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AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A VEGETARIAN.

A TRUE NARRATIVE OF A SUCCESSFUL CAREER.

Reported by C. O. Groom Napier, of Merchiston, E. G. S.

[CONCLUDED.]

"The sailors killed and roasted two kids.

"The smack put us ashore at Dingle Bay, and after a month's travel in Ireland we returned home, and heard that our sailors, taking advantage of our absence, had drunk too much of the store of rum they had provided at their own expense for the voyage, and that the vessel, becoming unmanageable, had capsized, the two men and pilot being drowned, the boy alone escaping, and, clinging to the keel of the yacht, he was picked up a few hours after. The yacht was rightly by some fishermen, and eventually brought to the Isle of Man, where she was claimed by her owners, who had to pay a salvage of £70. As this incident had occurred during my hiring of her, I recouped them of part, and received back my baggage, not so very much injured as I expected. At the bottom of our box of provisions were some seeds from our garden which we were carrying to distribute amongst the poor Irish at the places where we landed; so thinking that some future shipwrecked wanderers might be benefited thereby, I cleared a patch of ground and planted carrot, parsnip, and cabbage seed, hoping, but not expecting, the goats would leave the tender vegetables unmolested.

"I had been married about sixteen years, when I resolved to print a pamphlet on the subject of vegetarianism, giving my experiences and those of my wife and family. I gave away two thousand copies and with some result, for they were the means of adding over forty to the vegetarian flock. In this pamphlet I propounded a scheme for the renovation of my neighborhood on vegetarian principles. At this time I employed about eight servants, male and female, in the house and garden. I gave the men 14s. a week to find themselves, and they were allowed a certain proportion of such common vegetables as potatoes, carrots, turnips, and onions free. Being married men, they had each a distinct cottage, large and comfortable, with an ornamental flower-garden in front and a fruit garden at the back. They were built in the gothic style, after my own design. Each of them kept bees and fowls for their own profit. Their style of living was the envy of all their neighbors. I allowed none of them to take lodgers, and insisted on cleanliness; no rooms were papered, but all were white-washed annually. During the many years that have elapsed since the first cottage was built according to this plan, I have added to them, until the number has reached fourteen. They are mostly inhabited by Scotchmen. They are all temperance men, anti-tobacco and mostly vegetarians. I do not give a man a cottage to himself until he is married to a clean, orderly, industrious woman. My laborers' children turn out well.

"One cottage is inhabited by my second gardener and his wife, without children. She teaches the boys and girls of the other cottages, and has done so for twenty years. I pay her £30 a year. She was a trained schoolmistress before she was married. My head gardener is a religious man, and holds divine service, in one of my barns, for about a hundred persons connected with the estate. It is like a mother's meeting, children of all ages being present. I am not sorry for this, for the parson of the neighborhood is a great man for beef and beer, and his influence I dread on my little Arcadia. My head gardener now and then gives a lecture on vegetarianism in school-rooms, and we two have drawn up a table suggestive of expenditure for rich and poor. Out of his wages he keeps his father and mother and two maiden aunts comfortably, at an expenditure of about 7s. per week. He is an Aberdeenshire man, and about forty years of age. I hope his eldest son will become an eminent man, and I am paying for his education at one of the universities, on account of his extraordinary ability and fine natural disposition; and also on account of the respect which I feel for his father, who has helped me to carry out my principles on my estate. This man's

parents and aunts live in Aberdeenshire, and have never been on the parish. The laird gives them three rooms over an outhouse at 6d. a week. They spend 2s. a week on oatmeal, and 1s. a week on milk. They grow vegetables enough to make a stew for dinner; 1s. worth of flour gives them a meal of bread in the evening. They eat their bread without butter, but with their vegetable soup made either of peas or beans; 3d. buys what condiments or groceries they require. They are always clean and tidy, and gather what fuel they need from the peat on the moor. The blind aunts are very strong, whereas the father is very feeble. They work the garden and collect the wood, he going with them to lead them on their way. My gardener has drawn up a table showing how an adult man may supply himself with wholesome food, lodging, and clothing, at 7s. 6d. per week on vegetarian principles. He can get a room unfurnished for 1s. a week; he can get attendance to a certain extent for 1s. a week extra; his bread-bill need not be more than 1s. 6d. per week; 1s. 6d. for green vegetables, including potatoes; 6d. for butter or oil; 6d. for cocoa, and 6d. for groceries, 6d. for clothing, 6d. for washing. So the money is spent.

