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## **THAT BOY: WHO SHALL HAVE HIM?**

**By W. H. Daniels**

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D. L. Moody, And His Work, Etc.

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## PREFACE

The history of theological opinions is a fruitful field In it may be found materials for endless laughter as well as innumerable tears.

One of the infinite attributes of God must be his patience, else he could never have endured the caricatures of himself which certain of his professed ministers have painted for portraits of his nature, nor yet the formulæ which they have preached and written as authoritative statements of his opinions and will.

The experiences of multitudes of souls under the lash of these doctrinal task-masters are exemplified in some of the characters in this book, the originals whereof are personally known to the author.

When this story was running through the monthly numbers of the "National Repository," the author was taken to task for slandering the memory of a dead doctor of divinity, who is herein portrayed. These critics, though nominally of the same religious sect, utterly failed to recognize the features of their own theological grandfather! though the doctrines laid to his charge are plainly printed in the pages of his voluminous works. For such theological progress as this there is cause for devout thanksgiving.

Another purpose of this story is to set forth some practical results of certain false theories of education which have come to be respectable by fashion and venerable by age. The title of this story, in part, appears elsewhere in literature, and will call to mind the theme of that admirable lecture by the Rev. Dr. J. H. Vincent, to whose courtesy for the loan of this piece of literary property the author hereby expresses his obligation.

W. H. D.  
Chicago, January 1, 1878

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## 01 -- AN ORTHODOX NEIGHBORHOOD

In the days when New England was very new a colony of about fifty persons settled in a pleasant region of country on the head waters of the Charles River, about thirty miles from Massachusetts Bay. They were sturdy people, of good Puritan stock, who feared God, and

reverenced ministers and magistrates; the men, strong to swing the ax and drive the plow; the women, wise in all domestic mysteries, ordering the house with care and neatness, and raising stalwart sons and buxom daughters to fill it.

If any of the old masters had undertaken to paint a picture of such a village they would have traced a yellow circle round it, as they used to do round the heads of their saints; at any rate, history has drawn her golden circle round it as one of the centers and strongholds of the severest Puritan theology.

These good people were not plagued by that weariness of the flesh which comes of making books and newspapers without end; their intellectual life centered in the two sermons of their minister on Sunday. That great white meeting-house on the hill was to the parish what the Acropolis was to Athens, or the Forum was to Rome.

Theology was their mental meat and drink. If a man went to his neighbor to borrow a swiveling knife or a sickle, the neighbor would lend him the article, and afterward engage him in high discourse on the well-worn topics of disinterested benevolence, divine sovereignty, the salvability of the heathen, or the probable number of the elect; flavoring his homely speech with quotations from the only books with which he was familiar; to wit, the Bible and the Shorter Catechism, chiefly the latter. The deacons and one or two devout women were able to quote from the Larger Catechism also, but this was a rare accomplishment. The sturdy farmers would sit on their three-legged milking stools, and husk corn by the light of the harvest moon, expounding meanwhile those tough old doctrines of limited atonement, the federal headship and eternal torments for the sin of Adam.

When the husking was over they would change their stools for split-bottomed chairs by the huge fire-place, and solace themselves with mellow apples and quart-mugs full of well-warmed cider; by the use of which, for the time, their theology grew mellow also. Meanwhile the women folk talked together over their Gunpowder or Bohea, of deaths and marriages, of weaving and spinning, of how to keep off witches, of whether all dead infants were saved, and such other pious and profitable things as lay near their housewifely and motherly hearts.

This was one of the comfortable corners of New England which spooks and spirits were the last to leave. Long time after they had been driven out of Boston and Salem, their presence was familiar in this orthodox neighborhood.

Sometimes the cream in the churn would be incorrigible, even after long beating; upon which the house-mother would know that it was bewitched, and straightway fetching a pipkin full of scalding water would dash it into the cream; then the witch would go and the butter would come.

The excellent couple were troubled with uncanny visitors at night, who became so frolicsome and familiar as to rattle the loom and twirl the great spinning-wheel. They endured these antics until their patience was gone, and then consulted an eminent authority upon the subject, who told them how to drive the spirits away by speaking to them. The next night the

loom was rattling and the wheel buzzing worse than ever, whereupon the good man remembering only a part of his directions, called out:

"Good evening, Mr. Devil!"

"That isn't the way to do it," said his wife. "You must speak to them in some great and awful name."

Upon which the good man shouted:

"In the name of Dr. Emmons -- Satan, you let my wife's great spinning-wheel alone."

At the mention of that name, it is said, the bad spirits took flight, and troubled the worthy couple no more.

Who then was Dr. Emmons?

None other than the minister of this orthodox parish.

If the Doctor's name were great among the people of the lower world, still greater was it among mortal men. There was a magic in it like that in the name of Napoleon among Frenchmen or of William the Testy among the worthy Dutchmen of New Amsterdam; and even now, though he has been dead for more than thirty years, he is held in honor by those old grandfathers and grandmothers, who think of him as of a theological Numa or Agamemnon, in an heroic age of his own.

So great a man was he in his day that things which he had used became sacred relics: Thus, a few years ago, his old pine pulpit, topped with faded velvet, on which Pelagians, Arminians, Monophysites, etc., had been so unmercifully banged and cudged, was brought out of its resting-place in the barn-loft of one of his old parishioners, and transported over a thousand miles, to be set up in state and dignity on the platform at a national council of the sect to which he had belonged.

In these economic days no one would look for so great a man in so small a town, while the idea of his being settled in it for life would be absurd to the last degree; nevertheless it worked very well in his case; for, as he gradually developed his full proportions, it came to be evident that no town of whatever size could contain the whole of him. As the young Connecticut theologian in this his first and only settlement waxed greater and louder, becoming at length a veritable son of thunder, and a doctor of divinity besides, his little flock began to look upon him as the Irish people looked upon Saint Patrick, and to feel under such obligations to him for being so great a man, and bringing so much distinction to their little town, that they suffered him to become a spiritual prince and autocrat, while they, as loving and loyal subjects, made it a part of their religion to believe, discuss, and defend any thing he might choose to say. Thus, from the smallness of his parish as well as the largeness of its pastor, his theology, which was of the most dogmatic sort, came to be the standard of orthodoxy in the whole country round.

In these later days, when men have grown so dainty in doctrine, the theological digestion of this mighty man is matter of admiration and wonder. Whatever was for sale in the shambles of his school he ate; asking no questions for conscience' sake. If a thing were to be believed, he believed it without higgling at the price it might cost his commoner sense: crude masses of dogma, that would strangle the weaklings of these days, he swallowed whole, without a cough or even a wink; and he taught all his subjects to do the same.

One of the theological students who used to resort to him, as in these days they do to schools of divinity, to be fitted for the work of the pulpit, Came one day, proposing to him this question:

"Dr. Emmons, I understand you to say that God from all eternity determined whom he would admit to salvation and whom he would pass by, and that the number of the elect and reprobate is so definite that it can not be increased or diminished."

"You are right, young man; I did say that."

"But," rejoined the student, hesitatingly, "here is a passage of Scripture in the second epistle of Peter, which says, 'The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.'"

The great man looked at the youth for a moment in silence, and then replied:

"Young man, let me give you a little advice. First establish your system, and then bend the Scriptures to it."

Among the marvels of doctrine which this great man invented and exhibited was the idea that the Governor of the universe had two wills, separate and distinct; one of which the Doctor called his revealed will, that is, the one made known in the Scriptures; the other he called his secret will, that is, the one he kept entirely to himself. Concerning this secret will of God the Doctor was as well informed as any man of his time. He explained to his admiring hearers that this was the will by which God determined such matters as the existence of evil, the length of human lives, the number of souls to be saved and lost. He also said that while the revealed will offered salvation through Jesus Christ to all sinners indiscriminately, yet in the secret will it had been determined to apply that salvation only to a part. This doctrine he formulated and put into the confession of faith of his Church, where it stood unchanged for nearly a hundred years.

Irreverent people sometimes ventured to laugh at this invention. For instance: a man whom the Doctor had hired to saw and split some wood was induced, after much persuasion, to depart so far from his usual habit as to go and hear his great employer preach. On Monday morning the Doctor went out to the wood-pile and opened conversation with him.

"Well, well, Mr. Pond! So you were at meeting yesterday?"

"Yes, Doctor."

"How did you like the sermon?"

"Not very well."

"You didn't; what was wrong about it?"

"Well," said the man, slowly and thoughtfully, "I should think if God has a secret will he would know better than to tell you about it, and let you blab it all out before a whole meeting-house full of people."

There was another item of inferential theology on which the Doctor was equally clear; namely, the duty of being willing to be damned. It would hardly be just to give him the honor of inventing this doctrine, but unquestionably the honor of putting it on the theological market and forcing a small trade in it belongs, more than any other man, to Dr. Emmons. This high state of grace he professed himself to have attained, and, with this doctrine he kept the spiritual ambition of some of his people constantly on the stretch; though it is not recorded that many of them ever attained to that ecstatic frame of mind. This was one of his inferences drawn from God's sovereignty and man's duty of submission: if, therefore, any one ventured to call it a hard saying, he would hurl this text of Scripture at their heads:

"Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?"

This generally silenced, if not convinced, the slow believer, though one man was bold enough to say, he did not wish to reply against God, though he did sometimes feel like replying against Dr. Emmons.

These strong doctrines the great man preached without fear or favor. Even at funerals he would often instruct the mourners in their duty of approving of God's sovereign pleasure, though it might have consigned the dead man or woman or child to eternal pains in hell. On one such occasion, as is duly recorded in his published "works," he drew a vivid picture of parents in glory singing hallelujahs while gazing on the smoke of the eternal torments of their own children ascending forever and ever. [1]

In spite of the severity of his nature and his logic, there were little streaks of sunshine in him, like the faint pink and yellow tints sometimes seen on the upper side of a great, hard Roxbury Russet. His usual manner, however, both in the pulpit and out, was as glum and awful as an inquisitor. Stern, conscientious, inexorable, he was the very prince of theologians of the inferential school. Sinners had no rights which God was bound to respect; and he was God's minister; therefore, sinners were not entitled to overmuch tenderness from him.

With this view of his relations to them, he used great plainness of speech. A poor old shoemaker who had lived for years within rifle-shot of his church, but had very seldom entered it, died one day, as even old shoemakers sometimes will; and the Doctor, on the occasion of his funeral, is said to have given it as his opinion, from what he knew of the man, that, without doubt, he was at that moment in hell.

There was a little nest of Baptists just across the border, at one corner of the town, who gave this good man no little trouble. It was too late in the day to banish them, and being stubborn people who liked their own notions in religion as well as the Doctor liked his, he held them as dangerous enemies to the peace of his little kingdom. He used to exhort the grandfather of the writer, who lived on that side of the town, after this manner:

"Keep up good frontiers, Mr. Metcalf; don't let those Baptists get in; don't take any notice of them; don't sell them any land; keep 'em out! keep 'em out!"

But his chief distress and horror were the Universalists. A few of these heterodox people lived in a pretty valley, whose stream gave power to a couple of saw-mills, a grist-mill, and three small cotton factories; and so well did they thrive in temporal things in spite of thunders from the Doctor's pulpit only a mile and a half away, so much money did they make out of land and water, and so little of it ever found its way into the hands of the parish treasurer, that, either in satire or in jest, the hamlet came to be called Poverty Lane.

The great Doctor preached faithfully at those worldly-minded sinners; though he had them less frequently in his presence than in his mind. Sin, he said, was just as much of God as righteousness: the sinners on the outskirts of his parish were doubtless raised up, just as Pharaoh was, in order that God might show forth his power in them. Like the king of Egypt, they very likely were vessels of wrath, and when they were fully fitted for destruction he would destroy them, just as in his secret will he had determined to do from all eternity. Neglect of the ordinances of grace and rejection of sound doctrine were the very means which the Divine Sovereign was using to bring the impenitent into a state fit to be cast out at the last great Judgment Day. Let not sinners take pride in their sins, every thought and word and act of which was definitely foreordained. God stands by the criminal and moves him to the crime in order that he may perish miserably to the praise and glory of his sovereign grace. [2]

Then he would take them on the other hip, and say how small was the number of the elect. He even figured it out by the help of arithmetic, and such census reports as he was able to come at, whereby he reached the mathematical conclusion that not more than one in a hundred, if more than one in a hundred and fifty, of all sinners born into the world had any chance whatever of going to heaven when they died. Prayers, penitence, good works, all would be of no avail to the reprobate: in consequence of Adam's sill they were all doomed to destruction, and nothing they could do would lift the heavy curse from off their souls till God by his effectual calling and irresistible grace should bring them to a knowledge of the truth; which thing he would or would not do according to his sovereign pleasure.

Having thus cleared himself from the blood of these sinners, he would usually draw to a close with this concluding sentence: "If the foregoing remarks are true, it is the duty of all men to repent;" an inference of which no reasonable person could complain, since, whether the "foregoing remarks" were true or not, it was their duty to repent all the same.

But the easy-going sinners of the valley paid little attention to the doctrines thus wisely fitted to their spiritual needs; many of them going off to the adjoining town of Bellingham on

Sunday, where there was preaching more to their mind, or taking their ease (and a little something else, for there were three or four tavern-stands in the village) at home. There was, indeed, one man among them who held a pew in the church, close up under the pulpit, into which he would come with the meekest possible air along the whole length of the west aisle, never in season, and often after the Doctor was half-way through with his sermon.

The favorite doctrine with this man was original sin. "I feel guilty for the sin of Adam every day," he said.

Some of his neighbors remarked that it was a pity old Joe should waste so much contrition on the sins of Adam when he had so much use for it in other directions; but the fact was that this orthodox doctrine had taken such deep root in the man that his only ideas in religion were, total depravity and irresistible grace, to both of which he gave himself up with absolute, submission, -- he was a most inordinately lazy man, -- whereby he saved himself much trouble in the way of piety, as well as of common honesty.

For full fifty years the great Doctor preached and governed, with ever-increasing power and vigor; swinging his logical beetle, driving the wedges of his inferences into the hearts and consciences of his hearers, as if they were so many logs of seasoned hickory; still belaboring the Universalists, still keeping out the Baptists, still showing up the secret will of God, and still insisting that before any soul was fully fit to be saved he must be willing to be damned. To his equals he was courtly and impressive; superiors -- he did not know of any; while to his inferiors, that is, his people, he was stern and regal, ruling them with a rod of iron, and holding them in due subjection as one appointed over them in word and doctrine.

One Sunday he fell down in his pulpit in a fainting fit. It does not appear that he had ever been sick before, it being one of his rules of life always to rise from the table with a good appetite. This sudden stop, therefore, appeared to him like a period which the pen of the Almighty had put to the record of his work; accordingly he resigned his pulpit, retired from public life, and took to waiting for death, which was rather slow in coming, for he was obliged to wait for it nearly twenty years.

During this period he and his old friend, Rev. Thomas Williams, of Providence, entered into a contract to preach one another's funeral sermon. Each prepared a suitable mortuary tribute to the other's virtue and greatness, and then brother Williams came over to see him and compare notes. As he was reading over that cheerful manuscript the Doctor interrupted him at a certain point where he thought the eulogy too high.

"Hush!" said Williams, "you are a dead man, you have nothing to say."

And so it proved at length; for the great Doctor died first, and brother Williams had the satisfaction of producing that very manuscript in the pulpit of his old friend, and reading, and reading, and reading; till it was almost sundown, and the dead man had to be buried with his long waiting funeral sermon only half preached. But brother Williams had not written that discourse for nothing. He came over from Providence and preached the funeral of his sturdy old friend



again and again, and again, till he had quite finished the discourse; by which time the subject of it had been dead nearly a year.

Dead and alive Dr. Emmons dominated the theology and thereby ruled the conscience of that orthodox neighborhood for more than a hundred years; and even unto this day the old men and women who were born and bred in his time still have the stamp of his thought upon them. In this favored town, now spoiled somewhat of both its quietness and its doctrinal greatness, the relic hunter in theology may find a few remaining specimens of the highest product of Calvinistic Puritanism. They still hold the doctrines of the Institutes, and all the Emmons inferences thereon, and shake their gray heads over the weak theology of these degenerate days, which, in their view, is so diluted with flee grace and fatherly goodness that the devil is actually in danger of being cheated of his due. Heaven used to be small, and its society select; but now, alas! they do not feel secure from meeting almost anybody there, -- Arminians, Baptists, Quakers, infants whose parents did not belong to the Church, and, if you would believe it, even some of the heathen too.

One of those high-caste theological Brahmins who had been under the dominion of the Doctor for nearly half a century, heaving a deep sigh, thus unburdened his mind:

"It appears to me that ministers nowadays are letting down the doctrines awful low!"

\* \* \* \* \*

## 02 -- A WOMAN

Tall, black-eyed, beautiful, broken-hearted, her little child, dressed all in white, lies asleep in a new cradle. There are no rockers on it, for babies that sleep in that cradle sleep all too sound. The old cradle stands on the floor where she used to kneel and smile over it -- the new one stands on the table.

People are coming in at the door, but they do not bid her "good day." One or two of them take her hand, but they do not shake it -- they only press it.

A carriage arrives -- empty. It will go away with only one little passenger -- a baby riding out alone!

This coachman carries people only one way-going; he has no rates for returning. This coach is hard; it has wooden cushions. No one complains of it, but no one rides with him a second time.

Here is the minister: the woman looks at him and shudders. Why must this old man have come? She is told that the young pastor is away and the old Doctor himself has kindly taken the service for him.

This man, as we have seen, is strong at funerals. Since the old shoemaker, he has buried a couple of wives, and a child or two of his own, besides some dozens for other people. When his

favorite daughter died, they say he raved like a madman, and was ready to fly in the face of divine Sovereignty. Only that once has he ever shown such signs of weakness.

Even the toughest theology breaks down sometimes.

He can do a funeral, as an army surgeon can do an amputation.

Since people have sinned in Adam of course they must die, and be buried.

This woman is one of the peculiar products of the inferential school of theology. She has hated the Doctor's preaching ever since she was a child; when she came to be older, she hated the man that preached it: afterward she hated God, that is, the theological god who was set forth in it. On one occasion when the great Doctor was at the house catechizing the children, she had refused to repeat one or two of the answers laid down in the book, on account of which she had been sharply reprov'd by the minister and afterward punished by her master.

She had no father, no mother, no love till she was twenty years old.

Twenty years is a long time for a woman to do without love, and be brought up on inferential theology besides.

Her guardian was an orthodox man of the straitest sect, who took delight in the "strong doctrines," and believed every thing the great Doctor said; partly because of the man who said it, and partly because of the savageness of his own nature. It was a positive satisfaction to him to think of the probable perdition of people who did not agree with him in religion; more especially, of the perdition of certain unregenerate persons whom he had overreached in trade, and who therefore called him a hypocrite. His wife was a sickly woman, his children useless and unmanageable; therefore he resolved to patronize a certain orphan asylum in a distant city and have a smart young girl bound to him.

Grace Beaubien was bright, healthy, active, ten years old, quite large and strong for her age; she would suit his purpose very well. The matron of the asylum did not quite like his hard look out of his cold green eyes, which had a yellow tinge about the edges of the pupils; nor yet the lean fingers of his sun-burned hands, which, to her fancy, had hooks at the ends of them; but, as he bore credentials from the great Doctor, setting forth the fact that he was one of his most faithful parishioners, the girl was bound out to him according to the custom of those times.

From that day until she was twenty-one she was a slave. For the first seven years she was pushed here and driven there; sometimes beaten, continually scolded, and all this not so much because of any crime against the order of the household as because she was willful. This was, in the eyes of her master, an unpardonable sin; but without it she must have died. When her fretful mistress worried her, or the daughters teased her, or the big sons tormented her, she did not take it to heart, but caught all their abuses on her will, as a Bushman catches poisoned arrows on his shield. She was calm, because she would not let them see that they hurt her; she was strong for her heavy tasks, because she would not let them see she was tired. All this was sorely aggravating to the head of the house, who regarded it as his especial duty to subdue the girl.

One Sunday morning he opened his eyes during his long prayer at family worship, and caught her glance of unutterable scorn; and coming to the "Amen" sooner than usual, he beat her for looking wicked. He came very near being late at Church that morning on account of his persistent efforts with a hickory switch, first, to drive the wicked look out of her, and secondly, to make her cry. Cry! she would have died first.

"There's no use trying to subdue such a little heathen," said he to his wife, by way of apology for his failure. "We might have known by her name that she had some foreign heterodox blood in her. A body never can tell what these orphans are made of."

That same week the old shoemaker died, -- the only friend she had in the world. His soft old heart had been touched with pity for the loveless orphan, on account of which these two people had come to be fast friends. The history of their acquaintance was on this wise: She had been sent along with her master's two daughters to be measured for a pair of shoes to be worn to school that Winter; for Grace was to be schooled as well as clothed by her guardian and benefactor. The orders were to make handsome shoes for the daughters and coarse ones for Grace; but while the old shoemaker was measuring her foot he chanced to give a look at her face also, over his round-eyed spectacles, and saw something that made him change the order a little.

In due time the "handsome" shoes for the young ladies were finished, and the work sent home; then he began on the "coarse" shoes for Grace. He chose the softest and finest bits of calfskin among all his stock for the uppers; he cut the soles out of the middle of a new side of the best oak-tanned sole leather; instead of sheep-skin he lined them with white kid; instead of putting them together with pegs he sewed them with yellow thread; he also did some ornamental stitching on them with white saddler's silk; and, by way of a finishing touch, he bound the tops and edges at the lacings all round with bright red morocco. Then he sent for the child, telling her that her shoes were ready, at the same time sending his bill to her master for a pair of common cowhide shoes.

What is the matter with your spectacles, old man, that you have to wipe them so often? Do the tears come in those glass eyes also at the sight of that child, who, for once in her life, is happy?

That was the old shoemaker's last job. Grace worked two extra hours one night, cutting apples for drying, to make up the time she had wasted in going to see her old friend in his sickness. She did not tell him that her benefactor had taken away her beautiful shoes -- "lest they should make her proud," -- and, with wise discretion, had given them to his smallest daughter. Such knowledge would have made the old shoemaker unhappy. So she thanked him over again for his beautiful present, covered his pale wrinkled face with kisses, and bade him a last good-bye.

After she was gone the old man fell into a kind of trance, in which he imagined himself to be dead, and standing before the great white throne giving an account of himself. He told the Lord that he had not been a very good man. He had spent seven years to learn how to make boots and shoes, and had always tried to do good, honest work, -- hadn't put in split leather and called

it French calfskin; hadn't put off welted shoes for double-soled, or put in hemlock leather when he charged for oak-tanned.

He had not been to Church very regular, because it didn't seem to do him very much good. He liked the psalm-singing, and sometimes the prayers; but as to the sermons he mostly didn't understand 'em, or else they muddled his mind with all sorts of doubts and troubles. He wasn't well up in the catechism, but he had read the Gospels over a good many times, and had always wondered at the Son of God coming down from heaven to live and die for sinners. He made no doubt that Matthew and the rest of them were right about it, but it always seemed to him almost too good to be true.

He had noticed that the Lord, when he was here, wasn't above making friends with the poor fishermen, and so he had hoped that he wouldn't altogether forget the shoemakers; though there wasn't anything said about them in the Gospels.

He was afraid he wouldn't look very well up among the saints, but he was sure he would be very lonesome down in the other place, for he was fond of little children, and he didn't think he would find any of them there.

He hadn't much more to say. He hoped the Lord would be gentle with him; but if he must be sent to walk in the fire, wouldn't the Lord see to it that he didn't have to walk barefoot? May be they would give him a pair of shoes in memory of those he had made for little Grace Beaubien.

Then he fell asleep and never woke up again. This was the old shoemaker at whose funeral the great Doctor had said, "No doubt he is at this moment in hell." Grace heard him say it. Then it was that she began to hate God. He and her master and the minister appeared to be on one side, and her poor dead friend on the other. Calmly and deliberately she took sides with the shoemaker in hell.

For years afterwards she was forced to sit under the preaching of that hated man. His sermons tormented her, and his long prayers, in which he stated his opinions to God, almost drove her mad. He seemed to be very intimately acquainted with the ruling powers both in the upper and under worlds, and, from the descriptions he gave of them and their operations, she much preferred the latter. The terrible thought that her dear old friend was there, suffering eternal torments in consequence of the sins of Adam, -- it must be for the sins of Adam, for, in her eyes, he had no sins of his own, -- so wrought upon her morbid religious sense as to awaken a desire for a personal acquaintance with the master of the place, in order that she might tell him how good and kind the old man had been to her, and so, perhaps, soften the torment he suffered. Thus it was that she took up that insane notion of praying to the devil. But one day she came upon this verse in the Bible, some chapters of which she was forced to read every Sunday afternoon: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." It was Jesus who said that; would he not then be good to the old shoemaker for her sake? Perhaps it would be better to pray to him than to the devil. To make sure she prayed to both.

Meanwhile as the slow years went by the Father in heaven was giving her a new delight; something which was more than a match for all her troubles. He was making her beautiful.

This only awakened envy and jealousy around her; but it was a source of boundless joy and triumph to this proud spirit to watch how its servant, the body, was coming to be so full and fair.

When she was grown to be a woman, and her strong nature began to assert itself her old tormentors grew afraid of her. She never replied to their spiteful words except with her eyes; but when one of the young ladies of the house ventured some rudeness of speech or manner towards her she would stop and look at her, and very soon this fashion of rebuke became her sure protection. What there might have been looking out of those great black eyes of hers no one of them cared to discover.

Another relief also came to her: the great Doctor no longer preached the Gospel, and his inferences thereon, in the old church on the hill. His successor preached the "strong doctrines" as well as he could, but for some reason or other, they seemed a great deal weaker in the new version than in the old. Nevertheless, Grace hated him, partly on the old Doctor's account, and partly on account of the theological god whose ambassadors they both Claimed to be. So darkly had she seen the face of her Father in heaven through the Doctor's theological glass! say, rather, she had not seen his face at all, but only a hideous mask which the Doctor had held up before his people, labeled Jehovah. But the Father was good to her all the same; yea, all the more, that she did not understand him, knowing that when she came to understand him she would love him, and that would lighten her heavy heart.

They made no account of her birthdays in the house of her master, but they did in the house of her Father. On the day she was twenty years old, John Mark Leighton came home from college; and let it be noted as a rare fact well worthy of record, he came home heart-free.

Love is one of the heavenly mysteries, a divine outpouring of power and glory into human souls. It must be supernatural, for it dominates all nature; it must be superhuman, for it masters the human race; it must be divine, for do not the Scriptures say that the other name of love is God? Doubtless, on that day, these two persons became inspired; not that one became a prophet and the other a prophetess, but that henceforth there was a life and power in them which was not in them before; a life and power which was not the result of any natural process, but which was manifestly breathed into them by the same Divine Spirit that first breathed life into that curious piece of clay in Eden. That miracle was wrought over again by which the first man and the first woman fell in love at first sight. Or, if you will have a likening out of the New Testament these two persons had been caught up toward heaven at least, and had felt, if they had not "heard, unutterable things."

On her next birthday, the first day on which she had ever belonged to herself, she gave herself away again; on her first day of liberty she entered into new bonds, the bonds that hold the world together.

The next year the Father sent her still another gift, in which she was so blessed that she began to doubt within herself whether there were not, somewhere in the worlds above her, a thoughtful, loving care in exercise over her life and fortune. Whoever sent such blessings as love, marriage, maternity -- must He not be good and lovable after all?

It was Grace Leighton's first baby that lay in that new cradle. Over its sweet face the old Doctor explained to them that, even if this were a child of wrath, it nevertheless was the duty of the parents to praise God for his reprobating will. The young father listened to these heavy words and felt his heart breaking under them; the young mother heard them, and, springing to her feet and raising her clinched hand to heaven, she cried out:

"Hush! Your reprobate God shall never have my child!"

Amazed, and for once in his life silenced, the old Doctor quailed beneath the wild look of the outraged mother. Not knowing what else to do he took up his hat and went away, leaving the funeral half performed. Then the old sexton, with tears in his eyes, took the dead child and its cradle tenderly in his arms, carried it away to his carriage, and then away to its grave.

After this the mother fell back upon her old entrenchments, and hated the theological god worse than ever.

There is only one power under the sun stronger than the human will, and that is human love: these two are the lineal descendants of the will and the love of God. These four powers struggling together in a human soul, two against two, make it like the cave of Aeolus. Such was the soul of Grace Leighton, but she kept all the storms at home. She appeared to live in an atmosphere such as precedes a tornado, charged to the full with electricity, ominous, oppressive. In her presence people sometimes felt as soldiers feel in the presence of a fifteen-inch shell with the fuse on fire. They waited for her to "go off," as people wait for the first flash and crash out of a greenish-black thunder-cloud; but save at the funeral of her child there had been no outbreak of the storm.

"Misfortunes never come single," says the old proverb. They are apt to be married, and bring their family with them. Sorrow upon sorrow fell upon Grace Leighton, under which she held herself up by her will, refusing either to break or bend; just as in her girlhood she had once refused to cry.

John Mark Leighton was of the old Brahminical blood of New England; a young man who was thought well of by old men; not "cranky" for having been to college, and therefore all the more highly honored; gentle, silent, blessed by inheritance with good store of worldly wealth. After the death of his first-born there was a settled melancholy about him which did not wear off, but seemed to mingle with his nature and become a part of himself, until the simple people among whom he lived began to say he must have some Settled trouble on his mind; some doctrinal trouble, perhaps. By and by he was received into the Church; standing up before the congregation while the written account of his experience was read, and vacantly assenting to the creed, word for word, as it had been written by the great Doctor, now gone to his rest. Still the old smile did not come back to his face. Then his neighbors changed their minds and said that

some unknown sickness must be eating his life away; but even this presumption failed when, after a long time, he showed no signs of dying; and at last, curiosity being baffled with his case, it was accepted as one of the strange visitations of God whereby human souls are either marked for some great destiny or written down for early transportation to the spirit world.

At length his temporal fortunes failed him. He became a partner in the principal store in the village, putting into the concern nearly all the money he was worth; but partnership proved to be a bad ship. This particular craft had been classed A-1, but the miserable thing foundered on its first year's voyage, and he was glad to escape from the wreck, with little left but his good name. His partner, a portly, plausible rogue, had carefully planned the bankruptcy, and so well did he execute it that, while the new member of the firm was left almost in destitution, the old one was able, after the storm had blown over, to reopen the place of business; taking down the name of the firm and putting up a new sign-board over the door, on which his name appeared followed by the word "Agent," though whose agent he might be, unless it were the devil, none of his neighbors could imagine.

The ruined partner accepted the situation without a murmur; and, finding nothing else to do, engaged himself to work with spade and pick in a canal, for a new factory that was building in Poverty Lane. He bore no malice toward the man who had wronged him, and wrought at his new trade as if he had been born to it.

But his wife was not the woman to forgive such an injury. Accordingly, when the bloated spider of an "Agent" opened his store again, she became the most regular of all his customers. She usually came when trade was liveliest, thus having a few minutes to wait while others were being served, which time she improved in looking at the "Agent."

The first time she came he seemed lost in amazement. Why did this woman patronize him, when there was another shop in the village? The next day he tried to be polite to her, but her scornful look silenced him. Every day she came, made some small purchase, paid him a little money, looked at him, and went away. Presently her eyes began to burn him, and the money she laid on the counter made his fingers tingle when he touched it.

