

STORIES

for The Junior Assembly

Edited by D.M. Prescott

STORIES
for the
JUNIOR ASSEMBLY

edited by
D. M. PRESCOTT

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PREFACE

This is a book of true stories for use in the morning assembly, or at any other time when stories are appropriate—such as for illustrating a talk or filling a gap in the time-table. They are arranged in order of length, beginning with very short anecdotes and increasing till the time required for reading is several minutes. They are taken from the past and from the present day, and range over the whole world.

But they have one thing in common. They all deal with *character*, the basic cement of society. Some people today, under the pretext of being modern, are chipping away at that cement; they would suffer as much as anyone if our civilisation were to collapse for lack of it. Heroic qualities are not any the less needed because they are derided as old-fashioned; indeed, the true 'avant garde' are those who have discovered, in a twentieth-century setting, the thrill of 'giving all for something great'.

By and large the stories are new, but some old favourites have been included, partly because though most people have heard of them, many do not know the actual details, and partly because great living is relevant in any age. A few legends are also included because they have useful character-building qualities and because in themselves they have literary or dramatic value. The style in which all the stories is told is simple and direct, so that those using them may be able to retell them if necessary in their own way.

The list of contents at the beginning gives the length of each story, and at the end are three indexes, one giving the stories in alphabetical order for easy finding, one under subjects for use on specific occasions, and the third listing the names of famous men and women of whom stories are told.

D.M.P.

THE BLANDFORD SERIES
OF ASSEMBLY BOOKS

Edited by D. M. Prescott

The Senior Teacher's Assembly Book

The Senior Teacher's Prayer Book

Readings for the Senior Assembly

The Junior Teacher's Assembly Book

The Junior Teacher's Prayer Book

Stories for the Junior Assembly

The Infant Teacher's Assembly Book

The Infant Teacher's Prayer Book

Stories for Infants at Home and School

Poems for the School Assembly

I ONE-MINUTE STORIES

A PRESIDENT'S UPBRINGING

John F. Kennedy, who became President of the United States, owed much to the way his father brought him up. The father, who had nine children, used to get them to sit down, and then tell them, 'I don't care what you do in life, but whatever you do, be the best person in the world when you do it. Even if you're going to be a ditch-digger, be the best ditch-digger in the world.'

NEVER TOO YOUNG

How soon in life can you start being helpful to the people around you?

In a country district recently, the farmers were very troubled by dogs which were chasing and worrying the sheep; but they could not catch them. A public notice was sent out asking anyone who saw it happening to report; and it was a little boy of only four who did so.

FOES INTO FRIENDS

After the American Civil War, when the north beat the south, Abraham Lincoln, the President, showed a forgiving spirit to the conquered southerners. One day, when he had forgiven an enemy, someone asked him, 'Why did you do it?' 'Our business is to get rid of our enemies, isn't it?' replied Lincoln. 'Well, I got rid of this one by turning him into a friend through forgiveness.'

A PERFECT JOB

A carpenter was once taking infinite trouble with the planing and finishing of the underside of a table.

'Why do you take all that trouble?' asked someone who was watching him. 'No one will ever know.'

'But I shall always know,' said the carpenter. And he went on putting his whole heart into his work.

THE BOY WHO WAS NOT AFRAID

One day a man famous for his skill in swordsmanship came to a school to show it to the boys. At one point he asked for a volunteer to kneel down before him with an apple on his head, which the swordsman would then cut in two. No one volunteered; even the school football captain would not face the risk. Then a boy with red hair ran out and knelt down, and with one blow the swordsman cut the apple on his head neatly in two. The school was Harrow, and the boy was Winston Churchill.

'YOU STILL HAVE YOUR CENTRE'

In his book *Rovering to Success*, where he is talking about courage, Lord Baden-Powell says, 'Remember how General Foch, at the Battle of the Marne in the first world war, reported to Joffre, his commander-in-chief, "My right has been thrown back; my left is in retreat; I am attacking with my centre." And so can you. Your right may have been attacked, your left may be in disorder, but you still have your centre; attack with that, and you'll pull through.'

WHY WORK?

When a great cathedral was being built, a man passing by the site stopped to talk to the workmen.

'What are you doing?' he asked one.

'Cutting stone,' he replied.

'And what are you doing?' he asked another.

The second man said that he was earning so much a week.

'And you—what are you doing?' he asked a third.

'I am building a cathedral,' said the third man.

EVERYONE MATTERS

Dr. J. Patterson Smyth, in his book *The People's Life of Christ*, says this: 'Some time ago I watched the organ builders at work in a church. All the pipes were scattered over

the pews, from the great eighteen-foot diapason to the little shrill whistle the size of a man's finger. And I saw that the builder was as careful in the tuning of the little one as of the great. He did not want the little one to do the work of the great. Each made its own sound, and so the music came out right.'

A CHANCE NEARLY MISSED

The organist of a country church was practising one day when a stranger appeared and asked to be allowed to try the organ.

'Oh,' said the organist, 'this is a very special organ, and we do not allow strangers to play on it.'

The man went quietly away, looking disappointed. But the organist's conscience smote him for his discourtesy; he ran after the stranger and called him back to play. Such wonderful music was the result that the organist asked the stranger's name. 'Mendelssohn,' was the reply. And the organist realised that by his discourtesy he had very nearly missed hearing music played by a great master on his own organ.

AN ADVERTISEMENT

In 1900, Sir Ernest Shackleton placed this advertisement in London papers:

MEN WANTED for Hazardous Journey. Small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return doubtful. Honour and recognition in case of success.—Sir Ernest Shackleton.

This was his call for men to accompany him on his world-famous expedition to the South Pole. Later he said: 'It seemed as though all the men in Great Britain were determined to accompany me, the response was so overwhelming.'

THE TWO GOATS

Two mountain goats once met on a narrow plank bridge which spanned a deep ravine. They wanted to pass each other; but there was no room, and they both realised that if they were to butt or push each other, they would fall into the abyss together. The situation was a deadlock.

One goat was very proud, and would not give in; but the other was more sensible. He lay down on the plank, and let the second goat walk over him to the opposite side. Then he got up and went safely over too.

Someone always has to begin.

THE EARL AND THE OLD LADY

Lord Shaftesbury, the great earl who put an end to children working in factories, had no use for class distinctions, and treated everyone the same. One day the British Army came to camp on his estate, and, as Lord Lieutenant, he set out in an open carriage to receive them. As he drove, he passed an old countrywoman hobbling painfully along. He stopped the carriage and made the old lady get in; then he himself mounted the box with the coachman, and when they reached the army lines to be received with military honours, there was the earl seated on the box, while the old lady rode in state inside the carriage.

THE WRONG SCREW

A young workman in England was putting the brass screws into the wooden base of a new compass when he lost one of them, and could not find it. 'Oh, another one will do,' he said, and replaced it with a steel one. But the compass was put into a motor-boat given to the Labrador doctor Wilfred Grenfell, in order to make his work of treating the sick people along that desolate coast more easy; and one day, when he was called to visit a sick woman, that steel screw

deflected the compass needle so that he lost his way, and not only did not arrive in time to save the woman but also came near to losing his own life. A moment's carelessness caused the loss of one life and very nearly two.

ANSWERED PRAYER

The crew of a Flying Fortress had to take to their life-rafts after being forced down at sea while on a routine mission *en route* to Australia. Eight of the nine crewmen were greatly worried. The ninth, Sergeant Hernandez, began to pray. Shortly thereafter, he startled the rest by announcing that help was on the way. He continued to pray. At the end of the second day they were rescued by native Australian fishermen near a lonely coral reef. These natives had been several hundred miles from the mainland in their outrigger canoes, and had turned homeward with their catch, when a 'strange urge came over them'. Something impelled them to alter their course and steer for the worthless, uninhabited little coral island where the airmen had drifted.

EVEN ONE NOTE COUNTS

The great conductor, Sir Michael Costa, was one night holding a rehearsal with a full orchestra, hundreds of singers and an organ. The instruments were playing at full strength, the choir was singing, the organ playing and the noise was so great that a man at the back of the orchestra who played the little piccolo, one of the smallest instruments, said to himself, 'It does not matter whether I play or not,' and when his note came, he did not sound it. Suddenly there was a dead hush. In all that mighty burst of sound, the keen ear of the conductor had missed the note of the piccolo. Someone was not playing his part. The small sound mattered just as much as the big ones in that great orchestra; and the maestro had stopped the music to make sure that everything was there.

HOW GREED CATCHES MONKEYS

In a certain eastern country, the people are very clever at catching monkeys, because they make use of their greed. A large jar with a very small mouth is put on the ground, with some choice nuts inside it. Along comes a monkey. He smells the nuts, puts his arm into the jar and grabs a handful. Then he tries to draw his arm out again. But the fistful of nuts makes it impossible for him to get his paw through the small opening. He is much too greedy to drop the nuts, and the jar is too heavy for him to drag it away; so there he is kept, a helpless, fettered prisoner, till the hunters come along and catch him.

THE BRAVE PILOT

A pilot was flying a planeload of passengers over the jungles of New Guinea. He was the most able pilot in the district, trained in crop spraying, which requires very skilful flying.

Suddenly, as he flew, his engines faltered and stopped, and he realised that a crash was inevitable. The pilot was a Christian, and in this extremity his only thought was for others. With consummate skill he was able to bring his machine down and land it so that the side where he himself sat struck the ground. It burst into flames, and he was so badly injured that, though he was rescued, he died from his injuries. But the passengers on the other side were saved, thanks to the brave man who gave his life for them.

HONEST ABE

Abraham Lincoln was a great statesman, and one reason for his greatness was that people trusted him. They called him 'Honest Abe'. And this honesty ran all through his life, in small things as well as big ones. A story is told of how, as a young man, he had a job in a country shop, and at the end of the day, when he counted up the money, he found that he had overcharged one of the customers by a few cents.

Many people would have said, 'That's too small a sum of money to worry about,' but Abraham Lincoln, at the end of a long day, walked several miles to pay back the money. It was that kind of integrity which made the American people trust him enough to choose him as their President.

TRUE GREATNESS

In Britain in the nineteenth century there were two famous statesmen, W. E. Gladstone and Benjamin Disraeli. A young lady once went to two dinner parties on two following days; on the first day she sat next to Mr. Gladstone, and on the second day her neighbour was Mr. Disraeli. Afterwards she was asked what she thought of these two very different men.

'After Mr. Gladstone had sat next to me at dinner,' she replied, 'I was convinced that he was the wisest person in the world. But after I had sat through dinner with Mr. Disraeli, I was sure that *I* was the wisest person in the world.'

That is true greatness, to make people feel that they themselves can do great things.

THE LAST FIVE PER CENT

It has been said that the hardest part of any job is the last five per cent.

When Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tensing were on the very last stage of their climb to the top of Mount Everest, they came to a point where they began to wonder if they could go any farther. Every time they reached a corner and turned it, there was only another ascent of snow and ice ahead. Hillary was just asking himself how much longer he could go on, when they turned a last corner, he made a few more whacks with his ice axe—and there they were at the top! The height of Everest is twenty-nine thousand *and two* feet; and for Hillary and Tensing those extra two feet were certainly the last five per cent.

IDEAS ARE STRONGER THAN STONES

Long ago, the Chinese decided that they would make themselves really safe against their enemies. So they built an enormous wall right across the country. It took nearly two thousand years to build, and when it was finished it was fifteen hundred miles long, twenty to thirty feet high, and twelve feet wide across the top, so that soldiers could march along it. Every two hundred yards or so, there was a forty-foot tower guarded by troops. It seemed as if nothing could possibly get through this impregnable wall.

But one day enemies came. They did not trouble to attack the great pile of stones; they had a better idea. They simply offered bribes to the gatekeepers, big enough bribes to make them willing to take the money and secretly to open the gates. The enemy was inside, and the great wall had been no defence at all.

PLUS OR MINUS

There are two ways of looking at life—the plus way and the minus way. Or, to use longer words, the positive way and the negative way.

A teacher once illustrated these two ways by coming into a classroom and pinning on the blackboard a large white square, in the middle of which was a small black dot.

‘What do you see there?’ asked the teacher.

‘A small black dot,’ chorused the class.

‘Really?’ said the teacher. ‘Is that *all* you see? Do none of you see a big white square?’

In our lives at home and at school we often see and pick out the small things that are wrong—the minuses—instead of the big things that are right—the pluses. We need to change our thinking from minus to plus, so that we see the good things—then we shall hardly notice the ones that are not so good.

POSITIVE THINKING

By Dr. Leslie Weatherhead

I read somewhere of a man who tried to cure himself of negative thinking by giving his wife sixpence every time he uttered a negative thought. He found that he had quite a lot to pay up at the end of the day! She pounced on him if he only said he was afraid it was going to rain. If he said he was afraid he wasn't going to sleep that night, she was on him like a ton of bricks, and if he said he thought he was going to be ill, she wanted double pay! Slowly he found the value of the discipline of thinking positively. He *expected* health. He *expected* a serene, confident, joyous day from the moment he awakened. Thus he found a way of life that left no anxious thoughts for the morrow. The discipline of positive thinking helped to change his whole life.

THE CRY IN THE WOOD

During the Seven Years War between France and Austria in the eighteenth century, the French had marched an army into Austria, and a young French officer, called the Chevalier d'Assis, was sent ahead to reconnoitre and see that the way was clear of the enemy.

It was night time, and as he entered a dark wood, suddenly he heard movements all about him, the sharp point of a bayonet pricked his breast, and a voice whispered fiercely, 'One sound, and you are a dead man!' The Chevalier realised that he had stumbled upon an Austrian ambush lying in wait for his regiment. Without a moment's hesitation he shouted at the top of his voice, 'Here, Auverne! The enemy are here!'

When the French soldiers burst into the wood, they found the enemy gone; but the young Chevalier lay dead on the ground. He had given his life to save theirs.

ENEMIES OR BROTHERS

A battalion of soldiers at Kimbu, in the Congo, were commanded by a Congolese colonel who believed that all men should be brothers. One day, while fighting lion-men, or 'Simbas', in the forest, the colonel's men brought in some of these outlaws as prisoners. True to his principles, instead of killing them, the colonel invited them to a meal, and talked to them, himself unarmed, as if they were indeed his brothers. They were so moved by what he said that the very same day they went back into the forest to find forty more of their men and to convince them, as they themselves had been convinced, that this war, in which brother was killing brother, must end. In the next few weeks a hundred and fifty 'Simbas' came in from the forests of their own free will to join their brothers in the forces which were fighting to bring back law and order to their war-torn country.

THE LITTLE BIT EXTRA

A story told by Dr. A. D. Belden

A friend of mine who has come recently from China told me that she was watching once a big Chinese 'junk' that was stuck on a mud bank in one of China's great rivers. A crowd of coolies with long poles was trying to move the 'junk' off the mud. Skipping about them was a tiny, funny boy—the captain's little son—who was ever so important, carrying a little bamboo pole himself and urging the men on. Presently all the men got their poles under the boat, heaving as hard as they could. But nothing happened. Then the little boy, carrying himself with such an air, solemnly pushed his pole under and lifted, and lo! the huge boat rolled gently off the mud bank. The 'little bit extra', though it must have been ever so small, had done it! Try out the idea—put a little bit extra into your life. It will save you getting stuck on a mud bank, perhaps!

THE THREAD THAT DIDN'T BREAK

There is a story of a steeplejack whose wife knitted his socks; and this woman prided herself on knitting so carefully that she never split the wool with her needles. One day, when the steeplejack was alone on the top of a high chimney, the ladder by which he had come up became loose and fell down, and he was left up there in mid-air, and in a desperate plight. Suddenly he had an idea, and, taking off his sock, he began to unravel it. Carefully he let down the wool to the crowd which had gathered below; a strong thread was tied to the wool, a thin string to the thread, and at last the steeplejack was able to draw up a stout rope by which he climbed safely down. He owed his life to the care with which his wife had made every stitch, so that the wool did not break.

ANGELO AND THE ROBBERS

Three notorious robbers once came to the house where Saint Francis lived with his friends. They were begging for food; but a young brother called Angelo drove them angrily away, calling them thieves and murderers, as indeed they were. But when Francis, who had not been there, came back, he told Angelo that he had done very wrong. 'You must take this bread and wine,' he said, 'and go after those men till you find them. Then give it to them from me, and kneel down and beg their forgiveness for your cruelty. Then ask them to come to me, and I will provide for them, so that they need not steal.'

After a long and weary journey Angelo found the robbers and did as he had been told. The robbers were so astounded to hear a man ask pardon for nothing but a few angry words that they decided to give up their evil ways and go and live with Francis. This they did, and became his faithful friends and followers.

A WALL OF DEFENCE

One cold winter many years ago the people of a certain town were in great trouble. A hostile army was marching down upon them, and they were certain that the brutal soldiers would ravage their homes. But in one family there was an aged grandmother who believed in the power of prayer. While the other members of the family were paralysed with fear and worry, she was quietly praying that God would protect them by building a wall of defence about them.

During the night they heard the tramping of many feet and the clank of heavy artillery; but no harm came to them. In the morning they moved cautiously out of the house. To the utter amazement of everyone except the grandmother, they discovered that a huge wall of drifted snow stood between their house and the road. The plundering army had missed a rich prize by only a few feet.

'See,' said the grandmother, 'God did build a wall around us.'

THE TEST

At a time when Christians in the Roman empire were undergoing persecution for their faith, Constantius Chlorus, father of Constantine the Great, was governor of Britain. He received orders to persecute the Christians in Britain too; but in his heart he did not believe that men should be ill-treated because of the way they believed. However, he ordered all his court to come and burn incense to the emperor. Everyone knew that not to do so was punishable by death. The governor watched those of his courtiers who were known to be Christians to see what they would do. Some were afraid, and burnt the incense; but the rest refused to betray their faith.

When all had made their choice, Constantius Chlorus said, "Those who are false to their God will never be true to

their prince.' And he dismissed from their posts those who had denied their faith, while he gave greater responsibility to those who had stood firm, because he knew that he could trust them.

'SOMETHING ELSE AND SOMETHING GREATER'

Wedgwood china is known the world over, and original pieces are worth a great deal of money. But its designer, Josiah Wedgwood, might have spent his days as an unknown potter but for something that looked like a great misfortune at the time. At the age of eleven he caught smallpox very badly, and was left with a diseased leg. He took his place in his father's pottery, and soon became a good 'thrower'—a man who moulds the pots on the wheel. But his bad leg obliged him to give up the work. But instead of wasting his life in fruitless regrets at not being a thrower, he began, as Mr. Gladstone said at his funeral, 'considering whether, as he could not be that, he might not be something else and something greater'. And he took up designing instead. And so it was to an apparent misfortune, looked at in the right spirit, that we owe the designing of the wonderful Wedgwood ware for which Britain is so justly famous.

A BORN NATURALIST

Dr. Edward Wilson, one of the heroes of Captain Scott's tragic expedition to the Antarctic, was a born naturalist. He told his father when he was only nine that that was what he had decided to be. At school he had a regular menagerie in his classroom, and he loved nothing more than birds' nesting. But he would never take more than one egg in four, and when he grew older he contented himself with merely watching the birds. Once in the holidays, when he had been out very early to find a plover's nest, and brought home two eggs, he discovered that the chicks inside were on the point of hatching, and he at once set out again, without

waiting for breakfast, to walk the three miles back to where he found them and replace them in the nest. His care for the wild creatures came before his need of breakfast. And it was this same care which he gave to people which made him so much beloved on the Antarctic expedition.

‘NO MAN SHALL BUY ME’

Andrew Marvell was a Member of Parliament in the reign of Charles II. He was also a writer, and in his writings he sometimes criticised the government very severely—so much so that it was decided to bribe him to hold his tongue. A nobleman from the court, with a large sum of money, went to the two poor rooms where Marvell lived very simply, with only a boy to wait on him, whereas in those days most people in his walk of life kept a number of servants.

When the courtier offered him the money, Marvell called his boy and said to him, ‘John, what shall I have for dinner today?’ ‘Why, sir,’ said the boy, looking much surprised, ‘the little bit of mutton I bought for you in the market.’ ‘And what shall I have tomorrow?’ asked his master. ‘Why, sir,’ said the boy, ‘I suppose what is left from today.’ ‘There, you see,’ said Marvell to the courtier, ‘my dinner is provided for today and tomorrow. You can take your money away; no man shall buy me.’

KINDNESS BEFORE CEREMONY

We often think of Queen Victoria as a very stiff and formal person, who insisted that everything should be done in the correct way. But under her proper appearance there was a warm heart, as is shown by an event which happened at her coronation. After the crown of England had been placed on her head, the peers of the realm came to kneel before her and swear fealty. To do this they had to mount five steps, and one earl, who was very old and feeble, fell as he began to

climb. He slowly picked himself up and began to climb the steps again, but he was obviously in pain, and the queen, in her royal robes, came down three of the five steps and stood there for the old earl to kiss her hand. Those who saw it realised that here was a woman with a tender heart as well as a royal personage, and the seeds were sown of the great affection in which her people held her in later years.

HE GAVE ALL FOR HIS MEN

In the days when a certain country was fighting for its freedom, a troop of its soldiers were fleeing from the enemy when they came to a river. They found a ford and crossed over by it, but their officer remained behind (to protect their rear). When the enemy force came up, this officer made no effort to escape. He was seized and questioned, but he refused to tell them whether his men had crossed the river, or even whether it could be forded.

'We shall soon find that out,' they said, and ordered him to cross the river. He could quite easily have done so by the ford, which lay just below the surface of the water; but instead he let himself sink deeper and deeper, deliberately rolling off the ford and allowing himself to be drowned. The enemy were convinced that the river could not be crossed, and the officer's men were able to escape. He had given his life for them.

TWO KINDS OF COURAGE

There are two kinds of courage, and both were shown by a French shepherd boy fifty years ago. His name was Jean Baptiste Jupille, and he was guarding his flock in the mountains when they were attacked by a mad wolf. With fearless courage Jean Baptiste seized the wolf and choked it to death with his bare hands, but not before it had bitten him severely. He was threatened with the terrible death of rabies.

