

**HENRY MORRIS:  
OR, LIVING FOR AN  
OBJECT**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649601288

Henry Morris: Or, Living for an Object by American Sunday-School Union

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

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**AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION**

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**M. Morris.**



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p. 6.

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**Philadelphia:**

**AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION,**

No. 124 CHESTNUT STREET.

*NEW YORK:* No. 17 CHAMBERS ST.

*BOSTON:* No. 9 CORNHILL.....*CINCINNATI:* 41 WEST FOURTH ST.

*LOUISVILLE:* No. 103 FOURTH ST.

5-11-32. F. Vane D. of the "Eight": 27 June

# HENRY MORRIS.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE WORD IN SEASON.

ONE warm summer's afternoon, a boy about fourteen years of age was lounging upon the edge of a wooden trough in front of a public house. The trough was connected with a pump, and had been placed there for the convenience of horses. The large swinging sign, standing out upon the road in a conspicuous position, stated that the house was kept open for the "Entertainment of man and beast." Here the beast was refreshed with a cool, pure liquid, while within the owner was supplying himself with a burning poison. The boy possessed a naturally active turn of mind, and

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was lying down, as we described him just now, only because then there was nothing special for him to do. Presently the horse of a traveller appeared, turning a corner of the road. This sight aroused him in a moment from his listlessness, and, taking down a painted bucket from the side of the pump where it hung, he stood ready to hold the reins while the rider should dismount.

"Will you stop, sir?" he said, in a quick, business way, as the traveller drew up before the door.

"Just while you give my horse a drink," replied the gentleman.

"Hadn't you better go into the house, sir? Mr. Conner keeps the very best liquor, and I will take good care of your horse until you come back," urged the boy, in the same tone as before.

"No, I thank you," replied the gentleman. "My horse is thirsty, but I am not; and, in my opinion, the drink which Mr. Conner would give me in the bar-room is not half so good as what my horse is getting here."

The boy looked up steadily in the gentleman's face at this unusual speech, and for



the first time noticed him particularly. A physiognomist would have been instantly attracted by the countenance which met the boy's upturned gaze. The whole cast of the face showed distinct marks of a high degree of intellectual strength mellowed by a mild and pleasing disposition. The boy was no professed physiognomist, yet he too was attracted by these things and felt their influence. He had a strong desire to know more of the stranger.

"This is a first-rate horse of your's, sir, and no mistake," he said, as he smoothed down the glossy coat of the horse.

"Yes, he is a very good horse," the gentleman answered; and, then looking very intently upon the intelligent and pleasant face of the boy, he inquired,—

"Is Mr. Conner your father?"

"Oh, no, sir," replied the boy; "my name is Henry Morris."

"And what is your business here?" asked the stranger.

"I hold horses for the customers and water them, as I am doing now, go of errands, do nearly all the chores about house, and sometimes 'tend bar," said the boy.

"Do you mean to follow this kind of trade all your life?"

The boy hesitated, scarcely knowing how to reply. He had often indulged in a vague sort of fancy that some time or other he might be a respectable-looking middle-aged gentleman, owning a fine farm and driving his family to church in a two-horse wagon, or be the proprietor of a thriving store or factory. But *when* he was to commence moving towards this great change in his prospects, and *how* it was to be brought about, had never been seriously reflected upon; both were still far on in the dim uncertain future. The gentleman was waiting for an answer, however; so he replied, hesitatingly,—

"No, I suppose not, sir."

"Then I should think it was quite time that you were looking round for something better to do," said the gentleman.

Again the boy paused, while an expression of doubt settled upon his features. For the first time his fancies began to assume a sensible shape, and such an enormous pile of difficulties arose between him and their accomplishment that he felt half inclined

to relinquish them forever. The stranger seemed to read the changing expression of his face and to understand it.

"You would not wish to become such a man as that?" he said, pointing to a miserable-looking being who was sleeping off the effects of a spree upon a bench near by.

The boy drew back with an involuntary shudder.

"There is no necessity for your making any exertion to be like him," continued the stranger. "All you have to do is to remain as you now are, and you may slide into it naturally enough."

The boy looked concerned and troubled, and, without speaking, he began slowly and mechanically to empty the bucket,—as by this time the horse was quite satisfied.

"Depend upon it, my boy," added the gentleman, taking the reins and mounting, yet still looking intently in his face, "no one ever yet became rich, or great, or good, without making an effort and overcoming many serious difficulties; and I should think it not impossible for you to do what others have done."

The next moment, after putting a piece