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Poetry.

A CONDESCENSION

Gwendolen Jones was chubby and sweet,
And her age was half-past three;
And she lived in a house on Wellington Street,
In the yard with the walnut tree.

Harold Percival Marmaduke Smith
Was almost half-past four;
And he said, when they gave him a base-ball and bat,
That he'd "play with the girls no more."

Gwendolen Jones she gazed through the fence;
At an end with all life's joys,
As she saw the friend of her youth depart
"To play with the great big boys."

Harold Percival Marmaduke Smith
Up to the field marched he;
But his eye was blacked, and his head was whacked,
And his ball no more did he see.

And the boys called him "Baby" because he cried,
Did Teddy and Willie and Tim;
And they chased him away when he threatened to tell,
And said they'd "un use for him."

Gwendolen Jones came down to the fence,
And her face was a joyful smile
When Harold Percival Marmaduke said
He'd play with her "once in a while."

—St. Nicholas.

Select Family Reading

The Little Brass Tray of Barton's Desk

BERTHA GERNEAX WOODS

BARTON SOMERS did not seem to be in a very happy mood, though the day was one of November's brightest, and Indian Summer haze was turning all the landscape to opaline beauty.

"There's no sense in a fellow grinding away at anything he hates the way I do mathematics. Father won't listen to my dropping out of school yet, but I can't see what good is done to lose a year this way when I wanted to be getting to work. Here I am seventeen, and lots of fellows are launched in business by that time."

"But think how much better equipped you'll be when you've had a little more preparation. Better be thankful you have a father who's willing and anxious to keep you in school. I shouldn't call it 'losing' a year, I can tell you. Make the most of your chances, young man, and remember you are preparing yourself every day for a little better place in the business world."

"Oh, perhaps," grumbled Barton, "but you wouldn't like it yourself. Didn't you go into business when you were only fourteen, and—now—just look at what you have got to show for yourself, Uncle Penn."

Uncle Penn recrossed his knees, and for a moment did not answer. When he did speak, it was in no tone of self-gratulation. It was serious, and so was the look in his keen grey eyes as they passed from the soft amethyst hills in the distance to a scrutiny of his young nephew's face.

"I did quit school when I was fourteen, for a fact, but it was a case of necessity, not of choice. I was fortunate enough to get ahead in spite of my educational lacks, but let me tell you, those lacks have been my handicap all my life. Everything I've acquired has come harder to me because I didn't have the careful training that your father's trying to give you. I had the mechanical turn of mind that you have, and I was bound to make a success of what I undertook. I used to study into the small hours of the night to get hold of things I could have learned three times as easily at school. Many's the time when I was working my way along as office boy, I've seen other fellows with not half my ambition or natural mechanical ability step into places I longed for and couldn't obtain, because I had not the skilled training."

Barton's face softened. "But you forged ahead anyway, Uncle Penn, and I suspect some of those same fellows are carying you to-day," he added shrewdly.

"Very likely," replied his uncle. "But they could easily have outdistanced me if they had of had the same amount of determination and ambition. It's a fortunate thing, Bart, that determination and pluck can so often make up for early lack of advantages. But you can see for yourself what a double chance a fellow has if he combines the two, the school training and in addition the determination to win. I feel a very deep interest in you, Bart. Your talents and inclinations run along very much the same lines as mine, and I expect you to turn out a bigger success than I have been able to, because you have everything to help, not hinder, you. I know two men who will be mightily disappointed if you don't make good; one is your father and the other is sitting in this chair."

Barton laughed but his face did not quite lose its discontented look.

"You see the trouble, Uncle Penn, is just this: Here's father determined I shall complete my course. And it's not only a question of taking the time for it, but there are some studies, like mathematics, that I haven't the slightest inclination for. I like the chemistry and physics, and I can see some sense in my taking them. They will come in when I get into electrical work. Oh, yes, of course, I'll need some mathematics, I suppose that's true. But all this talk about the mental discipline of it—" Barton waved his hand as if the idea were too far-fetched for his consideration.