But then came the call for the second kind of courage—moral courage. In Paris a scientist called Louis Pasteur had discovered that the disease could be cured by inoculation with the virus from a mad dog. But so far the cure had only been tried on animals, never on a human being. Jean Baptiste agreed to be the first to be given the new treatment. It was a very brave decision, for it might not work. But the treatment did succeed, and the brave shepherd's life was saved, as well as the lives of thousands of others in the years to come.

SHE COULD BE TRUSTED

Oliver Cromwell, who once ruled England as Lord Protector, had a little grand-daughter of whom he was very fond. He loved to have her with him, and although she was only six years old, he let her sit on his knee at important council meetings which discussed affairs of state. Some of his ministers were troubled by this; they told Cromwell that they were afraid of the little girl hearing state secrets and talking about them afterwards. 'Why,' said the Lord Protector, 'there is no secret I would trust with any of you that I would not trust with that infant.' To prove it, he set her a very hard test. He whispered something to her, telling her it was a secret which she must always keep. Then he told her mother and grandmother to try to get the secret from her. They tried everything—threats, bribes, even whipping—but nothing would make the little girl betray her grandfather's trust. At last they gave up, and everyone was sure that cabinet secrets would be safe with the loyal little grand-daughter.

QUEEN OF BEAUTY—AND COURAGE

When the judges crowned as beauty queen sixteen-year-old Shirley Tonkin, they praised her looks and deportment. And only afterwards did they learn that the girl they chose

as the prettiest and most graceful had an artificial leg. For Shirley, an orphan, is a heroine as well as a beauty.

She was almost killed three years ago saving her eighteen-month-old niece Carol Ashwin from a runaway van careering down High Street, Falmouth. (The little girl was saved), but Shirley suffered terrible injuries. Doctors had to amputate a leg.

Shirley's brother-in-law, John Ashwin, who is her guardian, said, 'When she came home after the dance, she flung her arms round me and cried, "I won, I won. And they couldn't tell there was anything wrong with me."' He added, 'She has always determined to be as good as any other girl despite her handicap. After the accident she was eighteen months in hospital and on crutches. Since then she has learned swimming, dancing, badminton and horse-riding, and has even entered for a fifty-mile hike.'

TRY AGAIN

Most people have heard of Bruce and the spider, but many do not know the real story. It is about King Robert the Bruce of Scotland, who in 1302 had been fighting against the English without success, and had been defeated in six battles. In despair, he took refuge in a poor man's hut in a place called Rachrin. As he sat in the hut wondering what to do next, he saw a spider hanging from a long thread, and trying to swing itself from one beam to another so as to fasten its line ready for making a web. Again and again it tried and failed—Bruce counted six attempts altogether. At last, on the seventh try, it succeeded.

'Why,' thought Bruce, 'that is just like me. I have had six tries against the English, and failed six times; but perhaps, like the spider, if I try just once more, maybe my fortunes will mend.' Encouraged by this thought, he led his men into battle again, and from then on he was as successful in war as he had formerly been defeated.

A STRONGER WEAPON

When the white people were taking possession of land in New Zealand, they often found themselves fighting the native Maoris. These simple people had few weapons with which to fight, but they sometimes found other ways of defending themselves.

One day a wise Maori leader heard that white troops were moving to attack his village. So he called his people together.

'Prepare a great feast,' he told them, 'and when the soldiers come, go out to meet them, and welcome them with songs, dances and games.'

This the people did; and the soldiers, when they arrived, were nonplussed by such a reception. It was something they had never met before, and they did not know how to take it. They could do nothing but accept the friendly hospitality of the chief and his people, and join in all that was going on. At last they marched away, leaving the Maoris in peace; and they never again made war against that particular tribe.

The interesting thing is that today the Maoris and the white people in New Zealand live together in harmony and peace.

ONE SMALL PARCEL

In Holland during the second world war people were very hungry. Some got less to eat than others, and in one town it was decided to make a collection, or pool, of all the food there was, and divide it out equally among the people, so that everyone had a fair share.

This plan worked well for a time. But there came a day when all the food had been eaten, and there was nothing left in the pool. The townspeople were desperate—how were they to live? Then a lady brought in a small parcel. 'This is some food I have kept back,' she said. 'I was saving it for an emergency. But there is an emergency; so here it is.'

There was not much in the parcel; but presently a neighbour also brought a parcel of food she had been holding back. And as the news spread, from all over the town came people with food that they had hidden. And so there was enough to eat to keep them all alive until the war ended.

THE LESSON OF MICHELANGELO

We read with wonder of the care that Michelangelo (the great sculptor), put into his work from his earliest days. He would rise at dawn to study a piece of marble by early light before he bought it. After he set down his marble in his work shed or room, he would spend months before he touched it—although his fingers were aching to be chipping and revealing the beautiful figure he saw hidden inside.

For months he would draw works of the masters in churches, then scores of people—going to villages or public baths to see them. Perhaps he would draw only one arm of one man. Of another, say, of a porter, he would draw scores of positions, as the man strained and lifted. He would search Florence or Rome for the person he wanted to portray—as Jesus, or Mary, or Bacchus. Then he would make models of clay and wax. Finally, when he began to chip, meals and sleep were a nuisance.

Only the second-rate are slap-dash. The great have, as well as genius, what somebody defined as genius—‘an infinite capacity for taking pains’.

LEADING THE WAY

In 1798 a ship called *La Tribune* was wrecked off the coast near Halifax, Nova Scotia. Those on shore could see the doomed vessel, and a group of men in her rigging; but the waves were so high that no one dared to launch a boat to their rescue. And there were no lifeboats then.

A boy of thirteen had been watching, and waiting for some of the men to go to their help. But no one did, and at

last he resolved to go himself. He managed to reach the ship in a small boat, and to take two men on board. With infinite difficulty he brought them to shore, and tried to go again; but he was so exhausted that he could not. But his courage had shamed the rest; a number of boats put out, and all the men were rescued.

No one knows the boy's name, but he was a true leader, who dared to the limit and inspired others to do the same. It is said that leadership goes to those fit to take it; and that unknown boy was certainly fit!

THE COST OF FREEDOM

When the American Civil War, with its years of bitter fighting, was nearly over, some of General Washington's officers, who had been paid nothing for a long time and were impatient because peace was not signed, passed round a secret paper suggesting mutiny. If they had done so, the new American nation, only just founded, and torn by internal strife and delay, would certainly have collapsed. The plan came to Washington's ears, and, calling his troops together, he strode on to the platform and began to read a blistering speech. After a time he faltered and reached for his spectacle case. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'you will permit me to put on my glasses; for I have not only grown grey, but almost blind in the service of my country.' As he spoke, there were tears in the eyes of many officers; and after that remark there was no need for his written speech. All talk of mutiny was at an end, and men's hearts were encouraged by this reminder of the great cost which their leader had so willingly paid for freedom for themselves and for their children.

A HARD WORKER

We do not always think of writers as workers; but some of them do work very hard indeed. And of all the writers, perhaps the hardest worker was Sir Walter Scott. Besides the

thirty-two stories which he told, and which are famous as the 'Waverley Novels'—all together they fill ten thousand pages—he also produced much poetry, history and many other writings. And he was never afraid of doing his work more than once.

But the hardest task he ever undertook was when the firm which published his books failed, leaving a debt of £140,000 in the money of that time—it would be far more than that today. It was not Scott's debt; but he had become a partner in the firm, and he felt himself to be morally responsible for it. So he set himself to write enough books to earn that enormous sum of money. Day after day he worked, until after six years he died. He had not earned enough money by then to pay off the whole debt, but what he had written during those long years of toil brought in enough after his death to pay it all off entirely.

SAVED—BY A PIN

A man was once imprisoned in a dark cell, where he saw no one except the jailer who brought him food, and no light except the lantern the jailer carried. As the days dragged along, he began to fear that the darkness and the monotony would make him lose his reason.

Then one day in his coat he found a pin, and he knew that he was saved. A pin does not seem a very important thing; but to that prisoner it was everything. Each morning he used to throw it away, and then spend the rest of the day finding it. As he groped about for it in the dark on his hands and knees, his muscles began to grow strong again with the exercise, and his mind, which now had something to think about, became active and alert once more. When, after six years, he was set free, he was not a broken man, as so many prisoners become in such cruel conditions, but well and ready to take up his life again. He had not had much—only a pin—but he made such good use of it that it saved him.

NOT TOO PROUD TO WORK

During the American revolution an officer, not in uniform, one day rode by a group of soldiers repairing some defences. They were trying to raise a heavy baulk of timber to the top of the works; it was a hard task, and the officer noted that the man in charge kept shouting orders, but did nothing to help himself. He asked this man why he did not lend a hand. 'Sir,' he replied indignantly, 'I am a corporal!' 'Oh, are you?' said the officer, taking off his hat and bowing. 'I beg your pardon, Mr. Corporal.' Then, dismounting, he helped to lift the timber, using all his strength till the sweat stood out on his forehead. When at last the wood was in place, he turned to the man in charge. 'Mr. Corporal commander,' he said, 'when you have another job like this, and not enough men for it, send to your commander-in-chief, and I will come and help you a second time.' Then he rode off, leaving the corporal thunderstruck, for he realised that the man who had not been too proud to help was none other than the commander-in-chief himself, General George Washington.

THE REWARD

A girl set out one day to sweep the tiled floor of the hall in her home. She believed in doing a good job, and she swept into the corners and cleared up all the dust in a dustpan. Then she looked at the door mat.

'If I really did the job properly,' she thought. 'I'd lift that mat up and sweep underneath it, and then shake it out of the front door. But I really can't be bothered. No one will know.'

Then she thought, 'The job isn't really properly finished if I don't do it.' So she took up the mat and opened the door—and there on the doorstep was an exciting-looking parcel! She took it in, and found that it was addressed to her, and that inside was an unexpected present. As she finished un-

packing it, she glanced up and saw rain falling. 'That rain would have spoiled my present if I hadn't opened the door just then,' she thought.

Doing a good job doesn't always bring a reward like that; but it seemed to that girl like a message to tell her that what is worth doing is worth doing well.

SHE DIDN'T WANT TO LEARN

About a hundred years ago there was a little girl who didn't want to learn to read. Every day she used to set out for school; but under some steps in the school building there was a hole, and there the little girl used to hide every day until it was time to go home again. Somehow she managed to escape notice; and she never did learn to read.

The little girl grew up to be an old lady; and like many old ladies she became greatly troubled with rheumatism. She could not move about, and had to sit still in a chair all day. This was before the days of radio or television, and she had nothing whatever to do, and became terribly bored. 'Oh, if only I could read!' she thought. 'Then I could read books, and the newspaper, and the days would not seem so long.' So this old lady, who was seventy by this time, engaged a young girl to teach her to read. Old as she was, she went to school again, and at last, with much difficulty, she could do what she should have learned to do while she was still a little girl at school.

'THE GAME IS WORTH THE CANDLE'

A good few years ago, when missionaries could still work in China, an American missionary doctor was working on a strange disease which was killing many Chinese. He found that it was caused by parasites called flukes living inside the sufferers. Having discovered them, he needed to study them to find out how to deal with them; but he had no proper

laboratory there in China. He knew that in America he could have all he needed; but how to get the live flukes there? The health authorities would not allow a sick Chinese with the flukes inside him into the country for fear of infection. What was Dr. Barlow to do?

He hit upon a brilliant if dangerous idea. One Sunday morning, when most of the hospital assistants were at a church service, he took thirty-six of the flukes from a patient's body, put them in a glass of water and drank it off. Then he travelled back to America with the flukes inside him and there he was able to study them and find a cure for the disease.

'But surely,' a friend said to him, 'it was a very dangerous thing to do.' 'I know that,' said the doctor. 'But the game is worth the candle.'

SHE TOOK THE RISK

This is the story of a brave nurse in the first world war. Her name was Mary Davies, and she was nursing in an American hospital in France. In those days many men died of wounds because the bacillus which causes wounds to fester had not been discovered. But Dr. Taylor, under whom Mary Davies worked, believed that he had found the deadly bacillus, and if that were so, it could be dealt with and many lives saved.

But how could the doctor be sure without an experiment on a human being? Mary Davies determined to be that human being. She knew about the bacillus, being a student of bacteriology; so she inoculated herself with a preparation of it, went to bed and sent a note to Dr. Taylor saying what she had done. It was a great risk to take; but Dr. Taylor came and applied the remedies which he had prepared, then waited anxiously to see the result. For a day and a night he waited; and then at last he knew that, thanks to a brave nurse's action, he had truly discovered both the cause and

the cure of bacillus infection, and the new remedy could be used to save thousands of lives.

THE KIND-HEARTED GENERAL

One cold snowy day during the second world war, when General Eisenhower was supreme commander of the allied forces, he was being driven to his headquarters at Versailles, near Paris, when he passed an old couple sitting by the roadside. The old lady was crying, and Eisenhower told his chauffeur to stop so that he might find out what the trouble was. He discovered that the couple were on their way to see their daughter in Paris, but they had still a long way to go, there was no transport and the old lady was too tired to walk any farther. The general at once took the old people into his car and told his chauffeur to drive on to Paris and find their daughter's house. But she lived on the other side of the city, and it took a very long time to find her, so that the general was very late in returning to Versailles.

When he got there, to his astonishment he received a tremendous welcome. His men were laughing and shouting and calling out in a way that amazed him, till he found that the enemy had known of the journey he was making, and had set up an ambush at a big crossroads which he would have had to pass to reach his headquarters. A staff car had been blown up there. But because of the general's kind deed, his car had turned off the main road before it reached this junction, and the leader of the allied forces escaped to lead them to victory.

A JOB—OR AN ADVENTURE

There was once a man who was bored with his job. He worked in a factory, where his task was to make little metal parts to go into tractors for India. All day long he had to stand at a machine, making the same little part over and over and over again, hundreds and hundreds of them; and every

day he grew more bored with the work. He would watch the clock all day, longing for the time when his work would be finished and he could go home.

But one day he began to think. He thought of all the hungry people in the world, and how the tractors into which his little parts were to go could help them to grow more food, so that they would not be so hungry. A little rhyme ran in his brain:

Without this part, the tractor won't go;
Without the tractor, the food won't grow.

and he began to feel quite different about his work. By it he could help to bring an answer to the hunger in the world. So it became, no longer a boring job, but a real adventure; and he began really to enjoy turning out the little parts as quickly and as well as possible.

AN HONEST MAN

A legend

A sultan once wanted to find an honest man to collect the taxes of his realm, but he did not know where to go for such a man, so he consulted a wise councillor, who advised him to publish abroad his need, and then to invite all the applicants to his palace on a certain night to be arranged. 'I will show you the honest officer when you ask them to dance,' said the wise man.

The applicants arrived at the palace in due course, when they were told by an officer of the court that they were to advance to the sultan, one at a time, through a dark and empty corridor. As soon as they were all assembled before the throne, the sultan said amiably, 'Gentlemen, I should very much like to see you dance. Please dance.' But all the applicants refused, except one man, who danced cheerfully and well. 'That is the honest man,' said the sage, pointing to the dancer.

In the dark corridor the wise man had placed sacks of money, and all the dishonest men had filled their pockets as they passed through to the sultan. If they had danced, their pockets would have sounded like money-boxes being shaken, and so they had refused.

AN EXPLORER'S BOYHOOD

Most people have heard of David Livingstone, the missionary explorer who in the nineteenth century opened up the great continent of Africa and let light into many dark places. He faced every possible difficulty and danger—from the climate, from wild animals, from slave traders and from suspicious Africans; but by the time he died he had opened up a third of the unknown continent.

The preparation for this tremendous work began in his early childhood, when, although only a poor weaver, he bought himself a Latin grammar with his first wage, and would keep a book on his loom so that he could read a page or two as he passed in his work. His love of nature was equally keen, and on Saturday afternoons and holidays he and his brothers wandered far afield, and he learnt much of botany, geology and zoology, all of which helped him in later life. With regard to his character, it was noticed that when they came to a difficult bit of ground, the brothers would go round it, but David would march straight on. His walk, someone said, was 'very steady, very sure, very patient', and that was how, in the years to come, he was to walk through Africa.

THE BREAK-THROUGH

Switzerland was once subject to (the Austrians). . . . But after a time the Swiss banded together and would not obey the Austrians any more. But Switzerland really won her freedom at the battle of Sempach, where (a) great hero of the Swiss people gave his life for his country. A great

host of Austrians came against the Swiss, and they were clad in stout armour, with long spears and swords; but the Swiss were not protected by heavy mail. When the Swiss rushed against (the Austrians) they could not break through, but were thrust down and cut to pieces.

Then Arnold von Winkelried bade the Swiss draw together in the shape of a wedge or triangle, and follow him; and he ran upon the Austrians, stretching out his arms and dragging the spears together, so that all the points, as far as he could reach, were drawn together and pierced his own body, so that he fell and died. But in this way he made a space where there were no spear points, and there the wedge of Swiss drove in, and so fought hand to hand with the Austrians and put them utterly to rout. After that the Austrians saw that it would be no use to try to force their rule upon the Swiss.

ELIZABETH FRY AND THE BURGLAR

Elizabeth Fry, the brave Quaker lady who in the eighteenth century went into the prisons and started to change the terrible conditions in them, once visited Bristol in connection with her work, and stayed at a hotel there. When she went to bed one night, what was her amazement to see a man's boot protruding from under the bed. It was a burglar!

But Elizabeth Fry was not frightened. She calmly knelt down by her bed and began to pray aloud for the burglar under it. After a time she heard a rustle, and found that the man was kneeling by her side. When the prayer was ended, she turned to him and asked him, in the sort of language Quakers used, 'And now, friend, tell me what brought thee hither.'

This gentle treatment was too much for the burglar, and he broke down. He told her that it was the first time he had ever stolen anything, and that hunger had driven him to it. Elizabeth Fry promised to help him if he would go home;

and she herself took him to the front door to prevent him from being stopped by the hotel porter. Later she followed up his story and found that it was true, and she was able to give him the help he needed.

THE MIGHTY FRYING-PAN

The pen, they say, is mightier than the sword. This is a story of something else that was mightier than the sword, or even the gun—an ordinary frying-pan.

It happened in the early days when the white people were settling in America. Some made friends with the Indians, but others fought them, and in revenge the Indians would raid farmhouses when the farmers were away and carry off the women and children. One day a farmer's wife, alone in the house with her two young children, looked out of the window and saw a group of redskins in their war paint moving about among the barns. Fear seized her, and she looked up at the gun hanging over the doorway. But a better idea occurred to her, and instead she took up her big heavy frying-pan and started to prepare a good meal. By the time the Indians reached the farmhouse, they were greeted by a tempting smell and a woman who smilingly invited them in. They ate the good stew, stuffed the rest of the food down inside their deerskin shirts for another time, and left—without the farmer's wife and children. The pan had indeed proved mightier than the sword, and showed what good cooking can do even in such a dangerous situation.

II TWO-MINUTE STORIES

WHO IS REALLY RICH?

The city of Stavoren, in Holland, was once very wealthy. Many citizens owned trading ships which brought back rich cargoes; and one woman had a fleet of them. One day she ordered the captain of one vessel to bring back a shipload of the richest treasure in the world. He consulted his crew as to what it was, and some said gold, others suggested silks or jewels; but the cabin boy said, 'I have gone hungry, and I know that the most precious thing in the world is wheat.' The captain agreed, and brought back a load of the finest wheat; but the owner was very angry, and made him throw it all into the sea, to the great distress of the citizens, for there were many poor people in the town.

Soon after, a terrible storm wrecked all the rich woman's fleet, and she became a beggar, whom no one would feed. One day she was passing a great sandbank which the sea had thrown up before the city, and she saw that it was covered with growing wheat. The sea had cast it up. When it was ripe, she invited all the poor to come and harvest it for themselves. She became much loved by the people, who took her in and cared for her, so that she found a new and lasting kind of riches.

THE BOY AND THE PRESS GANG

In the old days of sailing ships, conditions on board were so terrible, with the bad food, the hard work and the brutality, that no one would volunteer for it. So a group of men called a press gang would be sent into a town to seize men and make them sailors by force. They made raids on small ships too, and in the eighteenth century a press gang took the entire crew of a coasting vessel to serve on a man-of-war—captain, mate and all. The mate, who had a wife and children, was so distressed at perhaps not seeing them again

that a young apprentice named Campbell, who, being only a boy, had not been press-ganged, offered to take his place. The head of the press gang was delighted—‘better a likely boy with some spirit than a blubbering man’, he said—and the boy went aboard a large ship. The commander of this ship heard what he had done, and was so pleased with his unselfish action and his good work aboard that he soon made him a midshipman. Campbell worked hard, and in time obtained command of a small vessel of his own. He was again promoted because of his good service, and ultimately became the famous Vice-Admiral Campbell, whose name is still remembered with honour by the British Navy.

GIVE, AND YOU GET

A poor young artist in Paris visited a friend’s studio, and found him painting a picture of a beggar. The ragged creature who sat as the artist’s model looked so wretched that the young artist, poor as he was, slipped a few little coins into the beggar’s pocket as he left the studio.

But the young artist did not know that the supposed beggar was really Baron Rothschild, the richest man in Europe, who had agreed to sit for his friend dressed in ragged clothes because he had just the kind of face that was wanted for the picture.

‘Who was that young man?’ he asked his friend, as the young artist left.

‘He is a very talented art student,’ was the reply. ‘The pity is that he is so poor that he will not be able to finish his studies.’

The banker was much impressed that anyone who had so little should yet be willing to give to someone who he thought had even less, and he decided to help this generous young man. So the next day the young student received a letter in which was a cheque.

'Sir,' said the letter, 'all good deeds bear fruit sooner or later. Yesterday you gave a beggar six sous. Today those six sous have become ten thousand francs. If you will present the enclosed cheque at my banking house, you will be paid the above sum.

JAMES ROTHSCHILD'

THE HERO

Even quite small children can be heroic soldiers. Some three hundred years ago a little French boy of only five was called upon to show extreme heroism. His parents, Daniel Bonnet and his wife, were country people who held the Huguenot faith, which was then being persecuted in France. They decided to escape, with their children, the youngest of whom was this little boy of five years old, to a country where they could worship as they thought fit. They put their children in the deep panniers in which a donkey used to carry their produce to market, and covered them with vegetables. Then, telling them not to make a sound, they set out as if going to market. But on their way they met a soldier, who guessed what they were doing.

