

Diary of James Frederick Turner (1881)

The first that I can remember in my life is that we lived and kept a boot and shoe shop in Regent Road, Salford, Manchester; I at that time being about five years of age. We afterwards removed to a much larger shop in the same road, which we (meaning my Father and Mother) kept as a Grocery Store or Provision Warehouse, and where, I believe, we had a thriving business. It was at this place where my father commenced to drink, and where our downfall was. I never could get to know whether we banked, or what was the cause; but this I know, Father disappeared, and left Mother to brave the storm. We were sold up, and we went to live in Hulme, where Mother contrived to support us by dressmaking.

The family at that time consisted of my sister Sarah Ellen, John my brother, myself and sister Jessie. The next that I remember of seeing my father was at my aunt Mary's, my mother's sister, and I did not see him after that till we went to live at Halifax. We resided at Hulme about eight months.

On our arrival in Halifax we went to live in Rawlings Buildings, Claremount — we lived there for about two years. Our Walter was born while we resided there. I was about the first scholar that went to St. Thomas' School, when it was first erected. I first started to work as a short-timer while we lived in Claremount. I worked six weeks, and then the doctor refused to pass me; he said I was too little. I never received any wages during the time I was there working.

We next moved to Bank Street, Range Bank, Halifax, and whilst we lived there, our Tom and Amy were born. I got work at Dean Clough next where I worked for many years (about eight years altogether). When I was a fulltimer I worked in the Printing Shed, where I had what I could earn. I earned very good wages, twelve or thirteen shillings a week on an average. I got removed from there to Rug Stitching, where I earned on an average £1 0s 0d per week. I cultivated some very bad habits whilst working there, such as taking money out of my wages, and then going away from home for three or four days at

a time — going 'on tramp' I called it. I think I should have been better had I never gone to work there.

I left there and commenced cart driving, and when I got tired of cart driving, I asked back again. I did this for three or four years — in fact I left and left, until they would not have me at all. I afterwards was apprenticed to Mr. Isaiah Mitchell, to learn the Drapery and hosiery business; but that did not suit, so I left and went to work in Manchester at an oil warehouse, but I only stayed about six weeks. It was my uncle Dan who obtained me the situation.

When I came to Halifax back again. I got work at Mr. Bramley's, ironmonger, commonly called the 'Fry Pan,' as porter and driver. It was while here employed that I got married, to Martha Crowther, being at the time about nineteen years and a month in age, she being three months older. The reason I got married so early was because Martha was 'enceinte.' I was married privately and without any fuss whatever. We first went to live at Martha's sister, Jane Scott, but only stayed about three weeks as we thought they overcharged us for lodgings, namely 4/- per week, and we had our own bed, and did not go home till night as we both took our meals with us.

We then set up house for ourselves in Musgrave Street, Godley Bridge, where we lived for about four months; my daughter Emily was born there. We afterwards removed to Range Bank.

In the year 1877 I took an idea to emigrate to the Colonies; I got the necessary forms, and got them properly filled up, and forwarded them to the emigration agent. I at that time firmly believed that we (that is me and my wife and child) were to go for £1 per head, according to the advertisement; but when I had sold all my effects he wrote to say I could not go unless I paid £10 for us in place of £3. I did not know what to do, as we had not got so much, for it had cost us a great deal of money preparing to go. So we resolved to go to Manchester, where we lived about seven months, and then we came back to Halifax.

I did not work above a week the whole time we were in Manchester, but the wife was working a great part of the time. We suffered poverty very much whilst in Manchester — I hope we shall never be so poor again. We pawned a great many of our clothes to live on. (The emigration agent's name and address was, Mr. F. Hetherington, 185 High Street, Uxbridge).

When we came to Halifax we had to live with my parents until we could get a home of our own. We lived there a week or so, when I obtained employment as a carter with the Halifax Industrial Society. We then got a woman we were acquainted with to get us some furniture, and we were to pay her back at a certain sum per week. I did not stay long in work, for the horse which I drove fell lame, and I was

dismissed. The horse was suffering from a sandcrack. I could not get any more employment and we were very badly off.

