

**Tales
From the Boyhood
of Famous Men**



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ANARKALI, LAHORE, INDIA.**

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NOTE

THESE stories (adapted from the original tales by Nathaniel Hawthorne) are meant for rapid reading, in class or otherwise, for pupils in their third and fourth years of English. The exercises at the end of each are not, of course, exhaustive : they illustrate the kind of exercise which a teacher may suitably set on matter read cursorily in English, as distinct from the exercises which would form part of a lesson in an intensive study of the language. It is, of course, also possible to use this book for intensive study if desired.

The exercises may be given and done in English or in the vernacular as part of lessons in either language, but if in English, they should ordinarily be done orally before they are done in writing.

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OLIVER CROMWELL

BORN 1599. DIED 1658.

ABOUT the time when Jahangir was Emperor in India, a King named James the First was ruling in England. One of his subjects was a big landowner called Sir Oliver Cromwell. He spent his days very much like other big landowners of that time. He used to go hunting hares and foxes, and feasted with his neighbours, and drank a good deal of wine. He dwelt in an old house in the country, in which his father and ancestors had lived for very many years. This house, like other country houses of important people, had a big hall. Round its walls hung armour and swords and other weapons of war which his ancestors had used in battle, and skins of wild animals, horns of deer, and tails of foxes, which they or Sir Oliver himself had hunted and killed.

2. Sir Oliver had a brother younger than himself, whose son, Sir Oliver's nephew, used often to visit Sir Oliver in his big house. This nephew's name was also Oliver, but he was generally called Little Noll. The

little boy was always getting into mischief, for he was active and daring. Often he fell into dangers, but in some way or other always escaped real harm.

3. When he was still an infant a strange thing happened to him. A huge monkey, which was kept in the family, suddenly seized Little Noll in his paws and ran up with him on to the roof of the house. There the ugly beast sat looking at the people of the house, who were in fear lest he should throw the child to the ground. Luckily, however, after a time he brought the baby down again safe and sound. His going up on to the roof in this way was taken in the family as a sign that he would rise in life to a high position. One morning, when Noll was five or six years old, there came to the house a royal messenger to say that King James was passing through the district, and would be pleased to come to Sir Oliver's and dine with him. This was a high honour, certainly, but a very great trouble, for, besides the King himself, Sir Oliver had to prepare a feast for all the King's company, a large number of nobles and attendants. More food would be eaten and more wine would be drunk in that one feast-day than Sir Oliver's own household generally ate and drank in a month. However, Sir Oliver, being a loyal subject of his King, sent a message back thanking His Majesty for promising to visit him, and ordered his servants to make the best preparations that they could. So the



OLIVER CROMWELL.

cook and his helpers in the kitchen lit a great fire there ; and when the neighbours saw the smoke coming out of the chimney they knew that great preparations were being made for the feast to His Majesty.

4. By and by the sound of trumpets was heard approaching nearer and nearer, and Sir Oliver and his family went to the gate to welcome the King. In a big carriage sat His Majesty, and soldiers on horseback were on either side. At the gate stood Sir Oliver, hat in hand. His Majesty was wearing a coat of green cloth, not very new, for James the First was never very careful of his dress. In his hat he had a feather, and over his shoulders was slung a hunting-horn. He wore no sword. His face and figure were not really very kingly, but the people greeted him with low bows of respect.

5. "How are you?" cried King James, and his carriage stopped at the gate. "I am glad indeed to see you!" Sir Oliver thanked the King humbly, and knelt as the King stepped down from his carriage. Then the King pointed out to Sir Oliver a little boy who had come with him in the carriage. This was a child six or seven years of age, who also wore a feather in his hat, and was dressed more richly than the King himself. Though he was not an ill-looking child, he seemed shy and quiet. His cheeks were a little pale, as if he spent much time indoors, instead of being sent out to play

games in the rain and wind. "I have brought my son Charlie to see you," said the King. "I hope, Sir Oliver, you have a son of your own to be his playfellow."

6. Sir Oliver bowed respectfully to the little Prince, whom one of his servants had just taken out of the carriage. It was wonderful to see how all the onlookers, even the old men with grey beards, bent and bowed to the ground before the little boy. It seemed as if they were ready to kneel and worship him. Poor little Prince! from his very boyhood every one had paid heed to all his wishes, every one had treated him as if he were a superior being, and so, of course, he had generally come to think he was really superior to others; and naturally he thought that every one and everything in the kingdom existed just to please and amuse him. This was a sad mistake; and when the King died and the Prince became King in his place, he suffered for this mistake a heavy punishment. But I must return to my story.

7. "What a noble little Prince he is!" exclaimed Sir Oliver, lifting his hand in admiration, "and I am sorry that I have no son to be the Prince's playfellow. But there is a nephew of mine somewhere about the house. He is about the same age, too, and I am sure he would be very happy if he might amuse His Royal Highness."

"Very good," said the King, "send for the boy." But, as it happened, there was no need to send for little

Noll, for while King James was speaking, out of the throng came a sturdy little boy, and stood staring boldly at the Prince. His clothes (which had been put on new and clean in honour of the King's visit) were soiled and torn, for he had spent the morning in rough play. He looked at the King as boldly as if he were only his uncle, and at the Prince as at an ordinary playfellow.

8. This little boy was Noll. "Here, Your Royal Highness, is my nephew," said Sir Oliver, rather ashamed of Noll's bold looks and torn clothes. "My boy, make your bow to His Royal Highness." Noll bowed as he was bid, for in those days parents taught their children to be respectful to their elders. King James, who was a learned man, asked Noll a few questions from Latin grammar, and then told the Prince who he was. The little Prince gently held out his hand, not for Noll to shake (as is the ordinary English habit), but that he might kneel and kiss it.

"Nephew," said Sir Oliver, "pay your duty to the Prince."

"I owe him no duty," said Noll, pushing aside the Prince's hand with a rude laugh. "Why should I kiss that boy's hand?"

9. All the courtiers were amazed at Noll's rudeness, and Sir Oliver looked grieved and distressed. But the King laughed heartily. Little Noll, he said, had a

bold English spirit. Some day his own son would be King and rule over England. It was good for him to learn beforehand of what kind of people he would be ruler. So King James and his courtiers entered the house, and while the King was at dinner, the Prince and Little Noll and some other children were sent to play together in a separate room. The young boys soon began their games.

For boys, sons of kings and sons of simple villagers, all like play, and are glad to have one another to play with. What games they played I cannot tell. Perhaps they played at ball, or at some other of the many games played in England by children then as now. Perhaps it was leap-frog or blind-man's-buff or catch-as-catch-can, for these games have been played for hundreds of years, and rich and poor have spent happy hours of childhood in playing them.

10. Meantime King James and his nobles were feasting with Sir Oliver in the great hall. The King sat in the royal chair at the head of a long table. Whenever any of those present spoke to him he spoke with the greatest respect. Whenever a servant brought him wine or something to eat or drink he knelt as he presented it to the King. It might seem from these signs of worship that the King was above ordinary human beings. Yet he seemed to have as much need of food and drink as any other person at the table.

11. But it so happened that King James was not to finish his dinner in peace. All of a sudden a terrible noise was heard from the room where the children were at play. There were shouts of anger and cries of fear, and besides these could be heard the voices of older persons trying to make peace among the children. The King and every one else at the table looked amazed.

“What can the matter be?” muttered Sir Oliver; “that good-for-nothing nephew of mine is in some mischief or other.” Getting up from the table, he ran to see what was the matter. Many of the guests followed him, and amongst them the King. They all crowded to the door of the play-room.

12. On looking in they saw on the floor little Prince Charlie, his dress all torn and covered with dust, and blood was flowing from his nose. He was gazing at Noll with eyes of anger and fear, as if he were asking how an ordinary boy like Noll could dare to give a Prince such a beating. As for Noll, there he stood, bold and straight, looking as if he were ready to fight not only the Prince, but the King and his kingdom too.

“You little villain,” cried his uncle, “what have you been doing? Go down on your knees at once and ask the Prince’s pardon. How dare you lay hands on the son of His Majesty the King!”

“He hit me first,” replied Little Noll; “and so I hit him back.”

13. Sir Oliver and the guests were horrified. For a boy who could not endure a blow from the King's own son, no punishment could be too severe. Some of the courtiers said that Noll ought to be put in prison and tried for treason against the King. Others wanted to seize the boy there and then and give him a sound whipping in the royal presence.

But King James, who had plenty of good sense, told them to leave the boy alone. “You are a bold boy, to be sure,” said he, looking kindly at Noll, “and, if you live to be a man, my son Charlie will be wise to be friends with you.”

“That I never will,” cried the Prince, stamping his foot in anger.

“Quiet, Charlie, quiet,” said the King. Then he turned to Sir Oliver and the company and said, “Do not hurt the boy. He has taught my son a useful lesson, which he will, I hope, remember. If when he is King he tries ever to rule too roughly over our brave English people, let him remember how little Noll Cromwell made his nose bleed.”

14. So the King finished his dinner and departed, and for many years the childish quarrel between Prince Charles and Noll Cromwell was forgotten; and when King James was dead and Prince Charles became King

of England, did he remember the lesson which Noll taught him? It seems that he forgot it, for he ruled the people neither wisely nor carefully. He wanted to take from his subjects money and other things without their consent. Many of the English who loved liberty then rose against him, and after many battles they beat him and pulled him off his throne.

15. And throughout this war the King and his nobles were on one side and the people of England on the other, and the people had a famous leader, who helped more than any one else to beat the armies of the King. The war seemed to be a long struggle between him and the King; and the King was overthrown.

The time came when the King was brought to trial. And in the judgement hall where he was being tried sat that famous leader as one of the judges. After a long trial the judges condemned King Charles to death.

16. But the great war leader had it in his power to save him, and many, his own children among them, begged him to save the King from death.

“No,” said he sternly. “It is better that one man should die than that the whole country should be ruined because of him. Die he shall.”

When Charles, no longer a King, was led to the scaffold, his enemy stood watching from the window of the royal palace. From this window he saw a man

about to die, because he had not learnt in childhood to use rightly his power over others. He saw the executioner lift his axe and strike off the head with a single blow.

“The deed is well done,” perhaps he said [to himself. “Now Englishmen may enjoy their rights.”

17. At night when the body of Charles was laid in a coffin the great leader entered the room, lighting his way with a torch.

His figure as seen by the light of the torch was that of a man growing old. His face showed the scars which he had received in many battles.

His look was care-worn with the troubles that the charge of his country had laid upon him. Probably there was little left in look or manner of that Little Noll who had battled with Prince Charles long years ago. Yet this great leader was Little Noll and none other. He lifted the coffin lid and held the torch so that its light fell upon the dead King's face. Then came to his mind all that had happened in England between their first meeting long ago and this their last meeting. In that time, poor Prince Charles had lost his kingship and his life, and Little Noll was in fact, though not in name, King in his stead. “Why was it,” thought Cromwell, as he gazed at the pale face in the coffin, “why was it that this great King fell, and how is it Noll Cromwell has gained all the power of the

realm?" And what was the reason? King Charles had fallen because, in his manhood as in his childhood, he forgot that every human being was his brother. He thought himself a superior being, whose people were meant to be ruled over. And Cromwell rose to power chiefly because he fought for the rights and freedom of his fellow-men, and the people of England helped him in his struggle because he was their helper.

EXERCISES

1. Say briefly who were :—

James I., Sir Oliver Cromwell, Little Prince Charlie, Little Noll.

Try to describe the appearance of any of them.

2. Why did Little Noll quarrel with Prince Charlie, and why did Cromwell fight against Charles I. ?

3. Give an account of any quarrel you have had in your lifetime.

4. In one or two sentences for each, try to describe the character of :—

King James.

Charles I.

Cromwell.

5. Say in a few words in English what is a king, a courtier, a scaffold, a coffin, a guest. Give a vernacular equivalent for each of these.

