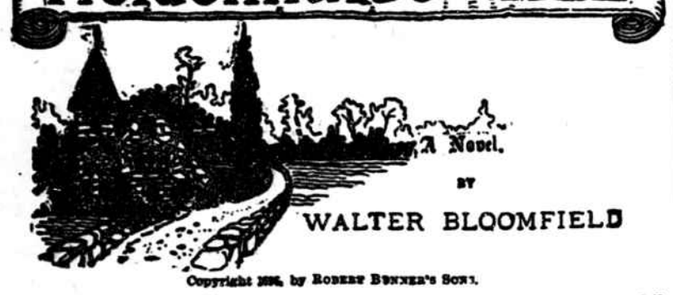
Holdenhurst Hall



A Novel.

BY

WALTER BLOOMFIELD

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CHAPTER X.

Continued.

When in a confidential mood (which was frequent with him), Signor Simona had informed me that he was owner of only half the vast business he conducted, his equal partner being one Mario Battista, a Venetian merchant who had been for many years located at Constantinople, where he was busied with affairs such as he was himself engaged with at Venice. It was the wish of Signor Simona to transmit a great treasure of money to his partner, and he was in doubt how to do so with assurance of its safety. On two previous occasions when he had essayed to send much smaller sums to his partner his captains and sailors had treacherously betrayed their trust, and gone off with the money to some small island in the Mediterranean, or to the northwest coast of Africa, and there become pirates, but goods, however valuable, he had never lost in this way. The occasion, I though, afforded an excellent opportunity for me to serve the interests of my host, and in so doing to reach Constantinople without expense to myself, and I was besides anxious to be gone from Venice that I might be rid of the amorous attentions of Anita, which I found much difficulty in resisting. Nevertheless, for her father's sake, and for no other reason, I spared her. It was in these circumstances that I acquainted Signor Simona with my intention to visit Constantinople, at the same time showing him my passports and my letter of introduction to Sir Thomas Roe, English Ambassador to the Porte, signed by King James's own hand. If he would fit out and man a frigatoon for Constantinople I would, I said, gladly make the voyage therein, the money being pecked and treated as my baggage, but none the less faithfully delivered by me to Signor Mario Battista immediately on my arrival in that city. My host was delighted with my offer, and that same day gave orders for a frigatoon to be made ready for sea, as I had suggested. He also caused ten chests to be made of stout ebony, lined with sheet lead and bound on the outside with bands of copper. Each chest was of about one cubic foot content, and into each Signor Simona packed with his own hands 25,000 gold sequins. When all the chests were filled they were fastened with screws, the copper bands made fast with metal studs, and the whole coated with a resinous black paint, to which later was added my name, in white characters, upon each.

When the design of my journey to Constantinople became known to Anita, she opposed it with all her wit, and exhibited a great wealth of artifice in her efforts to prevent it. She represented to her father how essential was a change of scene to one who, like himself, had lived long and worked hard in one place, and who was besides suffering from recent bereavement, from which she argued that he would do well in going to Constantinople, more especially as she was capable, with my protection, of taking charge of his house and affairs. But finding that the old man could not be persuaded to undertake so perilous a voyage, she changed her tactics, and after some honeyed compliments concerning my honor and probity endeavored to show that it was unfair to Signor Battista to entrust a great treasure in which he had a half interest to the custody of one who was entirely unknown to him, and whom he (Simona) himself had known but little more than a hundred days, and that his merchant wisdom would be more apparent in devising some other and more regular means of getting the money to Constantinople. This advice being also rejected, she feigned illness, kept to her bed and inflicted upon her aged father such fears for her life that he dispatched a special courier to Padua to fetch a learned leech of that city. Several days passed before the leech reached Venice, and when he came he made but a hasty and superficial examination of the patient. "Your daughter," said the leech to Signor Simona, "is suffering from an indeterminate languishment and may die at any time; the best thing for her is a prolonged cruise in the Mediterranean; by such means her life may be spared for many years." When Signor Simona acquainted me with what the leech had prescribed for his daughter I perceived at once what had happened. Clearly Signor Anita's courier had sped faster than her father's, and this was a prescription which had been first dictated by the patient to the prescriber. Matters fell out as I expected they would. A week before the frigatoon was ready to put to sea Signor Simona took me aside, and after profuse expressions of his affection for me, said he had resolved to entrust me not only with his money, but his daughter also, and straightway unfolded his desire that Signorina Anita should accompany me to Constantinople for the benefit of her health. I had expected as much, and was not surprised, though I heartily wished the Italian girl at the bottom of the sea. To have raised any objection to the proposal would have savored of an intent on my part to feloniously make off with a quarter of a million gold sequins, so I accepted the situation with the best grace I could command, at the same time resolving that so soon as I had delivered my charge to Signor Battista, I would send the subtle Anita back to Venice in her father's frigatoon, and pursue my travels as I had originally planned them in England.

CHAPTER XI.

