

ORPHANS' FRIEND.

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HYMN OF TRUST.

BY OLIVER WENDEL HOLMES.

O Love Divine, that stooped to share
Our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear,
On Thee we cast each earth-born care,
We smile at pain while Thou art near!

Though long the weary way we tread,
And sorrows crowd each lingering year,
No path we shun, no darkness dread,
Our hearts still whispering, Thou art near!

When drooping pleasures turn to grief,
And trembling faith is changed to fear,
The murmuring wind, the quivering leaf
Shall softly tell us, Thou art near!

On Thee we fling our burdening woe,
O Love Divine, forever dear,
Content to suffer, while we know,
Living, and dying, Thou art near!

Lo, the Angel's Food is given
To the pilgrim who hath striven;
See the children's Bread from Heaven,

Which on dogs may ne'er be spent.

Very Bread, Good Shepherd, tend us;
Jesus, of thy love befriend us;
Thou refresh us, thou defend us,
Thine eternal goodness send us
In the land of life to see.

Thou who all things canst and knowest,

Who on earth such food bestowest,
Grant us with thy saints, though lowest,

Where the heavenly feast thou showest,
Fellow-heirs and guests to be.
—St. Thomas Aquinas.

From the New York Observer.

A BOY'S DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

BY M. E. WINSLOW.

"I think it's hard if a boy can't have his own way Independence Day," said Eugene, as he slammed the door of the sitting-room and strode out into the hall with an air which seemed to say that he meant to have it in spite of the prohibition he had just received.

His mother looked pained, but wisely forebore to say anything more just then; she had forbidden her son to join a party of rough, wild boys, who were going to Pelham, five miles away, to spend "the Fourth;" he had never positively disobeyed her thus far, and she did not think he would do so now, but it was evident that obedience would be very unwillingly rendered, and she was too wise to make the struggle harder by more words. She had planned a pleasant way of spending the Fourth for herself and her fatherless boy, and was just going to tell him about it when she was forestalled by his saying, in an independent manner, "Mother, I'm going to Pelham to-day with Jake and Oscar; you needn't save any dinner for me." Now, Jake and Oscar were the two worst boys in the village, but they were older than Eugene, who felt much flattered by their notice, and imagined their slang words and cigarette puffing to be very independent and manly things. They had chafed him a little about being "tied to his mother's apron strings," and could always make him do pretty much as they chose by patting his soft, curly hair and calling him "Miss Polly." They taught him a good many things that his mother knew nothing about, even giving

him occasional whiffs of their precious cigarettes, whose nauseating effects he made brave efforts to conceal.

Mrs. Lamont had watched their growing influence with great alarm, and resolved to do all in her power to counteract it.

Uncle Abner had invited her and Eugene to join the farm party in their long-talked-of expedition to Star Mountain, and although she was far from strong, and seldom went any distance from home, she resolved, for her boys' sake, to go and have as nice a time as possible. She had even made a cherry pie—as sacred to the "Fourth of July," as turkeys are to "Thanksgiving," for the picnic dinner, and a loaf of iced cocoanut cake, sending all the way to Pelham for the cocoanut, and hurting the ends of her delicate fingers in grating it, because she knew it was something of which Eugene was particularly fond. But she had not told him yet, and she thought she would wait now till his temper had cooled down a little, and he came to say he was sorry, as on similar occasions he always did.

But this time Eugene did not come. His mother waited and waited; then she called, but no one answered or came. So she busied herself in packing up the picnic dinner, and then called again. But there was no Eugene to be seen, nor could he be found in the house or garden, nor "down the street." Meanwhile the farm wagon drove up, crowded with girls and boys, all gay and happy, laughing and talking, full of anticipations of the good time they were going to have. There was one seat left for Eugene, but no Eugene appeared to fill it, and after waiting a reasonable time the wagon drove on. Then came the carriage full of older people, but Mrs. Lamont would not go without her boy; he might come in at any moment. The carriage could not wait, and the watching, grieved, but loving mother spent her holiday alone. So, our wise and merciful God often waits and watches for his wandering, would-be-independent children, and in his holy word belikens his love to that of a mother.

Meanwhile Eugene, still full of indignation at not having his own way, stood leaning idly on the gate, when a party of badly dressed, ill-looking boys came along; it would have puzzled any one to see what a well-brought-up, gentlemanly boy could find to like in them.

"Hallo, Gene," said the foremost; "all ready; we'll see fun to-day; hurry, we'll be too late for the train."

"I can't go," said Eugene, pitifully. "Mother said I mustn't."

