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THE ELDER'S SERMON.

BY S. W. FOSS.

Our elder told us yesterday we had not learned to live. Until we learned how blessed 'tis to pardon and forgive. The dear, sweet, precious words he spoke like heavenly manna fell. The perfect peace they brought our hearts no human words can tell.

"Love begins millennial peace," he said; and, though my lips were dumb, I still kept shouting in my soul, "Amen, and let it come." "When men forgive all other men the year of jubilee." Will down upon the world," he said; I said, "So let it be."

"So love your neighbor as yourself," he then began again. And Silas Fitz, across the aisle, he shouted out, "Amen." What right had he to yell "Amen," the low-toned, meekly bowed? Who took my cow, my new milch cow, and locked her in the pound?

The low-down, raw-boned, homely crank, a lunk-head and a lout. Whose love and grace and heart and soul have all been rusted out—To sit there in the sanctuary and holler out "Amen."

If I could choke the rascal once he'd never shout again! One day his dog came by my house, I called the brute inside. Gave him a chunk of meat to eat and he crawled off and died. He just crawled off and died right then. Says I, "I'll let him see. No one-legged singleton like him can get the best of me."

But, O, that sermon—I would love to hear it preached again. About forgiveness, charity, and love of fellow-men. I should have felt as if I basked in heaven's especial smile. If that blamed villain, Silas Fitz, hadn't sat across the aisle.

—Yankee Blade.

FINN'S DISAPPEARANCE.

"Does any one know what has become of Derry Finn?"

The question was asked in the smoking-room of the Hellespont Club, where half a dozen men were gathered together an hour before dinner. "The last I heard of Finn," said I, "he had got a place of some sort under the Turkish Government—something in the postoffice, I think."

"I believe you are right," said a man on my left, "but he must have left the Sultan's service some time since. I made inquiries about two years ago, and the folks in Constantinople could tell me nothing about him. One day, they said, he failed to come to the office as usual, and he has been absent without leave ever since."

"Perhaps he's dead," said some one.

"Or he may have made his pile in some irregular way and gone off to California to enjoy it," suggested another.

"Well, I hope he has not come to grief," said the member who had started the subject; "for, though not overscrupulous, Finn was in many ways a good fellow, and a clever dog, too."

"Speak of—the devil!"—whispered one of the group, in an accent which had a little superstitious awe in it; for there, at the other end of the room Dermot Finn himself, large, good-natured and dissipated-looking as ever, loomed through the cloud of smoke.

A roar of welcomes, inquiries, and invitations to eat, drink, and smoke met him. He responded heartily, but parried inconvenient questions with a truly hibernian skill.

The dinner hour drew near and two or three members, of whom I was one, got up an impromptu feast in honor of the returned prodigal. The dinner was a great success.

Finn was the same harum-scarum, clever, impecunious, unscrupulous fellow we had known three years before, but his face bore traces of anxiety and suffering. By degrees his reticence wore off. I could see that his love of posing as a hero of adventure was struggling with his prudence, and I mentally backed the former impulse to win. I was right. Under the benign influence of whisky toddy and a first-rate cigar Derry consented to explain his long disappearance from the known world.

"You must know then, boys," he began, "that when I was fairly appointed sub-assistant inspector at the general postoffice at Constantinople I thought myself booked for a mighty good thing. The salary was—I forget how much, justres a month. But

what's the good of a liberal salary if it ain't paid? Can any of yez tell me that? So I was fairly discontented, and only hung on to the chance that some arrears of salary might be forthcoming, meaning to make a bolt of it the day after I was paid.

"Another point I didn't admire," continued Finn, "was the work. For one thing, I had to copy and translate letters addressed to suspected persons, which the Turkish Government had intercepted. They made no bones about, I assure you. They'd send me a bundle to overlook, and I would pass them as unimportant or take copies to be laid before the chief constable (as we should call him), or, on rare occasions, stop them altogether. I had a superior, of course; but he was so stupid and lazy that I was practically my own master.

"One day I found, among the rest, a bit of a note that fairly took away my breath. It was addressed to a merchant suspected of being in with the revolutionary party, who were always making a mess wherever they could, especially in Crete. An outsider might not have seen anything remarkable in the wording of the letter. I understood it, however, quickly enough, and I tell you it made me tremble all over.

"For this letter informed me that at 3 a. m. on a certain night, about three weeks off, a very large sum would be brought to the house of this conspirator fellow—Mustapha Bey was his name—to pay for arms and ammunition and generally help on the revolutionary cause. I reckoned up the sum a dozen times, and upon my word it came to over fifty thousand pounds.

