

## Mr. Beecher As I Knew Him

By Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher

IN SIX PAPERS

FOURTH PAPER



Through his preparatory studies Mr. Beecher was the opponent of intemperance, and in his western pastorates he fought it continually. He never lost a chance to put his foot boldly down to show where he stood.

The abolition cause was, also, becoming a prominent subject of discussion, even before his entering on public life, and was very pronounced during his law seminary course. Those who favored it were unpopular, and most persons were bitterly opposed to the subject being brought into public meetings.

### FIRST INDICATIONS OF THE FUTURE

In Indianapolis Mr. Beecher especially entered boldly into the abolition movement at a time when all the courage a man possessed was needed. Its supporters truly took their lives in their hands in every effort made for the cause. Mr. Beecher's people were often vexed that he would persist in speaking so boldly on the subject; some threatened to leave the church, and now and then some did leave, and threatened to take their letters. Then, after staying away a few Sabbaths they returned, and remained contented and astir in church work until some fresh and more indignant attack on slavery would lead to the same results. But nothing checked Mr. Beecher's earnest denunciation of this great evil. It burned more fiercely with every new development of the wrong and cruelty connected with it, and as he was situated these acts were constantly brought before him. In Lawrenceburgh, with only the Little Miami river separating us from the Kentucky shore, the cries of the slave under the lash were often heard; and in Indianapolis those fortunate enough to escape sought refuge and sympathy, and were helped to reach the North.

### AMID FLOWERS AND FRUITS

Chiefly because he saw that some change was necessary, he consented to edit "The Farmer and Gardener," knowing that in that work he must turn his mind into an entirely different channel, for the time being. The books he consulted for this work, which he had access to in the town library, were as a feast to him, and a great help in enabling him to edit the journal. After an hour of such rest, and then a run up to the garden with me, he could return to his pastoral work with renewed vigor. Some of the best sermons I ever heard him preach there, were made fresh and full of richness, born of this kind of rest and refreshment. Even till the last, the pleasure, rest and comfort Mr. Beecher secured by studying such books and the catalogues of trees, fruits and flowers, never changed. He often said "A seedman's list or catalogue are far more fascinating to me than any story or romance I ever read."

Aside from the pleasure through such relaxation, he gained a very thorough knowledge of the best modes of agriculture and horticulture. He could not be idle, and in all he undertook aimed for the best and highest. It is still on record that in one of the horticultural exhibitions in Indianapolis Henry Ward Beecher took three prizes for the best vegetables.

Years after we left the West, when talking with, or giving advice to young ministers, Mr. Beecher would say:

"This mode of using or making leisure hours in the garden when overworked by my regular church labors, not only answered the purpose of soothing and quieting excited nerves, but brought me into such relations to the material world that—I speak with moderation—when I say all the estates of the richest duke in England could not have given me the pleasure I have felt when riding through the unoccupied prairies, bright with wild flowers, or by the waysides rich with the coloring that Nature, unassisted, so bountifully bestowed."

Since Mr. Beecher left us, one of his old Western parishioners writes:

"Mr. Beecher loved to work and toil, especially in his garden. He always had the earliest vegetables in the market, and his garden was the best in the city. He loved to work among his flowers, and could readily call each one by its name. I think he loved his flowers and took more pleasure in them, than in anything else, excepting his family. He was certainly more devoted to his family than any man I ever saw. It was no uncommon thing for him to take his fruits and vegetables to the market himself before daylight and sometimes his little five-year-old daughter went with him."

\*The first of Mrs. Beecher's articles on "Mr. Beecher As I Knew Him" was printed in the October JOURNAL. Back numbers can still be had for Ten Cents each.

### BEGINNING HIS GREAT CAREER

The first literary work of Mr. Beecher's which attracted any attention was his "Lectures to Young Men." Living in the capital of a new State, he saw, with increasing pain, how every form of vice, every species of temptation, was making headway—enslaving the young and undermining their morals. The more those evils increased and boldly made their work manifest, the more keenly did he feel the danger. New cases of wrong-doing were constantly coming to his knowledge. When called "down town," or to the post-office, he seldom returned home without seeing or hearing of some outrage, or some case of dishonesty. Among the young, to whom Mr. Beecher had been especially drawn, bright with the promise of grand and useful lives, many were allured from the paths of truth and honor, breaking their parents' hearts, destroying their homes and at last dying dishonored and hopeless. Seeing young men thus led astray he felt there must be some way to help them, some one who could show them how full of danger, how near to certain ruin, were those paths which looked to them desirable and full of pleasure.

Hoping he might, with God's help, be permitted to aid them and convince them of their danger, he gave his prayers and most earnest effort to this work, the "Lectures to Young

the house, and then begged two young men who were boarding with us to go with him; but they were afraid. I doubt if he thought of the fears that had been expressed after the sermon. He certainly did not allude to what passed when he returned; but one of our people came in soon after and told me. As usual, the veranda of the hotel was filled with "loungers." He passed by, went to the post-office, and returning, this person stepped down and stood before him with a pistol.

"Mr. Beecher, were you alluding to me in your remarks yesterday morning?"

"I was."

"Take it back, or I'll shoot you!"

Mr. Beecher looked him sternly in the face for a moment, and said:

"Shoot away!" and walked on. The man followed him some rods with the pistol aimed at him; and then, as if ashamed to face the people on the hotel steps, turned down another street and walked away. Mr. Beecher often met and passed him after that, but no other word ever passed between them.

### SORROWS WHICH TAUGHT HIM SYMPATHY

Yet with all the wrongs and cruelties continually brought to his notice, keeping him always ready to do battle for the oppressed, it did not sour Mr. Beecher's spirits, or change the sweetness of his home-life. His unvarying gentleness and kindness to the young made him a general favorite with them, and all in trouble or sorrow well knew where to go for advice or sympathy. Before he had ever experienced loss or affliction he shrank from such calls because he felt inadequate to bring them such comfort as they needed.

But early in our second year in Indianapolis our first little boy died at his birth, and loving children as he did he felt the loss deeply, but said, "God saw I must myself pass under the rod before I learned the secret of comforting others."

Two years after this loss, returning from Jacksonville, when within a few miles of

### OVERTURES TO LEAVE THE WEST

I SHALL merit reproof if I linger so long in the west. But as Mr. Beecher once said, in recalling our life there, "there is no end of things gone by; they rise at every point, and one walks encompassed with memories which accompany him through the living streets like invisible spirits." And so just as the pen seeks to travel to the east, something comes up worth the telling.

However, for more than a year, one letter followed another with urgent invitations to Mr. Beecher from churches at the east; but he unhesitatingly declined these overtures for him to leave the west. Finally, an invitation was sent him from the American Home Missionary Society to come east and address them at the May anniversaries, 1847. I had been very alarmingly ill, and when this request came to him I was still so feeble as to give friends and physicians much anxiety. The physician emphatically urged Mr. Beecher to accept this invitation, and to take me with him. Just before my illness we had sold the little cottage, and from that, with money from my father's estate, had built a small house, not quite finished, but which would be all ready for us on our return from the east.

We went east to the anniversary meetings, and then began a most earnest effort for Mr. Beecher to remain, Park Street Church, in Boston, and Plymouth Church, in Brooklyn, each desiring to secure him. His reply was invariably, "My wife is, I think, greatly improved in health by this rest; we shall return to our church in Indianapolis in a few weeks. If Mrs. Beecher continues to improve we shall remain west. But if she is again broken down by these western fevers my duty is plain. I shall leave. Her health is the only thing that can induce me to relinquish my work at the west."

No church was yet formed in Brooklyn, and when they still urged his coming he told them "it was like asking a young man to promise to be the husband of an unborn girl. There is no church here to be my bride."

We returned to Indianapolis in June. The house which was to be surely finished before our return was far from being completed, yet we had no alternative but to move into it as it was. No doubt living in a house so unfinished had some effect on my health; but aside from that, the summer had proved one of the most unhealthy we ever passed through, and in six weeks after our return Mr. Beecher, myself and three children were very sick. Under such circumstances Mr. Beecher acknowledged that it would be unwise to risk remaining longer, and with great reluctance sent in his resignation to the church he so dearly loved.

### ACCEPTS PLYMOUTH'S CALL

Plymouth Church was formally organized on June 13th, 1847, and on the following day a unanimous call to Mr. Beecher had been passed and sent to us. Upon his determination to resign from the Indianapolis church, he considered Plymouth's call. On August 19th he concluded to accept it, and so notified the waiting people in the East. Truthfully, we both believed that in a few years we should return to the West and our first home.

But although Mr. Beecher had accepted the call, how were we to find the means to leave? We were greatly in arrears financially. Mr. Beecher's small salary was behind, and he had been forced to borrow to meet the necessities of his family. Our furniture would not bring much; the house was mortgaged and not easily sold.

But as soon as the call was accepted the friends at Plymouth Church, with that kindness and liberality that for forty years has never failed, raised the money to take us East, and my brother after a while disposed of the house, and then settled all claims there.

My brother took myself and three children East, while Mr. Beecher remained to dispose of all furniture and pack books, etc., and eight weeks after he started East on the first car that ever ran out of Indianapolis.

