

THE UNIVERSITY OF HARD KNOCKS!

The School That Completes Our Education!

(Lesson 7 & Lesson 8)



Table Of Content

Table of Content	2
Just So You Know	3
Brought To You By	4
Master Resell Rights	4
Acknowledgements	5
Acknowledgements	6
About This eBook	7
Lesson 7 - THE SALVATION OF A "SUCKER"	10
a) You can't get something for nothing	
b) The fiddle and the tuning	
c) How we know things	
d) Trimmed at the shell game	
e) My "fool drawer"	
f) Getting "selected to receive 1,000 per cent"	
g) You must earn what you own	
h) Commencement orations	
i) My maiden sermon	
j) The books that live have been lived	
k) Singer must live songs	
l) Successful songs written from experience	
m) Theory and practice	
n) Tuning the strings of life	
Lesson 8 - LOOKING BACKWARD	25
a) Memories of the price we pay	
b) My first school teaching	
c) Loaning the deacon my money	
d) Calling the roll of my schoolmates	
e) At the grave of the boy I had envied	
f) Why Ben Hur won the chariot race	
g) Pulling on the oar	

Just So You Know

Copyright © 2003 ViralNEWS.com (PT Online Marketing, Jim Phillips)
All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form, by any means, (electronic, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) without the prior written permission of the author. No liability is assumed with respect to the use of the information contained within. Although every precaution has been taken, the author assumes no liability for errors or omissions. Neither is any liability assumed for damages resulting from the use of the information contained herein.

Jim Phillips
ViralNEWS.com
jphillips@vn11.com

Brought To You By

Thanks to our sponsor who has made this product possible. If you would like to know more about them. Click on the link at the end of any page.

Sponsors Name:



Master Resell Rights

You have received Master resell rights with this product. This gives you the right to sell this product, which includes the Master resell rights to whom ever purchases this product from you. Of course you keep all the profits from each sale you make.

Which means your customers who purchase this from you also have Master Resell Rights.

Graphics

With the purchase of this product you also receive professional graphics to sell this product. To receive your professional graphics. [Click this link so that you will be taken to the download site.](#)

You must be connected to the internet.

Sponsored by www.viralnews.com

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge a few people and companies. Without their help I could not have had such a successful internet business.

Hopefully by giving you this information it will help you to also have a successful online business.

First, I would like to acknowledge **Jim Phillips**. I joined his ViralNews group back early in my career.

It has been invaluable to me.

[Click Here: Very Valuable Site!](#)

Jim Phillips has also given me a heads up on another great opportunity.

"LOW on MONEY?"

Want a work at home business but cannot afford it? NOW YOU CAN! Make the Switch and Join us TODAY!

[Click Here: Very Valuable Site!](#)

Acknowledgements

Bryan Winters is another person that I want you to know.

He has helped me tremendously by setting a good example. Then also showing me what a successful online business should be.

If you really want to succeed online than let me introduce you to Bryan.

[Click Here: Very Valuable Site!](#)

Another friend that I want you to meet is **Kaviraj Kodai**.

Kavi is a great person and has absolutely gone out of the way to help me.

Talk about a great programmer, business person and human being. It is my privilege to introduce you to my friend.

[Click Here: Very Valuable Site!](#)

Well there you have it. I hope you will get to know some of my friends.

They certainly have been instrumental in helping me to become a success on a shoe string budget.

May you have the same success with them as I have.

The University of Hard Knocks!
By Ralph Parlette & Jim Phillips
ViralNEWS.com

About This eBook

The University of Hard Knocks!
Ralph Parlette (1870-1930)

LADIES and Gentlemen: I do not want to be seen in this lecture. I want to be heard. I am only the delivery wagon. When the delivery wagon comes to your house, you are not much interested in how it looks; you are interested in the goods it brings you. You know some very good goods are sometimes delivered to you in some very poor delivery wagons.

So in this lecture, please do not pay any attention to the delivery wagon--how much it squeaks and wheezes and rattles and wabbles. Do not pay much attention to the wrappings and strings. Get inside to the goods.

Really, I believe the goods are good. I believe I am to recite to you some of the multiplication table of life--not mine, not yours alone, but everybody's.

Can Only Pull the Plug!

Every audience has a different temperature, and that makes a lecture go differently before every audience. The kind of an audience is just as important as the kind of a lecture. A cold audience will make a good lecture poor, while a warm audience will make a poor lecture good.

Let me illustrate:

When I was a boy we had a barrel of sorghum in the woodshed. When mother wanted to make ginger-bread or cookies, she would send me to the woodshed to get a bucket of sorghum from that barrel.

Some warm September day I would pull the plug from the barrel and the sorghum would fairly squirt into my bucket. Later in the fall when it was colder, I would pull the plug but the sorghum would not squirt. It would come out slowly and reluctantly, so that I would have to wait a long while to get a little sorghum. And on some real cold winter day I would pull the plug, but the sorghum would not run at all. It would just look out at me.

I discovered it was the temperature.

I have brought a barrel of sorghum to this audience. The name of the sorghum is "The University of Hard Knocks." I can only pull the plug. I cannot make it run. That will depend upon the temperature of this audience. You can have all you want of it, but to get it to running freely, you will have to warm up.

Did You Bring a Bucket?

No matter how the sorghum runs, you have to have a bucket to get it. How much any one gets out of a lecture depends also upon the size of the bucket he brings to get it in. A big bucket can get filled at a very small stream. A little bucket gets little at the greatest stream. With no bucket you can get nothing at Niagara.

That often explains why one person says a lecture is great, while the next person says he got nothing out of it.

What It's All About

Here is a great mass of words and sentences and pictures to express two or three simple little ideas of life, that our education is our growing up from the Finite to the Infinite, and that it is done by our own personal overcoming, and that we never finish it.

Have you noticed that no sentence, nor a million sentences, can bound life? Have you noticed that every statement does not quite cover it? No statement, no library, can tell all about life. No success rule can alone solve the problem. You must average it all and struggle up to a higher vision.