I did get a few weeks as a super at Keith's Circus, at a salary of 6/-per week. During this time my wife was confined of our Annice. We were living at that time in Squire's Court, No. 1 Range Bank. Our Sarah Ellen (my sister) got married about this time, March 1878. About a week or two after Annice was born, I got work as carter for Rushworth and Firth, Plasterers, Halifax, and I was to go to York to a job they had there, plastering some new barracks, which were being built there; Fulford Foot Barracks they are called. We stayed there about twenty months. We liked York very well and have since been sorry we left there.

We came back to Halifax, and after about three weeks 'play' I got work at the Halifax Flour Society as carter, but only as a temporary man. I got finished there in about three weeks. I then played a three week or so when I asked a friend of mine to ask for me at R Lumby's, as a labourer, and where he obtained me a situation as a labourer. After I had been there a few months I got put to cart driving, but no advance in wages, the wages only being 18/- per week. I started to work here about the latter end of November 1879.

22 April 1880. Tom was born at 19 Mason Street, Range Bank, Halifax. It was my brother Tom who named him.

9 December 1880. Signed teetotal at Stannary Band of Hope.

I did not average about 14/- per week until 6 April 1881, when on that day I commenced to have my wages work or play. In December 1880 I applied for the situation of School Attendance Officer Halifax, but did not get it. There were 162 applicants. In February 1881 I commenced to be an Insurance Agent, but I soon got tired of it, and sent in my resignation on 9 May 1881.

On 29 May 1880 my father died after a few hours illness (delirium Tremens). He died at 16 Bank Street, Range Bank, Halifax. Father was a very heavy drunkard; had he been a sober man he might have lived to be an old man. Father was only 50 years of age when he died. I was very much cut up with his death, it was so sudden. He was buried on 2 June, at St. Thomas's, Claremount. Soon after Father died, I got my brother on at the shop, as a labourer.

The day after father died, I sent a letter to Uncle Samuel, (Father's oldest brother) giving him full particulars of Father's death and also an invitation to his funeral, but the letter was wrongly directed. It came back about a week afterwards through the Dead Letter Office. I

obtained his proper address and wrote another letter, and I received an answer from him, During my Father's life I wrote several letters to my Uncle Dan (Father's brother) in Canada, and received replies to a great number of them. The last one I wrote to him contained a funeral card (Father's) and in it I asked him to send my Aunt Elizabeth's address, but he has not answered it yet. I wrote to him about the middle of June 1880, and it is now 31 July 1881.

On 1 June 1881 Mr. Edward Crossland Lumby got married, and a first class wedding it was. On the day of the marriage I had as much as I could eat, drink or smoke, for nothing. On 7 June he gave us a trip to Blackpool — married men two tickets, single men one ticket, and 2/-and half price to nearly all the places of amusement in Blackpool.

On 29 July 1881 I am sorry to say he died at the age of 24. About a fortnight or so before he died, he hurt his left knee, and on 27 July 1881 he hurt it again, but he still followed his business, though on the day following he had to go home as the knee got worse. On Friday 29 July he had to go under an operation, and for that purpose he preferred to be chloroformed. The family doctor Dr. Jubb called in the assistance of the house surgeon at the Infirmary, and they administered it, death being almost instantaneous. I feel as sorry about his death as if it had been my own brother, as he has always been a good friend to me, the best friend I ever had. Only the day before his death I was in the office talking with him and his father about the horse I drive. And about three hours before his death I read a letter he had sent from home.

He died at about half past one at noon. The workmen were invited to the funeral which took place on 2 August 1881. All (or nearly so) the workmen attended the funeral, besides other men from other workshops. The scholars at the school which he attended also were at the funeral. Thousands of people were at the Church, Skircoat, Halifax. He was interred in the family vault. He was a young man esteemed by all who knew him. I never myself heard a word against him in any shape or form. He was married in one month, died the next, interred the next. Since his death the shop has not been the same.