After a while her daily appearance at the store became a matter of interest to the villagers, who tried to time their own little purchases so as to meet her there; but she hardly noticed them, and only seemed to see the "Agent," who now, to save himself from prolonged torture, always insisted on serving her first. She seemed to haunt him like an avenging fate. All day long he dreaded her coming; trembled in her presence as if he had seen a ghost; began to dream at night of two black eyes looking into his soul while he slept, from whose piercing gaze he tried in vain to hide himself. All night long they stared at him, and when he woke in the morning, covered all over with cold sweat, he started and shivered, and cast questioning looks at the walls and ceiling, as if he still expected to meet those eyes which now burned into his conscience and filled him with strange horrors and forebodings which might be preludes to perdition.

For weeks together this inquisitor kept up her slow torture, varying her look of scorn and wrath with an occasional smile of triumph, as she saw her victim cringing like a scared wolf, and

growing visibly haggard in feature and thinner in flesh; afraid all the while to treat his tormentor rudely, as an unarmed man would fear to throw stones at a tiger in the jungle. His dishonesty was now the net in which he was taken, and the woman's wrathful look was the trident with which he was transfixed, after the fashion of the old gladiators' game. He could not dispose of his property and leave the town; he was only an "Agent," and the first attempt to quit that refuge of lies would bring his swindled creditors down upon him. It would not do to trust his affairs in other hands, lest other eyes should detect his frauds. He was a prisoner, though all the world lay open before him, and another lay open beneath him. Ah! that might have been the trouble. Perhaps in his cosmogony there was one world too many.

He must have gone stark mad under this visitation of wrath but for an event which turned it in another direction. Unable to endure the heavy, unaccustomed work, her husband's health began to fail; still he kept on, having this alternative -- dig or starve. There was, indeed, one more factor in the problem, namely, death. Sometimes he detected himself in the thought that death would be desirable, for which he upbraided himself as a coward; saying, "Any one may escape from trials by dying, but the brave and honest thing is to live and work, and not complain, or wish to run away." When at length he was forced to take to his bed, from which it was soon evident he never would rise, his hardest task was to keep from being glad of it. He put the thought away as unjust and unfaithful toward his wife, who he knew worshipped him instead of God; and who had given proof of her love by bearing up under all their misfortunes without a word of complaint in his hearing. It was also unjust to the child who was likely to come into the world only to find itself an orphan.

There was no help for him in pills and powders; still the physician was brought to see him, and since he never proposed to inflict any of the torments known to his profession, he came to be regarded in the light of a neighbor and friend; a relation which doctors and lawyers do not always hold to those luckless mortals who fall under their professional care.

After one of his visits, as the old doctor rode away from the house on the back of the faithful old nag, which for many a year had been his confidential partner in business, he began talking to her as was his habit, in this wise:

"Strange how that man lives! He would have been dead and buried long ago but for that black-eyed wife of his. She seems to be furnishing life for both of them; -- keeps so much of herself in him that he can't get off. Never saw the like; -- she actually won't let him die. Wonderful creatures, these women! Aren't they, Sukey?"

Sukey, with the instinct of her sex, recognized the compliment, and acknowledged it with a toss of her head, evidently intended to be coquettish and knowing, but really so stiff and antiquated that the old doctor laughed outright; upon which the mare, with sullen dignity, broke into a heavy trot and pounded and jostled her old master most unmercifully.

Just what the doctor said was true. By a subtle magnetism, which is often enough seen but never understood, the woman had so joined her own life to that of her dying husband that, having used up all his own vitality, he was now living upon hers. That process which doctors call transfusion of blood, -- that is, filling the veins of sick man with blood drawn from the veins of a



healthy one, -- is a crude and clumsy process compared with the transfusion of vital force, by means of which this woman was keeping her husband alive. Her love and her will were twined about his spirit, just as her two other arms might have been about his body if some assassin, other than death, had been trying to drag him away.

One day he said to her, "You hold me so fast that I can not die. It is of no use; death is the stronger, and will tire you out at last. Why do you not let me go?"

If Will were only as strong as Love, she might have kept up the struggle forever; for love holds its object just as firmly in weakness as in strength. Love is divine; but the will, being human, depends for its exercise upon certain physical conditions; hence the contest was unequal. After keeping up the struggle for a week, the woman felt her strength beginning to fail; death was gaining on her, -- she knew it, and so did her husband. Then, with the love-hand, she held him all the tighter because the will-hand was losing its hold.

"Kiss me and let me go," he said at last. "You shall not lose me for so small a thing as death." But still, with the agony of despair, she clung to him with the one hand which never grows tired; only one hand now, -- and so death took a firmer hold. At length exhausted nature quite broke down. His wife fainted and fell at his bedside. Then he gave a little sigh of relief, and in a minute he was dead.

There had always been something strange and heavenly about the man. People used to take notice of the broad brow and the clear blue eyes under it, so deep, and wide apart, which seemed to have gained their distant and longing look by watching for something which never came; and when he lay in his coffin with that strange beauty of death upon his face they gazed upon him with loving wonder, recalling the while the good words and works they had known of him, and saying how strange it was that he had walked such a humble path in life, when he seemed to have been made to tread the holy mountains, and might have been a prophet or a seer.

There are certain wild, timid, tiny creatures which, when brought to bay, will rush with fury upon a man. Their feeling at such a time may serve to point out, in a faint degree, the emotions of the widow, when, after four unconscious days and nights, she awoke to find her husband dead and buried. The awful truth seemed to sink into her like a fire-brand into the snow, and when she had fully come to a sense of it, there arose in her soul a surging tide of fury. She had been full of scorn and rage at the "Agent" for taking her husband's property; now she was proportionately mad at Him who had taken her husband himself. She did not waste herself in noise and blasphemy, as weaker souls might do, but treasured up the memory of her wrongs, as she regarded them, that they might help her in hating God with all the bitterness of her desolate soul.

One day a stranger called at her door to inquire his way; and, seeing her appearance of recent sorrow, offered words of sympathy such as any man of God might freely give to any unknown brother or sister in distress. Her case interested him, and he asked if he might come in; saying, "I am a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, trying in my simple way to carry on his work in the world since he is gone back to heaven. I have a message from him for those who mourn."

Being a member of that hated order he had a narrow chance of having the door shut in his face, but courtesy prevailed over prejudice, and the widow suffered him to come in.

"I am called Elder Hooper," he said. "I am one of those ministers they call itinerants. I suppose you have never heard of us before in these parts, but some day we shall bring great comfort to these people by preaching to them a free and full salvation."

The widow looked at him in amazement. She did not understand his remark; but it was so different from all the words she had ever listened to which proceeded out of the mouth of a minister, that, almost before she knew it, she had given the stranger a few of the facts concerning her life and her affliction. Then, as those bitter memories thronged upon her, the old rebellious spirit broke forth,--

"He is rich and has every thing; I was poor, and had nothing but my husband; and now, because Vie is stronger than I, He robs me of my husband. Well, it is some comfort that He knows what I think of him for treating me so!"

She said this in a calm, low voice, looking the stranger full in the face, and seeming to him, as she stood there in her desolate cottage, to be tall and beautiful, and impious enough to share with Milton's Satan the burning throne of hell.

He looked at her in blank amazement for a minute, and then said:

"Perhaps your husband gains more than you lose by his going to heaven. Is it not selfish for us to be angry at the good fortune of our friends?"

This was a new question to the widow, and one she could not answer: so, leaving this thought to work in her strangely tortured soul, the good man took his leave; saying, as he gave her his hand for good-bye,--

"My poor child, you will think better of the Lord when you come to get more acquainted with him."

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### 03 -- TWO MEDICAL PEOPLE MAKING PROFESSIONAL CALLS

This Dr. Dosor was a physician of the old school. After a liberal education, which chiefly consisted in the study of the Greek and Latin tongues, he had taken a course in medicine, according to the fashion of his time, with a certain successful doctor of that region, whose small knowledge of the mysteries of the healing art he had bought and paid for, and on this limited capital had set up the business for himself. During the first few years of his professional life, having but little else to do, he kept up his classical studies, and so fully was he engrossed by them, that, oftentimes, at the bedside of a patient, he had been known to bring out of one of the many pockets of his seedy coat a greasy copy of Homer or Aeschylus, instead of the pair of hawk's-bills, or the paper of jalap of which he was in quest. He was an absent-minded man,

careless of his dress and person, but possessed of so much skill in the science of human nature that his fame increased through all the country round, till, as a Cure of human bodies, he ranked along with that other doctor whose acquaintance we have made as a Cure of human souls.

The doctor's mare, like himself, was old, wise, lumpy in body, a little stiff and clumsy withal, but nevertheless a highly reliable animal; resembling her master also in this, that she was never known to do any thing in a hurry. She had a decidedly professional air, and carried herself and her rider with disdainful dignity, which seemed to say how much superior to all common horse-flesh was the animal which took care of the doctor, who took care of the town.

In a horse, this style of manners may indicate superior intelligence and breeding.

The mare was highly educated as well as deeply experienced, for not only had she been, for twenty years or so, the doctor's traveling companion, but also his medical confidant, to whom, when tired of talking to himself, he would state his views of medicine, Greek poetry, theology, and kindred subjects, or laugh over the odd expedients to which he had resorted with some of his simple-minded patients, -- gingerbread pills and the like. Thus, as they traveled the lonesome roads of that thinly settled region the long miles were shortened, and both man and beast were edified with learned discourse.

"Well, Sukey," said the doctor, after meeting the funeral procession of his last-mentioned patient, as it passed along a shady road which was his favorite route from Poverty Lane to the center of the town, -- "well, Sukey, that man was sure to die, any how; so what was the use of torturing him, and drugging him, and putting him through purgatory beforehand?"

Sukey received the remark without any signs of disapprobation, and the doctor, taking silence for consent, as usual, went on with the conversation:

"And we haven't any thing to blame ourselves for, Sukey. We couldn't cure him, but we didn't help to kill him. What a pity we couldn't say that of all the people we have doctored for the last twenty years! We didn't even try a single experiment on him. I would have liked to see how a good big plaster of Spanish flies on the back of his neck would have worked, but it was no use: that woman saw through everything.

"I think, Sukey, she used to try to make him eat more than what we ordered, but if we had left him any strong physic she would have thrown it out of doors. Calomel and jalap cost too much money, Sukey, to be wasted after that fashion; don't you think so, old girl?"

Sukey gave a sudden, heavy downward plunge of the head, which might have been taken for a nod of assent, or it might have been a nod of another kind; for the creature was becoming quite subjective in her old age, and, for want of interest in outward things, would sometimes, especially in warm Summer afternoons, when their road lay along a sandy plain, or through the silent woods, actually fall asleep with her master on her back. After a while she would wake herself up again by some heavier nod than usual, and try to look particularly bright and sensible; just as you may have seen people do in similar circumstances under a long sermon. But if, on turning her head to see if her master had observed her weakness, she happened to find him also

asleep in the saddle, her sense of embarrassment at once gave place to that of responsibility; and the faithful beast would keep broad-awake for miles together, carrying her master as carefully as a mother would her sleeping baby so as not to disturb his rest.

But this time her master caught her napping, "Dropped asleep, did you, Sukey? mind you don't drop me some time and break my old neck for me -- it must be rather brittle by this time-and then what would all these people do when they are sick? You are a sensible old girl, Sukey, but you couldn't carry on the business without me!"

The sympathy between human and other animals, though somewhat treated of by theologians, is scarcely to be regarded as a doctrine of religion. Some of the more intelligent brutes are capable of such affinities with men, women, and children as would seem to justify the hope of the great Doctor Adam Clarke, that he should meet his old white horse in heaven; though there is some doubt whether Martin Luther will be able to keep his promise to his dog, that if he were good, in heaven he should have a golden tail.

It was not many weeks before these two medical people were called to the house of the Widow Leighton.

"A fine boy, ma'am," said the bluff old doctor, holding up a little blue specimen of the genus homo, which had just put in its first appearance with that sorrowful little cry which might be called the keynote to the tune of this troublesome life.

"How nicely they do put up these little packages!" he continued, giving the flew baby a professional look, to see if the appropriate number of eyes, ears, arms, legs, etc., had been shipped in this fresh invoice of humanity.

"Couldn't be improved as to the general outline; but there's almost always something wrong inside," he added in a low tone to himself, as he gave the little stranger over to the tender mercies of the snuffy, talkative old nurse.

In due time the "little package" was handed over to the mother, who pressed it to her heart with some of the same joy which the Holy Mother felt when the infant Savior first nestled in her bosom; some of the same joy which the Savior felt when, after the sorrows of death, he first clasped a redeemed world in his arms.

"There now, little woman," -- the old doctor had a fashion of treating his lady patients as if they were all babies together, and he a kind of universal grandfather, though, alas! he was nothing but a dried-up old bachelor, -- "there now, little woman, don't starve him to death bringing him up by hand. That boy is worth raising in the orthodox fashion. Did you hear what lungs he has? He will make the powerfulest kind of a preacher some of these days.

"My friend, Elder Hooper, says the two things a preacher most wants are piety and lungs; this young chap only wants the piety, and he'll have it too, if he takes after his father.

"Tut, tut, woman! what are you doing? You'll kill the baby if you hold on to him like that."

Then the doctor studied his patient carefully. He had only meant to cheer her up, as was eminently proper under the circumstances; but, from the wild look that came into her eyes, and the sudden tightening of her arms about the baby as if someone had tried to tear it away from her, it looked as if his cheery words had thrown her into convulsions in which she had come near strangling the child. What could it mean?

At length, having satisfied himself that it was only a temporary nervousness sometimes met with in such cases, he put on his weather-beaten hat, opened the door, shut it softly behind him, and went out to join his professional assistant, which had been long and not very patiently waiting for him at the gate. She turned her head and gave him a look half tender and half spiteful, as he climbed into the saddle, and then, after waiting for him to settle himself into traveling trim, and having been informed that the next call was to be on old Jim Rumsey, in Poverty Lane, she set off with much deliberation toward his house, whose whereabouts she seemed to know as well as her master.

"Well, Sukey," said the doctor, after they were fairly under way, "so we have another baby come to see us."

The mare listened attentively, but made no reply. "Where do you think they come from, Sukey?" Sukey shook her head violently, whether to signify her absolute ignorance, or her dislike to express an opinion, or whether it was to dislodge a large fly which had settled between her ears, is not fully determined; however, the doctor received it as an answer to his question, and went on with the conversation.

"You don't know where they come from, old girl, don't you? No more do I. Elder Hooper says they come down from heaven; but if that is so it is my opinion the silly little things don't know when they are well off, or they wouldn't leave heaven to come to such a place as Poverty Lane."

Then the doctor relapsed into silence, thinking perhaps of one Baby who certainly did leave heaven to come to a poor little place called Bethlehem; and that if it were worth his while to make such a journey, perhaps it might be also for his little brothers and sisters.

"Go on, Sukey!" said the doctor, giving the bridle a little jerk, as, half-awakening from a brown study, he found himself at a dead stop. But the mare refused to move, upon which he came to himself sufficiently to observe that she had brought him to the house of patient number two; a wretched being who had been a sot for twenty years, and was now dying of a complication of ailments, among which were old age, acute rheumatism, and delirium tremens. Then one member of the medical firm got down laboriously from the back of the other, and went in to look after the sick man, whom he found screaming with pain, and cursing his attendants for not giving him more rum. During a few minutes in which he had been left alone he had drunk the whole of a mixture composed of a quart of alcohol and two pounds of salt, which the Doctor had

left for bathing his swollen legs, and now, the pickle being exhausted, he was in an impotent fury of thirst and pain.

After trying an experiment or two the doctor started for the next patient on his list. For a long time he rode on in silence; then he relieved his mind to his four-footed companion in these words:

"Well, Sukey, when that man was born, a baby certainly made a mistake. Poor fellow! He had better stayed where he was; for it looks as if he had a very poor chance of ever getting back again."

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#### 04 -- THAT BABY: WHO SHALL HAVE HIM?

It was five or six weeks after her husband's death that the Widow Leighton's son was born.

During all that time she had been like the giant in the fable with a mountain atop of him, except in this; the giant rocked the mountain in his efforts to get free, but the woman, struggling none the less, could not lift the weight which bore her down.

A mountain range of difficulties in the present is lighter than a single stone of the past; especially if that stone be at the head of a grave.

After a while her silent rage began to be varied with outbreaks of passion so wild and terrible that she came to be an object of superstitious fear to certain good women of the village, who whispered among themselves that if the witches and devils hadn't been driven out of that part of the country a long while ago, there might be a whole legion of them in the Widow Leighton.

Into one of these paroxysms she had been thrown by the words of the old doctor, mentioned in the last chapter. Knowing that the ministry was a favorite profession with women, he had made that remark to please the mother and compliment the baby; but, instead of toning up the weak nerves which trembled between life and death, those words had been like thrusts of red-hot spears. Without knowing it he had roused a deadly horror in the woman's soul, which was in close alliance with a deadly sin.

It was not long before nurse and doctor were dismissed. Rich people may be sick as long as they like, but the poor must follow the advice of stern old Aesculapius: "Take some short, sharp treatment and get well at once; or die, and have done with it."

Will, -- Love, -- Sorrow, -- the great forces that have to do with mortal life, helped this woman to be superior to weakness and pain. She must live for the sake of her child; if she would live she must work; if she worked she must not be sick. The case was as simple as a problem in the rule of three; therefore, the widow rose from her bed, put on strength as one would put on a garment, and resumed her struggle with fate and God. A strange, wild life she led, sweeping the

whole arc from ecstasy to woe. That beautiful boy was, by turns, her heaven and her hell. The divine joy of motherhood gave place, by times, to the sorrows of death. Now she would clasp her child fiercely in her arms, defying Heaven to come and take him away; again, bending over his cradle and weeping hot tears upon his sleeping face, she would break out in cries of sorrow, penitence, and despair.

On one of these occasions Elder Hooper stopped again at the widow's cottage. Ever since his call a half a year ago he had thought of this poor woman as one of his Master's lost sheep in the wilderness. He often remembered her in his prayers and resolved, if possible, to make another visit to that orthodox town with its heterodox hamlet, and enlighten its people a little with the Gospel as he understood it.

His knock at the door being unanswered, he gently lifted the latch, and, looking in, he beheld the mother prostrate at the foot of the cradle in which lay the little child asleep; moaning to herself in a tone of despair:

"Oh, my boy; my boy! must God have this one too?"

It is not necessary that a man should be a saint in order to be greatly moved at the sight of a beautiful woman in distress; but Elder Hooper was a saint, therefore he was moved all the more.

It seems cruel to leave this poor woman there, struggling with some great sorrow, while we paint the portrait of Elder Hooper; but hers is a chronic case of sin and misery; for years it has eaten at her heart like a cancer; it has boiled in her blood like fever; it has shaken her bones like ague; it has stricken her down like a coup de soleil. Even Elder Hooper can not help her much at present, so there is time for us to take a good look at him, for which we shall be all the better and she none the worse.

I have said he was a saint. Now, good friends, do not let your long-legged imaginations outrun nay quiet-paced story, and come up with a pale, thin, spiritual-looking individual, with weak lungs, bad digestion, a habit of turning up his eyes at heaven and turning up his nose at earth; a forlorn yet pretentious person whose behavior indicates that he has mistaken himself for an angel whom they had sent on some errand to this lower world and forgotten to call him back again; a reverend person, very reverend, perhaps right reverend, whose fashion of life is intended to impress upon all beholders the idea that he wears invisible wings, which he is all the time flapping in vain efforts to rise above this low world, and all its common belongings.

Elder Hooper was not that sort of a saint at all. On the contrary he was a substantial sort of saint, evidently intended for use, but none the less ornamental on that account. He was a magnificent man, fully six feet high, of powerful but not clumsy build, with a broad full-moon face, heavy overhanging forehead, above which his thick, iron-gray hair stuck out in all directions in a manner which showed him to be both vigorous and irrepressible. His clear blue eyes, with sometimes a twinkle in them, were pledges to all the weak and sorrowful of gentle treatment and tender sympathy, and an invitation to little children to frisk and frolic about him, and climb all over him, with the knowledge that he was always ready for his full share in the fun.

Twenty years' hard work in the itinerant ministry had brought out the abundant sweetness of the man; and from his great success in carrying all sorts of burdens, curing all spiritual ailments and comforting all kinds of sorrows, a look of conscious power of helpfulness had settled in his face, such as one might imagine in a portrait which Raphael had begun for the great Apostle Peter, but had changed his mind and finished it up for the beloved Apostle John. It had fallen to his lot, as an itinerant preacher to spread himself and his labors over great circuits of country half as large as the State of Massachusetts; not very thinly spread either, judging by the number of souls he led to the Savior and the praises of his other good works which were heard from one end of his circuit to the other.

If Elder Hooper had been a priest his confessional would have been thronged. Women and children believed in him and opened their hearts to him without delay; some masculine sinners also, who kept themselves barred and bolted against ordinary ministers and means of grace, had turned their souls inside out before his tender, loving eyes, and begged him to state his opinion of their case, whether they had any chance of salvation left; and, if so, where they should look to find it; while such a knowledge of human nature had this good man acquired that he might have set himself up as a religious clairvoyant without ally deception whatever.

But the case of the widow was too much for him. She was mourning over her child as if it were either dead or dying, while the little fellow was a perfect picture of baby health and beauty.

He stood in the low doorway lost in amazement, trying to settle with himself whether to speak to the woman or to go away and leave her alone with his Master. He never was in a hurry with his spiritual offices. He believed that God always has plenty of time, and that he gives his children enough of it to pass, in a reverent and intelligent manner, through conviction, conversion, and every other height and depth of grace and glory, joy and sorrow. His long study of the Bible and his great skill in applying its truths had made him master of all spiritual situations. He could bring a text on the instant to suit any case in which a soul might find itself; but here was a mystery too deep for him; it was worse than trying to follow a blazed trail in the dark.

The sudden sense of a presence whose coming she had neither seen nor heard, caused the widow to spring to her feet in alarm; but the sight of that apostolic face was like the sight of the rainbow after the storm. She held out both hands to the minister with an imploring look which seemed to say,

"I am a lost child! do not chide me for running away, but take me by the hand and lead me home."

Then she knelt beside the cradle and wept; first wildly, then calmly, as if tears were putting out the fire which had tortured her so long.

For a time no word broke the silence. The woman could not speak for weeping, and the man possessed the rare ability of holding his tongue when he had nothing to say. At the first sight of the man of God she felt as if he had been sent to bring her at once to judgment; but in a moment this vision of wrath gave way to one of mercy, and she saw his face as if it had been the



face of Him who had once wept over Jerusalem. Then a sense of submission and rest stole over her troubled spirit to which she had been a stranger until now.

This sudden change was partly divine and partly human. Elder Hooper was one of those who seemed to be endowed with a double portion of the spirit of peace, which he also had the power of communicating to others. Many a time a penitent, kneeling at the altar, broken-hearted and hopeless, had felt the hand of Elder Hooper gently laid upon his head; and, at the same time, a window had appeared to open in heaven through which the light of the upper world had poured down upon him, sending a thrill of joy through all the fibers of his being.

And what was this gift or power but that same which Simon Magus once tried to buy of the apostles, when he saw that by the laying on of their hands men received the Holy Ghost?

The good man finding no words of his own to suit the case fell back, according to his custom, upon the words of Holy Writ, and laying his hand upon the head of the weeping, kneeling woman, he gave her his blessing in the words which Jehovah himself had taught to priest Aaron,--

"The Lord bless thee and keep thee! The Lord make his face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee! The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give the peace!"

Then, with a tender glance at the sleeping child he went away without speaking another word.

There were two or three families in the village who regarded themselves as belonging to the flock of this wandering shepherd; people who had removed hither from a far-off section of the country where the Church of his order was already thriving. Among the old citizens also were a few thoughtful and singular people who had been roused to anger by the "high doctrines" of the inferential school, and to whom the coming of the teacher of any other views of religion was always hailed with delight.

Among these was our old friend Dr. Dosor, who had chanced to fall in with the itinerant as he was passing through the town on his way from his conference at Baltimore, to a far-off field of labor near the borders of Canada; and finding the minister to be a man of a rare good sense, and most companionable withal, he took him to his house, kept him as long as he could, and then sent him on his journey, having first obtained his promise to preach at the school-house in Poverty Lane the next time he should pass that way. This being his first return, he reported himself to the doctor, who lost no time in giving notice of his preaching at the schoolhouse, at early candlelight, on the coming Sunday evening.

From the doctor and his other friends the good man learned some of the facts in the widow's singular history, and having noticed some signs of softening in her hard heart, and also learning that the father of the child had been a devout man who would doubtless wish his son to receive the holy ordinance of Christian baptism, which his mother never would suffer him to receive at the hands of the minister of the parish, he sent a good old mother in Israel to talk with her about the matter; and with such tact and gentleness was the task performed that her

fierceness and opposition were quite disarmed. She was even led to see that it was a duty which she owed to her dead husband as well as to the child, to have him sealed with the sign of the covenant of God's people; therefore, under the inspiration of the blessing which the stranger had pronounced upon her, she promised to bring the child to the appointed meeting, and permit Elder Hooper to baptize him. Once or twice the old rebellion surged up in her soul, but her promise was not to be broken: she had taken this first step toward God and his altar, and she was afraid to turn back lest some greater evil should come upon her. Now and then the thought would arise that possibly God might bless the boy for the sake of his dead father, though she felt perfectly sure he would not for the sake of his living mother.

In this she must have been mistaken; for, is not motherhood the strongest claim on the love and mercy of the Father in heaven?

That little meeting at the school-house was marked by an event which those who witnessed it will not forget to their dying day. After a sermon, to which the elder gave this title, "A Fair Chance for Salvation," and in which he taught the doctrine, never before preached in that town, that God loves all his children, and will bless and save them all if they will only let him, he announced the service of infant baptism: upon which the widow came forward with the baby in her arms.

It was evident that she was forcing herself to this act; her manner, as she arose in her place and made her way up the aisle, was as of one fighting his way through a den of lions. The old struggle was up again, the old fury was upon her; but she fought off the powers of darkness with the same force of will with which she had hitherto fought off the powers of grace, and stood up in the presence of the Lord and the congregation; holding her child to her breast as if she were about to lose him holding him as a Hindu mother might hold her babe, standing on the bank of the sacred river, into which, by command of the gods, she must cast her helpless child. To this woman the sweet, holy rite of baptism was the giving her last and only treasure to God, who, she was sure, would never give it back again.

By this time Elder Hooper thought he understood the case. So easy is it for a man to be mistaken in a woman, of whose heart he knows perhaps as little as the telescope knows of the star.

He introduced the service with an explanation of its meaning. "This sacrament," said he, "is the Christian form of ratifying the covenant that Jehovah made with Abraham, and which by the grace of Jesus Christ is extended to all little children. By it they are adopted, in due form, into the Church, which is the family of God.

"The use of water in the sacrament is to remind us of the washing away of our sins in the blood of Jesus Christ, as well as of the 'washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.' Whatever of sin, or a tendency thereto, the child has inherited from its parents, who, like all other descendants of Adam and Eve, have more or less of evil in them, is not to be reckoned against the child; because Jesus Christ, who was once a little child himself, has laid special claim to the little children, whom he will save in his kingdom for his own good will and pleasure; though it is necessary for grown-up people to repent and believe in order to be saved."

"We baptize the children into the name of the blessed Trinity; that is to say, we give them the name of the Deity as their family name; the other names which we give them are for convenience of designation, though sometimes they are given in memory of those who have borne them before, and so they come to signify blood and kinship."

Then, stopping to read a little slip of paper which the widow handed to him, he continued,--

"This child is to receive the name of his father who was once on earth, and also the name of his Father who is always in heaven. By the laws of the land he inherits the possessions of his father; so, also, as one of the sons of the Lord Almighty, by the promise of the Gospel, he inherits the blessing of eternal life, and a share in the glories of the kingdom of heaven."

Observing that the widow had a weary look he took the child into his own arms with a view of relieving her, and went on with the appointed service; reading the lesson from the Scripture, the covenant of the Church, and the charge to parents, until he came to the question, "Do you solemnly engage to fulfill these duties so far as in you lies, the Lord being your helper?"

The mother hesitated. How was she, a rebel against God, to enter into such a covenant with Him? It was too much for her to promise, for it seemed too much for her to perform.

The Elder waited for her answer, knowing that she had heard the question, and, at length, feeling that it was needful to assert the claim of his Master, he said with great solemnity:

"My child, this boy belongs to the Lord, who died for him; but he will not receive an offering from unwilling hands. If this sweet child could only know what honor is in store for him, he would put his baby arms about your neck and plead with you to give him to God and the Church. I seem to see him standing as a prince in Israel. God has chosen him for a great work." Then looking down at the babe in his arms, whose future seemed to open out in vision before him, he continued:

"Let your mother sing rather than sigh, sweet child. I seem to hear a whisper from your guardian angel which tells me you are one day to stand in the holy place and preach the everlasting Gospel."

At these words the widow seemed to writhe in agony. She held herself back for an instant, while the minister was dipping his hand in the water, and then, with a wild cry, she sprang forward, snatched the child from his arms, printed a burning kiss upon its forehead where the waters of baptism should have been, and then fled from the place like a hunted hare, carrying her unbaptized baby in her bosom.

When the widow had disappeared it occurred to Elder Hooper that perhaps he did not quite understand women after all; at least, not this one.

Omitting the hymn (for who could sing after such a scene), he closed the service with prayer; which he offered, not as he was wont to do, waxing warmer and warmer, and louder and louder, and seeming fairly to revel in the privilege of supplication, but in a hesitating way, as if he had just made a mistake in his Master's business, and in a voice which the people said sounded as if there were tears in it. Then he pronounced the benediction, the same he had pronounced upon the widow as she knelt by the cradle, and, according to his usual custom, took his stand at the door to give a kind word and a shake of the hand to every person in the congregation. Nevertheless the good man was not quite in his usual spirits. For once in his life, as he afterward declared, he had met with an experience which shook him.

There are certain persons, and the Elder was one of them, who are the frequent subjects of supernatural impressions. Events of which they can have no possible knowledge pass in review before their eyes; secret things, hidden in the future, are revealed to them; voices of persons whom they can not see call them to particular places at particular times; they are warned of approaching evils to themselves and their friends; they feel the presence of angels and of people who are dead and buried; they open the Bible at random, and come upon texts of Scripture which contain specific directions to them; in times of religious revival they are impressed to speak to this one, or to pray for that one, and the persons so marked out are found to be ready and waiting to come into the kingdom; in a word, they seem to have an intimate acquaintance with the spiritual world. Sometimes these people are reckoned as saints, and after they are dead the Church canonizes them, and writes their biographies, giving minute account of these curious occurrences under the head of miracles; sometimes they are accused as wizards or witches; and tried for their lives by throwing them into the water. If they sink and drown like ordinary mortals they are innocent; if they swim they are guilty, and so must be hanged or burned; a method of testing their quality which appears to have been first suggested by the water-test for eggs. Again these strange people become the apostles of a new religion, and instead of using their spiritual gifts for the help and edification of the Church they make shipwreck of their faith by their efforts to enlarge their acquaintance with the unseen world; become magicians and devil-worshippers, and so increase unto more ungodliness.

Now, as I do not fully understand this subject, I will refer the reader to our old friend, Dr. Dosor, who reckoned himself a high authority in such matters; also to his friend and ours, the good Elder Hooper, whom we shall find at the doctor's house.