We are told that the stomach needs bulk as well as nutriment. It would not prosper with the necessary elements in their condensed form. So abstract truths in their lowest terms do not always promote mental digestion like more bulk in the way of pictures and discussions of these truths. Here is bulk as well as nutriment.

If you get the feeling that the first personal pronoun is being overworked, I remind you that this is more a confession than a lecture. You cannot confess without referring to the confesser.

To Everybody in My Audience

I like you because I am like you.

I believe in you because I believe in myself. We are all one family. I believe in your Inside, not in your Outside, whoever you are, whatever you are, wherever you are.

I believe in the Angel of Good inside every block of human marble.
I believe it must be carved out in The University of Hard Knocks.

The University Of Hard Knocks! - 9 -

I believe all this pride, vanity, selfishness, self-righteousness, hypocrisy and human frailty are the Outside that must be chipped away.

I believe the Hard Knocks cannot injure the Angel, but can only reveal it.

I hope you are getting your Hard Knocks.

I care little about your glorious or inglorious past. I care little about your present. I care much about your future for that is to see more of the Angel in you.

The University of Hard Knocks

Lesson 7 - The Salvation of a "Sucker"

The Fiddle and the Tuning

HOW long it takes to learn things! I think I was thirty-four years learning one sentence, "You can't get something for nothing." I have not yet learned it. Every few days I stumble over it somewhere.

For that sentence utters one of the fundamentals of life that underlies every field of activity.

What is knowing?

One day a manufacturer took me thru his factory where he makes fiddles. Not violins--fiddles.

A violin is only a fiddle with a college education.

I have had the feeling ever since that you and I come into this world like the fiddle comes from the factory. We have a body and a neck. That is about all there is either to us or to the fiddle. We are empty. We have no strings. We have no bow--yet!

When the human fiddles are about six years old they go into the primary schools and up thru the grammar grades, and get the first string--the little E string. The trouble is so many of these human fiddles think they are an orchestra right away. They want to quit school and go fiddling thru life on this one string!

We must show these little fiddles they must go back into school and go up thru all the departments and institutions necessary to give them the full complement of strings for their life symphonies.

After all this there comes the commencement, and the violin comes forth with the E, A, D and G strings all in place. Educated now?

Why is a violin? To wear strings? Gussie got that far and gave a lot of discord. The violin is to give music.

So there is much yet to do after getting the strings. All the book and college can do is to give the strings--the tools. After that the violin must go into the great tuning school of life. Here the pegs are turned and the strings are put in tune. The music is the knowing. Learning is tuning.

You do not know what you have memorized, you know what you have vitalized, what you have written in the book of experience.

Gussie says, "I have read it in a book." Bill Whackem says, "I know!"

Reading and Knowing

All of us are Christopher Columbuses, discovering the same new-old continents of Truth. That is the true happiness of life--discovering Truth. We read things in a book and have a hazy idea of them. We hear the preacher utter truths and we say with little feeling, "Yes, that is so." We hear the great truths of life over and over and we are not excited. Truth never excites--it is falsehood that excites--until we discover it in our lives. Until we see it with our own eyes. Then there is a thrill. Then the old truth becomes a new blessing.

Then the oldest, driest platitude crystallizes into a flashing jewel to delight and enrich our consciousness. This joy of discovery is the joy of living.

There is such a difference between reading a thing and knowing a thing. We could read a thousand descriptions of the sun and not know the sun as in one glimpse of it with our own eyes.

I used to stand in the row of blessed little rascals in the "deestrick" school and read from McGuffey's celebrated literature, "If--I-p-p-play--with--the--f-f-f-i-i-i-r-r-e--I--will--g-e-e-et --my-y-y-y--f-f-f--ingers--bur-r-r-nd--period!"

I did not learn it. I wish I had learned by reading it that if I play with the fire I will get my fingers burned. I had to slap my hands upon hot stoves and coffee-pots, and had to get many kinds of blisters in order to learn it.

Then I had to go around showing the blisters, boring my friends and taking up a collection of sympathy. "Look at my bad luck!" Fool!

This is not a lecture. It is a confession! It seems to me if you in the audience knew how little I know, you wouldn't stay.

"You Can't Get Something for Nothing"

Yes, I was thirty-four years learning that one sentence. "You can't get something for nothing." That is, getting it in partial tune. It took me so long because I was naturally bright. It takes that kind longer than a human being. They are so smart you cannot teach them with a few bumps. They have to be pulverized.

That sentence takes me back to the days when I was a "hired man" on the farm. You might not think I had ever been a "hired man" on the farm at ten dollars a

month and "washed, mended and found." You see me here on this platform in my graceful and cultured manner, and you might not believe that I had ever trained an orphan calf to drink from a copper kettle. But I have fed him the fingers of this hand many a time. You might not think that I had ever driven a yoke of oxen and had said the words. But I have!

I remember the first county fair I ever attended. Fellow sufferers, you may remember that at the county fair all the people sort out to their own departments. Some people go to the canned fruit department. Some go to the fancywork department. Some go to the swine department. Everybody goes to his own department. Even the "suckers"! Did you ever notice where they go? That is where I went--to the "trimming department."

I was in the "trimming department" in five minutes. Nobody told me where it was. I didn't need to be told. I gravitated there. The barrel always shakes all of one size to one place. You notice that--in a city all of one size get together.

Right at the entrance to the "local Midway" I met a gentleman. I know he was a gentleman because he said he was a gentleman. He had a little light table he could move quickly. Whenever the climate became too sultry he would move to greener pastures. On that table were three little shells in a row, and there was a little pea under the middle shell. I saw it there, being naturally bright. I was the only naturally bright person around the table, hence the only one who knew under which shell the little round pea was hidden.

Even the gentleman running the game was fooled. He thought it was under the end shell and bet me money it was under the end shell.

You see, this was not gambling, this was a sure thing. (It was!) I had saved up my money for weeks to attend the fair. I bet it all on that middle shell. I felt bad. It seemed like robbing father.

