1904

Normal College News, January 16, 1904

Eastern Michigan University

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PERSEVERANCE

"In facile natures fancies quickly grow,
But such quiet fancies have but little root,
Soon the narcissus flowers and dies, but slow
The tree whose blossoms shall mature to fruit;
Grace is a moment's happy feeling; Power
A life's slow growth; and we for many an hour
Must strain and toil, and wait and weep, if we,
The perfect fruit of all we are would see."

—Leonardo da Vinci

ORATORICAL CONTESTS IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS

MISS CLARA WILSON

It is reported that in a certain work on Ireland, the table of contents gave the title of a chapter "On Snakes." On turning to the chapter the inquirer for knowledge read: Chapter VI. "On Snakes; there are no snakes in Ireland," and this was the beginning and the end of the chapter.

In the same fashion, after inquiring into the present relation of English work in the schools and oratorical societies, I am tempted to quote "there is no such thing." Certainly there is no established and recognized basis on which the practice of the different schools agree. But surely it is time that so important a part of a man or woman's education, as his speech-training, should receive careful attention.

It is not so many years ago that the subject of teaching English was in an chaotic state. Today there is no excuse for a school whose English is not well taught.

You will observe that I am now using the term English in the somewhat narrower sense which it commonly has as named in our school courses of studies. Here it means chiefly study of English literature and especially of English composition; that is, the ability to read appreciatively; to write acceptably; but only to a very small degree in the present state of things, the ability to speak readily and fluently.

You will pardon the egotism of an English teacher in saying that of all high school studies, English as just divided is the most universally necessary as practical equipment. "Rithmetic" has been learned as far as practical needs go pretty well before the high school; the other two R's are English according to the modern understanding. But they are not all of English. You must remember that an eminquent authority has listed at least nineteen branches (I place the number at an inside limit, lest I should be accused of special pleading) that are included in that omnibus-natured term English. One of these, of course, is right
speech. The problem that now faces the teacher is how many nineteenth of time he can devote to speaking, at the expense of some of the other fractions. His time is brief. It is as disconcerting to the teacher who is attempting to extract a pupil’s idea of Macbeth’s guilt, to intermit the process and explain the heinousness of “hadn’t ought,”—as it is to the one who is untangling trapezoids and parallelograms. It is as difficult to secure a topical recitation in rhetoric as in history, and of exactly the same importance. And yet the speech problem cannot be ignored. I quote from an article in the School Review for 1902:

“There never was a time when the man,—I might add and the woman—who can talk was in such demand. His services are called into requisition upon all sorts of occasions. At the club, in his community, in the halls of legislation, wherever men congregate, he is a power and a leader. The ready and convincing speaker is sure of a following, and his addresses are paving the way for his political or social preferment. However, the vast majority of people are afraid of the sound of their own voices. Their inability to speak at length is only too apparent, so weak are their attempts and futile their efforts. The excuse invariably is that they have received no training in the principles and practices of public speaking.”

Up to this time the subject, taken from the educator’s standpoint, has commanded little attention—either ignored, or perhaps waiting its turn to arrive. While individuals may recognize its importance to themselves, the schools have been slow to assume responsibility for this sort of training.

I can state my proof in three sentences. In all our educational journals, so prompt to seize live topics, there has appeared but one article on the subject, the one just quoted.

Few schools have teachers who have had the special training to instruct in composition and delivery for public speaking. And text-books are so rare (which means so little in demand), that when the representative of a publishing house recently offered me one, he remarked that the firm doubted if there was much use for it. However, one school found an immediate use for it, and will offer a course in public speaking next semester.

And now the old question rises: What are we going to do about it? Is it possible to arouse in our schools a sense of need strong enough to give us the courage we must have if our cause is to move forward? And still more pertinent is another question: When we have the need recognized, how is it to be met? Can schools do anything to train students into effective expression? We shall need not attempt in the high school to make professional orators or elocutionists of them; but can’t we give them a readiness in speaking equal to that in writing?