6. Make up a conversation between yourself and King Charles I., about any event in his life.

GLOSSARY

James I. A king of England who ruled from 1603 to 1625.

country. A rural district as opposed to town. Vernacular, *dihát.*

armour. A defensive covering worn in fighting. Vernacular, *zirah baktar.*

hunting-horn. A wind instrument of the trumpet class.

Latin. The language of the ancient Romans. Latin is a classical language of Europe, as Sanskrit and Arabic are classical languages of India.

leap-frog. A game in which players leap (vault) with parted legs over others bending down.

blind-man's-buff. A game in which a blindfold player tries to catch others, who push him about.

catch-as-catch-can. A kind of wrestling.

treason. A direct action against a member of the Royal family or the State.

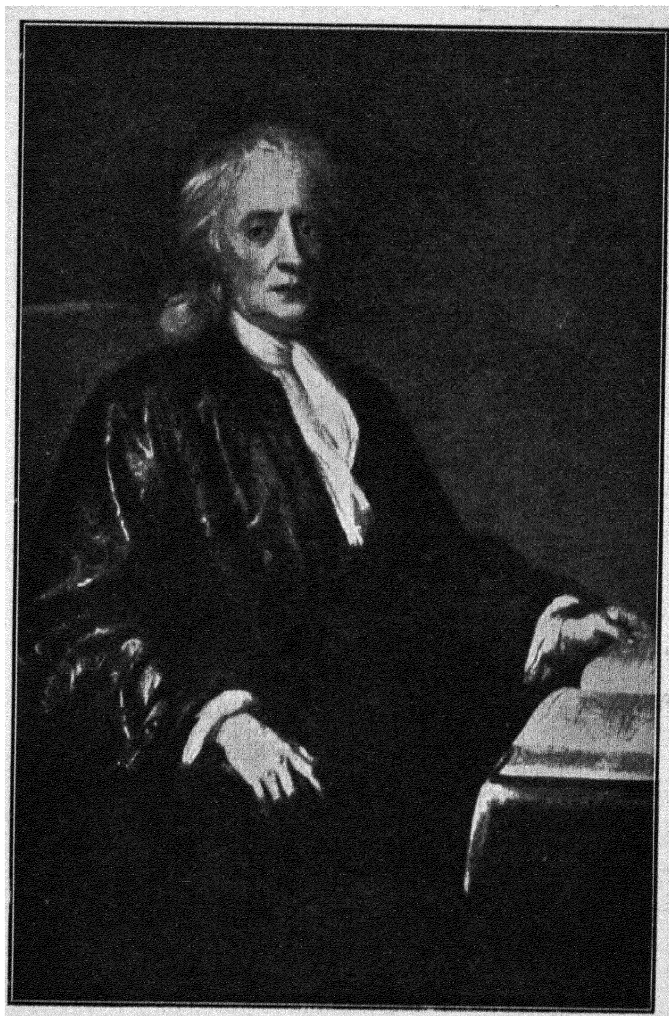
scaffold. A raised platform of timber, usually for the execution of criminals.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON

BORN 1642. DIED 1727.

ON Christmas Day, in the year 1642, Isaac Newton was born in the small village of Woolsthorpe in England. Little did his mother think, when she saw her new-born baby, that he would live to explain many things which had been hidden or unknown since the world was created.

Isaac's father being dead, Mrs. Newton married again, her second husband being a clergyman, and went to live at another village. Her son was left to the care of his good old grandmother, who was very kind to him and sent him to school. In his early years Isaac was very inattentive to his studies, and stood very low in his class, though later on he rose to the highest place in the school. From the very beginning, however, he was chiefly remarkable for his mechanical skill. He had a set of little tools and saws of various sizes made by himself. With the aid of these Isaac managed to make many curious articles, at which he worked with so much skill that he seemed to be a born mechanic.



SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

From the painting by Vanderbank in the National Portrait Gallery, London.

2. The neighbours much admired the things which Isaac made. And his old grandmother was never weary of talking about him.

“He will make a capital workman one day,” she would probably say. “I have every hope Isaac will do well in the world and be a rich man.”

Those who had seen him work with his tools perhaps thought that he would make beautiful furniture and other things of use in people's houses. And then all the rich people would purchase these fine things to make their rooms beautiful. Others probably thought that little Isaac was born to be an architect, and would build splendid palaces for the rich and the noble.

3. Some of his friends advised Isaac's grandmother to apprentice him to a clock-maker, for he had not only mechanical skill, but a taste for mathematics, which would be very useful to him while he made clocks. And then, in due time, Isaac would start his own business, and would manufacture curious clocks containing figures which would come out from the clock-face when the hour struck.

Indeed it seemed very likely that Isaac would devote himself to the manufacture of clocks, since he had already made one of a kind which nobody had ever heard of before. It was worked not by means of wheels and weights like other clocks, but by the

dropping of water. This was an object of great wonder to all the people round about, and, as you know, there are few boys, or men either, who can manage to tell what the time is by means of a bowl of water. Besides the water-clock, Isaac made a sun-dial. Thus his grandmother could always tell the hour, for the water-clock would tell it in the shade and the dial in the sunshine. It is said that the sun-dial may still be seen at Woolsthorpe, in the corner of the house where Isaac lived.

4. Isaac had a wonderful power of gaining knowledge by the simplest means. For instance, what method do you suppose he took to find out the strength of the wind? You will never be able to guess, though nothing can be more simple. In order to find out the force of the gale, he jumped first in the direction in which the wind blew, and then in the opposite direction. He measured the length of the leap in both directions and compared it with the length to which he could jump on a perfectly calm day. Thus he was able to find out how strongly the wind blew. Perhaps this was not the best way of doing it. It might have been much better if, instead of using his own body, he had made a piece of paper fly through a given distance, and observed the time that it took to do so. But this plan of his shows us, all the same, how even in his sports the boy Isaac continually thought of searching out the secrets of nature.

5. Not far from his grandmother's house there was a windmill which worked on a new plan. Isaac *would go* there very often and spend hours in looking at its various parts. While the mill was at rest he examined its machinery closely. When its broad sails were moved by the wind he saw how the mill-stones were made to go round and crush the grain. When he had come to know how the mill was made, his friends noticed that he became unusually busy with his tools.

6. It was not long before his grandmother and all the neighbourhood knew what Isaac had been about. He had made a model of the windmill. Though not so large as the windmill itself, yet the model had every part of the mill and its machinery complete. Its little sails were neatly made of linen, and whirled round very swiftly when the mill was put where a breeze was blowing. Even a puff of wind from Isaac's mouth or from a pair of bellows was sufficient to set the sails moving. And, what was most curious, if a handful of grains of wheat were thrown into it, they would soon be changed into snow-white flour.

7. Isaac's playfellows were delighted indeed to see his new windmill. They thought that nothing so pretty and so wonderful had ever been seen before.

"But, Isaac," said one of them, "you have forgotten one thing that belongs to a mill."

“What is that?” asked Isaac, for he thought that, from the roof of the mill to its floor, he had forgotten nothing.

“Why, where is the miller?” said his friend.

“That is true—I must look out for one,” said Isaac, and he began to consider how one could be supplied.

He might easily have made the small figure of a man, but then it would not have been able to move about and do the work of a miller. It so happened, however, that a mouse had just been caught in a trap, and, as no other miller could be found, Mr. Mouse was appointed to do that important duty. The new miller looked respectable in his dark grey coat. To be sure, he was not very honest, and was often caught stealing a portion of the grain which was given him to grind. But perhaps some men who work in mills are not more honest than this small creature was.

8. As Isaac grew older it was found that he had far more important matters to think about than the manufacture of toys like the little windmill. All day long, if left to himself, he was busy either thinking or studying some book of mathematics or science. At night he would look up with reverence and curiosity to the stars, and wonder whether they were worlds like our own and how far away they were from the earth. He wished he could know what was the power that kept them moving in their paths. Perhaps, even so early in

life, Isaac Newton felt that he would one day be able to answer all these questions.

9. When Isaac was fourteen years old his mother wished her son to leave school and help her in managing the farm. For some time, therefore, he tried to turn his attention to farming, but in vain. He had no liking for this work, and his heart was in his books. When, therefore, his mother ordered him into the fields to look after the sheep or to drive away cattle which were treading down the crops, he was always negligent. The sheep went astray and the cattle enjoyed themselves among the growing corn, while he was lying under a tree with a book in his hands or shaping wooden models with his knife. His mother, noticing his earnest desire to continue studies, sent him back to school. It took him less than a year to complete his school course.

10. In 1660 he went to Cambridge. As long as he stayed there he worked very hard at his books. He was soon known for his great ability. It is said of him that while engaged in his studies, he would often forget to take his meals. The following anecdote is told of him. His friend Dr. Stukeley called on him one day. Newton was out, but his table was laid for dinner. Dr. Stukeley lifted the cover and ate the dinner, and then replaced the cover. When Newton appeared later he greeted Stukeley, and sat down and

lifted the cover. "Dear me," said he, "I thought I had not dined, but I see I have."

11. It will not be possible to mention all the splendid discoveries which he made when he grew to be a man. He tried to find out the nature of light, for, before his day, nobody could tell what the sunshine was made of. One day you may read the story of the fall of an apple on his head, which led him to try to discover the force of gravitation. This is the force which keeps the heavenly bodies in their courses. When he had once got hold of this idea he knew no rest until he had searched out all the laws by which the planets are guided through the sky. This he did as thoroughly as if he had gone up among the stars and followed them in their journeys. As a boy, he had found out the mechanism of the windmill; as a man, he tried to explain to his fellow-men the mechanism of the universe.

While thus occupied he used to spend night after night in a lofty tower gazing at the heavenly bodies through a telescope. He may be said, indeed, to have spent the greater part of his life in worlds that lie thousands and millions of miles away, for where the thoughts and heart are, there do we live.

12. Did you ever hear the story of Newton and his little dog, Diamond? One day, when he was fifty years old, and had been hard at work more than twenty

years studying the nature of light, he went out of his room, leaving his little dog asleep before the fire. On the table lay a heap of papers written by him, containing all the discoveries which Newton had made during those twenty years.

When his master was gone, up rose little Diamond, jumped upon the table, and overthrew the lighted candle. The papers immediately caught fire.

When Newton opened the door he saw that the papers were completely burnt and the result of twenty years' hard work was just a heap of ashes. There stood little Diamond, who had done all the mischief. Almost any other man would have killed the dog at once out of anger, but Newton patted him on the head with his usual kindness, although he was very miserable at heart.

"O Diamond, Diamond," exclaimed he, "you little know the mischief you have done!"

This incident injured his health and he remained sad and unhappy for some time afterwards; but from the way in which he treated his little dog, one may judge how sweet his temper was.

13. Newton lived to be a very old man and won great fame. He was made a member of Parliament and received the honour of knighthood from the King. But he cared little for fame and honours, and was ever modest and humble even though his knowledge was so

vast. All that he had learned only made him feel how little he knew and how much remained to be learnt and known. A short time before his death he spoke the memorable sentence, "I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been like a boy playing on the seashore and picking up here and there a pretty shell or a smooth pebble, while the great and boundless ocean of Truth lay all undiscovered before me."

14. In 1727, when he was 85, Sir Isaac Newton died. All his life, in dress he was simple, in his diet sparing, and in his habits temperate—he did not even smoke.

Sir Isaac never wore spectacles and never lost more than one tooth to the end of his life. He was hospitable, kind, and charitable, and used to say that they who gave nothing till they died never gave at all. He spent a large part of his income in helping the poor, in assisting his relatives, and encouraging learning. He has left a fame behind him which will last as long as the stars shine in the midnight sky.

EXERCISES

1. Tell any story which pleases you from the life of Sir Isaac Newton.
2. Name some of the curious things which Newton made when he was a boy, and describe one of them.

