

# BRITISH WORKMAN



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**CELEBRATED SHEPHERDS.**

**DR. ALEXANDER MURRAY**

A celebrated self-taught linguist, was in early life a shepherd. He was born at Duntrotterick, in Galloway, in 1776. His father was a farm servant and had a numerous family, who were all shepherds, or pastoral farm servants. Alexander had reached his

sixth year before he was taught the alphabet. His first instructor was his father, who drew for him on the letters, A, B, C, &c. on the board of an old wool-card with the black end of a burned heather-stem! After this time, though his school education was very limited, he was constantly making acquisitions to his store of knowledge, spending every penny which he procured from friends or strangers in the purchase of books. By extraordinary

application he made himself master of the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and French languages, and when, in 1794, the fame of his acquirements gained him admission to the university of Edinburgh, he made a rapid progress also in the Eastern dialects. In 1800 he became assistant to Dr. Muirhead, the Minister of the parish of Urr, and soon afterwards he succeeded him in his pastoral charge. In 1811 he was applied to by the Marquis

Wellesley, as the only person in the British dominions qualified to translate a letter written in Goss, from the government of Tigre to his Britannic Majesty, and he performed the task in the most satisfactory way. The following year he was appointed to the chair of oriental languages in the university of Edinburgh, and at the same time received the degree of Doctor of divinity. He died in 1813.

**JAMES FERGUSON.**

Among the self-educated men of modern times there are few who claim more of our admiration than James Ferguson. He was born in the year 1710, a few miles from Keith, in Banffshire, his parents, as he tells us, being "in the humblest condition of life" (his father was a day labourer), "but religious and honest." It was his father's



THE FATHER OF DR. ALEXANDER MURRAY TEACHING HIM THE ALPHABET.





THE SATURDAY HALF-HOLIDAY.

PERSEVERANCE;

SKETCHES FROM REAL LIFE.

BY MRS. C. L. BALFOUR.

CHAPTER V.

coming into my poor house, I will prepare that home for him. Well, Saturday evening has come. There is visiting on the morrow. The poor working-man visits a neighbor...

We left Patty surrounded by all the sudden friends that had been called to the minister's door. Her poor mother had a relative or two, and those who had professed friendship, being invited to the poor man's house. One of "The Friend and Pitcher," chose either to express their sympathy, surprise, or indignation over him, than to offer aid and to the miserable family. It is strange and beautiful to observe how often God manifests Himself in the very weakness of his creature, and sends help in time of trouble, from the most unlikely sources. Patty had been a mere drudge in the household—ordered by and considered by none; and yet, when this storm descended, she the poor bruised reed, stood, when all around were prostrate. Her quiet methodical ways and constant industry were found to be indispensable. Through the first night of wretchedness she had nursed the children, and looked up the money for their extra charges, and made her mistress to lay her worried head upon a pillow, though to sleep there was perfectly impossible. The next morning she obtained the help of a poor man to open the shop; and when from a cold and fever she herself had dropped in to make small purchases, Patty was able to serve them without making many groans or calling her mistress, whose anger she could not bear observation. Of her own mind she was not so sure. She had heard enough during that and many succeeding weeks—and what with having both to do for her sick mother and to care for a new being. Her former sufferings and privations had robbed her of her childhood, her present exertions were fast putting her girlhood. She learned, for it was torn's sake, that her mother and her nephew had been committed to take their trial before the post office. They were conveyed to the county jail to await the sentence. Meanwhile, bills came pouring in from creditors, and the rent being in arrear, the landlord, fearing for his claims made a deed of sale, and put in an execution.

At the end of six dismal weeks, the result was, James being sent to the workhouse, and after 7 years transportation. His uncle, never able to see his wife and children, always drunk and incapable, was acquitted, but severely reprimanded—and the stock of the sold out of the system of a deep mine, the creditors. Whether the disgrace was too much for the ruined father and husband to see, or whether he feared to put away her girl, he tried his fortune elsewhere, on the very day that he left the court house, he borrowed a horse and carriage, and drove to his wife's family, and with this sum set off as if to return to his native land, and was supposed to have gone to America, by one of the New York Liners. At all events, he never came nor wrote to his wife and family.

This accumulation of misery, at length arising, greatly surprised and grieved her, and one of the most ill used of the husband's creditors advanced enough to enable Mrs. Vine to take a little stationer's shop, and commence again in a very small way, hoping by that, and needle-work, to eke out a subsistence. She was very nervous and shy at first, and there were times when in her great anguish of desolation, even the faithful Patty had rebukes rather than commendation. One night, in particular, she was weeping, and greatly surprised when Mrs. Vine struck her on the shop, and the door of the back parlour, never was so open, and she saw the calm face of the poor girl, sitting on the chair in the parlour, the gentle smile, and the young man, who had been known to every body, who has never known anything but sorrow—who toils for us every day without a murmur, and who is ever so kind and full of good providence!" This was a new feeling to the woman and troubled her. "Patty had never said one word about religion, but she had shown her piety in her life, and the smiles were all her own, and she had never had a bad word from that time, though there was no undue familiarity on Patty's part, and her mistress were friends, fellow helpers in bearing life's burdens. And hard enough those burdens were, for they worked early and late—in the shop, and at needle-work.