These two men were as fond of one another as two young girls at a boarding-school. What a help they might have been to each other if they had lived near together! How thoroughly they might have done for the community between them; the doctor attending the case till the body grew too bad to be cured by physic, and then the Elder taking his turn, and showing the poor soul the way to heaven, and in due time saying the beautiful burial service over the grave! How their friendship would have ripened with such brotherly exercise of their several functions!

It was a cold Winter's night, and a storm was coming on; just the time for one of those friendly fireside debates in which these two distinguished personages delighted, especially the doctor, who, among the unlearned and orthodox people of the community in which he lived, found very few companions to his mind, and was all the more eager to talk with such a man as his guest.

From matters of personal interest they soon came back to the scene which had just occurred at the school-house; and at length the Elder announced his opinion, in a low and confidential tone, that the Widow Leighton was under some supernatural influence; something, in fact, not unlike the affliction of the boy whose case is mentioned in the Gospels, whom the disciples vainly tried to cure while the Master was away. This Scriptural theory the old doctor stoutly denied.

"You ministers," said he, "seem to think that human beings are hollow, and have nothing in them except what comes down from heaven or up from hell. Just like a woman up in Bellingham the other day, who had a new baby, -- never had one before, -- and wanted me to see how pretty it was. Just then the baby gave a little scowl in its sleep. 'There!' said the mother, 'see that! When a baby smiles in its sleep it's a sign that the angels are talking to it.' 'Nonsense,' said I; 'the angels haven't any thing to do with that. That's nothing but wind in the stomach.'

"Now I tell you on the authority of a medical man that there are all sorts of curious things in human nature; things which don't come up from anywhere, or down from anywhere, but which stay in us all the time, though we don't always see them. For instance, there was a preacher down in the edge of Rhode Island who used to have violent chills and high fever afterwards. Well, sir, I have heard that man preach tremendously when the fever was on him; he would surge along for half an hour at such a rate that people used to think him inspired; but he didn't know a word about it afterwards. And what was worse, the poor fellow couldn't preach worth a cent at any other time. Now that case is plain enough, the 'preach' was in him all the while, but he couldn't get it out except when the fever was on him.

"There's another of my patients -- just been to see her today -- who was said to have been living by a miracle. Hadn't eaten any thing for three months; had remarkable dreams and visions; used to go to Paradise and talk with the angels, and when she came back would quote poetry which she heard up there. Sometimes her muscles seemed to be all tied up in hard knots; then she would be in awful agonies of pain; pretty soon she would calm down again and commence to talk in such pious fashion that the simple-minded people who took care of her actually thought she was inspired. The young minx grew to be quite famous in the neighborhood; a great many people used to come to see her; they said it was better than going to a prayer-meeting. Some of the ministers called on her, but they couldn't agree whether it was angels or devils that were doing the business, though they all agreed that it must be one or the other.

"Well, sir, one day as I was going by the house they called me in, and her poor old mother, who was a firm believer in the 'angel' theory, asked me what I thought of the girl?"

"Plain case of hysterics, madam," said I.

"But, doctor, this can't be disease. Didn't you hear her saying over the poetry the angels taught her?"

"Nonsense, ma'am," said I. 'Angels don't make such poor poetry as that; and as for the rest of her lingo I have had dozens of fever patients who talked such stuff by the yard.'

"But she lives without eating any thing!"

"Does she? Just watch her for twenty-four hours."

"Oh, but she says she must be all alone at night when the angels come; she says they wouldn't come at all if any of us were 'round.'

"However, they watched her as I told them, and found her prowling round the house at night, helping herself in the pantry, etc., so there was an end of that miracle -- nothing but mental derangement -- just a little effervescence of the nervous fluid. I tell you, Parson, there are very few of those inspirations which I can't cure with a good smart dose of asafetida."

"You doctors are a set of Sadducees," replied Elder Hooper. "You believe in neither angel nor spirit. With you it is all 'nervous fluid' and 'hysterics' and 'fever.' Now let me ask you how long a man must have chills and fever in order to foretell future events? What sort of nervous derangement did Isaiah have when he wrote that fifty-third chapter, which was all fulfilled more than seven hundred years afterward?"

"Was it hysterics that made Mary Magdalene into a saint?"

"How many of the penitent sinners at my mourner's bench do you think you could convert with your asafetida?"

"No, no, doctor; stick to your physic; it is good enough in its way if you don't happen to give the wrong kind; but we ministers find out before we've been preaching very long, that some people live in two worlds, even before they are dead. Why shouldn't they do the same thing afterward? Of course, the devil has counterfeited all these revelations, just as he has every other good thing; but the Scriptures give us a test for the spirits which offer us their service, so it is evidently the Lord's intention that we should make use of the help of the good spirits and cast only the bad away."

It was now late at night, not less than eleven by the wooden clock which stood in the doctor's sitting-room. A driving snow-storm had set in which howled about the house, rattled the windows, and made the great open fire of hickory logs, which had now burned down to a great heap of glowing coals, look particularly snug and comfortable. The friendly disputants sat for a few minutes in silence after the question of inspiration had been disposed of, and listened to the voices of the storm.

All at once Elder Hooper sprang to his feet--

"Someone is calling me," he said, and in an instant he was at the door; which, being opened, let in a great gust of wind and snow, but there was nothing else to be seen or heard.

"Stuff and nonsense!" said the old doctor. "Those ghostly friends of yours must be very unreasonable to call you out of doors such a night as this."

Presently the Elder heard his name spoken again, this time more distinctly, along with some other words which he could not quite make out. Again he opened the door and listened, and through the howling of the storm he heard distinctly the voice of a woman praying--

"God of my husband, send Elder Hooper here!"

It sounded like the voice of the widow. In a moment the case was plain and open to his mind. The house of the widow was fully two miles away, and a human voice could hardly have been heard for as many rods in the teeth of that howling hurricane. It must be therefore a call of God. Something was wrong at the house of the Widow Leighton and his immediate presence was required. He would go at once.

On making known his purpose the old doctor laughed outright; but finding his guest incorrigible he resolved to keep him company. In a few minutes the two friends were in the saddle, fighting their way through the snow-drifts and against the wind toward their strange destination.

"What an old fool I am!" said the doctor to himself. "These spiritually-minded people don't know any better; but for a regular old-school doctor of medicine like me to be going off on such a tramp as this is too ridiculous. No wonder Sukey thinks it a fool's errand."

The mare had not been backward in expressing her opinion against this journey through the storm, but the preacher's horse took it as a thing of course, being accustomed, like his master, to all kinds of hardships in the ministerial line. The Elder was turning over the events of the evening in his mind, wondering whether he had not used too much severity with the widow; whether his Master would not have been more gentle, and whether she would not thereby have been saved from a grievous sin.

When the two men approached the cottage it was past midnight, but a faint light shone through the window; then the Elder knew his mission was not in vain. Every step seemed to give him new life. In his imagination he was going on some such errand as that of Jesus to Bethany, where was the new-made grave of Lazarus.

Fastening their horses under the lee of a thick copse of bushes which grew not far from the widow's cottage, for the place was too poor to boast of a stable, or even a shed, they crept softly to the door and listened, and heard again the voice which had called them forth, -- "God of my husband, send Elder Hooper here!"

The two ministers, one for the body and the other for the soul, entered the cottage together. They had not come a minute too soon, for one look at the child showed him to be dying. The wretched mother was kneeling before a little table which had nothing on it but a bowl of clear water, and holding out the baby in her arms as if she were offering to give him to someone whom she could not see. The entrance of the two men did not surprise her, but at sight of them she sprang up and held the child toward the minister, saying:

"I was wicked. God forgive me! I will give up the child. Be quick; baptize him, and maybe God will let him live."

Again the infant lay in Elder Hooper's arms. The solemn service had been nearly finished already, so the good man only prayed this little prayer:

"O God, who breakest our hearts only lest we perish for their hardness; this poor mother repents, and gives thee back thy child."

Then with the water on the table with which the mother had meant to baptize her dying babe herself, but from which act she had been restrained by an awful sense of the Divine Presence, the minister sprinkled the baby's forehead, and then, laying his hand gently upon it, said:

"John Mark, I baptize thee into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen!"

John Mark was his father's name, but the baby did not seem to have much use for it, unless it were upon the headstone of a tiny grave; still there was life in the child, and the elder, bethinking him of the old prophet Elijah, and how he had brought back to life the son of that other widow at Zarephath, unbuttoned his shaggy surtout, threw back his shad-bellied preaching coat, opened his straight waistcoat, and laid the gasping little thing in his bosom.

The doctor comprehended the act in an instant and nodded assent; the mother stood by in amazement, thinking the while that this was an act intended merely for her comfort; a suggestion, perhaps, of the way the Good Shepherd himself carries the lambs in his bosom; so she waited patiently for the child to be placed in her own arms again, meanwhile looking inquiringly at the doctor, whom she was glad to see, though she had never thought to pray for his coming. This appeared strange to her when she thought of it, but, as it afterward appeared, the minister alone was quite equal to the occasion.

It must not be supposed that Elder Hooper was learned in the art of healing; by no means. He was learned in nothing except the Bible, the Discipline, and the Methodist hymns. This was a little bit of medical practice which he had learned from the Bible itself, on account of which he felt it to be quite proper for him to take charge of the patient, even in the presence of so great a physician as Dr. Dosor. The cure was simple enough, not differing much from that mentioned in the First Book of Kings which was tried with such favorable effect in the case of David.

If the reader will look up this matter in the work of Dr. Adam Clarke, the prince of commentators on the Old Testament Scriptures, he will, by the help of that erudite Irishman, and of Friar Bacon also, whom he quotes, be able to understand just what Elder Hooper was doing to the child. All the electric power of the stalwart man had been aroused by his short battle with the storm, and almost a woman's love and sympathy had been awakened in him by the scenes through which he was passing. There was plenty of life surging through his great heart and along his tingling nerves, if the half-dead baby could only get hold of a little of it he would live.



The good man sat in silence fixing his whole attention upon his singular task, and becoming so absorbed in it as to be quite unconscious of what was going on around him. The mother, finding that no help from her was wanted, knelt again by the little table which had served as a baptismal altar and tried to pray; while the doctor took out his great silver watch, one of those lumpy things they used to call bull's-eyes, and counted the seconds between the labored breathings of the child.

Was there ever such another quarter of an hour to a poor mother's heart? Yes, once; when a Stranger of gentle but commanding presence halted a funeral procession moving out of the gates of Nain.

Now the mother rises from her knees and bends over to look at the child. The short, feeble breath has come to be more regular; a little color has come back to the white lips; now the eyes open with a look that is clear and natural, and straightway close again in quiet slumber. The little life has found the great one, and is clinging to it.

Once when he tried to give the baby to its mother he felt a curious pulling sensation, like that which one experiences in letting go the handles of an electrical machine. The child felt it also, for he gave a little shudder from head to foot and awoke with a cry, but straightway went off to sleep again when restored to his place in the good man's bosom.

By sunrise the child was well enough to be hungry. Then the Elder resigned his charge to its mother, and after offering up a prayer of thanksgiving, he and the doctor took their leave; the latter with a new understanding of supernatural things; the former with a sweet warm feeling at his heart, out of which, like his Master and the prophets and the apostles, he had given life to the (almost) dead.

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## 05 -- DOCTOR DOSOR LOSES HIS PUPIL

After this Elder Hooper set great store by baby Leighton. He would sometimes ride forty or fifty miles out of his road, as he passed from one field of labor to another, to see him; at which times he would praise him to the entire satisfaction of his mother, and talk to him about being a preacher by and by; for, like every other enthusiast in the holy office, this good man thought nothing else was worth doing by one who was permitted to preach the Gospel. The mother also, against the strong current of her nature, yielded to the inevitable, and accepted the holy office for her son as one of the decrees of fate. She regarded him as having been contracted to God for that purpose on the night of his baptism, and the Widow Leighton was a woman who always kept her word. She did not even discriminate against those promises made to God, and in favor of those made to her neighbors; neither did she try to take advantage of the fact that she had only given the boy to God when she thought him at the point to die. If he had come to be worth any more than when she gave him away that was no loss to her; and God was fairly entitled to all the advantage of it. Dead or alive, he had been given away, and from this time she had no other thought but that he must some day minister at the altar. This awful alternative had been forced

upon her, -- obedience from the mother or death for the child. She had chosen the former, and would carry out the implied agreement.

She had not learned to love God at all, yet from this time, day and night, with ceaseless toil and watching, she must devote herself to bring up this child for him. Perhaps he would accept her along with her son; if so she would be glad, if not it made no difference with her duty; and there was such pride in her stubborn nature that, as she understood the case, she would have preferred perdition, with the majestic sense of having kept her promise, to a life among the angels, any one of whom might point her out as a hypocrite.

Never was a boy more trying to a mother's patience or more inspiring to a mother's pride. He grew bright and strong and beautiful and bad every day of his life. People thought him a prodigy: Even Dr. Dosor felt his old bachelor heart warm toward the little chap, and fairly envied the widow her treasure. He used to make frequent visits to her house on his account, and as soon as the little fellow was old enough to appear in public he would sometimes borrow him for an occasional half-day, take him to his own house, romp and roll with him on the floor, or on the grass, according to the season of the year, till the old housekeeper was quite out of patience. Some unusually loud scream of laughter or crash of furniture would bring her to the scene of the uproar, when she would rate the "two babies" most soundly; declaring that, for her life she could not tell which was the least sensible of the two.

No sooner was the little fellow put into trousers than the doctor began to take him up in front of him on the saddle whenever he went to visit a patient in his mother's neighborhood; a proceeding which caused no little amusement to the good people of the village, but which roused old Sukey's jealousy to the highest pitch. Here was a little biped, a thing of no possible use, supplanting her in her master's love and attention. He did not talk to her now as aforetime, but talked to the boy instead; at which she became spiteful and envious. On one occasion, when her rival had been handed up by his mother, and placed on the saddle in front of the doctor, for the first time in her life she actually refused to move; and she could not possibly be coaxed or driven out of the widow's door-yard until the boy was handed down again.

The doctor said nothing to Sukey about her bad disposition, but meditated how he could outwit her. During all the afternoon they never exchanged a word; but when they reached home there was a sly twinkle in the old doctor's eye as he took off the weather-beaten saddle with its woolly sheepskin housings, and hung it up on the accustomed peg; a smile of triumph which showed he felt himself to have mastered the situation.

A few weeks afterward Sukey was introduced to a new gig, into which she unsuspectingly suffered herself to be harnessed; and, finding it easier to draw her old master than to carry him, she made no objection to the change. They started off along the road to Poverty Lane, stopped at the house of Widow Leighton, and before many minutes her small tormentor emerged from the door, climbed up into the gig by the side of the doctor, who prepared to enjoy his triumph over the old friend as well as the society of the new.

Never was a female of the equine species more overwhelmed with conflicting emotions. She could not run away and kick the gig to splinters -- she was too old and stiff for that; if she

balked, the Doctor had the advantage of her, having bought a new whip along with the new gig and harness; therefore, after making every sign of indignation and disgust of which a discreet and well-educated mare was capable, she gloomily accepted the situation and started down the road, the perfect picture of despair. Thus that antiquated medical firm dissolved partnership; and from that day to the day of her death Sukey was nothing but a servant; the boy had succeeded to her place in the old doctor's heart.

The child had evidently inherited his father's intellect, and his mother's sensibility and will. The very first time she took him to Church, which she felt it her duty to do according to contract, at the earliest practicable age, he manifested a dislike for the service, all except the singing. He did not show his total depravity by crying and stamping and demanding to be taken home, in all of which his mother would easily have triumphed over him; but his behavior was painfully suggestive of her own state of mind during the days between the funeral and the christening. He did not object to going to Church, but he would sit and scowl at the minister till he fell asleep from sheer weariness. Once his mother was horrified to find him standing up in the pew, making faces and shaking his chubby fist at the man in the pulpit who was saying an unusually long and stupid prayer. Poor woman! No wonder she was afraid of her child who was so fearfully like her former self; but she had vowed a vow, and with her that was as final as death. With the best heart she could she kept on working for him, teaching him, training him; she would have been glad to pray for him also, but she did not feel at all acquainted with the Lord; besides, she was afraid he would remember her bad manners toward him if she ventured on any very intimate approach.

As we have seen, the Elder had not proceeded very far with her religious education, and now that he had gone to some frontier circuit in the Far West, where there was special requirement for piety and lungs, as well as courage, muscle, and practical wisdom, she had no one to whom she could open her heart, or from whom she could seek instruction or comfort. There was, indeed, another one of those "saddle-bags men" who occasionally passed through the village as Elder Hooper used to do, whom, for his old friend's sake, the doctor had invited to preach in the school-house a couple of times; but he was one of those dry, well-seasoned men, who are good at raising money, building churches, and administering discipline, but possessed of neither "bowels" nor nerves. The widow would as soon have thought of seeking spiritual advice from the wheezy old doctor himself as from this unwelcome successor of Elder Hooper and the apostles.

In due time the boy was sent to the district school. Under the instruction of his mother he was already quite a prodigy of learning. He could read and spell, if the words were easy; he knew the multiplication-table as far as "three times seven are twenty-one;" he could pronounce the names of the Presidents in tolerable order, though he was apt to get confused amongst the small ones after Andrew Jackson. Besides this secular knowledge he knew the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, -- this latter being a very rare document in this orthodox region, -- and was well up in the New England Primer, that wonderful book in which even the alphabet is done into theology, beginning with the poetical statement:

"In Adam's fall

We sinned all;"

a formula which had its use in helping young Puritans to remember that as A stands at the head of the alphabet, so Adam stood at the head of the race. There is no doubt but the boy would have preferred some other version of the A, as

"A was an archer  
And shot at a frog;"

or this:

"A was an apple-pie;"

followed by the impetuous B, who bit it, without waiting for the more polite C, who cut it, etc., versions of the A which have the merit of possible truth at least, while the one in the Primer has theological merit only. However, little Johnny was not yet old enough to take exceptions to things which he did not understand, so he recited the A and the B:

"My book and heart  
Shall never part;"

as the only means of reaching C and D; the first of which, even in this theological primer, stood for a cat and the second for a dog. F:

"The idle fool  
Was whipped at school;"

and, near the close, Y was disposed of in this remarkable couplet:

"Youth's forward slips  
Death soonest nips;"

which, if it had any meaning at all, was rather discouraging to all "forward" children. Z brought up the rear thus:

"Zaccheus, he  
Did climb a tree,  
His Lord to see."

All these and many other edifying things his mother taught him, partly after the forced and hated lessons of her own cheerless childhood, and partly at the suggestion of the much regretted Elder Hooper.

His other instructor was Doctor Dosor. There were only about sixty years between them, and, being a good deal together they not only became the two most intimate friends in all the country round, but also grew to be very much alike in their tastes and opinions. The doctor was

fond of talking of his cures, and having now a better listener than old Sukey, he amused himself and improved the boy by telling him how people got sick and how he and the rest of the doctors cured them. It must be confessed that in one respect the mare possessed her master's confidence to a greater degree than her rival; to her he used to make no secret of how he had blundered over this patient and how that one might have got well if he had only found out what was the matter with him in time; but to the boy the cases which were not cures he always omitted to mention.

The old man had a very simple method of practice, whose general principles even a lad of five years old might understand. The most of the ills of the flesh, he said, had their chief seat in the liver -- of course no man could live unless his liver were all right -- and in order to put and keep that organ right, nature had kindly furnished that wonderful specific, calomel. There were cases, to be sure, where mechanical treatment was required; but, in a general way, if a man could eat well and sleep well, which two things he would be sure to do if he had a healthy liver, he could get well by himself of any small ailments which might happen to afflict him. For the larger and more serious ones, such as paralysis, gout, consumption, and old age, there was nothing better than churchyard mold.

With this theory and practice of medicine the boy soon became familiar, as the following incident will show:

Ever since the advent of the gig Sukey had been very rapidly growing old. She took her supplanting so much to heart that it actually impaired her digestion, and having already passed the time of life usually allotted to horse-flesh she was not equal to the effort required to throw off her grief, as a younger animal would have done. She sulked and pined and grew more and more miserable every day, till at last, from being as plump as a pullet, her bones began to show through the skin. Johnny observed this and mentioned it to the doctor, with this remark:

"Old Sukey's ribs begin to show. There must be something wrong with her liver. I think we should give her a dose of calomel."

Poor beast! Even her ruin was of service to her rival, for no sooner had her skeleton become prominent than her old master made an object lesson of it, and explained to his promising pupil the manner in which the frame-work of a horse was constructed; following it up along the line of that science now known as comparative anatomy, with lectures on the structure of the human skeleton; and it was not long before the boy; could give the name, place, and principal use of every bone and joint in the whole medical establishment. He was able also to talk learnedly about fevers, dyspepsia, colic, and such other cheerful subjects as physicians most delight in, whereby the soul of the old man became so knit to the soul of the boy that he longed to have him for his own; and, though he was full of misgivings on the subject, he began to concoct a scheme by which to get permanent possession of him.

"What a doctor he would make!"

Why the old doctor had never married nobody knew, and now that he was so old a bachelor almost nobody cared. In spite of all his learning, both classical and professional, the

subjects of love and matrimony had always been too wonderful for him, but now he was brought face to face with those perplexing subjects which seemed to be inseparably bound up with that other question, namely, how to get possession of the boy. For a long time the matter weighed upon his spirits till he became so solemn and silent that Johnny ventured to suggest a dose of calomel, but the old doctor shook his head and declined the prescription. He had at last discovered a disease the seat of which is not in the liver.

Among the serious obstacles to the scheme which was now foreshadowed in his mind was his faithful old housekeeper. Susan; a very capable person, who had long held control of his bachelor establishment; first as a convenience, next as a necessity, and finally as a terror. It would not be strange if this mature and active-minded maiden had aspired to a place of more extended usefulness in the doctor's house than that which she had held for twenty years or so; nor is it strange that she should have looked with little favor upon the doctor's growing fondness for the son of the Widow Leighton. Being gifted with great freedom of speech, she occasionally made known her dislike of the boy, and after every one of his visits she made the master of the house pay dearly for the brief enjoyment of having the young madcap in it.

He had circumvented old Sukey with comparative ease, but how to do the same thing with old Susan was more than a match both for his ingenuity and his courage.

"Here am I, a lonesome old chap," he would sometimes say to himself, "with a big house of my own and nobody to fill it, a snug sum of money out at interest, and making more all the time out of my pills and powders -- permanent business; diseases, death, and doctors, never go out of fashion, -- and there is the mother of little Johnny with no property in the world except the boy, bless him! working the ends of her fingers off to get a living and send him to school. Now I would be willing to put my property against hers and call it square if we could only fix up the other matters to suit. She would have a good comfortable home; be a rich widow some day instead of a poor one; and what a doctor I could make out of the boy! But how old Susan would go on about it if she knew what I was thinking of! I really believe she would set to and scold me out of it."

At length a happy thought struck him: he would quietly "fix up the other matters" first, and leave the new mistress to manage old Susan. Upon which he chuckled at his own sagacity, saying to himself, "She can do it and not half try."

At this point a new difficulty arose, suggested by the logic of the case. He was profoundly in awe of old Susan; how then should he ever be able to "fix up the other matters" with a woman who was so much more than a match for her? The case looked doubtful; all the more doubtful on account of his ignorance of women. He was reasonably well acquainted with their construction, ailments, tempers under treatment, and other professional views of the subject, but when he tried to contemplate the widow as the possible partner of his bosom he began to be very foggy and foolish; a condition in which many another old fellow of sixty has found himself with respect to an attractive widow of half that age. On looking over the subject again he thought he might possibly do without the woman if he could only get the boy; but then the conclusion forced itself upon him that he must have both or neither; for no woman would be fool enough to give away so nice a boy as that unless she went with him herself.

At this point he remembered a learned treatise by one of the eminent disciples of Galen, on the art of producing and transferring love. That eminent medical gentleman wrote a treatise to prove that the singular affection called love was simply a peculiar condition of the nervous fluid, which could be produced or cured at will like any other nervous disorder. He had even gone so far as to concoct certain powders, for which he claimed great merit in the treatment of these cases, and which, as the old doctor remembered, had been indorsed by the great physicians of the Middle Ages, down as late as 1560. But with all his research he was not able to find the recipe upon which those remarkable powders were mixed, and although he knew the virtues of certain drugs and balsams in awakening or abating the emotions, yet no medicine, so far as he knew, could be trusted to awaken the affections of the one who received it on behalf of the one who gave it. His favorite calomel was not of the least use now; even asafetida was a failure; neither vanilla nor camphor could be trusted either to produce in the widow or prevent in himself the ravages of that strange "disorder of the nervous fluid" with which he felt himself afflicted. There was nothing in all the medical mind that would help this case, unless it might be the fees; good store of which he had laid by him, and upon which, failing all more subtle chemistry, he placed no small reliance.

But, alas! there was the same trouble with the doctor's views of matrimony as of theology; namely, he did not believe in inspiration; and Elder Hooper was not at hand to set him right. His worldly judgment had settled it that a sensible woman, without a cent in the world, would count it greatly to her advantage to "fix up matters" with a rich and amiable old gentleman like himself; but in this case he found that, unlike his former patient with the hysterics, the common-sense treatment was unreliable.

Love had been life to the widow; now it was religion also. Her heart had started on a life-long journey, like poor Evangeline, to find her lost love again. He was only gone away for a little while; sometime she should rejoin him. He had passed into the world of spirits before her, and she thought of him there as good Catholics think of the Holy Mother. He was her patron saint. She relied upon God to bless her son because of the implied contract at his baptism; but when she prayed for herself she addressed herself to her husband; who, as she believed, would take her requests, put them into proper form, and himself present them before the throne. Perhaps for her husband's sake God would bless her a little. Had he not died for her? Was it not to save her from want that he had wrought as a common laborer in the canal? Surely God would be very likely to attend to what he should say on behalf of one for whom he had laid down his life.

Thus the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice first found place in her heart. It was all right as far as it went; another step in the same direction would bring her to a saving faith in the Redeemer. Had he not also died for her and gone to heaven? Would he not offer her prayers before the throne? and could the Father deny him any thing he asked on behalf of one for whom he had died?

Of course, the old doctor did not know all these things; and if he had they would have been but foolishness unto him. Spiritual things, whether love, marriage, death, or salvation, are to be spiritually discerned, The doctor was a materialist, therefore he went on blindly figuring out his chances of success with the widow as he would have cast the interest on a note, or footed

up the value of his house, furniture, lands, mortgages, collected and collectible fees; becoming more and more fatherly toward the boy and more and more enamored of his mother, though it must be confessed his acquaintance with the woman advanced by slow degrees.

Hope mid fear by turns controlled him. Sometimes the scales turned in his favor and sometimes in favor of the widow; but on the whole, the more he observed in her that was admirable and desirable the more inaccessible did she appear. Gradually he sunk into that state of mind so rare in old suitors for the hands of women, that is, humility. When he thought of the brave struggle she maintained on behalf of herself and her son his practice, his possessions, and himself shrunk into smaller and smaller proportions. At first he had counted greatly on the favorable effect of offering a home to this homeless woman; but when he saw how perfectly she maintained her self-respect in the three little rooms which comprised her hired residence, even that hope failed him.

By the time he had reached the status of an ardent lover, he had also reached the borders of despair. His hard old head and his soft old heart could not agree together; there was no peace for him at home, for old Susan had begun to suspect his designs upon another woman, and was, therefore, savagely discreet and furiously virtuous; he could not take pleasure in the society of the widow, who refused to suspect his designs upon her, and who treated him with neighborly courtesy and kindness, always assuming that he had come to see Johnny, and treating him very much as she did any of his other playfellows.

His only comfort was the boy, in whom he took increasing delight; lavished time and money and valuable information on him; while the lad, on his part, treated the old man as a comrade rather than as a venerable benefactor, and so helped to keep his heart warm in spite of the cool manners of the woman, who, first of all her sex, and altogether in spite of herself, had thrown all his "nervous fluids" into "disorder."

At last the poor man began to doubt within himself whether there were not some truth in the doctrine of inspiration. He felt himself possessed by a strange spirit which he could neither describe, account for, nor escape; his nature, like a century plant, had been for scores of long, slow years gradually approaching its climax; and now, by some influence from the sun, or still higher up, he had blossomed out into a great passion of love, which glorified his whole existence. Under its influence this rough, weather-beaten man, who used to plunge into the houses of his patients as he would into a hotel or stable, stamping off the snow or mud on the well-scrubbed floor, to the great disgust of all good house-mothers, and ordering people about as if he had made them instead of mended them, this gruff, absent-minded old fellow, whose clothes seemed to have been thrown at him instead of put on him; who used to take savage delight in mixing up horrid doses and laughing at the wry faces of his victims who swallowed them; this unmitigated old bachelor, this materialist, by reason of a new spirit which possessed him, was actually coming to be a gentleman. He rolled and romped with Johnny all the same whenever his tormentor was out of sight; but towards all other people, more especially towards all women, he became courteous and attentive. He learned to put on his clothes, occasionally giving them a shake in lieu of a brushing. He would often knock at a door before entering it. He bought a new hat! Beyond all doubt he was rising in the scale of being; but this did not help him at all in the chief desire of his heart, for the woman rose in his estimation a great deal faster than



he did in his own. He did not feel at liberty to call at her house very often, and when he was there he more than half wished himself away. He would make up fine sentences to use on the occasion of his next visit, and then come home and denounce himself for an old idiot because the black eyes of the widow had frightened them all out of his head.

Poor man! the inspiration had come at the wrong time of life. Some considerable amount of ignorance and impudence are needful in these affairs of the heart; qualities which are not rare in persons under thirty years of age; but the doctor had grown old and wise and slow, and the "grand passion" was too much for him.

During all this time, Johnny was more and more possessed with the idea of becoming a doctor. He regarded himself already as a match for ordinary complaints and able to sit in consultation even in the most serious and complicated cases. One day he came home from a professional ride, of which he gave the following account:

"Well, mamma, we have cured up Old Granny Tim. She had a congestion, or digestion, or suthin' or other; the doctor asked me what I would give, so I ordered a heaping spoonful of jalap. Sure, enough, he give it to her, and she got well.

"We had another patient down by the red school-house, almost, dead with the liver complaint. Didn't we stuff the calomel into him! He had something the matter with his mouth afterward, but I guess his liver is all right anyhow.

"But oh! the biggest thing we ever did was just when we were coming home today. We were riding along, stating our opinions about them new doctors they call homeopaths, when, all at once, we heard a terrible hollerin' behind us; so we stopped, and up comes Ed Fisher. all out of breath, to tell us that his father had fallen off a load of hay, and broke his leg. So we went back to the house, and I and the doctor set it for him." Here was a state of things which filled the widow with the deepest concern. It was evident that her son was receiving impressions which, in a little time, would be too strong to be effaced. The sense of being helpful on such a grand occasion as the setting of a broken leg seemed to make him half a head taller and half a decade older. A few more such scenes as this and his tastes would become hopelessly developed in what, for him, was the wrong direction.