His uncle, however, evidently did not agree with him. "Best sort of discipline, son, if you take hold of it in the right way."

"But I can't take hold of it, Uncle Penn; you see I haven't the mathematical mind."

"Haven't cultivated it, you mean," his uncle amended. "Don't believe you'd like it if some of your classmates were to say you 'couldn't' keep up in that as well as other branches."

"Why, uncle seems to me—" But here Barton stopped, too truthful when he came to think it over, to dissent from his uncle's statement.

The next day was Saturday, and Barton gladly accepted his uncle's invitation to go into the city with him. There was an interesting electrical exhibit held that week in the Chamber of Commerce and they spent two absorbed hours bending over the intricacies of various pieces of machinery. Uncle Penn noted with pleasure and pride the intelligent comments of his companion.

"He has it all in him," he said to himself.

"I tell you," Barton remarked, his face glowing as they came out of the building, "that's the sort of thing that fires a fellow's ambition. When I go into a place like that, I feel as if I couldn't wait to be in the field myself."

"Let's run into the library a minute," his uncle suggested, as they approached the tall gray building that housed the city's public matter. "There's an exhibit on the top floor that 've not seen for many a day; interesting and pathetic too."

"What is it?" Barton asked wonderingly, but his uncle did not heed the question.

A moment later they were in the elevator and making their way to the top floor.

"It's over in this room," Uncle Penn said, striding ahead. "An exhibit from Farilault."

"Farilault! Why that's the place where they have the School for the Feeble Minded!" Barton remarked as he followed.

"Yes, this is the work of the pupils there and a mighty good showing I call it, too." A half-dozen glass cases held the exhibit.

"You don't say all this is the work of those poor kids, do you?"

"Not much kids about it!" Uncle Penn replied. "Notice the labels. Some of them are well on in the twenties, and some even beyond that. But they're children 'mentally' as you can see by the figures."

Sure enough! A beautiful piece of basket work had upon it the name of a pupil who for twenty-seven years had borne his piteous limitations, but whose mental age was classified as "nine years."

Barton surveyed the symmetrical weaving, the correct coloring in the pattern, with skepticism in his eyes. "George!" he exclaimed again. "How could anyone with a mental age of only nine years do such work. Just imagine Fritzie turning off anything like that and he's ten!"

And look at this!" "This" was a fine piece of hammered brass work, made, the label informed them, by a young man of thirty whose mind was that of a child of twelve.

"But how can they do it?" Barton asked. "And look at that embroidery, will you? Madge couldn't do better herself, and the woman who did it only a child mentally, it seems."

"Marvellous!" assented Uncle Penn.

A sweet-faced woman who stood near, spoke now, rather hesitatingly.

"Pardon me," she said, "but I am especially interested in this exhibit myself, and I can assure you it is all genuine work of these handicapped young men and women at the school. I have been a teacher there, and every piece in that exhibit tells a history of brave touching effort. You can hardly appreciate how hard they do try!"

Uncle Penn adjusted his glasses for a closer look at the embroidered centerpiece.

"It's marvellous," he said again. "Don't see how they can do it!"

"Only by putting into it all there is in them of faithful, painstaking effort," answered the woman. "And their pleasure when they see the work completed is something touching. Now, that piece of embroidery you've been looking at—how long would you suppose it took her to make it?"

"A month?" Barton suggested with interest.

"A year! You see it meant steady, persistent effort, and mistakes every now and then, that had to be pointed out and rectified. She was always so patient over it, too—her poor stumbling efforts would touch your heart." The woman was looking now at Uncle Penn's fatherly face. "But she kept at it, as long as we would allow her each day, and the pattern worked itself out, bit by bit. 'Oh, see my roses my roses!' she would exclaim over and over again when the centrepiece was done. And they were her roses—every one a blossoming of honest, faithful toil. You should have seen her delight when the centrepiece was nicely laundered and she stood looking at it in all its freshness, ready to be sent here. 'My roses!' she said again, 'My very own roses!'"

The woman bent over for another look in the case—perhaps for an instant she did not feel quite willing to have these see her eyes.

