

### My Teacher

THE day was dark and a strong wind blew from the N.E. when I left my apartment in the early morning. This was my morning practice refreshing myself for my day's work by taking a walk along the lakes and promenades of Central Park. It was the end of Autumn, a season most beautiful for a lover of nature. In autumn the dreary aspect of the parks and the country tends more to lonesomeness than happiness. At this period winter sends its harbinger announcing his approach. The leaves fall from the trees, the little birds cease to chirp their charming songs and seek a refuge against the cold. The people quicken their pace endeavoring to arrive as soon as possible at their destinations. The sun still shines but its feeble light has not strength enough to warm the earth or its inhabitants. Everything is cold. It appears as if the world were sleeping or dying, but men who think can appreciate in it the great labor of nature, the wonderful power of the Creator. Every year the earth has its spring and its winter; no matter how many years pass, the Creator never wearies of His work, and nature never grows older. Soon the beautiful spring will follow the cold winter and the phenomenon will be repeated again and again.

Pursuing this train of thought, I found myself face to face with a man sitting on one of the benches of the promenade. His appearance was that of a poor and miserable person. His clothes although old and ripped, when new were of a perfect style. He seemed to be about sixty years old, but his eyes plainly showed he was not over fifty.

He looked at me with the same curiosity as I looked at him. Then with a clear voice, which I was unable to judge as being lovely or commanding, the stranger asked me :

"Say, young man, what are you doing here, so early in the morning?"

This question asked by a man whom I saw that day for the first time in my life, surprised me. I thought to walk away, but as I said before, the tone of his voice, everything about him in fact, demanded my attention. I knew he was not one of the rabble crowd, and something from my soul compelled me to answer :

"I am a student and my presence here so early can easily be explained. I am accustomed to take every morning a walk in the open air in order to refresh my mind before I go to study."

"But do you not feel cold?" he inquired.

"Why! no, it is a pleasant morning." I replied.

"Oh! I see," said he, "you are yet in the spring of your life. Now you do not feel the winter's cold."

At the very first, when I saw him, he called my attention; his first question awakened my curiosity. Now I thought the man was insane as I was unable to get the full sense of his meaning.

For a while he bent his head over his chest, then arose from the bench and in a most familiar manner, putting his right arm upon my shoulder, he said :

"My boy, not many years ago I was like you a young man, vigorous and full of life. I was a member of a family who classed in high society. I had money enough to amuse myself, having many of those things which people without sense call "good times." I was in the spring of my life and I never looked forward to the future; I thought only of the present, believing my

life was going to be always the same. Look at me now, I am an old-young man, and a young-old man. I lost my family and my money. With the money I lost my friends. I do not know how to work, and I am a beggar—a man useless to myself and to the community.” He made a short pause and proceeded: “Now listen, and take my advice. A man has only one spring in his life, after his spring follows his winter; and the man who does not know how to appreciate the value of the opportunities that God offers him in the spring time, will have a cold, very cold winter.

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That day I returned to my boarding house sooner than I was in the habit of doing and worked harder with my books and learned my lessons better than ever before; and when night arrived I was still hearing the voice of my unknown friend, when he said:

“The man who does not know how to appreciate the value of the opportunities that God offers him in the spring of his life, will have a cold, very cold winter.”

RALPH VILLASUSO VILLAVERDE.

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The hypocrite is a saint, and the false traitor a man of honour, till opportunity, that faithful touchstone, proves their metal to be base.

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With an optimist two and two make five, with a pessimist they make only three.

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No entertainment is so cheap as reading nor any pleasure so lasting

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Be a live wire and you will not get stepped on; it is the dead ones that are used for floor mats.