3. Describe a sun-dial and explain how you can tell the time by it.

4. Say in a few words in English what is a clergyman, a windmill, a star, a telescope.

5. Make up a story of a visit to the moon, saying what it looked like and what you did there.

6. Sir Isaac Newton would have made a bad farmer. Give reasons for and against the statement.

GLOSSARY

Christmas Day. The Festival of Christ's birth: 25th December.

mechanic. A skilled workman who makes or repairs machinery.

capital (adj.). Excellent, first-rate.

apprentice. A learner of craft, bound to serve, and entitled to instruction from his employer for a specified term.

Vernacular, *shágird peshá bitháná.*

sun-dial. An instrument to show the time of day by means of a shadow cast by the sun.

Cambridge. A famous seat of learning in England.

gravitation. Attraction.

telescope. An instrument for making distant objects appear nearer and larger. Vernacular, *dúrbín.*

Parliament. A council consisting of the representatives of the people. With the Sovereign it now forms the supreme body which makes laws for governing Great Britain. There are two Houses—Commons and Lords.

Knight. Knighthood is a title. One who gets a knighthood is given the title "Sir". This rank is conferred as a reward for services to the Crown or country.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

BORN 1706. DIED 1790.

IN or about the year 1716 a boy used to be seen in the streets of Boston who was known among his school-fellows and playmates by the name of Ben Franklin. Ben was born in 1706, so that he was now about ten years old. His father, who had come over from England, was a soap-boiler and candle-maker.

He was a very bright boy at his books, and even a brighter one when at play with his companions. He had some remarkable qualities which seemed always to make him a leader, whether at sport or in more serious matters. And many amusing stories are told about him.

2. When he was a little boy his father and mother gave him some money to spend. It was the first money he ever had to spend as he wished. Ben was told that he should spend it wisely, and he knew full well that everybody in the house would ask him how he had spent it. Off he ran from the house, thinking of all the things he was going to buy, and expecting such a happy day as he had never known

before. He had not gone far when he met a boy blowing a whistle that he had just bought. The sound of the whistle and the boy's evident delight in blowing it filled Benjamin with an eager desire to own a whistle also. His choice was made there and then. He hurried on to the nearest toy-shop. As soon as he reached it he asked the man sitting in the shop if he had any whistles. He was shown a number of them ; Benjamin picked one out without asking the price. He was so anxious to possess a whistle that the price was of no account. The shopkeeper gave him the whistle and took all the money he had, which was, of course, far above the fair price. Never was a child more delighted than he when he left the shop with his whistle in his hand.

3. At once he started for home, blowing his whistle many times on the way. He blew it as loudly as he could when he entered the house, expecting, no doubt, to astonish the whole family with what he had bought. "What have you got there, Ben?" asked his mother.

"A whistle, Mother," replied Ben, and he blew it once again.

"How much did you pay for it?" she inquired.

"All the money I had," was Ben's simple reply.

"What!" exclaimed his brother, "did you give all your money for this little thing?"

"Yes, and, I think I have made a good bargain,"



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

replied Ben, with a smile playing on his bright and innocent face.

“You are not half so bright as I thought you were. The money you gave is four times the price of the whistle,” said his mother rather angrily.

When Ben told his mother that he had not inquired the price of the whistle, and in his eagerness to get the whistle had offered all his money to the shopkeeper, she knew how he had been cheated.

His elder brother explained to him that, for the money he had, he could get a whistle and a good many things more. Ben now saw his mistake, and he burst into tears. And to the end of his life he never forgot that once he had paid too much for the whistle.

So Ben grew up, and as he grew older he grew wiser, for one of his habits was always to try to learn some useful lesson from every event in his life. Thus he generally profited as much by his misfortunes as many people do by their good fortune and success.

4. Ben's face was already familiar to the inhabitants of Boston. Some of the best and most noted men used to visit his father, in order to talk about the affairs of the town. Ben's father, Mr. Franklin, was considered a very wise and upright man, and was respected by all who knew him, although he supported his family by the humble trade of boiling soap and making candles.

While his father and the visitors talked about

public affairs, little Ben would sit on his stool in a corner, listening with the greatest interest, as if he understood every word. It seemed from his looks as if he not only understood what was said, but he could have given wise advice himself. But in those days boys were expected to keep quiet in the presence of their elders. However, Ben Franklin was looked upon as a very promising lad, who would talk and act wisely by and by.

5. "Neighbour Franklin," his father's friends would sometimes say, "you ought to send this boy to college and make a clergyman of him."

"I have often thought of it," his father would reply; "and my brother Benjamin promises to give him a big book of sermons written by himself, if he is going to become a clergyman. But I have a large family to support and no money to pay for a clergyman's education."

In fact, Mr. Franklin found it so difficult to provide bread for his family that, when the boy was ten years old, he actually had to remove him from school. He was then employed in cutting candle wicks into equal lengths and filling the moulds with tallow; and many families in Boston spent their evenings by the light of the candles which he had helped to make. Thus, you see, in his early days, as well as in his manhood, he lived and laboured to spread light where there was darkness before.

6. Busy as his life now was, Ben still found time to spend a few hours with his former school-fellows. He and the other boys were very fond of fishing, and spent many of their leisure hours on the edge of the mill pond catching different kinds of fish, brought by the tide. The place where they fished is now, probably, covered with stone pavements and brick buildings, a crowded part of Boston. But in those days it was a marshy spot just outside the town, where sea-birds flew and screamed overhead and meadow grass grew under foot. On the edge of the water there was a deep bed of clay, in which the boys had to stand while they caught their fish. Here they had to move their hands and feet about in mud and water like a flock of ducks.

7. "This is very uncomfortable," said Ben Franklin one day to his companions, while they were standing with their legs deep in the marsh.

"So it is," said the other boys. "What a pity we have no better place to stand."

Had it not been for Ben, nothing more would have been done or said about the matter. But it was his habit, when he met a difficulty, to use his best efforts to remove it. So, as he and his comrades were returning from the water-side, Ben suddenly threw down his fishing-rod with a very determined look.

"Boys," cried he, "I have thought of a plan which will be good for us and for everybody else."

8. It was rather strange indeed to hear this little rosy-cheeked chap of ten talking about plans for the good of everybody. Nevertheless, his companions were ready to listen, for they were sure that Ben's scheme, whatever it was, would be well worth their attention. They remembered how wisely he had led them in their enterprises ever since he had been old enough to join their company.

They remembered, too, how he had sailed across the mill pond by lying flat on his back in the water and allowing himself to be drawn along by a paper kite. This was a wonderful device; if Ben could do that, he might certainly do anything.

"What is your scheme, Ben? What is it?" cried they all.

It so happened that they had now come to a spot of ground where a new house was to be built. Scattered round about lay a great many large stones, which were to be used for the foundation of the new house. Ben mounted upon the highest of these stones, so that he might be seen by all and speak to them with authority.

9. "You know, lads," said he, "what a trouble it is to be forced to stand in all that mire, wetting our shoes and stockings in mud and water. See! my clothes are wet to the waist nearly, and you are all in the same plight. Unless we can find some remedy for

this evil, we will have to give up fishing. And, surely, this would be a terrible misfortune."

"That it would, that it would," said his friends sorrowfully.

"Now, I propose," continued Master Benjamin, "that we should build a platform for the purpose of carrying on our fishing. You see these stones. The workmen mean to use them for the house; but that would be only for one man's advantage. My plan is to take these same stones and carry them to the edge of the water and build a wharf with them. This will not only help us to do our fishing with comfort, but it will also be a great assistance to boats passing up and down the stream. Thus, instead of one man, fifty or a hundred, or a thousand, besides ourselves, may be benefited by these stones. What say you, lads? Shall we build it?"

10. Ben's proposal was received with loud shouts of approval. Nobody thought of asking whether it was right or wrong to build a wharf with stones that did not belong to them.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" shouted they, "let us set about it." It was agreed that they should all be on the spot that evening and begin their grand public enterprise by moonlight. So, at the appointed time, the whole gang of youthful workers assembled, and eagerly began to remove the stones. They had no

idea beforehand how much toil this part of their work would require. The very first stone which they laid hold of proved so heavy that it seemed to be stuck to the ground. It was Franklin's cheerfulness and resolution alone that encouraged them to persevere.

11. Ben, as might be expected, was the soul of the *enterprise*. By his mechanical skill he found out ways of lightening the labour of carrying the stones, so that one boy, under his direction, would do as much as half a dozen if left to themselves. Whenever they felt tired he had a joke ready, which sent them all into a roar of laughter, and this served to renew their strength. And when, after an hour or two of hard work, the stones were taken to the water-side, Ben Franklin was the engineer who supervised the building of the wharf.

12. The boys, many in number as they were, by working together like a colony of ants, carried out their task, though each by himself could have done but little. Finally, just as the moon sank below the horizon, the great work was finished.

"Now, boys," cried Ben, "let us give three cheers and go home to bed. To-morrow we may catch fish at our ease."

"Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" shouted his comrades.

They all went home so greatly overjoyed that they could hardly get a wink of sleep.

13. In the morning, when the early sunbeams were gleaming on the roofs of the town and gilding the water that surrounded it, the masons engaged for building the house came to begin their work. But, on reaching the spot, they stared in wonder when they saw that the stones had disappeared.

“Why, Sam,” said one to another greatly perplexed, “here has been some magic at work while we were asleep. The stones must have flown away in the night.”

“More likely they have been stolen,” answered Sam.

“But who on earth would think of stealing a heap of stones?” cried a third. “Could a man carry them away in his pocket?”

14. The master mason, who was a rough sort of man, stood scratching his head, and at first said nothing. But, looking carefully on the ground, he noticed innumerable tracks of little feet, some with shoes and some without. Following these tracks with his eyes, he saw that they formed a beaten path towards the water-side.

“Ah, I see what the mischief is,” said he, nodding his head. “Those little rascals, the boys, have stolen our stones to build a wharf with.”

The masons immediately went to examine the newly built wharf. And to say the truth, it was well

worth looking at, so neatly and admirably had it been planned and finished. The stones were put together so firmly that there was no danger of their being carried away by the tide, however swiftly it might flow along. There was a broad and safe platform to stand upon, whence the little fishermen might cast lines into deep water and draw up fish in abundance. Indeed it almost seemed as if Ben and his comrades might be forgiven for taking the stones, because they had done their job like skilful workmen.

15. "The lads that built this wharf understood their business pretty well," said one of the masons. "I should not be ashamed of such a piece of work myself."

But the master mason did not seem to enjoy the joke. He was one of those unreasonable people who think a great deal more of their own rights than of the convenience of all the rest of the world.

"Sam," said he, more rudely than usual, "go, call a policeman."

So Sam called a policeman, and inquiries were started to discover who had stolen the stones. In the course of the day, orders were issued by a magistrate to arrest Benjamin Franklin and other mischievous boys, who had broken the law. If the owner of the stolen property had not been more merciful than the master mason, it might have gone hard with our friend Benjamin and his fellow-labourers. But, luckily for

them, the gentleman had a respect for Ben's father, and, moreover, was amused at the spirit in which the adventure had been undertaken. He therefore let the offenders off pretty easily.

16. But, when the police were dismissed, the poor boys had to go through another trial, and receive sentence and suffer punishment from their own fathers.

As for Ben, he was less afraid of a whipping than of his father's displeasure. Mr. Franklin, as has been mentioned before, was a wise man, and also a thoroughly upright one. He had read more than a person in his position generally reads, and had thought deeply over the ways of the world, until he had gained more wisdom than a whole library of books could have taught him. Ben had a greater reverence for his father than for any other person in the world, on account of his blameless character and his practical wisdom. Consequently, after his narrow escape from the hands of the law, Ben came before his father greatly disturbed in mind.

17. "Benjamin, come here," began Mr. Franklin in his usual solemn and authoritative tone.

The boy approached and stood before his father's chair, waiting obediently to hear what judgement he would pass upon him. He felt that now the right and wrong of the whole matter would be made clear to him.