"It seems pretty tough!" This exclamation of course was from Barton. "Working against such odds and showing that sort of spirit, rather makes a fellow with all his faculties feel it's up to him to make something of himself, doesn't it?" His uncle nodded.

There were other visitors pressing around the case now and the sweet-faced woman teacher moved away in readiness to aid her bits of information to any who might wish it.

"Most of these are marked 'sold,' you see," Uncle Penn pointed to the blue cards. "But that embroidered thing, dolly, do you call it, hasn't. Wonder if your mother would like it?"

"Of course she would, Uncle Penn. It's a beauty, and she doesn't get much chance for fancywork herself. But I don't believe she'd want you to spend so much for it," he added rather awkwardly.

"It is not much," Uncle Penn said, "and somehow, now we know the history of those roses I want them in the family. Poor thing! Poor thing! Hope they'll tell her how folks admired her work. If she has the mind of a child of twelve even, it'll please her to know. A year's work!"

While Uncle Penn was arranging for his purchase with the one at the desk, Barton bent over a bit of brass work—a pen tray, beautifully done. He could seem to see the clumsy hands with its skill so laboriously acquired, hammering out the metal. The maker of that little brass tray had spent a score of years in this workaday world, but in 'mentality' he was rated at about half that age.

"And nothing much to look forward to!" Bart said to himself musingly. "Just the same plodding hard effort, day after day, beginning another bit of work as soon as he's finished the last." "Poor fellow."

Bart thought the price matched the tag fastened to the bit of brass and stepped over to the one at the desk. Uncle Penn's eyes met the lad's comprehendingly, and, each with his package they went out to the elevator. Not till they were down in the crowded business street did either speak. Then the first word was from Barton.

"Queer how seeing anything like that makes one feel sort of sad and glad both at once, isn't it? Pitying those poor things all you know how, and yet congratulating yourself that you're all right and sound yourself?" Uncle Penn nodded his understanding of Barton's point.

"Something like the folks that enjoyed their roast turkey more when they thought of the poor people that 'couldn't even afford a piece of salt pork.' Sounds horribly selfish doesn't it? And yet—you know what I mean, don't you?"

"Yes, I know, Bart."

"Strange to say," Barton continued with a twinkle in his eye, "that exhibit's given me an idea or two—something you never thought of when you took me in."

Uncle Penn's gray eyes twinkled back at the boy.

"I'm going to put this brass tray on my desk, and some day when I'm plugging away at my geometry and feel that I'm coming out the little end of the horn, I've a notion that I'll look at that poor fellow's work and sort of—sort of take a brace of myself."

"Good for you, Bart!" exclaimed Uncle Penn. "That's the kind of spirit I like to see. And it's what I expected of you, too."

MAN: THE MASTER MAGICIAN

Of course you have seen some wonder-working magician take from an apparently empty hat great quantities of flowers that cascaded down upon the stage in a flood of color. If your curiosity carried you through an investigation of this seeming miracle you discovered that these masses of paper flowers were packed into a bit so small that it was easily concealed in one's hand. All the magician did was to remove the hand that held them compressed. Then, seemingly from nothing, there sprang forth a stream of bulbs and blossoms that threatened to over-flow the stage itself.

My own feeling, as I look upon the workers who are building their personalities into our properties, is that of a magician. He knows in his heart that when the confining band is liberated, beauty in the form of flowers will burst forth and give joy to all who see. And I know in my heart that this business which we have builded, is the result of the magic of the liberated thoughts and feelings of men. Men talk of the greatness of railroads and steamship lines, of factories and buildings of steel, of mines and farms, of schools and churches, of a great canal that connects the oceans, and of irrigation projects that reclaim the desert from the dominion of the sun. But I know that the greatest business in the world is the building of the bodies and brains of men and women, and the liberation of their power in service of their neighbors.

