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The Focus

Junior Number

May, 1915

State Normal School
Farmville, Virginia



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THE FOCUS

VOL. V

FARMVILLE, VA., MAY, 1915

NO. 4

Sunbeams

G. M. W.

THE MORNING dawns; the hevy clouds
Roll back before the king of day;
The darkness scatters; o'er all the earth
The shadoes haste away.

The rising sun with glorius light
Looks down and smiles; each ray
Sent from that burning hart of fire
Makes light some traveler's way.

Each has some mission to perform,
Each one its God-lent light
Must use to find a weary soul
And make his darkness bright.

Experience*Emma White*

THINK thou knoest, little one,
What the path of life may be?
Think thou knoest thoughts to which
None but age hath access free?

Youth thinketh itself very wise,
But too soon 'twil sadly find
That its wisdom quickly dies;
For the road is ever lined

With thorns that cut and bleed
Youth's feet and rufly tear
Its hands; but youth wil read
Wisdom and Experience there.

'Twil find both joy and pain
From experience freely given;
For til we kno both joy and pain
No man is fit for heaven.

The Story of the Dandelion

Mabel Justice

IT WAS A BRIGHT sunny morning in June. "Tweet! tweet! tweet!" sang the little birds in the big oak trees, "How beautiful is the world! How good it is to be alive!"

In the dewy, sparkling garden each flower lifted its beautiful head, refreshed after a long night of rest. The sunflower had already fixed her wistful gaze upon the shining face of her god; the morning glory, which overran the fence, was unfurling her petals. "Yes, it is good to be alive" said a beautiful crimson rose in answer to the song of the birds, "especially when one is so beautiful as I." And she gazed proudly around the garden, for she was in truth the loveliest flower to be seen.

"Yes," answered all the flowers together, "it is good to be alive!"

Only the dandelion, which grew beneath the bush of the crimson rose, said nothing, and the rose looking down for an instant heard a faint sigh.

"What is the matter with you?" she asked. "It is true that you are not beautiful, but you have the honor of living in my shadow and then, too, you are free from the danger of being plucked by some rude hand and allowed to die of thirst."

"That is true," sighed the dandelion, "but I cannot help thinking of the old happy days when I was the most favored of flowers. I was taller than you and far more beautiful. People came from the ends of the earth to see me."

"Indeed," said the rose, with a skeptical smile, "and when was that time?"

"If you wish, I will tell you about it," replied the dandelion. "It was on just such a day as this that I was condemned to be the poor insignificant thing that I am and to live unseen among the grasses."

"Perhaps your story wil interest me for a while," re-
turnd the beauty.

The violet, the mignonette, the sweetpea, which gru
near, also bent their heds to listen while the dandelion
began in a melancholy voice:

"A long, long time ago, before any of you wer in existence,
my home was in the garden of the greatest king on earth.
All kinds of wonderful flowers wer there, but I was the
greatest of them all. In the center of the garden I gru,
and when I lifted up my golden hed all the other flowers
bowd down. As I mentioend before, people came from
everywhere to see me, and the king never tired of shoing
me to them. I was the happiest flower in existence.
Every morning the king's dauter, who was the most
beautiful princess in the world, waterd me from her
golden watering-pot and attended to my needs. Even
the hed gardener, himself, was not allowd to tuch me.
Thus it went on for a long time. Then a rumor began to
be whispemd about the garden.

"The king has found a new flower, far more beautiful
than any here, said some," and then all the flowers would
look at me, tho they said nothing.

"I tried to console myself by thinking that it was not
tru. But alas it was! A few days later came strange
men bringing with them this flower, which was placed
not far from me. You here cannot imagine anything
like it. It was taller than I, its leaves wer as green as
the greenest gras, its petals wer soft and velvety, and in
color as blu as the hevens. The coming of this flower
caused no neglect to me in any way, but stil it aroused in
me such jelusy as I never dreamd of feeling before.

"The rest had best be past over quickly—I do not like
to think of it now. There was a law among the flowers
of the king's garden that there should be no jelusy, nor
should one flower say unkind things to nor of another.
I broke them all. Then came the Flower Queen, and in
her anger thretend to banish me forever from the earth.
All the flowers of the garden, among them the blu flower,
interceded for me, and this is the result. That day I

left the king's garden, and in this form have been scattered over the face of the earth."

There was silence for a while after the dandelion ceased speaking, then the violet said:

"But you should be happy now. You want for nothing, and everybody loves you, especially the children."

"I am happy," replied the dandelion. "It is only at times when I think of my folly that I am sad."

"Yours is an interesting story," said the red rose. "I should like very much to have seen that blue flower."

"Tweet! tweet!" sang the little birds from the oak trees, "how good it is to be alive!"

How do I Know that Spring is Here

Eva Orr

THE BLUEBIRD has come with his joyous note,
That merry harbinger of spring;
And has called to all the sleeping world,
"Wake up! wake up! for it is spring!"

I can see it in the flowery paths
That beckon and call like a human thing;
I can hear it in the whispering wind,
And in the brooklet's murmuring.

I can see it in the budding flowers;
I hear it in the wild hawk's cry;
I feel it in the gentle showers,
I see it in the wind-swept sky.

The bluebird has come with his joyous note,
That merry harbinger of spring;
And has called to all the sleeping world,
"Wake up! wake up! for it is spring!"

The Hermit's Cave

Gordon Seamon

ONE SUMMER EVENING I was sitting on my front porch, gazing away over the city streets, the silvery river, the alfalfa fields, and the Mexican foothills, to the Sierra Madre mountains beyond. Suddenly, against the gray of the mountain, I spied a very white spot which held my attention. Father came up behind me and noticing my absorption said, "Wel, dauter, you seem to have found the Hermit's cave."

Of course this strange remark needed an explanation, and, knowing father's wide knowledge of Mexican traditions, I settled myself comfortably in the hammoc and waited eagerly for the tale which I knew would be forthcoming.

"A good many years ago there livd in Juarez a very welthy land owner, Señor Cortega, who had a beautiful dauter. A more lovely maiden than Pazita could not be found in the whole of Mexico. Altho her suitors wer numbered by the score, there wer two more favord than the rest. Don Josè Castillo, a large, florid gentleman with a string of cafeterias (coffee houses) thruout the state, was Señor Cortega's choice for a son-in-law, whereas Pazita preferd Señor Juan de la Gorda, who, besides his undying devotion to Pazita, possest only a small hacienda (country house) on the outskirts of the town. Cortega forbade young de la Gorda's coming to his house, but the devoted lover was not to be daunted.

"One soft spring evening, just as the new moon was taking its initial peep into a typical garden of Eden, Pazita slipt from the house to meet her lover. Never had she lookt more lovely than at this moment, with her hevvy, black braids coild about her shapely hed, a crimson rose at the waist of her simple white frock which fel in soft folds about her tiny feet, her dark eyes like limpid pools from which Don Juan might drink his fil. As these two, the beautiful dauter of the South and her tall, handsum lover, stood in their Paradise, engulfd by their

happiness, little did they think that the serpent was slowly creeping upon them.

"A step sounded on the flags behind them. A quick turn and the two suitors were grappling in each other's arms. Back and forth they fought. Don José's fingers were just closing on the other's throat when there was a flash of steel and Señor Castillo lay prone upon the ground, a tiny, dark stain on his breast. A friendly cloud obscured the moon and when it was past all was peaceful in the garden. The maiden and her lover had fled, leaving Don José lying, face downward, upon the flags, his gold-hilted dagger in his hand. Many months past and Juan became favored by Señor Cortega, for he had inherited a snug little fortune.

"On the eve of his wedding with Pazita, Juan was not the happy man one would expect to see. His conscience troubled him sorely and finally forced him to the confessional. The old priest listened earnestly to the tale of the fight in the garden and the murder of Don José.

"'My son,' he said when Juan had finished, 'you can never marry the woman of your choice. The only way by which you can atone for your sin and insure for yourself a place in heaven, is by presenting your entire fortune to the church and leaving the town, to reside as a hermit the rest of your life.'

"'You know the limestone cave on the mountain? Go there. You may take with you a goat. Every three months at the dark of the moon you may come to the old cottonwood at the Asequia and there you will find a burro laden with provisions. Take them to your abode, turn the burro loose and he will come home. You must neither see nor speak to any person from this hour. At sunrise you must start on your way.'

"'Good Father, this too great a sacrifice! Take my fortune, but do not force me to give up my bride.'

"'My son, the girl was the cause of the crime and you both must suffer.'

"'Good Father, at least grant me one more interview with her that I may bid her farewell.'

“‘Alas, my son, that I cannot allow. Now go your way that you may make redy for your jurny.’

“Sloly Don Juan rode thru the deserted streets, his hed bowd in thought. How could he leav without one word to Pazita? Surely there could be no harm in one last meeting. No! The Padre had said he must not see her again. Resolutely he guided his horse’s hed towards the hacienda. But there arose before his eyes a vision of his sweethart waiting for him beside the old fountain, their trysting place. He *must* see her, he turnd, put spurs to his horse and dasht off in that direction. In a few moments he was there, sprang from his horse and hastened toward Pazita as she sat waiting in the moonlight. With a glad cry she welcomed him.

“‘Sweethart mine, what has kept you? I was afraid some accident had befallen you.’

“Briefly Juan told of his visit to the priest and the results of it.

“‘Oh, hart of my hart, how can I liv without you?’ he added in a burst of despair.