And now he was to enter upon a life entirely different from any he had ever known. He had proved himself equal to carry forward his work at the West, a faithful preacher and missionary in a pioneer State, and had earned a reputation for hard, faithful work. But now he was to labor in a refined, cultured and highly-critical city, almost a part of the metropolis.

Even among those most earnest in calling him there was some fears that he might, in these critical times, be a little too outspoken—at least for his own good. Ah! how little they knew him! As if his own good would have a feather's weight to hold him back from any duty!

Outside of Plymouth Church there were any number of prophecies. The new church would not hold together for many months, some said. Others knew that Mr. Beecher would not fulfil the expectations built upon him. Those who were a trifle more sarcastic gave him six months to preach over the barrel of his father's old sermons, and thus tongues wagged, and under such auspices did Henry Ward Beecher come to the city which was destined to prove the arena of his subsequent career!

EDITOR'S CORRECTION.—In the last (December) issue the portrait of Mr. Beecher and child was designated as being the great preacher and his first child. This is incorrect; the child was William, the sixth child.

[The fifth of Mrs. Beecher's papers will be contained in the next (February) JOURNAL.]



HATTIE SCOVILLE (now Mrs. Devan) MRS. SCOVILLE (nee Hattie Beecher) W. C. BEECHER HERBERT BEECHER COL. HENRY B. BEECHER  
REV. SAMUEL SCOVILLE (with ANNIE SCOVILLE) MR. BEECHER (with HIS NAMESAKE) with KATE BEECHER (Mrs. Harper) MRS. HENRY BEECHER (with BABY SUSIE SAGE)

MR. BEECHER AND HIS FAMILY (From a portrait taken in 1871)

Men." Before giving them he had been instant "in season and out of season," in pleading with the young, or in fearlessly rebuking those who were tempting them to destruction. Of course, threats and abuse assailed him on every side for these bold reproofs; but nothing had any effect in retarding his earnest labors for those in danger, or his stinging rebukes to their tempters.

### HIS FEARLESSNESS IN UTTERANCE

I RECALL one occasion, when a case of most atrocious wickedness had transpired, and had occasioned much excitement, that the next Sabbath Mr. Beecher fearlessly alluded to it, and in the most severe terms. The offender was notoriously wicked, and the people feared him. His church was greatly excited at their pastor's rebuke, and after service gathered about him exceedingly alarmed. "Why, Mr. Beecher, you risk your life by speaking of ——— in those terms! By to-morrow he will have been told of what you have said, and we fear will make trouble, even if he does not resort to violence. It was not wise for you to have expressed your opinion so freely."

"I do not fear him. It was wise for me to do my duty as I see it. It would have been useless for me to have said what I did had I not hoped and intended that he should have known it."

Monday morning, as usual, Mr. Beecher went to the post-office, and to do so must pass the large hotel, around which there was always many idle people loitering, and where, if this man intended mischief, he would probably be. Knowing Mr. Beecher's habit of going to the office in the morning, I was very much troubled, but said nothing until he left

home, we met some of our people, who stopped and abruptly told Mr. Beecher his brother George had killed himself! Henry did not speak, but drove rapidly on. I just glanced at his face. It was like marble, and I can never forget the agony I saw there. When we reached home we learned that his brother died from the accidental discharge of his gun; and to find that "killed himself" did not mean suicide seemed to take away half the sorrow.

In March of 1846 our two eldest children were taken very seriously ill. Just as they began to mend, little Georgie, our third son—not, as has been stated by mistake, our first-born son—sickened, and died in a few days. This was the first great sorrow—a sorrow that hardly lost its acuteness in the years that have since passed. The people meant always to be kind; but it was a young city, and each one had their own cares, and they did not know how to help in times of trouble. Our darling—more like his father than any other child—died in March, and what was unusual, there had been a heavy snow-storm. "On that wild bleak day,"—to quote from Mr. Beecher's account, years after,—"we bore our noble boy through the storm to the graveyard. I got out of the carriage, and wading through the snow took the little coffin in my arms, walked knee-deep to the grave, and looking in I saw the winter to the very bottom of it, and laid his beautiful body in his cold, white grave. The snow-flakes followed and covered it, and then the earth hid it from the winter. If I should live a thousand years I could not help shivering every time I thought of it. It seemed as if I had not only lost my child, but had buried him in eternal snow. It was very hard for faith or imagination to break through the physical aspect of things and find a brighter feeling."





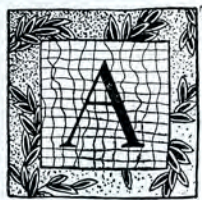
## Mr. Beecher As I Knew Him

By Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher

IN NINE PAPERS

SEVENTH PAPER

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At the commencement of Mr. Beecher's public life, his love of books, and desire to possess a fine library, was controlled by the absolute necessity for the strictest economy, although he found it wise to avoid book-stores even then. No man was so

helpless in a book-store, or at a book-sale, as was Mr. Beecher. It would have also given him the greatest pleasure, in our early days, had he been able to make presents of pretty things among his friends, as he did later, when less pecuniarily cramped, he indulged himself with his natural large-heartedness.

### HIS LOVE OF BOOKS

WHEN we had been a few years in Brooklyn he could in some degree gratify his tastes for works of art, gems, paintings, and especially books. He had always earnestly desired to possess a large, well-selected library, and now intended, by degrees, to secure it. But temptations in a large book-store were almost irresistible, and sometimes, before he was aware, he had indulged beyond his intentions, and these mistakes were often the cause of great amusement to us both.

Returning from some unusual "raid," he would come to me with the semblance of great distress, but making a laughable failure of it, and lament over the great temptations that waylaid him in every store. "And where is human nature so weak and helpless as in a book-store," he would say. "The appetite for drink cannot be half so powerful as the temptations which beset a book-lover in a large, richly-furnished book-store."

"Well! How largely have you invested in books to-day?" I asked once.

"Did I say I had bought any? I was speaking of the temptations. But you know how little skill I have in figures. When tempted to buy expensive books, I endeavor to take account of stock (isn't that the proper business expression?) and learn just how much I can afford to spend, but you know the bill comes in much ahead of my reckoning. You needn't laugh! Am I to blame because I am not expert in figures?"

Of course, I knew there was a box of books on the way. But no one could resist the quaint humor mingled with this pretense of penitence.

How vividly I recall one scene of similar character, when, lying on the sofa, he began to lament his lack of arithmetical skill. In the midst of this effusion he started up, a roguish smile glinting over his face, as he asked:

"What are you looking out of the window for with such a sarcastic smile on your lips?"

"Why, I thought I heard an express wagon coming to explain how you resisted temptation," and at the moment the wagon halted at the door, and a large box was brought into the library.

"What is that, dear?" I asked.

"Oh, some books I couldn't do without, you know."

"Yes, I know!" and to the astonishment of the driver we were both laughing heartily, while the man stood waiting for his express charges.

I think Mr. Beecher enjoyed this scene and similar ones of frequent occurrence as much as he did the books—for the time, at least.

From this pretense of concealment, he found material for many amusing articles for the "Ledger," for which at that time he wrote often. In one he wrote, "Buying books before you can pay for them promotes caution. If you are married, it requires no small skill to get your books all into the house before your wife sees how large the bundle is. She knows just when you have exceeded the bounds of prudence, and has little faith in the 'somehows' which you try to believe would help you pay for them. But the express brings them to the door, which your wife opens."

"What is it, my dear?"

"Oh, only a few books that I am needing."

"Ah! That smile! A true wife, who loves her husband, can smile a whole arithmetic at him in one look. As the bundle is being opened you seek to divert her attention by some incident, or anecdote, and when at last the contents are exposed, you point out the peculiarity of the binding, or gilding. But it will not do. She gives you her attention, but you cannot efface that roguish, arithmetical smile. People may talk about the equality of the sexes. They are not equal. The silent smile of a sensible, loving woman will conquer ten men."

How often was this picture reflected in his own life; the words were indeed "leaves" from his own experience.

EDITOR'S NOTE—During the publication of this series of reminiscences, a great many questions have come to Mrs. Beecher regarding points in Mr. Beecher's life not touched upon by her. Many of these questions have been of such interest that Mrs. Beecher has consented, at the request of the editor, to answer them in a special supplementary article, to be published immediately at the close of this series. This article will take up such interesting points as Mr. Beecher's habits of dress; his relations with Col. Robert G. Ingersoll; how he wrote his great novel, "Norwood," and his "one poem"; how his voice was trained; the only time he ever swore, etc., etc.

### GLIMPSES INTO HIS DAILY MAIL

FROM the time we went to Indianapolis until the last, the number of letters sent to Mr. Beecher increased yearly. Many were sincerely friendly; some, especially during anti-slavery times, vile and threatening. But begging letters were the most abundant, and the aid sought exceedingly curious.

One young man wanted Mr. Beecher to buy him a horse and a hearse, and thus enable him to have a monopoly of the undertaking business in his native town.

Another would much prefer to go out lecturing, instead of standing behind the counter, but had not ability to compose a lecture. If Mr. Beecher would, however, write one for him to commit to memory, he thought he had sufficient oratorical skill to insure success.