All of us who are serving are the empire builders. We are the dreamer of dreams. We are the master magicians. It is the love and loyalty and enthusiasm and efficiency of men that builds our roads, constructs our buildings and pours into them the breath of life. It is because I know this that I would send into the minds of all our workers sentences of understanding and appreciation of the work that has been done during the year that has passed. To you all I am compelled to say: "Well done thou good and faithful servants." You have done magical work. You will do work in which there will be even more magic. In the doing of your daily tasks you have grown, you have become stronger, you have become of greater worth. Our strength is the strength of all. Kipling expresses my thought when he says:

Now this is the law of the jungle,
As old and as true as the sky;
And the wolf that shall keep it may prosper,
But the wolf that shall break it must die.

As the creeper that circles the tree trunk,
So the law runneth forward and back—
For the strength of the pack is the wolf,
And the strength of the wolf is the pack.

May we all work together through the coming months with a spirit of harmony, neighborliness, good-will and enthusiasm greater than we have ever known before, and may success and happiness and contentment of spirit enter into our work and into our lives and into our homes. This is my wish for you and yours.

—THOMAS DREIER.

MR. POTTS AND THE SALESMAN

"City folks, they're so smart!" said Mr. Abijah Potts with disgust. "They don't seem to have all they need to do is just to give one look at a man, and then tell where he was born and where he's going; but they usye the mark sometimes."

"I bet they missed it on you, pa," said the youthful counterpart of Mr. Potts, who was testing the powers of a three-blade knife, a souvenir of his parent's recent trip to Boston.

"They did," said Mr. Potts, triumphantly; "that's just what they did. First thing I set out to get me was a new valise. My old bag has busted beyond repairs after all these years.

"Well, sir, I stepped into a leather store along with Cy that very morning, and the clerk come forward polite enough, though he cast a look at my linen duster that I didn't exactly like.

"'I want to look at travelling-bags—valises,' said I.

"'Step this way, sir,' he spoke up, gilt, as a monkey. 'I can give you just what you want—an excellent alligator bag for eight dollars.'

"My dander rose, but I kept a grip on my feelings and looked at him as calm as a clock.

"'Young feller,' said I, 'just because I've got on a linen duster and a cool spell's come on, you needn't decide that I'm going to Florida. It just happens,' said I, and I guess by the color he took on that my tone was pretty sarcastic—'it just happens,' said I, 'that I'm not agoing to Florida, but to the Fair in Buffalo, New York State,' said I.

"'Then, long as I didn't want to be too severe with him,' said Mr. Potts, leniently, 'I let him show me some good ribbed leather bags, and bought that one I fetched home with me.'"

TWENTY YEARS AGO

Notes from the Free Press of Thursday, March 26th, 1894

About forty degrees lower on Easter Sunday than Palm Sunday.

The pupils are enjoying the Easter vacation.

My pretty new spring bonnet, alas, I did not wear it, for fear of snow upon it, last Easter morn.

The cold snap made good skating again.

Cards for a fashionable wedding in Hamilton are being issued with the words in one corner, "No presents."

Guelph Mercury says: "Mr. James Gibbons, Esquesing, is in town to-day. He is 74 years of age and formed the first Reform Club in Guelph in 1830, after the rebellion."

A deputation is going to Toronto to-day in reference to securing the Ontario Provincial Fat Stock Show for Guelph next December.

As shooting time is approaching, when there is often much carelessness, as a preventative of the "didn't know it was loaded" tragedy, this advice, of unknown origin, may be found useful: When a gun or a pistol is pointed at you, knock the fellow down. Don't stop to enquire whether it is loaded or not, knock him down. Don't be particularly careful with what, only that he is thoroughly knocked down. If a coroner's inquest has to be held let it be on him, he won't be missed.

The special services in the Methodist Church were brought to a close on Friday night with an earnest address by the pastor to those who had manifested a determination to be Christians.

Eight new members were received in Knox Church on Sunday. The special services preceding were well attended and full of interest. Rev. Mr. Rae preached on Wednesday evening; Rev. D Strachan, of Rockwood, on Thursday evening; and Rev. R. Fowlie, of Erin, on Friday evening and Saturday morning.