“‘Dear one, there is no need of it. I wil go with you in your exile. It is but just that I, for whom you comited the crime, should share the punishment.’

“For one brief instant Juan cherisht this plan, but his true manhood asserted itself.

“‘No, no, my Pazita. The crime was mine and I must suffer alone. Come, bid me farewel, for I must be off.’

“One last embrace and he was gone. With a moan and a prayer on her lips Pazita sank upon her nees beside the old fountain. Not until the gray dawn crept over the earth did she move; then with a smile on her lips but a sigh in her hart she went about her morning duties.

“At sunrise a sad tho peaceful man started on his lonely jurny, thru the quiet streets, along the cuntry road, acros the sandy plain, then up, up, up the steep, rocky mountain side to the lonely cave where he was to dwel.

“He lived for many years spending his time hewing furniture from the solid rock—a bed, a table and a chair. He came regularly at the appointed time to the old cotton-

wood for his provisions. The night that Pazita died he did not come and a search revealed him, a wax-like image in the cave he had furnished. With gentle hands he was borne to a last resting place beside his sweetheart."

My eyes turned again to the white spot on the mountain-side, which was now brighter than ever before. Whether its new light came from the rays of the setting sun or whether my imagination, fired by the tale I had just heard, pictured there the penitential sacrifice of a human heart, I can not tell. One thing I do know, that the old mountain took on a new significance which I shall ever carry with me.

A Trip in an Aeroplane

Grace B. Armstrong

WITH A DRONE like that of a huge night beetle the machine leapt forward as a race-horse jumps under the raised barrier. Out upon the smooth medo-land it shot, roaring terrifically, and then, all at once, the jolting motion of the start ceased. It seemd as if we wer riding luxuriously over a road paved with the softest eider down.

The sensation was delightful—exhilarating. In almost complete silence we wingd upward. Up, up toward the fleecy clouds, which a few moments before had seemd so far away.

Dwarft to the merest midgets, the figures on the ground waved enthusiastically as the silver-wingd aeroplane made a graceful swoop high above the grandstand and started off in a direct line toward the east.

Belo us farms, medoes, villages and crowds of wondering cuntry folk past by in an ever-changing panorama. The earth beneath lookt like a big quilt with brown, red, and green squares, and tiny fly-like dots running and walking about.

The aeroplane had been racing thru the air for several minutes. It fairly cut thru the air and we wer glad to lower our goggles to protect our eyes from the sharp, cutting sensation of the atmosfere, as we rusht against it, or rather into the very teeth of it.

Straight ahed, and only a few miles distant, lay a silvery gleaming streak—the ocean. The broad Atlantic lay stretcht beyond the land, shimmering in the sunlight.

So fast wer we traveling that the ocean, at first merely a silvery streak, was now changed into a dark-blue rolling expanse of salt water. Far off we could make out the black smoke of a steamer hovering above the ocean.

A strip of beach flasht beneath us, and peering over the side of our ship we could see the big Atlantic swells rolling belo us. The thunder of the surf on the beach came

clearly to our ears, even at the height of a thousand feet. The twang of the salt wind, the inspiration of the ocean had come to us. We felt like vikings—very modern vikings—urging our craft above the ancient sea.

The vessel, whose smoke we had espied at a distance, was quite close now—a huge, black hul, with white passenger decks rising tier on tier, four big red funnels with black tops, and slender masts between which hung the spiderweb aerials of her wireless apparatus. Her bow was creaming up the ocean into foam as she rushed onward.

Like a darting, pouncing swallo seeking its food in mid-air, the aeroplane swoopt, soared and dived in long, graceful sweeps above the ship. Now we could see her promenade decks lined with white faces peering upward. Here and there the sun glinted on the bright metal work of cameras, all aimed at the wonderful spectacle of the soaring, buoyant air-craft.

On, on, out toward the lighthouse, with unlessend speed the silver-wingd aeroplane was rushing thru the atmosfere at a great rate. Far belo we could hear the mournful song of a bel-buoy.

Now we wer right above the lighthouse. Under the skilful manipulation of the aviator, the aeroplane hoverd above the lighthouse, making swoops and dives around it like some monstrus candle-fly.

Then as night was coming on, with a last circling around the gigantic candle, the aeroplane heded homeward.

Our Unjust Attitude Toward the Negro

Madeline Warburton

"Some folks say that a nigger won't steal
'Way down yonder in the cornfield,
But I caught a couple in my cornfield
'Way down yonder in the cornfield.
One had a shovel and the other had a hoe,
If that ain't stealing, I don't know,
'Way down yonder in the cornfield."

THIS OLD FAMILIAR FOLK-SONG, known and sung by all Southern people, black and white, is no doubt meaningless to us at first blush. When we study it, tho, we see a deep significance. In this short rime is embodied that subtle, indefinable racial attitude of the whites toward the blacks, that feeling of distrust and the tendency of ours to misjudge the negro race.

How tru it is that because we see a "couple" of negroes in our cornfield we conclude that all negroes steal; we see a "couple" break the laws and we conclude that all ar lawbreakers. We see a "couple" receive justis in in the court room, and conclude that all negroes receive justis. In short, we "jump at" conclusions and judge the caracter and treatment of the entire negro race by the caracter and treatment of the few individuals of that race that we happen to kno.

Ask a number of people, "Does the negro receive justis?" and some wil say emphatically "Yes," while others wil declare equally as strongly "No." Ask these people to prove their anser, whether it be "yes" or "no," and they wil invariably cite some case of the court room, or compare the treatment of negro criminals with the treatment of white criminals. This is tru of the majority of white people—especially in the South. When we say "the negro gets justis" or "does not get justis"—whichever we believe—we mean justis *only* in the narrow legal sense of the word. We overlook entirely the fullest and

truest meaning of the word. Our idea of justis to the negro is so cramped, narrow, and limited that if we happen to know several cases in which negro offenders of the law receive the minimum punishment for their offence, we say "Yes, the negro gets justis"—and mean the whole race.

This question of justis for the negro in the courts is important enough—vitaly important—but what should concern us *most* is a question of far greater weight; for the question of justis to criminals affects only a few, while this other affects the entire race. Does the negro race receive justis at the hands of the white race? That is, do we treat the negro justly in our everyday dealings with him? I would that we could answer in the affirmative; and I suppose the majority of us will answer "yes;" and really believe we are telling the truth. We cannot see that we are treating the negro unjustly. We say "we give him employment, pay him his wages, help support schools for him, and even give him clothes, food, and money when he is needy. What more would you have us do?"

"So far, so good, but not far enough." Our greatest injustices to the negro are not so material and are not so easily seen. We are unjust in an almost indefinable way, unjust in our sub-conscious feelings and attitude toward the race. We need to stop and think what justis really means, and then to review not only our actions but also our attitude toward the negro. Then it is that our conscience answers condemningly, "No, you are not just to the negro."

Webster gives the meaning of justis as "conformity in conduct or practice to the principles of right." Now our attitude toward the negro race sadly fails to conform to "principles of right." It is not conforming to "principles of right" to judge, criticize or condemn an individual whom we do not know. Neither is it right for us to judge the negro race without foundation for our judgment, or without knowledge of the race, as we unhesitatingly do. A few criminals are brought to our attention and we harshly claim that the negro race is a race of lawbreakers,

that they ar murderers, thieves, and robbers by nature.

Of course, there ar bound to be some negroes who break the laws, but there ar also a great number of whites who do the same thing. For the action of a few whites we do not condem the whole race as criminals. Neither should we be so rash in our condemnation of the negro.

In this connection, the newspapers work one of the greatest injustises of our race to the negro. They bring the criminal before the public to the exclusion of the higher and better element and thus cause the public to feel that there is no higher and better element. It is a very rare thing indeed to see a newspaper giv an account of the work of a worthy, honorable negro; but one of the lower clas, almost worthless negroes cannot even steal a loaf of bread that he is not "ritten up" in the newspapers. No dout, the newspapers do this unconsciously and do not realize in the least that they ar doing anything rong.

In several issues of *The Richmond Times-Dispatch*, one of the most just and unprejudist Southern publications, eleven articles on the negro wer punlisht. Of these nine wer accounts of crime, one a supposed-to-be witty editorial dealing with a negro man's being arrested for sleeping in a wagon, ritten no dout only to fil space, and *one* a short report concerning negro night scools.

Of course, this does not sho accurately the difference in the emphasis which newspapers put on criminals, and which they put on the higher elements of the negro race, but it is sufficient to sho that too much emphasis is put on crime, while the negro's honorable endeavors to do right and to progress ar comparatively ignored. This not only gives the public a rong conception of the negro race, but it offers no encouragement to the negro except along the criminal lines. It sets up no ideals, no standards for him. It encourages rather than discourages crime.

The negro race is truly cald a child race and, among other characteristics of the child, the negro possesses the tendency to imitate and the desire to be notist. It seems to be the hight of ambition for some negroes—but only *some*—to hav their names put in the newspapers. Cases hav been

known in which a negro committed a deliberate crime to attract attention and to get his name in the newspapers. He knew the *newspapers would publish crime*. So we see that by publishing negroes' names in connection with crime, the newspapers are simply putting a premium on crime and encouraging more negroes to engage in it.

That our conception of the negro as a non-law-abiding race is wrong is proved when we disregard the newspapers and open our eyes to real facts and study the negroes themselves. We find that not one out of a thousand willfully violates the laws.