“Benjamin,” said his father, “what could lead you to take property which did not belong to you?”

“Why, father,” replied Ben, hanging his head at first but then lifting his eyes to Mr. Franklin’s face, “if it had been merely for my own benefit, I never should have dreamed of it. But I knew that the wharf would be a public convenience. If the owner of the stones should build a house with them, nobody will enjoy any advantage except himself. Now, I made use of them in a way that was for the advantage of many persons. I thought it right to aim at doing good to the greatest number.”

18. “My son,” said Mr. Franklin solemnly, “so far as it was in your power, you have done a greater harm to the public than to the owner of the stones.”

“How can that be, father?” asked Ben.

“Because,” answered his father, “in building your wharf with stolen materials, you have committed a moral wrong. Remember it is a serious mistake to wrong others for the sake of a seeming benefit. Those who forget this truth, do much to destroy all that is good in the world.”

“Heaven forbid,” said Benjamin.

“No act,” continued Mr. Franklin, “can be for the good of all which means injustice to any one person. It would be easy to prove this by examples. But, indeed, can you believe that an all-wise and just God

could desire that a wrong act should be the true way of doing good? It is impious to think so. And I do truly believe, Benjamin, that almost all the public and private misery of mankind arises from forgetting this great truth, that evil can bring only evil, that good ends must be gained by good means."

"I will never forget it again," said Benjamin bowing his head.

"Remember," concluded his father, "that whenever we act against this highest rule of right we do an injury to the world. It may not seem so for the moment, but in the long run it will be found so."

To the close of his life Ben Franklin never forgot these words of his father; and in his public and private life he tried to follow the advice which that good and wise man had taught him.

19. After the great event of building the wharf, Ben continued to cut wick yarn and fill candle moulds for about two years. But as he had no love for that occupation, his father often took him to see other people at work. Day after day, father and son walked together and visited all the workshops of Boston, in order that the boy might judge for himself what trade he liked best. Thus Ben learned the use of a great many tools, which enabled him in after years to do various little jobs in his house without calling in a workman every time something went wrong. But he

seemed much inclined to go to sea. In order to keep him at home and let him gain knowledge, the lad was bound apprentice to his elder brother, who had lately set up a printing office in Boston.

20. Here he had many chances of reading new books and of hearing instructive conversation. He also tried to write stories, and he was so successful that, when no more than thirteen or fourteen, he began to write for his brother's newspaper. Ben, though not a poet, also wrote verses. He made two ballads—one about the shipwreck of Captain Worthilike; and the other about the pirate Black-Beard, who, not long before, had infested the American seas.

When Ben's verses were printed, his brother sent him to sell them wet from the press to the townspeople. "Buy my ballads," shouted Benjamin, as he walked through the streets with a basketful on his arm. "Who will buy my ballads about Black-Beard?"

If one of those roughly composed and rudely printed little books could be discovered now, it would be worth more than its weight in gold.

21. In this way Benjamin spent his boyhood and youth until, because of some quarrel with his brother, he left his native town and went to Philadelphia. He landed in the latter city a homeless and hungry young man, and bought threepence-worth of bread to satisfy his hunger.

Not knowing where else to go, he entered a Quaker meeting-house, sat down, and fell asleep. He has not told us whether in his sleep he had any dreams. But little did he dream that he would one day be honoured in that very city, and be the governor of the province where he had now landed for the first time in such a poor condition—without money and without friends.

22. Here he got work as a printer's boy, and worked as hard as he could. It was not long before his master began to feel that Benjamin was far superior to any other printer.

It would be a very long story indeed to relate how, from a mere printer's boy, Benjamin became one of the foremost makers of his nation, spending upwards of forty years in the public service of his country. Nor is it possible to mention all that he did for his people. It is enough to say that always and everywhere his country had the first place in his thoughts.

It is not only as a lover of his country that Benjamin Franklin is best known to the world. His achievements in science won him a great honour outside his own country. The learned men of England and France thought it a great pleasure to talk with him about his experiments in science. His books and pamphlets were translated into several languages of Europe.

23. Franklin died in 1790, full of years and honours. The news of the death of the true patriot and great

philosopher caused general and deep sorrow throughout America. All the bells were tolled and all flags were hung half-mast high, until his body was laid to rest by the side of that of his wife.

The young reader will, perhaps, wish to know what it was that made poor Ben, who had to leave school at the early age of ten and begin his life as a printer's boy, a learned man. If that difficult question can be answered in one word, the reply is, "Reading". That was the chief secret of his success in life. Even when a printer's boy, he would spend most of his savings in buying books. If he had any spare time, he would spend it reading books. He would borrow books from others even on the promise that he would return them by morning. He would sit up late in the night and wake up early in the morning and thus finish the book and return it in time. If he found a book to be really useful and good, he read it again and again till it was thoroughly mastered.

24. He himself tells us how he acquired practice in writing good English. He says, "About this time (when I was fifteen) I met with an old volume of the *Spectator*. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much pleased with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished, if possible, to imitate it. So I took some one of the papers, and made short notes of all the thoughts in it.

These notes I laid by for a few days. After that I looked at them again, and tried to write them out in full in the best words I could. Then I compared what I had written with what I had first read in the *Spectator*, saw my mistakes and corrected them." To increase his stock of words, he took some of the tales in the *Spectator* and turned them into verse, and, after a time, when he had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again.

25. It would be interesting to know how this hard-working young man used to spend his time. He would, so we learn from him, always get up at five o'clock. After saying his prayers, he planned his work for the day ; then he studied for an hour and a half before going into the printing office, where he worked from eight to six o'clock, with an hour's interval for dinner. The evening he spent either in study or in conversation with friends, till ten o'clock, when he went to bed.

A remarkable feature of Franklin's character was uprightness. He would say fearlessly what he thought to be right, never caring whom his words pleased or displeased ; and would never do what he thought to be wrong.

26. An interesting story is told of him which shows that he followed his own beliefs, not other people's.

In his newspaper, of which he was the editor, he had written an article which found fault with the

actions of some person in power. Two gentlemen called upon him. They told him that he had greatly offended this man, and that it was very unwise on his part to do that. Franklin listened quietly, and then invited these messengers to supper, begging that they should bring their injured friend with them.

All the three gentlemen turned up at the fixed time. He received them very cheerfully, and listened to what they had to say. They thought he would apologise for what he had written, but their host uttered no word of regret. Presently supper was brought in, and, to the surprise of these invited people, there was nothing but very coarse meal and a big jug of water. Franklin helped them all, and then ate his own portion with great appetite. The three guests tasted the food and tried to look as if they liked it. They made a few attempts, but could not swallow the coarse food. At last they laid down their spoons and gave up trying. Franklin then rose from his chair and told his guests that he had shown that he could live on such coarse meal and water as they had before them. So long as he could do that he needed no man's favour. Of course he meant that he would say what he thought right and just, without caring whom it displeased.

27. As Franklin had risen from poverty to power he was always ready to help those who were in distress.

But even in this he was most careful to make the best use of what he gave. The story of the whistle had taught him wisdom. The following story shows how he did it.

Once a friend wrote to him for some money, and Dr. Franklin sent him ten pounds, saying, "I do not pretend to *give* such a sum ; I only *lend* it to you. When you return to your country with a good character, you are sure to get into some business and will in time be able to pay all your debts. When that time comes, and you meet with another honest man in similar distress, pay me by lending the same sum to him. Tell him to pay the debt in just the same way, when he meets with another person in distress. I hope this ten pounds may thus go through many hands before it meets with a knave that will stop its progress. This is a plan for doing a deal of good with a little money. I am not rich enough to spend *much* in good work, and so am obliged to follow some such plan for making the most of a *little*."

28. You have read that poor Ben became one of the greatest men on account of his industry and love of truth, but that was not all. Even when a person is succeeding in life, sometimes dark clouds come across his way. A truly great man is he who remains calm in the face of misfortune. And Benjamin Franklin was indeed such a man ; for it is said of him that, even

when he saw nothing but the faces of his enemies around him and he was sure that he would lose his reputation, he remained as calm as ever. He never lost his temper.

EXERCISES

1. Tell the story of Benjamin Franklin and the whistle.
2. How would you make the most of Rs.100 if you had to spend it for the benefit of others?
3. Make up a conversation between the boys as if they were building the wharf.
4. Say in a few English words what is a mason, an apprentice, a library, a magistrate.
5. How did the father of each of the famous men you have read about earn his living?
6. Describe any punishment you have had in your lifetime.
7. Explain the method by which Benjamin Franklin learned to write English, and try the same method yourself with parts of the stories in this book.

GLOSSARY

- clergyman.* A man regularly authorised to preach the gospel.
Ver. *Pádrí.*
- sermons.* Discourses on religious or moral subjects.
- stockings.* A close-fitting covering for the foot and leg up to or slightly above the knee. Ver. *jaráben.* Cf. *socks.*
- wharf.* A wooden or stone platform built on the shore beside which ships may be moored for unloading.
- gang.* A number of labourers working under one person.
- horizon.* The line where earth and sky appear to the sight to join. Ver. *Ufq.*

ballad. A short narrative poem, often of a kind adapted for singing.

Quaker. A member of a religious sect called the Society of Friends.

flags . . . half-mast high. Flags were lowered to half height of their masts as a mark of respect for the dead.

Spectator. The name of a paper published in England in the eighteenth century.

DOCTOR SAMUEL JOHNSON

BORN 1709. DIED 1784.

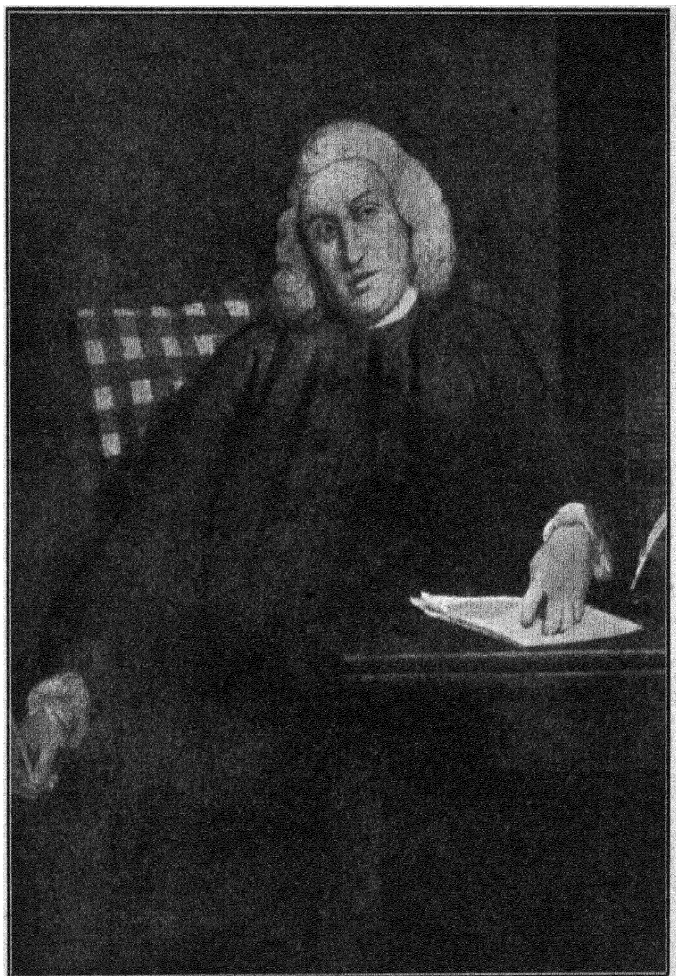
“SAM,” said his father, Mr. Johnson, one morning, “I am not feeling well to-day. Will you go to the town instead of me, and look after the book-stall in the market-place there?” This was spoken by the father of a famous man called Samuel Johnson, over two hundred years ago. At that time his father used to sell books in the market-place of a little town in England. He lived in a village some distance away, and used to go to and from the town daily.