"And so you were fool enough to ask her. My! what a baby."

"I didn't ask her; I just told her I was going, but she said I mustn't."

"Then show her you're man enough to keep your word. Come, Gene, you'll be a baby all your life, I do believe," said Oscar.

"Let him alone," said Jake, contemptuously. "We don't want infants with us; its Independence Day. I know a little fellow that will be glad enough to see the fun, and won't ask the women either," and he pretended to pass on.

"Stop," said Eugene, who did not care so much about going as he did about being thought manly by the boys. "If I only dared, I'd go."

"Dared?" returned the other contemptuously. "I tell you what, Gene, if you're such a coward, we fellows won't have anything to say to you. Now, will you go or stay? One minute, and we're off."

Before the minute had passed poor Eugene, who was too much of a coward to brave the disapprobation of bad boys, had leaped the gate, and all five were running across the field to the depot, where they arrived just in time to catch the train for Pelham.

We shall not follow them through their day of so-called pleasure; nor tell how hot and dusty and crowded the country town was. It is not necessary to repeat the bad language used by the big, rough boys, nor to tell how pitifully the little ones tried to imitate it. There was a celebration, with a parade of soldiers and citizens and Sunday-schools, and speeches in the Town Hall; but Jake and Oscar preferred to keep their admiring dependents in the neighborhood of the drinking booths, where they did not dare to refuse the poor lemonade "with a stick in it," the adulterated "lager," and the poisoned cigarettes of which their more experienced companions insisted upon their partaking.

At length Jake drew out of his pocket a dirty pack of cards and began teaching his companions some disreputable games. These soon led to quarrels and a fight in which poor Eugene was so much worsted, and so much incensed at being called "soft" by his older and more sinewy companions, that he abruptly quitted them and took the first train for his home, which he reached at about five o'clock. The house looked so cool and sweet as he walked up to the door, that he began to feel ashamed of himself, and all the more so when his mother, who sat in sad loneliness on the shaded piazza, washed the begrimed face and applied healing lotions to the bruise on his forehead without a word. Then she led him to the fair, white table, where the cherry pie and cake and more substantial provisions awaited the hungry boy.

But by this time Eugene's conscience, which was a tender one, and had been well cultivated, would not let him eat. He rose from the table, threw his arms round his mother's neck, and gave way to a flood of tears that his late companions would have called "babyish" but which the angels, who always look down upon human affairs, knew denoted the most manly action of the boy's life.

"I'm such a bad, disobedient

fellow, mother," he said as well as his sobs would let "that I am ashamed of myself, I wonder you aren't ashamed to call me your son!"

"But you are my son, Eugene," she said gravely, returning his caresses, "now finish your supper and we will talk it all over."

Eugene could eat now, and he did full justice to all the good things, after which he sat on the piazza with his mother, and the talk which they then had the boy never forgot.

We are not going to detail it. Mrs. Lamont made her boy tell her all the particulars of his day, which, ashamed as he now was, was perhaps the heaviest punishment she could have inflicted, he was a truthful boy and he told it all. Then she told him all about the excursion to Star Mountain, and he saw at once how much he had missed.

"Why didn't you go mother?" said Eugene suddenly.

Do you think I could enjoy myself while my boy was sinful or unhappy?" said she, and her look said more to her boy's awakened conscience than her words; "I had rather sit here waiting till he came back to his better self, even if it was lonely." So Jesus was content to suffer that his prodigals, whose repentance is his "joy," might come to themselves.

Here the wise mother told her son once more—what we have all read again and again to remember—the true meaning of our American Fourth of July. How our forefathers, brave, wise, moral, industrious and order-loving, were driven to sign a Declaration of Independence because they desired to obey law and not be forced by tyranny to break it, and how instead of each man beginning to follow out his own way, which would be license, they bound themselves at once to obey rightful authority and enforce righteous law, which is liberty. Still further she told him that to be afraid to do right is the meanest kind of cowardice, that bad habits are the worst kind of masters, and that the most abject slaves are those who are governed by the opinions of the base and vile.

"Let's get a light," said Eugene, after a good deal of this kind of talk. "I want to write something."

Then, after they had adjourned to the sitting room, he got paper and pen, and, after many changes, for he was not much of a writer, he produced the following:

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

"I, Eugene Lamont, declare that I will not, from this Fourth of July, 18—, be the slave of any bad habits, smoking, drinking, swearing, disobedience, etc. Also, I will be independent of bad boys; I won't do what they tell me; nor mind what they think of me; and I will do all I can to grow up a noble, true, honest, intelligent, law-obeying American citizen (Mrs. Lamont supplied some of the words), so help me God. EUGENE LAMONT."

