

# THE BUFFALO NICKEL

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JAMES KEITH McFERRAN

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# The Buffalo Nickel

DR. L. B. WARREN.



The cause of the homeless churches was presented in a great city church. After the service, a millionaire who had been the sole and somewhat somnolent occupant of the front seat unctuously placed a worn and weary looking dollar bill in the hands of the speaker. Yes, dear friends, this pursy and "pursey" brother, who lived in a big stone mansion on the avenue, gave a whole dollar for the housing of the homeless Christ—a great adornment for his mansion of gold and silver and precious stones.

The representative of the work, tightly clutching what seemed the sole fruitage of the service, was leaving the building when a gentleman stopped him, presented his business card and said, "Could it be arranged

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for you to call at my office tomorrow morning about nine?" Could it? Every dark cloud turned inside out and showed its silver lining, every shred of gloom was swallowed up in hope and the vision of revived faith could see a homeless congregation moving into a church home dedicated to our Master's work. The next morning saw the fruition of these hopes, in "The Story of the Buffalo Nickel."

We sat in his private office. He had closed and locked the door. From the drawer of his desk he took a picture, the picture of a wonderfully beautiful little boy. He placed the picture on the desk, tried to speak but could not. The brimming tears rolled down his cheeks for a moment, then he buried his face in his hands and leaned forward on his desk and sobbed. It was the agony of a strong man whose heart is breaking, it was the pathetic outburst of a man in the presence of his dead.

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In babyhood he had crooned him to sleep. In sickness he had nursed him, sitting beside him through the watches of the night. Then came the days of rompers and the first lisping utterance of "Daddy". Each evening the little form knelt at his knee before the strong arms lifted him to the little bed beside his own. Each morning there was an invasion from the little bed to the big one for a romp with daddy, a hunt for dimples to be kissed, a roistering, boisterous fun-time before bath and breakfast and daddy's office going. Then, with the homecoming in the afternoon, came one of the features of the day. Little hands went through every one of daddy's pockets, everything was taken out and piled upon the table and then the exciting hunt for the buffalo nickels, for every one of these coins that passed through the office till came home and every one was hunted out and claimed. Some of them

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went into the little pockets of the rompers. Some of them went into the little bank. When the bank overflowed daddy bought a bond and placed it in his safe for the little lad who was his life, and so the game went on.

Then came the influenza—doctors and trained nurses and mother and father sitting by the bedside day and night as fathers sometimes do, as mothers have ever done since the foundation of the world. Then came the end, a little casket, a wealth of flowers, memories of soft lips and dimpled hands—and a sheaf of bonds in an envelope marked with the name he loved.

The bonds were a sacred trust. They embodied every memory of the games and romps and hunts through daddy's pockets. What to do with them he could not tell.

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Then came the story of the homeless churches, the picture of Baptist men and women worshiping in union chapels and old saloons, under brush arbors and haystacks and in the open air; the picture of boys and girls going to primitive Sunday schools under these conditions; the plan for meeting their needs by Memorials in the Baptist Hall of Fame and how a Memorial of \$500 would in a few years compass the erection of many churches.

Day by day he had prayed for guidance as to how he should use those bonds, night by night he had sought an answer as to the disposition of this sacred trust—the buffalo nickel bonds bought by the coins so eagerly hunted out by the fingers he had so often kissed. Now the answer had come.

Look again at the picture which was placed that morning on the desk

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in the private office. It is a wonderful picture. The lips are parted in expectation, the eyes are alight with eagerness. Daddy must be coming in, the fun-time is about to commence, the joyful exploration of pockets is to begin.

Look at the beauty of the face, the lovely face of the little lad with his mother's eyes, and your heart will miss a beat in sympathy with the father's loss. Then think of what this memorial will accomplish in the coming years, and your heart will beat faster in joy at the beauty of the monument built by the buffalo nickels.

The yearning petition of the father heart found answer in aiding the cause of the homeless churches, and peace and joy were found through ministering to the little ones of the once homeless Christ.

Hundreds of other fathers and

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mothers and brothers and sisters and sons and daughters have thus found peace and joy. Hundreds of loved ones are thus memorialized. Hundreds of names are forever linked with the annually growing record of achievement.

A monument built by buffalo nickels! Churches erected by the savings of a little toy bank! Souls saved, joy in the presence of the angels of God, Christ's kingdom coming! Have you your part in this?