"Some of my gardeners' sons trained on the estate spend no more when they go away from it. In one of them, named Dickenson, I have always taken a great interest, as he was the first born on the estate, and for a humble working-man he has had a glorious career. At sixteen I gave him 16s. a week for attending to my stove plants. At fourteen he had 10s. a week. When he was eighteen a nobleman's steward saw him, and offered him 30s. a week to superintend a great stove house. As I could not give such wages I let him go, but with great reluctance. He wrote to his father that although he got 30s. a week and many perquisites, yet he limited his expenditure to 8s. a week until they offered to feed him and house him, when he cut down his expenditure to 3s. a week. He could have had the best of meat, but he still preferred the vegetarian diet, and he induced two of the other servants, who were much troubled with indigestion, to become vegetarians. This vegetarian movement in the servants' hall attracted the notice of the nobleman, who was much pleased to hear of it. By the greater use of vegetables than had been done formerly, especially by the introduction of potato pie, haricot bean stew, and macaroni as every-day dishes in the servants' hall, a saving of £500 per annum was effected in the commissariat of the vast establishment, therefore the nobleman was well satisfied, and presented my young Dickenson with a gold watch and chain, value £36, with an inscription, acknowledging his economy and fidelity. Dickenson's head was not turned by all this, although his wages were soon after raised to £3 per week and all food found. When the nobleman died his successor presented Dickenson with £250, accompanied by a flattering letter, and retained him in his service at a salary of £200 a year. Dickenson still living as he did before. After eighteen years' service he was pensioned off with £100 per annum, and now has a nursery of his own, and is reputed to be worth between £7,000 and £8,000, although he is not more than forty years of age. He has married lately a most frugal but accomplished governess, who has saved £2,000. She was not a vegetarian when he married her, but is so now. I am as proud of Dickenson as if he was my own son. His sister is a most exemplary vegetarian governess; she has induced no less than eight families, with whom she has lived, to become vegetarians, and from her economy in her dress she has saved in the course of twenty years of governing £400. On her showing me her bank book I added £100 to it, and said if she saved £1,000 during my lifetime I would add £500 to it. She is trying hard, and her brother has given her £110 towards it.

"My eldest unmarried daughter keeps my domestic accounts most beautifully, and audits those of any of the people I employ, with the object of impressing on them the advantages of economy. I have intimated to my children that in proportion as they save they shall inherit. This may be an excess of parental government in the estimation of many, but it has had a most beneficial effect. My family are so methodical and self-denying

that they are said to realize some people's idea of Quakers; but I have had little intercourse with that sect. The success of my own offspring, and the prosperity of my household and establishment, as you remarked to me, seem to be due to an exceptional combination of qualities and circumstances—in my wife and myself in the first instance, and, secondly, in those I employ, who are somewhat like myself. This is true, I will admit, but it does not militate against the great principle as laid down in the Bible, that 'the hand of the diligent maketh rich,' that 'industry has its sure reward,' and that those who honor their parents shall receive blessing. I have done more for my parents than all my brothers and sisters united, and I have received more blessing than all my brothers and sisters united. Pardon my egotism.

"I will give you a few facts of vegetarians in our county. A squire and magistrate, with £2,000 a year, used to spend £1,500 as a flesh-eater; he now spends £1,150 and is more comfortable, as a vegetarian. A barrister, whose doctor assured him that he should take three meals of meat and a bottle of wine daily for his health's sake, now finds that by a vegetarian and temperance diet his expenses are reduced more than one-half, his health is better, and there is a corresponding increase of vigor and power of sustaining labor, such as he never before knew. A struggling clergyman, whom custom induced, he called it 'compelled,' to take three meals of meat daily, was under this system always in debt, and obliged to send the churchwardens round every Christmas to ask for means to pay his way, now on the vegetarian diet he balances his income and expenditure, and is able to carry forward a few pounds every quarter. I believe, from more than forty years' experience of the vegetarian diet, that were it generally adopted nine-tenths of the pauperism and crime would disappear, that England would be able to supply herself with all the home-grown corn [wheat] she requires, and that the national debt, if deemed desirable, could be paid off in thirty years.

"I corresponded regularly with my parents, and they, hearing I was getting into comfortable circumstances, would frequently write me complaints of poverty. To these I responded by remittances of money, and at this time wrote to my father saying I would allow him £25 a year and my mother a similar amount. I visited my father about once in two years, but always took a lodging and took my meals apart from him, for he was an inveterate smoker and a great beer-drinker, and filled his snuff-box three times weekly. I once made a random calculation, that he had wasted £1,500 on stimulants in his life. These reflections prevented me from being more liberal to him. If I had given him £100 a year, I only know he would have spent more on cigars. He would have bought wine at 6s. a bottle, and perhaps have increased his consumption of snuff. On getting a legacy of £75 once, £40 of it went to pay his publican's bill. One day my father wrote asking me to accommodate my youngest brother and two sisters a few weeks, that they might see the sights of the town and get change of air. I wrote to my father that my wife and I would be very glad to see them, but they must not expect us to make any change in our vegetarian and temperance diet, but at the same time intimating that our style of living was very comfortable. There was an amount of formality between me and my father; he would sometimes call me, in derision, the Joseph of the family, because I went away from the rest and got rich, and I held his ill-success in life to be owing to his improvidence and self-indulgence, and feared he might want me to keep the whole family in idleness; accordingly I was not very much pleased at his proposal to send my sisters and younger brother to me. However, I assented, and they came. My elder sister, Mary Ann, was one of those sulky, vain, indolent natures, which neither my wife nor I can sympathize with at all. Public opinion was her god, and Mrs. Grundy her godmother. One day she said to my wife, 'I wonder you can endure to live as you do with your means; it strikes me as being very poor and miserable. Most people of your means have three meals of meat a

day. Do you never feel tired of the vegetables?' My wife said no, and that she did not think she could preserve the same health and strength on a meat diet. My wife rose at six and went to bed at half past ten, whereas Mary Ann and her sister could not get down to breakfast till ten at home; but when they were with us we took care to have the breakfast cleared away at eight, so that if they came down at ten they had to wait till lunch before they got anything to eat. This strict commissariat roused Mary Ann two hours sooner than usual.

