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RUNNING FROM GOD
Life Story of Rev. J.W. Morgan

By S. P. Hawley

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PREFACE

Realizing that a large part of my life has been wasted in sin and hoping that others may profit by my experience, I have decided to give to the public the story of my life. This has been told with no spirit of boastfulness, but with the sincere hope that it will be a warning to those who read it.

On account of serious trouble with my eyes I have been unable to write this book, but have given the story to Prof. S. P. Hawley who has written it in book form and has made many comments which I hope will prove a blessing to all who read it.

Yours for the spread of the Gospel,
John W. Morgan

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Chapter 1

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

I was born October 10, 1883, in a little log cabin which was situated on a steep hillside in Dresden County, Tennessee. This cabin was typical of pioneer days in East Tennessee, the chimney being built of sticks, mud, and stones. My earliest recollection was of the birth of my baby brother which occurred when I was scarcely three years old. Truly the earliest impressions made on the mind of a child are the most lasting.

When I was six years old my father was stricken with typhoid fever and pneumonia. My brother and myself also contracted these diseases, and within the short space of a month my mother buried both my father and little brother. I can remember distinctly the kind words of sympathy spoken by the physician when my mother told him that she would pay the bill when she sold out. He said she owed him nothing since she had lost her husband and baby. And well do I remember the night that we sat in the large railway station at Nashville awaiting connection with a train that would carry us back to Blount County.

Shortly after our arrival in Blount County, my mother saw that it would be very difficult to keep and support me as she was compelled to work in kitchens for a living. So it happened that I was bound out through the court to service under a man by the name of Cowan Wrinkle who lived at Rockford, Tennessee, about five miles from Maryville. It was understood that he was to send me to school and give me a horse, saddle, and bridle at the age of twenty-one. I lived with him nearly three years, but received only about two and a half terms of schooling. My mother saw that I was not doing well and came to Mr. Wrinkle and begged him to let her take me back, and he consented. She took me to Knoxville, Tenn., and tried to keep and support me, but it was too great a task for her, and she was soon compelled to let me go back to the home of Mr. Wrinkle.

When I was thirteen years of age I attended a revival meeting which was being conducted by Rev. Tom Sexton, the blacksmith preacher, at the old Mount Lebanon Church near Maryville, Tenn. During this meeting I was deeply struck with conviction, and was gloriously converted. The sunlight of God's love was shed abroad in my heart, and I was indeed very happy.

A short time after I was converted I went back to my mother who was in Knoxville. I secured a position there in the woolen mills, and joined the Highland Avenue Methodist Church. My mother was always patient and kind to me, and often after I came in from work we would sit on the porch together, and she would advise and talk to me as only a mother can. Many times since then I have realized to my sorrow what disobedience to my mother's counsel has caused. Proverbs 1:8. "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother." For nearly two years I was a faithful member of the church and lived a Christian life as best I knew how.

In the course of time I began to lose confidence in some of the members of the church to which I belonged, especially one man in whom I had the utmost confidence. I thought his work in the church very inspiring, and his home life wonderful. I could sometimes hear him praying a block away. At this time I was employed at Rorex's plumbing shop as a helper, and of course we worked in any part of the town to which we were sent. I was coming through the red-light district one day, and to my surprise, I saw this man coming out of one of the houses. This was an indescribable shock to my young mind and heart, and shook my confidence in Christianity. Later, I was out of work, and was given employment in a furniture factory by one of the foremen who was also superintendent of the Sunday school. I had not been there but a few days until I heard this man cursing and swearing like a sailor, and very naturally I lost confidence in him also. There the devil saw an opportunity to come into my young life; tried to make me believe that the church was full of hypocrites, and that I ought not to belong to such an organization. These incidents show how very careful of their influence Christian people should be. Rom. 14:7 "For no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself."

Little by little the devil kept dragging me into sin. I became associated with a bunch of bad boys. Well I remember when I took my first drink of whiskey. Another boy and myself bought a half-pint of "white corn," the fiery taste of which at first bluffed us out, and we sweetened it with candy. We also got into the habit of going out into the woods and other places to play cards. I remember as I was learning to play the game we would flip the cards on the ground, and every time I had the "Jack" the boys would catch it, and then laugh very heartily at me because of my "ignorance." But I was an apt pupil and soon learned the points of the game. As I grew older it became more and more interesting and fascinating, and it was not very long before I began to go to a gambling den not far from the post-office where we played for drinks and money. Like the mushroom which springs up during the night, and is the first thing to greet our eyes when we rise in the morning, I was always on hand at that place waiting for the boys to come. Shortly my mind was so obsessed with desire for cards that I would not work, and I lost all the money that I had. My mother was always busy trying to find new jobs for me. At this time I was sixteen years old. It is a true proverb that we are known by the company we keep, and not only are we known by it but we are influenced by it. I often think how different my life might have been if I had only chosen associates whose lives were clean and pure. But I chose the evil ones, and soon I, myself was unfit to be the companion of any boy.

I could not see that those who were drinking, gambling, and cursing with me were enemies to my welfare. I was young and had not known what it meant to be deep in sin. Satan promised me a good time, and I thought that the paths of sin would be smooth. Thus I went on and on thinking that I was having a good time. How I wish, dear young reader, that you would take the testimony of one who has gone to the depths of sin, one who has seen every picture in the devil's art gallery, one who has experienced the awful effects, and stop before you are drawn into the clutches of the great enemy of your soul.

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Chapter 2 GOD'S CALL AND MY ANSWER

Soon I secured a position in the iron and steel mills and took a fancy to this sort of work. Here I was thrown with a very wicked and rough class of men. We drank all we wanted to, and during our leisure time we would play cards or dice, and nothing was said about it. We had to work only while the metal was being drawn. It was so hot it was white as snow, and as we worked and toiled the perspiration would pour from our shoe-tops. As soon as "the heats" were out one of the boys would grab a large zinc bucket and run to the saloon and bring it back full of beer, after which we would drink and amuse ourselves until the next "heat."

Though I seemed unconcerned about my condition my mother kept praying and agonizing for me. Almost every day she would seek an opportunity to say something to me about my life. At the age of seventeen through her prayers and counsel, and through the prayers of our Christian friends I came back to God. Again I became a faithful member of the church, and an earnest worker in the Kingdom.

It was not long until I felt the unmistakable call of God to the ministry. I was willing to stay in the church and work for God there, but for me to preach seemed impossible. I wondered why God had called me. We were poor and I was all my mother had. I was then seventeen, and had but little chance to go to school, while there were those all about me who were educated and seemed far better suited to the work of the ministry than I. The pastor of our church offered to send me away to the same college that he had attended free of charge, but like Jonah, who, when the Lord called him to go to Nineveh, boarded a ship for Tarsus, I refused to go. I gave as my excuse that I was the only support of my mother and could not leave her. She wanted me to go and said she could manage to get along very well without me, but I did not want to preach and fought against it with all of my soul. The consequence was that I backslid and fell into sin deeper than ever.

At this time an elderly preacher by the name of Goodrich was boarding at our home, one of the best men I ever knew. But I had permitted the devil to gain such complete control over my life that I could not bear the company of religious people. Every time we sat at the table he returned thanks, and was continually talking of religious matters. Here I had the battle of my life between the good and evil impulses of my soul, and I allowed the devil to overrule by telling my mother that this preacher had to leave our home. My mother's eyes filled with tears, and she said, "John, how can you be so hard-hearted as to ask me to tell this harmless old man to leave here?" "If he doesn't leave here I will," I said. I was in an adjoining room when I heard my mother go in and tell him that at her son's request she had to ask him to leave. I could not hear what the preacher said, but I heard mother say, "He is my boy, and I cannot bear for him to leave me." Before this man of God left, he called us to prayers and read the first chapter of the book of Jonah where God called him to go and preach to Nineveh, and I felt as if I would melt in my seat. But he went his way and I went mine, i. e., the devil's way.

Soon I became an habitual drunkard trying to drown the tempestuous tumult in my breast with whiskey. I had no rest or peace in religious services, for each time I went I could hear the still small voice" calling me into the service of God. The devil had promised me great things for the future, as he does to all, but I never reached the grand prize. which he held out for me.

I remember one Saturday afternoon after our day's work was ended, Jack Roark, a boy chum of mine, and myself started up town and we stopped at every saloon we passed. By the time we reached Gay Street we were both blind and staggering. Finally Jack stopped and leaned against a telephone pole, and I managed to reach the next one. A policeman came along and locked Jack up, and a little while he came back and saw me, and said, "Where are you going?" I laughed and said, "Where the other fellow is." And he said, "Come and go with me." But as it happened a girl friend of mine was passing and saw us "get pinched," and she called up a friend of mine on the telephone. He sent a message to the jail for them to release us, which they did about eight o'clock that night when we sobered up.

The next morning was Sunday, and as I walked through the sitting room I noticed my mother was looking very sad and downhearted.

"Why are you looking so sad, mother?" I asked.

"I was just thinking of your enemies, John," she said. Her lips were pale and trembling and her eyes filled with tears.

"Why, mother, I have no enemies.

"Yes you have, John. You have an enemy that you know not of."

"Why mother, there are not any of my associates that could whip me. Look how big and strong my arms are. There are none that can step up and disfigure my face."

"You don't understand what I mean. That awful stuff that you have been drinking is your enemy, and it will ruin your life and drag your soul down to hell. I'd give anything in this world if you would be good like you once were when we used to kneel together in prayer." And she took hold of my arm saying, "Won't you kneel with me now? Can't you see my heart is breaking?"

I pulled away and got my hat as if I were going away but waited in the adjoining room to see what she would do, and I heard her kneel and pray for her boy. That is a sweet and comforting memory. Fortune may fail, friends may prove untrue, but a mother's love will always abide, will follow a wayward son even unto the ends of the earth. I shall never cease to be thankful to God for a consecrated mother.

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Chapter 3 MY GREATEST SORROW

In 1901, the Knoxville Iron Company by whom I was employed, bought the old Lookout Iron and Steel Mills at Chattanooga and moved them to Harriman, Tenn. One day the superintendent, Dave Plant, came to me and said, "John, you are a young man brought up in our mill, and we have a better position for you in our mill at Harriman. We will move you over there

free of charge and give you a position roughing on our eight-inch mill." I appreciated this offer and thought I would accept it, so we packed our household furniture and went to Harriman.

I liked my new job fine and we were getting along nicely, but we had not been there long when one day my mother said:

"John, I'm not going to be with you much longer." This aroused my curiosity as she was in perfect health, and I said, "Where are you going?"

"I have had a warning that God is not going to let me stay in this world of sin and trouble much longer."

I did not pay much attention to it, but in a few days she told me the same thing again and advised me to live for God and do His will. I laughed and turned away and asked mother if she were not losing her mind.

"No, you can laugh, but you will see that what I have told you is true," she replied.

Almost every day when I came home from work I found her reading her Bible, and noticed that she seemed more devoted to it than ever. One evening when I came in she was in the kitchen singing that old song, "Life is like a Mountain Railroad," and I asked her where she had learned that song as I had never heard it before. She replied that she did not remember where she had learned it, but said:

"I have been impressed with that song all day, and I just feel that that is the way my life is going to end-on a railroad."

We lived in a little bungalow which was situated on a small hill at the foot of which lay the railroad track leading from Brushy Mountain to Harriman. One evening we were sitting on the front porch and saw the train come around the curve at the foot of the hill. And mother said,

"I'm afraid of that train."