ROGER THURMAN: HIS RECORD CONTINUED

November 14.—The frigatoon Orio Malipietro was a noble craft, well found and in all respects fit. I went with my worthy host to see her while she lay in the arsenal where three centuries before the fumes of boiling pitch had assailed the nostrils of the immortal Florentine. A swarm of workmen were busy about her, and the arrangements for the comfort of her two passengers surpassed anything of the kind I had seen or supposed possible. Two stately cabins had been specially constructed, one fore and one aft; they were divided by a spacious general cabin, and both richly furnished with all things needful for comfort. The crew consisted of seventeen men; that is to say, of Captain Jacopo Perugia—a fine man of sixty or thereabouts, who had served Signor Simona for forty years—and sixteen sailors. The fore cabin was assigned to me, the after cabin to Signorina Simona and her maid. In all there was accommodation for a score of souls. Signor Simona introduced Captain Perugia to me as a man of whose fidelity and good seamanship he had had frequent proofs, and assured me that he had voyaged so many times between Venice and Constantinople that he could safely navigate the Grecian archipelago without a chart; whereat I scrutinized narrowly the face and head of the captain thus appraised, and was satisfied that he deserved his master's testimonial.

Notwithstanding that its owner spared no expense the fitting out of the Orio Malipietro proceeded slower than I could have wished, and three weeks passed before she was ready for sea. And here again I perceived the hand of Signorina Anita, who had divers women at work making clothes which she desired not to depart without, but could not sooner get completed. Signor Simona was a shrewd man, well versed in the ways of his kind, yet in dealing with his daughter he was but as clay in the hands of the potter, so great is the blindness of a fond parent.

At last the day came when Captain Perugia reported to Signor Simona that his frigatoon lay ready to sail with the first favorable wind, that her cargo of merchandise was well and safely stored, and all his daughter's baggage aboard. It was then that Signor Simona ordered the ten chests of sequins to be placed upon the floor of my cabin, where I should have them constantly in sight, and gave me a sealed letter for delivery with the chests to Signor Mario Battista, of Constantinople. He commended his daughter to my care, and both our lives and fortunes to the protection of God in a manner so natural and affecting that but few persons could have witnessed the scene unmoved. As for Anita she wept abundantly, and showed either great filial devotion or consummate skill in acting. And the wind now serving, the Orio Malipietro stood out to sea.

It was with strange emotions, not unmixed with sadness, that I watched the spires and campaniles of Venice wax dimmer and yet more dim as the swelling sails of the Orio Malipietro bore us southeastward along the Adriatic, and I could not repress thoughts of all which had happened to me since I first set foot in that marvelous city, so appropriately called the bride of the sea. Anita noticed my abstraction, and with the admirable tact which seems to pertain only to feminine natures sought to dispel it by engaging me in conversation. Poor Anita! I pitied her greatly, for she had fixed her affections on one who had determined not to reciprocate them—on a man who had never so much as spoken to her of love, and for him she had abandoned her aged father (for whom I am sure she had a real affection), and had embarked on a perilous journey under circumstances the most damaging to her reputation. Had I never suffered such treatment as befel me at the hands of a woman in England I should probably have been content with this brave young Venetian lady for a wife, for I doubted not she was as faithful as she was persistent, but my English affair still rankled in my heart, and my oath never to regard any woman other than as one in whom no faith should be put was too recently registered to be lightly broken.

Our progress was extremely slow, and suffered several interruption, but I regretted it not, for the month was June, and the seas on which we sailed locked by the most beautiful lands in the world. Truly the ancients did well in calling the Mediterranean such; it was a compliment—not an error, as some have affirmed. Stoppages were made at Trieste, Fiume, Zara, Ragusa and other places, and sundry merchandise delivered to divers traders in those places who dealt in Venetian commodities. It was on the sixteenth day after our departure from Venice when we put off from Lemnos, and all had gone well with us in that time. Our journey being almost accomplished I sat in my cabin cogitating how I might with the least harshness return Anita to her father, for I had gathered from her discourse that she entertained the hope of my returning with her to Venice in the Orio Malipietro, and that, if disappointed in that expectation, she was prepared to accompany me for so long as I chose to travel in the dominions of the Great Turk. Now I was fully determined neither to do the one nor permit the other, but concerning the manner of acquainting Anita with my resolve I stood in pause. Weakness is a fatal thing, and I cursed my folly in leaving Venice in circumstances such as to involve me in this dilemma, and saw clearly, now that it was too late, that my proper course was to have plainly told Signor Simona that I had no feeling for his daughter other than that of common friendship, and to have left Venice as I had entered it—alone. There is no practical use in perceiving good courses after the occasions to which they apply are past, yet to recognize one's self as a fool is the first step towards wisdom, and this I did very fully, albeit with much chagrin.