And he seemed like a real nice old gentleman, and maybe he had a family to keep. But I would teach him a lesson not to "monkey" with people like me, naturally bright.

But I needn't have felt bad. I did not rob father. Father cleaned me out of all I had in about five seconds.

I went over to the other side of the fairgrounds and sat down. That was all I had to do now--just go, sit down. I couldn't see the mermaid now or get into the grandstand.

Sadly I thought it all over, but I did not get the right answer.

I said the thing every fool does say when he gets bumped and fails to learn the lesson from the bump. I said, "Next time I shall be more careful."

When anybody says that he is due for a return date.

I Bought the Soap

Learn? No! Within a month I was on the street a Saturday night when another gentleman drove into town. He stopped on the public square and stood up in his buggy. "Let the prominent citizens gather around me, for I am going to give away dollars."

Immediately all the prominent "suckers" crowded around the buggy.

"Gentlemen, I am introducing this new medicinal soap that cures all diseases humanity is heir to. Now just to introduce and advertise, I am putting these cakes of Wonder Soap in my hat. You see I am wrapping a ten-dollar bill around one cake and throwing it into the hat. Now who will give me five dollars for the privilege of taking a cake of this wonderful soap from my hat--any cake you want, gentlemen!"

And right on top of the pile was the cake with the ten wrapped around it! I jumped over the rest to shove my five (two weeks' farm work) in his hands and grab that bill cake. But the bill disappeared. I never knew where it went. The man whipped up his horse and also disappeared. I never knew where he went.

My "Fool Drawer"

I grew older and people began to notice that I was naturally bright and therefore good picking. They began to let me in on the ground floor. Did anybody ever let you in on the ground floor? I never could stick. Whenever anybody let me in on the ground floor it seemed like I would always slide on thru and land in the cellar.

I used to have a drawer in my desk I called my "fool drawer." I kept my investments in it. I mean, the investments I did not have to lock up. You get the pathos of that--the investments nobody wanted to steal. And whenever I would get unduly inflated I would open that drawer and "view the remains."

I had in that drawer the deed to my Oklahoma corner-lots. Those lots were going to double next week. But they did not double I doubled. They still exist on the blueprint and the Oklahoma metropolis on paper is yet a wide place in the road.

I had in that drawer my deed to my rubber plantation. Did you ever hear of a rubber plantation in Central America? That was mine.

I had there my oil propositions. What a difference, I have learned, between an oil

proposition and an oil well! The learning has been very expensive.

I used to wonder how I ever could spend my income. I do not wonder now. I wonder how I will make it.

I had in that drawer my "Everglade" farm. Did you ever hear of the "Everglades"? I have an alligator ranch there. It is below the frost-line, also below the water-line. I will sell it by the gallon.

I had also a bale of mining stock. I had stock in gold mines and silver mines. Nobody knows how much mining stock I have owned.

Nobody could know while I kept that drawer shut. As I looked over my gold and silver mine stock, I often noticed that it was printed in green. I used to wonder why they printed it in green--wonder if they wanted it to harmonize with me! And I would realize I had so much to live for--the dividends. I have been so near the dividends I could smell them.

Only one more assessment, then we will cut the melon! I have heard that all my life and never got a piece of the rind.

Getting "Selected"

Why go farther? I am not half done confessing. Each bump only increased my faith that the next ship would be mine. Good, honest, retired ministers would come periodically and sell me stock in some new enterprise that had millions in it--in its prospectus. I would buy because I knew the minister was honest and believed in it. He was selling it on his reputation. Favorite dodge of the promoter to get the ministers to sell his shares.

I was also greatly interested in companies where I put in one dollar and got back a dollar or two of bonds and a dollar or two of stock. That was doubling and trebling my money over night. An old banker once said to me, "Why don't you invest in something that will pay you five or six per cent. and get it?"

I pitied his lack of vision. Bankers were such "tightwads." They had no imagination!

Nothing interested me that did not offer fifty or a hundred per cent.--then. Give me the five per cent. now!

By the time I was thirty-four I was a rich man in worthless paper.

It would have been better for me if I had thrown about all my savings into the bottom of the sea.

Then I got a confidential letter from a friend of our family I had never met. His name was Thomas A. Cleage, and he was in the Rialto Building, St. Louis, Missouri. He wrote me in extreme confidence, "You have been selected."

Were you ever selected? If you were, then you know the thrill that rent my manly bosom as I read that letter from this man who said he was a friend of our family. "You have been selected because you are a prominent citizen and have a large influence in your community. You are a natural leader and everybody looks up to you."

He knew me! He was the only man who did know me. So I took the cork clear under.

"Because of your tremendous influence you have been selected to go in with us in the inner circle and get a thousand per cent. dividends."

Did you get that? I hope you did. I did not! But I took a night train for St. Louis. I was afraid somebody might beat me there if I waited till next day. I sat up all night in a day coach to save money for Tom, the friend of our family. But I see now I need not have hurried so. They would have waited a month with the sheep-shears ready. Lambie, lambie, lambie, come to St. Louis!

I don't get any sympathy from this crowd. You laugh at me. You respect not my feelings.

I am not going to tell you a thing that happened in St. Louis. It is none of your business!

O, I am so glad I went to St. Louis. Being naturally bright, I could not learn it at home, back in Ohio. I had to go clear down to St. Louis to Tom Cleage's bucket-shop and pay him eleven hundred dollars to corner the wheat market of the world. That is all I paid him. I could not borrow any more. I joined what he called a "pool." I think it must have been a pool, for I know I fell in and got soaked!

That bump set me to thinking. My fever began to reduce. I got the thirty-third degree in financial suckerdome for only eleven hundred dollars.

I have always regarded Tom as one of my great school teachers. I have always regarded the eleven hundred as the finest investment I had made up to that time, for I got the most out of it. I do not feel hard toward goldbrick men and "blue sky" venders. I sometimes feel that we should endow them. How else can we save a sucker? You cannot tell him anything, because he is naturally bright and knows better. You simply have to trim him till he bleeds.