On 1 August our Walter (my brother) ran away from home; he went to Manchester with another boy who worked with him. He was away for three days. He ran away in the previous year, and was away seven days. He is an apprentice in wire drawing. My brother Tom who is a half-timer is a first class scholar (in my opinion) for his age. I think he has qualities more fitted for an office than a factory. He is a boy of great promise.

Trade is a deal better about here than it has been for some years, but how long it will last it is hard to tell. I myself would very much like to remove to Manchester, and if I had a job to go to, I would soon be off, as I cannot settle here. I do not like Halifax. My wife of course likes here as she is a native. My mother too I believe would remove back again to Manchester, could she but get those who are at home work. We cannot get on some way here, for I have only 18/- per week, and my wife is bound to work, as we could not make ends meet. It has been very hard for us these last three or four years, as we have scarcely been out of debt. Three children run away with a lot of money one way and another. I was nearly naked for a Sunday suit of clothes, so I borrowed £1 from Mr. E. C. Lumby, just before his marriage and bought a suit. Of course I had to add a few more shillings to it: I got a suit at the HI Society for a guinea, and a hat, and collar & front for 5s 2d. On 24 July I paid Mr. E. C. L. 10/-, four days before his death. I shall not pay the other 10/- till I am asked for it. We also bought a bed for the children, but it was hard to get the money together for it. Both Emily and Annice attend a day school.

I think I will conduct my Diary monthly and then I shall have a better idea of the time of what I write.

August 1881

1. Walter ran away from home and returned on the 3rd.
2. Funeral of Mr. E. C. Lumby at which I attended.
3. Bradlaugh expelled from Parliament.
19. Wife had to stop at home through illness — I believe she is overworking herself. I never saw her looking as ill.
22. Annice attended school as a scholar for the first time.
23. I think my wife is all right again now.
24. Very bad again. Mother bought my son Tom a wheelbarrow. Stopped at home with the wife as she was up all night, in the Diaorrhoea. If she does not alter I shall fetch the doctor.
25. Martha a great deal better.
26. All right again now; she has also given over working.
27. Went to the Cattle Show, but did not care much about it. Annice is very ill.

28. My brother Tom is thirteen years of age today.

29. He has commenced to work as a full timer. My sister Amy commenced today as a pupil teacher at St. James's schools.

30. I went for the first time to the Young Mens Christian Association, and where I was cordially greeted. I went with a view to becoming a member. I gave my name which the secretary took. I shall be proposed on the 31st.

I must turn again to the 29th. Annice all right again. Today I was accepted as a member of the Court Musicians Glory, a branch of the Ancient Order of Foresters' Friendly Society, held at the New Road Inn, New Road, Halifax.

31. I was proposed and accepted as an associate and subscriber of the YMCA. My brother Tom also joined. Walter got discharged from his work, he is now out of employment. I asked for him at our shop but we are all full up.

September 1881

5. Paid my subscription at the YMC Association from this date until the end of the year.

6. Went to labour in the shop, as the coachman is to drive cart and horse.

8. Sent a letter to a friend of mine, named Thomas Robinson, to try and obtain a situation for me of some sort at York. I cannot settle here as I do not like the town. I should like either to live at Manchester or York as I like them both. Labouring in the boiler shop is not healthy—there is too much sulphur rises from the coke, of which they burn a large quantity. Before I went to work at Lumby's I was strong and healthy; I have only been here about 20 months and I have not half as strong a constitution as I had. I am a little troubled with asthma, and I blame nothing for it but the sulphur. I wish I could obtain some better employment. The wages are only 18/- per week, and it takes all our time to make ends meet. It is very seldom I get a full week, as the shop generally plays half day per week.