2. The boy, Sam, was a big and clever lad, but with an ugly face. And he had a disease of the skin and eyes which made him sometimes nearly blind. The Johnson family had never been very rich, and as the father got older he was less able to earn a living. Sam was badly dressed and wore shoes from which his toes peeped out. But his schoolfellows respected him because he was clever and took the lead amongst them. Three of them used to come for him every morning; and while he sat upon the back of one of

them, the two others held him up on each side. And so he rode proudly to school.

3. Since Sam was so important a person at school he could not bear the idea of standing all day in the market-place trying to sell books. To sell books to ignorant country-people seemed to him too humble a thing to do. Perhaps too he was also afraid of showing his shabby clothes and ugly face to all these people. So when his father had made his request to him, Sam looked sulky. He stared at his father and answered in a loud voice, "No, I will not go to the market to sell books." The old father felt too ill and feeble to oppose his son's stubborn will. He made ready to go to the town himself. But as he was putting on his hat to go out, he said, "Well, Sam, if out of pride you let your sick father stand all day in the noise and crowd of the market, I have no more to say. But you will think of this, Sam, when I am dead and gone."

4. So this poor old man (perhaps with a tear in his eye, but certainly with sorrow in his heart) set out for the town. Poor grey-haired old man, weak and ill. Yet he had still to go and work that his family might not be in want. His ungrateful son was too proud to do anything for his father and mother and himself. Sam watched his father as he went slowly down the road till he was out of sight.



SAMUEL JOHNSON.

From the painting by Reynolds in the National Portrait Gallery, London.

5. But when the old man was no more to be seen the boy began to feel sorry. Like most children he was given to making pictures in his mind. And now the picture came to him of his father standing in the dusty market-place. Sam saw in his mind his father in front of his book-stall, and the noisy crowd all about him of people in the market buying and selling and calling to one another. In his mind Sam pictured to himself the names and kinds of books on the book-stall. Some of them religious books, some books for amusement with pictures on some of the pages. Then there were newspapers which told of the big events of the week. Besides this there were pens and pencils and writing-paper.

6. In his mind Sam saw his father offering his books and trying to persuade people to buy them. Now there was coming to the stall a farmer who could scarcely read or write, but stopped to look at the pictures. After him came a merchant and bought a newspaper. Then three or four children came and stood in front of the stall and looked about for sweet-meats on it. Their parents had given them a few pence to spend for themselves, and they were going about from one stall to another. There were so many things in the market that they could not make up their minds which of them all was the nicest.

7. All this time Mr. Johnson was doing his best to

sell his books and papers. Perhaps it cost him an hour's talk to get a profit of only sixpence. "My poor father!" thought Sam to himself, "how his head must be aching. I am sorry that I did not do as he asked me." Then the boy went to his mother, who was busy about the house. She did not know that Mr. Johnson had asked Sam to go to market instead of him, nor that Sam had refused to go. "Mother," said he, "did you think father seemed very ill to-day?" "Yes, Sam," answered his mother, turning her head towards him. She was cooking their meal on the fire. "Your father did look very ill. I am sorry that he did not send you to the town instead of going himself. You are a big boy now, and would, I am sure, be very glad to do something for your father, now that he is old while you are strong."

8. The boy made no reply. But the picture came back to him of Mr. Johnson in the market-place. There he was in the hot sunshine, looking very weary and ill. Some people amongst the crowd stopped and looked at him. "Has this man no son," one of them was saying, "who could take his place at the book-stall while the old father stays at home and gets well?" And perhaps, thought Sam to himself, my father will faint and fall as he stands there, and the people standing by will pick him up and whisper, "Is he dying? His face looks so white and deathlike." At

these unhappy thoughts of his, Sam shuddered. " Oh, I have been a cruel son!" thought he in his heart. " God forgive me! God forgive me!"

9. But God did not yet forgive him, for he was not yet ready to undo what he had done. Had he been so, he would have hurried away at once to town and have asked his father to forgive him. He would have said that he was sorry for his fault, and his father would have returned home, and Sam would have done his work instead of him. But Sam was too proud to do this; he did not like to feel small. So he stayed at home. After sunset, old Mr. Johnson came slowly home and sat down in his big arm-chair as was his custom. To Sam he said nothing; nor do I know that father and son even spoke to one another about the son's unkindness and disobedience.

10. In a few years his father died, and Sam had to look after himself in the world. It would make my story much too long if I were to tell you even a few of the things that happened to Sam in his life. In time Samuel Johnson became a famous man through his writings and his wisdom, and many books have been written about him and about all that he did and said when he came to be a man. But one thing I want to tell of. From his boyhood onward till the last day of his life Samuel Johnson never forgot the story of that day and the market. As he grew older he won

success as a student at Oxford and as a teacher and writer. But sometimes he was very poor, and only after much trouble did he earn money enough for an easy living. But all the time the thought kept coming back to him, "I was cruel to my father in his illness." Again and again in his dreams he saw the old man standing in the dust and noise of the market and putting up his hand to his forehead as if it ached.

11. I will now tell you of something that happened fifty years after the day about which I have told you. Again it was market-day in the same market-town. Again, fifty years afterwards, the scene in the market was the same. There were farmers selling cattle and sheep, and carts full of cabbages and onions and many other kinds of vegetables. Now and then a farmer's wife came trotting along on horseback carrying butter and cheese in two big baskets, one on either side of her horse. The town-people and their friends from the country walked hither and thither and chatted to one another. Some were joking and laughing, some were quarrelling, and others were sitting about or buying and selling. The noise and bustle was just as it had been fifty years before. In one part of the street was a man with performing dogs, whose antics kept the onlookers smiling and laughing. On the other side of the street was a stone church, its old walls covered with ivy and pretty creepers.

12. Now the old church had a tower, and in this tower was a large clock that chimed the hours, so that all the people could hear. The hands of the clock had almost reached the hour of noon, when an old gentleman was seen making his way among the crowd. He was very tall and rather stout, and had on a brown coat and breeches, thick woollen stockings, and a good pair of shoes. On his head was a three-cornered hat, beneath which he wore a grey wig. The old gentleman had a strange way of moving : it was more like a roll than a walk, so that he needed more room than ordinary people as he went along. "Make room, sir," he would cry out in a loud voice when any one got in his way ; "make room, please ! you are in the way."

13. "What a queer old fellow this is !" said the onlookers to one another. They did not know whether to laugh or be angry. But when they looked again at the stranger they kept quiet ; for, though his eyes were dim and his face had the marks of disease, he looked like a man whom people were used to obey, and one to whose words they would listen. So they stood aside and let him pass. He made his way across the market-place, and reached the corner of the ivy-covered church. There he stood still. And the clock struck twelve, the hour of noon.

14. This spot where the stranger now stood was the spot where old Michael Johnson used to keep his

book-stall, so the old people who were in the market remembered. The little children, who had long ago bought books and pictures and pencils from old Michael Johnson, were themselves grandfathers now.

“Yes! here is the very spot,” muttered the old gentleman to himself. There the stranger stood and took the three-cornered hat from his head. It was the busiest hour of the day; and the market-place was in great confusion. But the stranger seemed to pay no heed to the noise of people talking and laughing or to the lowing of the cattle and bleating of the sheep. He was buried in his own thoughts. Sometimes he raised his head to heaven, as if he were praying; sometimes he bent his head as if in sorrow.

. 15. The sun shone hot upon his forehead; but he seemed not to notice its heat. A dark cloud appeared in the sky, and raindrops began to fall upon the crowd in the market. But the stranger took no notice of the shower of rain. The people began to look at the strange old gentleman with wonder. Who could he be? Where did he come from? Why was he standing bare-headed in the open market-place? Even the little school-children left their play and came to gaze, with eyes wide open, at this tall, strange-looking old man.

16. There was a farmer in the market who happened to have made a journey to the big market in London a little while before. He made his way through the

crowd of people and came near the stranger. As soon as he caught sight of him, he whispered to one of his friends who was by his side. "Would you like to know, my friend, who this old gentleman is?"

"Yes, indeed, I would," replied his friend; "for I never saw a man like him in my life. He does not seem to be an ordinary man."

"No, he is no ordinary man, indeed," answered the farmer. "That is the famous Doctor Samuel Johnson, who, they say, is the most learned man in England. I saw him in the streets of London, walking with his close friend, Mr. Boswell."

17. What he said was true. The poor boy Sam, with whom we began our story, had become the famous Doctor Samuel Johnson. He was known to all to be the wisest man and greatest writer in all England. He was the first man who had written a really good dictionary of the English language; and his books were read by thousands and thousands of his countrymen. The rich and noble thought it a high honour to be his companions, and to listen to his conversation. The King of Great Britain himself had made him his friend, and had told him how great an honour it was to England to have Doctor Johnson as one of its citizens. He had reached the height of his fame.

18. Yet in his memory remained still one scene of his boyhood; and that scene from his past life still

caused him distress. Never had he forgotten his father's sorrowful look or his sad words. And though his father had died long ago, the son had never forgiven himself for the pain which he caused his father. And so at last, in his own old age, he had come back to his boyhood's home to show his sorrow at the very spot where Michael Johnson, his father, had once long ago kept his book-stall. Thus the aged and famous man had done what the poor boy refused to do ; and, by showing the sorrow that was in his heart, he hoped that peace of mind would come back to him and that God would forgive him for his wrong.

EXERCISES

1. The story you have just read tells about two different parts of Johnson's life. In about 100 words or less, give a summary of the first part.
2. In less than 200 words give a summary of the rest of the story.
3. Say in English what is a book-stall, a market-place, a newspaper, a church, a farmer, a dictionary.
4. Try to describe the scene in the market-place where Mr. Johnson had his book-stall.
5. Say what Sam's father thought to himself when Sam refused to go to the market-place instead of him.
6. Describe a scene in any bazaar or market known to you.

GLOSSARY

book-stall. A small house or shed where books are placed for public show and offered for sale.

market-place. An open square (ver. *chauk*) or place in a town where public sales are held.

sulky. Sullen, silent, and unfriendly.

stubborn. Obstinate, unyielding.

Oxford. A well-known seat of learning in England.

living. Livelihood.

antics. Capers, playful movements. Ver. *Qalábázian.*

creepers. Creeping or climbing plants. Ver. *belen.*

wig. An artificial covering of hair for the head.

Boswell, James (1740-1795). Biographer of Samuel Johnson.

BENJAMIN WEST

BORN 1738. DIED 1820.

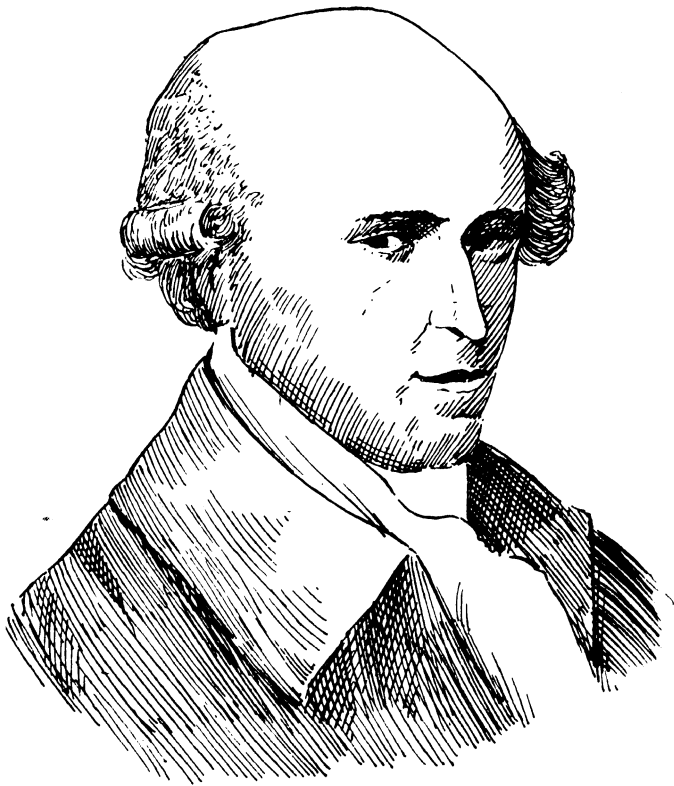
IN the year 1738 there was born in the town of Springfield, Pennsylvania, an infant, from whom his parents and neighbours expected great and wonderful things. A famous preacher of the Society of Friends or Quakers had foretold that little Ben would be a most famous and remarkable man. For this reason the eyes of many people were fixed upon the boy from his childhood. Some of his ancestors had won great renown in the wars of England and France ; but it was probably expected that Ben would become a famous preacher, and would teach the people to live in peace and love, and to lead pure and simple lives. His parents were thought to be very fortunate in having such a son.

