch on Character of a Healthful Introspection.

After the plastic period of childhood and early youth there can be but little turning over of new leaves. The mold of character is shaped, growth or decadence progresses on certain fixed lines. Individual cases may occur, but they are rather rare. It is fruitful to see that the milestones of years show a certain rate of progress or a subtle retrogression and falling back. There is no such thing as standing still. The inward loss of moral power attended by outward prosperity is the saddest indication. It is useless to wait for any fixed day to repent of our sins. We are already in eternity, so far as they are concerned. If they are accidental or purely impulsive, we may assail ourselves at any time before God. If they are generic, the poisonous flowers of character, an external application will do no good. There must be thorough underground work, a digging out of the evil root, that no single day can accomplish. Well will it be if long years can bring it to pass! When we think how long it takes to exterminate a single bad habit—something venial, not criminal—it is surprising we should have faith in the resolves of a day.

Years are nothing. They melt silently into the great whole, as a drop in the ocean. It is the sense of continuity we need—the feeling of progression in life and time. If we can not change tendencies when once established, we can look into ourselves. Introspection is medicinal. Those who say look out, and not within, make a great mistake. There may be a healthy as well as a morbid looking inward. We must at times take "stock" of ourselves and find how our spiritual ledgers balance. The exercise is most wholesome, for if it does nothing else for us it will lead us to a great sense of humility. We can gaze back upon the poor accomplishment, the failure, the slip, the loss of moral footing, and the regret that comes from such introspection has a purifying touch. It is perhaps the most acceptable prayer to God, and, whenever it comes, it makes for us a new year.—Detroit Free Press.

RAM'S HORN BLASTS.

Some of the "Figs and Thistles" Plucked for Our Readers.

Virtue is most valuable when it doesn't pay. Backsliding often begins by looking back. Whenever God reigns in the heart His law is loved. In the arithmetic of Heaven nothing counts but love. God is dishonored whenever a Christian borrows trouble. The Lord's side is the side that is not afraid of any amount of sunlight. An oath means that the man who makes it loves the devil. The preacher whose religion is all in his head does not believe in revivals. Reformation without religion is locking the door and leaving the key on the outside. God sent weeds to be a standing reminder that He expects all men to work.

No Christian ought to go in any company where Christ would not be made welcome. The man who is willing to be religious in God's way will not find it hard to do it. One reason why some men swear, is because it does not take any courage or manliness to do it. One of the things for which Christ came was to tell us that this world is not a reliable storehouse. When man makes a religion he tries to make one that will let him stay mean and still respect himself. Do not measure your neighbor's character with your plumbline; it may be shorter than his depth.

There are some men who would rather hear themselves preach than to listen to an angel tuning his harp. It may be that God makes some things purely for ornament, but a Christian does not come under that head. The devil has a thousand ways of meeting eloquence, but he goes down every time before the power of love. No matter how much the wicked get they only get to lose, but whatever the righteous get they get to keep. Judas spent three years in following Christ with his feet, but never took one step toward Him with his heart. Every sin has a dagger in its hand, with which sooner or later it will strike, no matter how harmless it may look. Ministers who are more concerned about salary than souls, never get the Bible wide open for anybody when they preach. If no preaching were done outside of church buildings angels would stop hoping that the world would ever be brought to Christ. There is no use in praying for the conversion of sinners in the street while no preaching is being done to the sinners in the church. We don't have to open the Bible very wide to find that God has declared that no one can be a faithful follower of His Son and be a loser by it.



STEPS UP TO THE LEADER.

sound of their footsteps had died away in the distance. "I need them as much as ever. Will it ever cease to be a struggle to keep them up? So far I have had sustaining grace, but how about the long future?" "As thy day so shall thy strength be," came to her cheerily, and she resumed her sewing with peace, yes, and with a positive joy in her heart. Meanwhile the children were having a grand time. The weather was perfect, and the arrangements all which could be desired. The G. A. R. men were drawn up in line at the entrance of the cemetery while the children marched past them, Myrtle heading the procession. One of the men started violently on seeing her, and could hardly forbear breaking from the ranks and hastening to overtake her. When the graves were all decorated and the children were marching back to the conveyances at the cemetery gates, the man left his comrades and stepped up to the leader. In the few minutes intervening between their arrival and taking their seats in the carriages he contrived to ask her if her name was Dexter, or if she had relatives of that name? "Yes, Myra and I are called Dexter, and so is our aunt, Miss Drusilla. Do you know her?" asked the child, looking curiously at the gray-haired G. A. R. "Yes, that is, I used to. Where do you live?" "With Aunt Drusilla, in a small white house with green blinds, on Spencer street. Good-by, sir, I must get in now. Come, Myra!" On the children's arrival at home they found their aunt engaged with a customer, so that there was no chance to tell her of the afternoon's performance for quite a little while. Just as they were about to do so there was a ring at the doorbell, and as their aunt was assisting them to take off their finery neither of them could go to the door. "I wonder if it's that man?" said

Aunt Drusilla looked up from her sewing, gave a scarcely audible sigh and said nothing. Too much excited to notice this apparent lack of interest on the part of her aunt, the elder child continued the fascinating description of the event in which she hoped to play so prominent a part. In a breathless tone, wherein was just a suspicion of an undercurrent of pride, she proceeded eagerly: "And I am to walk first, teacher says—and we are to wear white dresses with bright sashes—it will be lovely." "It won't be quite so lovely if we haven't any white dresses to wear," interrupted her little sister Myra, who was of a practical turn of mind. Myrtle's face fell somewhat at this, and a moment or two of thoughtful silence followed. Quickly rallying, however, she turned to her aunt as to a person of inexhaustible resources, saying confidently: "Aunt Drusilla will fix us some, I know she will." "No you don't, Myrtle, Aunt Drusilla hasn't said she would." "You will, won't you, aunt?" said Myrtle, coaxingly. "You must wait until I think it over, children—you know, I am not made of money." As this was a somewhat common expression with Aunt Drusilla when extra drains were made on her pocket-book, and often resulted favorably, the little girls felt no serious misgivings with reference to their white dresses. Left once more to herself Drusilla continued her work with thoughts which wandered far from her present surroundings. Time had flown by, carrying with it one by one of her old associates, either on the matrimonial wave, or to the shore where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, and still she, Drusilla Dexter, remained with an uneventful past and an apparently joyless future. I said "uneventful" in that, perhaps I erred,—taking the general opinion of the few who thought they knew Drusilla's history from beginning to end as a criterion for the precise truth. The wise man has truly said: "Every heart knoweth its own bitterness and a stranger intermeddeth not with its joys," and he might have added—its own secret hopes. Some fifteen years before the date of my story, while in her father's home, Drusilla cherished, and fell asleep many a night to dream of, an ideal of a manly type. No one suspected it—naturally reserved, she said but little of what touched her in the tenderest spots. Hugh Manning, their neighbor's son, was a big boy when she first started for school. His was the friendly hand upon which she had relied in all her childish troubles, and out of the abundance of a large-hearted nature he never refused to help the shy little maiden whose thanks were often only an appreciative smile. Years passed in this way until Hugh was a man indeed and Drusilla a sweet-faced maiden. The neighborly companionship continued, and Drusilla cared for none other. To see him once in a few days, even, satisfied her.

sheriff that he was not certain of his having been removed. The robbery is...