One great comfort had been granted to Patty by her mother, Tom, had been taken on board Mr. Dyer's vessel, about a week after the apprehension of the uncle and nephew, and was therefore out of harm's way, and learning how to earn an honest, if a laborious livelihood. (To be continued.)

unaccountable, but only apparently, determined to fall back in despair, determined to give way to illness, but all your lives

"nobility," I can only say, that "every man is the arbiter of his own fortune so must you visit me."

But to those of you who, notwithstanding all their advantages and trials, and reverses, and difficulties, are still pushing on to the goal of industrial career, I have to say, my friend, push on, what has been done may be done, what will, shall be. If you will, you may—

"Who follows fortune never should despair. Pain befalls and lagging comes to all. Dabbling apace, push with heart and soul. Push in life time will reach the correct goal. And though the path be rugged, steep, or straight, do find with ease that road to state. Yet the bold ferry summit to attain Who serves in common seldom arrives in vain."

My friends, forgive me if I have trespassing upon your time too long. I have been nobler anxious to do you a little good, if but ever so little, and so long as that end is answered, "Never heed."

It is discovered, the adoption, and the diffusion of stuypling and intoxicating agents, will form a very extraordinary, if not a very brilliant chapter in the history of man. The mass of such materials annually consumed, the immense portion of the earth's surface devoted to their cultivation, and the prodigious amount of capital and labor employed in their manufacture and sale, are altogether astounding. The estimated annual consumption of opium is twenty millions of pounds weight; and when it is remembered that a few grains, repeated every day, will shatter the strongest nerves, and transform a healthy man into a pitiful, wretched, and morose driveller, some idea may be formed of the tremendous quantity of disease, imbecility, and death, which annually are manufactured through the medium of this drug alone. Next on the list come thirty millions of pounds of the coca leaf, chewed by ten millions of shivered, half-starved South American Indians, who purchase a few hours of vigour and vitality out of the twenty-four at the expense of a heavy mortgage of gloom and insensibility on the rest of the year. Next in order are all their anti-intellectual tendency, there is an annual produce of nearly fifty millions of pounds of kops. The wretched natives of Sumatra and Sulu and Java receive a yearly allowance of five hundred millions of pounds of the betel nut. But, leaving the betel, the coca, hops, and opium far below it, the overwhelming tobacco revenue year by year, the annual consumption of four thousand five hundred millions of pounds a year! If we add to this the seas of wine, rum, brandy, whiskey, and other alcoholic liquors that annually flow over the human gullet, and keep up a perpetual, more or less rational, rancidness on the nose of mankind, we shall be forced to the conclusion that the children of Adam are living a very fast life indeed; and to wonder, not that the sun never sets on the empire of human misery, but that it ever sets on any one some six thousand years old, should still be able to bear up against the damaging assaults of so many enemies. Man is the prodigal son of the universe, living the life of a pig, through his own folly and stupidity; and it will require all the efforts of all the reformers to bring him back to the healthful and elevating enjoyment of his father's house. Glasgow Commonwealth.

THE SHEPHERD BOY'S WAY IN THE WORLD.

The following advertisement appeared in The Times a few weeks since. It is the president and committee of the Kirkby (Lancashire) Mechanics' Association, who received the truly valuable testimonial books, coins, shells, &c., to the above institution, by 'one who will never more than the shepherd boy, who drove coal-carts through the town of Kirkby Lonsdale, near more than twenty years ago,' and who will accept them most gratefully. Thus.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Half-Holiday. By JOHN LEWELL, Ed. Kay & Co. Those who want fully facts and arguments on this subject, will find in this volume the full and complete history of the past of the indispensable Non-Resistant. Non-Resistant Association. Uncle Sam's Farm Yarns. Ed. TWIBBLE. A popular American tale, illustrative of the far famed Yankee character. Well worth a perusal. The London Showers: a Gleaner at the "Homes" of Thousands. By GEORGE GOODWIN, F.R.S. 12, NOTTINGHAM ST. How to Choose a Wife. Ed. PATRICK & Co. Are you thinking of getting married? 2d. LABROD & BONE. These are, without exception, the best little works on our shelves. We strongly recommend them to the parents of all our uneducated children. The Worth of Fresh Air. 2d. LABROD & BONE. Both employees and employers would do well to possess the good counsel here given.