"Why mother, that train can't get up here to hurt you."

"Yes son, but something tells me that train will kill me."

I thought that this was very strange but said no more about it. My mother had never been to the mill to bring any of my meals, as I had always eaten my breakfast at home and taken my lunch with me. But one morning not long after the above conversation took place, we were late in rising and I had only fifteen minutes to get to the mill to work. Mother told me to run on to the mill and that she would get my breakfast ready and bring it to me, and I went. We lived across the railroad track from the mill, and it was not long until I saw my mother cross the track, set my breakfast down at the edge of the mill, and turn to go back home. She walked past the end of a box-car that was standing on a side-track, and I could not see any further on account of a little office that stood between us. Just then I saw the six forty-five train going up, and I heard the air-brakes jammed, and

saw the train stop suddenly in about three coach lengths. I saw some men looking and one of them pointed downward to the side of the track. I knew that something had happened, but I never thought of my mother. Soon a crowd began to gather, and I started across to see what the excitement was, when my foreman and another man took hold of me and said, "John, don't go out there, your mother is cut all to pieces." Her mangled body was strewn along the track a distance of fifty-two feet from the place where she was struck, her head being completely severed at the shoulders. As they gathered up the mangled body, the train crew and many of the employees of the mill were standing around. And as I stood and gazed upon the mutilated form of the best friend a man has, or ever will have in this world, I said, "If you trainmen had done your duty, my mother would not be lying there. You neither rang the bell nor blew the whistle." I stood still for some moments, my brain in a whirl, and a thousand thoughts passed before I could sufficiently recover myself to speak. The blood rushed to my head, and for a moment I was completely overcome with anger as I thought what unspeakable sorrow their carelessness had caused, but in a moment my anger was entirely gone as I saw again the stains of blood from mother's body on the ground. I who had never known a father's care, a sister's love, or the companionship of a brother, had been called upon in the twinkling of an eye to give up this last friend, my best friend. My cup of sorrow had been filled to the brim, and I wept as I had never wept before. My frame shook and my brain reeled under this awful blow. The light of my life had gone out.

The arrangements were made for the funeral, and I shall never forget the road to that little cemetery; I shall never forget the last time that I looked upon her face. Many times I had found comfort in looking into that sweet face, not what the world would call beautiful perhaps, but to me the most beautiful face in all the world. The body was lowered into the grave, and I heard the clods rattle as they fell upon the casket. Then it seemed to me that I could hear a voice saying, "John, this is the result of your sin." And overcome by grief, by sorrow and shame for my sin I left the cemetery carrying a load which seemed greater than I could bear, for I had rebelled against the Heavenly Father to whom I could have gone in this time of sorrow for solace and comfort.

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Chapter 4 A BROKEN PROMISE

Not long after the death of my mother I received a telegram from Lewiston, Pa., offering me a position on an 8-inch roughing mill. I accepted this position, sold out our household furniture and went. I was over a thousand miles from home and did not know a soul, and grieved with sorrow over the death of my mother, I would weep between "heats" as Jonah of old under the gourd vine. I was another Jonah running from the call of God into the ministry. There was a revival in progress at the Methodist Church in that city when I arrived and I attended it. I was deeply under conviction, felt that I ought to respond to the call of God, but soon I became acquainted with a Catholic girl who persuaded me not to go to the altar, and told me that I did not have education enough to preach. Of course she wanted me to become a Catholic. She promised me one of their Testaments, and tried to be a real friend to me. She tried to get me to stop drinking, and soon we became engaged to be married. But after a thorough consideration of the matter, I decided that I would not marry a Catholic girl, but promised her that I would stop drinking and try to be a man. A great many young men make promises of this kind before marriage, and girls believe them, but I want to

say to the reader that if a young man will not quit his bad habits before marriage, he will not afterward. Still I would go around to the back doors of saloons and drink just the same and hide it from the girl.

One Saturday afternoon some other boys and myself went into a saloon and swallowed a great quantity of "squirrel" whiskey and beer which was not fit for a dog to drink, (and a hog wouldn't drink) until I became unconscious. My friends knew of my promise to the girl, slipped me out the back door, put me in a covered wagon, took me across the creek, and left me under the shade of a tree to sober up. By chance one of my girl friends passed, saw me lying there, and broke the news to her. I can see her in my imagination throw up her hands and say to her mother, "I must go to his rescue." She came across the hill, through the woods, and over the rocks to the spot where I was, and exclaimed, "Jack! Jack!" but there was no reply. She took my watch, ring, and money and went back home. I came to myself about 5 P. M. There had been a terrible rain, the creek was overflowing and the water was all around my sides and peppering in my face. And when I saw where I was, I thought what a pity that I did not go down the stream and never wake up again.

I scrambled up and went to the adjoining town of Burnham where I boarded, went up to my room, cleaned up, and lay down on the bed. I was extremely nervous and almost a physical wreck. I was lying with my face toward the door, and my disordered brain pictured two large hoot owls above the door looking down at me with their fiery eyes. I tried to get up but found that I was numb, and I was scared nearly to death. But finally I went down stairs and stayed until I could not "see things."

In a few days I went back to see my girl friend. I sat with my head down, and did not have much to say for a long time. Suddenly she spoke up and asked, "Where is your ring, Jack?" I replied that I had left it at home. She also asked about my watch, and I told her it was in the shop. Then she quietly walked over to a chiffonier, took them out and handed them to me. She then told me how she had come to see me while I was drunk, showed me how her skirt had been torn as she was coming through the brush trying to rescue a drunkard like me. She then reminded me of my promise, and told me that we must part. I told her that I had already been thinking of leaving for New York. I asked for my hat and she gave it to me and followed me to the door. As I started down the street I looked back to see her for the last time. She waved her hand and said, "Good-bye Jack, may Heaven bless you and my prayers be answered." And when I had gone she wrote me that when she went back into the room and saw my picture, that she broke down completely and cried as if her heart would break. Her mother turned my picture to the wall and said, "Why Delia, my daughter, aren't you ashamed to worry over a drunkard like that when there are lots of good boys in the world?"

"Yes, I know," she said, "but they are safe in the fold, while Jack has gone 'out on the mountains wild and bare, away from the tender Shepherd's care.

So I left, but instead of going to New York, I went to Montreal, Canada. There I secured a job at Peck & Benny's Iron and Steel Mills, which was located on a canal parallel to the St. Lawrence River and emptied into the Atlantic Ocean. This mill was an old-fashioned one operated

by water- power, and made great quantities of nail plates out of which the old box nails used several years ago were cut.

But in a little while I grew discontented and decided to quit and come back to the United States. Isaiah 48:22. "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked." But I found out at the office that I would have to give a month's notice in order to get my money. I consulted a lawyer about it and he said it was the Canadian law, so I decided that I would get drunk while at work and get "fired." I tried this plan, but without success. All I got was a statement of the amount that was due me. This I sold at ten per cent discount at a nearby saloon, and left.

I had thought that by going to Canada I could get away from God, that I would hear no more prayers. I was a heart-sick, lonely prodigal, a physical wreck, but still unwilling to come back to the Father's loving embrace. I was going farther and farther from all that was right and good, but remorse of conscience and grief for mother were calling me back into the narrow way, and into the service of Him who said: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" And the first thing I saw when I got off the train at Montreal was a little Protestant Church on a hillside, and the tones of its bell brought back to me some of the saddest memories I ever had in my life. It was the "still small voice of the lowly Nazarene saying: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel."

But again I refused. I was like a ship without a rudder on life's great sea. I was tossed to and fro without help, and without light I plunged farther into the darkness. I said that I would not preach, and I was endeavoring to keep my word. I was running from God but He was following me. I have often wondered why God loves such vile and ungrateful creatures as I was. But we with our finite minds cannot understand the great loving heart of the Almighty. Isaiah 55:8-9. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." When all other friends forsake and leave us our Heavenly Father loves and seeks us still. The Holy Spirit follows us continually and tries to woo us back to a compassionate Savior.

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Chapter 5 BY THE MERCY OF GOD

Coming from Montreal back to the United States I boarded the steamer "Persia," came up the St. Lawrence River past the Thousand Islands, and on to Port Delusia near Buffalo, New York. There were about two hundred passengers on board. All of us were having a hilarious time drinking and dancing. The dance broke up about midnight when we retired to our staterooms.

Soon there came a flash of lightning followed by a mighty thunder peal. The wind was high, and repeated flashes of lightning revealed to our bewildered vision the angry waves beating upon the ship. The thunder continued to roll and soon the rain began to pour in torrents from the blackened sky. The pilot lost his channel, and suddenly the ship crashed into a rock in Lake Ontario. The shock was so sudden and so severe that I was almost thrown from my bed. I got up at once, dressed hurriedly, and ran up on deck to see what had happened. There an awful sight was

presented to my vision. About fifty men and women in their night clothes were down on their knees praying and screaming. I shall never forget the awful confusion and babel of prayer and screams in that terrible hour. All of us thought that we should be lost in the bottom of Lake Ontario. Just then above the din I heard a man yelling in thunder tones: "Cheer up everybody, the worst is yet to come. We are all going to hell." And instantly I thought of Jonah and wondered if I were the Jonah that had caused that wreck.

If Jonah were thrown into the sea and swallowed by the whale because he was running from God, why should I expect any better? I had sinned and brought sorrow to my mother and disgrace to myself. Every sin I had committed came rolling up before me as a great mountain. I had never realized as now how black my life had been. I, who had been reared by a devout Christian mother, who had been taught to pray at her knee, and had twice known the love of God and His pardoning grace, had gone on and on in sin. Oh! why had I sinned? Why had I not given my life to God? And if I had owned the world I would have cheerfully given it all at that moment for a square foot of solid ground on which to stand. Thus I stood meditating and expecting at any moment to be called into the presence of an angry God to give an account for a life of sin and disobedience to His voice.

But God was merciful to me, and it was not very long until a tugboat came from Brockville and pulled us off the rock at nine o'clock the next morning which was Labor Day. We stopped at Toronto several hours for repairs, the ship having been damaged considerably, then sailed on to Buffalo, N.Y.

There I went to work for the Lackawanna Steel Works on a channel and beam mill. This was the most dangerous place in which I ever worked. A slight mis-step in either direction meant instant death. This mill averaged a fatal accident every twenty-four hours. While I was working there I saw an employee get caught between a hydraulic pusher and eighty-five tons of steel. The muscle of his leg was forced up into his stomach, and he lived only four hours. Yet I felt that the protecting hand of God was over me, and that in some mysterious way my life had been spared that I might carry the message of a Savior's love to a lost and dying world. Psalms 103:8, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy."

How often we see the hand of Providence even in the lives of the wicked. We can leave our friends, but we cannot get away from God. I would toss on my bed at night and think how I had sinned against God's mercy, and how patient, loving, and kind He had been. I thought that I was the worst man in the world, and wondered if Christ would reach so low as to save a vile sinner like me. I had grieved the heart of my Savior; my mother had met death without even a promise from me that I would live better, and it seemed too much. Sometimes I was so overcome by my condition that I seemed to live an age in one night. Only those who have gone into the depths of sin can know the agony of a guilty conscience, and a heart that is blackened by sin. It is not so hard to be comforted when unavoidable accident or disappointment comes, but when we by our own waywardness and sin have brought sorrow and discontent, there is nothing left to do but flee to Jesus for pardon or plunge deeper into sin. I was never satisfied to stay in any one place very long and I decided to come back to Knoxville, Tenn., my old home.