A third would inquire Mr. Beecher's charges to give him an hour's training per day in elocution, and in "attractive gesticulation."

### PUTS A CLERGYMAN OUT OF HIS HOUSE

OF course a large proportion of his letters were of an entirely different character. Many earnestly seeking advice, many thanking him for help and guidance received; some soliciting the solution of doubts that distressed them, some argumentative, some objecting to certain topics on which he had spoken, either in the pulpit, or on the lecture platform.

An English clergyman, or claiming to be one, wrote him several letters, objecting to some sermon, and the lesson it designed to give. He urged Mr. Beecher to appoint a day when they could discuss the subject publicly. Such requests were often made, but without receiving attention, and this one was not noticed. Then the man wrote out his objections, had them published in tract form, and with it repeated his request for a public discussion. The whole was too foolishly weak for notice. But a few days after this publication, the author called. I met him, and he inquired if Mr. Beecher had received the pamphlet. I told him the pamphlet had come.

"Why did he not reply to it, or my letters?" I told the man that Mr. Beecher had no time for such discussions.

He then broke into a storm of abuse of Mr. Beecher, and called him vile names. I commanded him to be silent, and told him that if he wished to say such things, to say them to Mr. Beecher himself, but not to his wife. He became very ugly, and I ordered him to leave the house. He refused. I stepped to the door to call a police officer, and one being in sight, the man left the house very suddenly.

### WHERE HIS NAME WAS WORTHLESS

WHILE at the west we had no call for a bank account, as the little we were paid in small sums. After coming to Brooklyn, Mr. Beecher's increased cares and labors gave him no time to attend to much outside his own immediate duties, and therefore all money, or family business, was left in my hands. His salary was paid to me each quarter, and while we were so much in Peekskill, by me deposited in the Westchester Bank, and this arrangement occasioned at various times many amusing incidents.

One Monday morning I drove down to Peekskill Depot for Mr. Beecher. It was raining very hard, and when we came to the bank in the village Mr. Beecher handed me the reins, saying: "Hold the horses a moment, I want to run into the bank for some money."

"No. Let me go in and get it," I said.

"No, indeed! Let you get out in this rain! Not much, my dear!"

I persisted to urge it, knowing as the bank account was in my name he could not draw from it. But he seemed to have forgotten that, and feeling reluctant of reminding him, I made no reply, and he went in. I waited, knowing very well what would follow. I saw him standing by the window, hastily asking for a check. A moment's pause, and then from the president of the bank, from Mr. Beecher himself, and the clerks, came a hearty explosion of laughter. In a few moments he came out to me in the carriage, with a blank check to sign, saying, "This is a pleasant predicament. Why didn't you remind me of your reasons for wishing to go in yourself?"

"You didn't give me a chance," I replied.

After this incident he opened an account for himself in a Brooklyn bank, depositing therein all his lecture fees, which he always kept for himself as pin-money.

The Westchester bank incident was, however, long a source of amusement and badinage between us whenever we passed the bank building on our drives to and from the station at Peekskill.

### HOW HE PREPARED HIS SERMONS

MR. BEECHER'S sermons and addresses sprang from subjects over which he had long brooded. He was not a book student in the usual acceptance of that term. He would read every spare moment. He read slowly, and was frequently annoyed because he felt he did not remember what he read. Verbally he did not remember, but the meaning, the lessons taught by the books he read, sank into good ground, and bore fruit abundantly, perhaps unconsciously to himself.

His sermons were more the result of long rambles up and down the neighboring cities than by studious application to his books. He liked to go into some small shop where workmen prepared various things, to be wrought out more artistically in the larger and more fashionable stores, particularly those little shops where he saw precious stones, embedded in the rough, cut out and polished, to shine on the counters of the largest jewelry stores. Rough, hard-working men did this kind of work. It was with them he liked to talk, and they liked to have him. From such pilgrimages he gathered information and suggestions which were often the foundation of some of the best sermons he ever preached. He was emphatically a student of men, not of books.

Mr. Beecher read and wrote often through the week in the family sitting-room, or library, where a large proportion of his books used to be. His literary work was usually done here. Material for sermons were in his mind constantly, but he resorted to no actual preparation for them until Sunday morning. He always came down to breakfast on that day as cheerful and social as if no thought of a sermon, or any responsibility, was near him. But as soon as breakfast was over he went at once to his study, and when there all the family knew he must not be interrupted. There, until the last bell rang for church, he thought out and prepared his sermon. A few lines, as the heads of each division of it, was all he wrote out.

But not even after the service began, the first prayer, reading the Scriptures, and the choir was half through the hymn, was I ever sure that the notes he had prepared after breakfast would be used at all. Many times I have seen him, while singing, stop abruptly in the middle of a line, lean forward in his chair, and look intently toward some distant part of the church for a moment, then hastily search for a letter, or bit of paper from his vest, write rapidly a few lines, put the notes he had prepared at home beneath the Bible, and when the introductory services were ended, lay the little slip of paper before him, and from what it suggested deliver the sermon. Some of the best he ever preached originated from the inspiration of such moments.

When I asked at various times why he laid aside his notes and preached from those he had jotted down so hastily on the pulpit, his reply was that he had seen some one who he had learned was in trouble, or some one he had learned was bearing great trials in a remarkably patient, Christian spirit, or one who had silently done a most kind or heroic deed, and "blushed to find it fame." At other times he saw one who was resisting all good influences, and seemed going downward to a miserable end. Absorbed in the subject he had planned for the morning, his eye might many times have rested on such cases without drawing his thoughts aside, but now and then they came before him like an inspiration, and he seemed to hear, "there is your work for this morning. Do it."

Ah, as now I sit, alone, looking back, I think how closely in his heart he carried cases that came under his observation—of joy, or sorrow, of sincere repentance, or obstinate wrong doing.

[Mrs. Beecher's eighth paper will appear in the June JOURNAL.]



THE MOST SATISFACTORY PORTRAIT OF MR. BEECHER

[This likeness of Mr. Beecher, taken in San Francisco in 1885, is regarded by Mrs. Beecher and her family as the most acceptable portrait taken of him as he was known to them in the home.]

One woman had lost two husbands, and had not the means to put up a gravestone for the last. She begged Mr. Beecher to give her the money for one, as she expected to marry again in a few weeks, and wanted this done before her third marriage.

The daughter of a well-to-do farmer far west is unhappy for lack of better dresses than her father can afford to give. She visits her grandmother in a city where she sees a good deal of fashionable society, is invited to a party, buys an expensive dress, then writes to her father to cancel her debt. He refuses, and insists she shall go to work and earn it. She appeals to Mr. Beecher for sympathy, tells him work will make her hands unladylike, and begs him to send money to pay her debt.

A young girl of 18 from Illinois took money from her father's desk to come to Peekskill to ask Mr. Beecher to adopt her. She had heard all his children were grown up and settled, and he was able to give her fine clothes and make a lady of her. In this case Mr. Beecher bought the girl a ticket, put it and money for food and a sleeping berth into the conductor's hands, and she was sent back home.

The mail was brought to our door several times a day, and was usually a heavy one. I generally took it and examined the contents, answering many letters which he never saw, but any that required his attention, or directions to me for answering, I laid on his desk. Often for days not one out of ten was found which it was necessary to disturb Mr. Beecher about. It was important, as far as possible, to relieve him from such demands on his time, and therefore hundreds of letters every year were opened and answered by me which he never saw or heard.

When Mr. Beecher came in I told him of the visitor, and how I had ordered him out.

"O, you should not allow yourself to get excited over anything of that sort," he said. "Perhaps you might have spoken more gently. It was hardly worth while for you to get angry."

In the afternoon the man called again and met Mr. Beecher. He at once began to reproach him for taking no notice of his communication, to all of which Mr. Beecher quietly listened, but without reply. Indeed, he talked so rapidly there was no pause for an answer. Then he told of his interview with me in the morning, and called me rude names. That roused the man who had listened so patiently to the attack on himself, and he peremptorily ordered the offender to leave the house. He refused, and continued the abuse. Taking him by the arm Mr. Beecher drew him, notwithstanding violent resistance, rapidly to the front door, and pushing him out, shut the door, and laughing heartily, threw himself on the sofa. Stepping to his side, I gravely repeated his rebuke to me:

"O, you should not allow yourself to get excited over anything of that kind. Perhaps you might have spoken more gently. It was not worth while for you to get angry."

Instead of being subdued as I had been by this reproof, strange to say he laughed all the more merrily. I was subdued, not because I felt that I had been too hasty in my treatment of that man, but because Mr. Beecher seemed to think I had been. But after speaking even more sharply than I had done, and helping the man out of the house so unceremoniously, he saw only the exceeding ludicrousness of the whole affair, and laughed.



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By Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher

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EIGHTH PAPER

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**M**ANY stories were printed during Mr. Beecher's lifetime regarding his original intention, in boyhood, to become a sailor and spend his life on the sea, and perhaps I can do no better than to open this instalment with the correct version of that early tendency on Mr. Beecher's part.

### HIS DREAM OF A SAILOR'S LIFE

**W**HILE living in Boston, to which city Dr. Lyman Beecher had been called, Henry Ward Beecher was immensely attracted to the sea, watching the ships going and coming from the wharves, and what he saw of a sailor's life roused in him an intense longing for a seafaring life, until it became so strong nothing seemed to him so desirable as "A life on the ocean wave."