'Going to market, are you?' he laughed. 'I'll just see if your carrots are tender.' And to the parents' horror, he thrust his sword through the mound of vegetables. But no sound came from them, and he allowed the Bonnets to go on. They dared not stop to look at the children till they were away from prying eyes, but at last in a safe place they opened up the baskets and found that their little boy had been stabbed through the thigh.

'But I didn't make a sound,' he murmured, as he fainted away.

His wonderful courage enabled the whole family to escape to America and start a new happy life there.

RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL

In the seventeenth century, when the Danes and the Swedes were fighting each other, and the Danes had just won a battle, one of the Danish soldiers was standing on the battlefield, about to quench his thirst with a bottle of beer, when he heard a cry and looked down to see a wounded Swede lying at his feet, his eyes longingly fixed on the bottle.

'Your need is greater than mine,' said the Dane, in the immortal words of Sir Philip Sydney, and he stooped to hold the bottle to the wounded man's lips—only to receive a pistol shot in the shoulder from the treacherous foe.

'Is that the way you reward my kindness?' he exclaimed. 'Now you shall be punished; I was going to give you the whole bottle to drink, but now you shall only have half.' And putting the bottle to his lips he drank his share, then gave the rest to the wounded Swede.

The king of Denmark heard the story, and sent for the soldier. 'Why did you spare the life of such a villain?' he asked him. 'Sire,' replied the soldier, 'I would never kill a wounded man.'

'You deserve a reward,' said the king. And he made him a noble, giving to him and to his heirs, as a coat of arms, a wooden bottle pierced with an arrow, in tribute to his forgiving spirit.

SHE SHOWED THE WAY

A hundred and fifty years ago, a crew that suffered shipwreck had very little hope. There was no lifeboat service, and very few people were brave enough to go to the rescue of the doomed vessel, even if it was near to the shore. That was all changed in 1815 by a brave girl. Her name was Grace Darling, and she lived with her old father in the lighthouse on Longstone, one of the Farne Islands off the coast of Northumberland. Early one September morning Grace was

awakened by cries for help, and when the dawn came she saw that a ship had been wrecked on the rocks. She woke her father and urged him to launch his boat in case there was anyone still alive on the ship. But the old man was afraid to face the storm. Then Grace cried out that she was sure she could see people moving on the wreck, and she got into the boat; her father would not let her go alone, so they rowed off together in mountainous seas. As they came near the wrecked vessel, they could see that nine people were still clinging to it. The keeper, after several attempts, managed to land on the rock and make his way to the ship, while Grace had the dangerous task of rowing off and on through the wild seas, only her skill saving her small craft from being dashed to pieces. With help from the shipwrecked crew, the only woman survivor and four men were brought to safety; two of the men went back with Darling and brought off the rest. Grace cared for them all in the lighthouse for two days, till the storm abated and they could be taken back to the mainland. For her bravery and skill, Grace Darling became a national heroine; but more important, she aroused people's minds to the perils of the sea, and how shipwrecked people could be helped, so that we today have our magnificent lifeboat service which saves many lives every year.

WHICH WAY?

During the first world war, an officer was leading a platoon of his men along a road—at least, you could hardly call it a road, just a line of duckboards laid across a sea of mud. The fury of battle had torn up the ground until there was no firm soil left—only mud; and if you stepped off the duckboards it might swallow you up.

As the men marched, they came to a fork in the road. The duckboards went left and right.

'It's left we ought to go,' said one of the men. And his friends agreed. 'Yes, that is the right direction to take.'

But the officer was standing very still. 'No,' he said at last, 'we go to the right.' 'But, sir'. . . . A chorus of protests broke out on all sides. But he remained firm. 'We go to the right,' he repeated, and off they went in that direction, with the soldiers grumbling and muttering under their breath. They had gone some way when suddenly there was a scream and a roar, and a shell landed at the very spot on the other road which they would have reached if they had taken the left fork. The men stood still, awestruck.

'How did you know which road to take?' they asked.

'God told me,' said the captain. 'I have just discovered that if you listen, He speaks. And He has saved all our lives.'

SPACEMEN'S COURAGE

Two American spacemen, Captain Walter Shirra and Major Thomas Stafford, were closed up in their capsule waiting for the blast-off. They were in the spacecraft Gemini VI, on top of the Titan II rocket, and they were all set to rendezvous with Gemini VII. They had been there for two hours, and now at last the count-down had begun. Five—four—three—only two seconds to go now, and then—off! But that moment never came. They saw through the window a huge cloud of orange and yellow smoke—and there they were still on the top of the rocket. The engines were cut off, and everything was still. The launch had failed.

But now they were in a dangerous situation. Any moment the whole launching apparatus might explode and burst into flames. What should they do? They could fire the escape ejector, and blow themselves clear. But if they did that, they knew that they would destroy the chance of another attempt at the rendezvous later. With great bravery, they decided to stay where they were. As it happened, there was no danger—the cause of the failure was nothing but an electrical plug falling out. But President Johnson sent the astronauts a

personal message expressing his pride in them for their courageous decision to risk their own safety for the sake of the space programme's future success. And a few days later they actually made the first rendezvous in space—another step toward men's landing on the moon.

THE PRIZE

A boy named Frank once learned to swim. He learned because he wanted to win a prize in the swimming races at his school. He worked very hard, and didn't mind the coldness of the water a bit.

Then the great day of the race came. Away the boys shot. Our hero didn't go full pelt at first. He took care of his strength and swam steadily and strongly for about half the race, and then he let out and came on grandly, passing one after another. Just, however, as he came near the pool end, another boy shot past him, and Frank was second instead of first.

It was a great disappointment, and for several days he went about feeling very sulky, and saying to himself, 'Fancy all that work and nothing for it!' Then one morning, as he was walking along the sea front, he heard a (girl) scream, and found that the little boy she was supposed to be looking after had fallen into the water, and was being carried out by the tide. At once he plunged bravely into the sea and swam to the boy, and was able to keep him up until some men who had also heard the cry came to the rescue of them both.

Quite a fuss was made about it in the local papers, but the best of it was that Frank realised what a prize he had won after all. *The power to swim* was the very best prize to win.

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

During a time of war between two European countries, enemy soldiers raided a house. They took out the old father and mother and the sons and shot them; and the enemy

officer who had ordered the shooting took the young daughter and ill-treated her, till at last she managed to escape to a place of safety.

There she trained as a nurse; and one night, while on duty in an officers' ward, she saw on a pillow a face that she recognised. It was that of the enemy officer who had destroyed her home and ruined her life. A great battle arose in her heart. He was seriously ill, and by simply not attending to him she could cause him to die, and so be revenged. Instead she nursed him so devotedly that when he recovered, one of the doctors took her to his bedside and said, 'But for this girl's care, you would be dead.'

'I think we have met before,' said the officer, turning very pale.

'Yes,' said the nurse. 'We have met before.'

When the doctor had gone, the officer asked her, 'Why did you not let me die?'

'Because cruelty cannot be righted by cruelty,' she replied, 'nor violence by violence. I am a follower of Him who said, "Love your enemies." That is my religion.'

There was a long silence. Then the officer said, 'I never knew there was such a religion. Tell me more about it.'

NOT FOR NOTHING

In a wild part of the North American continent, where there were only a few farms, there lived a clergyman who was noted for keeping his word. If he said he would do a thing, he did it. One winter Sunday, when the snow lay in great drifts, he set out, with his son, to hold a communion service at a little school house at a cross-roads. It was still dark and bitterly cold.

'Dad,' said his son as they struggled along, 'nobody will be there on a morning like this. Why punish ourselves for nothing?'

'It's not for nothing,' said his father. 'You forget—I said I

would be there today.' And they fought their way on. When they finally reached the school house—on time because they had started so early—there was one man there, a young farmer who lived near by.

'I knew you would come,' he said. 'You always keep your word. And I need your help badly. My wife is very ill, and I've got no one to leave with her and the children while I go for the doctor. Will you come?'

So the clergyman and his son went to the farmhouse, dressed and fed the children, looked after the farm stock, brought in fresh wood for the fire and tidied up the house. At last the doctor came, and they were free to go. As the two left, the father said to his son, with a twinkle in his eye, 'Well—did we punish ourselves for nothing?'

THE PORTRAIT

A legend

When Moses led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt, so the ancient legend goes, the whole world was amazed at the miracle of what he had done. Everyone was talking of him, and the news of his wonderful doings reached the king of Arabistan. This wise ruler sent for his best painter, and told him to find Moses, paint his picture and bring it back. 'I wish to see the face of this great man,' he said.

When the painter returned with the picture, the king sent for those of his wise men who could read character from the face, and asked them to look at the portrait and tell him the character of the man it represented. He hoped to find out in this way the secret of Moses' power.

'O king,' said the wise men after studying it, 'this is the face of a man proud, greedy, loving power and given to evil living.'

The king was astonished at this report, and after much discussion he himself set out to find Moses. When he met him, the king told him the story of the picture.

'Now that I see you,' said the king, 'I realise that my painter was right in showing you as noble, and my wise men were wrong.'

'No,' said Moses. 'They are both right. By nature I have all the vices which your wise men saw in my face; but with God's help I have fought and overcome them.'

'OUR FATHER'

During the second world war, a British soldier in the Burmese jungle was badly wounded and lost contact with his party. As he lay there bleeding, he was not afraid of death; but he was afraid of being captured and tortured by the enemy. He began to pray that they might not find him; but presently he heard voices coming towards him, and knew that they were those of enemy soldiers. Nearer and nearer they came, till at last one of them saw him, and they came crowding round. 'This is it,' he thought, and prayed for courage to die bravely.

But the leader of the soldiers gave an order, and to his surprise one of the men unslung his water-bottle and gave him a drink, which he badly needed. Another order, and rough bandages were produced and his wounds were cleaned and tied up. Still a third order, and he was lifted and carried to an open clearing, where the men laid him down.

Then the leader said, 'Your Father, our Father. We brothers.' He told the British soldier that he and his party were Christians, who hated killing and longed for peace. They had put him in the open clearing so that his friends might more easily find him. Then they left him.

In due course the wounded man was found by his friends, and eventually reached home. He owed his life to the Japanese who had known that all men, whatever their colour or race, have the same Father.

MARGARET TO THE RESCUE

One stormy night, while the wind shrieked and the waves rose high, a ship was driven on to the rocky coast of Scotland. All the people in the nearby village turned out, but there was nothing they could do, for the fishing fleet was out at sea, and all the men and boys were with it. Only old men, women and children were left. The nearest lifeboat was four miles away, and it was before the days of telephones.

'If only the lifeboat men knew!' someone cried. And a little girl called Margaret resolved to let them know. She set out to cover those four miles through the storm, not heeding those who called after her that she would never be able to cross the flooded river that lay in her path.

On and on she ran till she reached the bank. It was only a burn, or stream, but it was in full flood, and as she struggled through it the force of the icy water almost carried her away. But somehow she fought her way across, and pressed on, numbed and exhausted, in her dripping clothes till at last she staggered into the next village, where the lifeboat was. 'A ship on the rocks!' she gasped, and then she fainted from cold and exhaustion. But even as she was being cared for and brought back to her senses by the women of the village, the lifeboat was being launched and setting out to the rescue. And thanks to little Margaret's courage and endurance, the ship's crew were rescued, and no lives were lost.

COOKING IS IMPORTANT

The people who live in the part of America called Pennsylvania—the Pennsylvania Dutch, as they are called—are famous for their good cooking; and when George Washington became commander-in-chief of the American Army during the War of Independence, he chose a Pennsylvania Dutchman as his army cook, because he knew how much good food mattered to his men.

But when the troops were at Valley Forge, during the most critical period of the American Revolution, not only was the winter bitter, but the food was not good, and the men began to desert. In great distress, Washington sent for his cook. 'The food is not good enough,' he said, 'and so the men are deserting. You must find something new and different for them to eat.'

'But how can I?' protested the cook. 'There is nothing to be had.'

'You must do the best you can,' Washington insisted.

So the cook went round all the farms in the district picking up anything he could, a little here and a little there; and when he had collected it, it was a great mixture of meat, vegetables and herbs. But he put it all together and made delicious soup of it, which put new heart into the men, so that they won the battle of Valley Forge. This soup is still made today in the United States, and is known as Philadelphia Pepper Pot Soup. And when people eat it, they remember the wisdom of George Washington, who knew that good cooking is important.

BOYHOOD OF A SPORTSMAN

Sir Stanley Matthews has been called the greatest footballer of them all. And if you ask how he came to be so, you will find the answer in the way his father brought him up. Jim Matthews was a boxer with a reputation as a fighter, and he wanted his boys to be fit. So he called them every morning at six o'clock to do exercises, to lift weights and use a chest-expanding machine. The exercises did not make Stanley big; but they taught him how to train, and how to value physical fitness. When he was fifteen, he began work on the ground staff of the local football club, and he had to walk two miles each way twice a day. As a result, Matthews has always trained of his own free will far harder than any manager or trainer would ask him to do; and he has put

everything into his football. He does not smoke or drink, partly because he does not enjoy it, but more because it might make him a fraction less fit at a critical moment. And he has never played for his own glory—he knows that football is a team game, and he always thinks about his team rather than himself. If someone congratulated him after a game in which he had done wonderfully, he would wave his hand round at the rest of the side, saying, 'These are the fellows who did it.' He was given the first knighthood ever conferred on a footballer, and it was everyone's opinion that he fully deserved it.

NOTHING DAUNTED

Miss Margaret Hayes was a missionary nurse in the Congo at a time when a group of Africans called 'Simbas', or lion-men, were starting to massacre the white people. Many of Margaret Hayes's friends were killed, but she managed to escape, and the African people, who loved her and were grateful to her for all that she had done for them, hid her in their villages. But the Simbas were determined to find her, and they searched everywhere, killing anyone whom they suspected of hiding her. At last Margaret Hayes said to herself, 'Why should so many people be killed for my sake? If I give myself up, all their lives will be saved.' So she went to find the Simba chief. 'Here I am,' she said. 'Kill me if you wish.'

But to her astonishment, the chief said, 'No, I don't want to kill you. We have been looking for you to nurse our sick and wounded.' So Margaret Hayes went with the Simbas and cared for all who needed her help. In the meantime, a rescue army was on the way. Nearer and nearer it came, till at last the Simbas fled in terror. Margaret Hayes was rescued and brought back to civilization, where she was given the care that such a brave woman deserved.

But when she was asked what her future plans were, she only said, 'I am going back to the Congo. That is my life.'

PUTTING EVERYTHING INTO IT

The thing that stops nearly every train in the world is the Westinghouse brake, or some improved form of it. It began with the inventor's last penny. George Westinghouse was a poor American country lad . . . who brought out and sold many railway inventions, of which this was the greatest.

The difficulty was to get a brake that would act swiftly on all the wheels of a train, equally all along the train, while it was controlled easily by one man. One day, when (Westinghouse) was reading a magazine article about the boring of the Mont Cenis tunnel (through the Alps), it flashed upon his mind that compressed air was the thing he needed. The brake was made, and then came the testing. Westinghouse and his partner had to hire a train to try it on, promising to make good any damage. In one of the cars was a gathering of railway experts to watch the experiment. As the train was starting, Westinghouse gave the engine driver a fifty-dollar note to induce him to do his best. *It was the last money he had in the world.* All the rest he had spent preparing for that moment.

The great moment was worth it, for it happened that the experimental train came suddenly on a dray with two horses blocking the line at a level crossing. The train was going at thirty miles an hour; the dray could not get clear, and the drayman in his terror fell on the line. But the driver jammed on the brake, and brought the train to a stop within four feet of the obstruction, flinging all the railway experts in a heap at one end of their carriage. As they emerged with battered hats and aching bones and saw how near to death the drayman had been, they needed no further proof of the power of the Westinghouse brake.

HOW TO STOP A RIOT

A lady and her daughter owned a cattle ranch in a district where there had been much trouble among the ranch

workers. One day a message reached them that a riot had broken out, and the rioters were on the way to their house. 'You must get away quickly,' urged the messenger.

'No,' said the ranch owner, who knew the answer to fear. 'We shall stay here and wait for them.'

'Wait for them? And what will you do when they come?'

'We shall give them tea.'

And that was what she and her daughter did. The rioters, when they reached the house, found, not two frightened women, but two smiling hostesses who graciously invited them to a tea-party. The rioters were so surprised that they accepted, and were soon quietly enjoying their tea.

Meanwhile, the ranch owner had been thinking, and she had been realising that part of the cause of the rioters' anger was that they believed her to be a very rich woman, and they were jealous of her supposed wealth. The thought came to her to open her account books and let them see just how much money she had, and how it was spent. The men realised that she trusted them, and was willing to be quite open with them; and they eagerly studied the books.

'Is that all the salary you take yourself?' they asked. 'Why, it isn't enough; you must have more for all your work.'

And after that there was no more trouble on the ranch.

HE LOVED ALL CREATURES

Abraham Lincoln loved all birds and animals. It hurt him that any of them should suffer. Even when he was very busy, he would stop to help an animal in distress. One day Lincoln and a party of his friends were travelling through a thicket of wild plum and crab-apple trees. It was a warm day, and they stopped to water their horses. Soon the party was ready to start off again, but Lincoln was not to be found. 'Where is Lincoln?' everyone asked. 'I saw him a few minutes ago,' answered one of the party. 'He had found two little birds who had tumbled out of their nest, and he was looking about

to find the nest so that he could put them back safely.' Before long Lincoln returned, looking very happy. His friends laughed to think that he had taken so much trouble for two young birds; but Lincoln said, 'If I had not put those birds back in the nest where the mother will feed them, I could not have slept all night.'

We all would have liked to help the birds; but Lincoln was kind to every living creature. One day he passed a beetle that lay sprawling on its back, trying in vain to turn over. He stooped and put it straight. 'Do you know,' he told the friend who was with him, 'if I'd left that beetle struggling there on his back, I shouldn't have felt just right. I wanted to put him on his feet and give him a chance.'

THE SECOND BLACK DOT

It was during the early part of the first world war that a fishing fleet put out to sea, each boat with her small crew of six or seven. They had been fishing for some time when there was a terrible explosion. One of the ships had struck a mine.

The nearest fishing smack quickly made for the spot to search for survivors, and presently made out a small black dot—a man clinging to a spar. At once the boat turned towards him and sped to the rescue. But the man in the sea could see something that those on board could not—the black shape of a second mine floating between him and his rescuers. They were coming straight for it, and before they could reach him, he knew that they would be blown to pieces. He shouted with all his strength, but he could not be heard against the noise of wind and sea, and still the smack came on. At last the shipwrecked man realised that there was only one way by which he could save the lives of the crew in the rescue boat; and he deliberately let go of the spar to which he was clinging, and allowed himself to sink.

As the would-be rescuers strained their eyes to the spot

where he had disappeared, they saw at last the small black dot bobbing on the waves; and they were able to escape just in time. And then they knew that their friend had not hesitated to sacrifice his own life so that they might live.

THE MERCHANT'S TREASURE CHEST

A legend

A certain eastern merchant was very wise in the ways of the world and of human nature. So when his son brought home a new friend, he felt at once that this friend was not honest. After some time, he said so to his son. But the young man was very angry.

'My friend not honest?' he cried. 'Why, he is as open as the day.'

But the merchant was still uneasy; and he decided to put the matter to the test. 'I am going away on a business journey,' he said to his son one day, 'and I want to put my treasure into safe hands. Whom do you think I should ask to look after it?'

'My friend will do it,' said the young man. 'It will be safe with him.'

So the great heavy chest, sealed with three large seals, was entrusted to the friend, and the merchant went away. When he came back, he said to his son, 'Will you fetch my treasure chest from your friend?' But when the young man returned, he was full of indignation.

'You have played a trick on my friend,' he cried. 'You told him the chest had treasure in it, but it was only rocks and stones.'

'And how did your friend know that?' asked the merchant. 'He must have broken the seals and opened the chest to know what was inside it.' And the young man was forced to realise that, difficult as it may be to believe, parents do sometimes know more than their children. After all, they have been in the world longer.

A NEW WAY THAT WORKED

The kings of Wessex in the ninth century were at a loss to know how to deal with the Danish hordes who raided their coasts. They fought and defeated them, but they came back; they gave them money to go away, but back they came for more. And then came a king called Alfred, who tried a new way.

Defeated by the Danish chief Guthrum, and his men dispersed, he rallied them, and this force of desperate men fell on the Danes, routed them and drove them into their stronghold, where, after a fortnight, they had starved them out. What should Alfred do next? Kill Guthrum? Extract from the raiders worthless promises, which they would break as they had broken so many others?

What Alfred did was to invite the Danish leader to stay with him, with thirty of his noblest followers. For twelve days they lived in the royal lodgings, treated as honoured guests and given rich presents. But above all, they talked with Alfred himself—a man who could forgive his enemies and turn them into friends. They began to guess at his secret, the Christian faith which ruled his life, and they came to want it for themselves. And so it was that Guthrum was baptised a Christian, with King Alfred as his godfather. A treaty was made by which the Danes agreed to settle in one special part of the country and live at peace with the English; and that treaty was kept. It was a new way; and it worked.

THE MAN WHO STAYED BEHIND

It was a great day in the prisoner-of-war camp. For weeks the prisoners had been secretly working on an escape route, and now the day had come to use it. Eighteen men were ready to go. Then nightfall came, and one by one they slipped away. Part of the route lay through the barbed wire, which was held open for them by the officer who was in charge of the escape. He counted them as they went through—fifteen, sixteen, seventeen—and then it was his turn.

But suddenly the clear thought came to him, 'Don't go. Stay behind.' It seemed madness to miss his chance of freedom; but the thought was so clear that he obeyed it, and went back to the camp. He stayed there till it was decided that all the sick men, himself included, should be sent back home. It seemed to the men too good to be true when at last they were on their way to the frontier—and home.

But when they reached the frontier, for no reason the guards suddenly announced that only half the men would be allowed to cross. The officer who had stayed behind felt righteous anger blaze up in him. This was simply cruelty to helpless men. He went straight to the enemy guards and spoke to them so sternly and with such authority that they changed their minds and let all the returned prisoners through. And the officer realised that he had given up the chance of freedom for himself in order that he might win it for a large number of men. That was why he had had to stay behind.