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Chapter 6 BETRAYED CONFIDENCE

On my way from Buffalo, N.Y., to Knoxville, I decided to stop over a night in Washington, D. C. There I met a street car conductor who seemed very friendly, and spared himself no time or expense to show me over the city. He seemed to have plenty of money, for I saw him pull out a roll as large as my arm. I thought this very strange, as street car conductors are not generally wealthy. It was not long, however, until he let me into the secret. He pulled out a great stack of street car tickets which he had fraudulently procured, and told me that he turned these into the company and kept the money. He said that the reason he did not care to tell me this was that I was a stranger and would soon leave the city, and no one would be the wiser.

The next day was the Fourth of July, and I came on to Asheville, N. C., where we stopped thirty minutes for dinner. There an old mountaineer boarded the train. He was tall and muscular, seemed to be about middle aged, for his hair and whiskers were gray. He wore a big white hat, large boots, and his clothes were rather seedy looking. He had a jug of whiskey in his hand, and came in and sat down by me. He, like the street car conductor, seemed friendly and told me that he was in the lumber business. He pulled out a half-pint bottle and offered me a drink, and of course I did not refuse. Each of us took two drinks and it was gone. Then he said, "If you will watch my jug, I'll go out and get another bottle." I agreed, and in about five minutes he was back with another bottle. We talked on and soon this bottle was emptied also. He told me how much he was worth, and said that he would like to have my address, so that he could correspond with me. He said that he had a daughter eighteen years old who would graduate from high school the next year, and that he would like for me to meet her. He then went out to get another bottle, and while he was gone I took his jug and went back to the rear car which was for the colored people, lay down and pulled my coat over my head. When the old man came back and discovered that his jug together with myself had disappeared, he came through the train, gun in hand, looking for me. But luckily for me he passed by without recognizing me. He got off the train at a station about five miles below there, and after the train pulled out I stuck my head out of the window and waved at him. The last I ever saw of him, he was jumping up and down on the track shaking his fist at me, but I had the jug and I knew that he could do me no harm. It was very comical to see the old man venting his rage on the atmosphere.

I went back to my old seat, took the jug from its hiding place behind the stove, and went to sleep. That night the flagman came through and woke me up and told me that the old man had telegraphed ahead for me to send his jug back. We laughed and talked awhile, and finally I opened the jug and gave him a drink. So by the time we reached Knoxville, the flagman, news butch and myself were all drunk. In a few days I went to work for the old Knoxville Iron Company.

One evening I went upstairs over a saloon, where Bill Grady, one of my old chums, was running a gambling den. I stood and watched the game for some little time; the betting was pretty high, and I had started to go out when Grady told me to stop, that he wanted to see me. He took me aside and told me that there was a man playing by the name of Crowder who had just sold his house and lot, and household effects, and that he had several thousand dollars on him. He then asked me to sit down and play and help win it, offering me thirty per cent of what I won and also

told me that he and Mr. Schmidt, the proprietor of the saloon below, would back me with whatever money I needed. Mr. Grady was to sit by me and "false-cut" the cards. I agreed, and sat down to play. We agreed to play table stakes, and set a limit to the game. We were using poker chips, and the money all went down stairs in care of Schmidt.

We soon had the little man out of the way and Crowder was left between us. We sat there for two days and nights without any sleep playing constantly except while we ate our meals which were sent up to us. I was growing tired and sleepy, and I decided that something must be done. We had been winning steadily, but the money was coming too slowly for me. So I dealt the cards, Bill false cut them. I gave Mr. Crowder four queens and myself four kings. Crowder opened the pot, Bill raised it and I raised it. After it has been raised a number of times, Bill dropped out and I raised it again. I had already beaten several hard hands for Crowder, and this time he looked up at me with tears in his eyes, and said, "I'll bet fifty dollars." We both had all of our chips in the pot and to make it safe I said, "Mr. Crowder, we sat down here to play table stakes and a limit. You are the first to break it." He replied, "I'll bet this fifty dollars, and if you don't call it I'll take the pot." Then I said, "No, you'll not take the pot whether I call it or not." I said to Bill, "Go to the elevator and tell Schmidt to come up here." He came up and asked what the trouble was and I told him that Crowder wanted to break the limit, and that all my chips were in the pot. He said that he was not afraid to trust me, and asked how much money I wanted to bet my hand. I told him that I wanted to borrow a hundred and fifty dollars. He gave it and I turned to Crowder said: "You may have the best hand, but you have broken the limit on this game, and I am going to make you pay to see my hand. I call your fifty and raise it a hundred." He looked at me for a few minutes, his lips quivered and I could see that he was very nervous, but he called it and of course I won. From that time on he began to weaken as he was losing, and he started to drinking. That evening about six o'clock Schmidt called me into an adjoining room and told me that we had better stop, that Crowder might give us trouble. He had lost nearly seven hundred dollars and Schmidt paid me my part and I left.

Next morning, some of my associates and myself were in the same saloon drinking when Constable Shinberry drove up and walked in. He singled me out from the others and told me that he had a warrant for me. He read it to me and it appeared that I was charged with gambling. He smiled and said, "I cannot take you to town now, but you appear at the squire's office this afternoon at two-thirty." I told him that I would be there. But in a little while I was shaking hands with my friends, telling them good-bye. I hastened to my room and packed hurriedly, hired a buggy to take me to Powell's Station where I caught the evening train for Jellico, Ky. There I met one of my old friends who was keeping a bar, and the next day I boarded a train for Cincinnati.

The devil is wise and is always on the alert to find and capture us when we do not have a definite aim in view. When we leave God out of our lives the devil is sure to come in. One of the greatest evils our young men are engaging in today is that of gambling. At first they do not see the awful effects nor the evils that gambling leads to, but little by little they drift into sin until nothing seems too vile for them to do. Some men will do anything to get money to gamble with, even going to the extreme of selling the household furniture. Thus many lives and homes are wrecked and ruined.

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Chapter 7 UNWILLING VICTIMS

When I arrived in Cincinnati I secured a position with the Prudential Life Insurance Company. In this work I was associated with a very nice class of business men, as a whole better than the steel mill employees with whom I had been working. I soon began to do personal work, and learned a great deal about human nature. It was a great education for me, and I learned more in the short time that I worked for this Insurance Company than I had learned during the whole of my previous life. In a few months I had stepped in the front rank among those who were writing insurance. I had also begun to lie to the people among whom I worked as a great many insurance agents do.

There were two brothers by the name of Ritter both of whom lived in the territory which I worked. One lived at Newport and the other at Covington. One was carrying a thousand dollars, and the other five hundred dollars worth of ordinary life insurance. One day when I arrived at the home of the one who lived in Newport, I found that there was crepe on the door. I was on my regular rounds collecting premiums, and just by accident happened to be there at this time of distress. I went into the basement where I found Mrs. Ritter crying. She told me that her husband was dead, that he had been sick only a few days. She said she would need her insurance money with which to bury him, and asked me if I would be so kind as to get it for her. So after I had gotten a doctor to pronounce him dead, I went to the superintendent, reported the matter, and he immediately wrote out a check for the death claim.

The next week I went to the home of the other brother. His wife asked me how she could get five hundred dollars more insurance on her husband. He was working for a railroad and had a very dangerous job, and she said she really needed more insurance. I asked her if her husband were willing and she told me he was not, that he had already been complaining about paying the premiums on what he was already carrying. I told her not to say anything to him about it, and that I would try to see what I could do. It was just two weeks before Christmas, so one night that week I went around to see him, I took my room-mate with me and pretended to be in a hurry, but waited for Mr. Ritter to come home from work. We had left on our overcoats, and when he came in we told him that we had only a few minutes to stay. I spoke to him cordially and introduced my friend as the home office inspector. I told him that all who had paid their premiums as promptly throughout the year as he had were entitled to a Christmas turkey. I told him just to sign his name at the bottom of a sheet of paper which I held out to him, and he signed without looking. He had signed unwittingly the application for five hundred dollars worth of insurance. I took it to the company's physician and told him the circumstances. He got his information in a round about way and the policy was delivered to the lady at once. Mrs. Ritter had paid a year's premium, and Mr. Ritter was insured for a thousand dollars and did not know anything about it. I had the turkey delivered and I suppose that he enjoyed it as much as anyone.

In a few weeks I decided that I would go out to Fort Thomas and write some insurance, and at the same time see the place where the sensational murder of Pearl Bryant had occurred. While there I went into the home of an elderly lady to see if I could sell her some insurance. I asked her if she carried any, and she said that she did not, never had, and never expected to, and that she did

not care to be annoyed by any life insurance agents. I turned the subject and we began to talk on religious matters, and I found that they were Methodists. She told me that she was a widow lady and lived there with her daughter.' She had a son who lived in California. I kept edging my way into the door little by little, as most all agents do, and finally got inside. She gave me a seat, and after about an hour's conversation I signed both her and her daughter for five hundred dollars worth of insurance each. It was then that the thought came to me that if I, an uneducated man, could do that where all others had failed, I could surely preach the gospel and do something for God. Then I began to try to do better and began to attend the Fourth Street Christian Church.

By this time I had made a great many friends in that vicinity. Mr. Deaterly, the superintendent of the Insurance Company, came to us and said that he would give a theater party or a banquet to the staff that sold the most industrial insurance during the two weeks before Christmas. He divided us into six staffs, four men in each. We started to compete at once everything that we could get, good or bad.

One day I went into a home down on Mill Street. An old tailor lived there with his wife and six children. The house was old and very dilapidated, the children dirty and unkempt. I solicited insurance, and found that they were already insured, but they did not know what company. Finally they brought out some old policies, some in the Prudential, some in the Metropolitan, and some in the Western Southern. But all of these were lapsed because he had failed to pay the premiums on them. I filled out an application for him, his wife and children. I asked the names and ages of the children, and the faces of the parents took on a puzzled expression. They did not know the names or birth dates of all of them. They found two old yellow papers where they had put the ages down, but they were almost all of them different on the two papers. But I filled out the application the best I could, and delivered the policies. The next Sunday the whole family went to Fort Thomas and the eldest boy took sick and died that night. On the following Monday the superintendent asked me what we ought to do about it. He said they were entitled to one-fourth benefits. I told him that I had to pay the first premium myself, that we should never be able to collect any more, and I thought it wise to pay all the premiums up for six months out of the death claim, and the family would never know the difference.

It happened that our staff won the prize. We preferred a party, so we leased the Bluegrass car from the Cincinnati Traction Co. We got two gallons of ice-cream and some cakes and hired a negro whom we dressed in white to serve it. He was a very black negro, and dressed in snowy white presented a very comical appearance. We were allowed to run over any of the street car lines that we wanted to, and could keep the car until midnight. We all had our girls with us and had a very nice time. Returning home over the river bridge from Cincinnati to Covington, the fuse blew out and a streak of fire ran entirely through the car. I was standing on the rear, and one of the girls screamed and ran toward me. She would have jumped into the Ohio River if I had not caught her.

It was not long until so many lapses began to come in on the rotten insurance that I had written to win the prize, that it cut my salary so low to pay them that I resigned. I should have known this if I had used a little foresight, but my mind was so intent on the prize that was offered that I did not care whether the insurance I wrote was worth a snap.