The means prescribed to us for especial consideration in the last paper is the oratorical associations. It is worth notice that the constitution of one of the two leagues of the state proposes for its object “to raise the standard of English work in the schools of Michigan.” Now, if the associations can do this, we want them; if they can help the schools, the schools can afford to help them—or rather cannot afford not to. I have, therefore, been at some pains—or put the teachers to some pains in some of our schools which have had experience with the oratorical contests—to gather testimony as to the effect of the associations in the school-work. I quote verbatim that you may feel the earnestness and enthusiasm that lie in these responses.

Here is the first: “Students who take part in oratorical contests are generally anxious to learn to write better; and the drill in elocution that they gain may be of great advantage, if given by a competent teacher. This, too, has come under my
personal observation:—I find that such students are generally much interested in the study of the works of great orators." (Sag. E., Miss Whittemore.)

Listen to this inspiring answer: "We have not been in the League long enough to judge of the results on the classes, but I have noted two good results on the individuals; first, it has trained their judgment, and second, taught systematic reading. The last I consider very valuable. I might say further that it has developed enthusiasm and pride in our high school, also broadened scholarship, and I think these must have a beneficial effect on their English work, as well as on all their work." (Sag. W., Miss Johnston.)

The experience of the school to which I belong follows the same course. While the number of students entering the contests is not so large as we might gladly see, the results give the greatest satisfaction in the case of those who do make the trial. The independent, voluntary work which it entails in the way of reading, selection and arrangement of material, grasp of the double point of view necessary to judge its power over an audience, development of climax, means the growth of insight into effective composition, as well as a most healthful spirit of learning to do for one's self.

But granted the desirability of the oratorical association and its spirit, the difficulty in most schools seems to be to make it work effectively and rouse a genuine interest in participation among the students. The final contest is simply one thing; by what unifying process shall it be linked to the life of the school? What allies can be summoned by whose aid irksome recitation shall become spontaneous choice? Caudly I admit that here the whole problem centers. I shall not attempt to answer this question dogmatically. The varying conditions of our schools require a wide adaptation of any method to suit individual needs.

In one of the schools which I quoted a few moments ago as highly in sympathy with the oratorical contests, the entire teaching force are engaged in the work of the literary societies, both girls' and boys' clubs, and (as they themselves say) are trying to educate an intelligent interest in public speaking, debates and the working of societies. None of the work is formal nor does it belong especially to teachers of English.

I believe that while perhaps not the only way, this school has found one way to accomplish the results we are aiming at. The literary society rests upon voluntary effort; it furnishes means through varied programs to give such different grades and kinds of exercises that it may be adapted to the talents and the needs of all students. The declamation may train his sense of appropriate and profitable subjects, and put him on his feet before an audience with something of confidence in the value of what he has to say. Essays, original stories, character sketches teach him what ideas of his own will meet an audience's approval.

"The influence (says my informant who is not an English teacher) is felt very decidedly in the classes of American History, Civics, Economy and the advanced courses in English. The manner of reciting, the interest in important questions of the day or history, and the clearness of thought and expression enables the teacher to pick out the members of that organization in his classes. More than this is the fact that many of our boys have first found themselves through the work of this society. It has made me out of some who were apparently worthless students." You will not be surprised that this school is a famous winner in interscholastic debates.

Now here is an instrument that any school may possess. The special teacher of elocation may not be in the reach of all,
Tommy, a bright mischief-loving negro youth of nine, was the apple of his mother's eye. She was always saying, "Dat ar Tom o' mine's gwine toah mek somethin' o' hisself yit."

His parents, too poor to pay house rent, had moved into an old tumbled-down barn and Mrs. Laue, "jist toah mek boaf ends meet," as she expressed it, took in washing while her husband was yard-man in an up-town hotel.

Back of their barn-house was a deep well and Tom threatened to fulfill his mother's prophecy and make something of himself, even if no more than a corpse, by falling into it.

Not succeeding in this, he finally managed to lose his best and only cap down the well. His poor mother, exasperated beyond all endurance, angrily declared, "Yoah are nuff toah try de patiencee o' Job, let alone a peah darky like me! Yoah jist clarr out now and doah yoah dare show yoah kinkly head in 'dis heah toah till yoah've got another cap au from some work toah do?"

So poor Tom went out into the world to seek his fortune. With tears in his eyes he applied for work at the village store.

"Say, yeah doan want somebody toah work at dis heah place, do yoah?"