A LIFE-SAVING CLIMB

In a mountain village in Switzerland two young brothers, Wilhelm and Louis, stood looking at each other very gravely. Their father was very ill, and the doctor had just told them that the only cure was a medicine so expensive that they knew that they, a poor peasant family, could never afford to buy it.

'We must get money somehow,' said Wilhelm. 'But how?'

'There is a way,' said Louis. 'There is an American gentleman staying in the village who is willing to pay a good price for a pair of young eaglets; and I know there are some in the eyrie up there.' And he nodded towards the top of a towering mountain.

'Up there!' cried his brother. 'But no one has ever dared to climb that face!'

'Then we shall have to be the first,' declared the other boy. 'We must have that money, and this is the only way.'

Both boys were mountaineers from childhood; but they soon realised why no one had so far climbed that particular peak. It was a feat beyond the normal strength of a grown man, let alone a boy; and they never knew how they climbed that mountain, roped together, still less how, having found the eaglets and wrapped them in their jackets, they managed to scramble and slide down again with their struggling armfuls of angry birds. But their anxiety for their father drove them on, and somehow they did it, and at last they arrived at the inn and presented the American visitor with the birds he wanted. And in return they received the precious reward with which to buy the medicine that was to save their father's life.

THE FACE AT THE WINDOW

The little girl beside her mother sat very still. They were American Quakers, and she knew that when they were at meeting, in the presence of God, everyone must keep absolutely quiet, sometimes for a very long time. But though she tried her hardest to sit still, the minutes passed very slowly. She would look out of the window, and see, perhaps, a cloud float by or a bird flash past. But now, as she looked, she saw something else—the tip of a feather. It rose slowly, slowly, and the feather grew longer, till under it appeared the fierce painted face of an Indian, and beside him another and another. The little girl did not move or cry out, but she gazed so intently that her mother and others noticed too. They did not move or speak either; and presently the faces left the window. There were padding footsteps, and in at the door came a file of Indians in their war paint. They looked at the silent men, women and children, then sat down on a bench by the door. There was a long silence, broken at last by the chief elder, who went towards the warriors

holding out his hand with the Indian greeting of 'How!' They responded in a friendly way, and redskins and palefaces became acquainted and learned to understand each other.

But all the white people knew that they owed their safety to the little girl who had made no sound although she was terrified nearly out of her wits. For if she had moved or screamed, the Indians would undoubtedly have fallen on them and massacred them all. It was her courage and self-control that had saved their lives.

BRAVE SAINT CLARE

A story of the patron saint of television

Saint Clare was a young girl living in Italy in the thirteenth century. When she was sixteen she heard the great Saint Francis of Assisi preach, and what he said made her want to give her whole life to God, as he had done. Other girls joined her, and they became a religious order of nuns.

One of the spiritual gifts which God gave to Saint Clare was the power to see and hear things happening at a distance; and for this reason Pope Pius XII in 1958 proclaimed her the patron saint of television.

As she grew older, an illness made Clare unable to walk; but she still cared for her friends, and one day she was able to save their lives. The convent where the nuns lived was attacked by a band of wild men from the desert, who had been attacking and burning towns in other parts of Italy. As these nomads began to scramble over the walls, Clare told the nuns to carry her to the convent door. Fearlessly she spoke to the invaders, and then she prayed this prayer: 'Doth it please Thee, O my God, to deliver the defenceless children whom I have nourished with Thy love into the hands of these beasts? Protect them, good Lord, I beseech Thee, whom I am this hour not able to protect.' And in answer to her prayer there came a voice: 'I will always have them in My keeping.'

Clare turned to her sisters the nuns, and told them: 'Have no fear.' And as she said these words, the enemies were seen scrambling back down the walls of the convent. They had been routed by the courage and faith of a woman who trusted God.

'IF YOU CAN DO A BETTER JOB'

In a certain machine shop, the drawing office was well known for its honest products. One day they designed a new machine, which they said would produce more than the old one. They sent the machine to the firm which had ordered it, and back came a delighted letter to say that it was producing five per cent more than they had been told it would. The man who had designed the new machine read the letter. 'Well, I'm not delighted,' he said. 'I designed that machine to turn out an increase in production of *ten* per cent, not five. I'm going to catch the next train and find out what's the matter.'

'There's nothing the matter with it,' said the manager. 'The buyer is happy. Why bother about what it isn't doing?'

'He's happy because he doesn't know what it *can* do,' said the designer. 'But we know. They've got a right to five per cent more production than they're getting, whether they know it or not. And before I go to bed tonight, I'm going to see that they get it.'

The designer went to the place where the machine was, and, sure enough, it had a small fault which he soon put right. And it began to give the extra five per cent.

'When anything doesn't do as well as it can,' said the designer, 'something is wrong, and that something may do a lot of damage later on. That's true of people as well as machines. Never stop a job, or do it poorly, because you think you can get away with it. It will damage your craftsmanship and your self-respect, and eat holes in your integrity. If you can do a better job, and you know it, then do it!'

WHEN THE CLOCK STRUCK THIRTEEN

Some hundred years ago, a man was walking in the streets of Bodmin, in Cornwall, when he heard the clock begin to strike midnight. Idly he counted the strokes—ten, eleven, twelve—*thirteen!* He turned to a man who was passing by. 'Did you hear that?' he exclaimed. 'The clock struck thirteen!' 'So it did,' said the other man. 'Very strange.' They talked the matter over for a minute or two, and then went their separate ways.

Some time later the first man was riding home from Bodmin, for in those days travellers went on horseback, when he suddenly had a strong feeling to turn round and ride back to the town. It seemed so absurd that at first he paid no attention, but the thought was so clear and so strong that at last he turned the horse's head and rode back. When he reached Bodmin, the same strong feeling made him go into the place where court cases were tried, and there in the dock he saw a man being tried for murder. Just as he came in, the judge was saying to the prisoner, 'Have you anything to say in your defence?'

'There is only one man who can help me,' replied the prisoner. 'At the time when the murder was done, I was in Bodmin, and I heard the clock strike thirteen. There was another man there who heard it too, but where he is now God only knows.'

'I am here,' said the man, rising in his seat; and now he understood why he had been sent back to Bodmin in such a strange way, and was thankful that he had obeyed the thought which had come to him.

DR. SCHWEITZER'S VOW

The great doctor Albert Schweitzer was once going on a railway journey, and a number of his fellow scientists had come to the station to see him off. They were discussing important scientific matters when the doctor suddenly said,

'Excuse me, gentlemen,' and walked over to where a poorly dressed old lady was struggling with some heavy suitcases. Schweitzer helped her on to the train, and then went back to his friends.

They were puzzled by his action, because they did not know that behind it lay a vow which he had made at the end of the first world war. During that war he was in a concentration camp, in which he fell very ill; and when at last the day of liberation came, and he was free to go, he felt very weak. So weak, in fact, that after walking for some time, carrying his few belongings, he found himself too tired to go any farther, and he was obliged to sit down by the roadside to rest.

As he sat there, a man came by who was a cripple, with only one leg. He came up to the doctor and insisted on carrying his load for him. Schweitzer was obliged to let him do so, and they walked together to a railway station, where the man with one leg said goodbye and hobbled away. Schweitzer was so grateful for his help that there were tears in his eyes as he watched him go. He made a vow that whenever in after life he came on anyone carrying a heavy load, he would help that person as the cripple had helped him. And it was to carry out that vow that he had left his friends to help the old lady with her luggage.

SHE GAVE WHAT SHE HAD

At the time when Napoleon Bonaparte was trying to conquer Europe, and state after state was falling a prey to his grasping ambition, Silesia, a German territory, was doing her best to beat back the invading armies. Everyone in that freedom-loving state was wrought up to a passion of ardent patriotism in the terrible year of 1813, giving all he could to the cost of equipping an army for defence.

A Silesian girl had no fortune to put at the service of her country, her small possessions were of hardly any value, yet

she burned with eagerness to help her country in the fight against the invader. One day the idea came to her that she might sell her thick, long hair and so obtain some money. She accordingly set off to Breslau, where she sought out a hairdresser, and offered him her tresses. He could not understand why she should want to part with her beautiful hair, so she had to tell him the reason. Then he agreed to cut off her hair, but could not afford to give her more than two dollars for it. The bargain was made, the hair was cut off, and the girl returned home.

The hairdresser was so touched with this instance of self-sacrifice that he would not part with the hair in the usual way, but used it in making various ornaments, such as bracelets. (Ornaments made with human hair were very fashionable at that time.) The story of what this Silesian maiden did for her country became known. All Silesia was proud of the act, and articles made of her hair were eagerly sought. So much were they in demand that the hairdresser reaped a golden harvest, and contributed a large sum to the state for its defence.

FREEDOM FOR FRANCES

Frances and Amanda Smith were two Negro girls living in America at the time when American Negroes were slaves. But they could buy their freedom; and although the girls' parents were slaves, their father worked all day, and often far into the night, to earn enough money to buy that freedom for himself, his wife and children. At last the great day came; the precious papers were obtained, and they were all free.

But then a terrible thing happened. Somehow Frances' papers were accidentally destroyed, and she could be sold again as a slave. There was an auction, and at it Frances was once more sold into slavery. But her sister Amanda determined that in some way she would raise the money to buy back Frances' freedom. She worked as a servant, making

beds, sweeping, washing dishes, cooking—she became famous for her Maryland biscuits and fried chicken. But for all her hard work, she earned very little money, and the savings to buy back Frances grew terribly slowly. Her mistress took pity on her and lent her forty dollars; but she still needed fifty more.

Then one day she found a large sum of money. She counted it—it was three hundred dollars. What a find! Now she could set her sister free. But Amanda was a Christian, and she knew that Christians are honest. So she found out who had lost the money, and took it back to him. And the man who had lost it was so grateful to have it returned to him that he gave her, to her joy, the fifty dollars she needed. Overwhelmed with gratitude, Amanda went down on her knees and thanked God for His goodness in giving her the money which meant so much to her and her family.

AS BRAVE AS HIS FATHER

The merchant Ho-ang was a brave man who lived in old China. He was brave enough to speak out when he saw something wrong being done. A greedy official was arresting and condemning to death innocent people whose wealth he desired; and no one dared to oppose him, for he was a great favourite of the governor of the province. No one, that is, but Ho-ang, who one day saw the official dragging along an old woman crying and struggling, and was so enraged that he struck the officer and killed him. The merchant was arrested and condemned to death. But Fi-ken, the eldest of his six children, had inherited his father's courage. He went to plead with the governor, who at first refused to see him; but Fi-ken went day after day, until the governor at last agreed to speak to him.

'What do you want?' he asked.

'I wish,' said Fi-ken, 'to be allowed to die in my father's place, for he is needed at home to support his family.'

The governor suspected that the prisoner had told his son to say this; so he asked him who had suggested the exchange to him.

'No one,' replied Fi-ken, 'except He from whom all good thoughts come.'

'But your mother could marry again,' the governor pointed out, 'and her new husband would care for the family.'

'No one could love her and my brothers and sisters as my father does,' replied Fi-ken.

The governor went away, and Fi-ken waited. At last he came back, and the boy stood up, expecting that his offer had been accepted. He began to thank the official, but he interrupted him. 'It is not your condemnation that I bring,' he said, 'but your father's pardon. A man who can bring up such noble sons cannot be guilty.'

CARRYING IT THROUGH

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Reverend John Hodgson, rector of a parish in a mining district near Newcastle, was deeply concerned about the dangers which the miners had to face, particularly through having to work in almost total darkness. A naked light in the mine might set off an explosion from the fire-damp often found there. The only light they dared to use was a steel mill—a revolving steel disc which struck sparks from a flint. But even with this feeble light, many miners' eyes were ruined through trying to see in the dark.

One day the rector was talking of this problem to some friends, and among the party was the inventor Sir Humphry Davy. Davy set himself to solve the problem. On his return to London, he sent to Mr. Hodgson for a bottle of the deadly fire-damp, and when he had designed a lamp which he thought would be fireproof, with the flame surrounded by wire gauze through which the gas would not

penetrate, he placed this lamp again and again in the fire-damp until he had proved to himself that his plan was sound.

But would it be safe in a mine? Someone had to take the fearful risk involved in testing the new lamp underground. And the rector, who was known as the miners' friend, carried that friendship to the limit by volunteering to make the test. Mr. Hodgson himself carried the lamp into the mine. A miner working at the coal face by his flickering mill saw, to his horror, a naked light moving towards him. 'Put out that light!' he cried in terror. Then, as it still moved towards him, he broke into curses and entreaties. But still the light came on. At last it was near enough for him to see that it was carried by the rector—the brave man who had finally proved the effectiveness of the Davy lamp, which has since saved countless lives.

THE BOY WHO THREW THE STONE

This is a story about a girl called Dorothy Pattison, who became a nurse at a time when it was considered no fit work for a well-brought-up young lady. The only way in which she could get her training was by joining an Anglican sisterhood called the Good Samaritans.

In the early part of 1865, Sister Dora (as she was now called) was sent to help at the hospital in Walsall. This had been built the previous year, primarily in order that men injured in accidents in the coal or iron mines might receive treatment as soon as possible. It had started with only four beds, and by this time had fourteen—clear evidence that it was needed—and yet the local people still resented it. They were suspicious of any newcomers, and subjected the Good Samaritan sisters, who had been asked to staff the hospital, to never-ending petty annoyances. . . .

Gradually, however, the hostility died away as they saw what valuable work the sisters were doing among the sick. Almost the last instance of physical violence was an attack

on Sister Dora herself. A boy threw a stone which cut open her forehead.

Then fate played a curious trick, for the boy who had thrown the stone received a serious injury in a local coal mine, and was brought into the hospital. At first he was too ill to take much notice of his surroundings, but as he began to recover he recognised Sister Dora, and burst into tears.

'Sister, I threw that stone at you,' he said between his sobs.

'Did you think I didn't know that?' she replied with a smile. 'Why, I knew you the very first minute you came in.'

'What! You knew me, and you've been nursing me like this!' It seemed incredible.

But as Sister Dora later explained to some friends, 'It was his first practical experience of good returned for evil, and he didn't know what to make of it.'

THE THREE TREES

A legend

Three trees once grew on a hillside, and as they swayed in the breeze they would discuss what they would like to be.

'I should like to be cut down one day,' said the first tree, 'and turned into a baby's cradle.'

'I should like to be cut down one day,' said the second tree, 'and become a great ship sailing the sea, carrying treasure and precious stones.'

And the third said, 'I should just like to stand on a hilltop and point people to heaven.'

One day the woodcutters came along and cut down the first tree. 'Let's make it into a cattle stall,' they said.

'But I don't want to be a cattle stall,' cried the tree. 'I want to be a baby's cradle.' But they turned it into a cattle stall. And when the child Jesus was born, they laid Him gently in the cattle stall, for there was nowhere else to put Him. And the tree said, 'Why, this is far, far more wonderful than ever I dreamed.'

The woodcutters said of the second tree, 'Let's make this tree into a fishing boat.' But the tree said, 'No! I don't want to be a fishing boat. I want to be a great ship, carrying treasure and precious stones.' But they turned the tree into a fishing boat and put it on an inland lake. And a fisherman called Simon Peter bought the boat, and Jesus sailed in the boat and taught the people from it. And the tree said, 'Why, this is far, far more wonderful than ever I dreamed.'

And of the third tree they said, 'Let's make it into a cross.' But the tree said, 'I don't want to be a cross—a thing of shame where men die. I want to stand on a hilltop and point people to heaven.' But they turned the tree into a cross, and Jesus was nailed to that cross. And all down the years men have looked to that cross, and it has pointed them to God.

THE LADY AND THE BANDITS

This is the story of two English ladies who were travelling up a river in the East when they ran into danger. One of the ladies is telling the story.

'As our boat crept along the river . . . we became conscious that the boatmen were rowing in dead silence instead of chanting their songs; that the captain was peering anxiously into the thickets alongshore; that even the little river docks, normally so lively, were almost deserted. We asked what it meant, and finally the captain admitted the truth: "Bandits have been killing and robbing in this district. They know you are on board and have been following us for hours. And we must tie up at the next pier."

'Miss Miller and I, two white women, would be a choice prize; half-sick with apprehension, we saw the pier ahead. As we made fast, the boatmen adjusted their long knives, and the captain brought out a shotgun; not a soul stirred in the village. I heard a low cry from one of the boatmen: the bandits were coming, three of them.

' "Captain! Put the gangplank down—I'm going ashore!"

Miss Miller suddenly cried. He started to expostulate, but she jumped to the dock, and, as the bandits appeared, bowed low. "Thank you, gentlemen," she said, smiling. "Thank you for coming." The outlaws looked at her, bewildered. "We had heard there were bandits in the country," Miss Miller went on, "and we have been very frightened. Now we know we are safe, and we thank you for coming to protect us."

The leader turned to his companions with a wide grin; they grinned also, and nodded. "We are gentlemen, as you have said," they replied. "There is nothing to fear. We will stand guard and you will be safe."

'All night those three, and five or six others, squatted beside the boat with their guns across their knees. And in the morning we went on our way, leaving them bowing and grinning on the pier.'

THE FIRST VICTORIA CROSS

Life aboard the *Hecla* was anything but easy for young Charles Lucas. They were hard days for anyone at sea, and he served under Sir William Hall, one of the sternest admirals in the Royal Navy. 'Nemesis Hall', the young mate heard him called by older men who hated the very sight of him. But for all that, Charles got to be fond of the old paddle-steamer on which he served, the *Hecla*.

Trouble had broken out, and shots from the batteries on Aland Island (off the coast of Finland), came thick and fast one June day, meeting the little *Hecla* at five hundred yards. It was important to silence the batteries, but the little *Hecla* seemed to be getting the worst of it. Next moment, things became even more serious, when a shell from the batteries pounding away landed on the deck and skidded into a corner. The fuse was still burning. In a matter of seconds everyone on deck knew that it would explode and instant death would be the lot of them all.

But one of their number was not afraid. In an instant, he ran forward, and bending down calmly picked up the live shell and hurled it into the sea. It was all done so quickly that few on the deck of the *Hecla* that day realised what was happening.

Unknown to them at this moment, their stern admiral, 'Nemesis Hall', was looking on from the bridge. He had seen a great many brave deeds at sea in his time, but nothing more worthy of special mention than the calm, unselfish way in which the young officer had picked up the shell as it came to rest on the deck, and hurled it overboard. Instantly the stern admiral recommended his young mate for special mention—and that is how young Charles David Lucas came to receive the first Victoria Cross that was ever awarded.

He wore it, for the first time after it was awarded, on the day he was married to the admiral's daughter.

HOW ORDINARY PEOPLE CAN HELP

'People often think, 'What can I do to help the world's troubles? I am only an ordinary person.' This is the story of a very ordinary person who did something very big; she actually helped two countries to get on better with each other.

The name of this person was Nell, and she worked in a laundry; and the two countries were Britain and Germany, who during the wars were bitter enemies. But when the second war was over, and peace was made, things seemed to be going better between them. However, when the German Chancellor, Dr. Konrad Adenauer, came on a visit to Britain, the press began to write unfriendly things about the visitor, and about Germany, and it looked as if all the old bad feelings were beginning to break out again. Nell was very sorry about it; but what could she do?

She talked about it to her friends in the laundry on the day

when the Chancellor was to go back home to Germany, and she asked them what they felt could be done. 'Well,' they said, 'at least we can go down to the station and see him off.' So down they went; at first there were very few people there, but gradually more and more came, till at last there was a large crowd. Finally Dr. Adenauer arrived, and the laundry workers led the cheering as he walked along the platform and got into the train. Then he came to the carriage window and looked out.

'We ought to sing something for him,' one of the laundry workers whispered to Nell. It was only a little whisper, but to Nell it was like the voice of God in her heart—'Sing "For he's a jolly good fellow"—go on, sing!' But Nell was afraid. Supposing she couldn't hit the right note! Supposing her voice wouldn't come out, or only as a squeak! But she crushed down these cowardly thoughts, and her voice rang out clear and true: 'Fo-or——' Her friend beside her joined in, and for a moment they thought it was only to be a duet; and then suddenly all the crowd were singing with them, and cheering Chancellor Adenauer. He stood at the door until they had finished, then waved and smiled and went inside. Then the train moved off, while the newspaper men hurried off to their offices to write up the story, and the world understood that there was a friendship between Britain and Germany, and that as a sign the German Chancellor had been given the treatment that is only given by the British to people whom they love and honour.

A PLACE CALLED DANGER

Mexican native missionary Valentin V. was (once) called . . . to go with a man to preach the Gospel in a far-off village. Horseback was the only means of transportation to this isolated place. For three hot and dusty days they threaded their mounts up the steep trails of the giant Sierra Madre mountains. By mid-afternoon of the fourth day, the sun-

weary travellers reached a lonely spot ominously called *Peligro*—DANGER.

Riding into a clearing, Valentin and his companion saw three men in the garb of *vaqueros*—Mexican cowboys—tending a campfire in which they were heating cattle-branding irons. In the remoteness of Mexico, minding one's own business is excellent practice. Accordingly, the native missionary and his friend rode on. They reckoned, however, without the *vaqueros*. What appeared to be a harmless round-up crew transformed suddenly into a trio of *bandidos* (bandits). Swifter than it takes to tell, Valentin V. and his companion were off their horses, out of their clothes, and bound so tightly that the native missionary's nose began to bleed. The hold-up men holstered their side-arms, and inspired by some devilish whim, prepared to brand their victims with the red-hot irons.

At this moment Valentin caught enough wind and composure to cry out to God, 'Lord, save us from the danger because there are still many more souls to be won for the Kingdom.' As he prayed, a huge boulder stirred, swayed and started to roll down the mountain directly above them with a crescendo of crashing undergrowth that startled the wits out of the outlaws. Taking to their high-heels, they fled, leaving the native missionary and his companion trussed and bound. The great rock came to rest about one hundred metres from the captives. Glancing back in their flight, the terror-stricken rogues were completely discomfited by the sight of a majestic eagle landing on the fallen boulder—silent witness to their final rout.

Thankful to be alive and unbranded, the faithful pair endured a long night of painful pinioning. With morning came another wayfaring man who set them free. 'Thank God for this victory!' rejoices Valentin V., back in the battle for souls.