"You see I put my name

at both ends to be sure I'd keep it," said Eugene, as his mother carefully read over the composition.

"Those last words sound rather lawyerlike," said she, "but I like them. My boy, you will have need daily to seek the help of God to enable you to keep such a pledge as that. True independence for a boy, a man, or a nation, is to be maintained only by complete dependence upon God, and implicit obedience to his law."

"At that moment the sound of wheels was heard, the Star Mountain party drove up, full of talk concerning the delights of their day. They stayed some time, and one mischievous girl, getting hold of the "declaration," read it aloud, signed it herself, and persuaded all the other boys and girls to do so. Perhaps a prosperous community of future citizens may have good cause for a Fourth of July celebration from the results of that act.

"Mother will God forgive my disobedience?" said Eugene, as he went to his room that night.

"Yes, dear, if you ask and trust him, and more, he will give you the victory in every temptation, and over all evil habits; for while we may sign a declaration of independence of the powers of evil, it is only He who can give us the victory in the fight."

That Eugene Lamont is now a noble, Christian man, independent in thought, and resolute in action, is no doubt largely owing to God's blessing upon the faded paper on which his "declaration" is written, in boyish characters, and which he still carries in his pocket.

A short time ago the Emperor Franz Joseph and the King of Saxony were out shooting together. Night came on, and the royal sportsmen, finding themselves at a considerable distance from the Residence, hailed a passing wagon driven by a stolid-looking peasant, and got in. When they came to their journey's end, the Emperor slipped a few florins into the peasant's hand, and said, smiling: "Do you know whom you have been driving?" "No."

"You have been driving the Emperor of Austria and the King of Saxony." The peasant, who was convinced that he was being hoaxed, replied with a chuckle: "And do you know who I am?" "No." "Well, I am the Shah of Persia!" And he whipped up his horse and departed.

All internal revenue taxation, except on spirits and tobacco in their various forms, ceased the 1st inst. Check's drafts, orders, voucher, matches, perfumery, proprietary medicines, bitters, &c., now require no stamps. There is also a change in the postal law, which took effect the 1st inst., reducing the cost of money orders. The reduction of letter postage to two cents begins October 1st. The postal notes for amounts under \$5 will be issued in September, if ready for use by that time.

SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY ON GIVING.

"Freely ye have received, freely give." There is a sweet reasonableness in this argument, that it is hard to get away from. Why give freely? Because ye have freely received. Thyself a beneficiary, be beneficent towards thy fellows less favored than thyself. Not only reasonable but all-inclusive. Art thou not embraced?

"He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly." Other things being equal, it is the bountiful sower that reaps the bountiful harvest. It is the harvest—the income—that we are all after. That, in some sense, is the measure of our lives. Out of a scant, stingy seed-sowing comes a sparse, lean growth and a slight, weak yield. Brother, it is just as true of your giving for Christ, and your sowing in the world-field of mankind as in ordinary husbandry. Are you wise in the latter and foolish in the former?

"She hath given more than they all." What! actually more over the counter of the treasury? Nay, not more as men count, but more as God counts. His standard of measure is not the number or the size of the coins, but the greatness of thy heart, and the purity of thy motives. So weighed, this poor widow stood high. Nay, of two immortalized by the Master she is one. One of the two out of the many seen in all the life of our Lord. Many givers, few remarkable givers, even though they lay down their millions. Over against the rich, this poor widow and the trifle in her poor old hand. They, out of their abundance, what they could well enough spare; she, out of her poverty, all her living. Righteous judgment of the unerring Wisdom Weighing thee and thy gifts, what, think ye, is His saying of thee?

"If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." Three things essential, blessedly essential, to acceptable giving.

The willing mind, the cheerful, unguarding spirit—this is what we might call the subjective element. This is the starting point. This gives quality to the transaction. Then, objectively, it is to be according to that a man hath. What he has not got and cannot honestly get, the Lord does not want. He need not borrow nor steal to make an offering to the Lord—except as a man of means may always make a loan, within limits, in aid of any lawful purpose. But according to that a man hath, cuts both ways. It is very comforting to Mr. Greathart, who has but very little money. What saith it to Mr. Clostrist, who will give something, but only a makeshift—a mere nothing out of his affluence? Suppose he was a willing mind, thus far, does that meet the condition of acceptable giving? Nay, friend—"according to that a man hath." God hath joined these two things. Put them not asunder.