"What can you do," asked the proprietor, with a humorous twinkle in his mild-blue eyes.

"Bown de map of de Jewnited States an' figger," replied the bold Tom.

"So you can figure! How much is two and two?"

"Eight," replied the young hopeful, promptly.

"Well, you are up in mathematics and no mistake!"

"Which did yoah say, mister? Math—math—say what is them ar things anyhow? Is dat ar what Carrie Nation's bin herrin?'

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" laughed the gentleman till the tears rolled down his cheeks.

Tom looked at him with anger depicted in every line of his black face. Then throwing up his head, thrusting his hands in his pockets, and scornfully curving his thick red lips, Tom strutted out.

"Lo! some folks doan' know much nohow! He meks me tired! I wouldn't have worked toah him nohow! When I works, I wants de peeples to be jist as high-towed as dis heah chile is!"

Our young hero then went to the doctor's office. "The doctor's next assistant hesitated about admitting the ragged, hateless little urchin. But Tom said pouncy, "Say, Boy, shaw me in dar! I spec he'll be glad toah see me!" So Tom was taken into the surgery, where the doctor was working with a skeleton.

When Tom saw the skeleton, he screamed out, "Poah de Load's sake, Mistah Doctor, tek dat ghostes away! He'll git me, I know he will," and as a gust of wind rattled the bony fingers, Tom ran out, yelling, "Murdah! murdah!" at the top of his voice.

"Well, Ise mighty glad Ise livin' yit! Massy but warn't I skeered tho'? Now dis heah's jist de las time dis heah's gwine toah look foah work. Heah I'll set till de crack o' doom;" and down Tom sat on the steps of the old North Church.

Here the kind-hearted pastor found him a few hours later, crying as if his heart would break.

"Why, my boy, what is the matter?" asked the rector kindly.

"Mistah! Oh sor, nobody keers foah me and I gits hinsulted eberywhar I goes an' I whilst I was dead so I does!" and Tom cried worse than before.

"There! there! tell me all about it," said the pastor, soothingly.

"Say, isyoah tryin' foah toah mek 'fun o' me', kase if yo'se is," ——— and Tom rolled his eyes suggestively.

(Continued on page 32)
COURSES OF STUDY IN HIGH SCHOOLS

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION

A year ago the State Teachers' Association voted in favor of requesting the State Superintendent to appoint a commission on high school courses of study. This commission was to submit a plan for revision and unification. A tentative report was submitted at Ann Arbor. It will be further discussed at the meeting of the Schoolmasters' Club. Following is the course of study as submitted together with portions of the explanations and discussions offered by the committee. The commission consists of Principal Webster Cook, Saginaw, chairman; Supt. C. L. Bevis, Ionia; Principal A. J. Volland, Grand Rapids; Supt. W. J. McKone, Albin, secretary; Supt. E. E. Ferguson, Sault Ste. Marie; Professor A. S. Whitney, Ann Arbor; President L. H. Jones, Ypsilanti.

Your commission would offer the following as a preliminary report, their work not yet being completed. The difficulties of our task are evident to anyone who gives the matter of high school course careful consideration. There are about as many different courses of study in Michigan high schools as there are high schools, and these courses in many instances are shifting and changing constantly without any real improvement, and without any clearly

(Continued on page 77)

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1. A half-year each of Botany and Zoology.
2. If Botany is given in the ninth grade, Zoology can be offered here; a half-year of Zoology and a half-year of Physiology may be substituted for either Physiography or Zoology.
3. A half-year of each.
4. Main emphasis on English History.
5. Three years of English must be taken; the rest options. It is expected that in each year of this course about one-half of the time will be given to Composition work.
6. For a half-year.