And we learn more than that. We find that we know very, very little about the negro race. Beside the criminals, we know only the servant class, and we are inclined to think there is no other. And here again, we judge the many by the few. If our servants happen to be careless and indolent, we accordingly declare that the whole race is careless and indolent. We wonder what has become of the "good old servants of slavery days," and declare that the race has gone back rather than progressed since that time. We forget that during those "good old times" the very best element of the negro race was put in the kitchen and stable, while the less industrious and less desirable ones were put in the fields.

Now, just as the better element of whites is progressing, so is the better element of the blacks. Every year there is a greater number of negroes who own farms and homes, and till their own soil; every year more schools for negroes are established, more children are being educated, and more negroes enter skilled trades and professions. This, of course, means that the self-respecting, industrious, conscientious, and ambitious negroes have become more independent and are working in their own homes and at their own trades and professions; while comparatively only the "dregs of the race" are left to act as servants to the white people.

Can you imagine Dr. Booker T. Washington hoeing corn or Major Moton shoveling coal? These men are representatives of the higher type of negro whom at one time we kept in our household service, but who have now caught

a vision of greater work to do—high and noble work that enables them to better the condition of the race and thus better the world—and they ar trying to do it. Surely we would not hold this type of negro back to household servis. We would not hav a negro man who can save lives by a skilful use of the surgeon's nife to work in our back yard and cut wood for us; neither do we want a negro woman who can teach children of her race correct ways of living and better housekeeping to spend her hours in our kitchen. We want the most worth-while negroes to go out into the world and do things most worth while. Yet when they ar gon, and we no longer come in contact with them, we ar inclined to forget that this better, responsible, self-respecting ambitius element exists, and to believe that the race is made up of the element left behind as our servants.

Now we misjudge the negro race and our attitude toward it is narro, prejudist and unjust because we ar ignorant of the true characteristics and possibilities of the race. Therefore, the thing for us to do is *to study the negroes*; not one or two, but the entire race—men, women, and children, every element and every clas that makes up the race; not only the criminals and the servants in the prisons and our kitchens, but the teachers, the preachers, the nurses, the doctors, the business men, the merchants, and the farmers—in *their* scools, *their* offices, *their* stores, and *their* own homes. We need to open our eyes and look farther than our "cornfield." There we find only the "couple"—and we need to find the race.

From Genesis to Re'lations

Nannie Garnett

“**B**RETHREN AND SISTERN, my dearly beloveds, Gaud has spared his servent to stand another night on this rostorium and I is right here 'mongst my sheeps again for the second night of this getting right with your Gaud, and you needs it.

“I is gwine to tel y'all jest 'zactly what I'm a gwine to do dis night, so you'l not begin to twist and squirm like you's tired, case dat's the very time I makes up my min' to make you keep on twistin' and squirmin'. Hit's the devil trying to make me stop. Now remember, when you 'gin to feel tired of hearing your Savior's message you's got the devil in you and the quickest way to sho de others he is there is to squirm.

“I ain't going to take no special text tonight but I means to preach dis old Bible from Genesis to Re'lations. Of course I can't tel y'all ebrything in one night but I's gwine to skip all about all over dis word of Gaud.

“Wel, there used to be just one great big world, but 'cause 'twas so big the sun couldn't keep the folks warm Gaud just chopt it up into a whole lot of little ones. Ain't we glad 'at we lives on dis one?”

“Dat we is,” chimed in voices of every pitch.

By this time Brother Brown began to get “warmed up,” and the rest of his sermon was sung in a tune characteristic of his race:

“Yes, my people, if Adam and-a Eve had-a done like Gaud told 'em and not-a eaten the forbidden fruit ebrything would-a been so different, but if y'all do the best you can dat's all you can do. Some of you don't get right but once a year and dat's big-meetin' time. You promises great things den, but the very next week I sees you do things dat makes my hed bow down with shame for you. 'Tis a meesly shame and disgrace to dis community the way some of you what call yourself Christians does do.

"If I only had a longer time tonight I would explain the unexplainable, unscrew the unscrewable, and move the unmovable, but I must hurry on.

"Some of you fathers of the boys in our midst would like to have the prodigal son told in a plain, brought-to-home way I am sure, so I am goin'-a tel it to the best of my ability.

"Gaud tels of a son that was not satisfied at home so his pa gave him all of his part of his riches and the son took his money and went into a fer country. After he'd been 'bout dar spending his money, smoking cigarettes, drinking whiskey, and shooting craps, he didn't hav a red copper left. He stood 'round on de corners just as ragged as a muffin a-wonderin' what to do. 'Last he 'cided he'd better git 'long back home to his pa. When he got dar his good old pa met him at de train and took him in de fold ag'in. Dat ought to be a lesson to you when your son don't always do jest prazactly to suit your big notions."

"Amen," came from an old genuin African who had been asleep and was going thru the forbidden squirming process.

"Being as dis is de time of de year when de farmers works de hardest I'l tel 'em a little passage to spur 'em on and maybe some of 'em mout wake up too.

"De Lord said after de furst man in dis world had sind 'at dey and de coming generations had to earn deir bread by de swet of deir brow. Now some of you niggers wouldn't swet for nothin', you jest as trufflin' as you can live in your skin. Always got be lookin' so sporty and spinky-spanky, 'specially when dese high-ferlutin' gals steps around. De funny part is how you can 'ford it when de rest of us has to work so hard.

"As 'tis getting kinder late I 'spec I'd better put off dis 'til tomorro mornin' at half past 'leven. I hope you wil all be out tomorro.

"Before leaving I want to thank the sistern for dat good fried chicken. Some of you must-a been mighty busy raisin' chickens dis year.

"Brother Harris, lead us in prayer."

"Brother |Harris began;

"Hep us to do like Brother Brown say, for Jesus sake, dear Gaud. Bring dese mourners up from de bench, for Jesus sake. Save old Tom Smith, please, sir. Thou has said 'Ask and it shal be given to you.' We asks all dese, and more, for Jesus sake. Don't let de devil make dese, your people, squirm and twist at the truth of thy word, for Jesus sake. Amen."

"Amen, Brother Harris. Now, while we sings, you dat wants to 'fes 'ligion come on to Jesus."

"De Lord gwine to set dis world on fire—," sang the congregation led by one of the old sisters.

"I'm coming," was the cry on every side as the repenters came in great numbers.

"H—m—m, h-m-m," accompanied by the rhythmic patting of feet, and the excited tone of the preacher as he pleaded, "Come on; come on," brought them—men, women and children—crying, screaming and shouting to the altar.

Dawn

Emma White

DEATH the purple arching dome,
 The heaving shadows gathering form
 A heavy curtain darkly wove,
 With glancing jewels from above,
 As slo mists steal thru cloudy veil,
 The coming of Aurora hail,
 Swiftly spreading, the east goes bright,
 Then suddenly breaks the morning light,

Back to the Country

Elizabeth Rowe

"**A**MERICA has reached its climax, is now declining and wil fall as Rome fel." How often we hear that awful, pessimistic prophecy about the destiny of our great republic! Is it true?

We hear girls make the statement almost every day. If that wer all we might carelessly turn it aside with the mock quotation, "Women are unreasoning folk indeed, always poking the fire from above." But when we hear even lawyers, the men who ought to be studying society comparing the evolution of governments and helping Utopia on, predict it, we ar at least askt to stop and think.

We all realize that there come times in national life as in the individual career when it is wel to pause and calmly review conditions. Just now that time has come to the people of America; and while there ar indications that the occasion for rest and reflection has been seized upon, stil many fields for reflection remain untoucht.

We hav seen from all past history, from Grecian and Roman to the present day, that the constant changes which mark human progress—the development in social, moral, industrial and political life—ever urge readjustments and demand new mesures. The history of our republic—particularly that of the last hundred years—is a record of most marvelous material progress. We hav pursued, overtaken and past all civilizations before us. We ar proud of our "supreme supremacy." But our satisfaction is beginning to be tinged with an uneasy suspicion that maybe we ar paying a big price indeed for our prosperity.

Here we ar brought face to face with the fearful sinilarity of Roman and United States history. What the land question was to the ancient world, the wage question is to our more complex industrial society today. "To combine liberty with imperial extent was to be left to a later race and a new stage," says the Roman historian,

Shal our historians be forst to say we left the task for stil another people? The "extent" is ours, the widest that any nation could boast of at our age. Certainly thru our rule we ar affording liberty; but must congestion in our city life and decay of our yomanry mean our downfall? Again, the Roman riter says, commenting on the Punic Wars, "In the ruin of the small farmer Hannibal had dealt his enemy a deadlier blo than he ever knew. The former background of Italian society drifted from the soil to form a degenerated town rabble at the capital. There they became the means of designing politicians, monopolizers, and support of the wealthy, later to be fed at state expense from public granaries."

Deploring the economic phenomena and transition from the old Roman simplicity to sumptuous luxury, the satirist Juvenal rote, "Luxury has fallen upon us more terrible than the sword. The conquered East has avenged herself by the gift of her vices."

We hav heard the evangelists preach to us so often from the text, "What doth a man profit if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Surely, what shal be the fate of a nation whose whole strength is devoted to mere money making and its people degraded to the cheapest machines on the market?

Here, as in Romè, in accordance with Tiberius Graccus' maximum land law, as it wer, the minimum wage law presents itself to our law framers as the means of relief for our deteriorating humanity. Shal we try it? Wil it be effectiv? Would the land restrictions hav been effectiv in Rome had Graccus lived before his time?