I Am Cured

It is worth eleven hundred dollars every day to know that one sentence, You cannot get something for nothing. Life just begins to get juicy when you know it. Today when I open a newspaper and see a big ad, "Grasp a Fortune Now!" I will not do it! I stop my subscription to that paper. I simply will not take a paper with that ad in it, for I have graduated from that class.

I will not grasp a fortune now. Try me, I dare you! Bring a fortune right up on this platform and put it down there on the floor. I will not grasp it. Come away, it is a coffee-pot!

Today when somebody offers me much more than the legal rate of interest I know he is no friend of our family.

If he offers me a hundred per cent. I call for the police!

Today when I get a confidential letter that starts out, "You have been selected--" I never read farther than the word "selected." Meeting is adjourned. I select the waste-basket.

Here, get in there just as quick as you can. I was selected!

O, Absalom, Absalom, my son, my son! Learn it early in life. The law of compensation is never suspended. You only own what you earn.

You can't get something for nothing. If you do not learn it, you will have to be "selected."

There is no other way for you, because you are naturally bright. When you get a letter, "You have been selected to receive a thousand per cent. dividends," it means you have been selected to receive this bunch of blisters because you look like the biggest sucker on the local landscape.

The other night in a little town of perhaps a thousand, a banker took me up into his office after the lecture in which I had related some of the above experiences. "The audience laughed with you and thought it very funny," said he. "I couldn't laugh. It was too pathetic. It was a picture of what is going on in our own little community year after year.

I wish you could see what I have to see.

I wish you could see the thousands of hard-earned dollars that go out of our community every year into just such wildcat enterprises as you described. The saddest part of it is that the money nearly always goes out of the pockets of the people who can least afford to lose it."

Absalom, wake up! This is bargain night for you. I paid eleven hundred dollars to tell you this one thing, and you get it for a dollar or two. This is no cheap lecture. It cost blood.

Learn that the gambler never owns his winnings. The man who accumulates by sharp practices or by undue profits never owns it.

Even the young person who has large fortune given him does not own it. We only own what we have rendered definite service to bound.

The owning is in the understanding of values.

This is true physically, mentally, morally. You only own what you have earned and stored in your life, not merely in your pocket, stomach or mind.

I often think if it takes me thirty-four years to begin to learn one sentence, I see the need of an eternity.

To me that is one of the great arguments for eternal life--how slowly I learn, and how much there is to learn. It will take an eternity!

Those Commencement Orations

The young person says, "By next June I shall have finished my education." Bless them all! They will have put another string on their fiddle.

After they "finish" they have a commencement, not an end-ment, as they think. This is not to sneer, but to cheer. Isn't it glorious that life is one infinite succession of commencements and promotions!

I love to attend commencements. The stage is so beautifully decorated and the joy of youth is everywhere. There is a row of geraniums along the front of the stage and a big oleander on the side. There is a long-whiskered rug in the middle. The graduates sit in a semicircle upon the stage in their new patent leather. I know how it hurts. It is the first time they have worn it.

Then they make their orations. Every time I hear their orations I like them better, because every year I am getting younger. Damsel Number One comes forth and begins:

"Beyond the Alps (sweep arms forward to the left, left arm leading) lieth Italy!"
(Bring arms down, letting fingers follow the wrist.

How embarrassing at a commencement for the fingers not to follow the wrist! It is always a shock to the audience when the wrist sweeps downward and the fingers

remain up in the air. So by all means, let the fingers follow the wrist, just as the elocution teacher marked on page 69.

Applause, especially from relatives.

Sweet Girl Graduate Number 2, generally comes second. S. G. G. No.2 stands at the same leadpencil mark on the floor, resplendent in a filmy creation caught with something or other.

"We (hands at half-mast and separating) are rowing (business of propelling aerial boat with two fingers of each hand, head inclined). We are not drifting (hands slide downward)."

Children, we are not laughing at you. We are laughing at ourselves.

We are laughing the happy laugh at how we have learned these great truths that you have memorized, but not vitalized.

You get the most beautiful and sublime truths from Emerson's essays. (How did they ever have commencements before Emerson?) But that is not knowing them. You cannot know them until you have lived them. It is a grand thing to say, "Beyond the Alps lieth Italy," but you can never really say that until you know it by struggling up over Alps of difficulty and seeing the Italy of promise and victory beyond. It is fine to say, "We are rowing and not drifting," but you cannot really say that until you have pulled on the oar.

O, Gussie, get an oar!

My Maiden Sermon

Did you ever hear a young preacher, just captured, just out of a factory?

Did you ever hear him preach his "maiden sermon"? I wish you had heard mine. I had a call. At least, I thought I had a call. I think now I was "short-circuited." The "brethren" waited upon me and told me I had been "selected": Maybe this was a local call, not long distance.

They gave me six weeks in which to load the gospel gun and get ready for my try-out. I certainly loaded it to the muzzle.

But I made the mistake I am trying to warn you against. Instead of going to the one book where I might have gotten a sermon--the book of my experience, I went to the books in my father's library. "As the poet Shakespeare has so beautifully said," and then I took a chunk of Shakespeare and nailed it on page five of my sermon. "List to the poet Tennyson." Come here, Lord Alfred. So I soldered these

fragments from the books together with my own native genius. I worked that sermon up into the most beautiful splurges and spasms.

I bedecked it with metaphors and semaphores. I filled it with climaxes, both wet and dry.

I had a fine wet climax on page fourteen, where I had made a little mark in the margin which meant "cry here." This was the spilling-point of the wet climax. I was to cry on the lefthand side of the page.

I committed it all to memory, and then went to a lady who taught expression, to get it expressed. You have to get it expressed.

I got the most beautiful gestures nailed into almost every page.

You know about gestures--these things you make with your arms in the air as you speak. You can notice it on me yet.

I am not sneering at expression. Expression is a noble art. All life is expression. But you have to get something to express. Here I made my mistake. I got a lot of fine gestures. I got an express-wagon and got no load for it. So it rattled. I got a necktie, but failed to get any man to hang it upon. I got up before a mirror for six weeks, day by day, and said the sermon to the glass. It got so it would run itself. I could have gone to sleep and that sermon would not have hesitated.