10. Went to Bible Class in the afternoon. Evening attended an Evangelistic meeting. Both at the rooms of the YMCA, I am beginning to like attending these meetings. I would rather go to them than to a Music Hall or Theatre, two places of which I used to be extremely fond. I used to think life could be nothing without either Music Halls or Theatres. But I am very glad I am beginning to see things in a

different light. Not that I am a Christian, I only wish I was. But I mean to try and become one. I have felt a great deal easier in my mind since I became associated with this Society. On the 13th, nothing preventing, I shall take my first lesson in Shorthand-Writing, and in which I hope to become an efficient writer. I am going to be taught at the Association where a class is to commence on the 20th. My brother Tom is also going to commence on the 20th. There is two classes, namely Elementary and Advanced. I will do my best to learn as it may do me good some day. If only I had a different job from what I am, I have no doubt but that I could improve, both in hand writing, Arithmetic, and other useful matters. I have been a subscriber to Cassell's *Popular Educator* since November 1880, with a view to the advancement of my education. And which I am glad to say I have done a great deal towards it. I also subscribe to a new paper called *Peoples of the World*. I intend to have them bound yearly, as they come out monthly.

18. Have been very ill during the last few days. I was so ill yesterday that I went to bed at noon (Saturday) and stayed till the following morning. I put my illness down to my work, as during the time I have been labouring, I have not had as good health as I previously had. I should like to purchase some good books, but I cannot with my present wages, for the few books I now buy, I have to save the money week by week until I have sufficient to purchase them. I think if ever anyone tasted poverty I have. For I have been at poverty's door this last three years and a half. But it's a long lane that never has a turning.

19. Mr. Edwin Lumby died today at London. We received the distressing news at the works at a little before twelve at noon, and in consequence we have to play until tomorrow morning. Mr. Lumby has never looked up since his son died. I fear it will be a bad job for the shop as there is no male heirs. The present Mrs. Lumby is Mr. Lumby's third wife. I have asked a woman of my acquaintance to ask for me at Ward's, to learn weaving. I wish I could get in, as it is a very nice, clean, and profitable occupation.

21. Funeral of Mr. Lumby, to which all the workmen are invited. I and my brother John attended it. I am fairly started to learn shorthand. It is very difficult at first, but I think it will be easier after I understand the principles.

25. Went to Stannary School with a friend, and where I had the pleasure of hearing Mr. F. H. Bowman give a Bible lesson. On the 24th I put 2/- in the Penny Savings Bank, Waterhouse St. I put it in because if I had it at home I might spend it, and I shall put a few coppers to it

when I can. It will come in towards paying my subscriptions at Christmas, to the YMCA and also towards binding the *Popular Educator*. I have persuaded a few of my friends to join the YMCA.

26. Went to the Inaugural Meeting of the Association. There was a very large attendance. I liked the speakers very well. There was a speakers from London, Manchester, Leeds, and from Halifax. The Manchester secretary who spoke about the advantages offered to Young Men, said they had 2,300 members, it being the largest Association in England. If I can get work in Manchester next summer I shall remove there — (I wish it was now I was going) — and if I keep in the same mind as I am at present I shall join the YMCA there as well. I am building castles, but I hope they will remain standing and not fall. Since I joined I have felt a good deal easier in my mind, for I have been a great deal better — that is to say, given up going to Music Halls, swearing etc., and have attended the Bible Class and the Evangelistic meeting regularly since I became a subscriber.

28. I sold to a friend of mine (Thomas Law) my small English Dictionary for 10d. I gave a shilling for it last February. Mother also talks of removing to Manchester next summer. I hope trade keeps busy enough for that, so that both us, and Mother, and the rest of the family can remove there.

October 1881

4. I was very bad all day with the headache, but I did not leave work through it. For the last few weeks I have been greatly troubled with the headache. I think it is the shop in which I work that brings it on. We burn a great many coles and the sulphur from them is very great. I feel sometimes as if I was going to smother, it is that thick; but I hope to get a fresh situation before long.

9. I became a scholar at Stannary, in the first Vestry class. I like to go very well.

12. My brother won some money through Horse racing. He backed a horse called Foxhole, and it won, so he bought a top coat for Sunday with the money, and gave me the one he had formerly for Sunday, and for which I am very grateful to him.

15. I had to draw the money I had in the bank today. I bought a Dictionary of the English Language by Dr. Ogilvie. Cost 1/11. Tom had been very ill the last few days. I think it is through him being weaned. I am going to purchase a book called Ancient Mythology as soon as I have the necessary funds. I am going to study elocution. I wish I was a first class scholar.