Suddenly, and without any warning, my reverie was dispelled by the deep boom of a cannon, and the next minute Captain Perugia entered my cabin, very pale, but quite calm and self-possessed. "We are lost," said he; "no earthly power can save us, but we will die like men," and with great deliberation he made the sign of the cross upon his forehead, and for a few moments his lips moved as if he were speaking, but he uttered no sound. "Lost!" I echoed, for I was downright amazed; "how lost? The ship is sound, the weather fair and Venice at peace with every State." At this moment three terrific cannon charges rent the air. Captain Perugia shook his head sadly. "The Turk is as deceitful as Satan," said the captain; "thous speakest truly, yet stand matters as I have said. To the northward ride thirty-four of the frigates in the figure of a crescent, and presently they will enclose us, if they do not sooner sink us with their guns." "But Venice and the Porte are at peace," I reiterated. "What of that?" retorted the captain warmly; "it may be that the Admiral Pasha desires sport, or the Sultan needs Christian slaves, and no Venetian vessel within a hundred leagues of us to tell the tale. I have said it; the Turk is more deceitful than Satan, and you may prepare either for immediate death or to be chained to an oar in the galley of the infidel. Do as you will; I and my men elect to die." He turned and again ascended to the deck. Hastily snatching a brace of pistols from a locker I followed the captain up the companion-way, thinking of the remark of Signor Simona when he presented them to me, that I should certainly not need to use them while aboard the Orio Malipietro.

On reaching the deck I saw the formidable Turkish fleet, distant not more than half an English mile, and disposed as Captain Perugia had described. The captain himself I could nowhere see, but after I had stood a minute or so gazing in silent wonder at the grand spectacle before me, and wondering whether the Turks intended to do us any mischief or not, he approached me from the after-part of the vessel, leading Anita and her maid. Both the women appeared dazed with fright, but they obeyed the captain's orders quieter and with greater expedition than I should have expected of them. The stern of a frigatoon being large and square, it affords a better mark for an enemy's guns than any other part of the vessel, and in the captain's judgment it was safest for the women to be concealed in my cabin, situated in the fore-part; where they were accordingly placed with all haste, and the door barricaded on the outside with bales of merchandise. These arrangements being speedily made the captain addressed himself to me and his men as we stood in groups round about him helplessly gazing at the huge hulls of the Turkish vessels as they approached us: "Comrades and fellow-citizens!—the enemy of your State and of all Christendom is about to add to the many proofs of his treachery and cowardice. Behold, Venice and the Turks are at peace; ours is a small vessel, built for trade and not for war. And it seems that the tremendous sea strength of the Great Turk is to be debased to doing the work of a corsair's galley, we being the victims! We have but one brass cannon aboard, and that good for nothing but signalling, while the thirty-four Turks are well armed, and the lightest of them is three times as heavy as we. Escape is impossible, but though we number only eighteen men, we can avoid being taken alive. Let us fight with all our strength, and so die, remembering that life with the Turk is worse than many deaths."

Though second to none in valor it was but a feeble cheer with which the Venetian sailors greeted this speech. Had they been about to engage in a fair battle, none would have been more enthusiastic than they, but an execution excites no enthusiasm, especially in the victims, and such it seemed was to be the character of the coming encounter.

To be continued.

Checkmated.

"I never felt so cheap before in my life," declared the well-known business man. "I am a great stickler for honesty, and I simply will not have any one around me of whom I have the least suspicion; and when I find a man that I know I can trust I regard his honesty as a valuable asset and pay him accordingly. The result has been that I have gathered around me a force of employes of whom I am justly proud, from the janitor up to the cashier. The other day my old office boy left me, and I was obliged to hire a new one.

"Out of the numerous applicants I selected a bright and honest appearing boy and put him at work. Then the old question arose. Was he honest? I am old enough to realize that appearances are sometimes deceitful, and I resolved to test the boy in a mild way. So one night when I left for home I left a nickel prominently displayed upon my desk. After reaching home I felt sorry for what I had done. I realized that by my act I had been placing temptation in the boy's path, and that there was little to excuse my plan; so I was very much relieved the following morning to find the nickel where I had left it. Then I saw there was something there that I had not left, and that was a bit of paper upon which the money lay, and upon which was written in the new boy's hand the inscription: 'To be left until called for.' I've got a smart lad in that new boy. Too smart, I'm afraid."—Detroit Free Press.

In a Dublin paper some time since was a biographical notice of Robespierre, which concluded as follows: "This extraordinary man left no children behind him, except his brother, who was killed at the same time."—Glasgow Times.

Lady Sneerwell—"Have your daughters accomplished much in music?" Unfortunate Father—"Yes—the tenants below have moved."—Punch.

DR. CHAPMAN'S SERMON

A SUNDAY DISCOURSE BY THE NOTED PASTOR-EVANGELIST.

Subject: He Paid His Fare—The Bible is But a History of Every Human Life—In It We Find a Perfect Revelation of Ourselves—Sins Are Bought Dear.

New York City.—The following scholarly and readable sermon has been prepared for the press by the popular pastor-evangelist, the Rev. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman. The subject of the discourse is "He Paid His Fare," and it was preached from the text, "So he paid his fare." Jonah 1: 3.