Then came the grand day. The boy wonder stood forth and before his large and enthusiastic concourse delivered that maiden sermon more grandly than ever to a mirror.

Every gesture went off the bat according to the blueprint. I cried on page fourteen! I never knew it was in me. But I certainly got it all out that day!

Then I did another fine thing, I sat down. I wish now I had done that earlier. I wish now I had sat down before I got up. I was the last man out of the church--and I hurried. But they beat me out--all nine of them. When I went out the door, the old sexton said as he jiggled the key in the door to hurry me, "Don't feel bad, bub, I've heerd worse than that. You're all right, bub, but you don't know nothin' yet."

I cried all the way to town. If he had plunged a dagger into me he would not have hurt me so much. It has taken some years to learn that the old man was right. I had wonderful truth in that sermon.

No sermon ever had greater truth, but I had not lived it. The old man meant I did not know my own sermon.

So, children, when you prepare your commencement oration, write about what you know best, what you have lived. If you know more about peeling potatoes than about anything else, write about "Peeling Potatoes," and you are most likely to hear the applause peal from that part of your audience unrelated to you.

Out of every thousand books published, perhaps nine hundred of them do not sell enough to pay the cost of printing them. As you study the books that do live, you note that they are the books that have been lived. Perhaps the books that fail have just as much of truth in them and they may even be better written, yet they lack the vital impulse. They come out of the author's head. The books that live must come out of his heart. They are his own life. They come surging and pulsating from the book of his experience.

The best part of our schooling comes not from the books, but from the men behind the books.

We study agriculture from books. That does not make us an agriculturist. We must take a hoe and go out and agricult. That is the knowing in the doing.

You Must Live Your Song

"There was never a picture painted, There was never a poem sung, But the soul of the artist fainted, And the poet's heart was wrung."

So many young people think because they have a good voice and they have cultivated it, they are singers. All this cultivation and irritation and irrigation and gargling of the throat are merely symptoms of a singer--merely neckties. Singers look better with neckties.

They think the song comes from the diaphragm. But it comes from the heart, chaperoned by the diaphragm. You cannot sing a song you have not lived.

Jessie was singing the other day at a chautauqua. She has a beautiful voice, and she has been away to "Ber-leen" to have it attended to. She sang that afternoon in the tent, "The Last Rose of Summer." She sang it with every note so well placed, with the sweetest little trills and tendrils, with the smile exactly like her teacher had taught her. Jessie exhibited all the machinery and trimmings for the song, but she had no steam, no song. She sang the notes. She might as well have sung, "Pop, Goes the Weasel."

The audience politely endured Jessie. That night a woman sang in the same tent "The Last Rose of Summer." She had never been to Berlin, but she had lived that song. She didn't dress the notes half so beautifully as Jessie did, but she sang it with the tremendous feeling it demands. The audience went wild. It was a case of Gussie and Bill Whackem.

All this was gall and wormwood to Jessie. "Child," I said to her, "this is the best singing lesson you have ever had. Your study is all right and you have a better voice than that woman, but you cannot sing "The Last Rose of Summer" yet, for you do not know very much about the first rose of summer. And really, I hope you'll never know the ache and disappointment you must know before you can sing that song, for it is the sob of a broken-hearted woman. Learn to sing the songs you have lived."

Why do singers try to execute songs beyond the horizon of their lives? That is why they "execute" them.

The Success of a Song-Writer

The guest of honor at a dinner in a Chicago club was a woman who is one of the widely known song-writers of this land. As I had the good fortune to be sitting at table with her I wanted to ask her, "How did you get your songs known? How did you know what kind of songs the people want to sing?"

But in the hour she talked with her friends around the table I found the answer to every question. "Isn't it good to be here?"

Isn't it great to have friends and a fine home and money?" she said. "I have had such a struggle in my life. I have lived on one meal a day and didn't know where the next meal was coming from. I know what it is to be left alone in the world upon my own resources.

I have had years of struggle. I have been sick and discouraged and down and out. It was in my little back-room, the only home I had, that I began to write songs. I wrote them for my own relief. I was writing my own life, just what was in my own heart and what the struggles were teaching me. No one is more surprised and grateful that the world seems to love my songs and asks for more of them."

The woman was Carrie Jacobs-Bond, who wrote "The Perfect Day," "Just a Wearyin' for You," "His Lullaby" and many more of those simple little songs so full of the pathos and philosophy of life that they tug at your heart and moisten your eyes.

Anybody could write those songs--just a few simple words and notes.

No. Books of theory and harmony and expression only teach us how to write the words and where to place the notes. These are not the song, but only the skeleton into which our own life must breathe the life of the song.

The woman who sat there clad in black, with her sweet, expressive face crowned with silvery hair, had learned to write her songs in the University of Hard Knocks.

She here became the song philosopher she is today. Her defeats were her victories. If Carrie Jacobs-Bond had never struggled with discouragement, sickness, poverty and loneliness, she never would have been able to write the songs that appeal to the multitudes who have the same battles.

The popular song is the song that best voices what is in the popular heart. And while we have a continual inundation of popular songs that are trashy and voice the tawdriest human impulses, yet it is a tribute to the good elements in humanity that the wholesome, uplifting sentiments in Carrie Jacobs-Bond's songs continue to hold their popularity.

Theory and Practice

My friends, I am not arguing that you and I must drink the dregs of defeat, or that our lives must fill up with poverty or sorrow, or become wrecks. But I am insisting upon what I see written all around me in the affairs of everyday life, that none of us will ever know real success in any line of human endeavor until that success flows from the fullness of our experience just as the songs came from the life of Carrie Jacobs-Bond.

The world is full of theorists, dreamers, uplifters, reformers, who have worthy visions but are not able to translate them into practical realities. They go around with their heads in the clouds, looking upward, and half the time their feet are in the flower-beds or trampling upon their fellow men they dream of helping. Their ideas must be forged into usefulness available for this day upon the anvil of experience.