III TWO- TO THREE-MINUTE STORIES

THE BRAVE FRENCH MAID OF NOYON

At a house in the little town of Noyon, in France, something had gone wrong with the drains, and workmen had to be sent down to open up the drain and clean out the sewer. That is a dangerous thing to do, because of the poisonous gases that are in a sewer. In this case, four men were busily at work when they were overcome by the sewer gas, and were unable to give the signal to be drawn up out of the sewer. The people in the house wondered what was the matter, and grew alarmed, but no one dared to venture down.

Then a brave servant maid, a girl of seventeen, in pity for the poor men, begged to be tied to the rope and let down into the sewer. This was done, and she reached the group of men lying helpless below. As quickly as her trembling hands would allow her, she tied one man to the rope, and jerked it as a signal for drawing him up. Willing hands hauled up the burden, and on reaching the surface the unconscious man was still alive. A second time the girl tied a man to the rope, and he was drawn into safety. But the next time the girl found the dangling rope come down for her to catch, she was gasping for breath. She struggled against the feeling of suffocation, and tried to fasten the third man to the rope. This she just managed to do, but she herself would soon have been unconscious; so, with a desperate effort, she wound her long hair round the rope and tied it tightly. Then she lost consciousness; but the watchers above carefully, very carefully pulled the double burden up into safety, just in time.

The fresh air soon revived the girl, and then she bethought her of the fourth man down in the dangerous sewer. It was hardly likely that he would still be alive; but there was a slight chance, and so again, the fourth time, this noble girl risked her life. But this time her effort was in vain, for the poor man was drawn up lifeless.

The French nation loves to record a brave action, and some handsome gifts found their way to the unselfish maid who so cheerfully and readily risked her own life for the sake of others.

THE INNER VOICE

David was a businessman—a traveller in insecticides and fertilisers for farmers. One morning he woke up in a bad temper. He was silent and moody at breakfast, and left home without wishing his wife a happy day, as he usually did. The car wouldn't start, which added to his irritation; and when at last he drove off, in the pouring rain, he was in a thoroughly bad mood.

Then, as he drove, a voice in his heart seemed to say, 'Telephone your wife and apologise.' At first he tried to ignore the voice; then he began to argue: 'I've only got twopence anyway.' But at last he went into a small post office where the postmaster gladly gave him the extra money for such a good purpose. He made his call and his apology, and came out feeling at peace with the world again.

Then another idea came into his head. It seemed to come from the same inner voice as before. 'Go to Red House Farm on the moor.' He felt he must obey, and in less than half an hour he was driving into the farmyard. The farmer and two men, sheltering in the barn from the rain, came out and stared at him open-mouthed. 'What on earth made you come here today?' asked the farmer. 'Who told you we needed you?'

He told David that a whole field of cauliflowers had suddenly been attacked by an insect pest. They asked a neighbour's advice, and he told them that David, the traveller in insecticides, would know what to do, and that the plants must be treated at once. But how were they to find David? He would certainly have left home by this time, and he might be anywhere on a trip, for he served a wide

area. They were just anxiously debating whether there was any way of reaching him, when David himself arrived—the one man who could help them. He knew what to recommend, and the crop was saved.

David was glad that he had learned to listen to the inner voice in his heart. He had found that it can work in two ways. It can *correct* us, so that we put right what is wrong in ourselves, and between ourselves and others, as David did; and then it can *direct* us, and show us how we can help in doing what needs to be done in the world.

HE HAD TO CHOOSE

Steve Davis, a London press photographer, was always hoping for what newspaper people call a 'scoop'—a picture which nobody else had got, and which would make him rich and famous. And when he heard that in North London a girl with a gun was holding up the police, he thought his chance had come.

When he reached the house, he found the girl with the gun in an upstairs window, and there were policemen below and in the window next door. The gun was loaded, as a policeman had found to his cost, for he had a bullet in his back. Another policeman had tried to get hold of the gun with a piece of bent wire, but it fired again and a bullet hit a police car. Men had tried to break down the door of the room where the girl was, but bullets through the door stopped them. This state of things had been going on for two hours, and there was a complete deadlock.

Then Mr. Davis the photographer had an idea. He went inside the next house, to the window where the other police were, and started to talk to the girl. He flattered her by telling her she was so good-looking that he would like to photograph her. She was pleased with the idea, and allowed him to climb out of the window on to a ledge, and come quite

near her. He asked her to turn the rifle away from him so that he could photograph more of it.

And now he had to make a most difficult decision. He could take the photograph he longed for, and make himself famous. Or he could do something about that gun, and perhaps save other people from being injured. In a flash he had made his decision. He grabbed the gun, which went off, fortunately without doing any harm; and a great tug-of-war began, as the girl tried to wrest it out of his hands while the police behind hung on to him. Then at last other police broke in the locked door of the girl's room, and took the gun away from her.

Steve Davis was later awarded the George Cross for his selfless bravery; he was the hero of the hour, not only because he had done a very brave thing but also because he was a real hero, who put other people's safety before his own success.

CHIVALRY IN THE SKY

The first men to fight in the air, during the 1914-18 war, were not only brave pioneers—they had a spirit something like those of the knights who fought in tournaments during the days of chivalry. The best fighters on both sides came to know and respect each other, and if one was shot down in enemy territory, the captured airman was given a great welcome from his opposite numbers.

The pilot most highly esteemed by both British and Germans was Captain Albert Ball. He joined up at eighteen, and had three glorious years in the air before being killed while still under twenty-one. During those years he won the D.S.O. three times, and also the Military Cross, and after his death he was awarded the Victoria Cross for 'the most conspicuous and consistent bravery' in twenty-six air fights. But his most outstanding exploit was when he put two enemy aircraft to flight, and wanted to follow them, but found that

he had run out of ammunition; so he decided to take up the battle again next day. He wrote a note to the two enemy pilots, challenging them to come up the next day and finish the fight. Weighting the note, he dropped it on the enemy airfield. The next afternoon he flew to the rendezvous, and found that the two pilots had accepted the challenge, and were waiting for him. However, three other planes were also waiting out of sight, and all five attacked him together. He found that they were too much for him, until a daring plan struck him. He suddenly slumped forward in his seat as if hit—cockpits were open in those days, and the pilots could see each other—and he allowed his plane to dive as if out of control. But he managed to land on a flat field behind the enemy lines. As he had expected, two of the German fighters followed him down; if he was alive, they intended to make him a prisoner. The rest flew back to base to report the downfall of the famous British ace.

The two pilots left their machines and came running towards Ball's plane; but he had left his engine running gently, and just at the right moment he opened the throttle, eased back the stick and was airborne, leaving the pilots standing dumbfounded on the ground below. They had no chance of catching him, and he arrived safe and triumphant at his base. He much preferred this kind of victory, which involved no bloodshed, but required quick thinking and decisive action.

MAN WITH A GREAT HEART

Dr. Konrad Adenauer, who for so many years was Chancellor of Germany, was a man with a very great heart; perhaps this was shown most fully in the terrible trouble which he and his wife endured during the Nazi persecution of the second world war.

Dr. Adenauer was taken prisoner, but he managed to escape and hid in an old mill. The Nazis were determined to find him, and they rightly guessed that his wife knew

where he was. So they arrested her and put her in prison with all the bad women of the town. It was a terrible place; all the women were screaming and shouting and dancing, and there was no place to be quiet or even to sit down. After she had been there for some time, the Nazi officer in charge sent for her and demanded, 'Where is your husband?' She refused to tell him. 'Very well,' he said. 'Unless you tell us, your two young daughters will be brought here too and imprisoned with all those women.'

It was a terrible threat. She knew that he meant what he said. And she felt sure that her husband would not want her to sacrifice their children for him. But it was a fearful decision to make, when at last she decided to tell him where her husband was hidden. The Gestapo went to the mill and arrested Adenauer again, taking him to a dark, desolate prison. After five days he went up for questioning, and the commissar told him, with great glee, that his wife had betrayed his hide-out. But Adenauer, although he knew nothing of how it had happened, trusted his wife, and he said calmly, 'She has done right.'

Annoyed because he was so calm, the commissar decided to arrange a surprise meeting between husband and wife. All this time Frau Adenauer had been in a terrible state of worry about her husband, and about what she had been forced to do. Suddenly they were brought face to face, and at first neither was able to speak or move. Then Adenauer went slowly up to his wife. 'Gussie,' he said tenderly. Still she remained speechless. At last she stammered, 'The children—they threatened the children—I could think of no other way.' 'I know it all,' he said. 'Don't torture yourself. We are all in the hands of God.' No bitterness was able to destroy his love and trust and sense of peace.

Soon after, his wife was freed; and later on he, too, was able to return to his home and family, and, when the war was over, to become Chancellor of Germany.

KEEP YOUR HEAD

Johnny Tomkins was a little fellow about eight years old. His father was a guard on the railroad. Johnny was trying to be a Christian, and to be as useful as he could. One day he said to his mother, 'I don't suppose, Mother, that little folks like me can do much good.'

'Why, yes,' replied his mother. 'If little folks ask God to help them and keep their heads and really try, they may do a very great deal.'

That very evening Johnny did something great. He was to meet his father at the station, and the train on which Mr. Tomkins arrived was to stay all night. His father drew Johnny into the end car of the train and sat him down by the stove while he himself went along the train attending to certain things. Now someone had already unfastened the car from the train, and, the engine shunting back a little, as engines will, the car began to travel along the line, which was slightly down-hill. Faster and faster it went, with only Johnny inside it. Presently it turned a bend in the line, and then Johnny's heart gave a big bump, for far down the line a red light was showing, and he knew it was the express train which ran as far as the bend before taking another set of rails. He felt very frightened, not only for himself, but for the passengers of the express. But suddenly there shot into his mind his mother's words: 'If little folks ask God to help them and keep their heads——' Quietly he dropped on his knees and asked God to save them all. No sooner had he done so than an idea flashed into his mind, and he didn't lose it—he was 'keeping his head'. His father's red lantern stood lighted near the stove. He picked it up, ran out on to the platform of the car and swung it steadily up and down. The fireman of the express could see it, and with a roar the express pulled up, and then began slowly but with gathering speed to go backwards. Just before the runaway car reached

the express, it was swung off upon a side-track by means of some points, and here it soon came to a standstill.

You can guess the excitement of the passengers in the express. They passed the hat round for Johnny; but it was not the money that pleased him so much as the knowledge that many lives had been saved because he had 'kept his head', and because God hears and answers prayer.

MENDING MEN

Guthlac was the leader of a gang of English boys in the seventh century, who found their amusement in stopping travellers and robbing them. But although Guthlac found his life full of excitement and adventure, there was something unsatisfying about it. He suffered from an awkward thing called a conscience; and to stop it nagging at him, he always returned a third of the booty he had taken from the astonished victims.

But even this did not give him peace of mind; and one night he found that he could not sleep. As he lay tossing and turning, he suddenly saw his life as God must see it, with all its selfishness and dishonesty and uncleanness. How angry God must be with him! Perhaps He might not even allow such a worthless person to go on living. Perhaps he might be dead by the morning. And Guthlac made a promise to God, there in the darkness—that if He let him live till the next day, he would serve Him for the rest of his life.

The next morning Guthlac found himself quite a different person. But he still wanted to do difficult and adventurous things, and one of these was to go and live on a haunted island right away from busy cities. There he listened to the voice of God, and heard Him speak; and great wisdom came to him, so that people heard of him and came from far and near for his help. All sorts of people came, princes, lords and ordinary people.

One man who came was called Beccel, and he asked to be

allowed to stay with Guthlac on his island, and learn about God from him. But as Beccel watched Guthlac and saw all the people who flocked to him for help, he became jealous, and murderous thoughts came into his mind. Guthlac felt, with the wisdom that God gave him, that something was wrong; and one day, when Beccel was cutting his hair, he asked him, 'How is it with you, Beccel? Have you a quiet mind?'

Beccel was silent for a while; and then he burst out, 'No—I was just about to kill you while I was cutting your hair.'

'But why?' asked Guthlac in astonishment.

'Because I was jealous,' said Beccel. 'I thought that if you were dead, I should be the wise man whom people came to see. I am truly ashamed. Will you forgive me?'

Guthlac understood very well, remembering his old wild days. He forgave Beccel, and helped him to be different; and he lived with Guthlac as his faithful friend and servant for many years.

THE WISE GRANDMOTHER

In the fierce old days when people had to live in walled cities for safety, a town in what is now Algeria, on the north coast of Africa, was being besieged by an enemy. Besiegers always aimed at starving out the cities they attacked; and it looked as if they were succeeding, for there was no food left and the people were making up their minds to surrender.

But just at that point an old grandmother went to the chief man of the town. 'If you will do what I say,' she told him, 'we can all be saved.' She seemed so sure of what she said that he agreed to listen to what she had to propose.

'Fetch me a calf,' commanded the old woman. The people looked at each other—where could they get a calf? The cattle had all long since been eaten. But they ransacked the town, and found an old miser who had kept a little calf and managed to feed it well because he hoped to sell it at an

enormous profit to the starving people. This calf they brought in triumph to the old woman.

'Now I want some corn,' she said. Again the people searched till they found a few miserable handfuls of corn, which they brought back.

'Give it to the calf,' said the old woman. But that was too much. Their last precious corn to feed an animal! But the chief elder said, 'Do as she tells you.' So the corn was fed to the calf.

'Now take it and leave it outside the city gate,' the old woman ordered. By this time they had all decided that she must be mad; but there was nothing else to do, and so they thrust the little calf out of the gate and shut it behind the animal. The enemy soldiers were amazed to see a plump little calf appear and start to graze outside the city wall.

'We thought they were all starving to death in there,' they said, 'but it doesn't look like it if they have cattle like this still. In any case, we may as well kill it and cook it.' For they were hungry too. But when the butcher opened the calf's stomach, he found that it contained undigested corn.

'They certainly aren't starving,' said the soldiers, 'if they can feed corn to their cattle. They must have plenty more to make bread, and it will take us weeks more to starve them out. We had better give it up and go home.' So next day, when the citizens looked over the walls, there were no enemy soldiers to be seen. The wise old grandmother's advice had saved the city, and had shown that ideas are always stronger than force.

COURAGE BROUGHT HIS HEART'S DESIRE

Al was a twelve-year-old paper boy on an American railway train in the middle of the nineteenth century. His work was to sell papers, fruit and sweets to the passengers on the train. He had taken on the job for a very special reason—to make money so that he could study science. Ever since he had

been a tiny boy he had wanted to find out things, and he had had a laboratory in the cellar at home where he conducted all kinds of experiments. But experiments cost money, and here he was on the train working, as hard as he knew how, to make it. He didn't give up his experiments, though—he had a little laboratory fixed up in the guard's van.

Al was always thinking of new ideas to make money. He picked fruit in the woods and sold it on the train. He engaged other boys to help him so that he could sell more. And by the time he was fifteen he was printing his own newspaper on the train, on a printing press bought second hand. It was called the *Weekly Herald*, and it often printed the news before the big papers had it, because Al used to pick it up in the telegraph offices at the stations where the train stopped.

But most of all he wanted to understand wireless telegraphy. He found out all he could by watching his friends the station operators; but he knew that he needed to study it properly. But how could he? Then one day his chance came. The train had stopped for water at a station called Mount Clemens, and Al was on the platform talking to the station-master, Mr. Mackenzie, when he looked up and saw a sight which froze him with horror. The station-master's little two-year-old son, Jimmy, was playing on the railway line, and in the distance Al could see a great train coming thundering towards him.

In a flash Al had dropped his papers, run along the track and snatched the little boy to safety just in time, as the train roared past. Everyone crowded round to thank and congratulate the quick-witted news-boy, and the station-master said to him, 'I can't reward you with money, boy; but I tell you what I'll do. I'll make you one of the best telegraph operators in the country.' Besides being the station-master at Mount Clemens, he was also the telegraphist, and he was as good as his word. Young Al was set on the road which

turned him into the great scientist and inventor Thomas Edison, among whose hundreds of inventions were the electric light bulb, the gramophone, the long-playing record and the motion picture.

THE JAPANESE HEADMAN

In a little village of Japan, near to the sea, lived an old Japanese gentleman. He was the chief man of the village, and owned many fine rice-fields; to him in their difficulties came all the villagers to obtain advice and comfort when they needed it; he helped them with rice and money if they needed help, and settled their disputes when they arose.

One day after the rice harvest there was a festival in the village, and all the villagers were busy merry-making. The headman had not gone down with the rest, but sat at home with his little grandson. Suddenly there was an earthquake; they are not at all uncommon in Japan, and nobody took much notice of it; the houses rocked to and fro, and then all was still again. But the old headman, watching from his doorway, saw the sea rushing back from the land, quite a long way out; he was old, and had seen it happen before and knew what it meant. The villagers all shouted with surprise, and ran down to the beach to watch the curious sight. There was no time to send a messenger to warn them, and this noble, loyal old Japanese gentleman did the only thing possible. He caught up a lighted torch and set fire to his new rice-stacks, one after the other, and they flared up into the sky, making a blaze of light.

The people on the beach caught sight of the great fire, and the alarm bell of the temple rang out. Back they all streamed as fast as they could run, and up the hill to the burning rice-stacks. Those who arrived first began to extinguish the flames; but the old man said, 'No, no, let it burn. I want all the people to gather here.' When the villagers heard that,

and found that he had himself set fire to the rice, they said, 'Poor old man, he is mad.'

'Are they all here?' asked the old headman; and they answered, 'Yes, we are all here; but what does it all mean?'

'Look at the sea,' he cried, and when they looked they saw that the sea was rolling back to the land again in a great wave that seemed as high as a mountain. It dashed in over the village and spread roaring over the fields, then it rolled back to its old bed, having swept all the village away. But the villagers were safe, for they were on the higher ground where the headman's house was; and the old man stood there, poor as the poorest of them, because, by his loyalty to his friends and comrades, he had burned all his crops to warn them of their danger.

TWO LOAVES MISSING

This is the story of a girl called Rabia, who lived in Basra, in what is now called Iraq, in the eighth century. We know many things about her. We know that she played beautifully on the flute. We know, too, that she came from a very poor home—so poor that when she was born her mother had nothing to wrap her in and no oil in the family lamp. But the main thing we know about her, for which she is honoured as a saint in Moslem countries today, is that she loved God and lived very close to Him and was always sure of His love for her. She spent her life in serving Him.

Not only did she trust God to supply her own needs—she knew that He would help her to care for other people as well. There is a story which tells how two hungry travellers came to her house one day, and all she had to offer them was two little loaves, of the kind that people use in the East—we should probably call them rolls. She put these down before the two men; but just as they were going to help themselves, a beggar came by and asked for food. To their astonishment, Rabia gave him both the loaves. Presently a

little slave girl appeared carrying a tray, on which were a number of loaves, saying that her mistress had sent them as a gift to Rabia. The men were delighted to see them; but they were still more astonished when Rabia, after counting them carefully and finding that there were eighteen, sent them away, saying, 'They are not meant for me.' It was not long before the little girl was back again, this time with a tray containing twenty loaves, which Rabia received with many thanks, and handed over at last to her hungry guests.

Then she explained her strange behaviour. 'When you came in,' she told the men. 'I knew that you were hungry, but I said to myself, "How can I offer only two tiny loaves to these two honourable persons?" When the beggar came in, I gave them to him, and then I prayed to God in my heart that for each of the loaves I had given to the beggar, He would send me ten for my guests. When only eighteen loaves came, I knew that one of two things must have happened—either they were not meant for me, or someone had taken some on the way. So I sent them back, and, as you saw, the full twenty came as I had asked.'

Rabia was a very practical girl, and she expected that God, who cared for her, would do for her exactly what she asked Him, neither more nor less. And so it was.

EYES IN THE DARK

There is a story told in the East of a man called Abdul who was accused of something wrong which he had not done. He was obliged to escape from his home, and a large reward was offered to anyone who caught him. Abdul ran and ran till he was exhausted, and then found refuge in a cave. But as he lay fainting in the darkness, he saw six eyes shining on him, three pairs of them, and he realised that he had stumbled into a hyena's den. The eyes belonged to three cubs, who were looking fearfully at this huge monster who had tumbled into their cave. But as he lay without moving, they

decided that he was harmless, and began to romp around and over him. When the mother hyena returned, she growled and snarled, but since her young ones seemed to have made friends with the intruder, she accepted him too, and allowed him to spend the night with her and her family.

Next day she went hunting again; but Abdul stayed in the cave. He knew that unfriendly eyes were looking out for him. The cubs played happily, till one of them gave a whimper, and there in the doorway stood a man. In his hand was a knife, and Abdul knew that he was not a friend. Had he found his hiding-place? Then he guessed that the man had tracked down the hyena babies and come to kill them. He had no idea that the refugee was hiding a few feet away from him. If Abdul stayed silent—but he could not bear the thought of his little friends being killed, and, heedless of his own danger, he cried out, 'No, you must not hurt them.' The man, startled, lowered his knife; but when he realised who was speaking out of the darkness, the thought of the reward flashed into his mind.

Then Abdul told him how he had taken refuge with the wild beasts and made friends with them. The story moved the man very much, and he felt that as Abdul had risked his life to save the hyenas who had befriended him, he himself must also be generous. 'Stay here hidden,' he said, 'and I will let you know when it is safe for you to come home again.' Then he went away, leaving Abdul in peace. The story tells that somehow the little ones made their mother understand what Abdul had done, and she fawned on him in gratitude. While he was in her den she brought him food, and the story says that what she brought was fresh meat, not the tainted food that hyenas love. And so Abdul stayed with his friends the hyenas until it was safe for him to go back to his own people.

‘WHEN DID YOU LAST SEE YOUR FATHER?’

The story of a famous picture

Colonel Sidney was a Royalist officer, brave, handsome, gay and so kind that everyone adored him. To his little son this splendid Cavalier was something like a god. When his father had to hide from the Roundheads, and his mother expected every moment to have these Roundheads searching her castle, the little boy knew that he must say nothing of his father’s hiding-place. When the Puritans came and searched everywhere for Colonel Sidney, the boy knew that presently they would question him, and that he must save his father. The Puritans gave up the search, and retired to the great hall, to which they summoned the ladies.