Without the slightest hope that his father would sanction his entering on such a life, and his desire for it becoming more and more intense, he began to make plans to run away, and go to sea at all hazard.

This, coming to his father's knowledge, he was too wise to oppose him. By kindness he gained his son's entire confidence, and inquired:

"But, my son, instead of going to sea at once, as a common sailor, would you not choose to prepare yourself for something better and higher?"

"Oh, yes, sir! If I could, I would like to work my way up to be a midshipman—and sometime become a commodore."

"To do that, Henry, you will be obliged to study hard for some years. A thorough knowledge of mathematics and navigation, and of all connected with such studies, will be absolutely necessary. Now, if you are really in earnest, and willing to devote some years to hard study in preparing for this work, I will send you to Mount Pleasant, in Amherst, Massachusetts. But remember, Henry, if you wish to stand high in this profession, there can be no idling; you will be obliged to work hard in the lines the teachers prescribe; and then, when you have acquired the needed education, if you still prefer that life to any other, I think I can secure you a position from which you can rise to the highest rank."

Never was a boy more overjoyed, or more grateful to his father, for so readily acceding to his wishes; and he was so much in earnest that he looked forward to study willingly.

This was just what his father desired: something that Henry would be so eager to secure that he would be ready to give attention to his studies more earnestly than he had ever done before. But the good father had no fear that his son would become a seaman. So, when he sent the "young commodore" to Mount Pleasant, he said in his heart: "I shall see that boy in the ministry yet!"

### TURNING FROM THE SEA TO THE PULPIT

**H**OW long after going to Mount Pleasant Mr. Beecher continued to look forward to the life of a sailor, I do not remember; but I think that during a season of deep religious interest in the seminary the first year he was there, that idea was forever banished.

This season of excitement produced what he called "mushroom hopes," which departed whenever he alluded to it. He said: "It was to me a sort of day-dream in which I hoped I had given myself to Christ."

As another has said: "His religious experience at that time was, in many respects, unsatisfactory, yet powerful enough to change his whole 'ideal of life.'"

Nothing more was said of being a sailor; and from that time he studied with the ministry in view.

If his early religious experiences were, in a measure, unsatisfactory, he was steadfast in his determination to press forward—to search for clearer light and more perfect faith. But all that relates to this part of his experiences—his hours of doubt and fear which came over him all through his life at Mount Pleasant, at Amherst, at Lane Seminary, and at intervals during his Western pastorates, have been often discussed, and largely quoted. No repetition is therefore necessary here. I may only say, when he referred to such fears and doubts, it invariably filled me with surprise, not unmixed with pain; to think that one who, in his most sacred home and private life seemed to me to walk so close to his Master, could have such fears, was what I could not understand.

### HE VISITS HIS NAMESAKE

**N**O man ever loved his children more devotedly than did Mr. Beecher, and grandchildren soon became loving rivals of their parents, and both were the joy of his heart. His pride in them, his delight in their every undertaking and his desire for their happiness were very strong. This was evinced in his letters and in innumerable ways; sometimes quietly expressed, at others in a very amusing manner, or in an openly acknowledged gratification. The following may convey a slight idea of these moods:

In 1883, Mr. Beecher engaged to lecture during his vacation through all the north-west, through Winnipeg, or Manitoba, out to Puget Sound, Oregon, California, Texas, the Southern States and home. I was to go with him. But the one great joy in this delightful journey was to see our youngest



MRS. BEECHER IN HER STUDY AND SITTING ROOM

[Taken two months ago while engaged in writing this series of papers]

son, Herbert, and his family. His wife we had never seen, nor the little one, Henry Ward Beecher of "Citic Coast" as he would always call himself. He was Mr. Beecher's namesake.

A friend had written pretending to ridicule some of Mr. Beecher's expressions of admiration for the country we were passing through, and comparing it to California. I copy a part of his reply:

"In taking this trip, Puget Sound was, of course, the very aim and center of our journey, for there our youngest son and his family were located. All our expectations and more were realized. His wife, his boy, and Herbert, himself, fully equaled our best hopes. He has earned a solid reputation for energetic enterprise, for integrity, and good social qualities. His wife is an artist, and no mistake. I know of no eastern woman who I think could equal her had she devoted her life to it. I told her she ought not to have married, but since she would do it I was thankful she had taken my son for her husband. She quietly stepped to my wife's side, who was holding the little boy, and said as she laid her hand on his head, 'Is not this better than painting?' Good! The boy is a noble little fellow. He bears my name, and I am content to let it go down with him for the future."

In a letter written home at the same time, after speaking with great tenderness and satisfaction of our son and his wife, he adds: "But oh! The boy! Only eight months old, and walking by chairs; with an eye that searches into everything, an ear that loves music and hears every sound, a countenance that changes every moment, full of smiles, love, fun, or sobriety, a noble body, and as good a specimen of cramps and crying—when he has to—as I ever heard. So get out of the way for Henry Ward Beecher of the Pacific coast, and three cheers for his grandfather."

### A BUCOLIC WEDDING FEE

**M**OST clergymen can doubtless recall many amusing incidents connected with marriages they have been called upon to perform. While at the west Mr. Beecher was often sent for to marry persons living at a distance from the city, in the half-settled country, sometimes eight or ten miles distant. Among the farmers such weddings were usually in the evening, when the neighbors in all directions were invited to be present and partake of a most generous and elaborate supper, always expected after the ceremony.

On one occasion the wedding was to take place at an unusually long distance in the country. It was a very stormy day, with no promise of any change at night. As the ride to the place would be by daylight, Mr. Beecher could reach the house without any very great discomfort.

The log-house was packed with the guests, and after the ceremony Mr. Beecher was urged to remain and partake with them of the remarkably inviting supper. But it was growing darker and raining very hard, and with the long ride before him he was obliged to decline.

When his horse was brought the groom followed to the door, saying, "Wall, parson, what's the damage?"

"I trust, none," said Mr. Beecher, smiling.

"Wall, but what do you ax?"

"Oh, whatever you please."

The man took a roll of bills from his pocket and began looking them over, muttering to himself as he took up each bill: "One dollar;

stooped forward, clasped his hands together, and twirling one thumb over the other rapidly, as if greatly embarrassed, said, hesitating between each word as he spoke:

"Parson, I thought—I thought—I'd come—come—and try—and see if I could—get you to ride out to S—this afternoon?"

"Why? Is there to be a meeting there?" asked Mr. Beecher.

"No, but (still stooping forward, with arms on his knees, and twirling his thumbs) I thought I'd come—and try—try and see—see—if you'd come to my house?"

"For what? Any of your family sick?"

"No (still in the same position), but I thought I'd try—and see—if—if—if you'd come and marry me."

"Why, man," Mr. Beecher said, springing to his feet, "I buried your last wife only eight weeks ago!"

"Wall, I know—but, parson, I have a large family—and—I must have some one to take care of them."

And Mr. Beecher went with him and married him to his ninth wife. Some years after leaving the west we saw in a western paper the marriage of this same man to his tenth wife, and not many years later the husband also died.

### WHEN ON THE ROAD

**F**OR several years after Mr. Beecher began to lecture, I kept the memorandum of his engagements, but during the last thirteen years of his life Major James B. Pond had the entire control of making all engagements, traveling with him, and taking all thought or care for the morrow off his mind. But for such faithful supervision Mr. Beecher could not have accomplished half that he did in that line. From the hour he left for a lecture trip until his return he was as free from thought or anxiety about his work as a child. It is customary to consider a woman an incumbrance when traveling, especially on business, but even when I accompanied him, Major Pond relieved my husband from anxiety for my welfare if there was ever any occasion for it.

As in all lecture tours, there was little time for sight-seeing, or pleasant excursions—often forced marches to reach the next appointment being more in order—but Mr. Beecher was always observant of everything of interest while on the road.

He was not absent-minded while traveling, as he often was at home when thinking about his work there, so there was no need to fear interrupting him. If he preferred not to talk, we could talk enough to counterbalance his taciturnity.

For years Mr. Beecher used no notes for his lectures, for the subjects were clearly fixed in his mind. He had certain titles to each lecture, and the subject which came under that title was carefully developed. But his lack of verbal memory served him well in these lectures, for although giving the subject promised, those who heard it one evening could, the next time that lecture was given, find scarcely a similar sentence or illustration. Each lecture was like separate divisions of the same subject. Without a scrap of paper to prompt him, he always persevered to the end without let or hindrance. It was because each lecture seemed so different from the one last given under that one title, that I wanted a separate name given to each division, this being due to pride on my part, doubtless, as I disliked people to think they were to hear "The Reign of the Common People," or any other lecture over and over again, when I knew no lecture was in any sense a repetition of one they had ever heard.

### HOW HIS VOICE WAS TRAINED

**F**ROM his infancy, Mr. Beecher's enlarged tonsils produced a thickness of speech, and this had been a source of anxiety to his father, fearing if it could not be remedied that he would never be able to preach. But no better place could have been selected to overcome that trouble, and to make him faithful in his studies, than Mount Pleasant. His teacher compelled perfection in all his recitations.