Many of the most brilliant theorists have been the greatest failures in practice.

There are a thousand who can tell you what is the matter with things to one person who can give you a practical way to fix them.

I used to have respect amounting to reverence for great readers and book men. I used to know a man who could tell in what book almost anything you could think of was discussed, and perhaps the page. He was a walking library index. I thought him a most wonderful man.

Indeed, in my childhood I thought he was the greatest man in the world.

He was a remarkable man--a great reader and with a memory that retained it all. That man could recite chapters and volumes.

He could give you almost any date. He could finish almost any quotation.

His conversation was largely made up of classical quotations.

But he was one of the most helpless men I have ever seen in practical life. He seemed to be unable to think and reason for himself. He could quote a page of John Locke, but somehow the page didn't supply the one sentence needed for the occasion. The man was a misfit on earth. He was liable to put the gravy in his coffee and the gasoline in the fire.

He seemed never to have digested any of the things in his memory. Since I have grown up I always think of that man as an intellectual cold storage plant.

The greatest book is the textbook of the University of Hard Knocks, the Book of Human Experience the "sermons in stones" and the "books in running brooks." Most fortunate is he who has learned to read understandingly from it.

Note the sweeping, positive statements of the young person.

Note the cautious, specific statements of the person who has lived long in this world.

Our education is our progress from the sweeping, positive, wholesale statements we have not proved, to the cautious, specific statements we have proved.

Tuning the Strings of Life

Many audiences are gathered into this one audience. Each person here is a different audience, reading a different page in the Book of Human Experience. Each has a different fight to make and a different burden to carry. Each one of us has more trouble than anybody else!

I know there are chapters of heroism in the lives of you older ones. You have cried yourselves to sleep, some of you, and walked the floor when you could not sleep. You have learned that "beyond the Alps lieth Italy."

A good many of you were bumped today or yesterday, or maybe years ago, and the wound has not healed. You think it never will heal.

You came here thinking that perhaps you would forget your trouble for a little while. I know there are people in this audience in pain.

Never do this many gather but what there are some with aching hearts.

And you young people here with lives like June mornings, are not much interested in this lecture. You are polite and attentive because this is a polite and attentive neighborhood.

But down in your hearts you are asking, "What is this all about? What is that man talking about? I haven't had these things and I'm not going to have them, either!"

Maybe some of you are naturally bright!

You are going to be bumped. You are going to cry yourselves to sleep. You are going to walk the floor when you cannot sleep. Some of you are going to know the keen sorrow of having the one you trust most betray you. Maybe, betray you with a kiss. You will go through your Gethsemane. You will see your dearest plans wrecked.

You will see all that seems to make life livable lost out of your horizon. You will say, "God, let me die. I have nothing more to live for."

For all lives have about the same elements. Your life is going to be about like other lives.

And you are going to learn the wonderful lesson thru the years, the bumps and the tears, that all these things somehow are necessary to promote our education.

These bumps and hard knocks do not break the fiddle--they turn the pegs.

These bumps and tragedies and Waterloos draw the strings of the soul tighter and tighter, nearer and nearer to God's great concert pitch, where the discords fade from our lives and where the music divine and harmonies celestial come from the same old strings that had been sending forth the noise and discord.

Thus we know that our education is progressing, as the evil and unworthy go out of our lives and as peace, harmony, happiness, love and understanding come into our lives.

That is getting in tune.

That is growing up.

Lesson 8 - Looking Backward

Memories of the Price We Pay

WHAT a price we pay for what we know! I laugh as I look backward--and weep and rejoice.

I was not born with a silver spoon in my mouth, altho it is quite evident that I could have handled a pretty good-sized spoon. But father being a country preacher, we had tin spoons. We never had to tie a red string around our spoons when we loaned them for the ladies' aid society oyster supper. We always got our spoons back.

Nobody ever traded with us by mistake.

Do you remember the first money you ever earned? I do. I walked several miles into the country those old reaper days and gathered sheaves. That night I was proud when that farmer patted me on the head and said, "You are the best boy to work, I ever saw." Then the cheerful old miser put a nickel in my blistered hand. That nickel looked bigger than any money I have since handled.

That "Last Day of School"

Yet I was years learning it is much easier to make money than to handle it, hence the tale that follows.

I was sixteen years old and a school teacher. Sweet sixteen--which means green sixteen.

But remember again, only green things grow.

There is hope for green things. I was so tall and awkward then--I haven't changed much since. I kept still about my age. I was several dollars the lowest bidder. They said out that way, "Anybody can teach kids." That is why I was a teacher.

I had never studied pedagogy, but I had whittled out three rules that I thought would make it go. My first rule was, Make 'em study.

My second, Make, em recite. That is, fill 'em up and then empty 'em.

My third and most important rule was, Get your money!

I walked thirteen miles a day, six and a half miles each way, most of the time, to save money. I think I had all teaching methods in use.

With the small fry I used a small paddle to win their confidence and arouse their enthusiasm for an education. With the pupils larger and more muscular than their teacher I used love and moral suasion.

We ended the school with an "exhibition." Did you ever attend the old back-country "last day of school exhibition"? The people that day came from all over the township. They were so glad our school was closing they all turned out to make it a success. They brought great baskets of provender and we had a feast. We covered the school desks with boards, and then covered the boards with piles of fried chicken, doughnuts and forty kinds of pie.

Then we had a "doings." Everybody did a stunt. We executed a lot of literature that day.

Execute is the word that tells what happened to literature in District No. 1, Jackson Township, that day. I can shut my eyes and see it yet. I can see my pupils coming forward to speak their "pieces." I hardly knew them and they hardly knew me, for we were "dressed up." Many a head showed father had mowed it with the sheepshears.

Mother had been busy with the wash-rag--clear back of the ears! And into them! So many of them wore collars that stuck out all stiff like they had pushed their heads on thru their big straw hats.

I can see them speaking their "pieces." I can see "The Soldier of the Legion lay dying in Algiers." We had him die again that day, and he had a lingering end as we executed him.