The boy listened to the questions, and to the answers of his mother. He heard her tell a lie to save his father’s life. Presently one of the Puritans whispered to another behind his hand, and one rose and spoke to his chief. The chief glanced at the handsome boy, and said, ‘Yes, it is good counsel; we will question the little lad at once.’

The mother was told to stand on one side, and the boy was summoned to the table. He stood before his judges, upright, strong and handsome, the image of his father. He appeared quite calm; but his heart was hammering at his ribs, and the palms of his hands were clammy with dread. He had a giant’s task on his young soul—not to betray his father, and not to lie.

One of the Puritans, leaning towards him, said in a slow and menacing voice, ‘The Lord God consumes with everlasting fire those who tell falsehoods, and all those will be punished whom the Lord casts away in His indignation and wrath. Now, listen to me, young sir. I ask you, in the name of the Lord God, this question—when did you last see your father?’

The boy replied in a voice that was steady and firm, ‘I saw Colonel Sidney last night.’

'Last night!' they exclaimed.

'And he told me,' continued the boy fearlessly, 'to fear God, and honour the king, and love my country.'

'Last night?' cried one of the judges. 'Then it was in the castle?'

'Yes.'

'What part of the castle?'

'I will show you.'

They rose excitedly, and the boy led them to a room with a little bed in it. 'It was here,' he said, and pointed to the bed.

'Whose room is this?'

'It is mine.'

'And your father came to you here last night?'

'Yes.'

'Where did he go afterwards?'

'I do not know. I was asleep when he came, and I was still sleeping when he went.'

'What do you mean by that?'

'The last time I saw my father,' replied the boy, 'was in a dream.'

ANDROCLES AND THE LION

Androcles* was a Roman slave, whose cruel master ill-treated him so much that he ran away. He found himself in a wild place, and when he had gone so far that he was quite exhausted, he came face to face with a lion, and felt that his end had come. But the lion was making a moaning sound and holding up its paw; and when Androcles, greatly daring, went nearer, he saw that a great thorn was sticking in the pad, and that the lion's foot was swollen and must have been terribly painful.

Then Androcles' pity for the suffering animal overcame his fear of it, and he took the paw in his hands and gently

* Pronounced An'dro-cleez.

drew out the thorn, and then did what he could to cleanse the wound. The lion allowed him to do it, and seemed to be grateful for his help. It stayed with Androcles while its paw was healing, and brought him meat, which he dried in the sun. There was water near by, and man and lion lived together in this strange way for some time.

After a while Androcles decided to travel on to Rome, though he was quite sorry to leave his friend the lion. In Rome he found work; but one day he had the misfortune to be recognised by his old master, who had him arrested and condemned to be thrown to the lions in the circus where the public games were held. Fights with wild beasts were often among the shows given there. Masters had no mercy on runaway slaves. Androcles in his prison heard the savage roars of the hungry beasts in their cages; but during his stay in Rome he had met many of the Christians who lived there, and had decided to serve Jesus Christ, and now, faced with a terrible death, he felt the power of Christ in his heart overcoming fear. At last he was led out into the arena, where the bloodthirsty crowds looked on eagerly, and a huge lion came bounding towards him. Androcles closed his eyes and waited for death. But nothing happened, and he opened his eyes to see the lion at his feet fawning on him. An idea struck him; he lifted its paw, and there, sure enough, was the scar left by the thorn. It was his old friend of the forest.

Meantime, the emperor, who was watching the games from his box, was much intrigued, and sent to know the reason for the lion's strange behaviour. Androcles was brought before him, and when he heard the story he set the prisoner free.

'And the lion, sire—what about that?' he was asked.

'Give it to him as a gift,' was the reply. So Androcles led his strange pet away, and it followed him like a dog through the streets of Rome for the rest of its life.

THE KING'S MOUNT

A Christmas legend

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, there were other animals in that stable beside the humble ass which brought His mother to the inn. There was the contemptuous camel, with a lip, the steed of some desert ranger. There was a proud war-horse stabled there by a passing warrior. There was a strong bullock who drew the wagon of a great merchant. In the quiet of that Christmas night, the four beasts munched their provender in silence.

We have all heard how at midnight on Christmas Eve all the beasts in the world gain for a few fleeting seconds the power of human speech; now this miracle began on this very night in the stable at Bethlehem. The four beasts watched the carpenter Joseph, his wife Mary and the newborn child who lay in the manger.

'Humph!' said the contemptuous camel, with a sniff. 'Quite an ordinary child.'

'A little peasant child,' said the proud horse with a snort, 'a common little kid.'

The great ox gave a grunt, and said, 'A weak, miserable little thing,' and they all went on munching their hay and forgot about Joseph and Mary and the Babe in the manger.

Then outside the stable there was a sound of footsteps and men's voices, which could be faintly heard through the half-open stable door. The humble ass, who had felt much too insignificant to join in the conversation of his betters (indeed, he would have been severely snubbed had he dared to do anything so rash), turned his long ears to hear what the men were saying. Then, for the first time that night, he spoke.

'They are saying,' said the ass, 'that a King is born this day.' There was a stir among the noble beasts at that news. 'Ah, he will need me,' said the camel, 'to cross the trackless desert; for surely this king will be a great traveller, visiting

all the cities of the world in his wisdom and magnificence.'

'He will need me,' said the horse, 'to ride in triumph through the streets of the cities that he conquers, for he will be a mighty warrior.'

'No, it is I that he will need,' said the ox, 'for it is a bearer of great burdens to carry his merchandise, his gold and his silver that he will most need.'

So they quarrelled that night as to which of them the new-born King would need; and of the Baby in the manger they thought nothing at all. Only the humble ass, who had said nothing, for he thought he was too humble to be used in any way, looked with mild brown eyes at the mother and her Child as Mary crooned over the manger-cradle the Baby's first lullaby.

But after all, it was on the humble ass that the King rode into His city in the end.

HONESTY BROUGHT A WONDERFUL REWARD

In a narrow street near the old port of Marseilles, in France, stood during the second world war a building marked 'Seamen's Mission'. It was supposed to be a home for sailors when they were on shore; but really it was much more than that. It was part of an underground escape route for allied soldiers, sailors and airmen on their way to safety in Spain; and the man in charge of it, the Reverend Donald Caskie, had the task of welcoming them, tired, hungry and dirty, then feeding, washing and clothing them, supplying false papers and sending them off secretly in parties to the frontier.

It was terribly difficult and dangerous work, the more so because the enemy suspected the place, and nearly every day they came to search for escapers. Mr. Caskie had to make many secret hiding-places for them—in the roof, under the floor and in little hidden cubby-holes; and it was so cleverly done and so quick that the raiders never found anyone who should not have been there. Feeding so many men was

difficult too, for of course none of them had ration cards, which everyone was obliged to produce, in those days of food shortages, before they could buy any food at all. Mr. Caskie was almost in despair.

So he was very pleased when one day one of the escaping soldiers brought him a bunch of seven food cards, which he said he had found in the gutter. But when Mr. Caskie looked at them, he saw that they belonged to a poor widow and her six children. He realised that she must have dropped them in the street.

'We can't use these,' he said to the soldier. 'I must return them as soon as possible. Our work here would never prosper if we were to take advantage of your find.'

The soldier quite understood, and so, as soon as he could, Mr. Caskie took the cards to the address written on them. He found the poor mother kneeling by her bed, crying as she prayed. She was in despair because, having lost the books, she had no way to feed her big hungry family.

Without a word Mr. Caskie put the lost cards into her hands. She sprang up with a cry of joy, and rushed about the room, hugging the children, and crying 'A miracle! A miracle!'

But that was not the end of the story. She insisted on taking Mr. Caskie to see the minister of her own church, so that he might thank him properly. As soon as this minister heard Mr. Caskie's name, he said, 'Oh, my people and I know all about your work, and we want to help you.' And he and his congregation became an important link in the escape route. They took the men into their homes, so that there were not so many dangerously crowded into the Seamen's Mission; and they gave them not only food and clothes, but maps and compasses and other things to help their escape.

This is how Mr. Caskie summed it all up: 'Never, never in my life,' he said, 'has an honest action brought such a wonderful reward.'

IN ENEMY COUNTRY

Rudyard Kipling's story of a secret agent's courage

There is a heroism beyond all, for which no Victoria Cross is ever given, because there is no official enemy nor any sort of fighting, except one volley in the early morning at some spot where the noise does not echo into the newspapers.

It is necessary from time to time to send unarmed men into No Man's Land and the Back of Beyond . . . just to find out what is going on there among people who some day or other may become dangerous enemies. The understanding is that if the men return with their reports, so much the better for them. They may then receive some sort of decoration, given, so far as the public can make out, for no real reason. If they do not come back—and people disappear very mysteriously at the Back of Beyond—that is their own concern, and no questions will be asked, and no enquiries made.

They tell a tale of one man who, some years ago, strayed into No Man's Land to see how things were, and met a very amiable set of people, who asked him to a round of dinners and lunches and dances. And all that time he knew, and they knew that he knew, that his hosts were debating between themselves whether they should suffer him to live till next morning, and if they decided not to let him live, in what way they should wipe him out most quietly. The only consideration that made them hesitate was that they could not tell from his manner whether there were five hundred Englishmen within a few miles of him or no Englishmen at all within five hundred miles of him; and, as matters stood at that moment, they could not very well go out to look and make sure.

So he danced and dined with these merry folk—all good friends—and talked about hunting and shooting and so forth, never knowing when the polite servants behind his

chair would turn into the firing party. At last his hosts decided, without rude words said, to let him go; and when they had made up their minds they did it very handsomely; for, you must remember, there is no malice on either side in that game. They gave him a farewell banquet, and drank his health, and he thanked them for his delightful visit, and they said, 'So glad you're glad. Au revoir,' and he came away looking a little bored.

Later on, so the tale runs, his hosts discovered that their guest had been given up for lost by his friends in England, where no one ever expected to see him again. Then they were sorry that they had not put him against a wall and shot him.

That is a case of the cold-blooded courage worked up to after years of training—courage of mind forcing the body through an unpleasant situation for the sake of the game. When all is said and done, courage of mind is the finest thing anyone can hope to attain to.

A NUGGET OF GOLD

(An Australian Methodist minister) once had a very remarkable experience in the outback (as the wild part of Australia is called). He was on his way to take a Sunday afternoon service in a tiny bush settlement when a big man sprang out from among some tall eucalyptus trees. Seizing the horse's head, the man commanded (the minister) to alight. He saw the wisdom of doing so, as five more hefty men came swiftly on the scene. He was now alarmed, for the dreadful truth dawned on him that he had fallen into the hands of desperate bushrangers.

They tethered his horse to a wattle tree, and a giant of a fellow proceeded to bind up his eyes with a long cotton handkerchief. Was this the end? Was it a remaining vestige of charity that he should not see the man who was to strike the fatal blow or put a shot through his heart? Something

of the sort, surely. The bushrangers were about to add murder to their catalogue of cattle-thieving, saloon plundering and bank robbing—typical ranger misdemeanours. The situation looked very black.

They led him into cool forest depths, and after journeying, or rather zig-zagging, for about a mile they stopped in what (he) felt to be a cave, as indeed it was. This was their eyrie, which would certainly take a bit of finding by the police. The scarf was removed from his eyes. There were six glowering bushrangers about him. Escape was impossible. Death seemed inevitable, for if they had brought him there to get some information to turn to nefarious purposes, they were barking up the wrong tree. He would never tell. He would die first. But as his eyes became accustomed to the darkness, he descried a seventh man lying on a mass of bracken on the floor. He was ill, very ill indeed; that was quite obvious. He was, in fact, dying.

‘Now, sky pilot,’ said a big, bronzed fellow gruffly, ‘pray for our cobber before he shoots off.’

So that was it. These desperadoes, knowing (the minister’s) whereabouts and movements in the bush, had decided to intercept him on this particular Sunday afternoon in order that he might pray for a dying comrade. He prayed, and the bushrangers stood awkwardly to attention. There was the hush of heaven in the robbers’ hide-out. The man died only a few minutes after the prayer for his soul’s salvation had been offered.

The bushrangers bound up (the minister’s) eyes and conducted him back to where his tethered horse patiently stood. After taking the scarf away one man—their spokesman—roughly thanked him. There were tears in his steely blue eyes. He pushed a screwed-up bit of paper into the minister’s hand, and then the bushrangers disappeared into the forest, never more to be seen by him.

He jogged along on his horse thinking over this unusual

experience; and then it occurred to him to undo the bit of paper. It was a tiny nugget of gold. The gift was symbolic. There is a bit of gold in everybody.

THE MAJOR AND THE MISSING MONEY

This is a story about the Indian Army. In the Madras Regiment in Assam was a major whose men had great confidence in him. As a young officer he had served under men with the highest standards of honesty and fair play, and the soldiers knew that they could trust him.

One day one of his junior officers came to him in great distress. A soldier who was going on leave had drawn out all his savings—seven hundred rupees—and put them in his case in the barrack room. The next morning they had disappeared.

‘Of course, sir,’ said the officer, ‘he disobeyed orders by not having his money put in the safe overnight. But we must find the thief. I know several men who might have stolen the money. With your permission, I will make some arrests, and get a confession by evening.’

But the major felt that that was not the right way to go about things. That night he called all the men together. Everyone was there.

‘Something has happened,’ he said to them. ‘What is it?’ There was silence, and he repeated the question.

‘A theft, sir!’ a soldier cried. The men all knew about the missing money.

‘Yes,’ said the major. ‘I thought this was a good unit—that I could trust you. But one of you has brought disgrace on us all. But I don’t want to hear any names—I don’t want you pointing a finger at anyone. I won’t call this man a thief. I believe that he made a mistake which, as we stand here, he regrets deeply. Anyone can make a mistake; I’ve made many myself. I believe this man had a moment of weakness, and would correct it if he could. He shall have the

chance to do so. If he comes to me, I promise never to divulge his name or punish him. But to make it easier, the doors and windows of the office will be left open. Any time during the night he can throw the money inside. He may have hidden it somewhere, so for thirty-six hours there will be no restrictions on any man's movement in or out of camp. He will have tonight and tomorrow night. I believe he will correct his mistake. But if that money is not back within the time limit, then I say to you that this is a bad unit. I will not serve with you any more. I shall ask for immediate transfer.'

Many thought it was a hopeless plan, and some of the officers joked about 'the major's crazy idea'. But next morning a sweeper came running. 'Sir! Sir! Here it is!' he cried, and handed in a packet wrapped in newspaper. Inside was the stolen money, all except thirty rupees.

That night the major again addressed the men. 'The mistake has been put right by the man who made it,' he said. 'It is true that thirty rupees have been spent, but we will forgive him that. The soldier who disobeyed orders and did not put his money in the safe must pay that penalty. In the face of the great temptation to keep the money, the man who took it has returned it. He is a great man, and I salute him.'

FRIEND OR FOE

During the second world war, a ship was torpedoed and one of the officers on board, called Denis, found himself obliged to swim. After a time he was taken on board a lifeboat, and found that he was the senior officer aboard; so he took charge. They rowed all night, and just as the sky was beginning to lighten, one of the men shouted, 'Look over there!' And they all saw, before they dropped into the trough of a wave, what appeared to be a submarine. Or was it a friendly ship? They dared not row over to see, for submarines had been known to sink lifeboats to prevent them

giving away the submarine's position on their lifeboat radio. And yet, if it were a friendly ship, they dared not miss the chance of rescue, since they were off the usual shipping routes. They were in a dilemma.

Denis turned to the ship's carpenter, who was beside him, and said, 'Do you pray?'

'Well, it's not much in my line, sir,' he replied, 'but I've heard that you are a man who believes in it.'

'Now's the time to try it out, Chips,' said Denis. 'Will you help?' So the two men closed their eyes, and Denis prayed aloud, 'Please, God, guide me. I don't know what to do.'

Immediately he was flooded with a sense of confidence, and knew what he should do. 'You stand up,' he said to Chips, 'and flash your torch in the direction of what we have seen.' Then he stood up himself and shouted to the men, above the noise of the wind and waves, 'All right, heave away starboard—we're going over to investigate.'

At once there was a chorus of protests: 'They'll machine-gun us!'

'Please be quiet,' Denis shouted back. 'It will be quite all right—you need have no fear. Now, all together—heave!' He seemed so sure and confident that he surprised himself. 'I hope you're right,' said Chips. 'I'm sure I'm right,' said Denis—and meant it.

They pulled and pulled, but for a long time they saw no more of the ship, for when they were on top of a roller the other ship was in the trough; but at last they were both on top together, and the men in the lifeboat could see that she was not a submarine, but a destroyer. She had been stopped, and now she was turning quickly to steam away. They all let out a tremendous yell, and when they saw the destroyer again, it had rounded and begun a search. Soon they were on board, and Denis had organised a further search for the rest of the torpedoed men from his ship. Then he went to report to the destroyer's captain.

'Do you believe in miracles?' asked the captain with a smile. 'Because it was a miracle that we saw you. We were so low on fuel that we lay most of last night waiting for instructions where to go for refuelling. But just before we spotted you I received orders to go to search for survivors from another torpedoed ship, and we were just off. You were only spotted by the merest chance by the torpedo-gunner's mate in the stern of the ship. Another half-minute, and you would never have been picked up.'

A NEW KIND OF TOUGHNESS

Alan Brown, the manager of a football team, thought he was very tough. He was called the Iron Man of Football, and he was known for always going straight for what he wanted; if anything or anybody got in his way, it was just too bad for them—he walked right over them. He did not tell the truth if a lie would suit him better; and if newspaper men came to talk to him and ask him about his team, he would refuse to speak to them, or else give them a rude brush-off. At home, his wife and three small children saw so little of him that they felt they hardly knew him.

Then one day Alan Brown found a new kind of toughness. He discovered that it is braver to be polite to people than to curse them; to be kind to those who ask your help than to treat them roughly; to tell the truth always than to lie when it suits you. And he decided to go all out for this new toughness. He began by doing a very brave thing. He called together the news men to whom he had been so rough and rude, and humbly apologised to them; he promised them that he would never again say anything dishonest or unkind to them. And he kept his word.

The news men were so astonished to hear what he said that they were almost shocked; but they decided to watch him and see how this new toughness worked out. They watched Sunderland, the team he was managing, play better

and better, because the new way he treated them made them want to do their best; and gradually they found themselves reaching the top of the second division. Then Alan went to manage Sheffield Wednesday, and they, too, did so well that they landed at the very top, playing in the Cup Final itself. And then the press men saw him do something that no one else had ever dared to do. Many football players had been in the habit of doing a very dishonest thing—instead of taking only the twelve free tickets to which they were entitled for the Cup Final, they took many more, and sold them for a very great deal of money. But when Alan Brown's team asked for extra tickets, he said, 'You are not going to get them. I will quit my job rather than give you one extra ticket.' You might have expected the men to be angry when he said that; but instead they apologised for what they had done wrong about tickets in the past, and said that in future they would accept any decision Alan made on rules, tickets or anything else. They were really glad to find someone tough enough to stand up for honesty, even if it cost him his job.

And the newspaper men were delighted too. One of them said that Brown had made an 'honest affair of the Cup Final'. Another reporter said, 'I could stand up and cheer this splendid integrity. Well done, Alan Brown!'

And this is what Alan said himself: 'In our game we must win the fair way, and that is what we aim to do. As a nation we will win through our difficulties the same way—without bitterness, without party bickering, the clean straight way which can win once more the respect of the world.'

A MAN-EATING SHARK

An adventure of Hans Haas, the underwater photographer

When native fishermen came past in their boats, and saw us swimming around among the reefs, they usually rowed over to warn us against 'tribon'—the shark. But day after day

passed without our seeing a single one. We ventured farther and farther out into deep water, and our excitement kept growing until finally the great moment really came. There were three of us, just turning a reef, when a big body materialised out of the distance, and came towards us with calm, steady movements. By the blue colour we could see that it was a blue shark—a man-eater. How often I had studied its picture. This was it.

I don't know what got into me. From everything I knew about sharks, I should really have been afraid. But this creature was so handsome, so graceful, looked so unlike a bloodthirsty man-eater, that for the moment I could think only how fine a photograph of it would be. I forgot I had not even a knife on me, and I swam towards the shark, armed only with the camera. I had not the slightest misgivings; the voice of reason was completely silenced.

Every detail I saw in those seconds stamped itself indelibly upon me. To this moment I can see the plump body fairly exuding power, the sharp pectoral fins, thrusting forward on both sides like the fins of a bomb. I see the big crescent tail fin, almost imperceptibly beating the water, and the dorsal fin, curved backwards—the dreaded 'black triangle above the water'. The shark's body was perfectly streamlined in shape; as the creature was swimming between me and deep water, it stood out in the round against the background; its outline was bathed in sunlight. Abominable beast? No! Without doubt it was the most beautiful of living animals.

The shark came closer; strangely enough, I did not see its eyes. They must have been too small, hidden somewhere between the pointed nose and the five sharply marked gill-openings in the shadow. I could make out the maw below. Twenty feet . . . Fifteen feet . . . closer and closer the shark came.

When the thirteen-foot creature was within what my companions judged to be eight feet of me, its massive body

gave a sudden jerk. With a cat-like suppleness quite incompatible with the calm majesty of its previous movements, the shark spun round almost on the spot. A few quick fin-strokes vibrated audibly through the water, then it was out of sight.

Not until we got to the surface did we really take in what had happened. The shark, the king of the sea, had fled before a small, unarmed human being. How could that be? Actually, the explanation was obvious enough. The shark is accustomed to having all creatures flee before him; it has always been so since time immemorial. And now, suddenly, it had met a strange creature that had shown no fear, but actually swum at it as if to attack. This must have been most unusual for the shark. Was the simple-minded creature not bound to think that this strange being was stronger than it?

After this we often met sharks, and always with the same result; no matter whether they were large or small, blue or grey or the light-grey ones especially feared on some coasts, they all fled when we swam towards them, just as if we, not they, were the dreaded tigers of the sea.

IV THREE- TO FOUR-MINUTE STORIES

THE MAN WHO TRUSTED GOD

This is the amazing story of a man who trusted God, and how that trust carried him safely through every kind of difficulty and danger. His name was Berggrav, a bishop in Norway when the German Nazis invaded his country.