Through the efforts of another teacher the thickness of speech was overcome. He would drill the boy a whole hour on one word, make him take a position on a line in the middle of the floor, and tone, pronunciation, emphasis and gesture were rigorously practiced. Every inflection of the voice, gesture and articulation, were repeated day after day, with such variations as his progress made necessary, until the pupil had himself, his voice and gestures trained and subdued to the right expression.

It will hardly appear credible to those who knew Mr. Beecher only after he became a public speaker, that such drilling could ever have been necessary. Surely, his father must have been almost inspired to have selected such a school for one with Mr. Beecher's peculiar characteristics. The place itself, the surroundings, his teachers and associates were wonderfully fitted to build him up for the work that came to him in more mature life.

**EDITOR'S NOTE.**—As Mrs. Beecher has preferred that her special article in answer to many questions shall precede the closing article of the series, that paper will be printed in the July JOURNAL; the closing article in the August JOURNAL.





## Mr. Beecher As I Knew Him

By Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher

IN TEN PAPERS

NINTH PAPER

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I HAVE deemed it best to interpolate just here the special article announced as a supplementary paper, in order that my final words might be those which dealt with Mr. Beecher's last days. In this paper I will answer some of the questions which have come to me during the publication of this series, the cordial recognition of which from every side has been such a source of pleasure to me.

### THE WRITING OF "NORWOOD"

MANY inquiries have come to me about "Norwood," asking whether "Mr. Beecher had ever written a novel before?" or "What induced him to write 'Norwood?'" and "Did he find it a troublesome task?"

While securing an education before entering into any active business, most young people are tempted to write a novel or poetry, but I doubt if Mr. Beecher ever was. It surprised me; for, from our earliest acquaintance, I was quick to notice something of poetry and romance, even in his common conversation, and I once asked him if he ever felt any inclination for either. He replied:

"No; something of both mingles with my whole life, but of a far higher type than I should venture to put on paper."

Entering at so early an age into active work that demanded all his time and thoughts, the subject was never again alluded to or thought of by either of us until 1866. Then Mr. Robert Bonner came one day and urged Mr. Beecher to write a novel.

"I write a novel!" said Mr. Beecher, with a merry laugh. "It would be the most absurd thing I ever attempted, or you ever read!"

But Mr. Bonner was not to be prevailed upon to so easily relinquish the idea, and he urged Mr. Beecher to make the trial. For a while he received only decided refusals. At last Mr. Beecher promised to "think about it." He did think about it more and more seriously, and the possibility that he could do it grew upon him. Finally, after several interviews with Mr. Bonner, he decided to try. But it was some days after before he attempted to write. He had promised the first chapter on a certain date which was fast approaching, and nothing had been written.

One morning he had sat silently at the library table for some little time, when rising suddenly he went to his study in the third story. As he left there was a set, determined look on his face, which I read as meaning one of two things: "I will write to Bonner, 'I cannot do it,'" or, "I will delay no longer."

An hour passed by, and I was naturally a little anxious. At last Mr. Beecher called, and throwing down a paper, said:

"Don't come up, dear, but I will send down a few lines for you."

His rich, happy tones reassured me, and unfolding the note I found he had started on the first chapter and felt encouraged to go on.

That was all I needed. I knew he would succeed—not in becoming a novelist, that no one could desire—but that he would do his work creditably.

Still, the work was never easy for him. One chapter every week was promised, and was written on that day so as not to infringe on other work. While writing each chapter he was entirely unlike his usual mood when other important writing was to be done. It was hard labor and depressed him. When the messenger boy left with the copy, Mr. Beecher for a few moments would be as jubilant as a boy.

But as the story grew under his pen he began to feel an interest in the characters he was delineating, and he did his work easier and with more courage.

When writing anything in the line of his regular work, of special interest, he often read it to me; but in writing "Norwood" he never did until near the close, when one day he read a portion in which he was evidently much interested, and when he had finished it, said:

"Well, I shall not be a second Walter Scott, shall I? But isn't it better than you expected?"

"No," I said, "it is very good, but no better than I knew you could do."

When at last it was completed, and the last chapter all ready to be sent, he called me, and threw down a slip of paper, with a much-worn quill pen stuck through it. On the paper he had written:

"The work is finished. Oh, be joyful! I am sufficiently satisfied to be content. Blessed is he who does not expect great things! Verily he shall not be disappointed!"—H. W. B.

After dinner we took a ride. Soon after starting I said: "I am so happy that work is off your mind. I am well pleased with it."

"You don't think, however," he asked, quizzingly, "that I give promise of becoming a distinguished novelist, do you?"

"No, I do not," I replied, "and should be very sorry if you should. I think you have a higher, nobler work to do."

After the work was done, and before the public in book form, he seldom spoke of it. All criticism, or words of approbation, were placed on his study table, and I always told him all remarks I heard about it. He read or heard these serenely, and, if favorable, appeared well pleased for the moment. But he went into his life's work with renewed vigor and energy, and gave this work but a small share of his thoughts.

### HIS ONE POETICAL EFFORT

MANY have asked whether it is true, as Mr. Beecher has recently stated, that Mr. Beecher at one time wrote a poem to me. It is true, in so far that during our long engagement, while Mr. Beecher was in college, I told him that it was time he wrote me some poetry. Whereupon he sent me a most ludicrous verse, with the laughable request that I would not give it to "The New York Observer" until he had time to correct it, as he should expect that verse would establish his reputation as a poet, if anything would. When received, we had some sport over it, and then it passed by—seldom remembered—until long after we came to Brooklyn.

Mr. Beecher was writing "Norwood" when Mr. Robert Bonner called one day. Just as he was leaving he told Mr. Beecher he had offered a distinguished public man a large sum if he would write him two verses of poetry, and added: "I will give you as much as I have for 'Norwood' if you will do the same, Mr. Beecher."

"What! I write poetry! I never wrote a line in my life," replied Mr. Beecher.

I was standing near him and said: "Why, Henry! Don't you remember those lines you sent me while you were in college?"

"Oh, Mrs. Beecher, repeat them to me," said Mr. Bonner, earnestly.

Knowing what the lines were, I was greatly amused at such an idea, but gravely began:

"It was something like this—"

"Eunice!" said Mr. Beecher, quickly.

"Never mind him, Mrs. Beecher. Tell me what it was, and I will give you \$5000 on the spot."

"Well," I replied, "it began—'I started—'"

"Eunice!" exclaimed Mr. Beecher, with emphasis.

"Now, Mrs. Beecher, do repeat it," said Mr. Bonner.

I began again—"I started from—"

"Eunice!" still more emphatically.

"Don't heed what he says, Mrs. Beecher. I'll give you double the sum if you will repeat the lines."

"Now, Henry! just think of how much good such a sum would do, and you know it was simply for fun you wrote—I started from—"

"EUNICE!!" came from Mr. Beecher, and this time it was with almost angry earnestness.

At this point, not having the least idea of repeating the lines, but seeing Mr. Bonner's earnestness, and Mr. Beecher's fear that I would do it, I was almost suffocated with suppressed laughter, but said:

"Why, Henry! Do you really believe I would repeat it?"

Then turning to Mr. Bonner I said: "It was only a little sportive nonsense, with about as much poetry in it as 'Jack and Gill went up the hill, etc.' which Mr. Beecher sent me years ago."

And this is the true version of the story of "Mr. Beecher's One Poem."

### MR. BEECHER AND COLONEL INGERSOLL

OFTEN has the inquiry come to me during these past months: "Why did Mr. Beecher countenance Colonel Ingersoll?" or "Why did Mr. Beecher grasp Colonel Ingersoll's hand in public?" and kindred questions. I cannot do better, I think, than to print here a letter from Mr. Beecher, never before published, addressed to Rev. A. N. Lewis, of Montpelier, Vermont, through whose kindness it is made possible for me to answer these queries in Mr. Beecher's own words.

As an explanation of Mr. Beecher's letter, Mr. Lewis writes: "In the year 1880 I wrote to Mr. Beecher, taking him to task (as one who had always believed in him, through good report and evil report) for his 'giving the right hand of fellowship to Colonel Ingersoll' on the platform at a political meeting. In the letter I also asked if he did not think that Rev. Dr. Backus's remark about the college bell 'making no more noise than a lamb's tail in a fur cap,' was appropriated from Rabelais. (Mr. Beecher had quoted it in one of his Friday evening talks.) His reply was so characteristic of the man that I have always preserved it in my scrap-book."

Mr. Beecher's reply was as follows:

BROOKLYN, November 15, 1880.  
DEAR SIR: I think that there is only a resemblance, and not a causal sequence in the "fur bell" of (Dr.) Backus, and the "feather bell" of Rabelais.

I do not believe that the stout old Puritan ever heard of Rabelais; and if he had, and knew that an Episcopal minister was familiar with him, he would have held up holy hands of horror! Not so do I! Not only do I know Rabelais, but Ingersoll, whom you do not know. A rigid and religious despot of a father threw him off with fatal rebound in theology.

He is a man of pure morals, of happy domestic life, of warm friendships; an ardent personal friend of Garfield and much esteemed by all who know him personally.