I can see "The boy stood on the burning deck, whence all but he had fled." I can see "Mary's little lamb" come slipping over the stage. I see the tow-headed patriot in "Give me liberty or give me death." I feel now that if Patrick Henry had been present, he would have said, "Give me death."

There came a breathless hush as "teacher" came forward as the last act on the bill to say farewell. It was customary to cry. I wanted to yell. Tomorrow I would get my money! I had a speech I had been saying over and over until it would say itself. But somehow when I got up before that "last day of school" audience and opened my mouth, it was a great opening, but nothing came out. It came out of my eyes. Tears rolled down my cheeks until I could hear them spatter on my six-dollar suit.

And my pupils wept as their dear teacher said farewell. Parents wept. It was a teary time. I only said, "Weep not for me, dear friends. I am going away, but I am coming back." I thought to cheer them up, but they wept the more.

Next day I drew my money. I had it all in one joyous wad--\$240. I was going home with head high and aircastles even higher. But I never got home with the money. Talk about the fool and his money and you get very personal.

For on the way home I met Deacon K, and he borrowed it all. Deacon K was "such a good man" and a "pillar of the church." I used to wonder, tho, why he didn't take a pillow to church. I took his note for \$240, "due at corncutting," as we termed that annual fall-time paying up season. I really thought a note was not necessary, such was my confidence in the deacon.

For years I kept a faded, tear-spattered, yellow note for \$240, "due at corncutting," as a souvenir of my first schoolteaching.

Deacon K has gone from earth. He has gone to his eternal reward. I scarcely know whether to look up or down as I say that. He never left any forwarding address.

I was paid thousands in experience for that first schoolteaching, but I paid all the money I got from it--two hundred and forty thirteen-mile-a-day dollars to learn one thing I could not learn from the books, that it takes less wisdom to make money, than it does to intelligently handle it afterwards. Incidentally I learned it may be safer to do business with a first-class sinner than with a second-class saint.

Which is no slap at the church, but at its worst enemies, the foes of its own household.

Calling the Class-Roll

A lyceum bureau once sent me back to my home town to lecture. I imagine most lecturers have a hard time lecturing in the home town.

Their schoolmates and playmates are apt to be down there in the front rows with their families, and maybe all the old scores have not yet been settled. The boy he fought with may be down there.

Perhaps the girl who gave him the "mitten" is there.

And he has gotten his lecture out of that home town. The heroes and villains live there within striking distance. Perhaps they have come to hear him. "Is not this the carpenter's son?" Perhaps this is why some lecturers and authors are not so popular in the home town until several generations pass.

I went back to the same hall to speak, and stood upon the same platform where twenty-one years before I had stood to deliver my graduating oration, when in impassioned and well modulated tones I had exclaimed, "Greece is gone and Rome is no more, but fe-e-e-e-ear not, for I will sa-a-a-a-ave you!" or words to that effect.

Then I went back to the little hotel and sat up alone in my room half the night living it over. Time was when I thought anybody who could live in that hotel was a superior order of being. But the time had come when I knew the person who could go on living in any hotel has a superior order of vitality.

I held thanksgiving services that night. I could see better. I had a picture of the school in that town that had been taken twenty-one years before, just before commencement. I had not seen the picture these twenty-one years, for I could not then afford to buy one. The price was a quarter.

I got a truer perspective of life that night. Did you ever sit alone with a picture of your classmates taken twenty-one years before? It is a memorable experience.

A class of brilliant and gifted young people went out to take charge of the world. They were so glad the world had waited so long on them. They were so willing to take charge of the world. They were going to be presidents and senators and authors and authoresses and scientists and scientist-esses and geniuses and genius-esses and things like that.

There was one boy in the class who was not naturally bright. It was not the one you may be thinking of! No, it was Jim Lambert. He had no brilliant career in view. He was dull and seemed to lack intellect. He was "conditioned" into the senior class. We all felt a little sorry for Jim.

As commencement day approached, the committee of the class appointed for that purpose took Jim back of the schoolhouse and broke the news to him that they were going to let him graduate, but they were not going to let him speak, because he couldn't make a speech that would do credit to such a brilliant class. They hid Jim on the stage back of the oleander commencement night.

Shake the barrel!

The girl who was to become the authoress became the helloess in the home telephone exchange, and had become absolutely indispensable to the community. The girl who was to become the poetess became the goddess at the general delivery window and superintendent of the stamp-licking department of the home postoffice. The boy who was going to Confess was raising the best corn in the county, and his wife was speaker of the house.

Most of them were doing very well even Jim Lambert. Jim had become the head of one of the big manufacturing plants of the South, with a lot of men working for him. The committee that took him out behind the schoolhouse to inform him he could not speak at commencement, would now have to wait in line before a frosted door marked, "Mr. Lambert, Private." They would have to send up their cards, and the watchdog who guards the door would tell them, "Cut it short, he's busy!" before they could break any news to him today.

They hung a picture of Mr. Lambert in the high school at the last alumni meeting. They hung it on the wall near where the oleander stood that night.

Dull boy or girl--you with your eyes tear-dimmed sometimes because you do not seem to learn like some in your classes can you not get a bit of cheer from the story of Jim?

Hours pass, and still as I sat in that hotel room I was lost in that school picture and the twenty-one years. There were fifty-four young people in that picture. They had been shaken these years in the barrel, and now as I called the roll on them, most of them that I expected to go up had shaken down and some that I expected to stay down had shaken up.

Out of that fifty-four, one had gone to a pulpit, one had gone to Congress and one had gone to the penitentiary. Some had gone to brilliant success and some had gone down to sad failure. Some had found happiness and some had found unhappiness. It seemed as tho almost every note on the keyboard of human possibility had been struck by the one school of fifty-four.

When that picture was taken the oldest was not more than eighteen, yet most of them seemed already to have decided their destinies.

The twenty-one years that followed had not changed their courses.

The only changes had come where God had come into a life to uplift it, or where Mammon had entered to pull it down. And I saw better that the foolish dreams of success faded before the natural unfolding of talents, which is the real success. I saw better that "the boy is father to the man."