I then secured a position with the United States Express Co. at Cincinnati at sixty dollars per month. My work consisted of going to the custom house every afternoon and getting money to deliver to the railway stations. The money was kept in a large steel cage on the third floor of the custom house. It was stacked in there like hay in a barn. I had an iron safe on my wagon, and I would sometimes get seventy or eighty thousand dollars in bills and change. I would put this in the safe and sit on top of it with a Winchester rifle while it was being hauled through town.

One night we had to meet a train that was due at six P. M., with some money. When I got there the officials could not work the combination on the safe, so the car was sidetracked and they sent me to guard it. It was very cold, and I built a fire and closed the doors. About one o'clock in the morning the Express Company brought two big gray horses and put them in one end of the car. Both of them broke loose and began to run up and down through the car, and I got out and let them have full possession. I sat out side on a pile of cross-ties and guarded the car until morning.

I had formerly made more money at the mills than I was making with the Express Company. The devil was afraid that I would get too good wearing a collar and tie, so he suggested that I go back into the mills. He told me that after all the time I had spent learning my trade that I could not afford to work for sixty dollars when I could make six or eight dollars per day at the mills. So the express job began to grow distasteful to me, and I decided that after all I could do better at the steel mills. I saw Pat Hogan, a friend of mine, and a foreman at Mitchel & Tranter's Steel Mills, and asked for a job. He told me that I could get my old job, laughed and said that he thought I would want to come back home.

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Chapter 8 FALLING AMONG THIEVES

So I pulled off my collar and tie, put on my old wool shirt and overalls, and began to work at Mitchell & Tranter's on the eight-inch roughing mill. A few weeks after I began to work there Pat Hogan came to me and said that he wanted Richard Garrety and myself to go over to Cincinnati with him. He promised to introduce us to some of his friends who were bar-keepers and show us a good time. So one night we went and he took me into a saloon which was run by a man named Rule. He seemed to be a very nice man, and after we had taken a number of drinks he urged us to come back again sometime.

Three or four weeks later, Garrety and myself went to the Grand Theater to see a play. We went out between acts and took several drinks of high grade whiskey, and by the time the last act came my eyes were so glimmery that I could not tell how many actors were on the stage, and created a great deal of merriment among those who were near enough to overhear me asking for this information. After the show was over we went to the Atlantic Beer Garden and stayed until eleven o'clock. Garrety said that it was time for us to go home but I would not go. I told him that I thought I would go down to see our friend Mr. Rule.

It was about midnight when I got there, and Rule seemed to be as friendly as ever. There was just one other man beside myself in the saloon, and he and Rule were shaking dice to see who

paid for the drinks. The three of us shook the dice and Rule had to furnish the drinks. He remarked that he was giving me something special, and indeed it must have been, for in fifteen minutes after I drank the half of a small glassful I became unconscious. When I recovered my senses I was sitting in the rear end of a saloon that I had never been in before or since. There were over a dozen fellows standing around the bar. I got up and rubbed my eyes, walked over to the bar and told those who were in there to line up. Just as the bar-tender was about to draw the drinks, I ran my hand in my pocket and discovered that my money was gone. I soon found that I did not have a cent. "Somebody has rolled me," I said, "don't draw any drinks." One of the fellows called me to one side and asked me if I knew where I was. I replied in the negative and he said, "You are in one of the toughest dives in Cincinnati. Be careful what you say." He then told me that a red-headed man had brought me there at two o'clock that morning, pretended that he was a friend of mine and had gone through my pockets. I had to borrow a nickel to get home.

This circumstance reminds me so forcibly of the truth of that passage of Scripture found in Galatians 6:7 -- "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Just as I had helped to rob Mr. Crowder in the poker game, so I had been robbed though I was worse off than he because I had not even a cent left. God's promises never fail; I was now reaping the harvest that I had sown. Going deeper and deeper into sin trying to stifle the voice of God, I was being steadily punished for my sins, and was beginning to see that the devil had nothing for me. Neither has he anything for you, dear reader, his promises are like Dead Sea fruit which turns to ashes on the lips. There are no oases in the devil's desert; all the golden prizes which he holds before your distorted vision are like the mirage in the desert which tempts the wayworn and thirsty traveler on to death and destruction.

When I got back home I asked Pat. Hogan what he meant by introducing me to such a thief and cut-throat as Rule. He got mad, we had a few words, and I quit working for him. I learned later that Hogan was killed in a drunken brawl, having met his death at the hands of a negro.

At the time I quit working at the steel mill, John Robinson's circus was in town, and I got a job with it. I was taking care of a cage of monkeys, two black tigers, and a hyena. I liked this work for a time as we were traveling through the state of Ohio. And as I watched those monkeys day after day I became convinced that if Darwin had ever had my job he never would have advanced his theory in regard to the descent of man. But it was not long after I joined the circus that I began to scratch. I investigated and found that I was as lousy as a pet coon. I looked at the others and they were scratching too. Old John Robinson himself was slapping his back as if he were fighting hornets. This did not suit me much so when we arrived in Pittsburgh, I resigned from the circus, went to a clothing store, bought myself an entirely new outfit, bathed, and burned my old clothing. I then went to the railway station and bought a ticket to Greenville, Pa.

As I look back upon my life I am made to wonder why I listened to the devil for so long. Every promise he made proved false, but I was running from the voice of God, and anything that would drown his voice, though only for a moment, was welcomed. There was no rest for me, and I sought in vain for any lasting pleasure. Sometimes for a little while the voice of God seemed silent, and I hoped to find rest, but in a short while I would find that the tempest had been stilled only for a moment, and that I must come face to face again with my obligation to God.

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Chapter 9 HARD LUCK

When I arrived in Greenville, Pa., I got a position at the Carnegie Steel Mills. Here I worked on a ten-inch mill at four and a half dollars per day. Shortly after I began to work there, the superintendent, John A. McKay, asked me if I would go on the road as a labor agent. I agreed, and after I had supplied the company with a number of men, I received a letter from the Lebanon Iron and Steel Company offering me a position at five dollars per day and expenses. This was the same kind of work that I had been doing, traveling for the company hiring workmen. I accepted, and when I arrived there I was told that I had been recommended to them as a man well acquainted with the iron and steel men of the country. I told them that I knew a great many men in Bristol and Max Meadows, Va., and thought that I could get all the men they wanted.

I went down to Bristol and got seven men and gave them tickets. I then went to Max Meadows. There I called on Henry Ellis, an old friend of mine, and told him my business. He put me in touch with a number of experienced mill hands. As I was coming out of the hotel the next morning about eight o'clock I was confronted with an old constable who said he had business with me. He asked me if I had license to be a labor agent. I told him that I did not and he said that I was to consider myself under arrest. He took me down to an old vacant butcher shop, as there was no esquire's office in the town. There they read the law to me and I was fined a hundred dollars and costs. I told them that I wanted another trial as I had no one to defend me. I then called up lawyer Pogue at Wytheville and related the case to him, and asked him to come and help me out. He came on the four o'clock train that afternoon. I also telegraphed to the company the predicament that I was in, and I received a reply stating that if I had followed their instructions they would stand by me, and asked for the name of the authority that had arrested me, saying that if I were not released they would enter suit against them at once.

When the train arrived there was such a mob standing around the depot that it looked as if a circus had come to town. Mountaineers had walked miles through the mud and rain to see the "labor agent." I was standing off to one side and Mr. Pogue spotted me. He went my bond and the case was appealed to court. As we reached the bottom of the stairs the company's lawyer shook hands with me and told me that if Mr. Pogue had not gone my bond that he would. I left that night for Lebanon, Pa. I worked in the mill there for a few months, became dissatisfied and went to Bessimer, Ala. I learned later that the case against me was dismissed after the cost was paid.

Not realizing that I was going into a dry country I failed to take any whiskey with me when I started. By the time I arrived at Nashville I wanted a drink very much as I was extremely nervous. A fellow directed me to a pool hall. I went there and asked if they had any whiskey. They in turn asked me if I did not know I was in a dry country. I told them that I knew that, but I had come from Pennsylvania and was on my way to Bessimer, Ala. I said, "You can look at me and tell that I need a drink." The great drops of perspiration were standing out on my forehead. So I got a quart of whiskey and went back to the station. It was not long until a negro porter called out, "Get your heavies to board the Atlanta train." Mine was not very heavy, but I held on to the one that had the quart bottle in it. In Atlanta I went out to the American Hoop Company and saw a friend of

mine whom I had known in Lebanon. He was a newly married man, so I took dinner with him and went on to Birmingham, thence to Bessimer.

At Bessimer I got a job on an eight-inch mill at ten dollars per night. I had not been working there very long until I got a letter from the North Alabama Rolling Company at Sheffield, offering me a position on a sixteen-inch bar mill paying more money. On my arrival there I met a number of men with whom I had worked in other places and some of them were going to work for me. But one of the hands and myself had a falling out and I "fired" him. When the superintendent learned of it he came and asked me to replace him. He said that the man was in debt to the company for transportation and they wanted him to work it out. I said, "He can't work on this mill as long as I'm in charge of it." So in a few days a new roller came from Pittsburgh, and I was told that my services were no longer required.

The next day two of my friends, Jack Roark, of whom I have spoken before, Bob Dills, a few others and myself bought a barrel of beer and some refreshments and went out in a field under the shade of a big tree to "celebrate." Bob was a good singer and just before we started to separate I asked Bob to sing, "Where is My Wandering Boy Tonight." It was very beautiful and today my heart is filled with an inexpressible sadness as I think of these old friends both of whom have passed into the Great Beyond without making any change. So far as I have been able to learn both went into the presence of their Maker unprepared. And the thought comes to me that God has been wonderfully merciful to spare my life to write this poor account of it in the hope that it may in some measure be a help and a warning to those who may read it. Dear reader, I am sure that you would not continue in sin as I did, or try to get away from God as I did, if you could know the many hours of agony I have passed through, and the many sleepless nights I have spent

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Chapter 10 A NARROW ESCAPE

I had heard that Sam H. Light, for whom I had worked before in Lickdale, Pa., intended to move his mill out to Sand Springs, Okla., and as I knew him well I decided that I would go out there and work for him. I had an uncle who lived in Elgin, Okla., a little village situated between Oklahoma City and Quanah, Texas, on the Frisco Railway. This uncle was my mother's brother whom I had never seen, and I concluded that I would stop at Elgin to see him on my way to Sand Spring.

On my arrival there all of the different tribes of Indians from all parts of what was then called Indian Territory were having a union picnic. They were coming and going all the time I was there. Almost every night I went down to the camp and watched them. All the chiefs were dressed in regulation Indian style. They had their hats trimmed in feathers which nearly reached the ground; some had rings in their noses and war paint on their faces. Every night they had their war dance which was very interesting to see. While I was there a farmer who lived near gave them a beef. This they sliced into long strips about three inches wide and hung them up on a pole to dry in the sun. Then they would eat them without cooking.

Most of the Indians were owners of large ranches on which they raised cattle. Some of the younger ones had been educated in American schools, and it was interesting to hear them talk. Others were still uncivilized and harbored such hatred in their hearts for the white race that they would not even look at a white man.

One of the younger Indians told me a story of how the ranchers felt when the first train came through the Territory. He said that thousands of their cattle had never seen a white man since being branded as young calves, and when the first train came along it scared the cattle almost to death. They would keep running and stampede so that it would take them several weeks to get them corralled. One old Indian said that he did not intend for his cattle to be scared so, and that he was going to lasso the next train and jerk it off the track. He actually tried it with the result that he and his horse were left strewn along the track and the train went on.