There was the doctor, too, whom she could read as easily as a large print Bible; whose hopeless love she had held in too high respect to suffer him to put it into useless words. Hitherto she had thought of it as a great misfortune to him, but now it began to look like a calamity to herself. He had won the boy already; a few years more and his destiny would be fixed; every day the dear, dangerous old man was imprisoning him more closely in his love, and fostering in his childish heart the fascination of his own profession, which was full of opportunities of helpfulness to arouse his manly nature, and full of mystical charms with which to engage his tastes. Once set in that direction and her boy was lost. To suffer him thus to stray from the path God had marked out for him was falsehood in her, and ruin for her son.

But what was she to do? She was poor and alone; all the more alone because of the heart and the fortune she could not accept. There was only this little cottage in all the world where she

had any right to be, and only this way to live till the boy should come to his life-work and she should go to her rest. Yet these two friends must be kept apart at all hazards. As for the man, he was old, and had better die at once than lead the child away from his heaven-ordained destiny. What were a few added griefs upon this gray head to the wreck of a life before it was fairly started on its voyage?

There was evidently but one thing to do. She and her boy must go away. Away! somewhere; anywhere; everywhere; one where as well as another so that it were away. She could not rest till she had settled it once for all, and shrived her soul of all possible blame.

That night, kneeling and bending over their sleeping boy, she sobbed out this prayer:

"John, please tell Him I will keep my promise. I will bring up the boy for Him. It is hard. This poor little place is all the home we have in the world, and now we must go away. If there is somewhere a place for your broken-hearted wife and the child we have given to God, please ask him to show me where it is. Johnny belongs to him, but I belong to you. I wish he knew how much I love you, and then, may be, he would love me a little for your sake, bad and willful as I am. Tell him this for me, and don't forget us in our troubles. Good night."

A little while after this the old doctor did that unheard of thing for him, that is to say, he started on a long journey. For this journey he had two reasons: first, he had heard that his good friend, Elder Hooper, was sick, in a little frontier settlement a thousand miles away; second, he remembered how well that good man understood the subject of inspiration. May be they could prescribe for one another.

It was two months before the old doctor came home again, to find the cottage closed and its people gone, no one knew where or why.

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## 06 -- OUT OF THE OLD LIFE INTO THE NEW

There is a story told of, the conversion of a certain heathen on this wise:

Through the preaching of the English missionary he had been awakened to a sense of his sins, his need of pardon, and of saving grace: he also felt strongly moved to pray; but, as he understood the case, it was needful that he should pray to the missionary's God in the missionary's language, and the only words of English that he knew were the names of the two months, January and February. At length; being utterly overwhelmed with grief, he broke forth in earnest supplication crying, in the midst of sobs and tears, "January! February!" over and over again, as if his heart would break. He who knoweth the hearts of His children understood the poor man's case all the same as if he had said, in good English, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner;" and in answer to his real prayer gave him the desire of his heart. The poor man was instantaneously and joyfully converted; his black face, all covered with tears, began to shine, and, like any other enthusiastic young convert, he began to shout: the same two words answering this purpose also, January! February! which being interpreted is, "Glory be to God! Hallelujah!"

After the same manner of mercy the prayer which the widow offered in that round-about way, seemed to have come directly to the ear for which it was intended. She tried to teach the boy to pray, this being one of the things which she had promised; and the little fellow had fixed in his memory the prayer our Lord taught his disciples; but one day he heard a minister, whom he specially hated, repeat the same in the pulpit in a drawling, humdrum fashion, hurried a little toward the end, and taking the Amen on the run; therefore, Johnny would not say it any more. His mother was frightened at his refusal as well as at his reason for it.

"That's the minister's prayer. I hate ministers."

Then the little child of wrath struck an attitude in night-gown, and began to mimic the preacher in a way which showed how closely he had studied his manner and how little good he had derived from it.

"You don't s'pose there's any use in talking to anybody that way, do you, mamma? The parson didn't seem to care anything about what he was saying, and I don't believe any one else did. Whom is he talking to when he says, 'Our Father, who art in heaven?'"

"He is the Great Spirit who governs all things," answered the widow; feeling at the same time what a difficult question it was.

"What is the use of talking to him?"

"To let him know we have not forgotten him."

"Do you talk to him mamma?"

"Not often."

"Why not? You make me talk to him every night."

"I think he likes to hear you talk better than he does me." And there the conversation ended, leaving the mother to bear a heavier burden than ever. The time had come when it was necessary to teach the child religion: the forms of it would not answer any longer. Alas! how was she to teach what she did not know?

The next morning a neighbor called, bringing the news that the firm of H. C. Fisher & Co. had failed; and by way of compromising with its creditors, had offered to pay one cent on the dollar.

Here was a calamity. This great establishment for the manufacture of straw hats and bonnets had given employment to the widow, as well as scores of other hard-working women in that part of the country; her earnings at this business had been her only means of support.

Here was a new problem. How were they to live, and move, and continue to have a being? She had not the least objection to starve, so far as herself was concerned; indeed, the savage thought came up in her mind that if she could, by such a process, find a way out of the world, she might accomplish two things: first, meet her husband again; and, second, present herself before the theological God, and demand redress for all the wrongs she had suffered at his hands. Perhaps he would be angry and destroy her. If so, that would be the end of all her trouble. Perhaps he would send her to perdition; and the wild thought came to her mind that it would be some small satisfaction, even among the lost, to hate the author of all her misfortunes. Then she remembered the promise she had made to God to bring up this child for him, and if she broke her promise that would spoil every thing. She could not hate him for treating her badly while at the same time she was despising herself for breaking her word to him.

There was food enough in the house to last for a week, though, as this had not all been paid for, she doubted at first whether it were not her duty to carry back to the store what remained of her little purchases on credit -- so anxiously did she guard the strength of her nature, which chiefly consisted in honorable pride. If she had detected herself in a mean action she would have been like Samson shorn; but with her self-respect unharmed she felt strong enough to defy all three of the worlds.

It is said that when people for the first time feel the violent shock of an earthquake, however strong their courage and their nerves may be, they at once become helpless with terror. The most substantial thing in all their knowledge, the earth itself, has become treacherous and uncertain; it may break in two and drop them, or, with some sudden upheaval, toss them overboard into space.

Not far different from this was the helpless horror with which the widow viewed her situation, Like Hagar, she must take her son and go forth into the wilderness, not driven out by some too-much-married Abraham and some jealous, spiteful Sarah, but fleeing, when there was no pursuer, from the shelter of the precious little home where her husband died and her child was born, precious all the more for the toil and struggle it had cost her to keep it; fleeing from the open doors of a goodly mansion, whose master she knew would be blessed beyond all words if she would only come and dwell in it fleeing from him, their best and truest friend in all the world, whose great honest heart, and all his other possessions, had long been silently, reverently, and despairingly laid at her feet.

While she had lived in that poor cottage she had been like one who, overtaken in the offing by a storm, tugs with all his might at the oars of his little skiff, not thinking to reach the harbor but just to keep afloat and not be driven out to sea. Inside the little shell, tired muscles and an aching heart; outside, nothing but mad waters, everywhere full of graves.

The first thing to be done was to raise the money for the rent of the cottage, which would be due at the end of this eventful week; due to her old enemy, the agent, into whose possession it had come along with other properties that once belonged to her husband. If she should fail to pay her dues to him she would be as bad as he, whom, now that the great theological Doctor was dead, she regarded with supreme horror and contempt. There was also the small account with the

grocer-after her husband's death she had given over her inquisitorial torture of the agent -- and this, also, must be paid.

The only property of which she was possessed was the meager furnishing of the cottage, the whole of which, if sold, might possibly pay her debts, but nothing more; therefore, for the sake of her conscience as well as her pride, she paid her old enemy-another visit; who, among his other dignities, was the auctioneer for that portion of the town, and ordered him to sell, three days from that time, all the furniture belonging to her little home.

The portly rascal was astounded. Her presence and her errand brought him face to face again with the iniquity he had committed against her husband and herself; however, he could not refuse the exercise of his functions, and, therefore, though with a very bad grace, he undertook to manage the sale.

During those three days the widow was sinking deeper and deeper in sorrow, and struggling blindly with fate which once more seemed too strong for her. She thought herself the sport of some malicious destiny which took a horrid pleasure in heaping up calamities upon her. One help after another had failed, one hope after another gone out; but never, for a moment was her purpose shaken. She would do right, though the heavens were already beginning to fall.

On the appointed day, standing hand in hand with her boy amidst the wreck of her home, she watched the man who might justly claim to be the "agent" of her poverty and her widowhood, while he put up for sale the poor bed on which her husband died, and the little cradle in which her baby slept; and, as she listened to his voice crying out, "Going! going!" it seemed as if, with this remnant of her earthly goods, her reason were going too.

And now the little cottage is bare and empty, and the night has come. The fire is out on the hearth, the cold supper has been eaten, a blanket which had been reserved from the sale is spread upon the floor, and there is still another one to cover them. With the money from the sale, which the auctioneer had declared to be, without exception, "cash on the nail," she has paid the little account at the store; paid the "agent" not only what was due him for the rent of the cottage but also the full amount of his fee for his services, and when she counts what is left for herself and her son it is barely enough to pay their fare by stage to the nearest railway town.

And now a sense of her utter helplessness comes over her. Again she hears the coarse voice of the auctioneer as he cried, "Going! going! going!" His hateful countenance reappears, and then begins to change, like the figures in a kaleidoscope, into all the infernal and horrible faces she has ever seen in pictures or in dreams. Again she listens, with bated breath, for that final word, with which, one after another, he has thrown her precious household gods away; and if with his last, sharp "Gone!" had come the end of all things earthly, and the crack of doom had sounded, it would, no doubt, have seemed to her a fitting climax to her long list of woes. "Gone!" All gone now except herself and her child; and they must go tomorrow.

It is time to sleep their last sleep in their desolate home; but first it is time for the child to say his prayer. She kneels upon the bare floor and Johnny kneels beside her, but though she waits a long time he does not utter one word. Then his mother calls to mind that only the night

before he questioned her about the use of talking to God, and refused any longer to say, "Our Father, who art in heaven." Hitherto the boy had been the priest of the little household, and it was with growing interest and confidence that she listened to his evening prayer and joined him in the "Amen." She was sure the Lord would be pleased with the voice of the child asking for his daily bread; though, for herself, if she wanted daily bread she must work for it, just as she must work for all other things for which good people and little children might pray.

True, God had once answered her prayer right quickly, but she could not venture to trouble him very often. Here they were, close to the edge of an abyss, and she could not, and Johnny would not, pray.

But prayer is not always in a form of words. Sorrow, suffering, tears, are prayers most eloquent, which enter silently into the heart of the Infinite Father though there be no words to enter into his ear. This broken-hearted widow and her child were praying in spite of themselves. They had come to Jehovah-Jireh, "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

While they knelt thus in the darkness a strange sense of awe, though not of fear, took possession of them; the powers of the world to come seemed to be in active exercise about them; the silence, which was at first oppressive, gave place to low sweet sounds like the faint echoes of distant voices singing; so rapt and lifted out of themselves were they that if a white-winged angel had stretched out his hand to them in the darkness they would scarcely have been surprised.

As the widow waited, wondering at this half-opening of a supernatural world, the floor of the cottage seemed to give place to the surface of a moon-lit lake. The waves bore her up, though she walked upon them doubtfully, thinking every moment they would give way. There were boats passing near her within sight and hail; she called to them to come and rescue her, but they passed her, one by one, without seeming to be aware of her presence. When the last, little craft was out of sight the winds began to blow and the waves to rise; still she walked upon them, drenched and beaten with the spray, climbing the hills and going down into the valleys of water until her strength was quite exhausted. With increasing weakness seemed to come increasing weight, so that, first, her feet sank in the water; then she waded to the knee; then struggling onward, the water was up to her waist. She was going -- going -- down-down; drowning with the weight of her sorrow. She lifted her face to heaven to take one more look of the stars when she saw a form half strange, half familiar, walking toward her on the waves. In an instant she knew Him. It was one whose portrait she had often seen; sometimes with his arms full of little children; sometimes walking by the sea, or on it; sometimes with a crown of thorns on his head; sometimes nailed to a cross.

He gave her his hand, -- there was a scar in the palm, lifted her up, or rather, took away her heaviness, so that she rose up of herself; and then they walked together, hand in hand, till they reached a low sandy shore on the western side of the lake. Here were the beginnings of a village, through which they passed till they came in sight of a curious box of a building standing by itself; on which was a name or sign, which at first she could not read.

"Look again," said her Companion, and as she looked the black letters on the white board came out distinctly, thus:

## Lakeside

It was a place she had never seen or heard of before, but at sight of the word a sweet sense of rest came over her as if she had reached the end of her toilsome journey.

The next moment she found herself alone. He who had lifted her out of the waters, and walked with her to the shore, was gone; and, with him, the vision. She came back to the old life again to find her boy asleep on the floor, and a moonbeam coming in at the window and lighting up his face. He was smiling in his sleep as if the good angels were showing him a vision too.

Tomorrow they were to go away. Was this not the Lord pointing out their destination? She was too weak now to fight the will of Heaven any longer. Sorrow, poverty, toil, homelessness had softened her hard heart till now it was a great relief to her to have a stronger will to lean upon. She was coming to understand that strange paradox of the apostle, "When I am weak then am I strong."

She took counsel of the vision. Tomorrow they would set out on their pilgrimage, seeking a city out of sight; a place not laid down on any map she had ever seen, and, by the geography of the vision, at least a thousand miles away.

Had she not walked upon the water safely at first, and when the waves were ready to go over her head was she not rescued and safely brought to shore? Surely, then, they could walk upon the land. Tomorrow they would begin their journey, and walk to the ends of the earth together rather than disobey this heavenly calling. Then she lay down to sleep, thinking of one whom she in one day more would resemble in one point at least; for he had not where to lay his head.

When the widow awoke the next morning in that desolate cottage she had triumphed over her distresses, and was as ready to face all the world at once as she ever had been to face a little of it at a time. The first thing which caught her eye after she had kissed the beautiful face of her boy was a small Bible, which lay on the floor beside them, one of the articles reserved from the sale, -- and remembering she had heard Elder Hooper say that he often was guided by texts of Scripture to which he had opened at random, she opened the book, if perchance she might find a text especially adapted to her case. And this is what she read:

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

A knock at the door surprised her, for it wanted yet half an hour to sunrise; but when she had opened it her surprise was turned to pity, for there stood the most wretched, horror-stricken being she had ever seen or imagined. It was none other than the "agent" who the day before had sold her out of house and home.

During the night he also had seen a vision. He thought he was sick and lying on the bed which he had sold the day before -- the one on which his old partner died; and that he was waited

upon in his sickness by the widow herself. There was that same burning look in her eyes from which he could not for a moment escape, and which kindled all sorts of fires in his blood. Presently the doctor came, and announced that he must die. Then he heard wild screams of laughter; and presently there stood around his bed a company of devils, who began to talk together over him.

"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth riches with increase," said one.

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" said another.

"He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them," said a third.

"Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house," said another.

"Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall eat your flesh as it were fire," said another.

Then they became impatient. He was too slow in dying; so they resolved not to wait for him; and finding that he was helpless and could move neither hand nor foot, they seized him with their hot fingers, stripped him quite naked, and carried him away to the church-yard, where he saw an open grave, just at the feet of his old partner.

Then in spite of his shrieks and prayers they set about burying him. Their hands blistered him as they swung him over the grave, and, when they dropped him into it, it seemed as if he should never reach the bottom, it was so deep. At last he struck, breaking every bone in his body by the fall.

Still he could hear what was going on above him. There were loaded wagons rumbling toward the grave's mouth, which jarred his broken, quivering body. They were loaded down with money!

"Here is his fifteen thousand dollars," said one of the fiends above him; whereupon he remembered that this was the amount his old partner had put into the business of the firm. It was all in copper coin.

"Thy money perish with thee," cried the fiends; and they began to fill the grave with it. What horror! He was being buried alive. They were heaping nearly twenty tons of fraud atop of him.

And now another torture. There was a head on every coin; and the eyes in every head began to laugh at him, and the mouth of every one of them began to mock him, hissing in awful chorus the record of his evil deeds and words, -- yea, even his very thoughts of evil.



There were some silver coins among the copper; a thousand dollars; so he heard them saying. This must have been that thousand for which he had sold the house where his old partner died; buying it himself, as "agent," and paying for it with a note of his own which the dead man had indorsed, and which, in this manner, he had made the dead man pay. There were eagles on these coins, and presently, stepping from their perch of arrows, they began to tear his flesh with their Beaks and claws.

There were a few gold coins among the silver and copper; two hundred and fifty dollars, so he heard them say. This was the amount of the rent of that house which the woman had paid him since her husband's death. These twenty-five golden eagles now turned into twenty-five serpents of fire; he saw them making their way toward him through the horrid mass; and then -- the grave opened beneath him, and he found himself plunging headlong into hell.

This was the dream from which he awoke on that bright morning of the 1st of May; a dream which had fastened itself in his brain through the whole livelong night; a dream so terribly real that it had left deep lines on his fluffy countenance and turned his brown hair gray. Horror of conscience and this prelude of the horrors of the damned had gone a long way towards making him honest. The first five minutes after he awoke he wanted to give his whole possessions over to the widow and her child; the next he was willing to divide with them; then, as the horror wore away a little, he thought it would be sufficient if he paid back the fifteen thousand dollars; but finally, the ruling passion strong even in death, re-established itself so far that he resolved, by way of compromise, to restore to the widow the paltry two hundred and fifty dollars she had paid to him for the rent of her dead husband's house, He might have backslidden even further than this if it had not been for a little laugh he heard in the next room. It was only the laugh of one of his children, but it sounded to him like the laughter he had heard in his dream.

This was why he had come to call upon the widow at this unseasonably early hour, and had brought with him what seemed in her distress a little fortune. He had taken from his secret horde twenty-five golden eagles, -- at least he would save himself from so much fire, -- and brought them to her very early, lest any one else should see him.

When he placed the money in her hand she looked at him as if she were looking through him, and quietly asked the question:

"Did you come by this money honestly?" The poor wretch stammered out an explanation.

"So then you pay me this much on account?" said the widow.

The old thief was angry. He had expected her to thank him for the money!

Westward now, according "to the bidding of the Lord and the geography of the vision, westward, by day and by night; packed in swinging stagecoaches, creeping through clouds of dust; jammed in close cabins of slow boats by canal; jostled in crowds at hotels and railway stations; jolted in cars over half-finished lines of railway; almost ready to perish with weariness; pained by the wretchedness of the boy, who at first had tried to be a man and take care of his mother, but who, before the end of those two weary weeks, had come to be a rather small

specimen of a child; westward, with nerves tightening and brain aching; westward, with strength waning and heart failing; westward, till full a thousand miles were placed between her and the little home she was leaving. Then she began to ask for the place she had seen in her dream; but no one knew of such a town.

"What state was it in?"

She did not know.

"What county was it in?"

She did not know.

"Whom was she going to see?"

She did not know.

"Why was she going there at all?"

She did not care to tell.

Then people would look at her pale face and her great black eyes, which had so much sorrow in them, and shake their heads, and whisper together that she must be some lunatic escaped from an asylum. Officious persons sometimes would cross-question her by way of satisfying their suspicions; then they would question the boy; but he only knew that he and his mother were very tired, and that they were "going away."

At a great city she heard the name of the place she was seeking. It was still a day's journey away, but she tried to cheer up the boy by telling him that, in one day more, they would stop and rest.

"Shall we get home tomorrow?" asked the boy.

"We have no home."

"Well, then," said little Johnny, nestling closer to her side, "we must be a home to one another."

It was late in the afternoon when the slow train, hobbling over a half-finished track, drew up at the Lakeside Station. She knew it at once. It was the very same; even the black letters on the white sign-board smiled at her like the faces of so many old friends. For a moment she was almost happy. The next moment she was quite happy.

"My child! my child! who sent you out to these ends of the earth?"

There was no other voice in all the world which had so much good cheer in it. She took one good long look in his full-moon face, and, raising her hand toward heaven, answered: "HE sent me."

"And here is the boy we gave to the Lord that stormy night," said the Elder, taking up little Johnny in his arms.

"Who are you?" said the boy.

"They call me Elder Hooper."

"Elder? What is that?"

"A kind of minister," said the good man.

But the words were hardly out his mouth before he felt a ringing slap on the side of his head.

"There! Put me down! I hate ministers," cried the little fellow in a rage.

But the strong man only put his other arm around him and pressed him to his bosom, just as he had done before; and, somehow, Johnny never knew just how, he began to feel at home in those arms; stopped kicking and striking, and long before they reached Prairie Parsonage he had laid his curly head on the good man's shoulder and fallen fast asleep.

For a little while the widow's joy made her forget her weariness, and when, after a generous supper, she found herself lying in the best room of Prairie Parsonage, and felt the good-night kisses of the dear motherly Sister Hooper on her forehead, cheeks, and lips, it seemed as if she had begun to realize the words of the Lord Jesus when he said:

"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

She had done her best to come to him; she had; at least, come a long way toward him; and a little of the rest that remaineth to God's people had now come to her. The words of welcome from these servants of the Lord sounded so sweet, and under their protection she felt such divine repose that, for an instant, she almost lost herself, and doubted whether she had not died and come to heaven.

The Elder seemed to know all about her without asking a single question. At the evening prayer he quoted this passage from his favorite book: "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

He must have been inspired! how could he know through what floods and fires she had passed? And so he was inspired; but, more than that, old Doctor Dosor had been here before her,

bringing all his troubles also to this far-away physician of the soul. Only that very morning, having lost the one last hope of his old life, he had bidden his friend good-bye and started on his journey home.

It was only after weeks of pain and delirium that the widow went forth again from that haven of rest to take up the struggle of life with a new love in her soul, and a new light in her eye. Hitherto she had been afraid of God, when she had not hated him; but had schooled herself to obey him for the sake of her vow and her boy. It was all so different now. Her stubborn heart, broken by many sorrows, had been exchanged for a new one; patience for sullenness; gentleness for fury; submission for defiance; love for fear.

And this was how it came about. One day, when the crisis of the fever had passed and she lay trembling between life and death, the Elder came in to see her, with such a look of tenderness as well as goodness on his fatherly face that she felt as if she could fall at his feet and worship him; just as St. John did that other angel.

God must be good after all, she thought with herself, if such a man as this is his minister.

The Elder laid his hand upon her forehead, saying, "Poor child! poor child! God must be very fond of you."

"Why?" asked the widow in surprise.

"Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," was the answer.

"He may love me a little for the sake of my son," said the widow.

"No doubt of it," said the Elder. "He loved the blessed Virgin for the sake of her Son."

Here was a new view of the case; a substantial fact on account of which even she might be an object of the personal regard of the Father in heaven. Motherhood was a way into the Father's love.

"But I have been so wicked and rebellious," she said.

"And have had enough of it?"

"Quite enough."

"And are sorry for it."

"Yes, oh yes! God knows I am."

"And out there on the water when you were just going down the Lord came along and gave you his hand!"

"Yes; who told you that?"

"And you were glad enough to take the hand of the Lord?"

"Oh, so glad," said the widow.

"Well, then; since you have got hold of the Lord's hand, hold on to him."

"I will! I will!" said the widow.

Then she began to feel so safe! and so humble! and so loving! and so glad!

Elder Hooper saw it all in her pale face. He had seen that same light come into so many eyes, all stained with tears. Then he went out to leave her alone with the Lord a little while, and to tell his good wife that another soul was saved.

But how did Elder Hooper know of her strange vision?

She must have told it herself in the delirium of the fever.

\* \* \* \* \*

07 -- WANTED -- AN HEIR

Mr. Zachariah Goodsmith was standing meekly in the doorway of his comfortable farm-house, talking mental note of all the errands which his wife was rehearsing to him for the fourth or fifth time. He was going to the market-town of Lakeside with a load of wheat; a journey which, in going and returning, would take nearly the whole day at the rate he commonly traveled -- that is, about two and a half miles an hour. This was as high a rate of speed as his team of fat, overfed horses were usually expected to make, though sometimes, with an empty wagon, their owner did, when in a hurry, urge them to go as much as three miles or three miles and a half in an hour. "A merciful man is merciful to his beast," was one of his favorite quotations; quotation from whom he did not exactly know, but it sounded a good deal like Scripture, and moreover agreed with his own notion concerning "dumb critters," his only abuse of which was feeding them too much and working them too little.

"Now, Goody, before you come back be sure to go and see that Widow Leighton, and find out all about her. I reckon she is a little related to me."

When Mrs. Charity Goodsmith called her husband "Goody," it was a sign that she was in a gentle and persuasive mood. His neighbors had corrupted his long and respectable name in "Goody Zach," not only for convenience, but also by way of compliment to the old man's extreme tenderness of heart.

"I don't like to go to see people I don't know; especially women," pleaded Zachariah.

"You go along! Say just what I tell you, and there won't nothing hurt you," said his wife, in a tone which was meant to be firm and at the same time encouraging.

Then she rehearsed for his benefit the probable dialogue which would take place, as follows:

"You will knock at the door, and most likely the woman will come to open it herself; they say she lives all alone except a little boy. Then you will ask if Mrs. Leighton lives there; and if she says she is Mrs. Leighton, you ask her if she is the widow of John Mark Leighton that used to live in Poverty Lane. If you find out she is the one. tell her about me; that my maiden name was Hawley, and that my father and her husband's grandmother were cousins. You can say as much as that without making a dunce of yourself, can't you?"

It was with no little fear and trembling that Goody Zach presented himself before the house of a stranger, -- a woman; a widow! In answer to his hesitating rap the door was opened by the lady herself. There stood a little, wrinkled, sun-browned old man, awkward as a boy and bashful as a girl, with an expression on his face in which confusions, gentleness, admiration, and surprise were mingled in about equal proportions.

"Does -- the -- Mrs. Leighton -- live here?"

"I am Mrs. Leighton."

"Be you the one that was married -- onto-John -- Mark -- Leighton down in Massachusetts?" continued the little old man with an evident effort at memory, as if he were reciting the words out of a book.

"My husband's name was John Mark."

"Well I allowed it must be you -- when Aunt Charity said -- there was a -- tall -- handsome -- black-eyed widow living down to Lakeside -- who went by the name of Leighton."

Alas for his memory. But a bashful man with a profound admiration for splendid women can be easily excused under such circumstances.

The widow was both amused and annoyed, but, being a lady, she did not suffer either of those feelings to betray themselves. She waited in dignified silence for the little man to collect his scattered wits which, in spite of the careful instructions of his wife, had been thrown into great confusion. At sight of that "tall, handsome, black-eyed widow," he would certainly have made a dunce of himself if the lady, pitying his painful embarrassment, had not helped him out of it with a question:

"Who is Aunt Charity?"

"Mrs. Charity Goodsmith. I am Zachariah Goodsmith -- maiden name. was Hawley -- almost every body calls her Aunt Charity same as they calls me Goody Zach and we got in the

habit of it ourselves," explained the little man, beginning to brighten up. "She says her grandfather and your mother were cousins. Stop! I've got that wrong; it must have been the other way," said Zachariah, blushing clear to the top of his bald head, which he had uncovered as soon as he had rapped at the door.

"Hawley," was at once recognized by the widow as a family name, so without further hesitation she received the good man as a friend and kinsman. She remembered hearing her husband's grandmother speak of a certain silly girl, who, a great while ago, had married a soft-hearted fellow, eight or ten years younger than herself, without a cent in the world, but so much in love with her that she was obliged to marry him to get rid of him, so she said. The real history of the match was something like this:

Charity Hawley was a brilliant, sparkling girl, full of spirit and self-reliance; courted by all the young fellows in the neighborhood who dared to look so high. But after being engaged to five of the handsomest and richest of them, and dismissing one because he was a flirt, another because he was lazy, a third because he was dishonest, a fourth because he was brought home drunk -- I have forgotten what was the matter with the fifth--she resolved to marry a man whom she could manage; and then if he turned out badly it would be no one's fault but her own.

Young Goodsmith had loved her at a distance ever since he was a small boy, though he never dared speak to her about it. He was nothing but a steady, strong-handed, common young man, while she was a beautiful woman. Difference immeasurable! distance impassable! But Miss Charity was now nearly twenty-seven, and all her tickets in the marriage lottery had been worse than blanks. How far her heart had suffered by it no one could tell, but, to the amazement of every body, most of all to that of young Goodsmith himself, this belle of the county, in the full, ripe glory of womanhood, began to smile on the steady, strong-handed, common young man; and he, lost in wonder and blessed beyond all words, became her faithful worshiper; for which, on condition that he would take her to some place out of the way of all their old acquaintances, she allowed him to become her husband.

This little romance of the olden time being recalled to mind, the widow at once became greatly interested in her visitor. She set herself to fathom the depths of his honest old heart, which love had kept as sound and sweet and gentle as that of a child. Of course he had never amounted to much; he was, humanly speaking, just what his wife had made him; and it was no part of her plan to train up a husband to rule over her, as some people do their children. But what there was of him was good. He was a man to be trusted; a man to ask favors of in time of trouble; a man of one word and of one mind; and, what is rarer than many people imagine, he was a man of one woman, as well as of one wife. True, he was a great admirer of the female sex, but that was largely on his wife's account. She was a woman; the woman, to whom he belonged, body and soul. Other women were stars, she was the sun; Stars might give daylight to other worlds, but there had never been any daylight for him except in the presence of Charity Goodsmith, whose maiden name was Hawley.

Johnny came home from school before Goody could get away, and at once they were on the best of terms. Then he must stay to tea. Unheard of thing for Zachariah Goodsmith to take tea with any other woman to pour it except Aunt Charity! But it did not choke him; on the contrary,

it agreed with him. By degrees his bashfulness drifted away like the morning fog, and he began to shine in this little circle; for when he was quite at his ease, which was not very often, on account of the wholesome restraint under which he lived, he could say very gallant things, as we have seen, a mutual admiration society of three members was formed at the Widow Leighton's house that October afternoon, whose first session was so slow in adjourning that when the good man found himself once more behind his steady team of horses it was past milking time. What could he say for himself if he should arrive at the farm two hours later than usual?

Ah! Goody Zach, you are not the first simple man who has been beguiled by a charming woman. Father Adam was before you there. Surely, then, it may be pardoned easily to his descendants, for does it not run in their blood?

But charming women are always making trouble for somebody. In this instance it was the horses that suffered. Goody urged them to a fast walk a large part of the way home, and several times, when the road was smooth and level, he actually forced them to a slow trot. The much abused animals were moist under their collars when they reached their comfortable stable; but there is no doubt that their owner would have pushed them to the extent of making them moist under the saddle also rather than be late at home on that particular day.

As he expected, Aunt Charity was eager to hear what he had found out about the widow, and also how he had behaved himself in doing it; on both of which points he was able to give a good account, confining himself to moderate adjectives in praising the widow, but making the largest use of the dictionary in his praises of the boy. He also brought a cordial invitation to his wife to visit them.

"She said I must bring you with me the next time I came to town," said Goody.

Aunt Charity gave a little sniff of disgust at the form of this invitation.

"Him bring me; indeed!" Nevertheless she was not slow in accepting it.

The meeting of these two strong-minded women was a dangerous experiment; but it proved successful. There was, to be sure, a great difference in their ages, and both were hungry for friendship; they also found it possible thoroughly to respect each other; and, with these foundations settled, the two households were soon on very intimate terms.