2. Little Ben does not seem to have done anything remarkable and fit to be mentioned in history up to the age of six. But one summer afternoon, in his seventh year, his mother put a fan into his hand and asked him to keep the flies away from the face of a little baby who lay fast asleep in the cradle. She then left the room.

3. The boy waved the fan to and fro and drove away the buzzing flies whenever they came near the baby's face. When they had all flown away from the window into distant parts of the room, he bent over the cradle and gazed with delight at the sleeping infant. It was, indeed, a very pretty sight. The little baby in the cradle slept peacefully, with its soft white hands under its chin, and looked as full of bliss and quiet as if angels were singing lullabies in its ear. Indeed, it must have been dreaming about heaven ; for when Ben bent over the cradle, the little baby smiled. "How beautiful she looks!" said Ben to himself. "What a pity it is that such a pretty smile should not last for ever!"

4. Now, Ben at this period of his life had never heard of that wonderful art by which a look, that appears and disappears in a moment, can be made to live and last for hundreds of years. As nobody had told him about the art of painting, he may be said to have invented it for himself. On a table near at hand there were pens and paper, and ink of two colours, black and red. The boy took a pen and sheet of paper, and, kneeling down beside the cradle, began to draw a likeness of the infant. While he was busy in this way he heard his mother's footsteps, and hastily tried to conceal the paper.

5. "Benjamin, my son, what have you been doing?" asked his mother, seeing that he looked confused.



BENJAMIN WEST.

At first Ben was unwilling to tell ; for he felt as if there might be something wrong in stealing the baby's face and putting it upon a sheet of paper. However, as his mother asked again and again, he put the sketch into her hands, and then hung his head, expecting to be well scolded. But when the good lady saw what was on the paper, in lines of red and black ink, she uttered a scream of surprise and joy.

“ Oh ! ” cried she, “ it is a picture of little Sally ! ”

And then she threw her arms round Benjamin, and kissed him so tenderly that he never afterwards was afraid to show his sketches to his mother.

6. As Ben grew older it was noticed that he took great delight in looking at the colours and forms of nature. For instance, he was greatly pleased with the blue violets of spring, the wild roses of summer, and the scarlet flowers of early autumn. When the woods showed all the colours of the beautiful rainbow, Ben liked nothing better than to gaze at them from morning till night. The purple and golden clouds of sunset were a joy to him. And he was, day after day, trying to draw sketches of trees, men, mountains, houses, cattle, geese, ducks, and turkeys, with a piece of chalk, on barn doors or on the floor.

7. In those old times the wild Red Indians were still found in large numbers in Pennsylvania. Every year a party of them used to pay a visit to Springfield,

because the huts of their forefathers had formerly stood there. These wild men grew fond of little Ben, and made him very happy by giving him some of the red and yellow paint with which they used to adorn their faces. His mother, too, gave him a piece of indigo. Thus he now had three colours, red, blue, and yellow, and could make green by mixing the yellow with the blue. Ben was overjoyed, and no doubt showed his gratitude to the Indians by drawing pictures of them in the strange dresses that they wore, with feathers, axes, bows, and arrows.

8. But all this time the young artist had no paint brushes ; nor were there any to be bought, unless somebody could be specially sent to Philadelphia for this purpose. However, he was a very clever and resourceful boy, and made up his mind to make paint brushes for himself. He, therefore, one day caught hold of an old black cat, who was sleeping quietly by the fireside. "Puss," said little Ben to the cat, "pray give me some of the fur from the tip of your tail !"

Though he spoke to the black cat so kindly and politely, yet Ben was determined to have the fur, whether she were willing or not. Puss would have refused if she could, but the boy was armed with his mother's scissors, and cut off enough fur to make a paint brush. This was so very useful to him that he

robbed the cat of her fur again and again, until her warm coat of fur had become so thin that she could hardly keep comfortable through the winter. Poor thing! she was forced to creep close into the chimney corner, and looked at Ben quite sad and miserable. But the child thought he had more need of paint brushes than the cat of warmth.

9. About this time West received a visit from Mr. Pennington, a merchant of Philadelphia, who was also a Quaker. The visitor, on entering the room, was surprised to see it decorated with drawings of Indian chiefs, and of birds with beautiful plumage, and of the wild flowers of the forest. Nothing of the kind had ever been seen before in the house of a Quaker farmer.

“Why, friend West,” exclaimed the merchant, “what has led you to cover your walls with all these pictures? Where did you get them from?”

Then West explained that all those pictures had been painted by little Ben, for which he had used nothing but brushes made of the black cat’s fur, and red, yellow, and indigo colours.

“Truly,” said Mr. Pennington, “the boy has a wonderful gift. Little Benjamin seems to be a born painter.”

The good merchant patted Benjamin on the head, and thought him a wonderful boy. When his parents saw how much their son’s paintings were admired,

they, no doubt, remembered the prophecy of the old preacher about Ben's future greatness. But still they could not understand how he was ever to become a very great and useful man merely by making pictures.

10. One evening, shortly after Mr. Pennington's return to Philadelphia, a big square packet arrived at Springfield for little Ben.

"What can it possibly be?" thought Ben, when it was put into his hands. "Who can have sent me such a packet as this?"

On taking off the thick brown paper which covered it, behold! there was a paint-box, with a great many cakes of paint, and brushes of various sizes. They had been kindly sent by Mr. Pennington. There were also several squares of canvas, on which artists paint their pictures, and besides these useful things there were some beautiful pictures of natural scenery. These were the first pictures that Ben had ever seen except those drawn by himself.

11. What a joyful evening was this for the little artist! At bedtime he put the paint-box under his pillow, and got hardly a wink of sleep, for all night long he dreamt of painting pictures. In the morning he hurried to his room on the top floor, and was seen no more till the dinner hour; nor did he eat more than a mouthful or two of food before he hurried back to the room again. The next day and

the next, he was just as busy as before ; until at last his mother thought it time to find out what he was doing. So she followed him to the room.

On opening the door, the first object on which her eyes fell was Benjamin, giving the finishing touches to a beautiful picture. He had copied parts of two of the pictures, and made one picture out of both, with such great skill that it was far more beautiful than those from which he had copied. The grass, the trees, the water, the sky, and the houses were all painted in their proper colours, as also the sunshine and the shadow, looking as real as life.

“My dear child, you have done wonders!” cried his mother. The good lady could not contain herself for joy. There was every reason why she should be proud of her boy, for there was work in this picture of which old artists, who had spent a lifetime in the work, need not have been ashamed. Many a year afterwards, this wonderful picture was shown at the Royal Academy in London.

12. When Benjamin was quite a grown-up boy he was sent to school at Philadelphia. Not long after his arrival he had a slight attack of fever, and had to stay in bed for some time. The light was shut out from his bedroom by means of closed wooden shutters so that it might not disturb him. At first it appeared so completely dark that Ben could see nothing in the

room. Gradually, however, his eyes became accustomed to the dim light.

He was lying on his back, looking up at the ceiling, when suddenly he saw the dim figure of a white cow moving slowly over his head. Ben started, and rubbed his eyes, greatly amazed. "What can this mean?" thought he. The white cow disappeared; and next came several pigs, which moved slowly along the ceiling, and then were seen no more. So real did these animals look that Ben could not explain the mystery.

"Well, this is very strange!" said Ben to himself. When the people of the house came to see him, Benjamin told them of the strange sights he had seen. But they would not believe him. "Benjamin, surely you are not in your senses," cried they. "How can a white cow and a number of pigs appear on the ceiling of a dark room?"

13. Ben, however, was sure that his eyes had not deceived him, and was determined to understand what had really happened. For this purpose, when he was again left alone, he got out of bed and examined the window shutters. He soon saw a small chink in one of them, through which a ray of light passed and rested upon the ceiling. Now, when you read more about the science of light you will understand how a picture of a white cow and pigs, and of other objects out of doors, can

come into a dark room through a narrow chink, and appear, in this way, painted over one's head. Benjamin found out how it happened, and how to make it happen also. By means of this new knowledge he made a dark camera, or magic lantern, out of a hollow box. This was of much use to him in drawing pictures of natural scenery.

14. Time went on, and Benjamin continued to draw and to paint pictures until he was old enough to take up a profession. His father and mother did not know what career to choose for him. The Quakers did not think it right for people to spend their lives in occupations that are of no real use. Now, what benefit could the world expect from Benjamin's pictures? This was a difficult and puzzling question; and, in order to set their minds at rest, his parents determined to consult the preachers and wise men of their society. Accordingly, they all met and talked over the matter from beginning to end.

15. Finally they came to a very wise decision. It seemed so clear that God had created Benjamin to be a painter, and that Benjamin would not make the best of his great gifts if he took up some other occupation. So the Quakers agreed not to oppose his wish. They even admitted that the sight of a beautiful picture might benefit the mind and move the heart as much as a good or a wise talk. They therefore

decided to let him have his way and follow his bent of mind. The old men blessed him and the women kissed him lovingly. All agreed that he should travel over the world and learn to be a painter by studying the best pictures of ancient and modern times.

16. So Benjamin left his home, and his native woods and streams, and the Indians who had given him his first colours ; he left all the places and persons whom he had hitherto known, and returned to them no more. He went first to Philadelphia, and afterwards to Europe. Here he came across many great people, but remained always simple in his dress and sober in his ways, for to be simple and sober is the custom of the Quakers. It is told of him that, when he was presented at the court of the Prince of Parma, he kept his hat upon his head even while kissing the Prince's hand.

17. When he was twenty-five he went to London and set up as an artist. In course of time he acquired great fame by his pictures, and was made chief painter to King George III., and President of the Royal Academy of Arts. When the Quakers of Pennsylvania heard of his success, they felt that the prophecy of the old preacher regarding little Ben's future greatness had been fulfilled. It is true, they did not like his pictures of battle and bloodshed, for they thought that such terrible scenes need not be painted for the world to admire.

But they approved of his great paintings of Christ. King George employed him to adorn a large and beautiful chapel at Windsor Castle with pictures of sacred subjects. He also painted a magnificent picture of Christ healing the sick, which he gave to the hospital at Philadelphia. It was shown to the public and brought money enough to pay the cost of a room for thirty more patients. If Benjamin West had done no other good deed than this, yet for this alone his name is worthy of honour and affection. For in that hospital every day there are thirty people who owe their comfort to that same picture.

18. We shall mention only one more incident. The above-mentioned picture was shown at the Royal Academy in London. On the wall, close beside this splendid picture, hung a small and faded landscape. It was the same that little Ben had painted in his father's room after receiving the paint-box and pictures from Mr. Pennington.

Benjamin lived many years in peace and honour, and died in 1820 at the age of eighty-two. The story of his life is almost as wonderful as a fairy-tale; for few stories are so strange and remarkable as this of a little unknown Quaker boy born in the wilds of America becoming the most famous English painter of his day. Let us each make the best of our natural abilities as Benjamin West did; and with the help of

God we shall live to achieve something useful. As for fame, it is but little matter whether we win it or not.