N. B.—Studies in black-faced type are required for admission to the University; those in Roman may be used for entrance credit; those in italic cannot.
Is it not possible that in our desire to become strong teachers we sometimes lose sight of the most important phase of a great teacher’s work—the making of a strong student? We are greatly concerned, as we should be, about the best methods of imparting knowledge. Do we consider carefully enough the more important process of getting the student to acquire knowledge? We prepare him to receive knowledge. Do we prepare him to go after it? Inattention on the part of the class is said to be the fault of the teacher. This is probably true, yet the remedy may be not only greater animation and better preparation for the class work, but the more difficult task of giving the student a motive which will make him give attention, whether the subject is well presented or not. It does not require a strong student to submit to the commanding personality, forceful presentation and brilliant illustration of the teacher, so that a fact is forever fixed in his mind. A strong student is one who has within him a great motive that originates activity. He should be a self-propeller, moving of his own volition. He should learn to dig, not because the teacher’s charming personality makes him think that it is play, nor because the teacher is shovelling more than half the earth and it is easy for him—he should learn to dig alone, when he does not want to, when his brow sweats and his back aches because he is after the hidden gold. Such a student will succeed without a teacher, and so sometimes we see teachers who make but a poor showing before the class and yet who in some way make strong students.

Recently the two last great leaders of the confederate army have passed away—Generals Longstreet and Gordon. Both of these men were the trusted councillors and close friends of the great Southern hero, General Lee. Their deaths remind us that the Civil War will soon be known only from books. We shall never again hear from his own lips, as so many of us have, General Gordon’s thrilling story of the “Last Days of the Confederacy.” This is a good time to recall the noble patriotism which these two men and their great chief showed after the war in healing the breach caused by that fearful struggle.

Seventeen hundred and fifty dollars are offered in prizes by Miss Helen Gould for the best essay on The Origin and History of the Version of the Bible approved by the Roman Catholic church, and the Origin and History of the American Revised Version of the English Bible.

The occasion of this offer resulted from a statement in Father Earley’s letter to Miss Gould’s secretary, stating that the Catholic church had never prohibited her members from reading the scriptures or Bible and from the fact that there is a very general ignorance about the Origin and History of the different versions of the Bible used in the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches.

Information concerning the contest will be found in the bulletin of the Bible Teachers’ Training School, of which monthly the contestants shall be subscribers.
marked principles determining the character of the changes. This, in part gives the reason why this report is now made.

With these preliminary remarks, I wish to turn to the subject in hand, and offer such explanations and recommendations as, in the opinion of the commission, seemed wise or necessary at this stage.

While we apparently offer but a single course, a little examination will show that we have really adhered to the American idea of a very complex, rather than to the European idea of a simple school. If we would examine the courses which the schools were offering a few years ago, we should find that for the most part they were made up of different combinations of the same studies. What we have done is to take those studies and group them here in a different way. Our main purpose has really been to fix the place of each subject in the course, and the time to be given to it, and in the end we shall seek to fix the substance of what in each case shall be accomplished. Such other arrangements as are deemed necessary each school can make for itself.

The course itself is built on the unit system. A unit may be defined as a study pursued for a year with four or five recitations weekly. Some one has said that it should not consist of less than 150 recitations in the same subject. Time for preparation of lessons is not reckoned, and for laboratory work, one-half credit is given; that is, two hours in the laboratory is counted as one recitation. You will see from looking at the course, that a year's work in each subject is the basis on which it is built. But there are a few exceptions, thus zoology may be given one-half year, and physiology another half, and the two, for the purposes of the course, counted as one unit. Algebra and geometry are considered the same way in the 12th grade, arithmetic and bookkeeping, and botany and zoology in the 9th, and commercial...
geography and commercial law in the 11th. With the exception of 12th grade mathematics and possibly arithmetic and bookkeeping, such units are not recommended, but are allowed, in order to meet special conditions or special requirements.

Evidently no student could take all the work here proposed. How much then should be required for graduation? The answer the commission makes to this question is 15 units. By carrying four units a year, a student in the four years would complete 16 units. There is thus a margin of one unit which the schools may or may not require, as they see fit. The extra unit might be of the work already offered here in the course, or it may be that in certain localities there is special demand for something that is not here provided. This leeway will allow some provision for such special exigencies. Two or three subjects are suggested by the commission as possible, such as the history and government of Michigan, astronomy, if more science is needed and possibly, but only in view of some pressing, special demand, reviews of certain studies that have already been gone over.

The smallest high school should virtually be a one course high school, with few or no options for its pupils. In larger schools, additional lines of work can be undertaken, and in the largest everything here given and even more.