Aunt Charity was no whit behind her husband in her admiration of the boy, who was, in truth, just the sort of lad to set their childless old hearts half wild to possess him. He was round and rosy; he had a great round head, a round face, round red cheeks, great round blue eyes, round arms and legs, -- in short, a perfect specimen of plump, healthy, hearty boyhood, with as much rebound and sprightliness in him as in a ball of india-rubber on the ground, or a bow-kite in the air. He was as nimble as a squirrel, and no less nimble in his wits than in his muscles; continually up to some mischief which was always laughable and never malicious; on which account he was never at a loss to give such an account of his misdoings as was quite unanswerable though not always quite satisfactory.



Thus, one sleepy Sunday afternoon, when even Mrs. Leighton was overcome by the heat, and the sermon, he slipped slyly out of church; and the next minute the voice of the preacher was drowned by the uproarious barking of half a dozen dogs which had come to church with their masters, but had very properly waited without. Johnny, who was always on good terms with the animal creation, finding them so glad to see him, endeavored to make himself agreeable, and instantly roused them to the wildest pitch of excitement by giving them each a smell at the little basket in which he had brought the Sunday lunch for his mother and himself, and in which he had managed to catch and imprison a little church mouse. Having taken the precaution of tying on the lid of the basket securely, he began tossing and running for it; a game in which the boy and dogs were so mixed and mingled that at times it was difficult to tell the one from the other.

The sport and uproar was presently brought to a stop by the appearance of one of the deacons.

On their way home his mother sought to bring him to a sense of his misconduct in disturbing the services of the Church. He listened respectfully, and, then replied:

"Why, mamma, dear, it was so awful dull inside! You were asleep, and almost every body else was asleep. Wasn't it a shame for Elder Hooper to let such a stupid man come to preach for him? The Church didn't seem to be doing me any good, and I thought I had better be out of it; so I crept out softly, mamma, so as not to wake up anybody; and when I got out there were the dogs looking as lonesome and gaping as bad as any of the folks inside I felt sorry for the dogs, so thought I would amuse them a little till that fellow got through with his long sermon.

"Now, mamma, wasn't I better to the dogs than that preacher-man was to you? Besides, that was according to the Golden Rule. If I had been one of those dogs I should like to have a fellow come and play with me; but if that minister had been sitting down in the pew I don't believe he would like anybody to preach such a long sermon at him."

Being so great a favorite with the old couple, the boy became a frequent visitor at the farm, and whenever he came there was always a great commotion. The great lonesome house which had never belonged to a child seemed to chuckle over his pranks in all its nooks and corners, and to laugh out of all its doors and windows at the fun with which he filled it. As for the two old people, they grew visibly younger every day he stayed. Aunt Charity would sometimes scold a little, more from habit than anything else; but Goody always took his part, in a mild and deprecatory manner, however, lest he should bring down a tempest on his own head. If the boy did any damage to house, garden, or orchard it was always pardoned as soon as discovered; if he spied out some particularly fine apples that Goody had hidden away in the haymow, or came forth from some private cubby in the house with his hands and pockets full of Aunt Charity's most particular cookies, it was usually with an air of triumph rather than of fear or shame; for it was more than likely that these very cakes and apples had been hidden on purpose that he might hunt for them, and find them. Thus Johnny and the two old people at the farm were all children together so long as he was with them; and when he went away they counted the days till his coming again, just as other little children count the days till the next Christmas or Fourth of July.

There is a chapter in the Book of Proverbs having thirty-one verses, each of which has, by tradition, been set to its corresponding day of a month; and Charity Hawley, like other well instructed girls of her time, had sought out her birthday verse therein, which ran as follows: "She considereth a field and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard." This, therefore, the woman had done; and so wisely had she considered, and so large had been the fruit of her hands, and of her husband's, that the old couple had come to be "fore-handed."

They owned a whole section of good land, a big barn full of cattle, and a big house empty of children. There was also a certain small tin trunk, which Aunt Charity always kept under the bed in the spare chamber, containing sundry notes and mortgages; for when that considerate woman had bought fields and planted vineyards to her heart's content there was still a good deal of the fruit of her hand to be put out at interest. She had shown her consideration also in having these notes and mortgages all made out in her name, though the fields and vineyards, having been purchased before the present happy days for women, had all been conveyed in the name of her husband. Of this small matrimonial and agricultural corporation she had been, from the first, both president, secretary, and treasurer. All moneys passed into her hands and none passed out again without her knowing the reason why. Once, indeed, Goody Zach had been induced to sign a note of hand as surety for a shiftless neighbor, which note, of course, he was obliged to pay; but the awful sense of his temerity and folly that came over him when he applied to the treasurer for the funds was a lesson which lasted him for the remainder of his natural life. Therefore, in spite of himself, he was rich, and increased in goods and had need of nothing, unless it were children to inherit them.

The only other member of the Goodsmith family was Snooks, a small grizzly-gray terrier, whose importance in the household was in the inverse ratio to the number of other people in it. Before the advent of the boy, Snooks had been the prime favorite, petted and spoiled to the last degree. He had a soft pillow for a bed in a warm corner by the kitchen fire; he was fed not on the crumbs which fell from the table, but if he happened to be troubled with a want of appetite, as was frequently the case, Aunt Charity would make him a nice bit of milk toast or broil him the leg of a chicken, and serve it to him warm, with plenty of butter. His wants and even his tempers were matters of importance in the house. Nothing was permitted to infringe upon his rights. If Goody Zach came in from work to rest himself, and found Snooks curled up in his own particular rocking-chair, the man waived his claim to it in favor of the dog; a kind of treatment which developed in him an enormous sense of his canine importance.

It must be admitted that Snooks was a most remarkable dog, and amply paid for his board and lodging by the exercise he afforded to the care and attention of his old master and mistress. Being so much in human society he became very sympathetic with human thoughts and troubles. If Goody had a touch of the "rheumatiz," Snooks would hop around the house on three legs behind him, and when he sat down with a scowl of pain the dog would look up pitifully in his face, as much as to say, "I know all about it." Aunt Charity were out of temper he would sulk too, refuse his food, lie on his cushion and growl to himself; but the moment her face showed signs of returning good-humor he would jump up into her lap and kiss her, saying, as plainly as dog could say it: "Poor dear old lady! This is a world of trouble for dogs and women, isn't it?"

In his political opinions the dog agreed with his master. Sometimes, in exciting presidential campaigns, a neighbor with "protection" proclivities would drop in for a chat with Zachariah, who was an ardent free-trader. As the debate grew warm Snooks would rise from his cushion, walk forward most impressively, and take his place beside his master's chair, where he would stand and look daggers at "the opposition." When the man rose to go Snooks would follow him to the door with a severe expression of countenance, and when it shut behind him he would give a low mutter of contempt, and then return to his master's side to be patted on the head and congratulated on the success of their argument.

In his morals Snooks was irreproachable. He was never known to commit a robbery or even a theft, on account of which he was regarded as a very saint among dogs; and being so much commended for his virtues he became, as very good dogs as well as other people are apt to, a trifle vainglorious and conceited. It is true he had no temptations in the way of poverty, bad company, and the like, on account of which many dogs, better by nature than he, have gone so far astray as to be scolded, whipped, and even hanged. If he had not been supplied with everything which a dog could possibly want he might not have been such a marvel of moral excellence. Still he was a dog of great quickness in observing moral distinctions, as would appear from the following statement, for the truth of which Aunt Charity and Goody Zach, as also the author of this sketch, can personally vouch.

It was the habit of his master to take up the newspaper in the evening and read aloud, during which reading Snooks would lie on his cushion without manifesting the slightest interest; but as soon as Goody laid down the newspaper and took up the family Bible and began to read the evening lesson Snooks would rise from his cushion, walk decorously to the side of his mistress, jump up into her lap, and remain there in the attitude of close attention, *arrectis auribus*, till the reading and the prayer were ended. Sometimes the prayer was long, but he did not become uneasy, or turn round to look at the clock, as a low-bred dog might have done; but with steady politeness, and such patience as he was able to exercise, he waited till Goody reached the Amen. Then, if the prayer had been very dull and long, he would relieve his feelings with a yawn which reached almost back to his shoulders, shut his jaws again with a little squeak, pass his right fore-paw down over his forehead and nose by way of making his bow, give a slight sneeze for "good-night," and then walk off quietly to bed.

But even so excellent a dog had his failings. As he advanced in age and experience he became critical, exacting, impatient of contradiction. All this, however, was as nothing compared to the inveterate jealousy which the sight of little Johnny always roused within him. This was his first severe temptation, and, like a good many of his betters, his virtue broke down under it. The boy tried every way of making friends with him, but always without success. When he arrived at the farm Snooks would stare at him with an injured expression of countenance, refuse to be stroked or patted on the head by him, refuse food from his hand, and in every possible manner make known his profound disgust. At last, feeling that there was not room for two favorites in one house, he fell into the habit of leaving it when his tormentor appeared and not returning till he was gone away, by which course of conduct he rapidly lost influence and favor with his old master and mistress.

"Tut! tut! what sort of a dog are you?" said Goody one day, as Snooks came in the back door shortly after Johnny had departed from the front. "A dog with such opportunities as you ought to be ashamed of yourself for such behavior. You are as jealous and touchy as the head singer of a choir."

Master John Mark Leighton had been celebrating his tenth birthday by an unusually long visit at the farm; the tokens whereof were visible in every direction.

A smashed window pane where his ball had looked in; a broken weather vane on the stable at which he had practiced with bow and arrows; a gate which he had swung upon to its evident damage; outline pictures of men and animals chalked on the side of the red barn; branches lopped from several young apple-trees; a good many small square holes where his jackknife had explored the interior of half-ripened water-melons; a broken kite clinging with its tail to the lightning-rod; nicks in the blades of planes, hatchets, and other sharp instruments in the tool-house; marks of the shears on the long tails of the horses where he had been collecting material for fish-lines; the paint worn off the hub of the hind-wheel of the best buggy which he had converted into a whirligig, with the help of Aunt Charity's clothes-line; a wooden tooth gone out of the cogs of the cider-mill, in which he had attempted to grind things harder than apples; a broken rake's-tail which he had used as a vaulting-pole; a couple of blocks nailed across two bars of the quilting-frames for a pair of stilts; a split in the windlass at the well, where he had amused himself by drawing up the bucket full of water and letting it down again at full speed; all of which, with other similar phenomena, were so many proofs that Master Johnny had been having a good time.

And now he was gone again! In consequence whereof the whole establishment seemed to shrivel up like a morning-glory in the afternoon.

Oh sweet, precious wisdom of Providence, this mingling of youth and age together! What a glum world this would be if the Shaker theory should ever come true, and people, instead of being born, were to be created full-grown men and women like Adam and Eve! Even so cross a baby as Cain must have been a great comfort to his parents when he was little.

One night as they sat by their lonesome fireside, after a long period of silence, the overflowing heart of Goody Zach found vent in words.

"What is to hinder our having him for our own?" This question formed the chief topic of discourse at the farm for many a day. The widow was poor; they were rich; and doubtless she would like to see her son inherit the best and biggest farm in the county, and the snug sums of money which the papers stood for in the little tin trunk. They would adopt him, educate him, make a farmer of him, lean on him as they went down hill, and when they came to sleep together at the foot leave him their ample wealth, with no incumbrance on it except the cost of a neat obelisk of marble which he should set up over their graves.

Rich people feel strong; their plans claim success. Thus it was with a comfortable assurance these two old people set off early one morning to capture, since they had failed to raise, an heir.

Take care now, Widow Leighton! That old man and woman clambering down out of the wagon, which has stopped at your door, have come to lay a fortune at the feet of your son. They are old and wise and kind. They will love him and care for him while the years shall maize a man of him; then he may love and care for them; and when they die John Mark Leighton, Esquire, will be the richest farmer in the whole country round. Fame and honor will be sure to find him out; perhaps they will send him to Congress. Who knows?

In that great house, which looks out so charmingly upon the lake from its grove of oaks on the bluff a hundred feet above the water-line there will also be a home for you when you, too, are weak and old, and that strong will of yours can no longer drive you at such vigorous pace through the slow, toilsome years. Take care! Now go and open the door and give the dear old people welcome.

Before setting out on this expedition the question with the old farmer and his wife had been whether they should take the lad; but when they came to face his mother it seemed to change into the question whether they could get him. He is now a well-grown boy, tall and strong for his age; and, like every young fellow with any decent blood in him, he is already squaring off at the world and getting ready to conquer a place in it. He is proud of himself, but a good deal more proud of his mother. The boyish chivalry he manifests towards her is a little amusing, but a great deal admirable; it is the early outworking of his soul according to that design of the Creator to make the care of someone woman a means of grace to every man.

Blessed is the unlearned and diffident husband whose wife has the gift of tongues! She may use them at him betimes, but she will also use them for him. Such a husband was Zachariah Goodsmith; such a wife was Aunt Charity.

It had been thought best by the mistress of ceremonies that her husband should first broach the important business, though she had neglected to sketch the probable dialogue beforehand, in consequence of which he was sadly at a loss to know how to begin. The "tall, black-eyed, handsome widow," who so inspired his gallantry and courage on a former visit, now struck him speechless with confusion. His errand began to look doubtful. As his courage oozed out of him his self-respect seemed to go with it; his farm began to shrink in size, while, at the same time, his sloughs and swamps grew larger and larger; his new red barn was not so remarkable after all; there were a few stunted, scrubby yearlings among his stock which seemed to come up before him like the lean kine in Pharaoh's dream; he began to doubt whether someone had not stolen that little tin trunk from under the bed in the spare chamber -- in a word, all his worldly importance was in a state of collapse, and he, a poor helpless thing, like a burst balloon, was quite at the mercy of the lady, the pride and joy of whose life he had come to carry away.

The silence grew oppressive -- torturing -- awful. He tried to relieve it by hitching his chair, but fear held him down. He tried to cough, but his throat was dry and only gave a faint gasp like the bellows of an organ just out of wind. He rubbed his bald head and tried to cudgel his muddled brain into thinking, but in vain. Then, as the great drops of perspiration began to stew out of him, he made one desperate plunge, succeeded in reaching the pocket in the tail of his Sunday coat, drew forth a great, red silk pocket-handkerchief and began to mop his leaky

face and neck with it, in something of the same desperation with which a sailor stuffs bunches of oakum, old tarpaulins, etc., into a leak in his foundering ship. He felt himself going down, but that maneuver saved him. That brilliant jib to his facial bowsprit was an extravagance for which his frugal wife had often blamed him, though, as he had teased for it, she had thought fit to indulge him; moreover it was the only red silk pocket-handkerchief in all the Lake Bluff settlement, and at this desperate crisis it amply paid for itself; for the sight of it brought back his sense of respectability and restored his presence of mind so far at least as to enable him to speak; and this is what he said:

"Wife, why don't you tell her what we want?"

Aunt Charity was a rhetorician by nature and much more so by practice. She prefaced her remarks with compliments to the widow and her son, in whose kinship she declared she took special pride; this by way of gaining the good-will of her audience, as the books of rhetoric direct. Her "introduction" was in "narrative style;" being a pleasant account of their early life in the wilderness, and their gradual increase in comfort as well as in years; into which she worked a full inventory of the items of their wealth so cleverly that their presence in the story was as natural as that of plums in a pudding. Next she dropped into the minor key, and told how lonesome they had been at the farm, except when Johnny had been there, and how often they had wished they had just such a boy of their own. Then she grew tender and motherly; condoled with the widow over her afflictions; pitied her for her hardships; asked anxiously after her health, whether it were not likely to break down under the double burden of supporting herself and her son. Again, with solemn air, she called to mind the fact that they would soon be dead and gone, leaving no one to mourn for them, and leaving their property to strangers, unless to the widow or her son, who were the only blood relations they knew of; and, at last, in an imploring tone, for the widow did not seem to hear her, she begged that Johnny might be with them more; said how glad they would be to bear a part in the cost and care of making a man of him; clothes, schooling, travel to see the world, and when they were gone he should enter in and possess their whole estate, in return for which they only wanted him to help them through their coming years of feebleness, love them a little, and hand them down gently to their graves.

Aunt Charity had meant to ask a great deal more, but even her heart failed, and she could only beg piteously for a little share of the boy, for a little claim upon his love and gratitude, for the sake of which they would lay their worldly all at his feet.

So hungry were they for love! They had begun to feel lost in this great wilderness of a world, and wanted a little child to lead them.

The boy all this time had been standing by his mother's side, holding her hand in his. There was something in the touch of her hand that inspired him; that roused the man in him; therefore, when Aunt Charity had hinted that he was a burden to his mother, he was as mad as a boy of his size could possibly be. But a glance at his mother's face changed his anger into pity. It was white and rigid, with eyes which seemed to strain at something out of sight; such a face as the sole survivor of a wreck might wear who, clinging to a slippery spar in mid-ocean, sees the top-sails of a ship lift themselves out of the water, watches her approach, feels a thrill of joy as if he were already safe upon her deck, and then strains his eyes after her, as, in spite of all his cries

and signals, she sails away again; for no one in all her company has noticed that little speck upon the sea.

Her hand tightened upon that of the boy, almost crushing it, and he, not minding the torture, gave her his other hand also. It made him feel more as if he were helping her.

Again the widow fought with God for her husband and lost him; fought for her boy and surrendered him; fled from home and love and plenty for his sake, and now again she must stand between him and his fortune, and for the sake of her promise, in which he had no part, must keep him back from all that the world holds dear.

But now another scene comes up before her, from that mysterious world to which, for the most part, we are all so blind.

On a mountain-side which overlooked a little lake, two young men were talking together. She heard one of them say to the other, "Go and sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and come and follow me." Then, as the other turned away with a disappointed and angry look, the vision changed, and she was wandering in the world of the dead. Among them was an old man walking all alone. The lines of care and covetousness were burned into his face; he looked poor and hungry, as if he were keeping an eternal fast, and as she looked with pity on him she recognized him. He was the same young man she had seen upon the mountain-side, and as he passed close to where she stood on his mournful, endless, weary way, she heard him moaning to himself: "Alas! alas! I might have been one of the apostles!"

The boy, as if with a sense of some strange supernatural power upon him, knelt at her feet and hid his face in her lap, which little movement called her back to the old life and world again.

And now at sight of the old couple who were standing by her, bathed in tears, she laid her hand on the boy's curly head, as if in a new act of consecration, and gave them this reply:

"You cannot have him; he is already given away."

The old farmer and his wife looked at her for a moment in wonder, then they looked at each other in despair. They sat themselves down and wept together; he, because of the answer of the widow; she, partly at the same words and partly in memory of a certain spot where was a handful of human dust that had never come to human life. It was the long-slumbering motherliness of her nature flaming up once more before it died in her childless soul, like a brightening in the western sky at the close of a sunless day.

For a long time they sat that night by the great fire in the great kitchen of the great house, more alone than ever, thinking sorrowfully of their wealth of land and moneys; and of their poverty of love; envying even the fisherman under the bluff, who was too poor to have but one glass-window in his cabin, but rich enough to have a child's face looking out through every pane. Suddenly the old man started to his feet exclaiming,

"The will of the Lord be done! But, at least, we can be his grandfather and grandmother."

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## 08 -- A LITTLE LEARNING IS A DANGEROUS THING

Mr. Alexander Layard was in trouble. He had been for a little more than a year a lively member of the Grand Trunk University, but his relations thereto had been rudely and suddenly disturbed, and he found himself, in company with several other active Sophomores, deprived of the fostering care of Alma Mater and thrust forth upon the chances of living by his wits in the midst of this cold unfriendly world. His misfortunes had happened as follows:

Having arrived at the dignity of Sophomore he was deeply impressed with its responsibilities, among others, that of properly initiating the Freshmen into the mysteries of college life. For this task he felt himself abundantly qualified, though he had failed in several other departments, and so thoroughly did he devote himself thereto as quite seriously to interfere with his other scholastic duties. Under his personal supervision as master of ceremonies, all the old and several new novitiate torments were inflicted on the Freshmen; never was a class more thoroughly initiated. Their seats in chapel had been salted; they had been smoked out; their backs had been chalked with the capital F; they had been glued down to their recitation benches, they had been locked into their rooms just before dinner; coal bunkers had been emptied into their beds and bureaus; strong brine had been poured over them out of an upper hall Window as they were returning one night from a meeting of the Freshman Club; several of them had been "put down" in barrels, that is, headed up therein, leaving only their own heads visible through openings in the heads of the barrels; others had been put under the pump to freshen them still further; and at last, a grand "rush" was attempted, in which, however, the Freshmen came off victorious.

It at once occurred to the judicial mind of Mr. Layard that this unlooked-for triumph would be fatal to the modesty of the new men; might, indeed, vitiate all the beneficial effects he had been so assiduously laboring to produce. It was bad for a Freshman to imagine himself equal in any respect to the upper classes in college, and as a means of checking this rising insubordination he proposed to make the rounds of their dormitories that very night, administer to every man a wholesome discipline, after the manner in which certain excellent mothers in former times were wont to correct their rebellious offspring, and then, upon evidence of gentleness and submission, put each boy to bed. In order that nothing might interfere with this parental treatment, which in so large a family was difficult in any case, all the professors who lodged in the college building were fastened into their rooms from the outside. Guards were posted at suitable places to prevent the Freshmen from rallying to one another's defense, and then one after another the children were taken in hand; their faces were washed and vigorously dried with papers and towels; they were undressed, gently if they were "good," forcibly if they were "naughty," and when in all respects they were ready for sleep, each man was put to bed, and tucked in tenderly by Mr. Layard himself, who, in cap, gown, and spectacles, assumed that motherly function. It was not long before the whole college was in an uproar; the faculty were powerless, being held in durance vile; the Seniors did not feel like compromising their respectability by taking sides with the oppressed; the Juniors had only just escaped from being Sophs themselves, and therefore took a deep interest in the progress of the sport; while the



Freshmen, poor fellows! being kept from rallying for each other's support by the wise strategy of their tormentors, after a few ineffectual attempts to rescue their beleaguered brethren, took refuge in their own rooms, and sought for safety by nailing up their doors; a measure which they had been prepared for ever since some of them had been half suffocated by a crowd of smokers who paid them an informal call, and who, the door not being opened with sufficient promptness, had opened a way for themselves to the severe detriment of locks and hinges. But Mr. Layard was a man of versatile genius, as will hereafter more fully appear; and on this occasion suggested a measure which was very effectual in overcoming the difficulties of the situation. A big, fat, heavy Freshman had been caught coming in from some owlish exercise; him they converted into a battering ram, which being vigorously swung by four stout fellows, one at each of his four extremities, was not long in opening a way through the doors, which were not after the fashion of Oxford "oaks," but only weak imitations thereof in paint and putty and pine.

It was past one o'clock in the morning before the last Freshman had been undressed and put to bed; but Mr. Alexander Layard and his friends being still in a wakeful mood, bethought themselves that it would finish out the night most fitly to treat some of his particular friends to a serenade. At once all the musical instruments the college afforded were brought out; flutes, fifes, violins, guitars, accordions, harmonicas, jew's-harps, trumpets, as well as several tin horns which had been provided on some former occasion for a similar musical compliment, to the Freshies. Mr. Layard, laying aside his character of house-mother, assumed the baton of the grand maestro, and proceeded to organize his orchestra on the very simple principle of taking each instrument from the hand of the man who could play it and giving it to one who could not, with the simple direction to get the largest possible effect out of it.

A large sheet-iron casing of a dilapidated and discarded furnace was mounted on the shoulders of two musicians by means of a long pole, while a third armed with a wicket bat played upon this rude but effective base-drum in a manner which left little to be desired.

With this band of music, making, as one would think, almost as much noise as that which played at the dedication of Nebuchadnezzar's great golden image, the favored ones were serenaded; and with so much zest and heartiness did they enter into their work, that the first streaks of a cold November morning were visible before the last number on the program had been performed.

It wanted now but a few minutes of morning prayers, a religious exercise so-called, which at the Grand Trunk University was celebrated at all seasons of the year at six o'clock A. M.

This exercise began with a noise in the college bell tower, whether of ringing or tolling depended upon the state of wakefulness the janitor had attained; then two hundred yawns, often mingled with growls and groans, as two hundred young men, future lawyers, judges, senators, presidents, and doctors of theology, reluctantly tumbled from bed to floor; then in a space of time so brief as to suggest the wise old proverb, "Procrastination is the thief of time," a universal clatter was heard, and two hundred human bipeds, in what might be called undress uniform, so universally though variously incomplete were the costumes, shuffled into the college chapel, and

with keen glances at the benches to make sure they were innocent of salt or carpet-tacks or bent pins or glue, every man disposed of himself for the further duties of religion.

The oil lamps lent a sickly glow as well as a sickly smell to the occasion, whose impressiveness was heightened by multitudinous coughs and sneezes from the young devotees, who having lain in bed a quarter of a minute too long had been constrained to appear in a manner somewhat premature.

Then came a few verses out of the Bible, read from the place at which the absent-minded professor chanced to open, followed by a form of words which, in the aggregate of several hundred mornings, were technically known as prayers; but very few of which, taken individually and separately, could have been described as "a prayer." The remainder of the exercise consisted of calls for special recitations, notices of lectures, occasional reprimands for college rascalities, and other such performance as was calculated to render "morning prayers" duly solemn and inspiring.

Of this particular morning two things were remembered: first the excessively crude appearance of Mr. Alexander Layard and several other members of the Sophomore class, whose fashion was that of a company of late and heavy sleepers roused from their innocent slumbers by the unwelcome morning bell; a phenomenon which astonished some of the spectators of their night's vigil at the thoroughness and quickness with which these extemporized artists had put on the character of Rip Van Wrinkle; second, the emptiness of the chapel platform; only the nervous little Frenchman, who held the chair of modern languages and who roomed out of college, being present. His own solitude grew alarming to himself as the sleepy ding-dong died away and no brother of the faculty put in his appearance. At last, with a shrug of his shoulders and a look of helpless embarrassment, he rose from his chair at the very foot of the row -- so much do those who teach the tongues of dead men outrank those who teach the tongues of the living -- and coming forward to the front of the platform he delivered the following in very Frenchy English:

"Shentlemens, ze pr-r-r-aying professo-r-r-s are all absent. You are excused!"

The next thing after morning prayers was the morning recitation. This exercise the young men had hoped to escape; but with the help of the little Frenchman, who at once had gone in quest of his absent brethren, those much-abused gentlemen were released from their captivity, and all appeared in time to hear the usual recitations; that is, to hear what there was of them, and to commence their detective clue with a list of the men who knew absolutely nothing of their lessons.

Alas for Mr. Alexander Layard and his band! Every one of them was found out, and every one of them was rusticated for the penal term of one year.

The way of transgressors may be very amusing both to themselves and others, but that does not prevent it from being hard. Here was a young man out of house and home, out of money, out of credit, out of favor with his father whom he feared so much that he dared not go home and face his righteous wrath; out of every thing except the ready wit with which nature had endowed him and the boundless impudence which he had acquired. The problem was how to

support himself for a year on this limited capital, and live in such a manner as not finally to alienate himself from his father, whose anger he doubted not would, by the end of his rustication, be sufficiently cooled to give him another chance at college learning.

After a careful survey of the situation he resolved to try his fortune in the schoolmaster's profession, and at once set off on foot to find some rustic region where there was civilization enough to call for teachers, but not so much as to submit their literary acquirements to a very severe examination. It was on this important errand that Mr. Alexander Layard found himself one evening at the house of the chief director of public-schools, in the township of Bluffton, who was no other than our old and worthy friend, Mr. Zachariah Goodsmith.

The first interview between these two laborers in the cause of popular education was a marked and memorable event. To the mind of Goody Zach a university, and more especially the Grand Trunk University, was the headquarters and focus of all earthly wisdom; any favored mortal who had been admitted to a share of its mysteries and honors was, next to a minister or a member of Congress, an object of admiration and wonder; and now here was a "college-larnt chap a offerin' to teach in the little school-house at the Bluff!" "What a remarkable piece of good fortune!

The candidate was dignified and reserved at first, but seeing what a profound impression he was making upon the simple mind of the chief director he thought fit to explain the cause of his unlooked-for advent in that unlearned locality. Like too many other young gentlemen at college he had allowed his devotion to learning to interfere with his health; he had been studying too hard, -- accompanying this remark with a little sigh, and passing his hand slowly upward over his handsome forehead, as if to quiet his too active brain. His anxious parents, his physician, his pastor, and the president of the university had all concurred in urging him to forego for a year his too ardent pursuit of learning; and with this view he had sought the quiet and healthful region of Bluffton, where, he had understood, there was a vacancy in the office of Principal of the High-school.

"At some distance from this place," continued our young friend, "I learned that your fellow-citizens had invested you with the honorable and responsible office of Chief Director of Public Instruction for this township, and as I wish for some kind of scholastic employment to console me for my year of absence from the halls of higher learning, I have called to offer you my services, with the hope that together we may achieve a career of usefulness to the rising generation of this beautiful and rural town."

Mr. Zachariah Goodsmith felt himself about an inch and a half taller after listening to this little speech. Here was a young man who was evidently wise beyond his years. So humble and sensible too; so willing to work; and, as his own story plainly showed, so obedient to his parents and dutiful to his betters. This was the man of all others to teach the Bluffton High-school. True, it was the first time that little bunch of boys and girls had ever been called a "high" school; but now that it was to have a teacher -- I beg pardon, a principal -- fresh from the Grand Trunk University, it could be nothing else.

Why shouldn't a school be named for its instructor as well as for its pupils?

After settling the business terms, the next thing was to examine the candidate as to his literary qualifications; but, to Mr. Layard's great relief, this formality was waived, partly in deference to the high position of the candidate in the world of letters, and partly because neither Mr. Goodsmith nor his two brother directors were willing to undertake that delicate duty.

In a few days the following document, written in a highly ornamental hand, which contrasted oddly enough with the cramped and crabbed signatures, was nailed to the school-house door:

#### BLUFFTON ACADEMY

On the Monday after Thanksgiving, Professor Alexander Layard, late of the Grand Trunk University, will open the Winter term of the above-named institution. In addition to the usual course of instruction Professor Layard will be happy to form classes in the Greek and Latin Languages, Algebra, Geometry, Political Economy, Rhetoric, and Mental and Moral Philosophy.

For further particulars patrons may apply to the Honorable Board of Directors of Public Instruction.

Signed,  
Zachariah Goodsmith,  
Chief Director.  
Hans Buhlderschutzen,  
1st Associate Director.  
Michael O'Keefe,  
2d Associate Director.

Love is both cunning and persistent. It is the love element in religion from which must have come that old doctrine of the inferential school of theology called the Perseverance of the Saints.

If any one really falls in love with God why should it not be for life just as well as any other true love?

Ever after Goody Zach and Aunt Charity had fallen in love with Johnny Leighton, and had settled into the places of grandfather and grandmother to him, their whole hearts and lives centered in the boy. He was by virtue of this adoption only one degree removed from them, and their love made so light of that as to leave them a very precious sense of possession in him. Every kind of strategy was used to bring him to the farm as often and keep him as long as possible; and now here was the very best kind of a reason why he should come and stay all Winter. What teacher at Lakeside could compare with Professor Alexander Layard? Besides, that gentleman was to be a member of the Goodsmith household, and if Johnny could only come and travel the road to learning hand in hand, as it were, with this young Athenian, not only for the six hours of the schoolday but also to bask in the sunshine of his constant presence, and absorb the unconscious wisdom which might be expected to flow forth continually from his conversation and manners, it was a thing greatly to be desired. Those two old people talked the plan over

together, all the while keeping up the pretense that it was simply for Johnny's good, but all the while conscious in their guilty hearts that what they wanted most of all was to have their idol where they could worship him to better advantage.