Our later day development has been almost entirely in the direction of increased manufactures. We hav become terribly lopsided and direfully need rebalancing. Fifty years hence, the census takers tel us, we shal hav a population of 200,000,000 souls—meaning that we shal be a food importing rather than a food exporting people at the present rate of food production in our cuntry.

Our cities ar congested with the cheapest wage slaves obtainable; our manufactured products mean little compared

with English or German made; our markets ar getting scarce; our productiv cost in rising. Above all, two-thirds of our population liv belo the estimated means of normal livelihood, and one million men, women and children go to bed hungry every night in the cities of our United States. There is no denying that we must hav machines and men must tend them. Many of our processes can be performd only thru the factory and mil. But our troubles lie in the fact that the entire sense of man's individuality and the place of a true economic principle has been lost in the buzz and whirr of machine wheels.

"Craftsmanship is at a discount." But the pity rests not so much upon the flimsy product as on the paralyzing effect of the system upon the nation. The lo standard of two-thirds of our workers is not an individual reflection; it is national in its scope.

Is there not here stimulus for thought and occasion for pause? As Mr. Stickley has said, "This twentieth century must see a movement back to the soil if we ar to fulfil our promis of national greatness."

Certainly the crying need of our cuntry if for a greater and nobler yomanry. Such is absolutely needed to backbone our democracy Under the open "roof of earth and floor of heven" we must look for our freemen. The captains of industry may sway their systems but the "husbandman is master of his own actions" and ruler of his nation. Chiefly by upbilding the rural man we might find escape from the culminated drift toward a greedy, remorseless, plutocratic control.

Who does not remember Henry's stirring appeal at Agincourt?—"And you, good yeomen, . . . show us here the mettle of your pasture; let us swear that you are worth your breeding." When the "Invincible Armada" menaced England's freedom, she had neither army nor navy to withstand it, but her rustic patriots poured into every port and mand the ships that repeld the enemy. Washington's army was composed of homely flint-lock fighters fresh from the farm; and the same was the case in the Spanish-American and later Boer Wars.

In conclusion: Why not make the same bold declaration that Patrick Henry made in 1875—"I am willing to know the whole truth, to know the worst, and provide for it." The whole truth with us is, our life is congested unnecessarily; the worst, two-thirds of our citizens live below the estimated normal livelihood. Prepare for it! Yes, prepare for it with the assurance of Carlyle, "Fight on, thou brave true heart, and falter not, thru dark and bright fortune. The cause thou fightest for, so far as it is true, no farther, yet precisely so far, is very sure of victory; the truth of it is part of nature's own law, which cannot be conquered."

Songs to Alma Mater

AS THE MOTHER looks down on the babe in her arms

With love and tenderest care,
And dreams of the days when that babe will be grown,

In silence her heart breathes a prayer—
A prayer asking wondrous things for her child;
And the future grows rosy and bright
As she pictures him great, and good, and strong,
Enlightening the world with his light.

Alma Mater looks down on her children with love
And her gentle heart, too, breathes a prayer—
That her daughters may go forth into the world
And follow her teachings there.

Her ideals high we may never reach,
But we'll try to fulfil her dreams;
Each one from the light of her soul will shine
As the sun sends forth his beams.

Alma Mater, thy daughters will always be true,
True to thy memory dear;
Thy great strength gives us strength to bear

All sorro and all fear.
 A crown for thine immortal hed.
 Each child of thine a jewel!
 We'll make of thee our Mother-Queen,
 Our own dear Normal School.

—G. M. W.

(Tune: *Annie Laurie.*)

COME, YE DAUTERS of the Normal!
 Come ye who love her best!
 Sing a song for Alma Mater,
 For dear old S. N. S.
 For dear old S. N. S.
 And be we far or near,
 Our voices we will ever raise
 For Alma Mater dear.

Thy name old Time can ne'er erase,
 Thy name of truth and love;
 It is enshrined within our harts,
 All other names above;
 All other names above.
 And so we'll shed a tear
 For the student days of long ago,
 And Alma Mater dear.

—Vira Carr.

The Origin, Work, and Result of the Student Volunteer Movement

Marjorie Matthews

THE STUDENT VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT originated at the first international conference of Christian college students, which was held at Mount Herman, Massachusetts in 1886. Of the 250 delegates who attended, twenty-one had definitely decided before the conference opened to become foreign missionaries. Before the conference closed one hundred of the delegates had recorded as their purpose, "if God permits, to become foreign missionaries."

In the summer of 1888 about fifty volunteers attended the student conference at Northfield. It was there decided that some organization was necessary, and a committee was appointed by the volunteers present to effect such an organization. This committee met in December, 1888, and an organization was established, taking the name of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, which is incorporated under the laws of the State of New York. There are an Executive Committee, a Board of Trustees and an Advisory Committee.

The purpose of the movement is as follows:

"1. To awaken and maintain among all Christian students of the United States and Canada intelligent and active interest in foreign missions.

"2. To enroll a sufficient number of properly qualified students volunteers to meet the successive demands of the various missionary boards of North America.

"3. To help all such intending missionaries to prepare for their life-work and to enlist their co-operation in developing the missionary life of home churches.

"4. To lay an equal burden of responsibility on all students who are to remain as ministers and lay workers at home, that they may actively promote the missionary enterprise by their gifts and prayers."

Student volunteers are drawn from those who are or have been students in institutions of higher learning in the United States and Canada. Each student volunteer signs the "declaration" of the movement, which is as follows:

"It is my purpose, if God permits, to become a foreign missionary."

"This declaration is not to be interpreted as a *pledge*, for it in no sense withdraws one from the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is, however, more than an expression of mere willingness or desire to become a foreign missionary. It is the statement of a definite life-purpose, formed under the direction of God. The person who signs this declaration fully purposes to spend his or her life as a foreign missionary. Towards this end he will shape his plans; he will devote his energies to prepare himself for this great work; he will do all in his power to remove the obstacles which may stand in the way of his going and in due time he will apply to the board to be sent out. Only clear leading of God shall prevent his going to the foreign field. While it is the duty of every Christian to face this question, no one should decide it without thought and earnest prayer. Having confronted the question, no one should leave it until a decision pleasing to God has been reached."

To accomplish the work a staff of secretaries is employed and officers are maintained in New York City.

The secretaries of the movement are a General Secretary, an Educational Secretary, a Candidate Secretary, a Business Secretary, Assistant Secretaries and Traveling Secretaries. The position of traveling secretary is held for one year by a student volunteer ready to go to the mission field. These traveling secretaries visit the colleges, meet committees and volunteer bands, and in every way promote the missionary activities of the colleges.

The student volunteers in an institution are organized into a Volunteer Band. The objects of the band are to deepen the missionary purpose and spiritual lives of the members, to secure other volunteers, and to promote foreign missionary activities in the colleges and in the college community.

Once in four years an international convention is held. There have been seven such conventions. At the last convention, held in Kansas City in December, 1913, there were present students and professors representing 755 institutions.

The movement has on its records the names of 5,882 volunteers who, prior to January 1, 1914, had reached the mission field, having been sent out as missionaries by no less than fifty-five different missionary boards of United States and Canada. More than two-fifths of the said volunteers are women.

The missionary enterprise depends upon the spiritual quality of those who are sent. The leaders of the movement have always insisted that no student is prepared for this high calling unless he is spiritually qualified. The volunteers should form spiritual habits such as personal Bible study, secret prayer and the practice of religious meditation.

At the present time about six hundred new missionaries are being sent out each year by the missionary boards of United States and Canada. The boards are calling for not less than a thousand qualified missionaries each year. These needs must be found among the students.

“The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into his harvest.”



✦ ✦ ✦ ✦ Sketches ✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

WHO?

"Oh! Me-e-e!" Such screaming, dropping of books, snatching of skirts, and scrambling for tops of desks was never seen before in the little school room.

Rap! Rap! Rap! on the old wooden desk; but all in vain did the stern-faced master demand order. Not a girl would get down from the top of the desk or trust her skirt near the floor till it was clear that the rat had gone to stay. Finally the desk-climbers crawled down and the laughter among the boys ceased.

But that was not the end by any means. The strained silence was broken by the icy-toned question, "Who turned that rat loose in this room?"

No one answered.

Louder and in more angry tones the master repeated his question. Again he received no reply.

"George Kelly, did you turn that rat loose?"

"No, sir."

"Do you know who did?"

"No, sir."

One after another each boy was questioned. No one seemed to know who the owner of the rat was. There were only two boys left and the master continued:

"William Kinston, do you know who turned that rat loose?"

"Yes, sir, I do."

"Who?"

Bill gazed around but made no reply.

"Who?" repeated the master, stamping his foot so hard that he dangerously shook the ink bottle.

"Can't tell, sir."

"Move your seat to that chair by my desk."

Thoro'ly exasperated, Mr. Morris began on John Cary, last in line.

"John, do you know who turned that rat loose in here?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who?"

John refused to answer.

In thundering tones the teacher demanded, "Who?"

John squirmed in his seat and fumbled with the ink well as he muttered, "I reckon I'd better go and sit by Bill, I can't tell you neither."

"Yes, I think you had," said the master.

When the bell rang for dismissal a little later the excited pupils filed out, casting backward glances at the two culprits seated near the master's desk.

With considerably cooled temper Mr. Morris approached the boys.

"John, you and William had just as well tell me which one of you turned that rat loose. It came from your corner of the room and one of you did it. Now, which was it?"

But both boys kept silent.

Finally Bill muttered, "No use to ask me. I ain't going to tell you, sir."