Whatever else men may say about the Bible at least this is true that it contains the history of every human life, and when we see Jonah fleeing away from Joppa seeking to get to Tarshish instead of Nineveh, we have a vision of our own past experience, when God commanded and we disobeyed, and we believe the Bible not because it is an old book, for there are other old books, but we believe it because it speaks to our deepest and truest heart's experience. It is a perfect revelation to us of ourselves. The Mediterranean Sea is interesting.

First, because of its sunsets, and secondly because it is tideless, but also for the reason that it is visited by frequent storms which are beyond description. Eight hundred and sixty-two years before Christ the passengers' boat plied upon the Mediterranean Sea from port to port. One of these was pushed out from Joppa when an excited passenger hurried on board, looked into the faces of all he met as if he feared detection, paid his fare and went down into the bottom of the boat that he might get away from the sight of men. A terrific storm overtakes them as soon as they leave the port, but we have not so much to do with the storm as with the excited passenger. The boat had crossed and recrossed the sea many times in safety, but this is to be an exception, for the wind howls and the waves beat against the bark, but as I say we are not to study the storm but the frightened man in the vessel. The word of the Lord came to him to say, "Jonah, go to Nineveh," and instead of obeying he set sail for Tarshish. It was an expensive trip, and brought him neither pleasure or escape; is like the journeys that the most of us have made. The text must appeal to every one; you never committed a sin, you never have indulged in appetite, you certainly never have obtained a success and never have met with a defeat, but you have been obliged to pay a fare. There are but two lines to travel in this world; one is the line of duty performed and the other the line of duty disregarded.

There may be different modes of travel, but two great divisions; those who have known their duty and followed it, and on the other hand those who have shirked responsibility; the one company is bound to the Nineveh of duty done, the other for Tarshish of duty shirked, but in every case we pay a fare.

Men must pay a price for attainments in this world always. It is the price of exertion, of earnest, continual effort, of severe discipline.

Two men in Philadelphia years ago were workmen in the same shop. One of them used his noon hour to teach a little dog to play tricks, and the other occupied his time in perfecting an invention which has astonished the world and made him a millionaire many times over.

I.

There are some things that impress our minds as we study the text and read this story.

First, it is vain to try to defraud God. Men some times think they are succeeding, and they laugh at the puritanical ideas of the Christian, but you may sin month after month and apparently prosper, and at last when you least expect it you will be discovered. A man cleaning out a well on one of the farms in our State came across a skeleton the other day. He reported to the authorities, and a murderer guilty of sin twenty-five years ago was apprehended and sent to his punishment. Jonah found that that was true; that God could not be mocked. The storm was against him, the sailors against him, God Himself sought him out. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

Second, as soon as we go contrary to God everything is against us. God said, "Go to Nineveh," and Jonah started for Tarshish, and the sea roars, and the winds blow, and the ship rocks, and no man ever gets to Tarshish in comfort when God commands him to go to Nineveh. The moment you turn away from Him there is conflict, and you cannot hide from God either by day or by night. There is one text which ought to be written in letters of fire for all men to read, "Thou God seest me."

II.

If we could only make men understand the eternal cost of sin many a man would forsake sin. The word of God has stated plainly, "The wages of sin is death," and the cost is an infinite price. There is danger, however, of being deceived because sin flatters and fascinates. At the time of the Inquisition there was a punishment known as the Virgin's Kiss. The one to suffer was pushed forward and made to kiss the lips of the Virgin and instantly the arms of iron were about him and hidden daggers pressed their way to every part of his body. How like this is to our experiences in sin, and in this world sin does not pay, for conscience disturbs us and the remorse crushes us, while in the world to come there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. It is an awful thing to be without God here, but who can describe being without God there. It is true that no success was ever achieved without paying a price, but it is here where the devil comes in to say, "You can escape all this drudgery and take a cross cut to success." There is an innate desire in the human heart to get the most for the least effort, and he takes advantage of this.

Let me give you an illustration of a young man of thirty years of age who has a work to do and a great end to attain, but he must have a long ministry of agony and suffering and conflict. The devil meets him to say, "All these things will I give you if you will fall down and worship me," and he might in an instant have had worldly power, but he had the courage to say, "Get thee behind me, Satan." With the temptations that come to all of us at times, we want success; he promises it; we seek happiness; he deceives us when he says that he can give it us; we are after peace and he would lead us to think that he can bestow it upon us, but let it be remembered that there is a law which always holds, that no man has real success in this world without paying the price for it, and if we yield in the least to Satan in the matter of an impure thought, an unholy occupation, a sinful alliance, instead of paying the price for success we are paying it for failure. "May it please the court," said a young man who was asked how he came to sin, "I had a good mother and a good father, but bad company has been my ruin." No man can ever be a Christian if he holds on to one sinful alliance, or keeps step with one sinful companion.

III.

Let it be remembered, therefore, that you will be obliged to pay first for every sin indulged. Look back over your past life, the youth you have wasted, the opportunities you have lost, the strength that has gone, you will have to pay for.