14. I gave to my brother John the ticket of a watch chain which I had in pawn.

31. Albert Riley and Lucy Smith were married, two old friends of ours.

November 1881

1. Attended the elocution class, and recited the soldier's speech in the first scene of Macbeth. (The class is going through Macbeth). The teacher, Mr. W. E. Barber FGS, principal of the Crossley Orphanage, only finding one fault, and that was in the pronunciation of the word 'rebel.' I put the accent on the wrong letter.

On the same night I went to see a man called John Fenton, who is the manager over the Rug stitchers at Dean Clough, relative to a situation, but he told me he could not set me on just yet, but he would see what he could do in the course of a week or two, and if he could find me work he would send for me. I only hope he will send speedily.

2. I am doing very well in short-hand, I think. I can form a great many words both rapidly and neatly. I have not been well at all today, I am troubled with a bad cough.

3. I had to work over tonight. I feel thoroughly done up.

4. Had a quarter off. I could not get up, I felt so ill.

5. Gun Powder Plot. My wife bought the children some fireworks; and some good fun they occasioned. Emily was bold enough to let hers off, but Annice would not touch hers, she was afraid to. Tom, as young as he is, held a Catherine wheel and danced with glee at the sight of its illumination. My brother John, Mother, and sister Jessie have gone to Manchester on a cheap trip. I could like to have gone, only my funds would not allow it. I cannot tell what is to become of us, I am sure we cannot make ends meet, for I owe for groceries and coal about £3 14s, and to my Mother about £5 or so. In fact I dare not ask Mother what I do owe her, and there is a load we are now burning which will want paying for. It would take £10 at least to place us straight. I wish we were clear of all debts. We do not, we cannot live as we ought to do.

6. Stayed at home all morning. I wish I had gone to school. I went to school in the afternoon, and also to the Drill Hall, to hear one of the members of the United Temperance Alliance give an Address I liked very much. In the evening me and my wife went to the Gaiety Theatre to hear the Alpine Choir, but we had to come out before it was over on account of the heat. The place was crowded, the choir did not com-

mence to sing until 8 o'clock, and we were there by seven o'clock but could not obtain a seat. The choir were brought here by the Halifax Band of Hope Union and the young Mens Christian Association; and I believe they have been a great success.

7. I have been cart driving today. I have not yet heard anything from John Fenton. I hope I get set on.

I went again to see John Fenton and he promised he would send for me if he took any hands on. Sooner and better.

9. I had to come home ill today. I would rather have stayed the day out but I could not bear it. I left off work at half past ten, came home and went to bed. I felt a little better after dinner, so I got up and took a walk. I also tried to get work at two places, but the same story — full up. I am sure I don't know what is to become of us, I cannot prosper do what I will. I shall have only 16/- to draw this week, and there is 7/6 goes out of it for rent; and Christmas comes close here too. I get worse off instead of better. The Goddess of Fortune seems to completely shun me. I have offered up a prayer to God to send us a release from this poverty and distress in which I am placed. I do hope my prayer is answered.

10. Went to work today, but I felt far from being well. I have a rather quiet job, or else I believe I should have had come home again. It is my daily prayer that I might get a fresh situation. I have felt a good deal easier in my mind since I commenced to go to school on Sunday; according to 'modern prophets,' the end of the world is fixed to take place on the fifteenth of this month. But I for one do not believe in such people.

11. The wife has been to Ovenden to help her sister to clean her house up; she gave the wife sixpence and a good dinner too. I gave threepence towards a subscription which was got up for a young man who came to work at our shop as a labourer last week, and who had a child dead and two more under the doctor. I know the man very well. He is rather given to drink but in a case like this one he is to be pitied. The wife's sister also kindly lent us 4/- towards paying the rent.

12. Had a walk around the town during the afternoon, it being Saturday. In the evening I had a walk out with the wife. I saw some books that I would like to buy — here is a list of them. Clarke's Commentary on the Bible, Ovid, Vergil, Homer, Tennyson's Works, Byron's, Burns, Chaucer, Dryden's, Shakespeare, Milton's and a host of others — if only I had the money. I could also like a good Bible with a reference, also a Bible Dictionary.