EXERCISES

1. Tell the story of Benjamin West in less than 200 words.
2. Explain just what you would do if you had to paint a picture.
3. Describe any object or scene of which the colours seem to you beautiful.
4. Which two of the following adjectives best describe Benjamin West: cruel, resourceful, proud, persevering, fickle, cowardly? Say why the adjectives chosen by you suit him.
5. Say in English what is a Quaker, a prophecy, a magic lantern, a landscape.
6. Make up a discussion between two Quakers about the choice of a career for Benjamin.
7. Make up a conversation between your father and your teacher about the choice of a career for you.

GLOSSARY

Society of Friends. This society was formed by George Fox.

They were peaceful people, simple in dress and speech.

sketch. An unfinished drawing.

Red Indians. One of the aboriginal races of North America.

canvas. A strong cloth of flax for painting on.

shutters. A movable covering to shade a window.

magic lantern. A kind of lantern by means of which pictures magnified to any size are thrown on the wall of a dark

room. Vernacular, *jadú ki láltain.*

chapel. A place of Christian worship.

The Royal Academy. An institution in England meant for promoting the art of painting, etc. It holds an annual exhibition open to artists of distinguished merit. There the artists show their work to the public.

landscape. A picture representing a piece of country with the various objects (a country scene) it contains.

fairy-tale. A tale, usually meant for children, of the doings of the fairies—little people supposed to have wonderful powers more than human.

GEORGE STEPHENSON

BORN 1781. DIED 1848.

NOWADAYS when travelling by railways is so common and sending heavy things a long way is so easy, one is likely to forget the hardships which our ancestors had to bear when they went on long journeys. Before the introduction of railways, it was thought no small thing for a person to cover forty miles a day on foot, or go eighty miles on horseback. But now you may take your seat in the Bombay Mail at 8 P.M. and get down safe and sound next morning with all your luggage at Delhi, hundreds of miles away from home, without feeling much fatigued. Such is the wonderful power of the railway steam-engine.

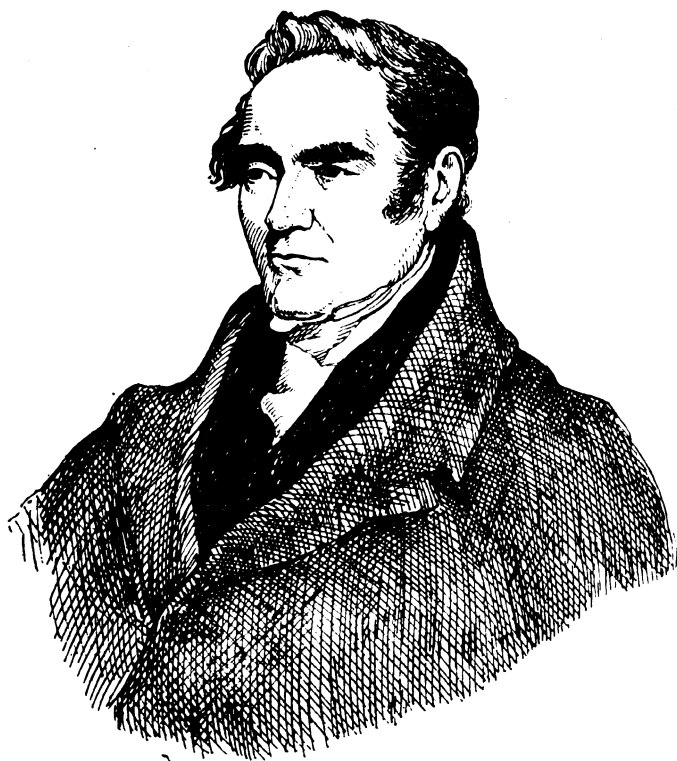
2. Yet, only a hundred years ago, the railway engine and the railway train were things unknown ; in fact, to make such things seemed impossible and even harmful. If any one talked of making an engine that would move from place to place he would be considered mad. As a matter of fact, when one was actually made and shown, many people thought it nothing short of a

devilish, harmful thing. The interesting story of the life of George Stephenson will give you some idea of the difficulties he had to face and overcome in order to show to the world that it was both cheaper and more comfortable to travel by a railway train than in coaches or on horseback.

3. George was born on the 9th of June 1781 at Wylam, a small village in the North of England. His father, known among the villagers as "Old Bob", was employed at the Wylam colliery. He worked at an engine and earned only 12s. a week, which was hardly enough to keep a wife and six children. But, though poor, no one in the whole village was a greater favourite with the children than "Old Bob". It was at "Bob's" engine that all the little ones would gather when they had time to spare, and they were always sure of a welcome from Bob.

4. As Bob could tell them good stories, no wonder the children loved him. But other admirers besides the children gathered round Bob as he worked at his engine fire. There was not a bird or an animal about the place but knew him and looked upon him as a friend. At his cottage the blackbirds were as much at home as any of his children; they would come and fly in and out, expecting to be fed as if they were part of the family.

5. Food in those days was scarce and sold at war



GEORGE STEPHENSON.

prices. Bob's income was small and his family large ; this prevented him sending any of his children to school. To go to school in those days was not the ordinary thing it is to-day. George, therefore, as soon as he was old enough to walk to his father's place of work, used to spend most of his time by his side, for he loved his father most. To sit by the engine fire and to listen to those wonderful stories which Bob told was his greatest delight. Many times the father took him bird-nesting. He let him peep into some nest where beautiful little eggs lay safe and warm or young birds opened their mouths and screamed for worms. This love of birds was as strong in George as in his father, and was a lasting hobby throughout his busy life. When George could work better, as he grew older, he was sent on errands to the village. He felt very proud indeed when his mother trusted him with the duty of carrying his father's dinner to the pumping-engine. At home he helped to look after his younger brothers and sisters. This kept him fairly busy, for the coal wagons ran past the cottage door, dragged by horses along the wooden rails, and it required much care and watchfulness to keep the children out of danger.

6. George Stephenson had to begin work while quite a child. At first he was set to look after a neighbour's cows and keep them from straying. For this job he was paid twopence a day. The work was light and

left him plenty of time to hunt for birds' nests while the cows were quietly grazing. From cowboy he was promoted to the work of leading horses at the plough and hoeing turnips, at a salary of fourpence a day. These small additions to the income of the family were very welcome to the poor parents.

7. Herding cows or leading horses was all very well for a time, but in his heart George had determined that some day he would become "an engine-man". He had always been fond of poking about in his father's engine-house, and the engine was still the thing he loved best of all. He had very clever fingers, and in his leisure moments he set to work to make a model of an engine in clay, which was greatly admired by the pitmen.

8. "Geordie" next started as a "picker" at the colliery, along with his elder brother, that is, he was employed in cleaning the coal of stones and dross. It was dull and tiring work for a lively and active boy, such as Geordie was becoming, but perhaps he knew it was the first step of the ladder he longed to climb. He was quite contented and cheerful, especially as he now earned a whole sixpence a day. And at last, after being employed in various ways about the colliery, he was made assistant to his father at the age of fourteen, at a shilling a day. The next year he got a job as "fireman" on his own account. He got on well at the colliery, and a year or two later rose to be an engine-

man. His work was to look after one of the engines used to pump water out of the mine, and to see that it worked properly. Now the father and son worked at the same engine, and the position of the latter was higher than that of the former.

9. George now gave his whole mind to the study of the engine under his care. It became a sort of pet with him, to be kept bright, clean, and in good order. He was never weary of handling it and examining its parts, so as to know every bit of it. To work about the engine, to be near it all day, to learn to know all its ways, was the one desire of his heart. Ever since the days when he had made little clay models, he had been keen to know more and more about it.

On Saturday afternoons, when his companions went off to amuse themselves, he would stop behind with his engine. He cleaned it, polished it, took it to pieces, and put it together again to find out how it worked.

But in spite of his best efforts there were still many things about the engine which puzzled him. There was no one at the colliery who could explain to him all the mysteries of his engine.

10. He soon saw that if he wanted to know more about engines, he must learn to read and write. But it was not until he was nineteen that he learnt his A B C, for then he was able to pay the school fee of three-pence a week out of his own wages.

Imagine the big bony engine-man bending over his desk, and labouring hard to master the alphabet. But perseverance overcomes mountains, and where the desire to learn was so strong rapid progress was certain. By the time he was nineteen he was able to read clearly and to write his own name. Then he took to arithmetic, for which he showed great taste. As he sat by the engine fire he would work his sums on the side of the coal truck, which he used as a slate. The patient pupil was not long in excelling his teacher.

11. Having learned all he could from the village teacher, George Stephenson now began to study mensuration and mathematics at home by himself. He also found time to make a number of experiments relating to the working of engines, and to make shoes as well as mend them.

Stephenson—ever rising step by step—became a *brakesman* when he had reached his twentieth year, and his wages amounted to £2 in the fortnight. By extra work during leisure hours he added to his earnings, and did not, like many of the other workmen, waste his earnings on drink. He soon managed to save as much money as enabled him to furnish a humble house and marry. Towards the end of 1803 his only son Robert was born.

12. His life was so busy that he could hardly find

time for games and sports ; his duties at the colliery occupied him twelve hours a day, and after that he attended a night-school, and sometimes put in extra work to add to his earnings. Still, he could beat any boy of his age in wrestling. He could throw the hammer with the best of them, and easily lifted heavy weights which they could scarcely move ; but he never let such things interfere with his daily task.

13. Everybody knew " Steve " for a steady, hard-working, good-natured young fellow. He felt very happy and contented now that he had a happy home, a sufficient income, and a reputation for doing his work well. He continued the same regular course of life, working hard during the day, and studying the principles of mechanics in the evenings. He made models of engines, introducing such improvements as he could think of. And if he had a spare hour left he would employ it in doing some extra work. If he had nothing else to do he would take a big spade and be off to a coal ship, to find if an extra shilling or two could be earned by clearing coal out of the hold. Besides making and mending shoes for his comrades, he had learnt how to clean clocks. An interesting story is related of him, showing how he did it.

14. One day his wife, while engaged in cooking, let some live coal fall out of the fender, with the result that a fire broke out in the house. Fire-engines were

unknown in those days. The neighbours rushed in, carrying jugs and pails of water. The fire was soon put out, but the furniture of the house was all spoiled by the smoke and steam, and the clock stopped. His wife felt very sad, because she knew the loss was heavy. But George did not despair. He took the clock all to pieces, looked into its wheels and springs, cleaned each and every part, and then put the whole together again. Not only his wife, but George himself was filled with wonder to see that it worked better than before. After that his comrades called him the clock-doctor.

15. In 1803 the family moved to Killingworth, a place seven miles from Newcastle, where George got the post of brakesman. They had not been settled here long when his wife died.

At first it seemed as if all his hopes were dashed by this blow. His heart was so sore that he could hardly bear even to look at the pretty child she had loved. Having placed the baby under the care of a neighbour he took up work in Scotland. He stayed away, working hard for many months and trying to forget his sorrow. Then with £28 of saved money in his pocket, and a great longing in his heart to see once more his home, his parents, and his little boy, he returned to Killingworth again. Reaching home he found to his great sorrow that "Old Bob" had been blinded

through an accident, and was unable to work. He was almost starving. George's first step was to pay off his father's debts, which were about £15; and soon afterwards he removed his aged parents to a comfortable cottage at Killingworth, where they lived, supported entirely by their dutiful son. He never allowed them to feel any want, even though the times grew harder and harder.

16. Sad was the condition of this unfortunate young fellow. He had lost his wife, he had to support his aged parents, his motherless babe must be well looked after. He could get no work in the neighbourhood. Food was dear, taxes heavy, and he was all but penniless. No wonder that in his despair he thought of emigrating to America; but, fortunately for England, he was unable to collect sufficient money for the passage. At last the clouds began to lift. His good name for skill and honest work got him the situation of a brakesman at West Moor.