"Mary Ann was fantastic in her dress, and talked a great deal of nonsense to the servants, endeavoring to make them discontented with the vegetarian diet, and one of them gave notice to leave in consequence; so I thought it was time to settle with my sisters, and I placed them in a lodging and gave them £2 a week to feed themselves as they chose, but they were welcome to come to our meals when they liked. To my surprise, although professing abhorrence of a vegetarian diet, they all came to take dinner and tea with us. My sisters were without watches or jewelry of any kind, and begged me to supply them. This I did, at a cost of about £40. My other sisters living at home, as well as those married and away, hearing of these gifts, wrote to me and demanded similar presents almost as a matter of right. I complied, although it cost me £120 more. I began to be weary of my family connections; they were no comfort to me, and my elder daughters began to be impertinent in consequence of the example of their aunts. My wife and I, when they left, resolved to drop all intercourse with them, let the evil association might impair the discipline of our house.

"After staying six months, instead of a few weeks, my sisters and little brother left, saying they would probably come again about the same time next year. True to their promise they appeared the next year, and asked me to take a lodging for them as before. As they had come without any invitation, I thought that I would now for the first time read them a moral lecture, which for the sake of the other members of the family, I put in the form of a letter, which was a good deal to the following effect. I have a copy of it in my letter-book at home. It began—

"Dear Mary Ann, and my Sisters and Brothers—After some prayer, I consider it my solemn duty to write to you, and warn you of your dangerous position. There is not one of you that fears God: you are all steeped in self-indulgence, of one kind or another. I won't mention names, but I put it to your consciences whether any of you has ever denied him or herself to do any good action, whether or not you have not lived lives purely selfish. You wrangled and quarreled like vultures at your meals, each demanding the largest share. You girls esteemed it degrading to make your own clothes, and adopted a style of dress which to my mind seemed a burlesque. You were at good schools, but you were too indolent to make good use of them; and your brothers have spent a small fortune on stimulants. Your marriages have all been contemptible. Finally, let me say, I have no respect for any of you, but as I fear God, I will not see you want. These of you, married and single, who will become vegetarians and renounce stimulants, I will endeavor to assist in life, provided you bring up your children as vegetarians. But I shall renounce all connection with those relatives who do not in six months become vegetarians. I feel impelled to do so by a sense of duty."

"I had this letter printed, and sent a copy to all my brothers and sisters; most of them replied, and said they would consider the proposal. Of my numerous brothers and sisters, none were at this time in prosperous circumstances, and yet they had all had a much better chance than I; more money had been spent on their education, and all of them had some legacies left them by an uncle, who left me nothing, as I was supposed to be separated from the rest.

"After spending about £15,000 on endeavoring to benefit my brothers and sisters and their children, I have determined to spend no more money on them, as they are incorrigible, self-indulgent, reckless, and vain-glorious, but keep all my money for my own offspring and those whom I can morally respect. Do you not think I am right, Mr. Napier?"

"I will now tell you the state of my family. They are all healthy and well-to-do, luxuriant in hair, sound in teeth, and much better proportioned in figure and figure than usual. I confess, sir, that I take no small pleasure in my family. Even my married children do nothing of importance without consulting me. I share my income liberally with them, but they with commendable prudence live plainly and economically, and save much; some are better at it than others, but I cannot complain of any of them; they are liberal too. My grown up sons spend a tenth of their incomes on moral and religious purposes. I do not devote much time to business now—not much more than three hours daily literary, scientific and other intellectual pursuits fill up the rest of my time."

The vegetarian's wife described their mansion in the country as containing thirty rooms, among which is a fine picture gallery ninety feet long; about twenty conservatories and thirty gardeners are attached to the house. By the sale of early

fruits and vegetables, and the rearing of certain orchids, the great expense of this wholesale gardening is reduced to about £1,000 a year, which her husband does not wish this hobby to exceed. He grows grapes throughout the greater part of the year, and pine-apples also, so that the desert fruit on his table is scarcely to be surpassed. His entire living expenses do not exceed £3,000 a year, although his income is something like six times the amount. Sometimes he will spend £3,000 a year in relieving distress, as he did at the time of the cotton famine. His wife said he is so shy and reserved with people in general that he avoids society; but rich people are sought after, and he sometimes receives a thousand begging letters in the year. He thought his life ought to be written and added as an appendix to Mr. Smiles' "Self Help," and so I have sent this sketch of it for publication.—*Frazer's Magazine.*

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