The professor had begged to be allowed to take up his residence in the Goodsmith mansion at once, in order -- so he said -- to enjoy the healthy atmosphere and quiet life at the Bluff for a few days before entering upon the duties of the academic term -- he omitted to state that he was quite out of money, and dared not send to his father for more -- and so wisely did he appeal to the sympathy and helpfulness of Aunt Charity that she consented at once to "take him in and do for him" in place of his mother.

The next step was to bring the boy to the farm in order that he might make the acquaintance of the new teacher; for whom he at once conceived the greatest admiration.

All the young fellows at Lakeside were common; here was a gentleman. All his teachers had been plodders; here was a genius.

The boy was just far enough along toward manhood to be fascinated by this brilliant youth, though all these abilities in a full aged man would have failed to make much impression on him. It was a glimpse of power and glory a great deal nearer to him than ever he had seen it before.

People look at the stars calmly enough, great worlds though they be, but if a little spluttering meteor happens to come into their horizon they feel their flesh creep and their hair rise, and long years afterward speak of it to their grandchildren as the most remarkable sight they ever saw.

One evening at the farm, after the apples and cider had been duly considered, Goody Zach requested his learned young friend to give his views concerning the boy, and state what, in his opinion, had better be done with him.

With a full sense of the dignity of his position, the fledgling school-master allowed himself to lapse into a brown study; tipped back in his chair, put both his thumbs into the armholes of his vest, and, after due meditation, opened his mind as follows:

"That boy must have remarkably good blood in him." Then after a long pause to let this delicate compliment tickle Aunt Charity's family pride, he resumed:

"Our young friend here has great talents in two different directions; first, he has the gifts of a scholar, and might become a learned man; second, he has great activity. It is therefore evident that a career should be marked out for him which would give full play to his abilities in both these two directions.

"What shall it be? The law? No; law is too common. Or medicine? No; medicine is too limited in its scope. A man never can become truly great by giving his whole life to things small enough to go into a coffin.

"Theology? N-n-o-o" -- with a hesitating glance at the two old people to see if they were likely to be displeased -- "no! Theology is on the decline. The advanced views of leading thinkers are bringing about a new era in what is called religion. Microscopes and telescopes are taking the place of catechisms and Bibles." Then rising to his full height -- Mr. Layard had a splendid figure for a young man of twenty, and he knew it -- he concluded thus:

"But there is a profession whose field is as wide as the world; grand, exciting, useful; giving full play to all the powers both of body and mind. Mr. and Mrs. Goodsmith, you have done me the honor to ask my advice. I give it. Send that boy to the Grand Trunk University, to become, like myself, a civil engineer."

"What is that?" asked Goody, whose only notion of an engineer was of a greasy-looking man he had seen in the cab of a locomotive at a railway station.

"A civil engineer," said the professor, "is a man who studies the laws and wields the forces of the material world; the nearest possible approach to creation! True, we civil engineers can not make new worlds, but we can charge the face of the old one. Both land and sea are ours. We bore the earth for water; we go down into it for iron and coal; we build our iron roads, and sweep over it drawn by horses which feed on fire; we tunnel its mountains, span its rivers with bridges, stretch the wires of the telegraph over it and talk by lightning; build all manner of vast structures on it; and compass all seas with ships and steamers. Three of the elements -- earth, water, fire -- belong to us, and it only remains for us to capture the air and teach men how to fly, and we have possessed the whole world."

Goody Zach was satisfied. His adopted grandson would certainly find room for his talents in such a grand profession. Aunt Charity was delighted; any thing that had power in it always pleased her. Master Johnny was overwhelmed. It was too good to be true. As for Mr. Alexander Layard, he contemplated the effect of his remarks in the spirit of that other hero; *Veni! Vidi! Vici!*

So grave and brilliant a proposal, and from such a distinguished source, could not fail to make a deep impression upon the simple minds of Goody Zach and his wife. To them a college was near the summit of all earthly glory; and, therefore, just the place for their hopeful heir. They were rich, and could afford to send him; and as for the boy himself there was no doubt but he would distinguish himself if he only had a chance. About the civil engineering they had some few misgivings on account of some things they had heard his mother say; but, at any rate, she could not object to giving her son the advantages of college learning when it was to be had, so far as she was concerned, for nothing.

She did not object; regarding it as the way the Lord had opened for training his future servant for his work. She gave her consent at once; and, accordingly, when the Bluffton Academy opened its first and only session, among the two dozen small fit Master John Leighton shone conspicuous. He was the only tidy handsome scholar in the whole school, as well as the only one who could manage a Third Reader or do a sum in the Rule of Three. Nevertheless, classes were formed in algebra, geometry, the Latin language, political economy, rhetoric, and

mental and moral philosophy; the first three being composed solely of Master Leighton; the others of the entire academy; to whom Professor Layard gave occasional lectures in each of the above-named departments of learning, according as circumstances opened the way.

Thus, when Snyder Buhlderschutzen and Paddy O'Keefe got into a quarrel over a broken jackknife, which the former had bought of the latter "sight unseen," and in which the little Irishman got the better of the little Dutchman, Professor Layard gave a lecture on The Rights of Property; laying down the broadest free trade doctrines, and concluding with this sound advice: "Always stick" to your bargain."

Again, when big Tim O'Shaughnessy pounded little Joe Mullins, he lectured on Habeas Corpus; which he defined as the right of a little chap to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, in spite of the opinions of any big fellow to the contrary;" and such a deep impression did he make on the minds of his class that whoever afterwards ventured to seek a quarrel with any one smaller than himself was sure to have the concluding sentence of that lecture quoted to him; which the Professor had chalked on the blackboard as the sum and substance of Habeas corpus, thus:

"Take One Of Your Size."

Among the girls was a little vixen who had a wonderful ingenuity in inventing bad nicknames, with which she tormented every body round her. This called out a lecture to the rhetoric class on Figurative Language, in which he so far surpassed the little torment as to shame her out of her vicious habit altogether.

The class in moral philosophy was also frequently called and lectured; swearing, lying, and fighting being mournfully prevalent; and as for mental philosophy, was not the academy itself, from Monday morning till Saturday night, or Friday night every other week, one long example in intellectual science? So every thing promised in the prospectus of the Bluffton Academy was performed to the letter. Even the Greek language did not fail of a representative, to-wit the Professor himself; who, by way of keeping up his own scanty knowledge of that classic tongue, as well as for moral effect on the academy, used to pronounce some passages from Homer or Xenophon in their hearing almost every day, to their no small wonder and admiration.

As a disciplinarian Professor Layard never had his equal in that school. He seemed to have an instinct for detecting mischief almost before it was done. He could tell by the look of a boy that he had just placed a bent pin for his neighbor to sit down on when he came back from his recitation. He picked out at a glance the miscreant who had climbed the roof one morning before school-time and stuffed the chimney-top with snow, whereby the academy was likely to be smoked out; and him he sent to mount the roof again to dig out the snow. When the luckless youth was in good position the Professor ordered a recess, and giving a sly wink to the boys as they went out, he caused the offender to be so terribly pelted with snowballs as effectually to put a stop to that sort of mischief.

But of all his varied talents and knowledges Professor Layard's forte was theology. As already seen he held "advanced views." Sometime in his seventeenth year he stumbled upon this remark of a leading thinker: "One soul is a measure of all souls; as a capillary column of water balances the sea."

Thenceforth Mr. Alexander Layard was a philosopher. He drew this corollary from the above proposition:

"Things are to me, what I think of them." Having thus established himself at the center of his own universe he proceeded to pass his judgment on every thing that came into it; and, in the intervals of his other follies, devoted himself to advocating all sorts of theological and political reforms.

There was nothing in his world he did not criticize -- except himself. He had opinions on all subjects which he called "original." He gave himself credit for great candor; saying, "I hold myself ready to believe any thing that is reasonable."

Of course, one of the first questions for this youthful philosopher to settle was the exact value of the Bible as a book of religion. He read a little of it, not too much, lest it should bias his judgment -- which accorded well with his habits in respect to other books -- and then set his capillary column to balance this sea.

The first point which aroused his suspicions as to the correctness of that book was the fact that, according to its chronology, this earth is only about six thousand years old. He had fallen in with the work of an eminent geologist which stated two facts; first, that the average rate of accumulation of vegetable soils is about one inch in a hundred years; second, there are vegetable soils sixteen feet deep. At once our philosopher demonstrated, by the rule of three, that Moses, in his work on Genesis, was in error by at least thirteen thousand years; whereupon he dismissed both the Old and New Testament as utterly unreliable.

When he entered as Freshman at the Grand Trunk University, he found himself required to attend prayers in chapel every day, and two Church services on Sunday. This he regarded as an infringement on his liberty of conscience, and stated his objections to the Faculty. Here is the closing sentence of his letter:

"I do not deny that, for the average mind with the customary training, such exercises may be profitable; but for myself I have found them otherwise; therefore I must claim, in accordance with my duty to my own candid judgment as well as my right as an American citizen, to whom liberty of conscience is guaranteed by the constitution, to be permanently excused from attendance upon any so-called 'religious service' during my connection with this university."

Much to his disgust, no notice was taken of his communication, and for fear of the bad effects of too many marks of absence he yielded an outward obedience to college order, though he did not fail to protest against college tyranny.



To one who has not tried it it is astonishing at what a rate, and to what an extent, one can get on in theology along the line marked out by Mr. Alexander Layard. Three years of experience as a religious critic, these three years being from seventeen to twenty, are enough to make a young man the master of the whole subject -- in his own estimation; which, according to Mr. Emerson's formula above quoted, answers every purpose.

Professor Layard had not mentioned Theology in the prospectus of the Bluffton Academy; but, like other great reformers in that department, he was always on the alert for malting converts. Johnny Leighton was the only lad in the academy whom he judged to be able to grasp his advanced ideas, and therefore he resolved to take him under his especial tutelage in religion as well as in mathematics and Latin; with the high ambition of testing the effect of his doctrines by planting them in the soil of a mind as yet unbiased by the old erroneous systems.

Poor Johnny! What would his mother say if she knew it?

\* \* \* \* \*

## 09 -- THE PORTRAIT

Among the treasures that Mrs. Leighton had saved from the ruins of her Eastern home was a beautiful life-size portrait of her husband, which she had cut out of its frame and stowed away in the one small portmanteau which held the sum total of the earthly goods belonging to the widow and her son.

In the days of their comparative prosperity in Poverty Lane a miserable wreck of a man stumbled into the store one afternoon, bearing on his haggard face and in his wasted form the marks of disease and sin. It was evident he had accomplished a long and terrible descent to reach his present level, -- such a strange proclivity for falling as we seem to have; a family trait, no doubt -- and having reached the status of a besotted, homeless, penniless, vagabond, in the last stages of consumption, brought on by dissipation and exposure, he was a walking demonstration of human depravity. As to his body, he was half dead already; as to his mind, he had been crazed by repeated horrors of delirium tremens; and as to his soul, he had abandoned all hope long ago. His guardian angel must have wept herself blind over him, if the angels did not have better eyes than we do; and she did a good thing for him when she led him to the shop where John Mark Leighton sold dry goods, groceries, and notions.

"I am out of money; but for the love of God give me a gill of rum," was the salutation of the wanderer.

"We don't sell liquor," was the reply; "but is there nothing else we can do for you, for the love of God?"

The man stared, it was the first gentle word that had fallen on his dull ears for many a day. Then, with a different voice, which told of good breeding and the former manners of a gentleman, he said:

"If I could find any one who loved God well enough to give me, for his sake, a quiet corner in which, to rest, and die; and a promise not to bury me quite like a pauper, it is all I would ask of this world I have done so much to disgrace."

The man was evidently in earnest; beyond all question he had but a few days to live, and the merchant, bethinking himself that here was a rare opportunity of making an investment, the account of which would be speedily borne in person to the Proprietor whose steward he held himself to be, took the stranger in, gave him a little room in his own house to die in, and a comfortable bed to die on; and the poor man, after a long session in the bath, and with clean linen in place of that which Mrs. Leighton had burned, lay down to take what rest he could before beginning what, as he supposed, awaited him; namely, the endless and fruitless labors of a lost soul.

When his host came in to know if there were not still something more he could do for him, for the love of God, he answered:

"Nothing that human hands can do. I am clean once more. Thank God for that. I could not bear the thoughts of being buried with a foul body, even though there is such a miserable soul in it. I used to be a gentleman, and it is a greater favor than I can tell you to let me start for perdition from a white bed, and from under a Christian roof, instead of from some ditch or stable, as I had expected."

Then he slept; slept so long that they thought he would sleep his life away; but after nearly thirty-six hours he opened his eyes and saw his benefactor standing over him with a look so kind and brotherly that for an instant he was in a confused state of surprise and joy.

"Hark! Don't expose me! You are good and kind. They have brought me to the wrong place; I belong down below. But let me stay! Oh let me stay! and I'll promise not to disgrace you any more. Don't you remember? You died for us poor people once!"

Then he began to study the face that bent over him to see if he could find any marks of the thorns; and took up the hand that was tenderly laid on his forehead, and looked in the palm for the Print of the nail. Failing to find it he awoke more fully, and perceiving that he was not in heaven after all, and that it was not Jesus Christ who was bending over him, but that he had only got back again into this world of sin and sorrow, he gave a long deep sigh as if his heart would break, and said, mournfully, almost bitterly:

"Another hope gone -- like all the rest."

Then his memory awoke, and as the visions of his long slumber came back to his mind, his face lighted up again; for in his sleep he had heard a voice which he had forgotten years ago; a voice of a plain, earnest man, pleading with a great multitude of people, of which he was one, to bring all their sins with them and come to the Savior. They were assembled in a forest with a circle of white tents around them. It was in the night, and lamps were hanging from the trees, which in his dream he thought to be stars, hung low. There were lights in the tents also, which

shone through the canvas, and in his dream he had taken them for tabernacles built of the material they use in the New Jerusalem; "fine gold, like unto clear glass."

The preacher had been telling them, among other things, the story of the Transfiguration; and saying that this glorious face and figure of the Son of God was a portrait, or statue, placed in the Bible gallery to show redeemed sinners the pattern of what they might sometime hope to be. He remembered how he had knelt beside a great rock, of which they had made a rude altar under the trees, and how the minister, -- they said his name was Hooper, -- had knelt and prayed by his side; and how a strange sense of joy and rest had sprung up in his soul as, for the first time in his life, he had opened his lips in prayer. "God be merciful to me a sinner," was the prayer he had uttered, he could remember the whole of it perfectly.

It was years and years ago. In those years had first sprung up ambition, then came success and praise and flattery; then pride; then dissipation; then poverty; then degradation; till there was only just enough humanity left of him so that the angels and the devils did not altogether forget him; mankind had erased his name from their books a great while ago.

It was a merciful dream, and along its path came a blessing, like the light and warmth and welcome that stream out into the darkness from a cottage doorway, suddenly opened after nightfall, at the sound of a long-forgotten voice at the garden gate.

Rest and care, and most of all, love brought back to the poor dying man a fitful glow of life; and during those days while his host became his teacher in the mysteries of grace, he asked for canvas and brushes and colors; and when they heard that he had once been an artist, and that his hand, had been thought skillful almost to magic, Mrs. Leighton insisted on having his wish gratified, which was to paint the portrait of the man who had dragged him out of the grave of despair and pointed out to him the resurrection and the life. His list of requisites for his work included the item of gold color. What he could want of that on a sober portrait was more than the woman could imagine but she followed his directions religiously, and brought him the coveted implements of his art, gold color and all.

When he sat up before the old-fashioned high-backed arm-chair which served him for an easel and took his palette on his left hand and a brush in his right his eye lighted up with a strange fire; his nerves, which had been shattered and trembling, became firm and steady, and with bold and rapid strokes he traced the outline of the noble head and the broad shoulders of him whom he had once mistaken for the Son of man.

Day after day he worked at his task; every day more eagerly because his strength gave out sooner; but at last the picture was finished, and with his last touch to the canvas the painter fell to the floor like one dead. They lifted him tenderly, and composed his body as people are wont to do at such times; but all at once he sprang up, called for his brushes and his palette and his canvas, and when they were brought he rapidly traced in the margin the words, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

Then filling his brush with the color of gold he encircled the face with an aureole or "glory," as the old painters used to call it, whereby they were wont to distinguish the heads of

saints from those of common people. It was drawn with a steady hand, and in so nearly an exact circle that it seemed almost a miracle. Then he gave his work one last, long look, as if it were a real and not a painted face, pressed his white lips to it reverently, and gave it his benediction thus:

"A dying beggar's blessing on thee! Amen!" The next instant he was dead. His funeral was a very small one, but it was not a pauper's funeral. The half dozen people who in every village always go to all funerals just because they are funerals looked at him as he lay in his decent shroud and coffin, and went away wondering at the look of repose which was frozen into the clay. They need not have wondered, though, if they had only believed that the Son of God actually meant what he said when he invited the tired ones to come and find rest in him. Here was a soul and body overburdened with its load of sin, yoked up with sorrow, and stumbling through the years under its hardness and heaviness; and if the Son of God was really in earnest with us, and not talking mere rhetoric, this was just the kind of people he meant in his invitation in The Sermon on the Mount. This heavy-laden one had come to the Burden Bearer and exchanged his sin for pardon, his fear for faith, his death for life. No wonder the poor tired vagabond felt rested by it; rested so perfectly and so sweetly that the dead face showed the marks of it through the seams and mildews which it had taken on during twenty miserable years.

If the dying artist had not drawn that saintly circle round the face, Mrs. Leighton would have hung the portrait in her little parlor, for it was as if the man himself had suddenly looked out of the canvas. The expression was inexpressible in words. If its complexion had been dark it would have been taken for a good Samaritan even without the accessories of a waylaid and wounded Jew, a saddled ass, and sundry bottles of oil and wine. The fact was, the painter had caught the very look which was on his benefactor's face as he bent over the beggar just awakening from his long and heavy slumber, and which had, at first, misled the poor man into the thought that he was dead, and that by some mistake he had been brought to heaven; where the Savior was bending compassionately over him and trying to think of some reason for letting him stay. But the glory line about the face was sure to lead to curious questioning on the part of all the simple folk who might see it, and for this reason she kept the portrait in their own private room.

After a while it became more than a picture to her, almost a presence; and when her husband was away the wife would pay it frequent visits; study its expression, which after a while, as she thought, began to change according to the changing feelings and fortunes of her absent idol. If he were sick she saw it in the portrait, and then she would bring her work and sit beside it and eagerly watch for signs of recovery; if something had greatly pleased or prospered him in his journey she saw it in the eyes that looked out of the canvas almost as plainly as she did in his own eyes when he came home and told her the good news. Sometimes as she studied it earnestly she caught a sad, half-reproving look which spoke of some great loss in bygone years; some great opportunity wasted, it might have been, whose memory thus haunted the man and harrowed up the soul of the woman; for, at such times, she would kneel before the picture with clasped hands as if it were some one whom she had wronged, and whose pardon she implored, not with words, indeed, but with bitter, penitent tears.

After her husband died, and her wrath at Heaven for taking him had been a little appeased, the picture became a shrine; and, before she learned to pray to the Lord, she used to pray before the picture as good Catholics do before the pictures of their patron saints; and even after, though she no longer tried to make her husband her intercessor, having found a better Advocate. Still she did not wholly lose her sense of a loving, helpful presence, which often seemed to look upon her tenderly out of those deep blue eyes; and, more than this, she used to watch the portrait for signs of present or coming good or evil either to herself or her son.

It is not the business of this story to explain these singular relations between objects animate and inanimate, but the writer has known at least one other picture and one other woman that had this same mysterious faculty between them; therefore he is not inclined to doubt the virtues of John Mark Leighton's portrait, when studied by the widow's worshipful eyes.

In her Western home, given her through a kind providence, in which Elder Hooper's had been the chief visible hand, the picture hung where it was the first object that caught her waking eyes; and sometimes, with the rising sun looking in at the East window, and pouring its flood of light full upon that wonderful face, it seemed rather the portrait of some angel than of one of our own mortal race. The days that had this beginning were good days; but if there seemed to be a cloud over the face, as sometimes happened, she was accustomed to pray right earnestly for extra grace and strength, feeling certain that both would soon be needed.

One morning, about a month after Johnny entered on his literary career, when she awoke she was shocked at the strange expression in the portrait, as if it were oppressed with anxiety over some impending evil. She sprang out of bed, rushed to the picture and gazed till her eyes were blind with tears, to fathom the meaning of this mournful mystery. "Something must be wrong with his son," she said. "Nothing else could make him wear such a face."

With all haste she began to make preparations for a visit to the farm; but before herself and her house and her conveyance were all in readiness the sunny countenance of Mr. Zachariah Goodsmith beamed in upon her, putting half her troubles to flight by assuring her of Master Johnny's excellent health, and enlarging with grandfatherly pride on his wonderful progress in knowledge under the never-to-be-sufficiently-praised Professor Layard. Then she thought she had mistaken the meaning of the portrait, and excusing herself for a moment she went and studied it again; but it had not changed; the look of anxiety was there still. What could it mean?

Since the health of the boy was sound, and his progress in his books was satisfactory, if there was any thing wrong with him it must be with his conduct, or, still worse, with his deeper spiritual nature; but of his behavior Goody Zach spoke in high praise, even going so far as to remark that Johnny was "not quite so mischievous as he used to be." The next point was one on which this good man might not be able to enlighten her; but, remembering how her son had exhausted his dictionary in praising his instructor, she thought it well to inquire more minutely into the kind of influence that young man was exercising over him.

Mr. Layard had not opened his mind at large to the two old people concerning his "advanced views," lest their deep-seated prejudices in favor of orthodox religion might be turned against himself; but, as has already appeared, he had dropped sundry remarks which showed his

want of confidence in the antiquated notions of the prophets and apostles and his lofty outreach after "the absolute," "the infinite," and "the unknown and unknowable force." Thus it was that when the widow pressed her inquiries closely with respect to the religious status of the new schoolmaster, his chief director was forced to admit that he did talk "a leetle different" from the preachers he had heard in his younger days; "but that must be owin' to his bein' a college-larnt man."

At once the widow's resolution was taken. She would bring both teacher and pupil together under her own eye, when there were no other influences about them, and study the problem for herself. The coming Saturday would be a holiday at the Bluffton Academy, and she exacted a promise from her good-natured kinsman to send the two young people to visit her on that day, expressly stipulating that no one else was to come with them. Goody thought of the risk there would be in such an arrangement to his pair of fat old horses, but seeing the widow so much in earnest he agreed; took a verbal message to Johnny and a courteous note of invitation to Mr. Layard; beyond which he was to say absolutely nothing on the subject of the proposed visit.

It was one of Mr. Layard's chief accomplishments to make himself agreeable to ladies; not so much to ladies of his own age -- any nice young fellow could do that -- but to elderly and sedate ladies, whose experience and culture had given them great judgment in human nature. For a young scapegrace like himself to gain the approbation of such persons was a standing joke against them which afforded him no little amusement. He would attend a sewing society, for instance, or any other such dignified social assembly, where he was not personally known, and afterwards chuckle over his success in duping pious old grandmothers by means of his talents "in character," as he termed it. He had frequently gotten himself up as a devout young gentleman, with poetic turn of mind, and played his part with remarkable success. He had even taken the pains to memorize a number of hymns and semi-religious sonnets, and a good many passages of Scripture, all of which he used on such occasions with most edifying effect. This task was an easy one; for he was blessed with a quick and retentive memory, whereby he had often saved himself from disgrace in his classes by means of hurried glances at his text-books after the bell had rung for recitation, or even while another man was reciting.

He had heard not a little of the distinguished dignity and beauty of Mrs. Leighton, and, on receiving her courteous note, he inwardly resolved to lay himself out to gain her confidence and admiration; to which purpose nothing seemed so well suited as his "character" religion. True, his pupil might be surprised at it, but it would only increase the lad's admiration for his versatile and brilliant master.

He hadn't brought the boy very far along, as yet, in the way he should not go, though he had given him some rudimentary principles to think upon; for example, the absolute moral independence of mind; the normal function of doubt as the only philosophical initial attitude of the human intellect toward all statements or doctrines, from whatever source; observation the final test of apparent truth; submission to the universal and impersonal reign of law as the ultimate form of the religious idea.

But Johnny hated preachers and preaching, even the preaching of "advanced views" by such an eminent expounder as Professor Layard, which accounted for the slow progress of that

gentleman's experiment of testing his doctrines on a healthy intellect not preoccupied with religious superstition. The boy's mind answered the requirements well enough, but he did not take to theology. They indeed laughed together over the slow sermons in the little meeting-house at the cross-roads, where Johnny attended by command of his mother, and his master in the capacity of philosopher and critic; and the boy's hatred of ministers the master regarded as a very hopeful sign, -- a promise of great liberality in future years. As for the pupil, he was so fully and blindly a worshiper of his brilliant teacher that even his theology, or his "egotheism," as it should properly be called, was already beginning to make an impression on him.

On the appointed Saturday Goody Zach, with sore misgivings, harnessed his dear old nags into his heaviest farm-wagon, hid the whip, and with repeated injunctions to "drive slow and not worry 'em," he sent the two prodigies off together. The road was straight for half a mile, and he watched the team as it jogged along with as much steadiness as if himself and Aunt Charity had been behind them; but when he lost sight of them behind a grove of black jacks at a turn of the road he gave a deep sigh, as if he feared his dear old servants would miss and mourn their old master; and so, indeed, they did; for the journey they were used to make in five hours they accomplished that day in two.

Once out of sight, Mr. Layard cut a lively switch, and, standing up in the wagon, which Goody had sent them in, with the hope that its terrible bumping would prevent fast driving, he assumed the character of driver of an English stage-coach on one of the fast mail lines; while Johnny, for want of a horn, enlivened the journey with spirited tattoos on the dash-board, and several zoological concerts, in which he imitated with wonderful accuracy every loud-voiced bird and beast he knew of, from the crow of a barn-yard cock to the gasping shriek of Hans Buhlderschutzen's mule.

To state the case mildly, these two young persons succeeded in having a good time.

It was with round-eyed wonder that the boy beheld the vivacious coachman suddenly transformed into the likeness of an embryo parson as he proudly introduced him to his mother as "My professor." The day passed pleasantly enough; Mrs. Leighton, with her womanly tact, seeking to put the stranger perfectly at ease, as if such an effort could ever be necessary on behalf of Mr. Alexander Layard; and he all the while believing himself to be making rapid progress in her good graces. He had been a little cautious at first lest she might have heard of his pretensions as a civil engineer, in which case it would not be quite appropriate to be a very devout young man; but finding no traces of such knowledge in her conversation he gave himself up to his "character" with the utmost assurance, as being the shortest and surest road to the widow's admiration and esteem.

At first that lady was really happy to find the tutor of her son such a model, both in manners and morals. She had not been long in discovering that Johnny was completely carried away captive by him, and as she watched them without seeming to do so, she began to suspect that his captivity was a very dangerous one; though just where the danger lay she was not able to decide. Therefore she sought to draw out the young man, and encourage him to open his whole heart and mind for her inspection, taking mental note of his every word and glance and tone.

A lunch had been set out for the two hungry travelers immediately on their arrival and, after a late dinner or early supper, all preparations for which had been made in advance, so as to leave the hostess all the time possible for the solving of her problem, they were to take their departure.

As the time drew near Mr. Layard, finding how deep an impression his religious discourse was making, quite exhausted his stock of sacred poetry, brought forth every word of Scripture he could think of, and then, as she seemed to be more and more edified, and continued the same line of conversation, he began to doubt whether he were not overdoing his "character," the resources of which were now well-nigh exhausted. He therefore sought to turn the talk into a more worldly channel, but as often as he led away from the original topic his hostess brought him back to it again, with a naturalness and aptness which would have been charming if it had not been embarrassing. Then she began to ask for his views on certain matters of religious experience, and Mr. Layard, for fear of getting out of his "character," wasted into personal professions of grace and piety which Johnny, who had till then taken little interest in the conversation, heard with evident amazement. But when his teacher began to tell his experience, after the manner he had once heard in a classmeeting, the stock phrases of which he had treasured up along with the hymns, etc., the boy's tell-tale face began to gather blackness, even against his master, who was so shamefully deceiving his mother.

Then she saw it all. Here was genius, impudence, youth, power; just the combination to take firmest hold of such a boy as Johnny. And this fellow who held him fast, body, mind, and soul, was capable of deliberate impiety.

At first he had signaled to the boy "Keep quiet; we will have some sport out of this." Then he looked again as if to say, "For pity's sake, don't expose me." Then his eyes said, "Don't be angry; I mean no harm by it." Next they indicated, "Hang it! I wish I were out of this." And finally they implored, "Help! make some diversion, or I shall be disgraced."

The mother saw and read every glance, though she seemed to be in the most calm and introspective frame of mind in view of the gracious discourse of Mr. Layard. Here then was the danger of which she had been warned. This brilliant, conscienceless hypocrite had both the power and opportunity of ruining her son. What should she do? To take the boy away from him and so break his toils by force would only leave the meshes of mischief more tightly tied. To try argument with her son would avail nothing; such hero-worship does not have its roots in reason; to appeal to his captor to release him would be asking an impossibility; there seemed to be only one way to deliver her darling from the snare of this fowler; namely, to push him on with his hypocrisy till one of two results should be reached: either he would break down in real horror and penitence in view of his wickedness, in which case she might save them both, or he would collapse through want of power in his conception of the "character," in which case he would be disgraced and become weak, in Johnny's eyes, like any other man.

As she left the room for a moment, the quasi devotee to piety breathed freer, but when she returned she held a picture in her arms, and, placing it where the afternoon sun shone full upon it she invited Mr. Layard to sit down before it, study it carefully, and be prepared to give her his opinion of it, while she made ready the dinner for her guests.



Layard was now himself a captive. His first glance at the portrait showed him it was no common piece of work. The aureole round it led him to think it a religious picture, but when he asked Johnny who it was the lad answered, reverently: "That is my father in heaven."

There was something like a reproof, also, in the voice of the lad; for, to him, the portrait of his father was a sacred thing; indeed, his reverence for his father, his love for his mother, and a certain pride of honesty which he had inherited from them both, comprised, at this time, the sum total of Johnny's religion.

There was nothing now for Mr. Layard to do but study the portrait with a view to further distinguishing himself in the eyes of his hostess and pupil as an art critic. Indeed, this was one of the points upon which he prided himself. He had once fallen in with a strolling painter at a wretched tavern, from whose half-drunken discourse he had picked up a few professional phrases. Besides, at the Grand Trunk University there was a college of drawing, and another college of painting, and another college of sculpture and modeling, in which latter he had often amused himself by making statuette caricatures of some of the faculty and students in clay, and setting them up for objects of general merriment. Sometimes he would attach to them such names as "Julius Caesar," "Socrates," "Croesus," "Falstaff," or some other classic or dramatic title; in each instance the unlikeness of the original to the historic character furnishing the point to the jest.

But here was a picture which seemed to criticize him. Those eyes startled him, first by their beauty, then by their power, then by something supernatural, that seemed to look out through them. It was as if this absent husband and father had suddenly come back from glory and detected him in his attempt at deceiving his wife and making an atheist of his son. He was almost frightened; could not take his eyes off those eyes; though they grew intensely terrible to him. His conscience, that element of his nature which thus far had given but little account of itself, was awakening. He was afraid first of the picture, then of himself.

