

The Family Circle

THE LAND OF 'PRETTY SOON'

I know of a land where the streets are paved
With the things we meant to achieve,
It is walled with the money we meant to have saved
And the pleasures for which we grieve.

The kind words unspoken, the promises broken,
And many a coveted boon
Are stowed away there in that land somewhere—
The land of 'Pretty Soon.'

There are uncut jewels of possible fame,
Lying about in the dust,
And many a noble and lofty aim
Covered with mould and rust.

And, oh, this place, while it seems so near,
Is further away than the moon!
Though our purpose is fair, yet we never get there—
The land of 'Pretty Soon.'

It is further at noon than it is at dawn,
Further at night than at noon;
Oh! let us beware of that land down there—
The land of 'Pretty Soon.'

A BOY WHO HAD NO CHANCE

'You feel proud, don't you, Dick?'
'I feel glad,' said Dick, simply.
'Of course he feels glad. And proud too, if he felt
like owning it, but it's the right kind of pride. Here
is one that feels proud, and is quite ready to say
it.'

A plainly-dressed, sweet-faced woman was holding
Dick's hand in a close grasp. The kindly faces
surrounding her showed by their sympathy that 'they
warmly acknowledged her right to be proud, for most
of them knew through what struggles her son had
reached this day when he had stood as valedictorian
in the graduating class of the high school.

Herbert Barnes, the first speaker, stood a little to
one side, gazing on what was going on about him
with half indifferent amusement.

'It is a great thing for Dick,' he remarked to
companion. 'At least, he thinks so. He has a fancy
that a high-school diploma is an open sesame to all
the big things in the world.

'It's a good deal to help us, isn't it? I mean
the education that it stands for.'

'Oh, I suppose so—to boys who need that sort of
thing. Now, I don't, you know; I can get along
without it.'

'I dare say you can,' said the other, who knew
that Herbert had been quietly dropped out of the
school about six months before for poor scholarship.

'Yes, I'm in for business now, and Latin and
'ologies don't count much there. I have a good
chance ahead of me, you know. My uncle is going
to give me a clerkship in his big business. It's a fine thing
to have a 'pull.

Dick Woodbury had plenty of kind friends,
but the demand for intelligent employment was limited,
and he had a great desire to remain near his
widowed mother. So it came about that within a few
weeks after the proud commencement day Herbert
stopped in surprise to speak to a boy wrestling with
some heavy packing-cases at the alley entrance to his
uncle's store.

'You here, Dick?' he said.

'Looks like it, doesn't it?' said Dick, pausing to
take a long breath.

'You don't mean you are doing this kind of
work?'

'That's just what I mean. A fellow that can't
get what he wants must take what he can get.'

'But—isn't it pretty tough?'

'Rather, at first. But I'm going to give my
muscles a training now.'

'A porter, after all his fine study, and the fuss
made over his graduation,' remarked Herbert to the
young man near the desk at which he worked a little
and idled a good deal. 'Poor chap,' half
contemptuously, 'I'm afraid he's going to find, as I said
before, that it takes something besides a high-school
diploma to boost a fellow up.' Dick brought the same
earnest, conscientious effort to his subordinate position
that he had always given to his studies. At
first he ached cruelly under the unaccustomed physical
strain, but before long the rebellious muscles
obeyed the demand on them, furnishing a good bodily
foundation on which to build such mental effort as
might in future be demanded.

And the demand came in good time to the boy
who had no chance except that built upon faithful
effort.

'I am told there was a light in the basement all
night,' said Mr. Seymour, on coming to his place of
business one cold morning. 'Who knows anything about
it?'

He was referred to Dick Woodbury.

'A load of that tropical fruit came from the station
just as I was leaving,' explained Dick. 'I told
the drayman everything was locked up for the night,
and we couldn't receive it; but he said they
couldn't put it anywhere, it would freeze. So I got
into the basement and made a fire.'

'And you stayed here all night?'

'Yes, it needed an even temperature?'

Mr. Seymour had his own opinion of an employee
who, in the seeking of his employer's interest, did
more than he was hired to do. It was not long
after this that Herbert was surprised at seeing Dick
at one of the desks in the same office with himself.

There he remained for a long time—longer than
would suit the maker of sensational stories of the
rapid advancement of poor boys. In real life the
crowding for place is too pressing for rapid promotion.
But in the years in which Dick worked hard
for what might be thought moderate pay he was
steadily building up a character for integrity and reliability
which in time found the place of trust
which awaits the trustworthy.

Herbert still remains at his desk, relying on his
well-off father to supply him with what he cannot
earn, and the boy who had 'no chance'—except the
chance always belonging to energy, perseverance, and
right living—now in charge of an important branch of
the business, writes out the cheques for his monthly
pay.

A BOY'S OPINION OF GIRLS

Girlls makes me sick. i no a hull lots of girlls
besides haveing sum cisters what i wisht was brothers.
all that girlls is good fer is to go tatteling
when a feller does sum thin he don't want his mother
to no of, cisters especelly. all they think of is
dressis. they are all the time wanting noo dresses
and hats and other things to ware.

if i had to ware dressis like they do with things
on them that tuk about a nour to fassen, and had
hare that had to be braded evry nite and fixt about
a hunderd times durence the day id rather be bald
heded.

also girlls thinks they are smart and go round
showin off how much more they no than there brothers
do. they aint so much thogh.

i no a hull lot more about girlls but i dasent tell
he caws its about my cisters and theyd go crybab-
bing to ma and ma would tell pa and pa would get
mad and do sum thing against his will. he always
says it is anny way but i guess he must have a
week will. i guess that is all for the presint as i
kant think of anny more to say.

BOY WISDOM

Bad habits grow without cultivation.

A good purpose leads to a good position in life.

Live each hour as though there were only thirty
minutes in it.

The word 'can't' sounds all right when it refers to
telling a lie.

The fellow who does nothing always gets tired the
quickest.

The cock crows early in the morning because he goes
to roost early.

Every boy should post himself—but not against a
street corner.

Practice makes perfect, except the practice of sin,
which makes imperfect.

A boy is never too young to begin to think of
what he will do when a man.

The telling of one lie is all that is necessary to
make you a liar. Likewise the stealing of one apple
will make you a thief.

CHINESE PROVERBS

Riches come better after poverty than poverty after
riches.

He who swallows quickly can chew but little.

Borrowed money makes time short, working for
others makes it long.

The gem cannot be polished without friction, nor
the man perfected without trials.

Some people's hearts are shrunk in them, like
dried nuts. You can hear them rattle as they walk.