He is an unbeliever in church and Bible, largely through ignorance; but on all public questions, education, morality, temperance and purity, he is always sound and earnest.

It has been the rule of my life to work with any man of good morals, on all lines on which we agree, though in a hundred others we disagree. Thus I work with Roman Catholics on charities, temperance, etc., with Swedenborgians, High Calvinists, (whose theology I admire for logic, and abhor as a slander on God); with politicians, with any one "whose face is as if he would go to Jerusalem!"

Christianity draws men together; that which separates men on any other ground than that of personal immorality is anti-Christ.

So think I—so do I—and I suffer cheerfully others to think as they please.

Cordially yours,  
HENRY WARD BEECHER.

### HOW HE ONCE SWORE

VARIOUS distorted versions have been given of an oath which Mr. Beecher is said to have used on a certain occasion, when very young, and, by request, I give the true story. It happened when he was nine or ten years old. He and his brother Charles were just seated at the breakfast table (his father was not at home that morning) when his half-brother, Thomas, then quite a young child, took up a saltspoonful of salt and raised it toward his open mouth, as if he were going to take it. Quick as a flash, Henry gave the spoon a push, which sent the salt into the child's mouth, to the great amusement of both himself and Charles. But their mirth was of but a moment's duration. Their stepmother gave both a sharp box on the ears and sent them from the table without their breakfast. Henry used to say he never walked so straight, or felt so tall as when he and Charlie went from the house to the back of the barn. Seating themselves on a log, there was an ominous silence for a moment "presaging approaching storm."

"Charles, what do ministers say when they want to swear? What words do they use?" asked Henry.

"I don't know," replied Charles.

"Can't you think of any?" asked Henry.

"No."

Another silence. Then drawing himself up very straight and bringing his doubled fist down on his knee with great force Henry exclaimed—

"Damn!"

Then he used to tell that a great horror came over him the moment that word escaped his lips. He was sure the devil must be very near to him. Without another word he stole back to the house and shut himself into his room in an agony of fear and remorse, and remained there till his father, who had been absent, returned, and called him.

"But why were you so very angry for being sent from the table without your breakfast?" I asked him once.

"Oh, that wasn't it," he replied, "but because she boxed my ears. She might have whipped me a dozen times without cause, and I should not have been so angry."

Mr. Beecher always felt that boxing a child's ears was unpardonable.

### HIS HABITS OF DRESS

THE question has frequently come to me during the last few months, "Was not Mr. Beecher untidy or indifferent in his habits of dress?"

Mr. Beecher was never untidy, but he was careless in leaving things out of their places. When dressing or undressing, he often tossed things upon chairs and tables, or left the bureau in a somewhat disorderly condition. That, however, was more my fault than Mr. Beecher's, because I was usually near by and ready to put away whatever was out of place. His family said I spoiled him. I think not.

But no man could be more fastidious than Mr. Beecher was in always having clean linen, collars, cuffs, and handkerchiefs, boots blacked, and clothes well brushed. Being an early riser, he often dressed hurriedly, leaving clothes and boots unbrushed, and sat down at once to a writing table—which was always kept in our room—to develop some thought that came to him when he first woke, or while dressing, and he would often write until breakfast. Immediately after breakfast and prayers he often went at once to his study and wrote for an hour or two to finish what he had begun. But it was seldom that his clothes and boots were not in order before breakfast.

When in college and in Lane Seminary, his wardrobe was of the simplest and cheapest. His father could provide no better. Of this he never made any complaint. But during his last six months at the theological seminary, he was offered the position of editor of the Cincinnati "Journal" for a few months, with some prospect of its being permanent, as the editor's health had failed and he had gone abroad with little hope of ever being able to resume his work on the paper. Mr. Beecher, therefore, had reason to feel almost sure of continuing as editor, and in that case it was his intention to accept a call made to him by a church a few miles from the city.

Up to this time he had never bought any clothes for himself, but with this work in prospect, he hoped to relieve his father from all further expense in that line. When his first payment from the paper came in, needing an overcoat, he went to the tailor's in a very independent state of mind and made his first purchase. Delighted with this new experience, he hastened to write me and describe the overcoat, "a beautiful piece of black cloth, with velvet collar, lapels and cuffs. I have always admired velvet, but now I have some. When I come east for you I mean my wedding suit shall be as fine as my overcoat."

Alas for human expectations! Soon after Mr. Beecher had bought the overcoat, with its velvet trimmings, and just as he had finished his theological course and was ready to begin work, the editor returned with improved health and resumed his editorial position.

For many reasons it was a disappointment to Mr. Beecher, but he accepted it cheerfully, as was his wont in all disappointments, and wrote me a humorous letter, saying: "Instead of a new wedding suit, I shall have to borrow a coat of brother George's, but I've got the new overcoat and the velvet collar, anyhow."

After we came east, for many years a dear friend sent him a full suit every Christmas or New Year's, of the very best material. The quality of the suit was a great pleasure to him, and he knew much more about it, where it was made, or if there was anything specially excellent about the material, than I did, and he was particularly careful of it.

Mr. Beecher always admired velvet, and would have collars and facings to his coats made of it, without regard to what might be the fashion, and from that, doubtless, arose the story that he had once worn a complete velvet suit, which he never did.

### USE OF WINE AND TEMPERANCE VIEWS

MR. BEECHER was always a strong temperance advocate, and until 1850 no wine or liquor of any kind ever came into our house. At that time he came so near breaking down from overwork that he was sent abroad by his physicians, and upon his return, not having regained his usual strength, they ordered him to take a glass of wine with his dinner. This he did, but only when at home. After a short time he gave it up. In 1863, during war times, when his energy was taxed to the utmost, the physicians again ordered the use of wine with his dinner, and gave instructions that in future, after any exhaustive effort, Mr. Beecher should resort to this stimulant. From that time we always kept wine in the house, and Mr. Beecher used it when under special mental strain.

He never urged those who had become intemperate, or who were in danger of becoming so, to take "the Pledge." If any wished to do so, he was always ready to write the pledge for them, and it was very strongly written, enclosed in an envelope, and left with him as a sacred deposit. But this was done at the request of the individual, not from any urgent appeal from him, Mr. Beecher. Judging others by his own nature, he felt that strong appeals to their honor, their manhood, should be more effectual than any pledge. The fact that Mr. Beecher did use wine at such times became known, for he took it openly—but not the reasons for it—and this was the foundation of the many stories circulated, all calculated to misinterpret his attitude on the temperance question. But there are hundreds who, if they heard such statements, remembering how he had helped and saved them, could correct such impressions by giving their own experiences.

### AVERSION TO TITLES

SOME have asked me: "Why did Mr. Beecher so persistently decline the title of 'Doctor of Divinity?'"

I know no reason except an utter aversion to such a thing as a title to his name. If others accepted the title it was their right, and in addressing them Mr. Beecher always used it. He used to say that such prefix titles as Judge, General or Doctor designated an individual's duties or calling, and were more of a convenience than anything else, and in some cases were almost a necessity. And "Reverend" for a clergyman might be classed in that category. But, he would laughingly say, the "Reverend Doctor of Divinity" was too much of a good thing for him to be burdened with. This title was offered him, I cannot now recall how often, but in every instance it was declined. His own views are expressed in a letter of declination of that title, now beside me, and which I copy:

PEEKSKILL, AUGUST 21, 1860.

To the President and Board of Trustees of Amherst College,

GENTLEMEN: I have been duly notified that at the last meeting of the Board of Trustees the title of D. D. was conferred upon me.

It would certainly give me pleasure should any respectable institution bear such a testimony of good will, but that Amherst College, my own mother, should so kindly remember a son, is a peculiar gratification. But all the use of such a title ends with the public expression. If the wish to confer it be accepted, for the rest it would be but an incumbrance, and furnish an address by no means agreeable to my taste. I greatly prefer the simplicity of that which my mother uttered over me in the holy hour of infant consecration and baptism. May I be permitted, without seeming to undervalue your kindness or disesteeming the honor meant to return it to your hands, that I may to the end of my life be, as thus far I have been, simply

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

### ATTITUDE IN PUBLIC MATTERS

I HAVE been asked to say something of the methods which Mr. Beecher pursued in reaching his decisions on public matters.

In all questions of public interest, Mr. Beecher never decided hastily as to the course he should pursue, but after most prayerful and earnest deliberation. In political matters, he never worked for a party but for that which, after long and serious thought, he was convinced would be for the best interest of the whole country. But once assured of what it was his duty to do or say on any important matter, he was immovable. No personal consideration, nor the acute distress he always felt when compelled to differ from friends, and particularly from any of his church, had power to change the course his conscience called him to pursue. Next to his country, in his love, stood his church, and to feel compelled for his country's sake to disagree with any of its members, was a martyrdom little understood by them at the time.