"Same here," mumbled John, with eyes fixed on the floor.

Mr. Morris spoke with the strongest determination, "John, you may bring me a cane from under the table."

Soon, instead of the usual tick of the old clock, a firm thud, thud from the rattan cane sounded through the room.

Then came the remark, "It's no use for both of you boys to get a thrashing which only one deserves, but such—."

Again the sound of the cane!

Two rather sullen boys trudged out of the school-room and off across the school ground. Neither spoke until they were out of sight of school. Then Bill said, "Of course he could never have made me tell, but, John, I told you not to bring that rat to school."

"That rat?" cried John. "I didn't bring it."

"What?"

"Didn't *you* bring it?"

"No, I sure never."

"Wel, who did?"

The next day as the janitor was scrubbing the scool floor, the water, swishing by a hole under the book case seemd to say, "Who-o? Who-o-o?" —*Jeanne Burton.*

BACKWARD

One night after trying for some time to concentrate my wandering mind on my Latin lesson, I gave up the attempt as hopeless and allowd my thoughts to wander at wil. Suddenly I started. I looked about me closely. Ah! what was that creature coming toward me? There was something familiar about it and as it neard me I recognized it—Virgil's Aeneas. I recald with terror the many stories of the prowess and strength of this man. In the hope that he would pass without noticing me, I croucht behind a huge rock. My hope was realized. He past quickly by.

I began to breathe more freely and to look about to see where I was. The place, altho I was confident that I had never seen it before, was strangely familiar. Suddenly, I knew. I recognized in the shadowy, dusky region Vergil's "Hades." Shelterd in some degree from observation by the rock, I watcht the shades of the heroes of ancient times flitting to and fro. As my eyes became accustomed to the darkness, I even recognized some of them. Each one was engaged in the occupation which had been his while living on earth. Cicero, standing on a stump, was denouncing Catiline in a fiery oration to a group of admiring shades. Caesar, in a heavy suit of armor with a sword, was at the hed of a band of soldiers. Each shade, apparently unmindful of the others, was pursuing his own occupation. While I was yet gazing at them, the arrival of a new shade turnd the attention of all in my direction. They saw me and in a body rusht toward me. I attempted to run but could not move. I felt them closing in upon me and was on the point of screaming when I heard a familiar voice say in a loud whisper, "Wake up, girls! It's twelve o'clock. The midnight feast is redy and most of the girls hav gon!"

—*Pearl Ellett.*

A PARDON REFUSED

Over and over again he drew the bow across the strings of the old violin. It had been his closest companion all his life; and why should he not now, in the seclusion of his prison cell with the violin clasped closely against his breast, seek its solution of his problem?

Tho an innocent man, Jean, for thirty years, had been bearing the chains of a convict. He had borne his lot nobly, but today the governor, having found a certain proof of his innocence, had given him papers granting him his liberty. After all these years of confinement could he go out from these prison walls and cope with the world? The heart and soul of the man were still there; but there was that awful fear—almost realization—that the body and mind were weakened and that he could no longer stand alone and fight his battle in a commercial world.

Yes, he would let the violin talk to him. Even now he is a sturdy mountain boy, again roaming about in search of rare specimens of insect life. What tenderness and what devotion! What infinite revelation of the inmost thoughts! What ecstatic present and romantic future! What passions of the heart and soul of the youth were poured out! Now he is sitting at the feet of a mountain lass letting the violin pour out his love for her, for it alone could interpret the sympathy of his heart. This was youth's glad symphony.

But these full, swelling strains,—tender, passionate, yearning notes—were broken and the violin sent forth major chords of passion. He sees again his younger brother wooing his betrothed and a mysterious outlaw coming in and robbing, with a single stroke, his brother of his life and him of his freedom. Again he is accused of the murder of his brother and sent to a doom of life-imprisonment. Again he has all hope and love crushed out of his young life, and again passes thru the heavy prison gate without knowing that there is still one who believes him to be innocent.

The violin can pour forth all the innermost secrets of Jean's heart, but it cannot tell him that the mountain lass

ever believed him innocent, and that she had married and borne a daughter to whom she had revealed the story before her death. No, the violin could not tell him there was still one who understood and was waiting to open her arms to him and keep him to the end. The violin could not tell him there was any joy for him outside the prison walls.

The violin slipped from his hands and his head sank upon his breast.

"It is no use," he murmured, and resigned himself to solitude in prison with his violin as companion.

—*Ruth Hankins.*

SUCH IS LIFE

No, there was nothing more to live for. He had stood it just as long as he could. For a year he had been trying to forget her; but the more he tried to forget the more he thought of and loved her.

Just a year ago today she had married the "other man" and it was then that Sam had said good-bye to all earthly pleasures and had renounced forever all dealings with the fairer sex.

Samantha! Samantha Jones! What a beautiful name! And how much more beautiful was the bearer of the name—Samantha, with the raven tresses and soft brown eyes; Samantha with the dimpling smile and sympathetic heart. No, there never was and never could be any one so beautiful, so gracious, so loving as his lost love.

What had he now to live for? What was the use of working all day when his only reward after the day's toil was a lonely room with no Samantha to whom he could tell his joys and griefs? No, not griefs, for all would be joy if only Samantha were by his side. Oh, the cruelty of it all. Oh, the harsh, cold world! What had it to offer as compensation for the beautiful girl who had been snatched so ruthlessly from his very arms.

These were Sam's thoughts as he made his way to the wharf. He gazed down into the dark waves which swished against the piles supporting the wharf. Yes, he would end it all now.

Not noticing a dark figure sitting dejectedly on a pile of lumber at the edge of the pier, Sam flung aside his coat and hat and prepared to jump into the swirling deep.

"O Samantha," he uttered, "beloved Samantha Jones, it is for your sweet sake that I bid farewell to this world," and he made ready to leap.

Just then he felt a restraining hand on his shoulder and a colorless voice said—

"I would not interfere with what you are about to do, but you spoke a name that made me desire very much to hear your story—What about Samantha Jones?"

"Tis cruel of you to detain me thus when I would find a place where I may rest until Samantha join me. But since you express interest in the name, I'll tell you all."

And Sam told the story of how an unknown rival had won his beloved from him.

"Twas a year ago today that she became the bride of another; and since life has lost its charm I seek rest in yon waves," he concluded.

The stranger started, and looking with unbelieving eyes at Sam, gasped—

"Tis strange, 'tis strange. For one year I have lived in torment and turbulence. Tonight I came to seek eternal rest from a nagging shrew, in these same swirling depths. One year ago today I married Samantha Jones."

FOOLISH, MORE FOOLISH

(A Folk-Lore Tale.)

John Stealem had been an ardent admirer of Mary Simms for a number of years, and at last he had amassed a sum of money large enough to buy a snug little home. He approached her one Sunday night, and declared that life without her was no existence at all, and he also told her of the cozy home he had purchased. Mary, blushing, accepted his proposal, and echoed his sentiments concerning her affections. With a light heart and a smile crowning his face, John took his departure, promising to return to see Mary on Thursday morning.

Now, Mary was the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Simms, and they planned to have the biggest wedding that had ever taken place in that part of the country. They decided to have the whole affair entirely different from anything anybody had ever heard of.

The plan of the wedding was that it should take place at sunrise on the following Sunday morning in the heart of the woods, where the birds would render the music, and only Nature would witness the ceremony, aside from the parents. The wedding breakfast should consist only of the woodland berries, and the honeymoon trip should be a canoe trip two miles down the river, where the young couple could fish to their hearts' content.

When John Stealem came to see Mary on Thursday morning, he was confronted with the unique plan of the wedding. He was so displeased with the plan that he revolted at once and said, "Never before in my life did I ever see such big geese. If I in my travels today see three such idiots, I shall come back and marry you, Mary; if not, you will never see me again."

After making this speech, he immediately departed, and started home. He had not gotten very far before he came upon an old woman, who had just scrubbed her kitchen floor. She was in a hurry to dry it, so she had a wheelbarrow trying to roll the sunshine into the house.

John was very much amused at the incident, and he looked on for a while, then continued his journey. In the space of a few moments he came to a log cabin. Up on top of the cabin beside the great stone chimney was a tuft of grass growing. An old man with long white hair and whiskers was up on top of the cabin trying to pull his cow up to eat the grass.

When John saw this he was in such a tickle that he just gave a great "horse" laugh, and the old man became very indignant.

"Say, old fellow, why don't you throw the grass down instead of trying to pull the cow up on the house?" asked John. The old man accepted the admonition.

John was on his way again, and had nearly reached home when he saw a negro woman plowing her cornfield with two pigs hitched to the plow.

It was then that John realized that he had seen three idiots that had less sense than Mary Simms, her mother, and her father. He instantly turned around and went back to Mary, and this time he was all apologies.

The wedding took place on Sunday morning—but not in the rustic manner that had been planned.

—*Jessie P. Dugger.*

NEGRO SKETCHES

AUNT DINA

“You, S’manthy, come here dis here minute. Yo’ seems to think I ain’t got nuffin to do ’ceptin’ await your circumvenience. You black nigger, don’ you let me ketch you asciratin’ with dat black, common, ordinary Anne Maria Johnson no more. You’s a lady—leastways your mammy is a decent wash-lady and your daddy is as high flying as any ’ciety gent’man in dis here town. Go ’long an’ pick up dem chips ’case here come Miss Lizzie and I ain’t done i’ning her dris yit.

“Morning, Miss Lizzie. How’s yo’ health dis here fine day?