In this connection it might be well to suggest that where sections are apt to run too small, there is considerable advantage in alternation of studies. Physics might be given one year to both 11th and 12th grade students, chemistry the next, and then physics again and so on. The last two years of the four year Latin course may be treated in the same way. So may 11th and 12th grade English, and possibly also 9th and 10th grade botany and zoology.

It will be noticed also that in quite a

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Chicago Lv. 6:45 3:00 10:30 12:00 10:00

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Kalamazoo 12:00 6:45 2:10 5:10 7:15 2:42 P. M.

Jackson 2:40 3:40 4:05 3:00 10:05 5:05 2:35


Detroit 5:30 10:30 6:00 12:25 7:15 4:15

**WEST**

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A. M. A. M. A. M. P. M. P. M. A. M.

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Battle Creek 2:25 12:22 10:45 3:30 8:35 1:10 4:25

Kalamazoo 3:00 11:15 11:20 4:22 9:25 1:55 5:05

Chicago 11:50 6:40 3:05 3:55 7:30

*Daily.
EDUCATIONAL NEWS

Supt. W. H. Elson of Grand Rapids, reads a paper before the winter meeting of the N. E. A., in Atlanta next February on "the superintendent's influence on the course of study."

Program is out for next meeting of Michigan Schoolmasters' Club at Ypsilanti, March 31-April 2. Professor John M. Coulter of the University of Chicago, President Cyrus Northrop, University of Minnesota, and President R. N. Jesse, University of Missouri, are important speakers from outside the state.

At the close of the last administrative year, the library of the University of Michigan contained 174,470 volumes and 33,00 pamphlets.

Applications for the appointment to the Cecil Rhodes scholarship at Oxford have been received by the committee from Michigan. The qualifying examination is not competition, but is intended to give assurance that all candidates are qualified to enter on a course of study at Oxford University. From the list of those who qualify at the examination the committee will elect one scholar in the spring and one a year later, who will in general most nearly meet the terms made by Mr. Rhodes in his bequest:

COURSES OF STUDY

(Concluded from page 76)

different sense of the word, studies are arranged in courses. Thus there is a course in science, consisting of four units, i. e., one unit of science work in each of the four years; a course in commercial work, a course in English, and courses in various foreign languages, and courses running through three years in mathematics and history. It is recommended that when this full curriculum cannot be offered by a school, that it select, not different units, but different courses. If four years of work in foreign language is given, it should be four units of some one language, not two units in each of two. But if four units cannot be given, two might be offered. If a school can afford more than four units, and not eight, then the commission would commend four of one and two of another.

These explanations are now sufficient perhaps to give you some idea of our course and what we have aimed to accomplish and with this our report is respectfully submitted.

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Oratorical Contests in the High Schools

(Concluded from page 76)

the class-room debates cannot always find a place in limited hours for English work, and many teachers will not care for them; but there is scarcely a school where, if the teachers want it, a literary society of some character may not prosper. If the teachers want it, with what economists call an affective want. Here will be found the need that stimulates English class work on the one hand, and on the other fires the ambition for the honors of the school and the state contest. And if the project of the president of one of our local associations does not fail and an inter-state league should be formed, yet higher laurels will be bung up for the winning.

Albany article was read at the State Teachers' Association at Ann Arbor, Dec. 30, 1903.
MRS. MAGERS PASSES AWAY

Mrs. Magers, wife of Mr. Magers, of the Department of Natural Science, died last Tuesday. Mrs. Magers leaves three little children. Mr. Magers' friends sympathize with him most deeply in his great bereavement.

NORMAL COLLEGE LOCALS AND PERSONALS

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Haynor, of Cleveland, Ohio, are the happy parents of a little girl since Jan. 12. Mr. Haynor was of the class of '95, and Mrs. Haynor, nee Miss Edith Cowen, of class of '00.

The enthusiastic way in which the Normal choir was greeted, on the occasion of the rendering of "The Banner of St. George," bespeaks the appreciation of the splendid work of Professor Pease, in whose hands the score received a superb reading. Every detail was thoroughly cared for, and the production most artistically rendered. The choir was greatly aided by the well-known violinist, Mr. Henri Eru, one of the foremost musicians of the day.