But that trait in his character is now, I think, truly recognized wherever his name or works are known. In looking back, all who knew him will recall many trying times when he was supposed to have made some serious, if not fatal mistake, and will now remember how patiently, and yet unflinchingly, he moved on in the way his conscience led him, without regard to the injury to himself, personally, that might result from such action, until at last the clouds between those he so truly loved were lifted, the old friendships were again resumed, and the truth of the judgment and wisdom which had guided him was frankly acknowledged by many. However much at various times Mr. Beecher may have been misjudged or censured, no man ever accused him of acting from ill feeling toward any. No man was ever surrounded by such true and loyal friends, many of whom loved him and recognized the sincerity of his convictions even while disagreeing with him, and all the more when time and further reflection showed that on many points they had not rightly understood his motives, and learned at last how safe had been the light which guided him.

[Mrs. Beecher's concluding paper, recounting the last days and death of Mr. Beecher, will be printed in the August JOURNAL.]





## Mr. Beecher As I Knew Him

By Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher

IN TEN PAPERS

CONCLUDING PAPER

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of the millions of readers of THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL during the publication of these papers, I shall never cease to be grateful. If I have by these simple words of his life brought Mr. Beecher closer to any one, my task of love shall not have been in vain.

### THE LAST TRIP TO EUROPE

IT was with pleasure that I hailed the first suggestion of an European journey for Mr. Beecher early in 1886. He needed rest and an entire change, and a sojourn in Europe would afford both. I cannot go into details of that blessed last vacation with him, the respect accorded him, the honors paid and the enthusiasm which greeted him on every hand. I had never been abroad, and everything was, of course, new to me. As Mr. Beecher could not take me out of the route pre-arranged for him, he was anxious to put me in the hands of a courier, or some friends, for a trip through France and Italy. But I declined, preferring to remain with Mr. Beecher, and now how thankful I am that not a day in all those four months was I absent from his side.

On the 24th of October, 1886, we embarked for home, which we reached on the morning of Sunday, the 31st. The trip had vastly benefited Mr. Beecher. Although speaking every evening, except Saturday, and preaching nearly every Sunday, traveling almost incessantly, he seemed rejuvenated by it, and at no time did he show the slightest trace of fatigue. The trip seemed to renew his youth, he often said. And so upon his return he was in perfect health, and ready at once to resume his labors with renewed zeal and interest. We arrived at the dock on Sunday morning too late to preach, or I think he would have been in his pulpit. After dinner he went directly over to Sunday School. Nine persons out of ten, after seven days of continued sea-sickness—for Mr. Beecher was not a good sailor—would have required rest, but not he! If he was too late for church, he said, he would be early for Sunday School.

Upon Friday after our return, at the regular prayer meeting, he spoke to his people for the first time. With deep feelings he referred to the marks of affection and honor that had been shown him, and said the cordiality extended on every hand had made him young again. He confessed that before leaving home he had been depressed and had felt that his usefulness was on the wane, but he had discarded all such fancies, and with a stronger faith in his Father's wisdom he felt there might yet be years before him to work in his Master's vineyard.

### WERE THESE PREMONITIONS?

IN December arrangements had been made for a fair, from the proceeds of which we hoped to enlarge and refurnish the church parlors. But I was suddenly taken seriously ill, and the fair was postponed. For weeks Mr. Beecher allowed no one to watch over me and nurse me but himself. Always cheerful, and keeping me so, even when suffering and most severely, by no look or word did he show his alarm at my illness. After his breakfast he would carry me down stairs to his study in his arms—I was too ill to take one step—so that he might have the care of me all the time he could remain in the house. When taken ill I did not think I should recover. Nor should I but for Mr. Beecher's unceasing care. He declined all engagements, and left the house only for his regular church services and important duties connected with his church and people; always most kind and thoughtful when any one was sick, but never before did he attempt to nurse and take the whole charge of me in sickness. And why did he now? Was it through any unrecognized influence or premonition?

As soon as I recovered, the work of the fair was hastened forward. In the object which it was hoped could be accomplished by this fair Mr. Beecher was greatly interested, and together we were requested to select and buy the carpet and furniture. In this work he was very happy and efficient. But the aid he thus gave did not interrupt his regular duties or prevent his beginning once more to work on the second volume of "The Life of Christ."

Mr. Beecher never liked the confinement of writing. His pen could not keep pace with his thoughts at first, and he shrank from returning to work so long interrupted. But at last, when impediments had been removed, inspiration to finish came to him. He soon began to work hopefully and enthusiastically, much helped, he often said, by running away from his study for an hour to see how vigorously the work at the church was being pushed forward, and his presence and eagerness to have it hastened was always like an inspiration. When I returned at night from this work his first remark was often: "Well, how is the work progressing? How soon will the fair be opened?"

Once I said to him: "Only a few days now, but what makes you so anxious?"

"I don't know," he said, "I never was in such a hurry. I feel ready to take hold and push."

"But the ladies are working as fast as they can," I said.

"Yes, I know that, but I don't know what has come over me to be so eager to have the fair over and learn what will be the result. Perhaps my anxiety to get you off South before you get sick again."

Was that the reason? Or was it foreshadowing the end of all his cares and labors? Yet how perfectly well he seemed—never better—and often remarked, when urged to give up

With that strangely intent look still on his face he remained silent looking so far off for a few moments; then, rising, throwing back his head and straightening himself as all who knew him have so often seen when roused out of intense thought, he drew a deep heavy breath, and wheeling his chair to his desk began to write.

The strangeness of this short scene, particularly the expression of his face, unlike any I ever saw before, startled me—and—oh! if I could know what revelation was made to him then! Nothing ever struck me with such solemnity.

### LAST DAY IN THE OUTER WORLD

UPON the afternoon that the dear church parlour was elegant with the so much needed enlargement, and the carpet, which Mr. Beecher had selected, on the floor, and new furniture all in, nothing seemed wanted but a mantel over the simulated fireplace, which I was commissioned to select. I greatly desired Mr. Beecher's help in doing this, but his work on "The Life of Christ" was now progressing so fairly that I disliked to ask him to go with me, as I knew before we would be suited it might occupy a large portion of the day. But in the evening he inquired how much more of the work on the parlors I should expect to do. I told him, adding "If your work did not need all your time I should ask your aid in selecting the mantel." He made no reply. That was sufficient, and I understood that he could not go with me.

But the next morning at breakfast he gravely asked: "Have you ordered the coupe?"

"For what?" I asked.

"Didn't you order me to go with you to select that mantel, and did I ever disobey your orders?" And to my relief he went with me.

On this, his last day in the outer world, we spent most of the time looking through furniture stores, and were successful in our search.

In this last blessed ride together I never knew him so inclined to talk when riding, or

And was not that what he did do? How his face shone upon me as he turned and drew me close to him. Twice during that ride he repeated this, using almost the same words, but with even more earnestness. How his face lighted up! How his eyes kindled! And oh, how blind I was! Why did I not understand that heaven was just opening for him and drawing him away from me—from all who so loved him? I simply watched him as if it was one of those inspired moments I had often seen, though never so wonderfully illuminated, when his soul shone out from his face. Did he feel that his Saviour was calling to him, "Come up hither?"

All through that ride he talked constantly of almost everybody we had known—everything we had experienced together. He was very earnest in urging me to do all I could to keep up the social life in the church, as he thought it one of the best means to keep the church united, and in that way the greatest help to the pastor of the church.

### THE BEGINNING OF THE END

WE returned from this precious ride in time for dinner. He had a short nap, and awoke very cheerful and happy. In the evening he had some engagement from which he did not expect to return before ten, and handing me several letters, requesting me to answer some of the most important, which he had marked, before his return, and then went out. But he came back, not long after eight, to my surprise, and said that remembering I was to go South the following week, he had excused himself to come back and be with me.

At about nine o'clock he said he was tired and would go to bed.

"Why, Henry! are you sick?" I asked.

"No, indeed! only tired," he replied.

"Well, then, I will come right up and do this writing in the back room," I said. I simply set back the chair, took my parcel of letters, turned out the gas and followed him. It could not have been five minutes after. I

expected to find him not half ready for bed. When I entered, the room was dark. Turning on the gas I found him in bed. It was so quickly done that I had no thought but that he was hoaxing me until I turned and saw his clothes on the chair near by. Passing to his bedside I found he lay on his right side, with the right hand under his cheek, apparently sound asleep. Why did I not see the darkness that was closing around us?

As I stood over him his face looked so serene—so youthful. Why were my eyes so blinded as not to understand how he was, even then, changed?

My hands being very cold, I did not dare to touch him, but kneeling at his side I placed my ear over his heart; it was beating far more easily and quietly than my own. I turned down the gas, and took my writing into the back room, but where I could look on him without going in. I wrote awhile by the fire until my hands grew warm, and then went to him and felt his pulse. It could not have been more regular and natural. I felt of his brow, the back of his neck and the temples. No stronger indications of health could have been desired. Yet I felt troubled. He still lay so peacefully, undisturbed by my examinations, or the gas over his head, either of which would have usually awakened him instantly. Returning to my writing, I continued at it until one o'clock, going to him often, but finding no change in that peaceful, apparently healthful sleep.

At one o'clock I prepared to retire. But he was sleeping so quietly that I would not disturb him, and so laid down in the room where I had been writing. I could not sleep, however. But why? I thought to myself. Why this great anxiety? I could find no indication of illness and was ashamed of my apprehensions.