“I ain’t circumnavigatin’ very good dis mornin’. You reckon I mus’ ’a danced too much last night? Law, chile, I ain’t been dancin’. I jes’ went ’long with Abraham Washington so he wouldn’t hav no excuse to be galivesting ’round wid dat yaller-faced Nora Bora Jefferson.

“I ’clar ’fore goodness, Miss Lizzie, it sho is scanlacious de way dat man do make goo-goo eyes at de gals.

“Ne’er mind, I done tol him dat de next time I ketches his highness sachtin’ round like a mule, I’m gwine to git me one of dese here ’vocements. Den I’se gwine to do some sportin’ mysif.

Does I think it’s right to git ’voked from my husban’—in the sight of de Lord? Law, yes, chile. ’Tain’t no harm when dat same husban’ a gits to thinkin’ dat he’s de whole sho

of de town and let's his po' wife work her fingers to de bone to keep him drissed up as becomes his station in 'ciety.

"Wel, honey, I feels mighty sorry fur yo'. Here's yo' dris and it jes look grand. Yes, it sho do.

"S'manthy, Missouri, Aristotle, Susie Anna Lee, git ret up from dat step so Miss Lizzie kin git out. You's every one gitting as lazy as yo' daddy."

—*Altha Dwall.*

MOZE AND THE AUTOMOBILE

Yes, Marse Tom, I wants er position wid you ter drive yer team en tend yer stock. No, suh, I don' wuk fer de doc no more.

How come I lef him? Now you axin' sumpin'! De trufe in de facs is dis.

De doc tuck en bought hissself one o' dese here otymobiles—sho is a fac'; en, whut's mo', he say he gwine learn me to run hit for him. When he say dat, dis wuz one proud nigger. But ez Parson Pennyroyal say, "Pride goes befo' a stumpt toe;" which sho'ly am de trufe.

Wel de fust day he run hit I sot up side him en he showd me whut little cranks make 'er go, en whut make her stop. Finally he gin me de wheel en let me run 'er.

I tel you, boss, I wuz de stuckupist nigger in ole Virginny when I started to run her down de road. I wouldn't er spoke ter my own mammy if I had past her.

When we come to de top o' de hil en commence ter go down she did *whiz!* De high red banks wuz a-flyin' by us. "Use de brake," says de doc. "Don't go so fas'."

I lookt down ter fin' de brake en we riz right up in de air en de whole earth seem ter fall on us. Dat otymobile had done climbd up de bank en fel back on us. Doc said dat she turned turtle. Seem ter me mo' lak she turn whale, en den flop on us.

Wel, wid de hep o' Bill en Rastus, who wuz workin' in de field pretty close, we got out f'm under, en turn her over. She wuz sho one busted cyar! De winder glas in front wuz all broke en de paint nockt offen her,

De doc say dat she could be fixt all right en fer me ter stay wid him en learn ter run hit.

I say ter myself, "You done made er fool uv yerself once, Moze, en I ain't gwine giv yer no mo' chances." So I tels de doc I can't run her en I'd better leave, so here I is axin' you fer a place.

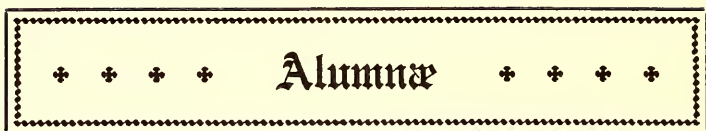
Motor cyars is all right fer some folks, but when I goes ter kingdom come I wants ter go in de ole way on de wings uv angels en not be fotched up in a 'ceitful, upsnortin' otymobile.
—*Ruth Davis.*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

I 'clar fo' goodness, Miss 'Liza, dat beau o' mine fum up de road a piece is de grandest man you eber lay yo' two eyes on. His har' it's jes' as purty and it lay jes' perzactly like de Lord inquired it should. He ain't got none er dem curls round his collar, neither. No'rm, he's a spectacle nigger, he is. De on'y thing, he ain't got no gol' teeth, but den he kin git some; and dem what he is got is jes' as white as chalk.

An', Miss Liza, dat man sho' do make love gran'. He say, "When I is present let all others be absent. I does not want to make myself more bored than I is welcome, but I wants the prefering privilege. Dear girl, I want that you and I lov, should bind like a gol' chain, 'cause I loves you the like of which ain't been since Adam was."

What I say? Lor', chile, I ain't got no time to be a'tellin' you what I say. I got to do my work. So I bids you a farewel. Good-bye.
—*Gordon Seamon.*



The following is a letter received by Mr. Grainger from one of our old girls and his reply:

"I expect to do some private work this summer which wil include a reading course for some children and I'm coming to you for help. Wil you send me a list of the books children should hav red by the time they ar fourteen? I surely wil thank you."

The best suggestion I can think of to giv you in regard to reading for children is that you get our *Training School Course of Study* (Address Book Room, S. N. S., Farmville, Va., price \$1) and examin the books mentiond under Literature, pp. 230 and folloing. See also Story Life under each of the grade "rite-ups" and Appendix II for a list of sources. Ginn & Co., E. P. Dutton & Co., Houghton Mifflin Co., and other publishers, wil furnish extensiv lists of books for children's reading free.

—J. M. G.

* * * * Exchanges * * * *

The first magazine that comes under our consideration this month is the *Lemon and Black*, of Randolph-Macon Academy. We ar glad to hav this magazine added to our exchange list. Your cover is very neat and attractiv, but when we open the magazine and turn to the table of contents we find the Literary Department rather unbalanst; there is not an essay in the number. The poems by "Bacchus" ar especially good, and ar wel worth reading; the originality of "Der Kaiser" is certainly striking. From it we quote the folloing passages:

"Who breaks cathedrals all to smash?
Undt of der Belgians makes der hasch?
Der man vot eats der Limberg cheese,
Undt throws der Russians to dere knees;
Der Kaiser!

Who iss it now dot sinks der schips
Of French undt English at efery trip?
Neffar did a man so shine
As dot oldt fighter up der Rhine;
Der Kaiser!"

"At First Sight" is an interesting story, but the plot is too obvius. The very minute a "perfectly adorable girl" is introduced and an "extremely handsome man" salutes her, the brilliant sunset fades on them and we kno at once the ending of the story. Had the plot kept up the reader's curiosity and dout until the last, it would hav been a vast improvement. Doutless, the author is not very wel acquainted with feminine nature, for his portrayal of the caracter of girls is not tru to life. He needn't be discouraged tho for his descriptions and choice of

language ar worthy of praise; and, despite imperfections, the story is good.

The magazine as a whole is to be commended on the variety of departments, including Alumni Notes, Literary Society, Y. M. C. A., Athletics and Miscellaneous.

By way of helpfulness, we suggest that you hav more material in your Literary Department and some that embodies serius thought. It would also be a good idea if you would acknolege all of your exchanges.

We ar glad to welcome *Alleghany Breezes* along with the other magazines which come to us this month. Your stories ar entertaining but very light. We would suggest that you add to your literary department articles which require more thought and which tuch our deeper feelings. The article entitled "The Mountain People of Virginia" gives a life-like portrayal of the mountain people. It is certainly tru of the people of Virginia, even tho poor, that they ar kind and hospitable to all visitors in spite of their poverty or unplesant environments. "When the Parson Comes to Tea" is very humorus. Many a household is thrown into just such confusion as is here depicted when the minister pays a call. Your poems contain good description, but most of them ar rather short.

It is indeed a plesure to read the *Southern Collegian*, since it is a magazine whose contributors sho great talent for riting both prose and poetry. We recognize the imaginativ power of the author of "The Priest of the Volga," and also his ability to handle a story. He handles his plot skilfully and chooses his words wel. "The Journey's End" is intensely interesting. The reader gets very vivid pictures of the cuntry about the artist's cabin and the trail known as the "Journey's End." The romance in the story is striking. The poem "Unarmored" can hardly be praised too much. It contains beautiful thoughts, forcefully exprest. Few of our student poets of today rite poems of such length. The interest shown in your honor system should be an example to all scools and colleges. This is a subject about which too much can not be said.

You are right in saying that the honor system belongs to every individual, and it is to his own good to reverence it above all things.

The *Record*, of Staunton High School, is one of the best high school magazines that comes to us. One of its most striking features is that its stories and essays do not deal with local happenings but with subjects of general literary interest. The "Essay on Sidney Lanier" is an excellent article, and shows careful thought and attention. The author compares Bryant's greatest poem, "Thanatopsis" with Lanier's "Ballad of the Trees and Master;" and points out the fact that Bryant only stated facts while Lanier expresses his identical thought in much more beautiful language. We must remember that Lanier was a mature man when he wrote "The Ballad of the Trees and Master," while Bryant was only eighteen when he wrote his masterpiece; and this is a very precocious piece of work for a boy of that age. We agree with the author of this article when she says, "We may say that in the glory of his work and spiritual endowment, Lanier takes his rank with Milton and the great modern poets of England."

If there were several poems in the magazine they would help raise its standard.

We acknowledge with thanks the following magazines: *The Richmond College Messenger*, *The Lemon and Black*, *The Trigonian News*, *The Mary Baldwin Miscellany*, *The Southern Collegian*, *The Record*, *The Southwestern University Magazine*, *The Tattler*, *The Furman Echo*, *The Chathamite*, *The University of North Carolina Magazine*, *State Normal Magazine*, *The Hampden-Sidney Magazine*, *The William and Mary Magazine*, *The Neozarko*, and *The Randolph-Macon Monthly*.