13. I attended Sunday School and chapel this evening, something I have not done for years before. I heard a grand sermon on the adherence of friends. In the afternoon the teacher of our class (First Vestry) gave us an excellent lesson on 'Martyrs,' and a very eloquent lesson it was. After tea I went to meet the wife who had gone to see her cousin, Ann Ward, and I thoroughly enjoyed the walk. Cousin Ann resides in Northowram, and works at Lumb Brook Mills, where they are very busy at present—tapestry weaving. They weave the same sort there that they weave at Ward's, the place I am trying to get on at to learn tapestry weaving. Ann told me she thought I could get to learn up there.

14. I have been to see a young man whom I know, and who works there, to see if he will learn me. He says they are not very busy, but he will be better able to tell me tomorrow night. I expect it will be another failure. Mother is resolved to remove to Manchester. I myself would go tomorrow, if I had work to go to.

15. I have seen the young man again, and he says he will learn me if I can get on, so I shall go up as soon as I have time.

16. I went to a lecture at the Literary and Philosophical Hall, Halifax, given by W. G. Barber Esq, entitled 'Fulfilled Prophecies considered as an argument for the inspiration of the Scriptures.' I liked it very well. It was a good lecture, and given in a very scholarly manner. Mr. T. S. Scarborough was in the chair. There was only a very meagre attendance.

17. I had not time to do anything today as I had to work to quarter to eight at night.

18. Today I heard of a situation being vacant at the Halifax Industrial Society, as an assistant in the hardware department. I shall make an application; applicants have to apply at 6 o'clock tomorrow night. There is only one way to obtain a situation at the Society and that is to get someone to speak for me, and I will try to get someone to do me that kindness.

19. Had a walk round the town, and a look at the bookshops. I have been to the Society, and have been before the Committee, and they have told me to call again on Monday the twenty-first at half past eight pm. I hope I get the situation. There was about 40 or 50 applicants there at the time that I was there.

When I got home last night Mother commenced to be ill, she was so ill she frightened me. I went for some brandy, and that eased her a great

deal, but about ten o'clock she commenced again, so I went to the Black Swan vaults, and I there got 4 pennyworth of Brandy with some kind of lotion in that cured her.

20. Mother a great deal better this morning. I did not go to school because I did not feel so well in the morning. I also received a letter from the HIS asking me to favour them with my attendance at 8 o'clock Monday night relative to a situation. It seems a good sign that I shall be accepted, I hope so at any rate.

21. Been filled with expectation all day about the situation; we played in the afternoon where I work. I went at 8 o'clock to the Stores and there was a great many young men there. We waited for some time, when a man came to say that all those who had not received a letter must go, and they that had, stay. Well there was eight of us stayed, and we all had each received a letter. I was the first called to go before the Board; the gentleman at the head of the Board asked me a variety of questions, all of which I answered. After he had done asking questions, he said if I was chosen, I should receive a letter tomorrow (Tuesday). I think if it is a fair competition that I ought to get the situation, as, in my opinion, I was about the most suitable candidate amongst the eight applicants chosen to appear before the Board. I have prayed earnestly to God that I might get it.

22. I have been filled with anxiety all day, but when I got home to dinner, 'No letter.' My wife said that should one come she would bring it up to me at my work. For I do wish I had a fresh situation. When I came home to tea, 'No letter.' I wish there hadst have been. I shall go down on Saturday and have a look at the new assistant, and if he was not one of those who was amongst the chosen ones, the Board and the members of the Society shall hear about it. For they have had two or three vacancies, and the applicants that have applied have not been selected. They have had a man squared beforehand, and had the Advertisement as a blind. Went to the shorthand class, but did not go to the elocution class, as I was so much put about that I did not get that situation. I never in all my life, to the best of my knowledge, was put out about a situation as I was about that one. I made sure of getting it. There is not a couple in England strives more to get on in the world more than we do; and yet we cannot get on at all. There is one thing in which we can succeed, and that is 'poverty'; I think I must have offended the Goddess of Fortune, for she never does me a good turn.