How many times we have heard men say, "If I could only go back to the days of my youth," but you cannot, they are gone, and although sins may be pardoned manhood is affected, character weakened, the soul scarred; that is the price of the sins of our youth. "I would give my right hand," said a distinguished man in Detroit, "if I could forget the sins of my youth, and sacrifice my left hand and my eyes if I could put away the sinful stories of my boyhood's days.

Second, for the habits of indulgence we shall be obliged to pay. We wake up at forty years in the midst of a busy world, every man is busy about us, and before we can seize an opportunity it is gone; before we can take advantage of blessing it is away, and habits of indulgence to a greater or less degree will cling to you till death. You may have gone through the worst forms of sin, and God will forgive you, but you are marked.

I once said to a friend of mine as I was trying to help one who has been a drunkard, "I often wish that I had felt the pangs and sufferings of intemperate men that I might better sympathize with men," and I shall never forget his face; it grew deathly white, and the tears ran down his cheeks as he said, "Never say it again, for if I could only forget I would be perfectly happy, but while it is true that we never forget, God does, for He has said, 'I will remember your transgressions no more forever,' and in the Old Testament has declared that "our sins shall not be mentioned against us in that day."

Third, we shall have to pay for every warning given. After Jonah was rescued and entered Nineveh he cried aloud: "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown," but God has been better to you than that. They had one appeal, you have had fifty; they had one warning, you have had a thousand; they had forty days, you have had forty years. Sometimes the warning has come in the providences of God, sometimes in the sickness of the night when the very ticking of the clock was an invitation, and we shall have to pay for consciences seared and hearts burdened, and we shall be obliged to go out into the world to come absolutely shorn of excuses. It is not necessary to speak of big sins. Dr. Talmage has said, however, that there are five acts in the rum traffic.

ACT THE FIRST.

A man starting from home for college, his parents weeping, his sister almost with heart breaking, and as he leaves the house they stand in the doorway of the old home to wave him farewell until he is over the hill and gone.

ACT THE SECOND.

The marriage altar and the church filled with music and two hearts beating as one and a new home established.

ACT THE THIRD.

Midnight and a woman waiting in a home of poverty for a husband who does not come home, and when he comes is intoxicated.

ACT THE FOURTH.

Three graves in a dark place, the grave of a child who died of neglect, the grave of a woman who died of a broken heart, the grave of a man who has killed himself.

ACT THE FIFTH.

A distressed soul's entry, no music, no life, the blackness of darkness everywhere.

V.

Suppose we go on in the way in which we started. Oh, what an infinite cost, ignoring conscience and the prayers of our friends and the pleading of the Spirit.

A young boy sent away from New York to a Western city provided with a new suit of clothes and a new hat, was seen tearing the lining out of his old hat, and when asked why he was doing so said, "It was a piece of my mother's dress, and I cannot go without it. She loves me, and it is all I have of hers," but it is not all that you have of your mother; you have the memory of her sweet life and the vision of her tears of concern and the sad look of her face as she said, "I beseech you, do not go astray," and you promised you would not, and you have. Manhood will suffer if you go on.

Here is a graduating scene in a Western college, and at the feet of the leader of the class the flowers are thrown, and as he descends from the platform the old college hall rings with cheers and people rise and congratulate the aged father and the loving mother on having such a boy, and here is a picture of a prison cell and the inmate's hair is matted and his eyes are bruised, and the picture of the second is the picture of the first after the transforming power of sin. Oh, that we might turn to God to-day, for we may wait until it is too late.

The Rebecca Goddard years ago came almost within sight of the New York harbor and was then caught in the ice and thrown back again at sea, drifted for days at the mercy of the waves and finally was lost, and yet she was within sight of the harbor. God pity us if we should be in sight of home to-night and after all be lost.

Cheerful Living.

Cheerful living is a matter for every day's experience. It is not a series of lightning flashes, each succeeded by a gloom of dark; it is a steady glow such as the lamp continually fed and tended makes because it is a lamp. It is and must be ever in this troubled life the great attractive quality for disappointed and despairing men. To proclaim Christ's invitation with good words is much, but to be ourselves Christ's invitation by a life of constant cheerfulness is at once the noblest and the commonest of all earth's opportunities. Since cheerful living is a light, the time of darkness is its opportunity of shining. To be happy in life's happy days is as easy as breathing. The opportunity of help comes in with trouble, sorrow, loss. And it comes most perhaps with petty troubles, cares, anxieties, vexations. To be cheerful, when it is easy to be vexed or sad, is to win a victory for Christ and hold a light for men. One lamp in the city's glow counts little, but how men in the darkness of the wood follow one lamp that shows the way toward home and peace!—Congregationalist.

Let the Master Enter.

There is an interesting legend of a strange instrument, which hung on an old castle wall. No one knew its use. Its strings were broken and covered with dust. Those who saw it wondered what it was, and how it had been used. Then, one day, a stranger came to the castle gate and entered the hall. His eye saw the dark object on the wall, and taking it down, he reverently brushed the dust from its sides and tenderly reset its broken strings. Then chords long silent woke beneath his touch, and all hearts were strangely thrilled as he played. It was the master, long absent, who had returned to his own.