When the Indians first heard of Christ and Christianity they said they would never accept it. They wanted to cling to their old ideas of "the Happy Hunting Grounds." But when they were educated in the government schools and the missionaries began to teach them, great numbers of them were converted and joined the various Protestant churches. Civilization and Christianity went on among them just as the train referred to above.

Another story I heard was that of an Indian a hundred and thirty-five years old who lived by himself out in the mountains, was uncivilized and had never heard the name of Christ. A young Indian who had been converted and educated heard of him and went out there and stayed two years in order to learn his language. Then he stayed two more years to get him converted. The old Indian who had kept his bow and arrow to accompany him to the happy hunting grounds was converted and baptized, and began to look forward to "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

This is truly an example of Christian zeal worthy of emulation. How often we think we fail if we spend one hour with a friend without seeing him converted, and yet this young Indian in his newly found joy was willing to spend four years to win this aged man to the Christ who had so wonderfully blessed him. Shall we as God's children of today consider our time worth more than the souls of men that Jesus died to save? Could we see a human soul as God sees it we would pray for more opportunities to win them to Him instead of trying to shirk our responsibility, instead of begging God to call some one else to do the service that He has laid upon us. God grant that we may get a vision of the world's need' and the value of souls.

I went on to Sand Springs and got a job under Mr. Light as foreman of the crew which was erecting the machinery. Not long after this Mr. Light came to me and said, "Morgan, I'm not going to let you roll on the ten-inch mill when we get ready to run, I've got a better position for you. You are to be my superintendent, you and I are going to run this mill."

So the work of building and setting up machinery proceeded, and the mill was ready to begin operating the second week of June, 1912. The boilers were fired up and the engines tried out preparatory to operation on the following Monday. But just at this time Mr. Light went into the post-office to get his mail, and as he stepped out into the street dropped dead with heart failure. So

all the work was shut down until further orders. All the men except one other and myself were laid off, and we were left to take care of the plant.

Mr. Kenwin, of Gary, Ind., and Mr. Chas. Paige, an oil man, were the chief stockholders. Neither of these men had ever had any experience in the steel mill work, so the plant had to be closed until they could decide on further plans for running. Mr. Paige owned all the land around Sand Springs, and was also sole owner of two street car lines, one running from Sand Springs to Tulsa, the other running up to a zoo located on top of a mountain not far from there.

On July Fourth all the churches of the town gave a picnic at the zoo. Several thousand people were there, and all available street cars had been pressed into service, including two steel cars which were sharp at each end like a boat, and were run by a gasoline motor. About nine o'clock that night the people were going home and every car was crowded to capacity. I was aboard one of the summer cars, and as it started down the two-mile grade down the mountain the motorman lost control of it. On down it went at a terrific speed until it crashed into one of the steel cars at the foot of the mountain. So great was the momentum that the light summer car was split wide open; six persons were killed instantly and thirty-three were injured. As it happened, I was standing on the rear end of the car and came out of that awful wreck without a scratch.

Those who were uninjured began trying at once to aid the others. As I went around to the front of the car I found the motorman. His skull had been split open and he was already dead. I went on and the next one I came to was a lady lying about twenty feet from the car over against an embankment. She was just regaining consciousness. She told me that her husband was the motorman and asked if he were killed. Not knowing how badly she was hurt I told her that he was all right, that I had just left him. It was a ghastly sight and one which I shall never forget -- the dead and wounded scattered about, some partially buried in the dirt, others with sightless, glaring eyes unspeakably horrible to look upon.

This was the third time that I had been brought face to face with death, and I quaked with fear to think how nearly I had come to being hurled into an endless eternity without God and without hope. How loving, kind and merciful the Almighty was to let me live. I truly believe my life was spared in answer to a mother's prayers.

This wreck cost Mr. Paige so much money in damages that he refused to furnish the capital to run Mr. Light's mill as he had promised to do. Mrs. Light said that Kenwin and Paige did not know enough about steel mill work to handle her machinery, so she decided to sell. The mill was purchased by the Texas Rolling Mill Company and is being operated today by them.

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Chapter 11 UNGRATEFUL HOBOES

I left Sand Springs and went to Pueblo, Colorado. I worked there a few months in the steel mills but soon became dissatisfied. I wrote to the Salt Lake City Hardware 'Co., and Silver Bros. Foundry Co., in Utah and told them I would like to come and build them a mill, and stated about

what it would cost to put up a small plant. I went out there, but on my arrival they would not consider my proposal as they said it would cost too much money. About the third night I was there I woke up in the hotel where I was stopping and discovered that I had been robbed. I went down and told the clerk what had happened and I noticed two other men standing talking to the clerk, and they looked at me and said, "We have all been robbed." The clerk said that there was a woman who had registered there from Denver rooming on the same floor. He said that she had come down about four o'clock complaining of being sick and asked him to call a taxi to take her to the hospital. It was his opinion that she was the thief. The clerk gave me seventy-five cents to pay for my breakfast. I then sold my best suit of clothes at a pawn shop for six dollars.

I picked up a Salt Lake paper and noticed in the "want" column that a night clerk was wanted at Weldon, a railroad hotel fifteen miles from there. The salary was sixty dollars per month and board and room. I called up the proprietor, applied for the job, was accepted, and caught the next train. It was a mountain town through which many tramps passed, and I was annoyed every night by them. Of course I could not refuse them something to eat. They passed the word along to one another until it became an established practice for all hoboes to come there after 1 A. M.

I never had any work to do as there were no trains. So one night I crept back into a corner behind the counter and went to sleep. When I awoke I discovered that the cash register had been robbed of over seventeen dollars in cash and a whole turkey had been taken out of the refrigerator along with several other eatables. When the proprietor came down I told him what had happened and he gave me a severe "bawling out" and said that I would have to pay the damage out of my salary. So I told him that I would quit, that I did not want such a job as that anyhow. After he deducted twenty dollars from my salary I had only thirteen dollars left.

So I caught a freight train and beat my way over the D. & R. G. Railway back to Fort Worth, Texas, a distance of eighteen hundred miles. A little distance out of Pueblo I climbed on top of a passenger car and stayed there all night. That night as we were speeding over the plains of Texas a terrific storm came up. The thunder rolled and the lightning was playing all around me, and it seemed that the wind would take me off the car in spite of all I could do. It was there that I thought of my mother's prayers and wondered if I would ever come out of that storm alive. I know that Jesus was not far away, for it seemed that I could feel him draw the lash across my back. He spoke to me in a quiet voice, and said, "John, you know that I have promised to be a husband to the widow and a father to the fatherless, and you know that I have been a husband to your mother. Many times I came to her rescue in time of trouble, and in times of sorrow I wiped the tears away from her eyes. Yes, and I have been a father to you when you were a little boy helpless and unable to defend yourself, I kept you in the hollow of my hand and protected you. Then when you were at the age of seventeen I called you to preach my gospel to a lost and sinful generation; and you threw down my cross and ran away from me, but I have followed you. So now I am tired of worrying with you and if you don't get busy and do as I have commanded you I will wipe you off the face of the earth." It was there that I made up my mind to obey His voice.

When I arrived in Fort Worth I secured a position with the Southwestern Mechanical Company operating a twelve-inch mill. I worked there about five months but soon got the "blues" and decided to quit the mill work. I went to the city and bought a Bible and began to study it day and night trying to qualify myself for the work that God had assigned me to do. One night I went

into a little Gospel mission on Main Street, made an open confession of my sins, and started about my Father's work the best I knew how.

There at the mission I met Mr. J. C. Crawford, general manager of the L. B. Price Mercantile Co. He seemed to be interested in me and gave me a position as a collector on the road for his firm. This territory over which I was to work covered over a thousand miles of surrounding country. My headquarters was at Temple, Texas, and I was to go over the territory once each month. There were so many towns to work that if I missed a single connection I would come out short at the end of the month. Sometimes I had to stay up all hours to make these connections, but I preached, or tried to preach, every time I had an opportunity. I was confronted with a great many temptations in this work. Sometimes the people were slow to pay and I was constantly receiving messages from the company to get the money or the goods, and it was very worrisome. Once I became so disgusted that I did not write to the company for three weeks and they wrote me asking how the crops were down in the southern part of the state.

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Chapter 12 THE WAY OF THE TRANSGRESSOR

While I was in the southern part of Texas my business called me to Huntsville where the state penitentiary is located. While in Huntsville I had the pleasure of meeting the chaplain of the prison and he volunteered to take me through it. And as we entered through the long hall of a large brick structure and stepped out of the back door, I noticed that I was surrounded by four walls about thirty feet high which enclosed a space about a fourth of a mile square. As I looked in front of me I saw a large grove with gravel walk-ways. Benches like those used in parks were placed here and there under the trees and around the band-stand. All along the left wall and running clear across over my head were two decks of cells. On my right was a large dining-room over which was the chapel. And as we walked on for quite a little distance we came to a laundry where a large number of convicts were employed. They also had a shoe factory, a wagon factory, a blacksmith shop, and a machine shop. I saw almost a thousand prisoners all dressed in white duck, and as I thought of their being shut in away from their families and friends, cut off from all the pleasures of life, I said to myself, surely the way of the transgressor is hard.

I was there at the noon hour and saw the men march into the dining-room which I should judge would seat about fifteen hundred. Each man went to his place and stood there until the gong sounded, and then they all sat down at the same time. They were not allowed to speak or carry on any conversation at the table. If a man wanted more bread he would hold up his knife, if he wanted more meat he would hold up his fork. In this respect it seemed to me to be a very unusual meal.

The second visit I made to this town I had the privilege of preaching to these prisoners. They all gathered in the grove and I spoke in the band-stand. Toward the close of the sermon I asked that every man who believed that whiskey had caused him to be there would raise his hand, and I believe almost eighty per cent responded. I said, "Boys, I have traveled in the same road. I was both a drunkard and gambler, but I thank God that He has' saved me. He can do the same for

you. All of you that mean to make a start to live better, come up and give me your hand." And almost half the crowd came up. A great many seemed to be under conviction.

At that time there were over eight thousand convicts on the different state farms and camps in Texas. I had the privilege of visiting the state farm at Weldon, Texas. This farm consisted of eleven thousand acres and contained two camps, one for white prisoners, the other for colored. And as we drove around over this great farm I looked upon hundreds of acres of cotton, corn, and cane. I saw the guards on horse back armed with double-barreled shotguns. Each had a squad of about eighteen or twenty prisoners. And as we drove across the field and came to the shade of a big tree I saw two other men sitting under the tree with six long-eared bloodhounds. They explained to me that they used these dogs to track the convicts if they ran away. I noticed that some of the men wore white uniforms while others had on stripes. They said that the ones wearing stripes were the ones who had attempted to escape.

We then went down along the river into the bottoms. Along the river were the tallest and most beautiful trees I ever saw. They were hanging with moss from top to bottom. And as we went further I saw women's clothes hanging here and there among the bushes, and the guide told me that this was formerly a camp for the women, and that some of the guards would tear off their clothing while they were at work. And I said surely the way of the transgressor is hard.