"I took a copy of the letter on the quiet, slipped it into my pocket, and took it home to consider fully. You see, there were several points my conscience wasn't clear about. Was I to allow this to go on—allow these arms to be bought and used in stirring up an rebellion against a friendly power, an that power one I was in the service of at the time? Clearlv not. You all see that, I should think?"

Chorus of assent. "Ye might say, then, inform the authorities of the letter I had read. But that, I saw, would be worse. No one that ever knew Dermot Finn would say that he was the man to aid the heel of tyranny to trample into the mire the first tender shoots of liberty, springing from a stony soil, perhaps, yet—"

A subdued sound of applause checked the overflow of Finn's generous enthusiasm.

"To betray the friends of liberty," he continued, "was clearly impossible. There was only one other course open to me; so of course I took it. I considered the treasure was, in effect, derelict—you understand?—derelict."

"I took my measures accordingly—engaged a berth on a homeward-bound English steamer, and got the captain to promise to send a boat ashore for some contraband goods I said I wanted to take away with me. He was to get two hundred pounds for the job.

"The spot at which the gold was to be landed was several miles from Constantinople, and I took care to investigate the place well by daylight that I might be familiar with it in the dark. There was a half-ruined house about two hundred yards from the beach. There the treasure was to be deposited till it could be fetched away in casks.

"I set off about sunset, armed with a revolver and a dark-lantern—like a Guy Fawkes or a burglar, by the powers!—and a few bits of rope for the trussing of refractory prisoners.

"My chief fear was that the bullion would be carried away into the interior before my men appeared on the scene. But I was agreeably disappointed. The steamer's boat, manned by four stout English sailors, turned up by 2 a. m. I left the men in the boat, lay down among the rocks and waited.

"Precisely at 3 a light moved here and there on the beach. I drew cautiously nearer and watched the conspirators as they landed their boxes of gold and carried them up to the ruined house. You may be sure

I counted the men carefully, to see how many would be left on guard; and I was delighted to find that all the conspirators except one returned to the boat and made off. It was clear they expected the gold to be removed before sunrise, and I congratulated myself on my punctuality.

"The rogues—I mean the revolutionary beggars, you know—had not been gone ten minutes when I thought it time to begin operations. I took one of the sailors to help me to tie up the man left on guard and carry down the boxes, and made for the ruin.

"Once inside I cautiously drew the slide of my dark-lantern. As I'm a living sinner, the light fell on a half company of Turkish soldiers!

"I was so dumfounded that I could do nothing; but the sailor, who was a step or two behind, bolted, and I've no doubt he and his companions got clear away. As for me I was thrown down and my arms were tied behind me with my own bits of rope before you could count twenty.

"It was in vain that I explained I was no conspirator, but an English officer in the service of the porte. The Captain in command of the party only laughed at me. Then I took him aside and made a proposition to him. He was to let me go, and I would run down to the beach, hail the steamer's boat and make the sailors come back. Meantime, he was to give him ten gold pieces each to look for me on the road to Constantinople. Then he and I would carry the boxes of gold down to the boat, sail to England together and be fairly well off for the rest of our lives. Or we would toss for the whole of it.

"The Captain heard me out and then stroked his beard.

"Bismillah!" says he, "what dogs you Christians are!"

"Just so," says I; "but will you do it?"

"With that he called to a soldier to open one of the boxes. I thought he was going to help himself. When behold!—bricks and brown paper and straw. That was the cargo.

"It was an unholy plant, boys—a fraud, a heartless trick, from first to last, on the part of the unspeakable Turk. I suppose they wanted to see whether I would be fool enough to let them in for a good thing, without so much as crying halves; with the happy alternative that, if I didn't answer to the helm, they would save the arrears of salary they owed me. See?"

"Ay, you may laugh, boys; but it was no laughing matter for me. I was marched right off to a jail a long way up country; and I can tell you this—the worst slum in London is a palace an abode of purity, cleanliness, and strict religious principle compared to the place I lived for nearly two years. After a time the Governor of the prison employed me as a sort of secretary, and then it wasn't so bad; but, of course, I had no access to the mail bags."

"How did you get off, then?" queried the audience.

"One day," said Finn, "the sly old dog of a governor hinted to me that if I could find him a thousand pounds English money I would be set at liberty before long. I discovered afterward that he did this because he was going to give up his post and settle in Egypt; and he meant, no doubt, to return me as dead, knowing he would be far enough away before the fraud was discovered.

"The idea of writing to my poor father for a thousand pounds ransom for a fellow that was not worth a thousand pence at any time was not pleasant; but the confinement was pleasing killing me and—well, I did it. If any of you are disposed to blame me—"

"No, no," "Not at all," "By no means!" resounded on all sides. "Did they send the money?" asked one of the company.