Some one, commenting on this legendary incident, says: "In every human soul there hangs a marvelous harp, dust covered, with strings broken, while yet the Master's hand has not found it. Open your heart every morning to Christ. Let Him enter and repair the strings which sin has broken, and sweep them with His skilful fingers, and you will go out to sing, through all the day. Only when the song of God's love is singing in our hearts are we ready for the day."

Liking What You Have.

It is not always easy to be content with one's surroundings or possessions; nor is it always necessary. To be content with such things as we have is not intended to make us lazy and indifferent to the things we ought to strive for, but to keep us peaceful in the place God has evidently placed us. Much unhappiness is caused by a fretful discontent, which is a condition of mind different from a noble discontent that seeks to rise higher and grow stronger both in manhood and possession—for the sake of better service. But there is a wholesome bit of philosophy which may serve us in the hour of foolish longing after things clearly impossible to us: "If you haven't what you like, try to like what you have." There is the secret of really getting "what you like," and it is also the secret of contentment.—Angelus.

Faith's Leading.

God's ways are full of goodness wherever we look. Faith looks up and sees God's goodness above us, hope looks ahead and sees God's goodness in the ways before us. It is as when an astronomer makes an observation on a star with an equatorial telescope; he starts out looking directly up into the zenith of the sky, but as the night moves on, and the star with it, and the telescope ever following the star, he finds himself looking straight ahead toward the distant horizon. So faith and hope are two visions of the same brightness—one above us and one before us. If we follow faith far enough it will surely lead us on to hope. If we dwell with faith we shall find ourselves living in hope. This we say unto you, therefore, that the believing man shall despair not at all.

Way to Success.

The men whom I have seen succeed best in life have always been cheerful and hopeful men who went about their business with a smile on their faces, and took the changes and chances of their mortal life like men facing rough and smooth alike as it came, and so found the truth of the old proverb, that "good times and bad times and all times pass over."—Charles Kingsley.

God's Creatorship.

Two important things grow out of the fact of God's creatorship. First, interest in the things created, upon the part of the creator. Second, responsibility for the things created.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMENTS FOR AUGUST 24.

Subject: Report of the Spies, Num. xiii., 1-3, and xiii., 25 to xiv., 4—Golden Text, Psa. xl., 4—Memory Verses, 30-33—Commentary on the Day's Lesson.

Explanatory. "Everything was now ready for taking possession of Canaan, provided the people had the necessary faith and courage. Accordingly Moses commanded them in the name of Jehovah (Deut. 1: 20, 21) to go up and take possession of the land. They only needed to trust in God and go forward, and in less than two years from leaving Egypt the land would have been theirs. The God who had delivered them with a mighty hand, who had made a path through the sea, who had rained bread from heaven, and brought water from a rock, and spoken from Sinai and entered into covenant with them, and was leading them with His visible presence—this God bade them go up and take possession of the land of promise. They should have trusted and obeyed."

2. "Send thou men." The people were afraid to go forward, and had asked Moses to send spies to search out the land. Deut. 1: 22. Although it would have been better for them to have had faith in God and to have at once entered upon their promised possessions, yet in order to satisfy the people the Lord ordered Moses to send the spies. "Of every tribe—a man." Moses selected twelve leading men, "every one a prince" (R. V.), in order that the best possible results might be realized. "The object of the expedition was (1) to learn what were the attractions of the country, (2) to discover the difficulties in the way of taking possession, (3) to find out the best way of reaching the country, (4) to learn what preparations it was necessary to make."

4-24. In verses 4-15 we have the names of the spies. In verses 17-20 Moses gives them special directions. They were to travel the whole length of the land to the Lebanon mountain region, and find out all about the land and the people, and to bring back some of the fruit of the land. In verses 23 and 24 we have a description of the fruit they brought back with them.

25. "Returned—after forty days." Forty days were sufficient for a journey of 250 miles and the return. The spies could rest six Sabbaths and travel 500 miles, going at the rate of less than fifteen miles a day. It is not probable that they went in a body, but singly or by twos.

26. "To Kadesh." Kadesh means holy. "Shewed them the fruit." They had brought back grapes, pomegranates and figs. The bunch of grapes was very large. V. 23.

27. "Floweth with milk and honey." This was a poetical description of a country rich in pasturage and produce. Thus far the reports of the spies agree. They all commend the richness and fruitfulness of the soil.

28. "Nevertheless." The report was given publicly and it was artfully arranged to begin with commendations, in order that their subsequent slanders might receive credit. This would introduce the godless majority report; there is in it no reference to Jehovah. It is an infidel document. "Children of Anak." "Long necked, famous giants, descendants from Arba, founder of the city of Hebron. The spies were terrified at sight of them."

29. "The Amalekites," etc. These people had already attacked the Israelites once. Ex. 17: 8-16. The Hittites were a strong, warlike people. The Jebusites held the region about Jerusalem. The Amorites were mountaineers.