As we were coming back to the camp about sundown I heard some of the guards say that they were going to punish two of the men. And as I looked inside the camp I saw one man with chains fastened to each wrist and he had been pulled up by a pulley until the tips of his toes were barely touching the floor. They told me that a man in this position would collapse in twenty minutes. Just about that time I heard some one scream, "Oh, captain!" We went around the building and saw a man lying face downward on the floor, two men holding his feet and two holding his arms and head. A large man wearing high-topped boots and a black mustache stood there with a leather strap about three inches wide and three feet long. Holding it in both hands he was bringing it down with all his might across the naked, quivering back of the convict. Each blow brought the blood, and it was pitiful to hear the moans of the poor prisoner. He would plead, "Oh captain, please don't hit me any more." I could stand no more, and as I turned away I said, "The way of the transgressor is hard."

Not only in prison do transgressors find the way hard, but everywhere those who disobey must pay the penalty. He that transgresses law, be it natural, civil, or Divine, must suffer. If he breaks the natural law by refusing to take proper care of his health he must suffer physically; if he breaks the civil law he must pay in money, or imprisonment, or with his life; and if he breaks the Divine law he must suffer numberless woes in this life, and without the atoning blood of Jesus he will have to stand condemned before the Judgment Bar of God to be turned into hell with all nations that forget God.

But sinner friend, there is One who will forgive you and remove your transgressions from you. You need not stand guilty before God. Let Jesus come into your heart. He has satisfied every demand of the law for you. He can brighten your darkened life and blot out your every sin. Isaiah 1:15 "Thought your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

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Chapter 13

THE OLD WRECKED SHIP

I came to realize very much the need of an education, as many people where I preached laughed me to scorn because of my ignorance. Particularly I remember one wealthy man in Temple who laughed in my face, and told me that others would laugh at me because I had no education. Not long after that this man shot and killed a road commissioner and it cost him all his fortune to save his life from the hands of the law. And he has to stand before the Judgment bar of God with this man's blood on his hands. "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea." Matt. 18:6.

While I was working for the Price Mercantile Company, God gave me a blueprint, as it were, of part of the work that he had assigned me to do. This blueprint was in the form of three different dreams which I had at different times at short intervals before I left Texas. In each of these dreams I saw a church where I was destined to preach.

In the first dream I went to a country village and was stopping in an old weather-beaten house and store combined. A little distance from this house was a little valley through which a creek ran. Across this creek and upon a little hill was a small white church surrounded by a number of shade trees. I thought I went up to this church to preach and it was almost filled with people.

In my second dream was a little red church situated in a valley and surrounded by a number of small houses in a little village. I saw in my dream a complete picture of the interior of the church, the choir, the organ, and the seating arrangement. I thought I was preaching and that there was a little table down in front of the pulpit at which two men were seated taking notes of the sermon. But in a little while they laid down their pencils and resting their chins in their hands began to listen intently to what I had to say.

In my third dream I saw a little white church situated on a steep embankment up which a long flight of steps led from the street to the entrance. This was a very beautiful little church with a tall cupola. On the inside were heavy wooden seats, and at the front a very small platform which formed the pulpit.

About two months after my first dream a man stopped me on Main Street in Ft. Worth. He introduced himself as 'George Cox from Oakwood, Texas, a town located on the interurban car line eighteen miles below Ft. Worth. He said' that he had' been informed that I was a preacher and that he would be delighted if I would come down to his home and preach the following Sunday night. I promised to go. On my arrival he met me at the car line and took me to his home. It proved to be the old weather beaten house and store combined, the very picture of my dream, and as we stood on the front porch and he pointed out the church it was familiar to me though I had never seen

it; and I knew and told him that I had seen that church in a dream. And I knew that God had sent me there and that my first dream was fulfilled.

After preaching there I went back to my work with the Mercantile Company. As I have stated before this was a road job, and I was working all over the state, and was just ready to take up the work in the western part of the state. It has been raining for several days and the creeks and rivers were all out of banks. I was going from Quanah back to Ft. Worth over the Ft. Worth & Denver Railroad. Just as we pulled out of Wichita Falls we came to Wichita river about a quarter of a mile from the station. This river was all out of banks and very swift. It was spanned by a bridge about two hundred yards long. Just as the engine reached the center of the bridge, the engineer felt the bridge move. Realizing that his train was behind and that only four coaches were on the bridge, he immediately reversed his lever, opened the throttle, and backed off the bridge. Just as the engine came off the bridge the tide took the whole of it and swept it down the river. And as we all realized that the engineer by his quick thinking had saved our lives we all gathered around him to praise him for his thoughtfulness. And about three hundred dollars was made up for him at once by the passengers. Thus I was snatched again from the clutch of the Grim Reaper through the Providence of God.

In this work I was associated with so many kinds of people on the road night and day with no chance to preach, I soon began to grow cold in the work. My salary was only three dollars per day, and I had been accustomed to making much more. So it was not long until the devil helped me to decide that my place was back in the mill at my old trade. So I went to Chicago and got a position in the Republic Iron and Steel Mills. There I met with a lot of my old acquaintances, went to board in a combined saloon and hotel, and was confronted on every hand with so many temptations that I decided to leave there, and go to Duluth, Minnesota. So I boarded a steamer and crossed three of the Great Lakes, Huron, Superior and Michigan. This was a great trip and one which I enjoyed except for a storm on Lake Michigan. This was unpleasant as no less than sixteen ships had been sunk and lost on the great lakes that summer.

I stayed in Duluth only a short time as I failed to get work there, so I went back to Chicago and from there to Galveston, Tex. There I boarded the Mallory Steamer for New York City. On this ship I met with every class of people, and was soon engaged in my old favorite game -- poker. On this five-day trip we saw land only one time and that was at Key West, Florida. And when I landed in New York the devil had prospered me in gambling to the amount of more than eighty dollars, or about forty dollars over what my ticket cost.

Realizing that I had done wrong I soon found myself in a saloon down on the Bowery. Soon I was back in the same old channel. I then went to Pittsburgh, secured a position rolling on a sixteen-inch bar mill for the Pittsburgh Forge and Iron Company located in Woods Run. In this position I had full charge of the bar mill and three heating furnaces. Twenty-seven men whose wages ranged from three to twenty-one dollars per day, worked under my supervision. My salary averaged over five hundred dollars per month, this being the best position I ever held in my life.

Not long after I began working at this place I became very intimate with one of the proprietors of a saloon. Very often he would take me out in his car to balls and different places. I remember one night in one of the Pittsburgh clubs I spent over fifty dollars within a short space of

two hours. I was gradually getting deeper into sin and drank heavily. And it was not long until I began to neglect my work.

One Monday morning I woke up with a bad headache, and a red nose, and was very sick. I told my assistant roller to go ahead and take charge of the work that day at the mill, and explained to him that I was not able to work. The second morning he came to my room, stood over my bed with tears in his eyes and plead with me to get up and come out to the mill. He said, "John, you will lose your job and then I'll lose mine. I have a little home in Baltimore where my widowed mother lives and it's over half paid for, and if I lose my job I'm afraid I will lose my home." But in my drunken stupor I said, "Jimmie, you go ahead, you can run the mill as well as I can." And after giving him instructions, I said, "If anything goes wrong that you don't understand don't let anyone know it, but send for me, and I'll come immediately."

For three days I refused to go to the mill and stayed in my room drinking. And on Wednesday night when Jimmie came to my room he informed me that I had lost my job. He told me that Mr. Bear, the superintendent, had closed the mill and had sent to Gary, Ind., for a new roller. The next morning I went down to the mill and saw the superintendent. He said, "Yes, I have sent for a new roller and your services are no longer required. This is too good a job for such a drunkard as you are." So I went back to New York.

While I was in New York I stopped at the Travellers Hotel down on the Bowery. There I got drunk and for more than a week I was not outside of the hotel. Then I was stricken with delirium tremens. I saw horses stampeding over me; raging, grinning lions stood on their haunches ready to spring upon me; snakes with their deadly forked tongues darting into my face were crawling over me. Ah! this is one of the most horrible tragedies a man ever passed through. When I regained consciousness there was a man trying to hold me while the doctor was giving me a hypodermic. As I looked up into his face he asked, "Young man, where is your home?"

"I have no home."

"Where is your mother?"

"She's dead."

"Well you had better send word to some of your people. You are going to die."

"I don't want my people to know the condition I'm in, but if I must die I know that I am lost and doomed for hell, and I might as well die drunk as in the condition I'm in. So at my request please get me some whiskey and get it quick."

The whiskey was brought and he prescribed one glassful every three hours and forbade me to drink more than that. The doctor's instructions were carried out and I began to feel better. I did not have another attack of delirium, and the next morning I awoke to the light of another beautiful day.

Somehow I managed to get up and dressed and out on the street I decided to walk down to the wharf and as I drew near I saw a skeleton of an old ship that had been wrecked and dragged to shore. I saw two men there and they said that that old ship in its day had been one of the finest that ever crossed the ocean. When the machinery was in working order and she was out on the mighty deep it mattered not how severe the storm, nor how high the waves rolled, that old ship with her bow set against the storm weathered every gale and landed safely in the port. But by and by there came a day when the wind was too high, and the storm was too hard, and she was dragged in to the shore unfit for further use.

And as I stood there and gazed upon the wreck of that old ship I compared my life to it. Looking out over the vast expanse of gray and gloomy ocean my mind went back to the days of my boyhood. Then I was strong and pure as the morning dew, but there came a day when I succumbed to temptation and one sin had led to another until the storm of life was too hard for my feeble strength. My life was wrecked' and ruined both morally and physically. I had wasted my life, brought disgrace upon my dead mother, and had trampled upon her prayers. I had failed and my life was wrecked because I did not have enthroned in my heart the Christ who stilled the waves of Galilee and hushed the tempest in the long ago. Today, dear reader, if you will only let Him, He will come into your heart, to soften the gales of life, to calm the waves of thirst for drink, to still the tempest of temptation, and to safely pilot your bark to the Home of the soul "where no storms ever beat on that glittering strand while the years of eternity roll."

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Chapter 14 THE BATTLESHIP

Since my early youth I had heard men with whom I worked in the mills speak of "The Battle Ship Boarding House," and of the wickedness and crime there, but as I was not interested in the place I had never inquired as to its location. On leaving New York I went to Connellsville, Pa. I secured board in a large boarding house which I soon found was filled with men drinking, cursing, gambling, and carrying on every kind of wickedness and crime in which this class of men engage.

I had not been there long until I found myself associated with a number of my old companions, men with whom I had worked in mills in various places. I had been there but a few days when I heard one of the men call the boarding house "The Battle Ship." On inquiry I found that I was in "The Battle Ship Boarding House" of which I had heard so much. This place was widely known as one of the roughest boarding houses in the whole country.

This house was a large three-story building with a long front porch, and steps on either side of the house leading up to the second story. At the left of the entrance was a small store, and a large sitting room at the right. There was a long dining-room with two long tables which would seat about forty men. A long flight of stairs running parallel to the tables led from the dining-room to the floor above. In order to give the reader a better impression of the character of the place and of those who took shelter there I shall relate a few incidents which occurred while I was there.

One night when we were all seated around the table eating supper, a big Irishman weighing over two hundred pounds came in drunk, and as he was endeavoring to crawl up the stairs which had no banisters, he lost his balance near the top, fell, and landed on his back in the center of the table. The table broke, and he went on through to the floor. Of course everything on the table rolled on and around him. He was not hurt at all, and this was one of the most comical sights I ever saw. The proprietor of the place was angry when he saw that the table had been torn up and told the Irishman that he would have to pay for it.

One day I was walking through the hall when a woman called me to come into her room and help get her husband to bed. He was intoxicated and was lying across the dresser paralyzed, his feet hanging off at one side of the dresser, and his head and hands hanging off at the other side. A pint bottle of whiskey had fallen from his pocket and lay on the floor by the dresser. He was unconscious and as helpless as a little babe. He offered no resistance, so we put him to bed.