WHAT OTHERS SAY OF US

The Farmville *Focus* for December is such a "Christmas" number that it seems almost too late to comment on it now. Just to read it gives you such a Christmas

feeling that you almost think the holidays are back again. However, we must suppose that Christmas is no time for essay writing, since there is only one essay in all the literary matter. That one, on "The Hague Peace Conference," is very clear and interesting at first, but at the end it diverges into rambling arguments in favor of peace in the abstract. There is a pleasing amount of poetry scattered between the stories—little snatches of song rather than any deliberate verse. They give a delicate and delightful finish to the magazine. However, when we stop to analyze them, we are puzzled over such phrases as "Thou blessed land of shining stars." The stories are by far the best part of the magazine. "Love—the Christmas Spirit" is an unusually good piece of work. "Uncle John's Christmas" has a skilfully constructed background and the "Christmas Sprites" is one of the cleverest, humorous stories on our table. "The Effects of a Dream" is so simple as to be almost childish. It is not in the Exchange Editor's territory to discuss the pros and cons of simplified spelling, but we are glad to see a magazine that does believe in it enough to use it.—*The Richmond College Messenger.*

The January number of *The Focus* is very good. The stories and poems are well written and the advertising department shows careful attention.—*The Chathamite.*

In *The Focus* we find a very nice literary department. The poems are especially good. We are greatly impressed by the article on Student Organization. The "Call of Spring" is one of the best we have had the pleasure of reading. Your exchange column is improving and your comments are timely. We always look forward to your arrival.

—*The Trigonian News.*

The Focus, State Normal School, Farmville.—The outward appearance of your magazine is neat and attractive. The stories are all entertaining. Call again.—*The Searchlight.*

The Focus, State Normal School. Your magazine is full of well-written, entertaining stories. We notice with surprise that you have adopted the simplified spelling. We are indeed at a loss to know why you deemed it necessary for a school magazine to adopt so early this mode of spelling before being sanctioned by the foremost writers of the day.—*The Lemon and Black* (Randolph-Macon Academy).

The Focus, State Normal School, Farmville, Virginia, contains a very clever story.—*The Micrometer*.

The Focus.—Even Juvenal knew their failing:

“ Minuti

Semper et infirmi est animi exiquique voluptas
Ultio. Continuo sic collige, quod vindicata
Nemo magis gaudet quam femina.”

—*Hampden-Sidney Magazine*.

“Varium et mutabile semper femina.”—*Virgil*.

Women are funny creatures. How strange are their idiosyncrasies! How unfathomable are their whims! Truly Virgil correctly sized them up when he gave expression to the line which is taken as the title of this criticism.

Chief among their oddities is their love of notoriety, to achieve which they will go to any lengths whatever, even at the risk of becoming ridiculous. History has recorded many instances of this along with the world's important events; and it is not only in Europe that history is now being made, for the women at the State Normal School at Farmville have discovered a novel way of attracting attention.

Recently, while browsing among the college magazines which litter the editor's sanctum, we were attracted by the external appearance of *The Focus*, and attempted a translation of the contents. We like the appearance of your magazine, damozels most fair; but we sincerely hope that you will forgive us for our candor if we say that the most pronounced effect produced on us was irritation. Parts of it we were able to translate with fair accuracy, but

some of it seemed hopeless to the average understanding. It was as bad as reading Latin without a pony.

In the table of contents appeared this title, "Why 'Nancy Stair' Should be Red in High School." Why indeed, in the name of Ichabod Crane, should she be red rather than brown, green, or black; and if she ought to be red why should she be so at this particular time that she was in high school and not at any other period of her existence? These questions we shall leave for the philosopher to answer.

And pray, what kinds of the finny tribe are so numerous at Farmville that you dub them a "scool?" Dear little fishes, be red if you like, but we like you better just as you are, unless we except the red of a blush.

The compilation of words called "Awake! Awake!" was labeled "verse" in the table of contents. There are three classes of writings: prose, poetry, and verse. This is just verse. It is irregular in meter and devoid of smoothness. The rhyme is good, however; and the thought though somewhat hashed up, is pleasing.

Concerning "My Wild Rose" we make the unqualified statement that it is good. In "A Prayer" the thought is good, but it does not read smoothly in one place due to a wrong number of syllables to the line. Also the rhyme of "throne" with "done" is wretched. The meter of the first stanza of "The Call of Spring" is bad.

The fiction is decidedly better than the verse, and there is a pleasing variety. There are four stories presenting amusing situations, two of adventure, and one on love, all good—a remarkable number for a college magazine.

However, this makes the lack of essays very noticeable, of which there is only one very short article on a local subject which is naturally not interesting to exchanges. The "Sketches" or storiottes are very interesting and the editorials are well written.

The magazine would be greatly improved if it were printed in plain English. Simplified spelling has been tried in many places and has failed. If it were universally adopted what a heritage would we have given our children. How they would praise us as with perspiring brows they translated Shakespeare from a lexicon! May the shades of

Theodore Roosevelt and Booker T. Washington protect them from such a fate! Simplified spelling would make it impossible to trace the derivation of the language; it is impractical; it is senseless. Wherefore, in all kindness, we advise our fair friends at Farmville that they had better be content to stick to plain English for the present at least.

—*Randolph-Macon Monthly* (Ashland, Va.)

* * * *

“When criticisms come,
They come not in single spies
But in battalions.”

And now the *Randolph-Macon Monthly* raises its voice in horrified protest. It too commits the error of attributing the beginning of spelling reform to women, and of believing that Shakespeare’s plays are read today in Shakespeare’s spelling, that Roosevelt has a leading part in the simplified spelling movement, and that it is a dead issue. For the correction of this misinformation, we would respectfully refer the editor to plain facts stated in previous issues of *The Focus* and in the literature of the Simplified Spelling Board, especially, “The Spelling of the Poets,” which may be had for the asking by addressing “Simplified Spelling Board, Madison Avenue, New York.” May we not also suggest that a little real knowledge of a subject is frequently a fairly good preparation for writing about it?

Our critic will realize his mistake in saying that simplified spelling, having been tried in many places, has failed; if he will refer to the list published in the April number of *The Focus*, of persons and institutions who endorse and will continue to use reformed spelling. Last November there were in the United States thirty-one universities, colleges and normal schools using reformed spelling and by February the number had increased to seventy.

This seems to us like mighty lively kicking for an issue that has “failed” or a “fetish that dies hard.” As our critic suggested, “women are funny creatures,” but how much more amusing are some of the members of the opposite sex!

Opposition is a great help to any movement. This would be a monotonous old world if everybody agreed, and if all of us sat turning our life's pages in the direction of our favorite notions all of the time without hitting something occasionally; and, besides, nothing great or good has ever been accomplished without opposition. Even a game of nine pins cannot progress in an interesting way without something wooden to be knocked over. All advocates of simplified spelling will be grateful to several of our exchanges who have innocently stood themselves on end to be bowled over in the interest of progress. —J. P. D.

In the William and Mary *Flat Hat*, a weekly newspaper published by the students, we found so apt an answer to a recent criticism of simplified spelling and *The Focus* in the literary magazine of that college, that we have taken the liberty to reprint it. (A copy of the criticism appeared in the April number of *The Focus*.) The author signs himself "Joozy Korr." We make our deepest bow to you, Mr. "Joozy Korr." We are indeed glad to see that the "Mirror" does not reflect the sentiment of your entire college regarding simplified spelling.

COMPOS MENTIS

In the April "Mag," our dear Brother "Mirror" almost split his skin with his swell of pride at so gallantly affecting a "Horatius at the Bridge" in defence of the "frozen music" and "poetic suggestion" of the "Englishman's chief heritage—the English language." The doughty little fellow ran out and cast some reflections upon the champions of one of the greatest of twentieth century movements.

Isn't it awful, Mabel, to think of making any change in the English language which would involve the slightest loss of the "ancient and momentous beauty" of its "gigantic fabric of architectural sound or frozen music." And, Brother, suffer thy concern for sound to undergo revision downward. What jackass said anything about reforming the sound of words?—halloo "I." Why, for land's sake, Brother, the sound of words is the very standard

with which it is proposed that spelling be brought into conformity. And since when was poetry or prose written for the eye? What carest thou how the symbols look so long as the sound offendeth not thine ear? Here's the rub: so many of our words do not look as they are pronounst; ergo, children and foreigners learn our language with much more difficulty than would otherwise be required.

All hail *The Focus!* All hail the Farmville pioneers of the South! Of course *Sisier Focus* could not be expected to simplify every word; the simplification of every word must come slowly, according to Brother "Mirror's" cherished law of the changes in language—"as gentle, gradual, and imperceptible as the changes in the skin of the human baby." But a start must be made, and as soon as the words already officially simplified come into general use among all those of a progressive turn of mind, more words will be simplified and our language, Brother "Mirror," will undergo the "baby skin change." Thoro reform will come; the movement is impelled by that infallible law of Nature—conservation of energy.

We are proud of the fact that Brother "Mirror" has got along so famously in his history of Shakespeare as to be able to read him NOW without the aid of the lexicon in the back of every good edition of the immortal poet. What is to hinder simplifying Shakespeare for the benefit of our dearly beloved progeny of A. D. 2015?

And what little squirt is it who has the audacity to say that Mr. Carnegie believes in reformed spelling because he knows no better? It strikes us that Brother Andrew is the same man who didn't know any better than to standardise colleges, champion world peace, give money for exhaustive research and for recharting the oceans.