"The father of your pupil, here," said the widow, as she returned to the little parlor and took note of the young man's helpless wonder. Then she took up the portrait and carried it out; but when Mr. Layard was called to his place at table the portrait hung on the wall, where he had the dead father and the living mother of his pupil both before him.

"You will say grace, Mr. Layard," said the widow, in a clear, calm voice, which sounded almost like a command.

His "character" required it, and he recited the words, "For what we are about to receive will the Lord make us truly thankful;" doing it with much rhetorical effect. "Amen!" said the widow, reverently; but the boy was speechless with surprise.

"While you are taking your dinner let me tell you the story of the portrait," said the hostess; then in a sweet, low voice, as if in the presence of him whom she loved more than all the world, she related the little history already given, keeping her eyes meanwhile fixed on her listener, who seemed greatly agitated by it.

Aunt Charity had often remarked what a good appetite the schoolmaster had for a studious young man in such delicate health; but for once he could not eat. He sat in awe and silence, feeling that the blue eyes of the father and the black eyes of the mother were looking through and through him; ready once or twice to throw himself on their mercy and confess his hypocrisy; but confession of his faults was not one of the things he had learned at the Grand Trunk University, or anywhere else. Finally, he roused himself to desperate resistance; his vanity triumphed over his conscience; and he braced himself for the few remaining minutes of the scene, determined to carry out his "character" to the end.

The supper and the story being ended the widow lifted a napkin at the side of her tray and displayed a book, the sight of which almost drove the schoolmaster to despair. It was a Bible.

"Mr. Layard," said she solemnly, "when he was alive he used to be the priest of the household; since he has gone we have been without a household ministry, except when some godly man came to be our guest. Take this book and read from it as he used to do; and then lead us in prayer, for grace to do our duty to the living and the dead."

If the earth had opened under him at that moment his first impression would doubtless have been one of relief; but it did not open. After all his acting he must pray, or else confess his crime and folly.

He took the book from the widow's hand, opened it at random, and began to read:

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

Strange that he should stumble on that passage! But he had started to read in sudden desperation and was half-way through the first line before he knew what it was.

He read as long as he dared, and then stood up and put himself in the attitude of prayer. At this the boy was so much shocked that he seemed about to denounce him for a liar and a cheat, but his mother motioned him to be quiet.

With evident effort, the wretched man began his "character" prayer; using first, in his confusion, a form he had once heard at a Masonic funeral; then, catching his breath, he started out again with the confession, "We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep," at which the widow sobbed outright. She thought that at last the hard heart had softened, and that he was going to break down in penitence, and so be saved after all; but after saying all he could think of in that direction he began the Paternoster; forgot that too, and after some Latin sentences from the Missal, he finished with the apostolic benediction.

After this finale to his "character" Mrs. Leighton, with her usual courtesy, assisted the two young persons with their preparations for departure. She did not seem to have noticed the incoherence of the praying; had not noticed it very much, being herself in an agony of prayer for him who was talking holy words and holy names in vain. But as for the boy, his heart had sunk

within him; and when the mockery was over he was weeping as if some great calamity had befallen him.

"Let me stay with you, mother -- at least till Monday," he said; and she answered, "No, my son," as calmly as if nothing had happened.

But something had happened. From that hour the spell was broken. The teacher's power over his pupil was like a hand that used to have a grip of iron, but now, though perfect outwardly, was unhinged in every joint and broken in every bone. He might thereafter teach the boy geometry and Latin, but never, never could he teach him "advanced views" of religion.

She felt assured that her own son was safe now, but what was to become of the other? Who was to pray for him, and love him and save him? "I will do it myself," she said.

She was not sure but she owed it to the young man to do this for him; for had she not urged him further than he would have dared to go in his wicked way?

The thought began to be oppressive. All that night the widow prayed, first for her own son, and then for the other; and when the morning light fell upon that wonderful portrait she saw that the danger signal had given place to a look of almost infinite pity. She was right then; he would help her to save them both.

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## 10 -- MR. LAYARD AS A VARIETY ARTIST

The sharp eyes of Aunt Charity did not fail to detect the change in the relations of professor and pupil; though all her ingenious questioning failed to open up the case. Mr. Layard was as eloquent as ever in his praise of Johnny and his remarkable progress in learning. He and Goody used to hold long conversations together on this prolific topic as if they had been the boy's two grandfathers, -- the profound and oracular manner of Mr. Layard on such occasions amply compensating for his slight deficiency in age. As for Johnny, he was faithful to the memory of his broken-down idol, and would permit no explorations of his heart's temple in which it had been set up.

At times even the serene professor himself seemed to be troubled. His vanity had been deeply wounded by his failure "in character" in the presence of Mrs. Leighton and her son, and he suffered as much self-abasement as was possible to a mind like his. The lady had not seemed to notice his confusion, and the lad had never mentioned it. On their way home together both had kept as far away from that painful topic as possible; but the professor felt that he had lost his most ardent admirer, in whose eyes he would thenceforth be a failure, -- the idea never once entering his head that it was falsehood instead of failure that had turned the boy's heart away from him, -- and this was indeed a misfortune. Having never had any brothers or sisters of his own, he was really beginning to love this bright, beautiful boy better than he had ever loved any one in the world, except himself. His new duties as teacher also were making a good impression upon him; even such vanity as his was not proof against the reflex influence of actual

helpfulness. He loved his scholars a little because, in spite of all his hollow pretensions, he saw that he was really doing them good; and if it had not been for that unfortunate overdoing of the part of "the pious young man," that term of school might have been the turning-point in his life.

His power of personal magnetism with which he had so often amused himself was now turned to good account. It was his boast that he was able to rule his little bunch of barbarians with his eye. He would engage with them in the most uproarious sport out of doors; but once seated at his desk in the rude school-house, he was a king on his throne. This sudden transition was an exercise "in character" which he enjoyed because of the ever new amazement with which his scholars regarded it. Once, indeed, a boy had tried to be familiar with him in school hours on the strength of a wild frolic together on the play-ground; but once was quite enough. The half-severe, half-contemptuous look of the man of learning brought the Mushes all over his dirty face; and when, in order to make this victory more complete and final, Professor Layard assumed a pose worthy of a Roman senator, and began to lecture the fellow severely in choice Latin, from one of the orations of Cicero against Catiline, the young offender against his scholastic dignity was so overwhelmed with confusion that from that day, indoors or out, he never ventured to take the slightest liberty with one who could, on occasion, be so great a man.

For the remainder of the term of the Bluffton Academy our young scholar applied himself more closely than ever to his books, partly from increasing interest in them, and partly to keep from mourning over the eclipse of the star that had so suddenly shone forth and disappeared. As for his teacher, his one failure in the midst of all his successes weighed so heavily on him that, being ill at ease in the presence of the good people at the farm, instead of spending his evenings as the center of their little admiration society in Aunt Charity's cheerful kitchen, he fell into the habit of taking long walks at night, from which he would seldom return till after the entire household were in bed.

To account for this change in his habits he explained that there was a brother schoolmaster at some distance who desired his confidential aid in some of the branches of higher mathematics; also a neighboring clergyman to whom he was giving private lessons in elocution; neither of whom desired the fact of their receiving such instructions to be made public, therefore he would respect their confidence though pitying their weakness, and withhold their names and addresses.

The real state of the case was that Mr. Layard had made the acquaintance of a set of law-breakers and "sports," into whose confidence he had come by a characteristic adventure, and at whose rendezvous, in a low drinking-house, in a small hamlet about three miles from the Bluff, called Dolkins' Corners, he spent a good deal of his leisure time.

Among the other "advanced views" of this liberal and progressive young man was the notion that in order to be a perfect gentleman a fellow ought to be able to carry a large amount of strong liquor in his stomach without feeling the effects of it in his head. How or why such an accomplishment adds to one's high respectability he had not stopped to inquire, but he had trained himself therein till he was as perfect a gentleman in this particular as was possible for a person of his tender age. At several convivial meetings of his secret society in the Grand Trunk

University he had achieved the distinction so highly praised by that liberal-minded poet, Bobby Burns:

"Wha last beside his chair shall fa',  
He is the king amang us a';"

while at the grocery, or, more properly, groggery, at Dolkins' Corners he had reached the highest honors at a single bound.

One Saturday afternoon the professor had been taking a longer walk than usual in search of health and pleasure, and having heard of the little crossroads settlement named after its chief citizen, Dolkins, he resolved to honor the place with a call. For the fun of the thing he assumed the "character" of a mild and timid young man just out from the tenderest tutelage of his fond mamma, and looking at the world and its possible snares and dangers much as a young rabbit might take his first look at a dog.

Such a callow youth at once caught the eyes of a trio of loafers who were drinking and playing cards in Dolkins' back room, and they resolved to victimize him; for business if he had any valuables about him, for sport if he had not.

At first our friend declined all approaches toward an acquaintance, saying he had merely called to warm himself, and hoped they would not regard it as an intrusion.

Being pressed to take a seat in the back-room he consented on condition that his presence should not interrupt any business that might be going forward.

"We were playing euchre. Would you like to take a hand?"

"You-ker? What is that?"

With a wink at his companions a big fellow, evidently the leading rogue of the party, proceeded to explain the game, and added that people who were lucky sometimes made a good deal of money by it.

"Is not that what is called gambling?" blandly inquired the young man. "Because my parents used to tell me that gambling was wicked; and being now an orphan, and having no one to guide me, I always try to remember their good advice."

However, after long hesitation, he consented to take a hand, just for amusement, and to make up the proper number of players; in which his partner gave him such careful instructions that he actually won the game, upon which the simpleminded youth remarked:

"Why, really, that is a pleasant diversion. I do not see why any one should object to playing with cards."

Then one of the rogues proposed the health of their new acquaintance, and a game of seven-up, to see who should pay for the drinks.

To this the young man seriously objected.

He was a strict teetotaler, he said. No alcoholic beverage had ever passed his lips. "You can drink 'Plantation Bitters,' then." "Bitters? I thought 'Bitters' were always prepared by physicians for people who were sick," replied our innocent friend.

"You are right, young man. Bitters is a medicine, but the people of this country have to take so much of it to keep off chills and fever that a benevolent old gentleman down East, who signs his name Mr. St. 1860 X., has tried to make it easy to take; and it is pretty easy to take, besides being an A Number One medicine to keep off the chills."

"A sort of tonic, I suppose," said Mr. Layard.

"Tonic is the word, young fellow. We will take whisky, and you shall take tonic."

This game was also explained to the stranger, who, at its close, sipped a spoonful or so of "Bitters," while the other three drank a "stiff horn" -- if that may be called stiff which makes people's tongues and legs so limber -- of Dolkins' best whisky.

Then more diversion, and more tonic; and after a while, "just to see if there was any luck in him," one of the sports proposed to furnish the stakes for their young friend to play with.

Again he was allowed to win, and half the money was handed over to him as his "commissions" on the game.

The commission business in this form proved so attractive to the young orphan, and the tonic was so palatable, and so healthful withal, that he suffered himself to break over his scruples; stopping frequently to ask if they did not think he was really going too far; and if the Bitters were really harmless. Thus the afternoon and evening passed glibly, and it was nearly midnight before the sports had really got down to business with their intended victim; by which time they were all rather more than half drunk, while his head was perfectly clear.

Having them now at a sufficient advantage, Mr. Layard changed his character;" becoming intensely excited by the Bitters, consumed by the gambling mania, and staking his "commissions" on the game, which he began to play with astonishing skill for one so lately initiated into its mysteries. He even assumed the place of master of the revel; calling for healths and bumpers at every game, and so wonderful a run of "luck" did he strike that he had actually won more than his three months' wages as professor, rolled one of the players drunk under the table, and laid out another to sleep on a bench, before the leader of the gang fully awoke to a sense of the situation.

"See here, young chap," said he, "you're too innocent by half; too innocent to be honest. We've spent mor'n fifty dollars on you, besides the drinks, 'n it's my opinion that's more 'n you'll ever be worth to us.

"Dolkins, lock the door! This young fellow don't go out of this till he hands over the money and pays for the liquor."

The door between the two rooms being open Mr. Layard could see that he was now alone with his enemies, or what was left of them, all the rest of the hangers-on having gone to their haunts or homes.

Whatever other shortcomings might be laid to his charge as a member of the Grand Trunk University, there was one department of scholarship in which he had distinguished himself; namely, that of Professor Hittem; whose pet and pride he had been, easily distancing the whole college in feats of strength and motion. In "the manly art," as our English cousins call it, he was particularly excellent.

There is something worth noticing in that phrase. The man who carries his defense in his pocket is apt to be a coward; though on the strength of this supposed advantage over a possible adversary, he may be something of a bully; but the man who carries his defense distributed all through him, in supple joints, steady nerves, and well-trained muscles; whose eye is as quick as light, whose motions are as free as a swallow in the air, or a shiner in the river, and who knows to a nicety how to handle himself to the best possible advantage -- such a man needs no such crude implements as knives and pistols for his protection.

More than this; a sense of ample personal power makes any decent man good-natured. With that most perfect of all machines, a human body instantly and thoroughly at his command he is apt to carry a civil tongue in his head. He enjoys the perfection of that machinery too much to waste it by foolish uses; while the man who has so little faith in himself that he habitually trusts to a piece of wood or iron for safety, in places where honest business or rightful pleasure leads him, is very likely, in time of real danger, to prove both a coward and a fool. A weak man is apt to be nervous and irritable, while the man who can lift half a ton, or drop his clinched hand so heavily that it will weigh four or five hundred pounds, is as cool and calm as a Spring morning.

There are statute laws against carrying concealed weapons; and natural laws in favor of carrying those of a better sort. If some enthusiast who is sighing for a new career as a reformer will only change the fashion amongst men of the world so that instead of wearing bits of steel in their coats and trousers they shall carry well-oiled joints and well-trained muscles, he will prove a benefactor to his race.

Mr. Layard now stood in need of all his muscular accomplishments. The big fellow, Pike they called him, was not very far gone in liquor; Dolkins was a flesh re-enforcement; and either of the two sleeping partners of the concern might wake up at any stage of the proceedings and manifest an active interest in the business. There was also a stout but stolid young Dutchman in

the outer room, Dolkins' man of all work, who, if he could be made to comprehend the situation, would, no doubt, rush to the aid of his master.

In Mr. Layard's judgment the most important factor in this problem was time. "Divide and conquer," he said to himself; "that was the way Napoleon used to do it:" so, before Dolkins could obey the order to lock the outer door, a bottle nearly full of whisky struck him in the back with such force as to topple him over and confuse his ideas for an instant; upon which the slow-going man-of-all-work made the natural but fatal mistake of attending to the wounded on his own side instead of rushing on the enemy.

A quick and vigorous push at the table on which they had been playing carried it past and over his big adversary, who was not prepared for such a sudden turn in affairs; and before he could get out from under it Mr. Layard had leaped over it, given Pike a stunning blow with his fist, on the sound military principle of retarding one detachment of the allied enemy while he engaged another.

The Dutchman, finding his master not severely hurt, drew an ugly-looking knife and slowly advanced upon the professor, who, quick as a flash, retreated to the wall, caught up the lightest of the two drunken sleepers, intending to use him as a shield if actually brought to bay; at which movement the Dutchman was so surprised that he lowered the point of his knife and stopped an instant to think what to do next. The next thing he knew he was lying on the floor under the drunken body. Layard had actually thrown a man at him!

Now for Dolkins, who had seized a heavy iron poker, and was returning to charge, though rather unsteady on his legs.

It was a foul blow to be sure; just a little below where the belt would have been -- it doubled up that groggery-keeper like a half-shut jackknife -- and it was planted so suddenly that his poker did him no service at all. Finding himself single-handed the Dutchman now begged for quarter, which Mr. Layard readily granted, and then went to look after his friend Pike, whom he had left lying under the table, he was not so badly hurt but that he sat up on the floor and drank a glass of Dolkins' whisky, which seemed to revive him greatly.

As for Dolkins himself he was the worst scared, as well as worst wounded, man of the crowd; but he also revived under the kind offices of the good-natured victor. And now, as the two other members of the party showed signs of waking up Mr. Layard bade the company a cheery good night. The first class in "the higher mathematics" had recited and were dismissed. The "elocution" had also been a great success.

On his way home from the corners, Mr. Alexander Layard held the following little argument with himself:

"Now, Professor, are you not ashamed of yourself? You, a man of learning, and an instructor of youth, have actually been engaged in a fight in a low gambling den!



"Well, what of it? We have only been making history on a small scale. Suppose we had been armies or nations instead of individuals, the thing would be worthy of a place in the annals of mankind.

"Let Professor Layard represent a nation supposed to be weak: Pike and Dolkins are two strong powers who desire to partition him amongst themselves. The weaker nation is somewhat skilled in diplomacy, gets the better of the hostile allies, and, for a time, obstructs their plans in carrying out their 'mission' and fulfilling their 'destiny.'

"Pike and Dolkins next form an alliance, offensive and defensive, and declare war against Layard; who, in the true Napoleonic style, having no allies, makes an ally of Time. By several quick and brilliant strategic movements he strikes the allies in detail before they have time to mass their forces, and cripples them seriatim. The enemy's re-enforcements that's the Dutchman -- come up too late to be of any use; his reserves that's the two fellows who were drunk -- don't come up at all. "Result -- splendid victory for Prince Layard!

"Vanquished enemy treated with all the humanities known to civilized warfare.

"His Majesty, Pike and the Sublime Dolkins left to bear the expense and loss of an unsuccessful war.

"Friendly and neutral newspapers describe the campaign as opening up a brilliant military and political career for Prince Layard.

"That is history. Hurrah for me!"

By the time he reached the Goodsmith mansion our young Napoleon had fully recovered his self-respect. He hailed the house loudly as one who came with honors; and observing the look of surprise on the face of Goody Zach, as he cautiously opened the door and stood shivering in the simplest costume, with a candle in his hand, Mr. Layard explained that he had taken a very long excursion, and on his way had fallen in with a man who had been hurt in a mill. Being somewhat of a surgeon he had devoted his irregular but not inefficient talents to his case. The precise kind and location of the "mill" he did not stop to explain, but went to bed with the air of a hero.

And why not? Of course the respectability of a fight does not depend upon its size.

The following day, as the professor had learned, a new church was to be dedicated at the Corners, and he resolved to honor the occasion with his presence; the more because Pike had told him what a stingy old sinner Dolkins was, and how hard he tried to keep up the style of a gentleman in the community at the smallest possible cost.

After the religion of the occasion had been somewhat attended to, the finances were brought forward, by a brother from abroad, who had a reputation for squeezing a congregation dryer than any other man in his denomination. By urging, scolding, teasing, and rallying he had apparently reached the last possible point of progress toward freedom from debt, and still there

remained about a hundred dollars, a large sum in the eyes of that people, unprovided for. At this point, when a very funny joke on the part of the reverend dedicator failed to bring out any thing more substantial than a laugh, and it appeared that instead of being consecrated to the worship of Almighty God the new meeting-house was in danger of being held in the grip of the almighty dollar -- in the form of a mechanic's lien, which had been bought on speculation by Dolkins, and mostly paid for in liquor -- the congregation was electrified by the following brief speech from a tall, handsome young man, whom no one in the house except Dolkins had ever seen before:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I am a stranger among you, though you may have heard of me. I am called Professor Layard, of the Bluffton Academy.

"This religious society is one of the means of promoting our common civilization, and therefore I in common with all good citizens of this great Republic, desire to see it prosper. I know your worthy pastor here by reputation; and although I do not agree with him in theology, I recognize him as a faithful worker in another department of the great cause of education, in which I myself am engaged. It gives me pleasure also to see here present on this important occasion a well-known capitalist and merchant. Of course you all know that I refer to J. Dolkins, Esq. Now the career of this hopeful young society ought not to be hindered by a debt upon its elegant and tasteful house of worship; therefore, I propose to your fellow-citizen whose name I have taken the liberty to mention, and whose modesty I trust will not be offended, to divide this last hundred dollars with him. I will give fifty dollars on condition that J. Dolkins, Esq., will give the other fifty; and we will thus close out the debt, and set this infant society fairly on its feet.

"Shall we do it, Squire Dolkins?"

With two hundred and fifty pairs of eyes staring at him the keeper of the Corners grocery, whose avarice and vanity were household words among all his neighbors, was in a very embarrassing position. He had attended the dedication for the same reason that he attended all large public gatherings; for the sake of the respectability of it; determined, however, that it should not cost him a cent.

His tormentor now stepped forward to the pulpit, took out ten bright five-dollar notes, and held them up before the eyes of the excited crowd, the most of whom had never in all their lives seen so much money at once.

The suspense was awful. The fire had gone out long ago, but the wretched man began to perspire and grow very red in the face. Then he muttered something about seeing Mr. Layard privately about it.

"No, no, my friend," said Mr. Layard; "you may venture, just this once, to let your right hand know that your left hand has done a good deed," at which there was a suppressed titter all over the house at the thought of how much the aforesaid right hand would be surprised. At last When the poor victim could stand it no longer, he gasped out:

"If the minister will take it in groceries, I'll do it."

"Done!" shouted the pastor, who had felt himself in eclipse behind the great dedicator, and was glad of a chance to distinguish himself.

Mr. Layard then deposited his bunch of money upon the communion-table with the air of a man laying up treasure in heaven; the people looked their thanks and admiration; and the distinguished dedicator, having now won another trophy to add to his already long list of Church debts paid, struck up the Doxology, which was given with twofold significance. In form it was an act of divine worship, but in fact it was a vote of thanks to Messrs. Layard and Dolkins for their astonishing liberality.

The climax of the day having now been passed a number of the audience left; thinking of the various chores which awaited them at home. Such of the congregation as remained to the end witnessed the actual "dedication," which bore so small a proportion to the rest of the performance that Mr. Layard suggested to his friend Dolkins, whom he greeted most affectionately, that this sort of thing called a "dedication" ought to be called an "inquisition."

There were curses loud and deep at Dolkins' grocery that night; for this capitalist and merchant, though he kept his establishment closed one day in seven, was not so particular about the nights; in fact, on Sunday night was held the chief carousal of the week. His companions of the previous session were anxious for vengeance on Mr. Alexander Layard. The two men whom he had drunk to sleep proposed to give him a pounding; but Pike, who had felt the weight of that young gentleman's fist, advised them to "let that job out." Dolkins was furious over the fifty-dollar subscription extorted from him, the more so as the "groceries" were not likely to mean whisky.

He had not lived long enough in a religious community to learn that all is fair in love, war, and church dedications.

At last, after a long silence on his part, Pike broke out:

"I have it, boys. The thing to do is to get him to play on our side. There's lots of sport in him as well as grit. A young chap don't get to be such an old soldier at whisky drinking and such a trump hand with the pasteboards just by going to Sunday-school. He belongs with us by rights, if he has been to college; and I vote for adopting him."

This was finally agreed to, and it was not many nights before Mr. Layard became the prime favorite with the sporting fraternity of that wild region, whose headquarters appeared to be in the back-room of Dolkins' grocery. Here he brought his various talents into play, leading and enlivening the nightly revels with songs, character sketches, tricks at cards, gymnastic wonders; and, at length, a fiddle having been procured for him, he reached the zenith of his glory by dancing to his own music, -- actually keeping step to his own jigs, hornpipes, and breakdowns in a manner utterly amazing to the crowd of Sports and loafers, which presently increased so much that Esquire Dolkins was able to reimburse himself by extra sales of drinks for the cost of the groceries he had been tricked out of at the dedication; thereby, it may be presumed, saving the recording angel, who keeps that class of reckonings, from his embarrassment as to the proper way to post up such an account.

But lest the poor pastor should be cheated by short weights, poor qualities, or high prices, Mr. Layard insisted that the groceries should be paid in his presence, and for once that little parsonage rejoiced in a profusion of the good things of this life.

When these ample stores were brought home the good pastor invited his young friend to come over and take tea with him. Here again Mr. Layard shone conspicuous, entertaining his host with such learned discourse concerning that good man's favorite characters in the history of the Church that, before he took his leave, a promise had been extorted from him to favor the people of the Corners with a lecture in their new church on "The Lives and Writings of the Fathers."

This lecture was duly given in Mr. Layard's most impressive style. The new church was crowded, the audience was sympathetic and responsive. As for the pastor, he was in a strait betwixt delight and astonishment, -- delight at the sonorous and eloquent oration; astonishment that so many striking facts in the lives of his favorite characters in history had escaped his observation, which hitherto unpublished facts and incidents, as Mr. Layard afterward explained, had been discovered by himself in his careful researches among a mass of old and rare manuscripts in the library of the Grand Trunk University.

But there were still greater labors and honors in store for the professor in connection with the little church, to which he had devoted so large a share of his "commissions." His rich voice attracted the notice of a good old father in Israel, who, since the memory of the oldest settler at the Corners, had acted as precentor in all services of public worship, and who was beginning to tire of the task, in which sentiment, to say the truth, every body agreed with him. As the result of his persuasions, on the following Sunday Professor Layard, having borrowed the Dolkins fiddle, assumed the position of chorister, aided by several young ladies of the Corners, Dolkins' Dutchman, and his new friend Pike, whose powerful bass added to the professor's ringing tenor, and the fresh, sweet soprano of the girls, really made delightful music, and served as a pleasing substitute for the worship of God. Most of the solos the professor would sing, accompanying himself on the fiddle with charming bits of harmony; his tremulous and tender tones, both of voice and viol, actually bringing tears to the eyes of those simple people, who mistook these musical effects for pious emotions. Next to the doctrinal sermons of their old pastor, nothing in the means of grace had ever seemed quite so edifying to them as the music of Professor Layard.

The transient portion of the congregation since the advent of the new chorister had so notably increased, that the soft-hearted old minister began to hope for a revival among his flock, quite a number of the Dolkins crowd coming to Church just to hear the music.

During one of his most brilliant solos Pike whispered to Dolkins' Dutchman, who was his next neighbor in the singers' seats:

"What a 'variety artist' Layard would make!" "Yah, das is zo. Ven I hears dot young feller blayin' dot fiddle so nice in Shurch, I all de time dinks about dot leedle row ve had mit him in de grocery.

Then pointing his finger at Dolkins, who was occasionally found among this worshipping congregation, the Dutchman suddenly doubled himself up and put on a comical look of agony, which proved so suggestive to the leader of the bass that he could hardly straighten his countenance in time to come in on the chorus with the words:

"Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, forever."

During the rest of the term of the Bluffton Academy Professor Layard conducted this performance in the little new church at the Corners, but his term closed none too soon to allow him to carry off his heavy weight and variety of honors.

His examination day was the wonder of the whole settlement, on which occasion he paid such respect to the Honorable Board of Directors as made them feel like a second edition of the fatuous old Triumvirs of Rome. Then there was an exhibition in the evening, at which Mr. Layard and Master Leighton both outdid themselves; and at the close the three directors were called forward to make speeches, which they did, all of them praising the school and the teacher to the highest degree, and each receiving a hearty round of applause. But the professor had hardly left the Bluff with his wages and other moneys in his pocket before the gossips caught scent of his nightly revels with the gang of roughs in Dolkins' back-room and of sundry other doings, which appeared singular in a young man who led a choir in church. Doubts were even expressed whether the money he had given at the dedication was not home-made; but as it had been paid to Dolkins on account of his claim against the Church, and that capitalist had not ventured to refuse it, it served one good purpose at least.

Professor Layard had done another substantial good work during that eventful Winter; that is, he had started John Mark Leighton on the road to learning, and showed him a glimpse of the powers as well as the delights of scholarship. He had roused an ambition in the lad such as no dull, plodding pedagogue could have called forth, and thereby helped to enlarge the scale on which he was to build his life. As far as he knew he had told his pupil the truth about his studies and about the world of letters to which they would some day admit him. Johnny was thus prepared, after the School was over, to go on with his work, though neither Lakeside nor the Bluff ever furnished him another such teacher as Professor Layard.

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## 11 -- WILL AND WON'T

In his seventeenth birthday John announced to the little family party which Aunt Charity had made in honor of the occasion, that he would be prepared to enter college at the ensuing Fall term, an announcement which made Goody Zach's face shine all over with grandfatherly pride.

"All right, my boy. I knowed you'd come to something handsome. You just stick right to that Latin and the other stuff, and Aunt Charity and me will stand by and pay the bills. You'll want to go to the Grand Trunk, I s'pose."

"To be sure," broke in Aunt Charity; "and the full course, too. I don't have no faith in them short cuts. This world has been a studyin' and a learnin' for nigh on to six thousand years, and it looks mighty foolish for a boy to think he can master it all in less than four. You take all you can git; that's my advice. I've seen a good many of them batches they take out of the Grand Trunk oven on Commencement days, and I haven't seen any of 'em yit that looked as if they had been baked too long."

While these years were going by, Mrs. Leighton had watched and waited with an anxious heart. She lived and labored now only for her son, who, on his part, was as loving and loyal as ever a son could be.

The widow had turned to good account her skill in the work to which her poverty had driven her in her Eastern home, adding thereto such other branches of the trade as she could teach to her son, who eagerly applied himself to his new task. Thus these two brave hearts and these two pairs of willing hands wrought out for themselves all the comforts and some of the luxuries of life, besides the tenth part of all their substance, of which, like Jacob of old, the widow kept careful account, and religiously devoted it to works of charity.

Johnny was brought up under her eye. She knew where he was, and in what company, every hour of day or night. She was given to hospitality, and as often as possible entertained ministers and other cultivated men and women, rightly appreciating the good effects of such society; but when some man who claimed to be called to minister in holy things failed in the ordinary courtesies of life she was greatly troubled for its effect upon her son.

There was, in particular, the Reverend Mr. Slopham, one of those superfluous mortals whose license as a preacher had only spoiled him for earning his living in any honest way, who about once a quarter used to put in his seedy appearance at Mrs. Leighton's house; sometimes as an agent of the Bible Society; sometimes as tract distributor; sometimes as solicitor for an impecunious or impossible college under the auspices of some education society; or as a beggar for a "struggling Church" in a new settlement, where there were, among a population of sixty or seventy families, three or four other strugglers of the same sort, only under different denominational names. This man Mrs. Leighton at length requested not to come any more, as his ungentlemanly manners were giving her son a low opinion of the holy office.

"Do you wish me to shake the dust off my feet as a testimony against you?" asked that much surprised individual.

"It would be a great improvement to your appearance," said the widow.

As the years went by, and the lad grew tall and handsome and manly, her motherly pride exulted over him, while her sense of his duty and his danger made her more and more afraid of him. Or, perhaps, it was a sense of her own duty which made her afraid, for very harmless people do become a terror to those who owe them some godly office which they find it a cross to perform.

John was at once the light of her eyes and the sorrow of her heart. So far as she knew he had not fallen into any fatal errors of doctrine, but he was drifting further and further away from the life which had been marked out for him by the powers above, and the memory of her own struggles against the will of God, and the sorrow it had brought to her, filled her with sad forebodings for him. For her sake he had attended her to the little church regularly every Sabbath. Two sermons had been preached at him every week; good enough sermons in their way, but often so much more suggestive of human laziness than of divine unction, that he for the most part despised, if he did not forget them. It must be confessed that the men who were sent to the Lakeside Circuit after Elder Hooper's term were not on very intimate terms with books, -- not even with the Bible, -- and that they too often tried to supply the lack of thought and research by something to which John gave the name of "minister talk," a style of discourse which produced much the same effect on him as a cold, drizzling rain.