The Nazis told the bishop to stop holding services and speaking to the people about God; but he would not obey. So they sent him away to a secret prison in the mountains, with Nazi soldiers to guard him. They thought they were free of him. But the bishop talked to the soldiers about his faith in God, and six of them caught it from him, including the chief guard.

One day the chief guard said to him, 'You ought to escape. We will fix it for you.' He said God had told him to do this. He arranged for the other four guards to be sent away on an errand, and then he showed Berggrav how to tie up the six guards to chairs, so as to save them from the other Nazis' anger; he himself tested the clothes line rope with the bishop to make sure it was strong enough. Then the bishop quietly walked out of prison, disguised with a beard and glasses, and went to the railway station, where he bought a ticket for Oslo and boarded the train. When the four unfriendly guards came back and found the others bound, they exclaimed, 'Very clever bishop! He should have had a double row of guards, and machine guns. But,' they added, 'it wouldn't have been much use. It was too well planned.' They did not know that it was the faith of the bishop and his guards that had brought it about.

After some time, Berggrav decided that he and his wife and son must escape from Norway. The rest of the story is told in the bishop's own words.

'We started for Sweden. First a ten-hour sail in a little boat down the fjord. A storm arose, and the guide said it was impossible to cross the mountains. This was one of the

saddest moments. We sat frozen and sad in the boat, seeing Sweden through a gap in the mountains, but moving away from it. My son was heavy-hearted. He said, "It is like Moses. We only looked into the promised land."

'We met another man. He said, "I will put you up. The weather will change." It did. At 1 a.m. we started off. There was no road, only moors, and stones, and then rain. It was impossible for my wife to do that trip. I turned to God as I used to do in childhood when I wanted a fine day. I said to Him, "God, here we are, and we can't go on unless the rain stops." Five minutes later the rain stopped. We didn't have another drop till we reached the train in Sweden.

'So we passed the border at 8.30 a.m., only 1000 metres from the Germans. We entered the wild desert of north Sweden and came to a Lapp tent. There we had to spend three nights, gathered round a fire on the ground. Our food gave out. The next day one of our Lapp guides said he would go out to look for food. A foolish thought, it seemed to me. But an hour later he came back with food, and said he had seen some colour among the stones and moved the boulders, and there was a parachute sail. He lifted it. Underneath was meat, flour, sugar, butter, real coffee. It was just like Moses. It was finding food from stones. That night we feasted.

'The next day we started again at 5.30. After fifteen hours we reached the first railway station. We were safe.'

A BETTER WAY

Here is a story of two brave boys who found themselves face to face with a very difficult problem. There were two ways of solving it, one better than the other.

Many years ago, when our brave forefathers were colonising the American continent, a new settlement of people sprang up which was called Windsor, in the state that is now called Connecticut, not far from the Connecticut river. The country all round at that time was just a wilderness. The

colonists were far away from other settlers, and when winter settled down upon them the state of the little colony became desperate for want of food. A ship was supposed to have been sent to them with supplies, but nothing had been heard of it, and the country round, even the river, was in the grip of the winter's ice. Weeks went by and still there was no news of brave Captain Talmage and his ship, the *Hawthorn*. His son, Samuel, and his daughter Betty were among the colonists, and were strong and loud in their faith that their father would not fail.

Samuel flung himself with all his strength into the task of searching for food, hunting in the forests round about, searching the ice-blocked pantry of Nature. His great friend Ebenezer Dow went with him. They were getting rather weak from lack of food. . . . One morning . . . the two boys went off . . . into the forest and crept silently along, when suddenly Ebenezer, parting the bushes, saw an Indian boy of his own age, crouching beside a wounded brave, staunching the man's wounds with oak-leaves and snow. There was a fresh-kindled fire, and on the ground a huge brown bear that had been killed. No sooner did he see them than Ebenezer, who had no weapon, snatched Samuel's knife out of its sheath. Samuel whispered, 'What are you going to do?'

'Do? What else is there to do but slay these savages and take their meat? The man is wounded and the boy we can easily overcome.'

But Samuel would not listen to this. 'I will not kill,' he said in a whisper. 'It would be foolish as well as wrong; suppose it brings down on the settlement the rage of the Indians?'

'Dolt!' was the reply. 'Who will ever know? We must have food.' And Ebenezer crept forward to rush his unsuspecting enemies. But suddenly Samuel made up his mind, and, running forward, he warned the Indians. The wounded

man sprang to his feet, weak as he was, and the boy sent a swift arrow, unhappily at Samuel, but it missed him. Ebenezer drew off into the bushes, but not before the Indian's sharp eyes had caught a glint of the knife, and gathering his strength, he seized Samuel and held him prisoner.

Presently the Indian brave, who seemed very calm, asked Samuel his name.

'Talmage,' was the reply.

At that the Indian became very excited, and said, 'Come!', and ignoring his own wounds, he strode through the woods, dragging Samuel by the hands to the riverside, and there, looking down the river, Samuel caught sight of a tall ship locked in the ice. They ran on till they came to the ship, which was the *Hawthorn*, and there Samuel learned that Captain Talmage had returned to Boston to hurry up further supplies and had sent the Indian forward to Windsor with news of the ship's arrival. But the terrible winter conditions and the storm which had been raging had made it difficult for him to find the settlement. They soon unshipped some supplies and rushed them through with Samuel as guide. You can guess the joy and pride with which he entered the settlement with food for them all.

When Ebenezer learned the truth, he came to Samuel and took him by the hand, saying, 'Forgive me. Your way was indeed better than mine, for had I slain the Indians we might never have heard of the ship till it was too late.'

FRIENDLY ENEMIES

One day during the second world war a British torpedo-bomber put out from Malta in search of a suitable target. It carried a crew of four—two Englishmen, an Australian and a New Zealander. . . .

Fortune upon this occasion did not favour them. They encountered a squadron of Italian fighters somewhere off

the coast of Crete and after a spirited little battle were shot down into the sea. They took to their rubber dinghy, from which they were presently rescued as prisoners by their late opponents. Their captors gave them dry clothing, entertained them in their mess and furnished them with comfortable quarters for the night. Next day the four prisoners were informed that they were to be conveyed by air to an internment camp in Italy. They were duly put on board a large Italian flying-boat, manned by a crew of five and piloted by a flight sergeant. The prisoners having been disarmed, no particular watch was set over them. They were directed to dispose themselves on the floor of the bomber, just behind the pilot's seat, and make themselves as comfortable as possible. Presently they found themselves soaring high over the Mediterranean, bound for their place of captivity. Within the bomber all was peace, save for the roar of the engines.

Then the New Zealander was struck by a sudden idea which ripened into immediate purpose. It was perhaps unkind, he reflected, to offer such an ungracious return for hospitality, but after all, there was a war on. So he rose to his feet, and regretfully, though most efficiently, knocked the Italian pilot out. He then swiftly deprived his prostrate victim of his revolver, with which he covered the remaining members of the crew, who, having thus far regarded the trip as an unusual and agreeable pleasure trip, were completely off their guard and were in no position to resist the combined assault now delivered upon them by the New Zealander's three colleagues. In due course the Italians were overpowered and trussed up. The New Zealander had taken the pilot's seat, and though sadly unfamiliar with the design and mechanism of this particular engine, had contrived somehow to get the lurching bomber back under control. On again she sped, high above the waters of the sparkling Mediterranean.

So far so good; but the question which had now to be faced was what to do next. No land was visible, and the present navigator had but the vaguest idea where they were, for he had no map. But since Malta lay somewhere west of him, and Malta was his natural homing-place, he turned his craft in that direction and hoped for the best. Presently land appeared below them. Plainly it was not Malta, but something considerably larger—a portion of the continent of Europe, in fact—so the pilot swung away to the south-west. Before long he picked up a new and this time unmistakable landmark, the crater of Mount Etna. After that, to locate Malta was the merest child's play, and in due course the great flying-boat began to glide down, and the four usurpers chuckled rapturously. They were about, they felt, to spring a delightful surprise upon their friends.

But it was their friends who sprang the surprise on them, for the moment their presence above the island coast was detected, they were greeted by furious salvos from the anti-aircraft batteries. They had forgotten that their conveyance carried Italian markings, and not British; to the blood-thirsty gunners below they were merely (enemy) intruders, and anybody's meat. Obeying an immediate instinct of self-preservation, they promptly hung out signals of distress and tokens of surrender. Indeed, one of them is said to have crawled out on to a wing and waved a conciliatory pocket-handkerchief. In the end they got down safely, and were taken off, amid cheers and laughter, by a motor-boat sent out from the harbour.

Upon reporting at headquarters, they asked, as a special favour, that they should be left in charge, at least temporarily, of the five Italians. They were anxious, they said, to show their involuntary guests as good a time as they had been given themselves. Permission was granted.

WHAT TO DO WITH A COWARD

A story of old Spain

This is a story of the great Spanish warrior hero, El Cid. He and his knights were one day besieging a castle held by the Moors. They fought all day, and every night the bravest warriors sat and dined at a special table set apart for them in El Cid's lodging, while he sat upon his ivory chest apart and observed them proudly.

Now among his warriors was one who was a coward at heart, and this El Cid knew well, but, as was his way, he set to work to turn this coward into a brave man.

On a certain day there was a fight between the Moors and the Spaniards outside the walls of the city, and El Cid was in the midst of the fight, and the coward was also there. But in the noise and confusion the coward hid himself and came not out of his hiding-place until the evening. Then all the knights repaired to the lodging of El Cid for dinner. As was their wont, those knights who had fought especially well went to the table of honour, and the other knights to lesser tables. The coward passed in with the rest, and was about to sit down at one of the lesser tables when El Cid came up to him and took his hand and said, 'You do not deserve to sit with these, for they are worthy of more honour than you or I. You sit with me.' So he took the coward to sit beside him on his ivory chest. The coward, thinking in his foolishness that El Cid had not remarked his conduct during the day, did as he was bid right willingly.

The next day was El Cid with his green banner again in the forefront of another attack upon the city. The coward was also there. But this day he remembered how the night before he had sat in a place of highest honour; and though he was still a coward at heart, yet did he this day give the Moors one good blow before he turned his horse's head and hid himself as before. All this did El Cid observe. Again that

night, when the coward was about to sit himself to eat with the warriors at the lesser table, El Cid came to him, took him by the hand, and said, 'Come, sit at my table, and eat with me out of the same dish; for though you are not yet worthy to sit with the warriors, yet are you a better knight than you were yesterday.' As the coward heard these words a shame came over him; yet he did as El Cid commanded.

That night he thought within himself that El Cid must have known of all his cowardice, and he resolved that come what might he would do his best to be a brave man.

The next day the Moors came forth from the town to make an attack upon El Cid and his men, and behold! the coward was among the first to rush into the fight! 'And,' says the old chronicle, 'he hewed away valiantly and slew a good knight of the Moors, and straightway he lost all the craven fear that had possessed him and proved himself to be one of best knights in the field.'

All day long he fought, and the Moors were driven back into the town, and they marvelled among themselves who this new knight might be. 'Whence has this devil sprung?' said they, one to another. 'For we have surely never seen him before.'

Once more El Cid observed all these things, and when the day was done the old chronicle says that 'he who was once a coward went, very meek and quiet, back with the rest', and at dinner-time, El Cid waited for the knight. When they had washed their hands, El Cid took him by the hand and led him to the table where sat the most valiant knights of all.

'My friend,' said he, 'you no longer deserve to sit with me, but sit you with these good knights, for the good deeds of arms which you have done this day have made you worthy to be their companion.' 'Then,' says the old chronicle, 'from that day forward was he who was once a coward numbered among the company of the brave.'

THE BULLY

A story told by a minister who has given his life to working with the switchblade gangs of New York, and has become their friend.

It happened years ago when I was a boy, and we had just moved to Pittsburg. I didn't win any 'most likely to succeed' awards when I was growing up. I was always pretty frail, and . . . the very thought of a fist fight left me shaking. Still, the funny thing is that, all through my high school years, I never had to fight because I had a reputation for being extremely tough. That ridiculous situation came about in a peculiar way. . . .

There was a boy in (my new) school named Chuck, who was a bully. He was the first boy I heard about when we got to Pittsburg. Before we'd unpacked our trunks I learned that Chuck always beat up the new kids, and that I had better be particularly careful because he was especially tough on preachers' kids. Chuck had me shaking before I ever saw him. What was I going to do when we finally did meet? I asked God this question, and an answer came quickly and clearly, 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit.' I knew it was a Bible quotation, and I looked it up just to check on my recollection of the passage. Zechariah 4, 6, it was—and then and there I took it for my motto. When the time came to face Chuck, I decided, I would simply lean on this promise. God would give me a holy boldness that would be equal to any bully.

All too soon I had a chance to test my theory. One spring afternoon I started home from school alone. I was wearing new clothes, I remember, which made it particularly important that I should not get into a fight; new clothes in our family were too carefully budgeted to be ruined in a street brawl. Suddenly, ahead, I saw a boy walking towards me. I knew in an instant that this would be Chuck. He was strutting down the opposite side of the street. But the instant

he saw me he crossed over and bore down on me like a heavy, snorting, angry bull. Chuck was an enormous boy. He must have weighed fifty pounds more than I, and he towered above me so that I had to bend my neck to look him in the eye. Chuck stopped dead in my path, legs spread and hands on hips.

'You're the preacher's kid.'

It wasn't a question, it was a challenge, and I'll admit that in that moment all my hopes of holy boldness vanished. I was scared to the core of me. . . . 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.' I kept repeating this sentence over and over to myself while Chuck commenced to give his opinion of me. First he picked on the fact that I looked stupid in my new clothes. Then he worked over the obvious truth that I was a weakling. After that he had a few words to say about preachers' kids in general. . . . 'by my Spirit, saith the Lord'. I still had not spoken, but inside me an amazing event was taking place. I felt fear melting, and in its place came confidence and joy. I looked up at Chuck and smiled.

Chuck was getting madder and madder. His face turned red as he challenged me to fight. Still I smiled. Chuck started to circle me with his fists clenched, pumping his arms slowly and taking short feints towards me. In his face, though, was a hint of alarm. He could see that, for some unfathomable reason, this little shrimp was truly not afraid. I circled, too, never taking my eye off his, and all the while I smiled.

Finally, Chuck hit me. It was a hesitant little blow that didn't hurt, and it happened to catch me on balance so I wasn't thrown. I laughed, low and secretly. Chuck stopped his circling. He dropped his fists. He backed off, and then he turned and took off down the street. Next day at school I began to hear how I'd beaten up the biggest bully in town. Chuck had been telling everyone. He said I was the toughest

guy he ever fought. Apparently he laid it on thick, because always after that I was treated with respect by the entire school. Perhaps I should have told the kids the truth, but I never did. I had a kind of insurance policy in my reputation. And, hating to fight as I did, I wasn't about ready to turn my policy in.

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THE BRAVE GIRL OF THE MILL

In a small village near Bonn, on the river Rhine in Germany, there is a mill which, on a Sunday long ago, was left in charge of a servant-maid named Hännchen, while the miller and his family went to church. The youngest child—a child of five—being too young to go to church, stayed with Hännchen.

Now, Hännchen was sought in marriage by a worthless fellow named Botteler; but Hännchen did not believe the bad tales about him, and on this Sunday morning, when he knocked at the door, she let him in and gave him food. He dropped his knife, and when the girl stooped to pick it up, gripped her by the neck and threatened to stab her if she did not tell him where her master's money was. In a moment she knew his real character; but instead of yielding to fear, her courage rose while a hundred plans rushed through her brain. She could hardly speak, but managed to make him understand that she would yield to his wish as she had no choice. Then she led the way to her master's bedroom and the box where he kept his money. Putting an axe in his hand for him to open it with, she said she would hurry upstairs and collect some clothes and her money, for she dared not stay after betraying her master.

But Hännchen returned to her master's room another way

and bolted the robber in. Then she ran downstairs and out at the front door to find help. She saw the little boy, and told him to run to meet his father, and say that he must come quickly or something dreadful would happen. The little fellow, young as he was, understood, and ran off at her bidding. Suddenly, however, she heard a whistle, looked up and saw her prisoner signalling to someone to catch the child. Then, to her horror, as the little fellow ran on, she saw a man spring up from the ground, snatch up the child and run back to the mill.

Hännchen at once recovered her presence of mind. She must save the child now as well as herself and the house. Her courage rose; her nerves became like iron. She went back hastily into the mill, locked and bolted the door.

Soon the man who had snatched up the child clamoured to be let in. He threatened the screaming boy with a knife, and said he would break down the door. But Hännchen trusted in God.

Then the man Botteler called to his accomplice to kill the child. Poor Hännchen shuddered at that; but she reasoned that the child's death would be no gain to them, and rightly judged this to be a mere threat. Then the robber outside threatened to burn down the mill, and put down the child to go and carry out his threat. In peering round the mill, he found the big hole where the wheel was; so he returned to bind the child with a piece of rope, and went back to creep into the mill that way.

Meanwhile, Hännchen thought that if she set the sails of the mill in motion the neighbours in the country round would know that something was wrong. She had seen the machinery worked, so she flew to the engine and set it going. Slowly at first, then faster and faster it went, but she little knew that the robber had squeezed himself into the drum-wheel. There he was, whirling round and round, unable to stop the machinery, and there he whirled until he grew

giddy and senseless. But though she at last heard his cries, Hännchen dared not let him out of his terrible prison, and she knew he would not get killed. Then the brave girl waited and waited, till it seemed as though her master were never coming, and no one had seen her signal of distress.

At last! A loud knocking at the door! There were Hännchen's master and some of the neighbours, who had come to find out why the mill was working. They had found the child bound on the grass, but too frightened to tell what was the matter. Hännchen managed to tell them and then she fainted.

The brave girl had done her duty, and left the rest to her master and his friends. They secured the two robbers. The one in the mill-drum was recovered, and both were bound and taken to Bonn. There they were punished for their evil deeds. But the miller's eldest son married the brave Hännchen, and she lived all her life in the mill which her wits had saved from destruction.

V FOUR- TO FIVE-MINUTE STORIES

THE TUG-OF-WAR MEN

A story told by 'Dickie' Dodds, former Essex County cricketer

The tug-of-war men make a striking contrast to the other athletes at the annual Amateur Athletics championships at the White City. There, each year, they can be seen pulling and heaving away before thousands in the stadium. As they stride in line towards their pitch, their measured tread, hob-nailed boots and massive arms and legs portray a body trained for a different aim and purpose from the fined-down physiques of the other athletes prancing lightfoot round the track.

This year the Russell Green team, for the second year running, carried all before them in the 100-stone event, against such opposition as Beckton Gas, Hawker Aircraft and the Metropolitan Police. Who are Russell Green, the tug-of-war champions of all England? What makes them so, and what are the attractions of this sport?

A phone call to the Amateur Athletics Association located Russell Green as a club from the village of that name and the adjoining village of Hooe, which are just inland from Bexhill in Sussex. I called to see Mr. Vaughan Pont, 'anchor man' of the Russell Green team, and once its secretary. I found a pleasant farmhouse, and Vaughan Pont with his wife Renate and their two young sons just finishing tea. The Ponts farm their sixty acres single-handed. If farming is their livelihood, tug-of-warring is their passion. I asked how you started a tug-of-war club. Mr. Pont said they just put a notice in the village calling a meeting of all those interested. Then they were affiliated with the Tug-of-War Association. Was it easy to get competition? It seemed there was not much in Sussex. You had to go to Surrey or Berkshire.

I asked how such a small village could raise a team to beat the best in England. 'We're really dedicated here,' said Mr. Pont. And it was also obvious, though he did not say so, that

they enjoyed their sport. 'Another thing,' he said after a pause, 'is our team spirit—you have to pull together to do well in tug-of-war.' I said this seemed to be what the politicians were always saying the country needed. What was the recipe?

Mr. Pont hesitated, and Mrs. Pont chimed in to say, 'There's no back-biting—no talking behind each other's backs. There isn't any malice. It would be nice if we could spread a bit of that around.' Mr. Pont said, 'Another thing—if we lose an end, you'll usually find one of the lads will admit where he went wrong—that his hand went, and so on—there's no blaming the other fellow.' (I thought that would be an interesting practice in the House of Commons.)

Was there any other ingredient of success, I asked him? 'Well,' said he with a broad grin, 'I really hate losing. I hate losing like hell.' He went on, 'There comes a time in every pull when your body wants to stop, when you want to pack it in. It's then I always say to myself, "The other lot probably feel the same—so keep going!"

'Of course,' said Mr. Pont, 'it costs a bit. We're probably the only real amateurs left. We buy our own equipment, pay our own fares and there's the money we lose when we're not working.' I asked what sort of work the men did. He said they all worked on the land except one, and he was a builder. 'This helps with our strength. In fact, some of us were picking up bales of hay until 11.30 at night the night before we won at the White City.'

Apart from their ordinary work, which keeps them fit, I learned that Russell Green have a novel way of training. They train twice a week for two hours. They have a half-ton block of concrete suspended by a rope over the bough of a tree. The individual members of the team tone up their muscles as they take the strain on the rope to raise the block from the ground.

I asked him what his ambitions were. 'It is,' he said, 'that Russell Green should be chosen to represent England.'

As I drove away from the village in the gentle Sussex hills above the sea, I thought of these men who hate to lose; who go on to win when the body says stop; who do not speak behind each other's back; who have team spirit; who work the land till midnight and then conquer the best in England; who train with zest and dedication in their home-made way; and who do it all with huge enjoyment and much leg-pulling. And if tug-of-war produces men like this, then the sooner it ceases to be a Cinderella sport, and becomes a national pastime, the better.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE 'CLARY GROVE' GANG

There was a 'gang' of young and middle-aged men in New Salem, called the 'Clary Grove Boys' who had become a terror to the people. They were never more flourishing than they were when Abraham Lincoln became a citizen of the town. They prided themselves upon their strength and courage, and had an established custom of 'initiating' newcomers of the male sex by giving them a flogging. . . . These ruffians had not initiated Abraham for some reason. Perhaps a wholesome recollection of his strength, courage and tact in engineering the boat over Rutledge's dam, or the extravagant statements of Offutt, (in whose store Lincoln worked), had restrained them. At any rate, they did not molest him, until one day, when Bill Clary had a dispute with Offutt in his store, and both became exasperated. Bill exclaimed, 'Jack Armstrong can lick Abe easy as a boy knows his father.' Jack was the strongest man of the gang, and perhaps the most ignorant.