"They did; but it arrived—"

"Too late?"

"Yes; the saints be praised! It was too late. After the letter was posted I asked the Governor would he put me on my parole till the money came?"

"Not he. Would do nothing of the kind."

"Nor give me some extra liberty—on parole, of course? Not he."

"Well, that put my back up. I set my wits to work, and a week later I was a free man. It took me six weeks to get to Constantinople, though; and then I had to sneak up to the house of the manager of the bank like a thief in the night.

"The money had just come, and you may be sure I had a friend to apply for it the moment the bank opened in the morning.

"Later in the day an agent of the Governor of the jail presented an order for the money which I had been forced to sign when I struck the bargain. He had come to the bank every day for a month, and if the cash had come a day or two earlier I must have lost it. But I scored there, anyhow, and brought the thousand safe home again.

"Now, can any one say, after hearing my experience, that the Turks are a civilized nation?"

"Certainly not, Derry," said we all.—London Graphic.

An Electric Devil.

When the United States warship Trenton visited Corea she carried into that harbor the first electrical installation ever seen there, and the first that the natives had ever heard of. Immediately after her arrival at the port the Coreans flocked to her sides in their sampans, and many of them were allowed on board. They expressed great surprise and wonder at the many new things they saw during their visit, and were delighted.

When night came, however, and the electric lights were set going, they were filled with astonishment and awe. They were shown the electric bells, annunciators, torpedoes, etc., and at once they believed the foreigners were in league with the devil. A native would be told to press a button, and a bell would be heard ringing at a distance, whereupon the whole company would rush to that part of the ship to see who was ringing it. Finding no one there, they would attribute the phenomenon to be an evidence that the evil spirit reigned over the vessel.

Some of the visitors made ineffectual attempts to prevent the ringing of the bell by grasping the wire tightly in their hands, hoping in that way to head off the evil one who was playing such freaks for their amusement. An electric primer, immersed in a bucket of water, was surrounded by half a dozen dirty denizens of the benighted land, while another native was told to push a button at a distance, whereupon the primer exploded, throwing water all over the surprised party, who were looking eagerly into the bucket.

Some incandescent lamps were lowered far down into the water, and being suddenly lighted, no one being near, the natives were filled with horror, and without stopping to look at the uncanny switchboard, which they regarded as an important part of the anatomy of the evil spirit, they hastily scrambled over the sides of the vessel and hurried away from the devil and the Trenton.

The Advantage of Erect Carriage.

A physician, writing on the subject of the benefits of cultivating an erect carriage, urges its special importance as a matter of health. A body bent forward by the shoulders and mid-spine causes compression of the vital organs, the true place at which to bend the body being the hips. Many people are ignorant of this, and instead of keeping the head erect and the shoulders well back, and bending forward, when necessary, from the hips, round their shoulders, crook their spine and crane their head and neck forward in a most ungainly manner, continuing this until, by force of habit, the position becomes natural.

The Scrub.

The scrub rises up in judgment against his owner, and utters a condemnation from which there is really no appeal. Every bone in his body and every hair in his staring coat proclaim: "Thou art the man who vainly expects figs from thistles and brambles."

RAILROADS' EARLY DAYS.

The Cars Were Lighted with Candles and Heated with Wood.

There is a vast difference between railroading now and what it was in ante-bellum days, said a veteran railroader the other day. It is a snap now to what it was in those days. Then every man had about three times as much work to do as now, and got about half as much pay for it. I began my career as water carrier on the Pennsylvania road in Ohio. My business was to carry water through the train to the passengers every twenty minutes, for in those days we didn't have water coolers and ice water in the cars.

Railroad tracks were built with stringers and old-time iron rails and frogs and switches. It was considered unsafe to travel over fifteen or eighteen miles an hour and the fastest passenger train never made over twenty miles an hour. Rules and regulations and time-cards differed considerably from those of the present day. The oldest conductor in the service always had the right of way of the track, and if his train was behind or disabled all other trains had to wait on his. Freight trains would wait thirty minutes for each other at passing or meeting points, and if neither showed up at the expiration of that time, they both lost the right of way of all trains of the same class. You see we had no telegraph stations then, and trains could not be moved and run by special orders as now. We used to do what was known as turning curves—that is, the flagman would go in front of the train around every curve and look out for another train, and when two trains would meet the one nearest to a switch would back to it and let the other one pass. Coal and coal oil were not used at all. The cars were lighted with candles and wood was burned on the engines and in the car stoves. The old-time train generally consisted of an engine and three coaches instead of eight or ten cars as now; and such a thing as a sleeping car was not known. We had no postal, express and baggage cars, but one coach was used as a mail, express and baggage car combined. The next coach was used as a smoking car and for colored passengers, and the seats were all wood instead of cushions. The third and last coach, known as the ladies' car, was the nicest of all, but not anything like the handsome and luxuriously furnished cars of the present time. The cushions on the seats were made of leather instead of the fine velvet and plush finished ones now in use. The funniest thing about the old-time trains was the engines, which were made with the old-time walking beams running up and down like a propeller, instead of cylinders, and every part of the engine was usually covered with brass. Old Commodore Vanderbilt of the Erie road, was the first man who did away with the brass on an engine, and as soon as he started it all other roads followed suit. Brass on the engines was not of any service except to make them look pretty. All the engines used to be named after the officers of the road and after the different cities and States, but they are numbered now.