23. I have not been so well today, and I have had to work very hard, for when the men have played a day or so, they work like horses to

make up what they have lost, and that causes the labourer to have to work very hard. This has been my case today. My wife has been to see sister Jane, who is nearly dead. She has two cancers in her inside.

24. I have to play all day, as I was so ill I could not bear to go to work. I have been around to see if I could get a fresh situation, but I could not manage it. I called to see the wife's sister, and I have never in all my life seen a woman so resigned to her situation as she is. She told me she did not care how soon she was dead, as she suffers very much from terrible pains in her inside. I hope when I die I shall be as content about going to Heaven as she is. She has the Bible in bed with her, and when she is able she reads from it. I called at the Post Office, for a situation as a Postman, and he told me to write him a letter, with full particulars as to age, and who he must refer to as to my character. So I have written him a letter and sent it off. I do not care how soon he sends for me.

25. I have been to my work today, and I feel a deal better; I have not been quite so good as I ought to be this week, but I will try and be better. There is so much wickedness at our shop that I forget, and am as bad as they. I want to get away from them as soon as possible. My sister Jessie received a letter from Aunt Caroline saying that her son Charlie had enlisted for a soldier. I am surprised that he has enlisted as he was such a good lad. His parents live in Manchester. His father was my mother's brother.

26. A friend of mine, Thomas Law, and me have been to Bradford this afternoon to buy a present, which he intends to make to his sweetheart on her birthday next week. We bought a beauty, a Lady's workbox, for 17/-, at the covered in market hall, Bradford. He behaved like a gentleman to me, paid all expenses, cigars, railway fares and tea. We should have enjoyed ourselves, only it rained all the time.

27. Went to school in the afternoon, and our teacher Mr. T. S. Scarborough dwelt greatly on the charms of music: to give us some idea of what it will be in heaven. Had a quarrel with my brother John, who, I am sorry to say, is very ignorant, and who will hold to whatever he alleges, be it right or wrong, and he won't be convinced to the contrary. I do not like to quarrel at any time and much less with a brother. My sister Amy, I am very glad to say, has won a 'Lord Wharton Bible' at the Sunday School which she attends, All Souls Church. She will be presented with it next Sunday.

28. I have had very good health today; at night I whitewashed the ceiling of our house.

29. I had to work over tonight; and when I came home I helped to paper the house. I missed for the first time the short-hand class.

30. I have not been so good today as I have allowed wicked thoughts to enter into my head. All three children are ill.

December 1881

1. The children have not improved much. I think it is cold they have got.

2. Me and the children have all got a bad cough. It is pay day. My wife has earned 1/6 by washing and cleaning. I have got a cured rabbit skin which I intend to put on my sons chest, as Emily and Annice both wear them.

3. I took the children out today, and they seemed to enjoy their walk. There is one or two things troubling me and my wife, and they are how we are to pay for the coals, which are used nearly up, and the gas bill which is due. And how we are to manage over Christmas I cannot tell. For where I work they are almost sure to play 8 or 9 days. I expect we shall have to run into more debt. We have got Emily a new pair of boots today, 5/-, but we can pay for them after Christmas. There will be some way done. I wonder when this poverty will cease, for I am sure both me and my wife strive our utmost to prosper, but we cannot; I try to get a fresh situation but I cannot.

4. I have been to school all day, that is, morning and afternoon. We have a most eloquent preacher named Mr. Fielden. I have been thinking today I would take a sitting in the Chapel as they are no set price, I can give what I like. But I can hardly afford it yet, I may be better able after Christmas. I hope so at any rate. The class to which I belong are getting up a testimonial for the Secretary, but I have had to beg to be excused from contributing owing to lack of funds. There is also a tea meeting on the 6th to which I was asked, but I cannot go for the same reason. Tickets are ninepence each.

5. Felt in good form today. I took it into my head today to learn music, and I intend having a try.

6. I have been very bad in health today. It has been as much as I could to stay at my work. When I came home at night, I could scarcely see with the headache. I never in all my life suffered so much pain before. I took some castor oil, and had some cold water cloths placed on my forehead, which seemed to ease it so much that I got off to sleep. It is

the heat and sulphur combined, which is at the place where I work. I am trying to get a fresh job but I cannot.