17. Then came the first great opportunity of his life. About this time a new pit had been sunk in the district where he worked. But the new kind of engine fixed for pumping water out of the pit did not work. The news reached George's ears. He walked over to the pit, carefully examined the engine, and turned the matter over in his mind. But who would listen to a mere brakesman on a matter which had puzzled even

engineers? Every skilful engineer in the neighbourhood had been tried, but with no better result. George would go now and then to Killingworth to take a peep at the engine and to satisfy himself that he understood what was wrong with it.

18. One day, when he was looking at it, one of the workmen came up and inquired if he could tell what was wrong with the engine.

“Yes,” said George, “and I think I can set it right in a week’s time, if I can have my own way.”

The matter was reported to the engineer, who was now almost losing patience, and was ready to try any new plan, even that of this enterprising brakesman.

George Stephenson was accordingly sent for by the engineer, who asked him, “Do you think you could do anything to set the engine right?”

“Yes, sir, I think I could.”

“I will give you a trial, and you are quite free to choose workmen for yourself.”

19. George, having already planned the work in his mind, soon set about it with a will. The work took him three days. On the fourth day quite a crowd assembled to see what he would do. Most of the workmen, who had seen so many engine-men go back disappointed, had come only to laugh at him. And they did laugh, when in the first few trials the engine did not work satisfactorily. But George was quite hopeful.

At last, to the surprise of the people assembled there, the engine began to work. It was indeed a grand success, and he was given a present of £10 in recognition of his skill. Henceforth he came to be known among his comrades as the engine-doctor. He was soon promoted to the post of engine-wright at Killingworth with a salary of £100 a year. It was a well-paid and honourable position compared with any he had yet held.

20. Another thing which made him famous was his invention of the miner's safety-lamp. About this time Sir Humphry Davy, too, had made a similar lamp. In order to understand the usefulness of this invention, you should know something about the inside of a coal-mine.

A coal-mine looks from above ground like a well several hundred yards deep. At the mouth it is not generally more than twenty feet wide, but its bottom is just like a small town with regular roads, deep underground, running on all sides. No rays of the sun reach the place. How do the miners then work there? Each workman carries with him a safety-lamp. It is not like an ordinary lamp, in which the outer air can come in contact with the flame. Though the lamps used nowadays are a great improvement upon the "Geordie" or "Davy lamp", in principle they are the same. Why was it necessary then to invent such a lamp?

21. You know that coal contains a great deal of gas ; it is gas which causes the bright flame when coal is burning in grates. A great deal of gas escapes into the air of some mines, and if an open light or candle—a “naked light”—were taken into the mine, the gas would take fire and explode, causing a terrible accident.

George Stephenson had seen many such accidents with his own eyes : men, women, and children lying choked and stifled by the fumes, some scorched, some even burnt to death. Sometimes these accidents were so frequent that the people openly said, “The price of coal-mining is our pitmen’s lives.” The Government had offered a high reward for a miner’s safety-lamp, but as yet none had proved quite successful. George thought that something could be done to save the lives of his fellow-workers.

22. He made many experiments, sometimes with great risk to his life, and at last succeeded in making a lamp with a chimney. He himself went down into the pit, and with the lamp lighted in his hand went near the gas. To the surprise of the miners there was no explosion.

For some time past Sir Humphry Davy, too, had been studying the problem of explosion caused by fire-damp or coal-gas. After many experiments he had succeeded in making Davy’s Safety-lamp, which worked quite well.

There was much controversy as to which of the lamps, Geordie or Davy, was better. No doubt the "Davy lamp" was made on a more scientific principle, but the result was much the same, and each has saved the lives of thousands of workmen.

23. George had no supporters or friends among scientists. He was a mere engine-wright knowing perhaps very little of chemistry. But Sir Humphry Davy was presented with a sum of £2000 as the inventor of the safety-lamp. Many people, who knew Stephenson's ability, thought that a great injustice had been done him. They got up a subscription for him and collected £1000. But what pleased him above all was a silver watch presented by the pitmen to show their personal gratitude for "Geordie". Through all his life he prized this watch above all other treasures.

24. But the invention which was to make him the foremost engineer of his time was the making of the locomotive engine. Do not suppose that he was the first man to make a locomotive. His son Robert has said, "The locomotive is not the invention of George Stephenson or of any one man, but of a whole nation of mechanical engineers."

Now that Stephenson had more time and more money at his disposal, his thoughts turned, as did those of many engineers, to making a locomotive engine, that

is, one which could move and draw trucks after it. He first made himself thoroughly acquainted with the engines which had already been made. His keen eye quickly discovered their defects, and he felt that he could produce a much better kind of engine.

25. He spoke about the matter to the owner of the colliery, and explained to him the improvements he intended to effect in his engine. The owner, Lord Ravenworth, greatly liked his talk and encouraged him to make the attempt. So he set to work to make one, and a clumsy-looking thing it was when it was finished! Still, it would draw trucks.

Stephenson noticed that his engine went slower than horses and cost more to run. Besides, it made such a terrible noise that the cattle grazing in the fields got frightened. But all this did not dishearten him. He was soon busy trying to make another. This time he succeeded better, and his engine was the best that had been turned out so far. Still, the people thought that it was not the thing that could take the place of horses in drawing coal trucks.

26. News travelled slowly in those days, but when it was known that the Bill for a railway had finally passed, George Stephenson grew excited and anxious lest he should lose the chance of bringing his locomotive before the public. He made up his mind to go at once to Darlington and speak to the rich Quaker, Edward

Pease, who, as he heard, had done much to push forward the scheme, even though the people were opposed to it.

It was rather a long and tiresome journey, but the friendly welcome that he was given at the end of it made him forget all hardships. Edward Pease heard him patiently. So far he had thought only of horse-power being used, but after his talk with Stephenson he felt almost sure that the locomotive engine would be both cheaper and more convenient. So he promised to make inquiries into the matter.

27. Wherever Mr. Pease inquired he heard only good reports of George's character and ability. He recommended him strongly to the company which was building the railway, and he was appointed to survey and report on a possible line.

Stephenson gladly undertook the work, and, assisted by his son Robert, who was as eager and as ready as himself, had the line measured out swiftly and carefully.

One day Mr. Pease travelled over to Killingworth to see with his own eyes how George's pet engine worked. He was much pleased to see it racing up and down alone, then with several heavy wagons attached to it, rattling as fast as ever. This was a very happy day in the life of Stephenson. As soon as Mr. Pease was convinced of the usefulness of a locomotive on the railway, he talked of it to all the important people of

the town, and the result was that the engine-wright of Killingworth was soon appointed an engineer to the company at a salary of £300 a year.

28. But in order to use his steam-engine on a railway, it was necessary to get the consent of Parliament, and this was anything but easy. All sort of objections were raised by the members of the committee appointed to report on the matter, and some of them were very funny. Some said that the noise would frighten cows in the fields, some feared that the sparks from the engine would set fire to houses, while others thought it would be very dangerous to go eight or nine miles an hour. Stephenson tried to reply to their questions and objections as best as he could. At last the consent of Parliament was obtained. The next thing to do was to find the best sort of engine. A prize of £500 was offered for the best engine, and four engines were finished in time for the competition.

There was a great deal of excitement, and crowds lined the track on which tests were to be made. Amidst general shouts and clapping, Stephenson's engine, the "Rocket", won the day.

29. With the aid of his Quaker friend, and taking the thousand pounds which his "Geordie" had gained him, and which he had set aside untouched in the bank, he built a factory at Newcastle, so that when the time came for the general use of locomotives they should be

properly constructed. At that time it seemed to be rather a risky affair to spend so much money in building a place for making locomotives which perhaps might never be ordered or asked for. But George hoped that locomotives would come to stay, and that railways would one day become a great highway for the king and all his subjects.

30. The Stockton and Darlington line was opened for traffic in September 1825. As this was the first public railway, a great crowd of people assembled to see the opening ceremony. Mr. Stephenson himself drove the engine. The train consisted of thirty-eight vehicles. The speed in some parts was twelve miles an hour ; and the arrival at Stockton was watched with deep interest and admiration. The line was found to work excellently, and it carried more goods and passengers than the directors had ever expected.

31. The survey of the Liverpool and Manchester line was the next important public work which Mr. Stephenson was requested to undertake. The owners of the lands through which the line was to pass offered great opposition, and did all they could to defeat the Bill when it came for consideration before Parliament. The result was that the Bill was for the time being withdrawn. This was very discouraging, and the railway system seemed about to die in its infancy. The directors, however, persevered. A new survey was

made, and again the proposal came up for consideration. This time it met with a better fate.

32. George Stephenson was appointed the chief engineer, at a salary of £1000 a year—a mighty advance from the cowboy with twopence a day. In constructing this line, his greatest achievement was the making of the road over Chat Moss. It was a bog, some twelve square miles in extent. Railing it over was a task much more suited to the powers of wizards in fairy-tales than to those of ordinary mortals. All engineers of the day had declared that no man in his senses would undertake to do that work. But to Stephenson nothing was impossible. He worked at it week after week, but with no visible effect. At one time even the directors became alarmed, but Stephenson answered, "We must persevere." More weeks passed and the bog swallowed truck-load after truck-load of the material poured into it. It seemed as if the bog had no bottom. A special meeting of the board was held on the spot to decide whether the work should be continued or stopped. Stephenson pointed out that a large sum of money had been already spent, and it would result in a great loss if the work were stopped. He was allowed to continue the work. He ordered the work to be pushed on more vigorously than before. To the surprise of every one, in six months from the day when the board had held its special meeting on the

Moss, a locomotive engine and carriage passed over the very spot, with a party of the directors' friends on their way to dine at Manchester. This is one example of the industry and perseverance of George Stephenson.

33. We may leave here the story of George Stephenson's life. He had now reached the height of fame and fortune. He was now known all over England as the foremost railway engineer. People from different parts of the country sent to him for advice. Kings of foreign countries honoured and invited him to visit them. His income increased by leaps and bounds, and he became a millionaire. He had the privilege of travelling without a ticket on any line, for was he not truly the founder of railways?

In spite of much heavy work, he enjoyed very good health. At last, this "great self-taught man" passed away in 1848, having laboured hard all his life.

34. He is one of those eminent men who have risen from poverty to power, not by chance or accident, but by dint of their labour. He had the desire to learn, the desire to advance, and this desire was accompanied by strong determination which brings success. In one word, "perseverance" was the guiding principle of his life. Once when addressing the mechanics of Leeds, he told them his secret in these words:—

"I stand before you as a humble mechanic. I have risen from a lower standing than the meanest

person here, and all that I have been able to do in the course of my life has been done through perseverance."

EXERCISES

1. Describe carefully a railway engine : (a) from memory ; (b) after visiting it.
2. What is a colliery, an engineer, a bog, a safety-lamp ?
3. How did Stephenson earn the titles of clock-doctor and engine-doctor ?
4. Make up a dialogue between Stephenson and Mr. Pease about the benefits which railways are likely to bring to the people.
5. What different means of travel are there in the Punjab to-day ? Which of them did not exist twenty and a hundred years ago ?
6. At what pace do trains travel in the Punjab ? Use a railway time-table to find out the answer.

GLOSSARY

- hobby.* A favourite occupation that is not one's main business.
- pitmen.* People working in a colliery.
- brakesman.* The man whose duty is to check the pace of a running vehicle by working a brake or piece of machinery fixed in the vehicle for the purpose.
- fire-damp.* A gas found in coal-mines, which causes a great explosion when mixed with air.
- Sir Humphry Davy* (1778-1829). A great scientist who received many prizes and honours for his discoveries.
- Bill . . . passed.* Making roads is a matter of public interest. Before placing iron rails on roads, it was necessary to get the consent of Parliament. A Bill is such an application for getting permission ; the Bill as finally passed becomes an Act.

Company. A body of persons combining for a commercial object.

opening ceremony. A function for declaring any new institution (e.g. a new railway) open.

railing it over. Making it a railway route.

board. A committee for carrying on the work of the Company.

THE END