Highest standing in respective classes in Dublin School: Wm. Somerville, Andrew Arthurs, Duncan Scott, Aggie Mulholland, Mary Kaley, William McPherson, Herbert McIsaac, Chester Wallace, Willie Stalker, Cassie Mulholland, Chris. McPherson, John Kaley. Average attendance for winter session 31. O. Midgley, Teacher.

The special services at Churchill Congregational Church have been productive of much good, over fifty persons having sought salvation. The church at Caledon, which is also in Rev. Mr. Adams' care, has had a special series of services.

Next Sunday the officials of the Brick Church place their church at the disposal of their Congregational neighbors for public service, the church at the hill being under a course of renovation, papering, etc.

A son and two daughters of Mr. Benj. Watkins, first line, were driving past Crewsons Corners on Monday evening when one of the lines broke and the horses ran away, but were guided into Alex. Cripps' yard where the occupants were thrown out. The horses then turned around across the lot and ran up the road nearly to McIntosh's before they were caught. No one was hurt but the outfit was almost completely wrecked.

THE HOME LINK UNBROKEN

The minister knew that his visitor had joyful news to tell, for his face fairly shone with happiness.

"I've got something to show you pastor," the middle-aged man began, as he reached his hand toward the pocket of his coat.

"Out with it, quick," laughed the minister. "I know by your looks that I want to see it."

"It's a letter from my college boy," beamed the father, "written the day he was 21. Let me read you a little of it and see if you don't think his mother and I have reason to be happy over it. 'Dear Mother and Daddy,' that's the way it begins. Only think of his wanting to be a comrade with me enough to call me 'Daddy!' Then he goes on:

"'Just like the little boy when asked, "What are you going to be when you become of age?" I reply, "I'm going to be 21, and am going to be the same boy, only, I hope, a better one." Parents dear, you may not have a handsome, clever and brilliant young man for a son, but he is clean and honorable, if he does say it himself, and he is proud of it. I cannot, nor will I, enumerate some of the evil or harmful so-called pleasures indulged in here in college. A good many fellows have asked me, why? And in addition to the other reasons I reply, "My dad believes I am just as good away from home as I am under his roof, and I know he believes I wouldn't do anything dishonorable, for he has told me so. He trusts me, and I would do anything rather than break trust with my dad."

"'Well, I am now 21, and free from all legal disability, and have full contractual powers, but also full responsibilities. And now I am, I will try to make good use of my manhood. I always was glad I wasn't a rich man's son, and I never was so glad I am a poor man's son as to-day. I have a very high degree of ambition, which is proper, but the crop of brains and ability must be grown to match, and that crop can't be forced, and needs great care and attention.

"'This is a real serious epistle, and a lady told me she thought I was a real serious-minded young man. And, anyway, I am a man to-day and that is quite enough to make a fellow feel serious. Lovingly, your grown son, Sunny Sonny.'"

As the father finished the reading, with a voice that trembled a bit, the minister clasped his hands and said:

"That is a fine letter! It has cost you something to keep that boy in college, but you feel paid."

"The boy who lives up to his father's belief in him, and will not 'break faith' during his college course, is not likely to break faith with his father later on." Then the minister added, "The time will come when he will know more fully the reasons why his father and mother wanted him to do certain things, and abstain from others. And then he will be still more glad that he has kept faith with you and kept the home link unbroken."

After a girl gets married she helps her girl friends to the same sort of bliss.

QUESTIONS

Will angels hear my spirit home
When I am called away?
Will friendly spirits aid my flight,
Upon the gates of day?
Or, will the soul, released from earth,
In darkness, lone and drear,
Forever seek companionship,
And light, and joy, and cheer?

When this ethereal self-hood quits
This hand, heart, and brain,
Will drowsy stupor seize its powers,
And age sleep the same?
Or, will transcendant glory dawn,
Bright from the eternal throne?
And shall I see Him as He is,
And know as I am known?

And is there nothing more of life
Than lieth who die unknown?
Will death be but oblivion,
With all our hopes o'erthrown?
Or, will we just begin to learn
That glories hid from view
To mortal eyes—so measureless—
Through countless ages now?

