

# Saint Mary's Beacon.

## MOSES AS A SCHOOLBOY.

Modern research and scholarship, especially the strides that have been made in deciphering the inscriptions of the monuments, point to a system of instruction, even in the time of Moses, which surprises us. Indeed, we could not believe it possible were the proof not overwhelming; and when we speak of lads preparing for the civil service examinations in the time of the Pharaohs we begin to think that some one is joking. But I make this assertion in sober earnest, about which there can be no doubt. Lads in those days prepared for the learned professions just as they do now, and some of the pictures are strongly suggestive of "crammers."

It would seem, too, that the noble art of self-defence was included in the athletics from the day Moses stood up to the boorish shepherds and vanquished them. Games of various kinds were indulged in, of which we have lost touch, but archery and wrestling stand out prominently in the list, and the illustrations of such are numerous.

The alphabet acquired which would generally be taught at home—probably by private tutors—the course of education could be determined by the choice of profession. To the educated classes there were the priesthood, the army and the civil service. These were the three great professions, and the subjects taught at the great centres of learning, like Heliopolis or Heropolis, would include religion, astronomy and astrology; magic and the use of incantations; medicine, anatomy, the use of amulets and charms; history; probably on extra language; engineering, mensuration, land surveying, construction, architecture, geometry; military exercises—all athletic sports were encouraged—arithmetic, said to have been revealed by Thot, and law. The civil service was, perhaps, the widest profession, as it included the posts in the King's household, the officers of taxes, and superintendents of public works. The chief butler and the chief baker in the time of Joseph would come under this head, and were probably men of refinement and education. There would also be under this head the record officer where a large number of men would be employed writing the national annals. The highest education of course, was demanded for admission to the priesthood. Indeed, the training never stopped, and embraced almost everything. The priesthood had the pick of the men. Certainly, next came the civil service. For the army the requirements were not severe, more regard being paid to the military athletic exercises. The priests were not only the ministers of religion, they were doctors and magicians, and probably lawyers.

A most desirable post was to get into the regal household, in immediate attendance upon the King. Magicians were specially favored, hence the diligent study of magic. Perhaps some youthful readers would offer no objection to such a subject being introduced into our public schools, and would regard it as fine fun to cause walking sticks to turn into serpents, and date trees to grow out of cricket caps! One wonders what Etonians were like; whether they were as mischievous and as boisterous as English lads; if so, what a time—the masters must have had, and what flogging there must have been.

Wonderful stories are told of the magicians. I mean, of course, the masters of the art—a position, I suppose, every lad who had a taste for that subject aspired to win. "Is it true," said Kheops to one of these sorcerers, "that thou canst replace a head that has been cut off? On his admission that he could do so, Pharaoh immediately proceeded to try his power to a test. "Bring me a prisoner, and let him be slain," commanded the King. The magician answered at this: "Nay, not a man, sire, my master; do not command that this sin should be committed; a fine animal will suffice." So a goose was brought, its head was cut off, and the body placed on the right side, and the head of the goose on the left side of the hall. He recited his incantation from the book of magic; and, lo! the goose began to hop forward, the head moved to meet the body, and when both united the goose began to cackle. The same process was gone through with a bull and a plican. Many similar stories are told.

Moses, as the protege and the adopted son of a princess, would have within reach the whole range of education which has been briefly described. His adopted mother, as a princess royal would have her own estate, and retinue of attendants. Probably she would be a patroness of one or more of the colleges, so the lad Moses would have every facility, which wealth and influence could give. There is the flash of genius, there is also the solidity of the scholar, in the man who made Israel a nation and the first fighting power of his age. No man in all the world's history has done so much as Moses. As statesman, soldier, lawyer, historian, poet, the story that fascinates us as children, retains its attraction and redoubles its force when we read it as men in the light of modern research. How much of his marvelous success is due to education we cannot estimate. I venture to say that the palm of being the greatest man in the world's history must be awarded to Moses, a public school lad of the time when the Pharaohs ruled in Egypt, before the first mud huts were built in the valley of the Tiber, and when this country of ours "was not."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

## Not the Same Girl.

The following anecdote has both a comical and a pathetic side. What a long time fifty years are in the life of a human being! And how far apart, how unlike in tastes, feelings, opinions and habits, men and women can become, who in childhood slept under the same roof, attended the same school, and dreamed of nothing but of being friends forever! A gentleman whose "courtly manners" were mentioned in all the newspapers when he died, a few years after this incident, fancied in his old age that he wished to see his boyhood friends, and most of all, the fair young girl whose love, long years before, he almost, but not quite, had dared to ask.

He forgot country manners, and called at half past eleven in the forenoon. He was asked to walk "right out into the kitchen," as there was no fire anywhere else. His early admiration stood before him, in a worn calico dress, no collar, and a wide and not faultlessly clean apron. Her half-combed, grizzly hair was tucked under a rusty black lace cap, trimmed with faded purple ribbon. She had no teeth, and a huge pair of silver-bowed spectacles were pushed upon her brown, wrinkled forehead!

Fifty-two years before they had parted with a kiss, and he had been intending to meet her with one, and thus bridge the chasm of years. But he changed his mind when through his gold-bowed glasses he took in the picture before him. Wiping her hands on her apron, she gave him a hearty handshake, and bade him "sit right down," adding that they were "killing hogs and trying up lard;" but if he would "stay to dinner," she would have a "fire put in the front room."

Of course he declined the invitation, and for his own comfort, as well as for her convenience, he determined to make his call short. Still, he must say something complimentary before leaving; but what could he say?

Just then the lard boiled over, and with a shrill cry to her daughter to "come quick," the woman jumped up and caught hold of the kettle. The smoke and perfume were in themselves far from agreeable; but they were grateful to the caller, as they gave him a chance for the desired compliment.

"Your step has lost none of its elasticity since the evenings we sauntered together on the banks of the R—," he said, "while this"—holding out his gold beaded cane—"is needed to support mine."

"Yes," answered the woman, "I'm spry as a kitten; and I have thought ever since you have been here, that I was glad enough time hadn't changed me as it has you."

TURNED DOWN—"I came to ask you for your daughter," said the young man, who has nothing but what he expects to earn, "but I can't express myself."

"Express yourself?" sneered the platocratic parent. "You don't even need to go by freight. Walking is expeditious enough in this case. Don't forget your hat."

"Well, are you going to get it?" was asked of the rural statesman just back from Washington, where he had been with a view to securing an appointive position.

"Don't think I am. That there Congressman of our'n was too darned polite to me."—*Detroit Free Press.*

NEARLY PLAYED OUT.—One Sunday not long ago the minister of a small country parish in Scotland had the misfortune to forget his sermon and did not discover his loss till he reached the church. The congregation being already assembled, he was in a sorry plight. Suddenly an idea struck him. He sent for John, the beadle, and instructed him to give out Psalm cxix (containing 176 verses). He hurried home for his sermon. On his journey back to the church he saw the faithful beadle standing at the church door, waving his arms and shouting at him. On reaching the door he exclaimed: "Are they singing yet, John?" "Aye, sir, replied John, they're at it yet, but they're chirping like sparrows."—*London Judy.*

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AND BLINKS LIVED.—"I say," asked Jenks, as he walked into Blinks' shop sample case in hand, "can a cowhide in a boot shop?" "Blinks was not at all slow." "No," he said, "but calfskin."—*Vanity Fair.*

AFTER THE SERVICE.—The wife: "The minister hit you pretty hard to day, John?" The husband: "I'm very glad you enjoyed the sermon, my dear."

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