One night shortly after the above related incident we heard the report of a gun up in one of the attic rooms and rushed up to see what the trouble was. There we found a man lying on his bed with a revolver in his hand trying to shoot out the electric light. Of course, he too was intoxicated and had missed every time he fired. We quickly and quietly disarmed the fellow and left him to his own thoughts as a means of entertainment.

Being associated in this place with so many of my old acquaintances I continued to go deeper into sin, drank more, and got farther and farther from 'God. Nearly every Saturday night I went to town and became so drunk that I was unable to walk home and would send for a taxi to take me. Notwithstanding these facts I could still feel the sting of conscience and knew that the Heavenly Father was still calling me. It is wonderful to know that we cannot go outside the bounds of His great love for us. No matter what we do or where we go He is there and ever ready to take us back into His loving arms and forgive us. I had tried so hard to get away from Him and to calm the voice of conscience, but it was impossible. Psalms 139:7-10. "Whither shall I flee from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

Not long after I had taken board in the "Battleship" the officers of the town went around collecting a dog tax from all dog owners. If the owners failed to pay this tax their dogs were shot down by the officers, and the next day a wagon was sent around to gather up the dead dogs. As the wagon was being driven up Pittsburgh Street two policemen stopped it in front of the Commercial Hotel and told the driver that they had a drunk man there whom they wished to throw in the wagon. He was thrown in with the dead dogs, and as the wagon went at a lively gait up the street, I could see the dogs and the drunk man bouncing up and down together. I believe this incident more thoroughly impressed upon my mind my own unworthiness than any other one thing I ever saw. If in the officer's opinion a drunk man was no better than a dead dog he must be very low indeed. And as I thought how many times I had been in this same condition I could not help but feel and realize more fully the depths to which I had fallen by following the paths of sin and listening to the lying tongue of the devil.

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Chapter 15 THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN

A few weeks later I got drunk and remained so for several days, and was just on the verge of having another attack of delirium tremens. I was in the sitting room and as I lay on my couch about seven o'clock in the evening I had a nervous chill. I was shaking so hard that I shook the whole room. I was in a very despondent frame of mind and did not think that I could possibly live. I could hear plainly the voice of a nurse in the next room as she said, "Morgan's dying." I realized my condition more fully than ever before. My friends did everything they could for me but I did not seem to improve; and as I lay there thinking that my time had come the tears chased each other down my cheeks. Through my blinded and glimmery eyes I could see my friends as they came one at a time on tip-toe, look at me carefully, turn and walk away shaking their heads as if to say that my time on earth was short. But human thoughts are not like those of the Almighty who knows both the future and past. I know that at this time it took more than human skill to raise me; God in His infinite wisdom and love saw through it all, and worthless and sinful as I was, He in loving mercy gave me back my life when it seemed so nearly gone.

The next morning I was much better and I decided to walk out a little way to gain some strength. It was the beginning of springtime and the sun was shining brightly. As I walked I chose the places less frequented by people, as I feared on account of my nervous condition to go through the main part of town. As I was beginning to improve, my thoughts dwelt more than ever upon my wrecked and wasted life, and how I had promised God over and over that I would live for Him, and how again and again I had broken the promise. Every time that I had broken my promise I had gone farther into sin. I seemed to see my life as an open book, the pages of which were blackened by sin, and oh, how I longed to have them forever blotted out! How I wished that I might forget it all, flee from the horrors of a misspent life and begin all over again. I was indeed miserable, everything looked dark, all sunshine had gone out of my life, and my sins were weighing me down.

As I walked back to the "Battleship," a little distance ahead I saw a large yellow dog lying on the sidewalk in front of a shoe-shop, and as I drew near the dog arose and came to meet me. I felt so low and so unworthy that, without realizing what I was doing, I stepped off the sidewalk to give room for the dog. I felt that in my condition I was much lower than the dog, for he was living as he was created to live, while I had transgressed God's law, had gone so far into sin that it seemed that I was not worthy to ask Him to take me, though He had promised to save the vilest.

I returned to my room and as I stepped in front of the dresser and saw my face in the mirror, saw how emaciated and haggard I looked, the burden on my heart for my sins seemed heavier than I could bear. I turned and almost ran to keep from beholding such a face. I pulled off my coat, threw myself across the bed, buried my face in my hands, and there the devil and myself had our farewell conversation. My mind went back to the days of my youth. I thought of everything the devil had led me into, of the great promises he had made me, and how he was dragging me down to an endless hell. It was then that I hurled everything that he had done for me into his face. I said, I know now that you are a liar and the father of lies. You have nothing for anyone but a wrecked and ruined life, a broken and bleeding heart, and in the end everlasting punishment. It was there that I decided the question forever. As I thought of how good God had been to me, how He

had preserved my life in all the dangerous places that I had been in, I resolved to make a complete surrender to Him. I determined that if He would take what was left of me, the old wrecked ship, I would give the remainder of my life to Him and His service regardless of my lack of education, regardless of anything man could say or do. I said with the Prodigal son, "I will arise and go to my father and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants." Luke 15:18. So I arose, put on my coat and hat, and went up Pittsburgh Street inquiring for the Rev. G. L. C. Richardson, pastor of the M. E. Church. I found that he was at home, told him who I was and that I wished to consult with him concerning my past life. I told him how I had been called to preach the Gospel at the age of seventeen, how I had tried to evade the call and run from God. I told him of my having decided to take up the work in Texas, but I had no education and had so much opposition that I had fallen from grace, and since that time I had gone further into sin than ever. I told him that I knew that I was lost and on my way to hell, and that I had made up my mind to do what God wanted me to do at any cost. After a short conference, he read the Bible to me and we both knelt and prayed. The following Sunday night I went to his church. After the message he gave a special invitation for penitents to come to the altar and I went. I fell on my knees, made an open confession of my sins, and pleaded for God to forgive and save me. And in a little while "the light brightly beamed on my soul" and God for Christ's sake forgave my sins. That was the second Sunday in April, 1915. I did not know anyone in that church, but I know that God met me there with open arms as He did the Prodigal son, and those around me rejoiced because of my return.

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Chapter 16 DREAMS FULFILLED

After being reclaimed I immediately joined the church. This is the best thing any young Christian can do. In the church he is encouraged and helped by the Christian people, and he is also made to feel his personal responsibility for the task that he has been assigned to perform in the interest 'of God's kingdom. This I know by experience.

Brother Richardson was a consecrated man of God, a working pastor, and a powerful preacher. His life was an inspiration to his large church of over twelve hundred members, and I am sure that it was largely through his influence, encouragement, and help that I remained faithful to the cause of Christ. He gave me an opportunity to preach in his church during a revival. And though there were present about eight hundred people that night, they all arose when the Christians were asked to stand. This seemed remarkable, and has been the only time in my experience that I have had the privilege of preaching to a congregation all of whom were professed Christians. Brother Richardson was widely known throughout the surrounding country, and was constantly receiving calls to hold meetings and conduct revivals in other places. I clearly remember a very striking incident that occurred in one of his meetings in a near-by town. There was a little girl not over eleven years old whom I had noticed doing personal work in the audience for several nights. This little girl brought her mother and her grown brother to the altar, and both were gloriously saved. And on the last night of the meeting I saw her stand and plead with her old gray-haired father to come to Christ. He was a locomotive engineer and had never been a Christian. With all the earnestness of her little soul she took his big rough hand in hers and begged him to surrender to

God. At last his hard heart was melted, and she came leading him down the aisle to the altar. She knelt down by his side, and with a child's faith poured out a prayer to the Great Physician to save her dear papa. In a little while, in answer to a child-like faith that knows no denial, the old engineer arose with his face beaming with the love-light of heaven, and shouted the praises of a God who saves to the uttermost all who come to Him aright. And I thought of the words of Isaiah, "And a little child shall lead them."

A few weeks later Rev. Richardson started a revival at Hickory Bottom church about five miles from Connellsville, an adjoining town. During this meeting he asked me to go over there with him and preach on Saturday night. I agreed, so he, Rev. Tannyhill, superintendent of the Coke mission there, and myself went over in an auto. And as we came around a curve in the road, a little red church was pointed out to me. It was situated in a little valley and surrounded by a few houses. And on being told that it was the church in which I was to preach that night, I said, "I believe I have seen that church before." And as we walked into the church and up to the pulpit and sat down, I knew that it was the little church of which I had dreamed in Texas over twelve hundred miles away. And when I stepped upon the platform to preach and looked over the audience, it was just as true a picture of my dream as any artist could draw. The organ and the choir were placed just as they were in my dream, and out in front of the pulpit was the little long table at which were seated the two preachers who had accompanied me. It was there that I tried to tell in my weak way how that I had seen that place in a dream, and how God had sent me there to preach His gospel.

After that revival closed I went over there every Sunday night and preached. The second week that I was there, at the conclusion of the message I gave the invitation. A strong, robust man who was standing in the rear of the church came down the aisle, gave me his hand and said, "Pray for me." We all knelt around the altar, and soon he was happily converted. After the benediction had been pronounced, I noticed the organist breaking through the crowd trying to get to the new convert. With eyes red from weeping, but withal an expression of joy upon her face she threw both arms around his neck, and I soon learned that Mr. Patterson, her husband, had been saved. He was one of the wealthiest farmers in that part of the country, had never been a Christian in his whole life, but now was willing to give any part of his fortune that the Lord required. Soon the Rev. Tannyhill supplied me with all the work that I could do in the surrounding mountain towns and coal-mining regions of that part of Pennsylvania.

It was sometime later that my third and last dream was fulfilled. I was sent up to a little mountain church called Adelaide, to preach. This one was also easily recognized. It was a small white church built on top of a high embankment, and leading up to it was a long flight of steps. It had a tall cupola, and on the inside were heavy wooden benches. I preached there many times. Thus my third dream came to pass, though the three dreams were widely separated by time and distance. And I knew without any doubt that God had given me a blueprint, so to speak, of a part of the work that He had assigned me to do. I know that God manifests himself to men today just as surely as He did in the days of old when He caused the dew to fall on Gideon's fleece.

And had I not yielded when I did I sincerely believe that I would have been cut off without hope of salvation and eternally lost. For we find in God's word the following terrible warning to all who resist the wooing of the Holy Spirit: "He that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." Proverbs 29:1.

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Chapter 17 IN QUEST OF HEALTH

Having been working in several meetings, I soon began to feel the physical effects and realized that my body was in no condition to perform its best service in the Master's vineyard. My eyes were growing so dim that I could scarcely recognize anyone across the street. Also I found myself on the verge of nervous prostration. I had heard so much about Hot Springs and the wonderful cures that had been wrought by the hot baths that I decided to go there and see if anything could be done for me. I felt the call from God to service so keenly that I could not be satisfied when I was not working for Him, and was willing to try anything that would make my body stronger and abler to do efficient service for Him who had done so much for me.

So I bought a ticket to Hot Springs, Arkansas, and as the train pulled in to East St. Louis I saw the old shed where the Tuter Iron Rolling Mills once were in operation and where I once worked when I was a young man. But now the machinery had all been torn out and moved away. But there remained lying along side the fence the old long telephone pole upon which, in the days gone by, a number of boys and myself had sat and "rushed the can of beer." It brought back sad memories and caused my poor heart to ache because of a life spent in sin. But amidst these sad memories I felt a deep sense of joy and praised God that He had saved me from a life of sin and debauchery, that He had set 'my feet upon the solid rock, that He had "begotten me again unto a living hope."