Which brightest, dearest, truest seems
The opposites portrayed?
Which kindles most of joy and hope?
Which most doth instinct dread?
The answer comes, like waves of light
Upon the shores of time,
God's Word and reason, both attest
The future all sublime.

A JOKE THAT RECOILED

No one feels unhappy when retribution overtakes the practical joker. Even if justice is long delayed there is a pleasant feeling of satisfaction when at last it comes.

Ten years or more ago a Paris drummer was leaving Bordeaux, when it occurred to him in a humorous moment that it would be tremendously funny, just as the train pulled out of the station, to lean out and slap somebody's face. This he did, and laughed all the way to Paris at the thought of the surprise and wrath of his victim.

Years passed, and the drummer went into business for himself, and settled down into a quiet and orderly citizen. One day, as he was walking along a Paris boulevard, he was stopped by a man who asked him if he had ever lived in Bordeaux.

The business man replied that he had not, but that as a commercial traveller he had frequently visited that town. Thereupon the stranger recalled the face-slapping episode, and politely requesting permission to return the compliment, at once suited the action to the word. In a minute there was a lively scrimmage on the boulevard, and the police appeared and escorted both combatants to the station-house.

After thinking it over, the business man decided that his assailant had been entitled to a fair chance to pay him back, and that it was his own stupid and inexcusable joke which had provoked the assault. Therefore he refused to make any charge against the other man, and they shook hands and called the account square.

NOT THE POOR ONES

"Let me introduce you to the most honest young man I have ever known."

"But mamma doesn't want me to meet any poor young man."

ANIMALS THAT WORK

Some of the wasps are paper makers; the spiders are spinners and the worms are weavers.

The ants are indefatigable workers and have a well organized system of labor.

Certain species of East Indian ants are horticulturists; they raise mushrooms, upon which they feed their young.

The bees are expert builders; their cells are so constructed as, with the least quantity of material, to have the largest-size rooms and the least possible loss of wall spaces.

So also are the ant lions, whose funnel-shaped traps are exactly correct in conformation, as if they had been made by the most skilled architects of our species with the aid of the best instruments.

The beaver is an architect, engineer and woodcutter; he builds houses and dams water-courses with the ingenuity and despatch that would do credit to human hands and brains. We all know what it means to "work like a beaver."

The spiders are skilful spinners. Their webs of great variety and intricate pattern are in reality marvels of construction. Each is made to serve the combined purpose of a trap and a castle.

WHAT HE SMALLEND

"Did you ever realize anything on that investment?"

"Oh, yes."

"What did you realize on it?

"What a fool I had been."

VALUABLE CUT

"It seems strange to me that Mr. Ketchum has forced his way into fashionable society so soon," said a conservative old lady to her son-in-law.

"In my day a man with his table manners would not have been considered a desirable addition to any dinner company. Why, he has no idea how to use his knife and fork!

"No-o," said the young man, slowly, "that's perfectly true; but his ability to cut coupons is such that they overlook his awkwardness with steak, fish and game."

READING THOUGHTS

"I wish I could read your thoughts," he said.

"So do I," she replied, with a half stifled yawn. "It is so unpleasant sometimes to have to say what one thinks."

Like a Grip at the Throat.—For a disease that is not classed as fatal there is probably none which causes more terrible suffering than asthma. Sleep is impossible, the sufferer becomes exhausted and finally, though the attack passes, is left in unceasing dread of its return. Dr. J. D. Kellogg's Asthma Remedy is a wonderful curative agent. It immediately relieves the restricted air passages as thousands can testify. It is sold by dealers everywhere.

A Safe Pill for Suffering Women.—The secluded life of women which permits little healthful exercise, is a fruitful cause of derangements of the stomach and liver and is accountable for the pains and lassitude that so many of them experience. Parmelee's Vegetable Pills will correct irregularities of the digestive organs and restore health and vigor. The most delicate woman can use them with safety, because their action, while effective, is mild and stitching.