'You don't know what you are talking about, Bill,' retorted Offutt; 'he could duck the whole Clary Grove crew in the Sangamon (river), before Jack Armstrong could get up after he'd laid him on his back.'

'I'll bet ten dollars on that!' shouted Bill. 'The fact is, Abe wouldn't dare to risk a fight with Jack!'

'The whole of you are blowers and cowards,' responded Offutt angrily. 'There's more in Abe's little finger than the whole of you have got in your soul and body.'

The knowledge of this hot interview spread like wildfire, and the 'Clary Grove Boys' would not consent to peace any longer. 'Jack Armstrong must wrestle with Abe,' and settle the vital question. . . . They proposed all sorts of bets, staking money, whiskey and what not upon the issue.

Soon the proposition from the 'Clary Grove Boys' came direct to Abraham, and he answered, 'I must decline a trial with Jack.'

'Then you are not the man to live in New Salem longer,' shouted one.

'Perhaps not,' replied Abraham, with a quizzical look, as if he meant to say, 'That is none of your business.'

'We'll duck you in the Sangamon,' exclaimed another.

'Whether you do or not,' answered Abe, 'I tell you that I never tussle and scuffle, and that I *will* not. I don't like this woolling and pulling.'

'Don't, hey?' shouted one of the number, at the same time pulling Abe's nose.

'Be careful—not too familiar,' said Abraham in a warning manner.

Thus the provocations were multiplied, until Abraham, seeing that the only way of settling the difficulty was to lay Jack on his back, consented to wrestling. They took side holds, and presently Abraham, having the advantage by reason of his long legs and arms, lifted Jack completely from the ground, and swinging him about, thought to lay him on his back; but Jack came down upon his feet squarely and firmly.

'Now, Jack,' said Abraham, 'let's quit; I can't throw you, and you can't throw me.'

'No, Jack, don't give up,' shouted Bill Clary. 'Abe's begging for quarter now.' Bill supposed that Abraham's courage was failing him, or else it was the plan of the gang to play foul. Be this as it may, Jack at once broke his hold and adopted the unfair method of 'legging', whereupon Abraham seized him by the throat, and lifting him from the ground and holding him at arm's length, shook him like a child. The astonished ruffians saw that their champion was worsted, and they cried, 'Fight, Jack, fight!'

No doubt all of them would have attacked Abraham had Jack led off. But the latter saw little encouragement in continuing a contest with a man who could hold him out at arm's length by the throat; and the moment Abraham relinquished his hold, Jack grasped his hand in friendship, and declared that 'Abe was the best feller that ever broke into their settlement.' Their friendship became almost like that of David and Jonathan; and from that moment the sway of the 'Clary Gang Boys' was broken in New Salem. Abraham did not hesitate to denounce their acts publicly; and others soon joined him in his hostility to such ruffianism. The result was that the gang gradually faded out, and quite a number of them became respectable citizens. Abraham's great strength and kindness of heart did more to reform the scoundrels than a missionary from New England could have done.

Everybody now became as enthusiastic over Abraham as Offutt was.

'I told you so,' said (the storekeeper). 'I've seen somethin' of the world, and I tell you, his like I never saw.'

There was no one to dispute Offutt now. There was an end to all riotous proceedings; for Abraham declared that such ruffianly conduct should be stopped, and some of the citizens were bold enough to back him. Even Jack Armstrong promised his assistance. Abraham's influence became regnant in New Salem. He was even appealed to by neigh-

bours to settle difficulties, so that he won the honours of 'peace-maker' in Illinois as he did in Indiana.

It was in New Salem that Abraham won the soubriquet 'Honest Abe', which he carried through life. The public confidence in his integrity and fair-mindedness was such that he was usually chosen for umpire in all games and trials where two sides enlisted. And, finally, he became in so great demand in this line that both sides, in those friendly contests, made him judge.

THE GOLDEN HELMET

There was wild feasting in the hall of the Frisian king. Men drank deeply, and shouted their war-cries or boasted of their exploits in battle. The only silent person in the hall was little Princess Fostedina, who hated the noise and the laughter and the cruel songs.

A warrior rushed in with the news, 'There are strangers cutting down the sacred tree in the forest.' With cries of rage, the king's men seized their weapons and made for the forest, and soon they returned with their prisoners, their arms cruelly bound behind them.

'Who are you?' demanded the king. 'And why have you cut down the sacred tree?'

'We are Danes,' they said, 'and we did not know that the tree was sacred. In our land we worship the Lord Christ, not heathen gods.'

A howl of rage went up from the Frisians, for they had heard of the Christians, and they hated what they had heard.

'They shall die,' the king declared. 'Give the wolves and bears in my cages no food so that they become ravenous. Then they shall feast well.'

The men were led away to await their cruel death; and no one saw the tears in the blue eyes of the little princess, or heard her whispered prayer to Fosite, the Goddess of Justice, after whom she was named, to save these poor doomed captives.

The next day a harper came to the king's hall. The king and his thanes were delighted, for in the winter they found life very dull. After the evening meal they asked him to sing, and waited to hear of mighty heroes and bloodthirsty battles. But he began to sing of the greatest Hero of all, who fought and won the fight against the enemy of mankind—the Evil One himself. He sang of the great battle to bring peace in the world; and Fostedina's eyes shone as she listened.

But the song did not please the king and his men. 'We want no God of Peace!' they shouted. 'We are the free Frisians, mighty in war, and we worship the gods of battle. Away with this fellow!' They drew their knives and rushed at the harper.

But before they could strike, the arms of the little princess were around him. The king laughed. 'He has found a fit protector!' he said. 'Let him go.'

So the harper went his way unharmed. But his words stayed in Fostedina's heart. She began to wonder which was the stronger—the power of her father and his men and their swords and spears, or the power of this new king, Jesus Christ.

Fostedina remembered the prisoners, and how quietly and yet fearlessly they had stood before the king; and suddenly she knew what she must do. Wrapping her bearskin cloak around her, she crept out across the snow to the hut where the captives were held, and softly drew the bolt. The door swung open, and one by one the men slipped out, while the wild beasts in their dens howled as they scented the prey which had escaped them.

Next day there stood the hut empty, and there across the snow ran the tracks of small feet. Sternly the king called his daughter to him.

'Fostedina,' he demanded, 'did you set the prisoners free?'

'Yes, father,' replied the princess. She felt no fear, for she knew that she had done right.

'Why did you do it?' he shouted.

'Because I believe that the Lord Christ is the one true God,' she said quietly.

The king's love for his daughter was not strong enough to overcome his hatred of these new ideas.

'Who wants a king who let himself be killed,' he sneered, 'and wore no crown but thorns? What punishment shall we give her?' he asked the high priest of the heathen gods.

'Since she has chosen to worship a God crowned with thorns,' said the priest with a cruel smile, 'let her stand in the market-place for a day and a night with a crown of thorns on her head.'

So the crown of thorns was made and pressed down on Fostedina's head till the sharp points ran into her flesh and drew blood. For a day and a night she stood patiently in the market-place, while the people mocked and jeered. But some, seeing her quiet courage, and her freedom from hate and fear, began to feel ashamed. And when the ordeal was over, and they saw on her forehead the scars left by the thorns, they began to wonder whether they had been wrong, and whether her way of looking at things was perhaps right after all.

Gradually a change came over the people of Frisia. The great forests and their sacred trees were cut down, the wild beasts were killed, and corn could be grown in the fields and the children could play safely in the sun. The change came through Fostedina and the price she had paid, and the people grew to love her dearly.

When her wedding day came, they grieved to think of the scars which marred her beauty; and the king's own goldsmith had an idea. He hammered out of pure gold a helmet ornamented with golden rosettes, and a procession of white-clad girls brought it to the princess on her wedding morning. She wore it gleaming under her white veil, covering the scars, and all the old evil memories were forgiven and

forgotten. And to this day the women of the province of Friesland, in Holland, wear under their white caps a golden helmet in memory of the brave Princess Fostedina.

SEVEN HUNDRED MILES TO ESCAPE

Ronald Mann tells his own story

During the second world war, I was serving with the British Army in North Africa. There I was taken prisoner and then sent to Italy. Eighteen months later I was lying in a German prison hospital in North Italy—tired, hungry and just recovering from losing the sight of an eye.

One day—it was the 3rd of October, 1943—I had an insistent thought: 'ESCAPE! Get back to England, where there is urgent work for you to do.'

It was only a short time afterwards that, in the quiet of an autumn evening, I was forcing my shoulder between two iron bars which had been loosened in the plaster which held them, and then letting myself down hand over hand on a rope made of sheets into a courtyard twenty feet below. Suddenly the stillness of the evening was broken by what seemed to me a deafening crash. Going down the sheet rope. I had started to sway, and my foot had crashed into a window pane and shattered it. Then I was on the ground, listening, expecting to hear the sound of steps running. But all was silent. Alford, whom I had asked to escape with me, came quietly down the rope. Then our packs were lowered to us by our friends who were helping us to escape, and as we put them on there was a whispered 'Good luck!'

Luckily there were no guards at the entrance to this courtyard because all the windows looking on to it were barred; but there were guards at the main entrance farther along the street. We had no civilian clothes, just our uniforms; we decided that the best plan was to walk straight out of the building, as if we did it several times a day. So, without

hurrying or hiding, we passed out of the entrance. There were other people going up some stairs, but they didn't turn round. We went out into the street, and without looking behind us to see if the sentries were looking, we walked away from the hospital, and took the first turn to the right into a narrow lane. We were free.

Our next plan was to find the mental hospital where the nuns had been so friendly to me on the day when I had been taken there by the German guards to see a sick soldier. We made our way through the narrow streets where people were hurrying home because of the German army order that everyone should be off the streets at seven o'clock. Just as I was beginning to wonder whether I had remembered rightly the way the German truck had taken me through the town, we came to a small square, and there on the opposite side was the mental hospital. We knocked on the door, and the nuns eagerly welcomed us in and helped us in every way. They found us civilian clothes, and after a good meal and a night's sleep sent us off with two trusty guides on a little mountain railway which ran up into the Apennine mountains.

For three months we walked up and down that long mountain range. We slept with the cows in their sheds, and ate the simple good food which the generous Italian peasants gave us—maize, macaroni, cheese, bread. And all the time the insistent thought was with me: 'Get back to England'. Sometimes there would come a clear thought, like an instruction—'Take this path' or 'Don't go into that valley'. In those three months of walking we covered some seven hundred miles, until we were getting near to where the Germans and the Allied troops were fighting. Then for another three months we lived in a cave, where food was brought to us by a courageous Italian farmer.

Then came the last assault. We decided to cross the fighting line by climbing the nine thousand foot Maiella

range, which was so deep in snow that there were no troops there except one German ski patrol on its steep slopes. We started to climb, with a party of Italian friends. But at six thousand feet, in the early dawn, our friends were captured by this ski patrol. We were obliged to watch them being taken prisoner only a hundred yards from us. But we ourselves were not noticed, standing there rigid among the trees in the snow.

When the ski patrol had taken the prisoners away, we scrambled on upwards through the trees in the deep snow, and soon found ourselves at the edge of the forest, and looking up at the three thousand feet of ice and snow that we still had to climb. We were both eager to go on; but then quite clearly came the thought. 'Go down the mountain. Go back.' Somewhat reluctantly, we obeyed, and trudged wearily down again for another nine hours, through deep snow, until we slept exhausted in the hay loft of a solitary barn.

Within twelve hours we had met a shepherd who lived in the Maiella range, and he led us over those rugged mountains, past precipices, up steep slopes of snow and ice, on to the mountain top. There we were caught in a blizzard so fierce that we could not see a yard ahead, and only kept ourselves alive by walking round in a small circle all night. We passed two days and two nights on the mountain before we got over to the other side, and finally to freedom.

By that time I knew that had we not gone back, we would surely have lost our way and died in the attempt. Then I was surer than ever that it was God who had given those insistent thoughts.

I did get back to England, and I did find urgent work to do there—to help build a new kind of world; and that urgent work has gone on from that day to this, and so have the insistent thoughts, which are available to anyone who listens for them.

VI FIVE- TO SIX-MINUTE STORIES

JOJO BROUGHT HIS UMBRELLA

A story of the Salvation Army in South Africa

In South Africa, the five young stalwarts (General) Booth hand-picked to wage Salvation war in Zululand found all the odds against them. Rumbling by ox-cart from Pietermaritzburg, Natal, over a hundred miles of red, rutted roads, they were set down on a snake-infested ten-acre site by the Amatikulu river among the proudest warrior tribe in all South Africa—who hotly resented their coming.

To the Army's leader, Captain Alister Smith, a mop-headed young Scot, one thing was plain; a handful of men held the Zulus in thrall. . . . Witch-doctors, in theory outlawed by the British, were still dreaded and revered for their occult power. . . . Though a tiny trickle of converts came to the primitive brick-built hut which the Army themselves had erected, Smith knew that progress would be minimal while the witch-doctors reigned. The huge forty-stone chief Tshingwayo, who ruled Amatikulu district, had abiding faith in them. Covertly he instructed his head men to keep their people from Army meetings.

Not until August, 1892, did Smith's chance come. Then drought ravaged Amatikulu country. The crops wilted in the fields; the lush green of the river valley shrivelled like fine brown hair. The dairy cattle were like stumbling skeletons and their milk yield swindled. Soon children began to die.

Though no friend to the Army, Chief Tshingwayo was still the father of his people. According to his lights, he now did the best he could for them. He summoned the finest rain-doctor and paid him handsome fees.

On the appointed day, Zulus from all over the district trooped to the Great Kraal to see the rain-doctor subdue the skies. They watched in silence as he threw the bones of divination. They saw him dance before the ancestral spirits and saw foam well from his lips. They heard his command,

high, nervous and staccato, as he shook his fist at the sky: 'Rain! I, the Great One, command you to come from the heavens!'

But from the 'Great-Great', as the Zulus called Smith's God, there came no answer. In despair and anguish the people saw the discomfited rain-doctor driven from the kraal.

Tshingwayo was in a quandary. He saw the Salvation Army as a threat to his powers, their teachings as subversive. Their strange notions of the sanctity of womanhood fell harshly on his ears; women's place was in the fields while men waged war. . . . Yet could *their* God bring rain to his drought-stricken land when the witch-doctors were impotent?

Early one morning two Zulus in grey cast-off military greatcoats reported to Smith's quarters. These were Chief Tshingwayo's envoys. 'Our hearts are dried up within us,' one confessed, 'our courage is finished. The Great One has called the rain-doctor, but he has failed to overcome the dry devil who beats us with his rod of hot air.'

Humbly they voiced their request: if the Army would hold a Sunday prayer meeting to the White Man's God, all the Chief's people would be ordered to join them. What word should they carry back to Chief Tshingwayo?

It was a daunting challenge, but one that Smith must meet. For the first time a new force had claimed these people's attention—prayer. Of course, answered prayer would turn the tide—but what if the Army's prayers went unanswered? This risk he must accept.

'We shall do our part,' Smith told them. 'We have spoken. Go in peace.'

No officer of Booth's Army ever prayed harder than Smith did now. Sunday saw hundreds of Zulus trudging across the parched valleys and plains, squatting on the forlorn brown grass outside the Catherine Booth settlement. To his

secret joy, Smith saw that at least one Zulu, despite the crowd's scoffing, had brought a vast umbrella.

'You could shelter your family under that tent, Jojo! Do you think it *will* rain?'

As the banter died, the upright old man replied demurely, 'Well, we are here today to pray for rain, and *it might rain!*' It was an answer, Smith thought, to shame many a Christian.

Then, rising before his vast audience, he taught them a short simple prayer in the Zulu tongue: 'Our Lord, send upon us the rain in Thy mercy. Help us with rain. Shower it upon us, O Great-Great.'

At once Smith's handful of converts began fervently to pray. Uncertainly at first, the Zulus followed. Voices rose and fell in exhortation, dying sometimes to a mumble as one prayed alone, rising again in massed volume to seek God's intervention. Three hours passed. The sun was white and pitiless in a blue, brassy sky and Smith prayed on. Suddenly, from far to the south, towards the Indian ocean, came a heavy rumbling. Rapt with awe the congregation saw, piling inland from the sea, massed thunder-heads moving inexorably towards Amatikulu. The sun from the west blazed upon them and they shone like high and snow-capped ridges.

As the thunder rolled louder, louder rose the prayers. Feet away from Smith, a searing flash of forked lightning ripped the ground. Again thunder crashed, unbearably loud, drowning out all human sound. In solemn silence the great congregation crouched. *Nkulu-Nkulu*, the Great-Great, was speaking with a warrior's majesty.

Warm, wet drops of rain, as large as pennies, spattered on the Zulus' upturned faces. Hastily, with a last devout prayer, Smith brought the meeting to a close; soon the rivers and streams on the homeward journey would be raging white torrents. He dared not, of course, look ahead to a moment not far distant, when Chief Tshingwayo and all his kraal,

even the witch-doctors, would themselves profess salvation. Nor could he envisage the first Army-sponsored Zulu school, where pupils from six to sixty came to learn not only to read and write, but brick-making and husbandry. Fat oxen, broken into the yoke, drew ploughs which the Army helped the Zulus to purchase. The unfair burdens thrust on the women became properly those of men. Sewing machines hummed busily, with the neat calico garments of practising Christians replacing the filthy skin kilts of savage life.

All this lay in the future. On this August Sunday, Smith saw only the people rise and run in all directions, laughing and singing as the rain their prayers had brought beat on their naked bodies. Louder than any sang old Jojo, trudging homeward beneath the vast canopy of an umbrella justified by faith.

THE LITTLE PINE TREE

A legend

By the gate that led into the heart of the ancient wood a little pine tree was growing. He was not very big. You would not have noticed him at all unless you stopped to pick some of the foxgloves that towered above him, who laughed because they were taller than a pine tree.

He did not quite like it always. It was not pleasant to be a pine tree and to have foxgloves looking down on you. But the old pine trees, all dignified and straight, tried to cheer him.

‘Never mind the foxgloves,’ they said. ‘You will be here when they are gone, and some day you will be so tall that they will not be able to see your head without breaking their backs. Just keep growing, and who knows what will become of you one day? It may be that they will make you the mast of a tall ship, and you will go to all the far places of the world; or perhaps they will make you a pole to carry telephone wires, and all day long you will listen to all men say

to one another; or perhaps they will paint you white and use you just to carry one of the great flags of which men are so proud—who knows? Only remember, there is just one thing that matters—you must grow straight. For only that which is straight is strong.'

On sleepy summer afternoons, when the foxgloves' bells were ringing sleepy slumber songs, and the bees were droning in their drowsy ways, the little pine tree would dream of being the mast of a tall ship, and journeying across the ocean and seeing the far lands, or of carrying all day long the messages men send to one another, and he would wake up to find himself saying: 'I must grow straight.'

The great storm winds overheard and laughed to themselves. 'Let us bend him,' they said; 'let us make a crooked tree of him, that the pines may be ashamed of him, and men shall find him useless.' And the storm winds laughed in their hearts, and thought that with so small a tree they could do whatever they willed.

When the winter came and the trees were bare, so that the little pine tree had no shelter, the great winds blew with all their might and tried to bend him to their will and make him crooked. Often the little pine tree had to bow before them, but as soon as they had passed he whipped himself back again, crying, 'I must grow straight, for only that which is straight is strong.' And when the storm winds came, they found him just as straight as before.

'We did not blow long enough,' the storm winds said; so day after day they blew in one direction, and bent the little pine tree over until his back was one great pain and every fibre ached. At long last the storm winds wearied and there was a calm. Then slowly and very painfully the little pine tree began to straighten himself again. It was very slow, very slow indeed, for the fibres had been twisted this way and that by the winds. But he persevered, little by little, and at last he stood straight and tall again.

The storm winds were angry that the little pine tree had proved himself so much stronger than they were, so they came back again and tore a branch from a tall tree and threw it on him so that the weight of it bent him to the ground.

They laughed aloud as they passed by, for the pine tree was small and the branch was heavy, and they thought he would never free himself from it. 'Now,' they said, 'we will see whether he will grow straight.'

The little pine tree was almost in despair, for, try as he would, he could not free himself from the branch that weighed him down. He heaved and strained, strained and twisted, twisted and heaved, and at last he moved it a little, and then a little more, and little by little he got free; little by little he straightened up. 'I must grow straight,' he said, 'for only that which is straight is strong.'

.

Many years after, the little pine tree had grown so tall and strong that men made of him a mast for a tall ship that journeyed over the world of the seven seas, and the branches he carried now were heavy yards, and his leaves were threshing, white sails.

Once more the storm winds came. 'We could not bend him in the woodlands,' they said, 'but we will break him now upon the seas.'

The winds laughed in their glee to think that now they had the pine tree at their mercy, and shrieked and howled and cried of all they would do to the pine tree that would grow straight, until men upon the deck of the ship held their breath for fear. Hurriedly they furled the beating sails that the winds tried to tear from the yards, carefully looked to see that every rope was fast, and overhead the storm winds mocked them, and howled again.

They lashed the white-maned horses of the sea into fury until they fell upon the ship and threatened to devour her,

now tossing her as though she was a ball they threw from hand to hand, now rolling her from side to side, as if eager to overturn her, and all the time they tore and strained the tall pine mast, bent and twisted it this way and that until the pine tree cried aloud in his pain.

Down on the deck men looked up through the dark at the straining mast. 'Will the mast stand?' they said to one another. 'If the mast goes we can never save the ship. If the storm carries away the mast—we are lost!'

And the little pine tree remembered the lesson of the woodlands: 'I must grow straight,' so that every time there was a lull he straightened again and settled himself for the next squall.

By and by the winds exhausted their strength. They roared in their fury because they were defeated, but after an angry squall or two they died away. Men breathed freely once more, sails were set, and the good ship went on her way. 'It was that mast that saved us,' they said to each other, but they did not know that the mast was strong, strong enough to weather the storm and save the ship, because as a little pine tree in the woodlands he had grown strong by growing straight.

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