EARLY closing is the key to the family altar, and the Saturday half-day is the key to the Sabbath. The Saturday afternoon is the time for recreation; it is the time for steam-boat trips and cheap railway trains, and for opening Crystal Palaces and British Museums. That is the time for throwing open, the public gardens, the military military bands. Thus and there let bishops and baronets be seen walking arm in arm, enjoying the sight of the people innocently enjoying themselves. \* \* \* Yes, the Saturday

is the day for preparation. There is something good in every religion, in one sense. Adopt it. \* \* \* There is the Jew; I want to be a Jew upon half the Saturday. I do not want to work, and I do not want my fellow-man to work upon half that day. It is a sitting-day on the morrow; not gadding from door to door, from house to house in life gossip. No. If I am to visit a mighty potent on earth to-morrow, I will prepare myself to-day. If there is any chance of that great person returning my visit, and

coming into my poor house, I will prepare that home for him. Well, Saturday evening has come. There is visiting on the morrow. The poor working-man visits a neighbor. Being than any earthly potentate—he visits God in his own house, his sanctuary; and if he does this as he ought, he will meet his God, and he will hold communion with Him; he will not come empty away.—PROFESSOR MILLER, Edinburgh, from his admirable lecture, "Lodow Lightness, not Lost." Price 3d. Nisbet and Co., London.



EXTRAORDINARY SAGACITY OF THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD'S DOG, "SIRRAH."

Ten celebrated shepherd-pets, James Hogg, had a dog named Sirrah. "He was," says he, "beyond all compare, the best dog I ever saw. He was of a sturdy, unassuming temper, disdaining all flattery, and refused to be caressed; but his attention to his master will never again be equalled by any of the canine race. The first time I saw him, a drover was leading him by a rope; he was hungry and lean; and far from being a beautiful creature. The man had bought him of a boy for three shillings somewhere on the border, and doubtless had fed him very ill on his journey. I thought I discovered a sort of intelligence in his face, notwithstanding his doctored and forlorn situation; so I gave the drover a guinea for him, and appropriated him to myself. He was scarcely then a year old, and knew so little of herding, that he had never turned sheep in his life; but as soon as he discovered that it was his duty to do so, and that it obliged me, I can never forget with what anxiety and eagerness he learned his different evolutions. He would try every day he found out what I wanted him to do; and when once I made him understand a direction, he never forgot

or mistook it again. Well as I know him, he often astonished me, for when hard pressed in accomplishing the task that I was put to, he had expedients of the moment that bespoke a great share of the reasoning faculty. About seven hundred lambs, which were under his care at waiting time, broke up at midnight, and scampered off in three divisions across the hills, in spite of all that the shepherd and his lad could do to keep them together. "Sirrah," cried the shepherd, in great affliction, "my man, they're a'wa." The night was so dark that he did not see Sirrah; but the faithful animal had heard his master's words—words such as all others were sure to see him most on the alert; and without more ado he silently set off in quest of the recalcitrant flock. Meanwhile, the shepherd and his companion did not fail on all that was in their power to recover their lost charge; they spent the whole night in scouring the hills for miles round, but of neither the lambs nor Sirrah could they obtain the slightest trace. "It was the most extraordinary circumstance," said the shepherd, that ever occurred in my pastoral life.

We had nothing to it (day having dawned), but to return to our master, and inform him that we had lost his whole flock, and knew not what had become of one of them. On our way home, however, we discovered a body of lambs at the bottom of a deep ravine, and the indefatigable Sirrah standing in front of them, looking all around for some relief, but still standing true to his charge. The sun was then up; and when we first came in view of them we concluded that it was one of the lambs which Sirrah had been unable to manage until he came to this commanding situation. But what was our astonishment when we discovered that not one lamb of the whole flock was wanting! How he had got all the divisions collected in the dark, is beyond my comprehension. The charge was left entirely to himself, from midnight until the rising of the sun; and if all the shepherds of the forest had been there to have assisted him, they could not have effected it with greater propriety. All that I can further say, is, that I never felt so grateful to any creature below the sun, and I do it by honest Sirrah that morning." JAMES HOGG.

Letter from MISS NIGHTINGALE to the Editor.

Sir, I have just been informed of the arrival last week, at Scutari, of two trusses, containing a large supply of numbers of the British Workman, and the Best of Hope tracts. I beg to offer my best thanks for a contribution which will be most useful to us, and which will be highly valued by the soldiers. I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant.

Castle Hospital, Balaklava, April 7th, 1856.

Mrs. Nightingale

Contributions towards further grants for Soldiers and Sailors will be thankfully received by Henry Fox Barclay, Esq., Treasurer to the Grand National Central Association, 10, St. Mark Lane, London, or by the Rev. Joseph Kingsmill, Chaplain to the Government Model Prison, Pentonville, London.