As for Brother Teddy, he is paying the penalty for being alive; no one will appreciate him until he has turned up his toes to the daisies.

And so, while literary stick-in-the-muds raise their squeals against progression in favor of their fetish, Reformed Spelling will go marching on, leaving them ensconced in their worship of the tried-and-found wanting—*William and Mary Flat Hat,*

THE FOCUS

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Sworn to and subscribed before me this 2nd day of October, 1912.

J. L. Bugg, Notary Public.

Entered as second-class matter at the postoffice at Farmville, Virginia.

Editorial

This is the last issue of *The Focus* for the school session 1914-1915. The Alumnae Number, which is usually published in June, will be postponed until September.

REVERENCE

Let us, who are daily preparing to make of ourselves teachers who will be models and examples of what is right in the eyes of little children, stop and consider. In this great undertaking of ours we find many strange things to think about, to work over, and many mighty truths which we are trying to incorporate into our lives. But can we not plainly see that we shall never do this work aright without the guidance and help of the Greatest of all Teachers?

Yet, it seems that we are not *seeing*—at least such is not evident to an observer. The times when an observer can best judge would naturally be those times when we assemble in His presence for song and praise, for forgiveness and guidance—that is, at chapel and at prayers. We seem unconscious of the purpose of our meeting until reminded of it by the rising of the leader; and is it not often

only respect for the leader that causes the silence then? What about the respect and the reverence due to Him and His teachings? We hav scarcely thought about that. Ah! there's the rub—we fail to think, and yet we hav *no* excuse for not thinking at such a time.

Can you hear the bustle, the clamor, the jerking of seats, and the loud talking in chapel up to the announcing of the hymn? We do not do this when we go to church. We seem to fail to realize that when we assemble in the auditorium for study of God's word and communion with Him in any way, that it is as much His house as the church is, and that we ar in His presence.

Cannot we who ar blest with so noble a calling keep singing in our souls the truth, the love for, and the trust in our God? Then we wil come thoughtfully, prayerfully and lovingly into His presence, saying,

“The Lord is in His Holy Temple;
Let all the earth keep silence before Him.”

MORE ATHLETICS!

We hav notist with much interest and pride the improvements being made on the athletic grounds and in athletics. The board fence is supplying a long-felt need. It is quite a plesure to be able to play tennis without having to chase the balls down the hil and out in the street every short while; and it is a stil greater comfort to feel that soon we shal be able to take fysical training out in the open without being embarrast by a number of unwelcomd observers. We notis also that the old shaky basketball backstops have been taken down, to be replaced, we hope, by new, substantial ones.

Hardly any student activity has aroused more interest and enthusiasm among the students than the Field Day exercises. Altho the events ar limited to seniors and juniors, and to only a few of them—the best—it is hard to find a girl who is not interested and anxious for Field Day to be a success.

Some of the girls belo senior and junior years feel that they should be allowed to enter the contests also. But if

such wer the case, either the number of contestants would be too large to be managed wel, or the lower classes would be apt to crowd out the seniors and juniors. This would not be best, for the seniors and juniors wil not hav the same chances to "try again" as the lower classes wil hav. Furthermore, having the contests closed to girls in lower classes gives them something else to look forward to when they become juniors and seniors.

There ar a number of events, and any girl is allowed to enter four, provided she can compete creditably with the others in it. Very few of us ar experts in any of these events, and many of us appear ridiculus to those who *can* do the things we *try* to do.

It was quite amusing to watch the expression of disgust on the faces of the little boys as they watcht the girls in their first attempts at baseball. The little boys couldn't understand how a girl managed to make a home run when the ball didn't go far enuf to reach "first baseman."

But, what does it matter? Even tho we cannot catch the ball every time; even tho we cannot make a "run" when the ball goes almost out of sight; or can not "run a mile;" we get good, helthful, enjoyable exercise—and that's what it is all for anyway.

* * * Here and There * * *

At the chapel exercises on April 19, Mr. Roy Young a well-known violinist, played several selections for us. Mr. Young very kindly offered to come back and give a concert on the night of May 14, for the benefit of the Blue Ridge Fund.

John Powell, the great Virginian pianist, gave a concert here April 10. A large and appreciative audience was out to hear him. We hope that this is not the last time that Mr. Powell will be seen here.

At a recent meeting of the Argus Literary Society the following officers were elected for next year:

President.....	Fannie Meade Brooke
1st Vice-President.....	Lena Cohen
2nd Vice-President.....	Ruth Robinson
Recording Secretary.....	Willie Harris
Corresponding Secretary.....	Louise Childs
Treasurer.....	Nan Stewart
Critic.....	Alma Craddock
Censor.....	Josephine Gleaves
Reporter.....	Rille Harris

During the past term the Pierian Literary Society made a special study of Irish Drama, so gave as their open meeting on May 8 an Irish play, "The Land of Heart's Desire," by William Yeates.

In keeping with the course of study, the Cunningham Literary Society had as their open meeting "An Evening with the Modern Poets." "That Old Sweetheart of Mine" was recited and illustrated by pantomime. Then "The

Hour Glass," a drama of William B. Yeates, the poet and dramatist, was presented.

The Ruffner Debating Society held its annual open debate on May 8. The question was a very interesting and vital one: "Resolved, That biology is of more value to the average high school student than Latin."

Affirmativ Misses Josie Guy and Rosa Allen

Negativ . . Misses Elizabeth Rowe and Madeline Warburton

The decision of the judges was in favor of the affirmativ.

+ + + + **Hit or Miss** + + + +

THE POEM THAT "MIST THE HIT"

We red that little poem;
 We didn't think it much.
 We don't see how *The Focus*
 Could ever publish such.

We red it o'er a second time,
 And then it made us mad
 To think that our good magazine
 Could accept a thing so bad.

And then we took our pen in hand
 To see what we could do;
 Altho we kno it's very poor
 We hand it o'er to you.

Now, dear little maiden,
 We think you've had enuf.
 Please never hand *The Focus*
 Any more such stuff. —L. E. N. G.

OWED TO SPRING

O spring! For test and note,
 For lessons to be learnd by rote,
 For teacher's stern who feel a call
 To teach us something spite of all,
 We thank thee.

For long, hot days and dusty streets,
 And freckles sprinkled o'er our cheeks,
 For winged bugs with lazy drones,
 For early walks, and ice-cream cones,
 We thank thee.

IN RESERVE

Parson Wilder, who had a small church in a little Western town, was about to go away for a two weeks' vacation. The Sunday before he announced from the pulpit:

"The preacher for next Sunday will be Mr. Judson, and the one for the Sunday following you will find hanging up behind the door on the other side of the vestry."

—*Harper's Weekly*.

"My dear, you ought to pass up frivolous things and take an interest in deep subjects. Take history, for instance. Here is an interesting item: Gessler, the tyrant, put up a hat for the Swiss to salute—"

The lady was a trifle interested, "How was it trimmed?" she inquired.—*Louisville Courier-Journal*.

We learn from the seventh grade debate given in the auditorium, Friday, May 7, that 600,000 immigrants decreased during the past year. Doubtless another cry against the "high cost of living."

EXTRACT FROM A COMPOSITION

"Columbus reacht land in October, 1492, a time when the dogwood and *red bugs* wer in ful bloom."

Miss Wayts—Louise, what gender is this word?

Louise—I don't kno, Miss Wayts.

Miss Wayts—Wel, what gender ar you?

Louise—Oh, masculine.

Little Brother—Sister, that ain't so. I'm goin' to tel mother you told er-er-r-a narrativ.

Little sister—O mother, big brother said sumpin' bad 'bout me!

Teacher—Can anyone tel me what became of the Lost Tribes of Israel?

Pupil—They ar in the British Museum.

STUDIES

English drives me crazy,
For "Book Reviews" and themes
Just make me tired, that's no joke—
(Mr. Grainger knoes, it seems).

History is my horror,
'Cause the ancient wars and things
Just make my hed go round and round,
As if my brains had springs.

I just abhor math'matics;
Time and again I've tried
To understand its twists and turns,
Til I have almost cried.

Now geografy is not quite so bad,
Yet I begin to fret
When our good teacher shuts his book
And says, "Now, girls, a test!"

But still there is another
More awful far than these,
And if you'll listen very close
I'll whisper—"Caesar is."

But taken all together,
We'l think them very fine,
When as Seniors leaving S. N. S.
We'l leave them all behind.

—D. L. B.

Miss Kennedy—I had to be twenty-five years old before I really knew how to hav a good time. I didn't really get to be a girl until I ought to hav been an old maid.

Catherine—That's a good thing, because now you won't have to be an old maid for such a long time.

HOW SHE CLASSIFIED HIM

Mrs. Atkins, dissatisfied with the number of times one man came to see her cook, spoke to her about it. "When I engaged you, Martha," she said, "you told me you had no man friends. Now whenever I come into the kitchen I find the same man here.

"Bress yo', ma'am," smiled Martha, "dat niggarr ain't no fren' ob mine."

"No friend? Then, who is he?"

"He's ma husban'." —*Ladies' Home Journal.*

HE DID IT

"If any man here," shouted the temperance speaker, "can name an honest business that has been helped by the saloon I will spend the rest of my life working for the liquor people."

A man in the audience arose, "I consider my business honest," he said, "and it has been helped by the saloon."

"What is your business?" yelled the orator.

"I, sir," responded the man, "am an undertaker."

—*Ladies' Home Journal.*

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