The participants in the oratorical contests on Jan. 8, were Mr. Kay, Mr. Reinhold, Miss Paulson, Mr. Harold, and Mr. Andrus. The contest was very close, all the orations showing much thought and preparation. The first prize was awarded to Mr. McKay, the second to Mr. Reinhold, and the third to Miss Paulson. The school has great confidence in Mr. McKay, who will represent it in the inter-collegiate contest at Adrian.

Miss Eleanor Thomas is the new assistant to Miss Tuttle in the eighth and ninth grades of the Training School.

Mr. S. E. Crawford's sister, Irene, has entered the Life Certificate course of the Normal.

The new Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti directory for 1904 is out, and may be seen at Zwergel's store.

Miss Harriett Mudge is teaching in the Holland schools in the sixth grade.

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Fred Squires visited friends at the Normal Tuesday.

Howard Brown has been appointed organist of St. Joseph's Memorial Church, Detroit. The choir has a chorus of thirty voices.

The first basketball game of the season will take place in the gymnasium to-night. The games are sure to be very interesting. The Detroit Y. M. C. A. team plays the Normals.

Miss Pauline Meier visited her friends at the Normal Friday.

Seniors:—Please pay your class dues and get your colors at the general office, Monday, Jan. 18. Please help the treasurer by being prompt and pay at this time.

The Kappa Psi held its initiation last Saturday evening and Amy Barringer, Amy McGregor, Louise Stellwagen and Elizabeth Broughton, became members of the Sorority.

The literary societies gave very interesting programs Friday evening. The Olympic presented one on Ernest Seton-Thompson and Thoreau, comparing the two as naturalists. The Atheneum and Crescent Societies had miscellaneous programs.

The Shakespeare Club will hold its meeting Saturday evening at Miss Ballard's rooms. They will start the study of "Henry VIII."

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Y. M. C. A. NOTES

P. B. McKay gave a paper on the way to maintain attendance in Bible Classes at a Bible Study Rally held in Albion, Jan. 9. Sunday, Mr. L. E. Buell, State Secretary of the Y. M. C. A., will speak in Starkweather Hall. Subject: "After College. What?"
TOMMY

(Concluded from page 71)

"No, no, of course not! But I thought I might be able to help you!"

Then Tom with many tears and exclamations told the story of his troubles, and finally broke down and fairly howled.

The face of his listener twitched convulsively many times during the recital, but he stifled his desire to laugh and said gravely, "The grocer man was very rude, indeed!"

At these words, Tom suddenly sat bolt upright.

"Say, yoah'se a grocerman, yoah is! Yoah'sequality! I'd like toah work yoah yoah!"

So the pastor fitted him out with a hat and engaged him to pump the pipe organ. Tom served faithfully one year and came to have some knowledge of music. He had a good voice and followed along with the singers.

It was Christmas Eve. Tom had begged so hard to be allowed to sing at the Children's Entertainment that finally his request had been granted and his song came first on the program.

The organist shook her head when his music was placed before her. "He can never do it," she said to herself, for the song was the Holy City.

With head thrown back and shoulders erect, Tom took his place on the platform and began to sing. Softly and clearly came the first notes, "I stood in old Jerusalem beside the temple there." As the clear mellow voice of the singer gained in volume, a hush fell on that vast congregation. Leaning forward in awed silence, they waited for his every word.

Tommy, with clasped hands, unmindful of his listeners, sang, sang as he never had sung before. Softly and solemnly came the words, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, lift up thy gates and sing," then loud and clear, "Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna to your King!"

Softly and sweetly, he repeated the chorus. The congregation, moved by the little singer, bowed their heads. As the last sweet note died away, it seemed as if the Holy Spirit were in their midst, and they in awed silence worshipped. Then as Tommy took his seat, the hush was broken by a thunderous applause, which echoed and re-echoed through the old North Church.

Several years have passed by. Again it is Christmas Eve and the North Church is ablaze with light. Crowds of eager people jostle against each other in their haste, for tonight a great singer is to sing to them.

At last he stands before them, tall, broad-shouldered, and erect, with head thrown back. He sings, now high and clear, then soft and low, as he pleads passionately with them to renounce their sins, for the glory of the Christ, who died that men might be free. Sweetly and softly, the last notes die away in praise of the Master.

"Have you guessed, reader, that it was Tommy, the hatless urchin, singing? Yes, it was he and he had found his work."

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