The boy who skimmed over his work in school was skimming over his work as a man.

The boy who went to the bottom of things in school was going to the bottom of things in manhood. Which had helped him to go to the top of things!

Jim Lambert had merely followed the call of talents unseen in him twenty-one years before.

The lazy boy became a "tired" man. The industrious boy became an industrious man. The sporty boy became a sporty man. The domineering egotist boy became the domineering egotist man.

The boy who traded knives with me and beat me--how I used to envy him! Why was it he could always get the better of me? Well, he went on trading knives and getting the better of people. Now, twenty-one years afterwards, he was doing time in the state penitentiary for forgery. He was now called a bad man, when twenty-one years ago when he did the same things on a smaller scale they called him smart and bright.

The "perfectly lovely" boy who didn't mix with the other boys, who didn't whisper, who never got into trouble, who always had his hair combed, and said, "If you please," used to hurt me. He was the teacher's model boy. All the mothers of the community used to say to their own reprobate offspring, "Why can't you be like Harry?"

He'll be President of the United States some day, and you'll be in jail." But Model Harry sat around all his life being a model. I believe Mr. Webster defines a model as a small imitation of the real thing. Harry certainly was a successful model. He became a seedy, sleepy, helpless relic at forty. He was "perfectly lovely" because he hadn't the energy to be anything else. It was the boys who had the hustle and the energy, who occasionally needed bumping--and who got it--who really grew.

I have said little about the girls of the school. Fact was, at that age I didn't pay much attention to them. I regarded them as in the way. But I naturally thought of Clarice, our social pet of the class--our real pretty girl who won the vase in the home paper beauty contest. Clarice went right on remaining in the social spotlight, primping and flirting. She outshone all the rest. But it seemed like she was all out-shine and no in-shine. She mistook popularity for success. The boys voted for her, but did not marry her. Most of the girls who shone with less social luster became the happy homemakers of the community.

But as I looked into the face of Jim Lambert in the picture, my heart warmed at the sight of another great success--a sweet-faced irish lass who became an "old maid." She had worked day by day all these years to support a home and care for her family. She had kept her grace and sweetness thru it all, and the influence of her white, loving life radiated far.

The Boy I Had Envied

Frank was the boy I had envied. He had everything--a fine home, a loving father, plenty of money, opportunity and a great career awaiting him. And he was bright and lovable and talented.

Everybody said Frank would make his mark in the world and make the town proud of him.

I was the janitor of the schoolhouse. Some of my classmates will never know how their thoughtless jeers and jokes wounded the sensitive, shabby boy who swept the floors, built the fires and carried in the coal. After commencement my career seemed to end and the careers of Frank and the rest of them seemed to begin. They were going off to college and going to do so many wonderful things.

But the week after commencement I had to go into a printing office, roll up my sleeves and go to work in the "devil's corner" to earn my daily bread. Seemed like it took so much bread!

Many a time as I plugged at the "case" I would think of Frank and wonder why some people had all the good things and I had all the hard things.

How easy it is to see as you look backward. But how hard it is to see when you look forward.

Twenty-one years afterward as I got off the train in the home town, I asked, "Where is he?" We went out to the cemetery, where I stood at a grave and read on the headstone, "Frank."

I had the story of a tragedy--the tragedy of modern unpreparedness.

It was the story of the boy who had every opportunity, but who had all the struggle taken out of his life. He never followed his career, never developed any strength. He disappointed hopes, spent a fortune, broke his father's heart, shocked the community, and finally ended his wasted life with a bullet fired by his own hand.

Why Ben Hur Won

It revived the memory of the story of Ben Hur.

Do you remember it? The Jewish boy is torn from his home in disgrace. He is haled into court and tried for a crime he never committed. Ben Hur did not get a fair trial. Nobody can get a fair trial at the hands of this world. That is why the great Judge has said, judge not, for you have not the full evidence in the case. I alone have that.

Then they condemn him. They lead him away to the galleys. They chain him to the bench and to the oar. There follow the days and long years when he pulls on the oar under the lash. Day after day he pulls on the oar. Day after day he

writhes under the sting of the lash. Years of the cruel injustice pass. Ben Hur is the helpless victim of a mocking fate.

That seems to be your life and my life. In the kitchen or the office, or wherever we work we seem so often like slaves bound to the oar and pulling under the sting of the lash of necessity. Life seems one futureless round of drudgery. We wonder why. We often look across the street and see somebody who lives a happier life.

That one is chained to no oar. See what a fine time they all have.

Why must we pull on the oar?

How blind we are! We can only see our own oar. We cannot see that they, too, pull on the oar and feel the lash. Most likely they are looking back at us and envying us. For while we envy others, others are envying us.

But look at the chariot race in Antioch. See the thousands in the circus. See Messala, the haughty Roman, and see! Ben Hur from the galleys in the other chariot pitted against him. Down the course dash these twin thunderbolts. The thousands hold their breath.

"Who will win?" "The man with the stronger forearms," they whisper.

There comes the crucial moment in the race. See the man with the stronger forearms.

They are bands of steel that swell in the forearms of Ben Hur. They swing those flying Arabians into the inner ring. Ben Hur wins the race! Where got the Jew those huge forearms? From the galleys!

Had Ben Hur never pulled on the oar, he never could have won the chariot race.

Sooner or later you and I are to learn that Providence makes no mistakes in the bookkeeping. As we pull on the oar, so often lashed by grim necessity, every honest effort is laid up at compound interest in the bank account of strength. Sooner or later the time comes when we need every ounce. Sooner or later our chariot race is on--when we win the victory, strike the deciding blow, stand while those around us fall--and it is won with the forearms earned in the galleys of life by pulling on the oar.

That is why I thanked God as I stood at the grave of my classmate.

I thanked God for parents who believed in the gospel of struggle, and for the circumstances that compelled it.

I am not an example of success.

But I am a very grateful pupil in the first reader class of The University of Hard Knocks.