Conductors and trainmen never wore uniforms in those days, and they had lots else to do besides helping ladies on and off the car and make mashes; but they had to work and work hard. A brakeman had to clean out all the cars, wash the windows, sweep and dust out, carry in the wood, make fires, get the train in order generally and do all the work preparatory to each trip.

Look what a change there is in the tickets of to-day and thirty years ago. At that time tickets were not punched, but the conductor would take them up, return them to the auditor's office, from which they would be distributed to the different stations sold from, and used again. There was no passes used then, but if anyone was entitled to a free ride the president or superintendent would come down to the train and tell the conductor to pass the party to their place of destination.

An Elephant Charging a Train.

It is not often that an elephant stoops to folly so extreme as did one near Oktwin, on the Rangoon-Mandazay Railway, the other day. A Rangoon correspondent tells us that lately an elephant, "not a very old one," after deliberately making an entrance for himself through the railway fence near Oktwin Station, proceeded along the foot of an embankment till a gangman's hut obliged him to make a slight detour up the bank and on to the line itself. Unfortunately the Mandalay train at that moment came up at full speed. The trespasser might have retreated down the embankment, but he evidently regarded the noise, flaring lamp, and vomit of sparks as the challenge of an enemy, and being a plucky young elephant, resolved to stay and fight it out.

Allowance must be made for his youth and inexperience, but it is much to be regretted that he allowed his combative instincts to rule his conduct. The action, as might be expected, was exceedingly brief.

The elephant received the engine's attack upon his head, and the next moment was hurled clear off the line and rolled down the embankment with his skull completely crushed in. The train, saved by its speed, passed on without injury.

Too Familiar.

"I wish you would not take advantage of the relationship seemingly implied in your name to be so familiar," said the hen to the hatchet.—Washington Star.

HISTORICAL.

HOMER.—The oldest known manuscript is part of the Iliad, found in Upper Egypt.

ORGANS.—The organ was invented by one Ctesibius, a barber of Alexandria, about 100 B. C.

PRINTS.—The earliest prints that are known are a set of the seven planets, in an almanac by way of frontispiece.

CHOIRS.—Prudentius, in the fourth century, set notes to the Romish breviary, and Flavianus established the first choir at Antioch.

MASONRY.—The Cyclopean masonry was not limited to Greece. Two fine specimens occur in Italy, at Ausidonia and Saturnia, towns anterior to Rome.

PERSEES.—The Persees, ancient fire-worshippers expelled from Persia, are the factors, capitalists, and leading merchants of Bombay, where there are 9,000.

LYRE.—The lyre was invented by Tasutus, and improved by Orpheus, Linus, and Thamyris. It had eleven strings, and was played on by a stick or the fingers.

HENRY VI.—The reign of Henry VI., 1422, if it can be called a reign, is generally reckoned to have ended after the battle of Towton, which was one of the most cruel and bloody of all the twelve wars of the Roses, and in which the Lancastrians were utterly defeated.

ROADS.—Turnpike roads were first established in the reign of Queen Anne. Till then all roads were repaired by the parishes. Turnpikes were so called from poles or bars swung on a staple, and turned either way when dues were paid.

RICHARD III.—A story is told in English history that at the overthrow of King Richard III., in 1484, John Howard, Duke of Norfolk, received a warning, which, however, he disregarded, against supporting the King. It was in two lines, written on the gate of the house where he lodged:

"Jack of Norfolk, be not too bold,
For Dickon, thy master, is bought and sold."

ART.—Some arts of former ages have been lost, as that of engraving on crystal stones and granite, practiced by the Ethiopians, Egyptians, etc., and the art of painting on glass, practiced in the monastic ages. Different directions, too, have been given to the arts, though each is perfect in its way. Chinese art, Japanese art, Hindoo art, are each different from European, which follows the Greek standard in sculpture, and the Italian in painting.

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