About three o'clock I heard him vomiting, and was by his side instantly. When quiet I asked what had caused the vomiting. "Oh, only a slight sick headache," he said.

"Why, Henry, you never had a sick headache before," I suggested.

"Well, can't I do something original once in a while," he replied, laughing in an easy, cheerful manner. "I am all right, now. But why are you not in bed? You will be sick going round in your bare feet." And in a moment he was again fast asleep.

### ENTERING UPON HIS LONG SLEEP

I TRIED to get him to go into a clean bed after his illness, but could not. Putting dry towels about him, and over the pillow, I went back and dressed. I could not sleep; I tried to write, while I sat where I could go to him instantly if needed. I was sadly depressed, yet not knowing why, as I watched the remainder of that night.

The breakfast bell rang, and the little children and their father met near our door, laughing and merry, but their grandfather still slept, or appeared to, with his right hand under his face, so peacefully and so tranquil. Why did not all this noise rouse him? He, who usually waked at the first sound? I called our son and told him how anxious I was, and how long his father had lain without moving. He chided me for needless anxiety, saying: "Let father sleep; that always cures a Beecher. Come down to breakfast, mother. Don't worry; father's pulse is all right; no extra heat about his head. Let him sleep."

At breakfast another son came in, and I took him upstairs to see his father. He, also, thought my anxiety groundless, and found neither pulse nor heart suggesting any trouble, and both sons begged me not to worry, but by all means let him sleep. By the afternoon I could endure it no longer and sent for the doctor, and he, from my report before seeing



MR. BEECHER'S GRAVE IN GREENWOOD CEMETERY

[On Dawn Path, near Hillside Avenue, on the Southeasterly Slope of Ocean Hill: Lot No. 25,911]

some of his cares until that writing was finished: "Why, I have not felt so well for years—so buoyant and so ready for work."

The fair was at last over, and most satisfactorily it resulted for all interested. Not being strong, it was decided that now, as soon as the furniture for the church parlors was bought, I was to go South. My trunk was packed and Tuesday, March 8th, I was to leave for Florida.

### WRITING HIS "LIFE OF CHRIST"

ON Wednesday morning, March 2d, a gentleman from England called, I think for a letter of introduction. After Mr. Beecher had written it they sat talking for a few minutes. As he was bidding Mr. Beecher good morning he stopped at the door, saying:

"Mr. Beecher, excuse me, but may I ask when you will finish 'The Life of Christ?'"

"I am now closely at work on it, and hope to complete it very soon," Mr. Beecher replied.

"I am rejoiced to hear that," the gentleman said, and then passed into the hall, but turning back, repeated:

"I cannot tell you how rejoiced I am that you will soon finish 'The Life of Christ.'"

As he passed from the hall, Mr. Beecher stood for a moment perfectly still. Then with bowed head, as if in deep thought, he walked slowly back to his desk, and, as was often his custom, knelt on his revolving chair, with his arms crossed on the back, and gazed earnestly out of the window.

I was writing at my desk near by, but he remained so still I half turned so I could see him. That almost rapturous expression that shone on his face can never be forgotten. But he seemed so far away.

After a moment of this weird silence, he spoke in a slow, solemn tone, as if communing with his own heart, unconscious of the presence of another:

"Finish 'The Life of Christ!' Finish 'The Life of Christ!' His life was never finished. It never can be finished. It goes on—it will go on through all eternity!"

in such a tender, happy frame of mind; everything he spoke of seemed golden colored.

Once he said laughing: "I am glad you made me take this ride. I have been working so steadily for a day or two my head feels tired, but this ride quite brightens me up."

I said to him: "I wish I had not been so ready to encourage you to finish 'The Life of Christ' this winter. You have had so many more applications for extra work."

"Oh, you needn't worry about that," he replied. "It is a long time since I have sat down to regular continued study, as this work requires, and of course, at the beginning, I have felt it a little burdensome; but I am getting broken into the harness, and now the work will be comparatively easy. But let me

tell you, dear, you little imagine how I dreaded to take hold again, and particularly to examine the first volume. I feared to find much that I must correct, or write all over again, and I dreaded to do that. But are you not glad with me? I find I shall be delayed by comparatively little rewriting or change. In a very few days now I shall finish the work. But, oh! Eunice, since I began to work upon it again, I feel as if I had never known anything about the character of Christ. If I was twenty years younger I should wish to burn up both volumes and rewrite the whole. Everything connected with his life rises now before me so much more wonderful, more glorious than ever before. My old love and reverence appear so low, so mean, compared with the adoration and worship my heart longs to pour out before Him. I know and see Him now as I never did before."

And that same far-away look that had so impressed me the day before, but less dreamy, more real, flashed over his face, as drawing himself up, he continued:

"When I think of him, a great luminous cloud appears to rise before me; and as I look the glory bursts out beneath it, bright, shining like the sun. Heaven opens before me as if I needed to take but one step forward and enter the promised land."



the patient, agreed with our sons that it was a slight bilious attack. But on seeing Mr. Beecher he saw at once, I think, cause for anxiety, but he did not say so until his second call, less than half an hour after the first. He roused him when he first went in easily, asked what caused the vomiting, and received a laughing reply. I noticed Mr. Beecher did not open his eyes.

Immediately on his second visit the doctor asked him to put out his tongue. The patient could only eject the tongue a little way. "More! farther!" said the doctor quickly; but the effort was a complete failure. Then, for a moment, Mr. Beecher opened his eyes and looked into my face. Love and sorrow for me mingled with a look as if he would say: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my work." And he closed his eyes, never again to open them here. I was holding his hand, and he gave mine a loving, earnest pressure that interpreted his look. It was "Farewell." The cruel truth was now plainly revealed, and all hope abandoned. The left side was paralyzed, and, recalling the earlier symptoms, the case was plainly apoplexy and of a type for which there was no hope.

It was generally supposed that from that time Mr. Beecher was unconscious. I did not believe it and never shall. I held his hand all the time unless called aside for a moment. In that case, as I returned, the nurses would say: "He's hunting for you, Mrs. Beecher." He would move his hand over the bedspread as if hunting for something, until I put my hand in his again. Several times he raised our hands together to my lips. The last time was but a few hours before he died.

Very early on Tuesday, March 8th, a change came over him. Death was close at hand. The family clustered about his bed, where one a thousand times more dear than mortal words can tell was passing away from us. But his singular vitality was not yet conquered, and there was a few hours longer left to us.

About seven o'clock on Tuesday morning the family were again hastily summoned. Death was now indeed near. That strong, active brain had finished its appointed work. Only a few more breaths and death was swallowed up in victory. The great loving heart was at last still. The freed spirit ascended to the heavenly Home.

"Through the pearly gates and the open door,  
His happy feet on the golden street  
Have entered now, to return no more;  
For his work is done, and the rest begun,  
And the training time is forever past;  
And the home of rest in the mansions blest  
Is safely, joyously reached at last.

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## MRS. BEECHER'S COMPLETE ARTICLES

**I**N response to many inquiries, the management of *THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL* states that to any who may desire to keep a complete set of Mrs. Beecher's articles of "Mr. Beecher As I Knew Him," it will send the entire series, covering ten numbers of the *JOURNAL*, to any address, postage free, for one dollar (\$1.00). Mrs. Beecher's articles will not be issued by the *JOURNAL* in book form, as has been erroneously announced. Owing to the demand for these papers, it is requested that those desiring to take advantage of this offer will do so at once, as the supply of back numbers is limited.

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## MR. BEECHER'S UNPRINTED WORDS

THE "JOURNAL" TO PUBLISH A SERIES OF  
HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL

**I**T is with great pleasure that the editor of *THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL* announces that he has succeeded in securing for publication in the *JOURNAL* a series of important articles of spoken words and writings by Henry Ward Beecher never before published in any manner. This material has long been in the possession of Professor T. J. Ellinwood, who was for nearly thirty years Mr. Beecher's private stenographer and authorized reporter, and who made it a rule on all proper occasions, in public and in private, to transfer to paper every thought expressed by Mr. Beecher. From this interesting material, the articles to appear in the *JOURNAL* will be made up under the personal supervision of Professor Ellinwood. The series will, in every respect, be a notable one, as it will present some of the most characteristic utterances on popular topics ever uttered or written by Mr. Beecher. Among the subjects these papers will treat are:

HOW A CHRISTIAN SHOULD DRESS

THE ETHICS OF PEW RENTING

PRACTICAL ADVICE TO USHERS

WOMAN'S PART IN CHURCH WORK

WINE DRINKING ON NEW YEAR'S DAY

THE WISE TRAINING OF CHILDREN

HOW TO CONDUCT A PRAYER MEETING

WEAR AND TEAR OF HOUSEKEEPING

THE CONTROL OF THE TONGUE

THINGS WE EXPECT OF MARRIED PEOPLE

HOW TO LABOR FOR A REVIVAL

COMMENTS ON MEN OF HIS TIME

SEWING SOCIETIES OF WOMEN

RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOR IN SUMMER

WOMEN TEACHERS AND MISSIONARIES

THE LITERARY VALUE OF THE BIBLE

and a number of equally interesting and trenchant topics.

This series will begin in an early issue of the *JOURNAL*, so soon as the careful editing of the material is completed.