30. "Caleb." The spy from the tribe of Judah. He begins the minority report with an unwavering trust in God. Joshua also joined with him. 14: 6, 30. "Stilled the people." A bitter wail of despair was going up from the vast throng of people.

31. "We be not able." This had not been asserted before. The ten spies are increasing in their opposition.

32. "Evil report—eateth up." How unbelief grows. At first it was only a suggestion (vs. 28, 29), then it became an assertion (v. 31), then it assumed the form of an "evil report." The spies cannot mean that the land was barren and the inhabitants dying of famine, for the fruit they brought with them and their first report would contradict this, but it has been thought that there was a pestilence in the land at this time, and also that the spies had learned that the people were constantly engaged in wars to maintain their independence.

33. "Sons of Anak." Anak literally signified long necked. The sons of Anak were a race of giants in strength. It seems to be a fact that in primitive times there were men of great stature.

1. "All the congregation." There were a few noble exceptions, however. "Wept that night." These loud wailings, resounding by night from tent to tent and from tribe to tribe, spread the contagious despondency through the whole camp. They were surrounded by the dark and chilling clouds of unbelief, and were occupied with themselves and their difficulties instead of with God and His resources. All this grief was on account of imaginary troubles.

2, 3. "Better—to return." They murmured against Moses and Aaron and wished to return to their former life of servitude. "Their wish to return to the groanings, burdens, tasks and insults of the brick yards of Egypt, from which a pitying Jehovah had led them forth was indicative of a base ingratitude and a servility of spirit exceedingly offensive."

4. "Make a captain." They repudiated Moses and Aaron and Jehovah. According to Nehemiah 9: 17 they actually appointed a captain to lead them back to the taskmaster's lash in Egypt. Moses and Aaron then fell on their faces before the people and Joshua and Caleb rent their clothes as a sign of their great grief, and made a strong appeal to the congregation in favor of taking the land at once. But the people like a frenzied mob tried to stone them to death, and were prevented from so doing only by the glory of the Lord shining forth from the tabernacle. "The majesty of Jehovah flashed forth suddenly to strike the people with terror in their rebellion, and to deter them from their wicked design." God now threatened the nation with destruction, and they would have perished but for the prayer of Moses. The ten spies were smitten with the plague and died. Every person over twenty years of age, except the two faithful spies, was to die before the nation entered Canaan. As a reward for their faithfulness Caleb and Joshua were permitted to enter the promised land. Caleb received Hebron as his possession, the very place he searched as a spy, where were the best fruits and the strongest enemies. Joshua had his name changed from Oshea to Joshua, which signifies savior, and was also honored by being chosen as Moses' successor to lead the people into Canaan. Thus does God reward the faithful and punish the wicked.

Electric Time Signals.

A new and interesting method of giving time signals by electric flashes has just been put in operation at the Harvard Observatory. By a relay connected with the Observatory clock interruptions are made every two seconds in a bank of electric lights, with a pause at the end of each minute, and a longer pause at the end of each five minutes, during which time the lights burn steadily. That is to say the time signals formerly given by beats are repeated by electric lights. The flashes are visible for a distance of ten miles, or five times as far as the time ball could be seen by the unaided eye.

Will Study Palaeolithic Man.

Professor William H. Holmes, curator of anthropology of the National Museum, has gone to Ohio and Indiana to investigate the reported discovery of remains and evidences of palaeolithic man at points along the Ohio Valley. He will also inspect some of the mounds of that region and in connection therewith a series of objects found in places of this character during the past spring and winter.

Gate of Solomon's Temple Found.

Dr. Selim, a professor at the Vienna University, who is exploring Palestine in behalf of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, has discovered the walls and the gateway of the ancient temple of Solomon in the neighborhood of Janohah, in Samaria.

GOD'S MESSAGE TO MAN

READING FOR THE QUIET HOUR WHEN THE SOUL INVITES ITSELF.

Poem: Take Time—A Christian Young Man Who Was Not Ashamed to Make a Public Profession of His Belief—Led His Tormentor to Jesus.

Take time to think:
Thought oft will save thee from the snare,
Bring thee to cooling streams and bowers,
Spare thee from nursing needless care,
Surround thee with defensive towers;
Yield thee the harvest of content,
Lift thee from dust to starry ways,
Discover comfort heaven-sent
In thy most dark and cheerless days,
Therefore, take time to think.

Take time to pray:
For when thou pray'st the vision's cleared,
The voice is toned, the will's subdued,
The dear are to thee more endeared,
And the soul's failing strength renewed.
In prayer the purest words are spoken,
The mind receives heaven's holy light,
The heart is given the Spirit's token,
The hands are charged with wisdom's might.
Therefore, take time to pray.

Take time to praise:
Praise is the witness that you see,
Or hear, or feel, or understand,
Or trust where there is mystery
About the workings of His hand,
It is thy child-attempt to prove
Thy kinship with the hosts above,
Who, as they in God's presence move,
Praise Him for His exhaustless love,
Therefore, take time to praise.