7. I had to stay at home before breakfast, as I am far from being well. I have been to my work but I have felt very poorly; but I cannot afford to stay at home. I promised to go and hear an organ recital at our school, but I am not able to go. The children are all also very ill, the two youngest being the worst.

8. Felt a little better today. I have heard that the coachman at our place is going to leave. I have asked for the situation. I am not very particular whether I get it or not; as I would rather have a situation in a warehouse if I could get one. If I do get it, I will have more wages or else I shall not accept it.

9. I have not heard yet whether I am to have the situation.

10. Very cold today. I went and had a walk round the town; called at the YMCA to look at the papers. I always look at the Manchester papers to see if there is a situation vacant that would suit me. If I see one, I intend to write after it. I would like to live there.

11. Snow had fallen very heavy during the night, so that I could not go to school in the morning, but I did in the afternoon, when Mr. T. S. Scarborough gave us a very interesting lesson on Winter from the first Book of the Bible (Genesis), and the eighth chapter, and a very eloquent lesson it was.

12. Commenced to cart drive again at the shop.

13. Went to short-hand class and took my first lesson in the Manual of Phonography.

17. Went to the annual meeting of our Sunday school class, and I liked it very well. There was a tea party preceeded the meeting, but I did not go.

18. Went to school both morning and afternoon; I also took a sitting in the chapel.

19. Went to Hebden Bridge with the horse and trap.

20. Went to short-hand. It is postponed until the tenth of January. I have been put on regular wages today, that is £1 0s 0d per week work or play. It could not have come at a better time, as the shop will stop on Friday until the following Thursday, and I shall get my full wages. I think it is the work of Divine Providence.

23. Pay day. I got 1/- for a Christmas box, so I had a good draw. I drew more money than I have drawn before this year, namely £1 0s 9d. Things are on the change for us I think. I hope so at any rate.
24. Wrote a letter in answer to the one I received from W. Brown; in it I told how we had lost the other. I am suffering from a very bad attack of the influenza.
25. Christmas Day. A wet, miserable, sloppy day, quite unlike Christmas. My cold troubles me very much, as I cannot give over coughing, and the catarra runs from my nose almost incessantly.
26. I have been very ill all day; it is usual for carters to go a-Christmas boxing, and I have got so far, 2/-.
27. Christmas Boxing again today, got 1/9: so I went out and bought myself a Chapel Hymn Book and Chant, 1/7. I bought a School Hymn Book last Sunday — Christmas — for which I gave 8d.
28. Worked half day today, and then went Xmas Boxing again, got 1/6. Yesterday I bought the wife a Xmas Box in the shape of two new aprons, the first I have had the pleasure of buying since we were married. I bought today: Gulliver's Travels by Dean Swift, and Homer's Iliad for 1/9. I am not right better yet, I feel weary and my head aches. Took Cassell's Educator to be bound yesterday, to Mortimers, Crown Street, Halifax.
29. Worked half day again today, and then went Christmas boxing again and I got 6d. I felt very poorly, so I went to bed by five o'clock.

Note

The Victorian exercise book in which James Turner wrote out his journal remains in the possession of his family, covering up to 23 October 1882. One of the descendants, Richard Turner, of Moorside, Union Lane, Ogden, Halifax, West Yorks, England, brought the original to his teacher, David Ellison, at Bradford Grammar School about eight years ago. It was then roneoed, thanks to Mrs. Barbara Summerling of Leeds University's Extramural Department. In this centenary year, a subscription edition, limited to 500 copies, but containing contemporary illustration and a short essay, is being published by Ellisons' Editions, 41 High Street, Orwell, Cambs, nr Royston, Herts, SG 8 5 QN, England: price £4.50 plus Postage.

James Turner lived until 1909. His widow, Martha, lived on until her eightieth year, dying in Halifax in 1936. Richard Turner is grandson, of her youngest boy, Savile.