After a few hours layover in St. Louis I boarded a train on the Iron Mountain Railroad for Hot Springs. Shortly after we left Little Rock a Federal officer boarded the train and went from coach to coach warning the people of quack doctors, crooks, pickpockets, and other dangers that they might possibly encounter at Hot Springs. And I thought that just as it was his business to warn the people of the dangers of that city, God had placed a responsibility on me to warn men of the enemy of their souls, "to flee from the wrath to come," and to admonish them to prepare to meet God.

Upon arriving in the city I secured a room in an apartment and hastened down town eager to learn what the doctors could do for me. I went first to a general practitioner who examined me, gave me a few pills and charged me five dollars. I then made a visit to a dentist who extracted a tooth and charged me two dollars. I next went to an oculist who examined my eyes and tried to fit me with a pair of spectacles, but I could see through none of them. He then told me that a part of the optic nerve was paralyzed and that nothing could be done to improve my sight. He took some more of my hard earned cash for nothing, and I decided that I would go and try the baths.

I went to the Rockefeller Bath House and asked the price of the bath. This was to cost fifteen dollars. I agreed, went in, was given a check and told to await my turn. Soon a large, burly negro appeared and called my number. I went along with him and found prepared for me what seemed to be a tub of boiling water.

"Say, nigger, do you think that I'm a chicken to be scalded?" I remarked.

"No, boss, dat watah won't hurt you. Git right in," he said.

"Well, for goodness sake shut off some of that fire."

"I'll swesh, boss, I caint do dat."

"And why not?"

"Cause de debil has got a lot o' thieves, bootleggers, murderers, and robbers down dah wuhkin' in eight hour shifts shobelin' coal to beat hell, an' I'se aint got no means o' communicatin' 'wid 'em."

After getting in the bath and feeling how hot it was I asked, "How long do I have to stay in here?"

"Not long, boss, if you has got a bad heart," he replied.

"Oh, my heart's all right," I said.

"How do you know?"

"Because the blood of Christ has been applied, and it has never failed to effect a cure."

The negro's expression changed and he said, "I done tuk dat treatment myself a long time ago, boss."

"What church do you belong to?" I asked.

"I belongs to the Baptis' chuch."

"Well, I thought you were a Baptist because I heard you swearing awhile ago just like an old deacon I used to know."

I then went back to the doctor whom I had seen at first and told him to be honest with me and tell me if anything could be done for me. He examined me thoroughly and then said that my heart was the only thing about me that was in first-class condition. And then I told him that a doctor in Cincinnati had refused my application for insurance twelve years before, and had said that my heart was in such a bad condition that I was liable at any moment to drop dead. This seemed to surprise him, but he still affirmed that there was nothing wrong with my heart at that time.

The doctor then showed me his library. He indeed had a wonderful collection of books. But as I glanced over them I saw that the Bible had been omitted. I thought this a splendid opportunity to speak a word for the Master and I told him of the omission. I told him that he needed this great Book of all books to complete his costly library. I told him this was the only Book which

man had never been able to master and lay aside; that it contained precious gems of thought for all who would read it, and concluded my remarks with the question of Jesus: "For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Mark 8:36.

I love the Bible because it brings peace and happiness on earth and good will toward men. Not only that, but as I turn and look through its pages I find joy, peace, and happiness for my tired and weary soul. I love it because it is the inspired word of God. Though it was written by forty-eight or forty-nine different men of God, men widely separated by time, training, and culture: when all the books are placed together each and every chapter and verse fit together perfectly. Well has it been said by Alfred M. Hagar, "I know that no man made the roses, I know that no man painted the sunset upon the evening sky; and in the same way I know that no man, nor group of men unaided by God, produced the Bible. For it points to God just as certainly and just as truly as the flowers point to heaven; and wherever this Bible has gone it has sweetened homes, exalted womanhood, sanctified the cradle, and redeemed men." The Bible is the greatest of all books and the greatest piece of literature in any tongue. All who would be wise must gather wisdom from its pages; all who would be holy must practice its teachings. It is "the sword of the Spirit" with which the Christian must gird himself to battle against evil; it is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." It is the Bread of Life to all who are hungry, it is the Water of Life to all who are athirst. It is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our pathway, it is our guide from earth to a place of eternal happiness. It pictures to our enraptured view the city whose gates are of pearl and whose streets are pure gold, the home forever of those whose robes have been washed white in the blood of the Lamb.

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Chapter 18 CONCLUSION

After fourteen years of absence I have come back to the old home-place, the scenes of my boyhood days. And oh, how things have changed! As I look out of the west window of my boarding place I see now the little city of Alcoa containing more than three thousand inhabitants spread over the old fields where I used to run, over the gulleys I used to jump when I was a barefoot boy. Little did I think then that those barren fields would some day be covered with houses many of which now shelter the employees of the great Aluminum 'Company of America.

And as I look out of the east window I can almost see the spot on which stood the little log cabin where my dear old grandmother, Mrs. Barbara Payne, once lived. But she has long since departed this life of sorrow to dwell in the house of many mansions. Many years have passed, but I seem to be again the barefoot boy running across the fields, and climbing the fences on the way to grandmother's. And when I come in sight I can see her standing in the door shading her eyes with her hand, saying, "I believe to my soul I see John coming."

And then I think of my dear old sainted mother whom God has called to be forever with Him. Who can tell or fathom the influence of a godly mother? However far a man may wander from all that is pure and right and good a mother's love and a mother's prayers will follow him. Amidst all the evil surroundings in which he is placed, he can never get away from the memory of

the prayer at mother's knee. It matters not how hardened his heart may have become, he can always be touched and softened with the memory of her who sang the lullaby that carried him to dreamland, her who taught him to lisp the little prayer, "Now I lay me down to sleep." For I know that God in answer to my mother's prayers saved and redeemed me from a life of sin. I know that in the most degraded and sin-cursed moments of my life I could still hear the echo of mother's prayer for me; could still hear her sing the old songs of Zion; and could still remember her loving words of advice and counsel. I can truly say with the songwriter:

"O praise the Lord for saving grace,
We'll meet up yonder face to face,
That Home above together share,
In answer to my mother's prayer."

And as I look out and meditate upon the changes that have taken place here, I am more deeply impressed with the great change in my own life. I left East Tennessee a homeless wanderer, but now have the assurance of an eternal Home beyond the stars. I went away into a life of sin, but now my sins are blotted out and forgiven. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Psalms 108:12. What a miracle God works in the hearts and lives of men today! It is truly amazing what the love of Jesus and the power of God can do for a sinner. But for the atoning blood of Jesus I would have filled a drunkard's nameless grave. How precious the thought that Jesus would love me, low and vile as I was, that He would create within me a clean heart, help me to live a pure clean life, and make me an humble bearer of the message of His love. And not only myself, but thousands of living witnesses testify to the saving power of God; men who have risen again, men who have been saved from drink and from every evil habit are now telling the story of Jesus and His love for sinners.

Some say that the day of miracles is past, but it is untrue. The same Jesus who, almost two thousand years ago, calmed the storm-tossed waves, today speaks peace to troubled souls; the same loving Savior who healed the lame man and caused him to leap for joy, today guides our feet in the paths of peace and righteousness. The same Jesus who opened the eyes of the blind, today gives light unto them that sit in darkness; the same living Lord who called the dead Lazarus forth from his tomb at Bethany, today lays His quickening hand upon the soul that is dead in trespasses and in sins, and resurrects it to walk with Him in newness of life.

I cannot close this brief sketch of the first part of my life without some words of advice to those who are newly converted. It is only by reading God's word, by trying to obey its precepts, and by prayer and trust in God that we can keep our religious experience. We are sure to lose out if we neglect to read the Bible and fail to pray. I remember that one time I was conducting a revival at Farmington, Pa. This place was on top of a high mountain. It was winter and the weather was very cold. The snow had drifted in some places to a depth of six or eight feet. But this little church was filled every night, and the meeting was progressing nicely. 'God was there to convict and convert. But I, like a great many other preachers, depended too much upon self and not enough upon God. I had failed to pray as much as I ought to have prayed, and one day I was left without a message for the night service. My mind was as blank as a clean sheet of white paper. I stopped the conversation in the room, bowed my head, and said "Lord, what shall I do?" And there came into my mind the thought that I had not prayed. I put on my coat and hat, stole away to the woods, and

sat down on a big stump. And as I looked at the sun I saw that it was already below the tree-tops, and I thought more anxiously of the service that night as there was no one there whom I could call on to preach. I then got down, scratched the snow away from the roots of the stump, knelt and prayed until God gave me a message. And I promised God then and there that I would never try to preach or do anything for Him without praying and trusting Him for guidance.

And to those who have felt the call from God to some definite form of Christian service, let me say, obey the call. Do not try to evade it as I did. If you do it will cause you to lose your experience, and bring you nothing but sorrow. I have indulged in all of the so-called pleasures of sin, and can testify that I had no real or lasting pleasure therein. Sin brought only sadness and sorrow into my life, and it is true that "the way of the transgressor is hard."

On the other hand, obedience will bring you joy. That is part of our reward that we receive here on earth. God has said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the 'Gospel to every creature.'" Mark 16:15. This applies not only to the minister behind the sacred desk, but it applies to every child of God. We must go to the high and to the low, to the rich and to the poor; all must have the message of salvation. God does not save us only that we may escape eternal punishment, but that we may serve Him, and in that service we find true happiness. In the New Testament we find some instances where those who were afflicted came to Jesus themselves, but we find a far greater number who either would not, or could not come for themselves, but had to be brought. To point the way to Jesus to someone who is in sin, to see their faces shine with the joy of sins forgiven brings a joy to the Christian that cannot be described. This happiness comes as a verification of the promise of Jesus: "If ye know these things, happy are ye, if ye do them." John 13:17.

Not only do we have the joy of serving the Master here, but we have the blessed hope and promise of immortality. Job of old propounded the question: "If a man die, shall he live again?" That question was answered by the Savior when He said: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." This is a glorious thought, and should be a powerful incentive to us to put forth our best efforts for God while here upon earth, for "here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." This city of many mansions is prepared by Jesus for those who love Him and keep His commandments. We cannot begin to tell the beauty and glory of Heaven, for it is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." 1 Cor. 2:9. There we shall be forever separated from all the evil and wickedness of this present world to dwell in endless day with all the pure and good and holy. In that land there will be no more pain, no more heart-ache, no more sorrow, for we are told that God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. I want to be there dear reader, don't you? There we shall be numbered among all the redeemed of all ages, we shall receive a harp and crown, and stand around the Great White Throne singing endless praises to the King of kings and Lord of lords. Wherever this book shall fall into the hands of Christian people I want them to offer up a prayer for me that I may do more for God, that I may be accounted worthy to hear the welcome of Jesus: "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And when I have come to the end of the way in this unfriendly world, it does not make much difference where I am buried, but I want those that stand around my dying couch to sing that old song: "Oh come, angel band, come and around me stand; Oh bear me away on your snowy wings to my immortal home." And as my soul takes its flight from this temple of clay, I believe my

dear old grandmother, with eyes no longer dimmed by passing years, but radiant with the light of perpetual youth, will look out from the battlements of Heaven ,and say, "I believe to my soul I see John coming."

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THE END