Take time to work:
Know what a privilege it is
To work with God, to have thy hand
Engaged for Him thy energies
Developing 'neath His command,
To share the stores of grace and truth,
Which to His faithful ones are given;
In service to maintain thy youth,
And hear the Lord's "Well done!" in heaven.
Therefore, take time to work.

How Far to Heaven?

A seminary student, whose custom it was to go into the darkest parts of Chicago to rescue the fallen and point sinners to Christ was returning from his mission one night to his room at the McCormick Seminary. The hour was late, about 11.30 o'clock, and on the street car which was bearing him to his destination was a party of people, who had just come from the theatre. They were gayly dressed and were talking lightly about the evening's enjoyment. The car was crowded.

Presently, in walked two shabbily dressed women, each carrying a large bundle underneath her arm, the contents of which were partly visible and which revealed the fact that they were the recipients of the benefits of some charitable institution. They looked tired and worn and haggard. The young man from the seminary arose from his seat and invited them to take it. With a look of gratitude and a modest thanks the two women squeezed into the small space previously occupied by the one man.

He stood in the aisle steadying himself by means of the strap which hung from the top of the car. With one hand he held on to it, while in the other he held an open testament from which he was reading. Presently, a finely-dressed, worldly-looking young man said to him in a most sarcastic tone, "O! then you're a Christian, are you?" "Yes, sir, I am," came the reply. "Well, then," said the impertinent youth, "perhaps you can tell us just how far it is from the top of your head to heaven?" "Yes," said the God-fearing man; "it is only a step," and with that he fell upon his knees in the middle of the car. A hush fell over the entire crowd and all seemed deeply moved.

Before long they reached the street at which the student was to leave the car, and he got off and walked to the seminary and from thence to his room in the dormitory.

The next morning as the students were all rushing to their respective classes many of them noticed a young man, a stranger to the rest, standing in one of the doorways eagerly scanning the face of each passer-by. At length came the young student of the night before and the stranger stepped forward and greeted him. He asked, "Were you not on the Clark street car last night about 11.30 o'clock, and do you not remember of a young man asking you how far it was from the top of your head to heaven, and your answer, that it was only a step? Well, I was that young man and I have come to find Jesus."

The seminary student was excused from his classes for that day and the young man was invited up to his room and was there led to the Savior. It was a wonderful example of courage and humility and it won a soul for Christ.—Ram's Horn.

Christ the Source of Strength.

Dr. W. Robertson Nicoll, editor of the British Weekly of London, believes in an all sufficient, all conquering Christ. He says:

"Christ did not come so much to give a theory of life as to give life itself. He came to be Himself the Centre for the affections of humanity, the Foundation for its faith, the Conquerer of its mortality, the Opener of the eternal gates. He was the Resurrection and the Life, not the mere teacher. He came not to develop the race, but to recreate it.

"By Christ's incarnation, by the triumph of His perfect righteousness over the power of evil, by His resurrection and His ascension. He created a new order into which we may enter, an order which exists independent of our will. Entering into that order we have an immediate, personal, and direct knowledge of the divine object of faith; entering that order we receive the beginnings of that communion which will endure through the eternal ages of the life of Christ in God."

Making or Marring the Past.

We make or mar the past. A son takes his father's or his grandfather's name, and that name, whatever it has been in the past, is going to be a different thing by what that son shall make it. It may have been high in an honor which shall be almost obliterated in its degradation. It may have been wholly unknown, and become widely, honorably mentioned. A nation takes the heritage of the pilgrim's travels and trials, and what that nation goes on to become shapes in a measure the reputation of the founders. They become greater and more worthy as it becomes greater and more worthy. So we of the present day hold in our hands, not only our own welfare and reputation, and the shaping of our future, but the reputation of those who went before us, whose works we pass on to their final fulfillment or their final failure.—Sunday-School Times.

The Agency of Prayer.

Dr. Theodore L. Culyer, in speaking of prayer as the agency through which he performs his many duties and derives his greatest help, says: "Prayer is the conduit-pipe between my soul and heaven. It is the outlet upward for gratitude, and yearning desires for blessing; it is the inlet through which the supplies of grace pour downward into the heart."

Sacrifices.

God literally reigned over Israel. At the door of the tabernacle in the wilderness sacrifices were offered unto God, and He answered from heaven—burnt offerings—yet God was seeking a broken heart.

Accidents of a Quarter Year.

The Interstate Commerce Commission has issued a bulletin on collisions and derailments of trains and casualties to persons for the three months ending March 31, 1902. According to this showing the number of persons killed in train accidents was 212 and of injured 2111. Accidents of other kinds, including those sustained by employes while at work and by passengers in getting on or off cars, brings the total number up to 813 killed and 2958 injured. During this period there were 1220 collisions and 84 derailments affected passenger trains, resulting in 41 fatal accidents to passengers and 826 injured. The damage to cars, engines and roadway by these accidents amounted to $1,914,258.