His loss of faith in his former friend, Mr. Layard, had dispelled his boyish dream of becoming a civil engineer, and he had simply been pushing on, content with the brightening and widening views of the world of learning which were all the time opening before him. In their charming little home there were more books, both for substance and number, than in any other house in the town, and mother and son kept pace with the great world by means of the weekly and monthly literature of her Church, not always very flesh or brilliant in those days, but always decent and safe. That blind faith in the future, so strong in youth, was especially strong in him. Without any very definite aim he was fully determined to be something; and a good deal of it, too.

Ever since that notable visit of Goody Zach and Aunt Charity, Mrs. Leighton had been expecting a question from her son, which the longer it was delayed the more she feared to answer. John had been admitted at Commencement examinations as a Freshman in the Grand Trunk University; but with all this greatness and glory in sight a cloud, seemed to settle down upon him. His usual gayety and independence gave place to silence and suffering, and sometimes his mother thought she detected a look in his face which told of a struggle going on within, like her own former conflicts with the powers of the world to come. At length, when he had become absolutely desperate, he opened his mind in the long looked for words:

"Mother, what did you mean when you told Goody Zach and Aunt Charity that they could not have me because I was already given away?"

The question had come. Now with fame and fortune in full sight, and his heart utterly turned away from the thoughts of God, he must make the awful choice of abandoning the world and laying himself a sacrifice on the altar of Christ, or become, as she had been, a wretched, hopeless rebel against the will of heaven. Why had he not asked this question before? Why had she not been strong enough to tell him? That wild look in his eyes burned her. She felt that she had sinned against him by her long silence, but now she must speak.

"Let us go to him," said the mother, rising and leading the way to the room where hung the portrait of the man who was the husband, the father, and the good angel of that little household. "He will want to hear how his wife tells her sad story, and how his son decides about his duty."

They seated themselves where he, could see them, and the widow began:

"Your father was a rich man's darling son, and I was an orphan, taken out of an asylum, and brought up as a servant -- almost as a slave.

"When John Mark Leighton came home from college, the idol of his family and the pride of the whole town, by some strange miracle he fell in love with me.

"So we were married for love. Our home was my heaven, and he was my god. It seemed to me he must have been an angel before he came to be a man.

"They used to torment me so with their theology that there was no other God left in the universe for me to worship but my husband. Once he tried to reprove me for it.

"'Who made the world?' he asked.

"'John Mark Leighton makes my world,' I answered:

"'But who redeemed the world?'

"'John Mark Leighton redeemed me.'

"That seemed to frighten him, so he asked:

"'Where do you expect to go when you die?' "'To you.'

"'But I may not die first.'

"'Then it won't signify where I go; there'll be nothing to do but wait till you come.'

"He gave up talking religion to me when he found I had no other religion but to love my husband and be a good wife to him.

"When your sister was born my heart was a little softer towards the Great Being they used to tell me about at Church; but when the little darling died, and that old minister came to its funeral, and preached that it was the duty of parents to give up their children to God, not only for death but for eternal torments if they were not elected to salvation, I rebelled again.

"On the night after the funeral, when I was wild with grief at the loss of my first-born, and in a rage at God for taking her away from me, John told me of a secret sense of duty that had haunted him for years, no word of which he had ever breathed till then. He said he felt that he was called to the ministry of the Gospel, and he knew he should never, be at peace in his mind till he obeyed the call.



"That was too much. I raved like a mad woman. 'What! God kills our darling Gracie, and you straightway go to telling people how great and wise and good he is?' Then, over that empty cradle, I lifted my hand to heaven and vowed that on the day my husband became God's minister I would die, if it had to be by my own hand.

"After that every thing went wrong. First, we lost all our property; but I did not mind that, I was so rich in my husband. When he could find no employment fit for such a man, he became a laborer, and worked with his pick and spade, while I tried to help him by the work you have seen me do all these years.

"He used to be so tender and loving that I repented of my wicked vow a thousand times for his sake, but not for my own. If any of our poor neighbors were sick he would go and watch with them, after digging in the canal all day; and I used to wish I might be sick too, just to have him take care of me in that sweet, comforting way.

Sometimes when people were dying, he would pray by their bedside. It seemed as if he knew all about the place they were going to, and was just telling the people up there whose poor soul it was that was coming, and asking them, for Jesus' sake, to open the gates and let him in.

"The work was too heavy for him, but he never complained. Once he asked me if I had repented of my rash vow, and that made me more stubborn than ever. A month from that day he died. Then I should have gone mad, sure enough, but for the hope of another child.

"About a week before you were born, I saw him one night how glorious he was! There was a little girl in his arms, about as old as our little Gracie would have been; and I saw in their faces how happy they must be. That softened my hard heart a little, for I thought God had been kind to my two darlings, if he had taken them away from me; but when he asked me if I would give the son that was to be born to me to the work his father was called to, I rebelled again; and he went sorrowfully away, with our little girl in his arms.

"One day a stranger stopped at the door to ask his way. It was that good man, Elder Hooper. He seemed to be better acquainted with God than the old minister was; and he taught me my duty to my husband, and to you, my son; so that I brought you in my arms at a little service he was holding, and gave you to him to be baptized. While he was celebrating the holy service, he seemed to be impressed with the idea that you were some day to be a minister, and he said so. Then the old rebellious spirit seized me again. I snatched you out of his arms and ran away, as if to hide you where God could not find you.

"That night you were seized with a sudden sickness something like a violent chill; and I thought you were dying. That crushed my hard heart to pieces. I gave up the struggle with God. I was ready for any thing. I even tried to baptize you myself, but the place seemed so awful that I could do nothing but fall on my face, and pray God to send his minister to finish the holy service. In the dead of night he came. God must have sent him; for he lodged a long distance away. And there he gave you to God in baptism; and I vowed you to the office of the ministry."

At this word the young man buried his face in his hands as if to hide himself, or shut out the sight of something that hurt him; but as he did not speak the widow went on.

"That good man took you, a shivering, gasping, dying, little thing, to his bosom; and somehow it seemed nothing less than a miracle he brought you back to life again.

"All these seventeen long years I have wept and prayed over you, for I saw that you had been born with my old rebellious spirit in you, and were fighting against the will of heaven; but I pray every day to God that he will be very gentle with you, as he was with me, and not lay the sin to your charge, but to mine."

John had listened in silence, but at the words, "not to your charge but to mine," he sprang to his feet and cried, "No! No! I have known it; I have felt it. It is my own fault that I will not give up!"

Then shielding his eyes With his hand as he passed before the portrait, he went away to his own room to fight his battle out alone.

It was by no means a new conflict, though now for the first time he felt that he was fighting at a disadvantage. His mother, his father, and his sister were all against him; but a sinner's will does not succumb to superior force.

The Arabs say, that if a man can "hold his soul," he can look the lion out of countenance when he meets him in the jungle, and actually put the beast to flight with his eye. It is the will of man terrorizing the king of beasts. But that is a little thing.

Sometimes in wild bravado, or in sullen wrath, the will of man stares defiantly into the face of the King of kings, resolved to fight and struggle and perish finally in perdition, rather than give up, even to Jehovah. Thus it was with John Mark Leighton.

Driven to bay by the providence and the grace of God, he boldly faced the duty that stood before him, and defied it.

"Go to hell I can; preach the Gospel I never will!"

It was the "will" of the God of eternity resisted and defied by the "won't" of a boy of seventeen.

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## 12 -- SHODDY THEOLOGY

Shoddy is rag-dust, mixed with wool enough to hold it together. By several ingenious processes this mixture is made into a fabric, closely resembling cloth, which is fashioned into garments and sold to simple people who do not know the difference, or who prefer to spend their money for show rather than substance.

By the use of shoddy that ancient guild of Jew clothiers imitate every new style of woolen goods, and, within a few weeks of its appearance in the market, are ready with a supply of cheap clothing, which they can sell at a large profit for about half the cost of the genuine article.

There are reasons for believing that this profitable industry is not absolutely confined to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

This same sort of thing is also found in theology. Worn-out heathenisms and heresies ingeniously wrought over again, mingled with a little correct faith in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man; a little natural religion; a little hero-worship of Jesus, the Jew; a little poetry, and a little philosophy, so called, well mixed and muddled together, compose that modern theological delusion called Liberal Christianity.

Put this mass into the head of a plausible, clerical adventurer and you have a "liberal" minister.

Bring together in some hall under such ministry the people of a given neighborhood who do not believe in the Bible, and you have a "liberal" Church.

Liberalism differs from atheism in this: Liberalism is mostly doubt; atheism is all doubt.

The Reverend Didymus D'Auber, the incumbent of the parish which included the Grand Trunk University, was evidently shaping his course toward a liberal ministry in a liberal Church, though at the date of the arrival of John Mark Leighton at college he still held this orthodox pulpit. He was a man of pleasing address, great personal magnetism, and among his many liberal admirers passed for almost a saint, while the orthodox, old-fashioned portion of his Church, though frequently troubled by his loose statements of doctrine and his entire neglect of such topics as depravity, repentance, regeneration, and vicarious sacrifice, tried with more charity than reason to think that what sometimes looked sadly like the doctrine of devils might be only his peculiar version of the faith once delivered to the saints.

The name of this man was a study for the etymologists. It had an aristocratic look with its two capital letters, separated by the apostrophe, as if to hint at still further dignity and respectabilities which required this abbreviated form, they being too large to be written out in full. In its primitive fashion, before its present wearer had set his genius to improve it, the name was a common-looking name enough, and not very complimentary withal, having evident reference to the poor performance of some remote ancestor with brush or trowel, whose great want of success in his art or trade had thus been maliciously fastened on him, and which the Daubers for a score of generations had been obliged to wear; but when the Reverend Didymus came to years of discretion he rescued the family patronymic from all its base suggestions, and by a trifling change lifted it into a style suggestive of ancient and titled nobility.

The French have a saying, "Scratch a Russian and you will find a Tartar." There are also in religion disguises so thin that a slight abrasion of the surface of the "liberal" or "progressive" orthodoxy is only necessary to show the downright heresy within.

The Reverend Didymus D'Auber was outwardly a liberal; inwardly he was a heretic. He claimed to be a believer in the doctrines of his Church, having a private interpretation of every Scripture that was at all severe against sin, and a means of extracting comfort for sinners out of every thing that came in his way. His religious views bore about the same relation to the creed of his Church and the doctrines of the Gospel that a bifurcated cylinder of soft flesh, without joints or bones, would bear to a well-formed man. To his thought; Jehovah was a mild-mannered Monarch, so fond of his children as to be wholly satisfied if they only managed to have a good time. The doctrine of the Divine Government never troubled him, because to him God was a King without much government; and his Church was a kingdom in which it was the privilege of every member to make a government for himself.

"In the Old Testament," said he, "we read of a stern master who always kept a switch handy; but in the ultimate state of things the school will be kept in order by keeping the scholars happy. The Church of the future will have no need of brimstone; its senses will be regaled by the odors of the rose and the lily; instead of Gehenna with its fires we shall have gardens of spices. It is only to the crude conditions of the human intellect that such crude topics need be addressed. We have outgrown mud-huts and sheep-skin mantles, so we are outgrowing the ancient devil and the traditional hell."

On this basis the Reverend D'Auber constructed a religion which had this merit, -- namely, a great deal of it could be had for a small price. No renouncing the world; no struggles with self; no fighting the devil; no tears of repentance; no bearing the cross; no death to sin; no hunger and thirst after righteousness; no deep self-examination; no devout searching of the Scriptures; no hard or unpleasant thing of any sort; nothing "crude" or unsentimental. Culture, refinement, development, would in due time bring the race back to Eden. Nothing but a redrawing of the isothermal lines of human history was required to make a paradise of perdition. Sin was less our fault than our misfortune, and, like ignorance, was to be educated out of the world: so he said.

It must not be supposed that this liberal gentleman put a great deal of this kind of theology into his sermons. They were like almanacs, calculated for different latitudes. For the old-fashioned orthodox brethren and sisters who had not outgrown the crudities of the Bible he preached beautifully on Entire Devotion to God, the Patience of Hope, the Comfort of Piety, and other such tender and delightful themes, while for the more liberal and advanced among his hearers he discoursed on the Perfectibility of Human Nature through its Own Recuperative Force; the Universal Law of Progress, and the like; and this he declared to have been the policy of the great Apostle Paul. "All things to all men."

Now, lest any one should be unable to account for the presence of such a preacher in the orthodox pulpit of the college Church, the following solution of this doctrinal riddle is given:

Naturalists tell us that the cuckoo lays its eggs in the nests of other birds, thus avoiding the labor of nest-building and hatching; and if ever the D'Auber school of divines should be in want of a heraldic decoration, a cuckoo; volant, over a nest where a wild dove is hatching doves and cuckoos together, would be a most appropriate design for their coat of arms.

The Reverend D'Auber was born and raised among simple, old-fashioned believers; and, being such a good boy, and utterly destitute of a taste for farming, he was pushed by his friends into the holy office. Whether God wanted him in that office was a question nobody ever thought of asking. The ministry was a respectable and easy profession; would give him a comfortable living; and it would be no small honor for the Daubers to have a minister in the family.

The young reverend had not been long in the ministry before he became enamored of the system -- or want of system -- of certain roving reformers in religion who held some public discussions in the quiet neighborhood where he was settled. In the ardor of his new emotions, and in the blaze of his new light, he was about to arise, Samson-like, break the ropes and tear off the wythes with which the Church had bound him, and come forth as a captain in the noble army of doubters; but being a prudent man as well as a liberal, he first examined the financial outlook of this new departure.

He was not long in making two discoveries: first, that among those unbelievers there was a very light demand for ministerial talent; there being but few Churches of their sort at home, and no call whatever for missionaries abroad; second, that the great majority of that class of "free thinkers" who cared to go to Church at all, preferred to save the expense of building sanctuaries and supporting ministers, it being their habit to find out those men in evangelical communions who are gradually apostatizing from the faith and glorify and claim them as liberals.

These two discoveries were the keys of D'Auber's success. He had only to preach enough of the old doctrines not to be disowned by his orthodox friends, and enough of the new notions to make himself an object of suspicion to them; on which account all the heretics in the neighborhood would be sure to attend upon his ministry; thus giving a show of prosperity to his Church, and silencing its conscience by pleasing its vanity. These two things therefore he did, and did them so neatly that, in a little while he became the especial pet of all the heterodox people about him, and at the same time lived comfortably off the salaries paid by orthodox Churches.

There was a certain saintliness about him which was pleasing to all classes of people. Men who were the especial enemies of Puritanism, pointed to him with pride:

"Look at D'Auber, there He isn't one of your sour-visaged parsons, all the time preaching up fire and brimstone: he is a man with some common sense to him, and knows how to make his theology agreeable."

Those women, also, who delight in dances, theaters, and small flirtations, but who carry about with them a mild flavor of piety, were his most enthusiastic admirers.

"What a perfectly sweet man the Reverend Didymus D'Auber is! so gentle and affectionate! What lovely sermons he preaches, and how delightfully he quotes poetry and plays croquet."

It was understood among his liberal friends that the Reverend D'Auber was a very proper man himself -- was obliged to be so, in fact, to suit the prejudices of his old-fogy deacons and stewards; but it was also understood that he would not be so cruel as to deny to the lambs of his flock, or even to the more frisky among the old sheep, the delights of brilliant society, or the pleasures of artistic taste. Accordingly, he had not been long pastor of the college Church before there sprang up in it a great fondness for dancing parties, Church theatricals, cards, and "society manners" in general. Quite a number of hitherto exemplary young men began to develop a taste for billiards, and for beer, light wines, cordials, bitters, and other refreshments furnished at the bar, which is as inseparable from a public-billiard table as one Siamese twin was from the other.

The old Church seemed to have renewed its youth. There were large congregations on Sunday, especially in the evening; at which service the Reverend D'Auber dispensed with the Gospel altogether, and delivered a series of popular lectures on aesthetic subjects, as "The Morals of the Drama;" "Luck and Labor;" "The True Liberal;" "The Relation of Art to Religion," etc.

There were also signs of a revival. People were beginning to join the Church.

One day a fashionable woman came to D'Auber's study, and said,

"My dear pastor, I think I must have experienced religion; and I have come to talk with you about joining the Church."

"I am delighted to hear it," answered the spiritual adviser. "All persons of culture and refinement ought to join the Church, if only to make it attractive to the young. But, pray tell me your experience, I am sure it will be so interesting," -- with a look which added "like the lady herself."

"Well, this was the way of it. Last night I went to see that new play. Now don't be angry with me, my dear pastor. I heard it was a very, very naughty play, and that just set me dying to see it. I dressed up so that nobody should know me; but it wasn't any use; there were ever so many of our set there, and it was so absurd for us all to pretend we didn't know one another when every soul of us had danced and played cards together till three o'clock at Mrs. Foley's party only the night before.

"You never would believe it, but that play made me feel real religious! Of course there is lots of sensation in it; but there is such a moral to the play! Don't you remember where those lovely young ladies with wings like angels come out -- "Oh, I forgot. You are a minister and mustn't go to theaters. What a pity! I wouldn't be a minister for all the world!

"Well, there were the angels, all so light and airy; and all at once it came over me how nice it must be to be a real angel; and when the orchestra struck up that lovely waltz that is made

out of 'Nearer, my God, to thee,' I felt as if I should just like to die right then, and go and live always in just such a beautiful place as that was in the scene. "Then it came over me how good I was feeling. "By and by the devils came on the stage. O-o-o-oh! How horrible they were! Then I began to think what a terrible thing it would be to have to live with such horrid creatures always-not that any body actually does, you know, but they did -- and then I began to cry.

"Pretty soon I thought of what you said in your sermon last Sunday; something about its being such a nice thing to be in love with all that is good and beautiful--"

"He who is in love with the good and the beautiful, through that love becomes both beautiful and good," recited the Reverend Didymus.

"Yes, that's it. Well, as I was going home I kept thinking about it all the time, and after I got to bed -- it must have been two o'clock, but I wasn't sleepy a bit -- I began to think how much I was in love with those angels, and whether that wasn't something like being an angel, or what is next thing to it, a member of the Church.

"I felt that way once before when that horrid old hunk, Dr. Besom, was pastor here. We had been having a masquerade ball on Christmas eve, and I was Saint Mary Magdalene. So I went and told the old bigot about it, and what do you think he said?

"He said, 'Do you want to be a saint, or do you only want to play at it?' The old wretch! I could have bit his head off.

"Now don't you really think there was some piety in feeling so happy in the character of Saint Mary Magdalene; and being so much in love with those beautiful angels in the play? Don't you think I am really saved; and can't I join the Church right away, before I get off the notion of it?"

After a suitable time for reflection, the Reverend D'Auber answered, "My dear sister, for so I trust I may call you, your experience is not an unusual one, though many of my brethren in the ministry, whose views are more narrow than mine, would have failed to see the high value of it.

"There is our leading soprano in the choir, Mrs. Mollis, a most excellent and liberal-minded lady -- came to our Church with a letter from the Universalists; she once told me that she had often felt more spiritual elevation at the fig-eater than she ever did at the Communion. The Bible says, 'There is a diversity of gifts for diversities of spirits'" -- the Reverend Didymus was not very familiar with that book, hence his occasional errors of quotation, -- "and I do not see why the play may not be sanctified to you, since your spirit is diversified in that way, just as well as one of my sermons, or one of David's Psalms."

In this liberal view of the case joining the Church soon became popular. There was a class of persons in D'Auber's congregation who had been long hesitating whether they could afford the sacrifice, but when they found that they could be counted in, and still retain all the world, the most of the flesh, and such portions of the devil as were not painted black, they

yielded to the persuasions of the Reverend Didymus, and became Christians; that is, "liberal" Christians, by profession.

Such was the state of the Church which it was young Leighton's duty to attend. His mother had never thought of looking beyond its name, which stood in her mind for the soundest faith and the most vigorous works in religion. She had felt sore misgivings for her son in view of the social influences that might surround him in his new life, but she knew that by college law he must attend public worship twice each Lord's day, and this was her strong reliance on his behalf.

John had not been either courageous or cruel enough to tell her the resolution he had formed to resist God's call to the holy office, and she had begun to hope that he had sullenly accepted his fate, as she had once done: not a very gracious state of mind, to be sure, but a great deal better than rebellion, and one which might give place to loving obedience under the inspirations of light and love. She remembered what Elder Hooper had once said: "You will think better of the Lord when you get more acquainted with him," and hoped this would be also true in the case of her son.

But John was as much a rebel as ever his mother had been, though he was not tormented with any of the old-fashioned "strong doctrines." There are dregs and settlings of evil in human nature, and whether souls are stirred with the golden wand of some son of consolation or shaken violently in the grip of a son of thunder, the effect is very much the same. No apparent clearness which is simply the result of quietness is to be taken as proof of a sanctified soul; the mass must be clarified by the divine chemistry; only thus can it be brought to a purity that is not dependent on outside conditions.

Mrs. Leighton's rebellious soul had been violently shaken by the terrible idea that she ought to be willing to be damned; that of her son was disturbed by the precious thought that he ought to be willing to be saved, and to assist in the salvation of others. So the main trouble, after all, was not in the school of doctrine, but in the enmity of the carnal mind.

In this rebellious state of will John might have swung over from orthodoxy to atheism in his efforts to get away from God but the mild and gentle system of the Rev. Didymus D'Auber, so full of shifts, conveniences, and compromises, offered him a resting place midway between the two.

He had been proof against all the "minister talk," of the ordinary men who had preached to him. Those simple-minded ministers had, year after year, faced him squarely with the Word of God; offering him no other terms of salvation except those laid down in the Gospel; they had belabored him continually with Christ's discourse to Nicodemus, the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, and such like Scripture topics, till, in sheer desperation, he had often shut his heart and ears against them, and roused his will to furious resistance. But there was one thing those simple-minded orthodox preachers had not taught him, and that was, how to evade the force of the Gospel. Under their primitive tactics the battle was joined between the will of God on one side and the will of the sinner on the other; and on this line they insisted it must be fought.



D'Auber, on the other hand, relied chiefly on strategy. He did not believe in worrying people.

"Let an honest, inquiring soul take his own way for a time; he will be sure to find out the right turn by and by," said his reverence to Father Cornelius, an old Irish Methodist class-leader, who, the pastor thought, was inclined to be too severe with sinners.

"That is like my old neighbor, Tim Moynahan," replied Father Cornelius. "Tim lived jist forninst the Dunshlaughlin turf pits, on the turnpike, atwixt Drougheda and Ballysloughthery. The praste at Bally was a great friend of Tim's, and one day when he was down at Tim's place he took a liking to a fine pig that Tim had.

"'Ye had better drive the pig up to my sty at Bally,' says the praste, 'and I'll bring him up like a gentleman.' So Tim promised to do it.

"Well, a few days after that I was coming up from Drougheda, and I met Tim wid a rope tied to his leg a drivin' the pig, and him a tuggin' and sweatin' and squealin' and tryin' to persuade him.

"'Where are ye travelin' along o' that stubborn baste?' says I.

"'Whist!' says Tim, 'don't spake a word. It's to Ballysloughthery I'm drivin' him; but he thinks he's goin' to Drougheda.'

"'Shure,' says I, 'he is goin' to Drougheda. Ye are half-way there this blessed minnit.'

"'Quite true,' says Tim. 'I'm just a humorin' him a trifle; but he'll take the right turn by and by.'

"Now, it's my opinion," continued Father Cornelius, "that it's the wrong road to travel, this humorin' an unregenerate sinner wid the trinkets and trifles of this world; an' it's a long road, too, afore he'll iver turn to repintance av his own accord. It isn't such a long way to Bally from the Dunshlaughlin turf pits, av ye take the right road; but ye'll niver git there by travelin' the road to Drougheda; and, by the same token, av ye want to git souls to glory, it's my opinion ye hadn't better start off wid 'em on the road to Tophet."

On one occasion the Reverend D'Auber gave this definition of Truth:

"Truth is conformity to the highest ideal. For instance, truth in art is conformity to nature -- a picture of a tree that looks like a real tree, or a portrait of a face that looks like the real face. So truth in character is conformity to one's highest ideal of virtue.

"In another sense truth is sunshine; and, as every blossom and every fruit takes its own share of the universal light and heat, so every soul must find out its own portion of the infinite, universal truth; and out of that make its own religion."

This made a profound impression upon young Leighton; it opened a way out of his difficulties. His highest ideal of virtue was not to be a minister of the Gospel -- decidedly not; therefore, truth and religion, for him, could not lie in that direction.

Father Cornelius, who had listened to the same discourse, remarked:

"That sunshine doctrine would do for us av we was all roses and cherries and squashes and corn; but it mayn't be good for the children of God. Jesus Christ is their truth and their sunshine; but it's my opinion Mister D'Auber's notion of truth isn't even moonshine."

Of the same discourse Mr. Alexander Layard, who was now a senior at the Grand Trunk and one of D'Auber's chief admirers, said:

"How admirable! That is according to my own religio-philosophical axiom, which I enunciated years ago: 'As far as I am concerned, all things are what they are to me.' Surely Truth could have no more profound and exhaustive definition."

Thus under the name and sign of religion, under the protecting wings of an Evangelical Church and a Christian school of learning, young Leighton drifted further and further out, till scarcely the bold headlands of the faith of his father and mother were visible. His captain, the Reverend Didymus D'Auber, had mistaken himself for another Columbus, bravely voyaging, with his liberal crew, in search of new worlds; while, to say the truth, his was a dismantled hulk gone adrift, sailing at the will of winds and tides and currents; or, worse, steered by a helmsman who shaped his course by looking at his own wheel and deck, or scanning the shifting horizon of the sea.

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### 13 -- THE SHAKESPEARE CLUB

Judging by the additions to the Church in the D'Auber revival it ought to have been on the top wave of prosperity; but the religious life languished, and the parish treasurer reported no improvement. The new converts had been converted to the Reverend Didymus and his liberal Christianity; but the converting process had stopped at that point. Conversion was, however, regarded by the pastor as a gradual and not an instantaneous work of grace. There was hope, therefore, that, after a little rest, the conversion would start up and go on again, and that the converts who were already converted to D'Auber would at last also be converted to Christ. Meanwhile the duties and sacrifices usually expected of mature believers could not reasonably be looked for in those young disciples, some of whom had united with the Church as an experiment, and did not care to invest any money in it till they should be satisfied that it was going to be of some real benefit to them.

Father Cornelius, whose Irish heart was very much bound up in the old-fashioned means of grace, noticed with regret that the Church meetings instead of improving rather fell off, and ventured to ask his pastor the reason.

"These people do just as you do," answered the Reverend D'Auber. "You go to prayer-meetings because you like to; they stay away for the same reason. I have not heard any of them complain of you for going too much, and I do not see why you should complain of them for going too little. Besides, you are a full-grown believer, and these are but babes. You like strong meat, but they need milk."

"True for ye, Mister D'Auber," said Father Cornelius. "'As new-born babes desire the sinsare milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.' That's what St. Peter says about it. Now, it's jist as my old friend, Felix O'Boyle, said to Father Dunphy when he tried to get away his Bible from him:

"'It is the Bible cow,' says Felix, 'that gives the sinsare milk; an' I think I'd better kape her and milk her for meself.'

"Now, Mister D'Auber, av ye'd tache thim babes to milk the Bible cow, and learn thim to be fond of the milk, no doubt but they'd grow up to be strong and lustly men and wimin in the Church; but it's my opinion that they'll get awful thin on milk and water, especially av ye make it so powerful strong of the water."

D'Auber received this homely advice with his usual bland smile, and by way of changing the topic of conversation invited Father Cornelius to attend the next meeting of the Shakespeare Club, which invitation, somewhat to his surprise, the good man accepted with thanks.

The Shakespeare Club was one of the extra means of grace which D'Auber had contrived for the early development of some of his "babes," who hadn't got their eyes open sufficiently to see any thing interesting in the Bible, and were otherwise in such an imperfect condition that they could not get to prayer-meetings, class-meetings, and the like. This exercise soon became popular, not only with the babes themselves, but also with some of the university men, who were not unwilling to begin religion in a small way under the auspices of Hamlet and Brutus, which D'Auber regarded as a good and Certain hope that they would gradually develop an interest in the prophets and apostles.

Among the more hopeful cases of this sort in the pastor's estimation was Mr. Alexander Layard, whose too ardent pursuit of learning had, as we have seen, interrupted his college life, but who had returned with renewed health and vigor, and was now the chief literary light of the Senior Class. If his lengthened experience had not made him a correct young gentleman it had perfected him in the art of appearing as such. His wonderful dramatic gifts made him at once the pride and glory of the Shakespeare Club, and D'Auber had hopes of bringing him next into the college Church.

Leighton, too, whom his old tutor had introduced with all the honors -- a most unusual condescension from a Senior to a Freshman -- had begun to manifest a decided talent for oratory, in view of which Mr. Layard had reconsidered his former advice concerning the career of his young protege, and now strongly urged him to devote himself to the stage. This idea had taken full possession of the young man ever since the occasion of certain theatricals which the pastor had introduced into the Sunday-school, wherein, along with the chanting of the Lord's Prayer and

the Apostles' Creed, the audience had been edified and convulsed with the dramatic sketch of "The Two Puddifuts" and the roaring farce of "The Skowheegan Yankee." In these two plays Leighton, under the tutelage of Layard, had greatly distinguished himself; and now there was nothing else worthy of his ambition but to shine as a theatrical star.

The session of the Shakespeare Club which Father Cornelius had promised to attend was to be a most brilliant one. "The Moralities of Shakespeare" was the topic of study, which moralities were to be set forth by some of the most brilliant talent the club afforded.

Mr. Layard having been informed of the coming of Father Cornelius, sought him out privately, made his acquaintance, and, by way of preparing him for the fullest enjoyment of the occasion, gave him some little insight into the aims and objects of the club, as well as into the character and history of certain Shakespearean worthies, whose moralities were to be set forth.

The club being a Church affair and designed to promote the graces of its members, the pastor had very properly been elected to its presidency, in which capacity he was a distinguished success; not because of any very large acquaintance with Shakespeare, but because of the semi-religious air his presence gave to the meeting, and the semi-religious turn he always gave to its proceedings.

"It helps my piety a great deal more to hear our dear, delightful D'Auber preach from Lear or Macbeth than it ever did to hear that horrid old Dr. Besom preach from Moses or Paul," said the gushing Mrs. Mollis.

This delicate compliment being carried to the reverend Didymus, he responded, "An every eye makes its own beauty, so every mind must find its own truth, every soul its own salvation."

The evening and the hour having arrived, the president took the chair. The janitor at this point removed the Bible from the little pulpit or reading-desk, which stood on the vestry platform, and laid it down on the floor; a proceeding which meant no harm; it was merely because, with the Bible on it the pulpit was too high. A beautiful quarto copy of the works of the great playwright was then taken out of a velvet case and placed where the Bible had been. This also meant nothing, except that a member of the club was very proud of her copy of the book, and took this innocent way of exhibiting it.

While this was being done Mr. Layard explained to Father Cornelius, who sat at his side, that Shakespeare was the author of a book which actors and other theater people read instead of the Bible; and that was why the books were changed. He had previously informed that worthy man that Shakespeare himself was worshipped for a saint by lovers of the theater, just as St. Patrick is by the Irish Catholics.

Every thing being now in readiness President D'Auber arose and said:

"Ladies and Sisters, Gentlemen and Brethren, -- I am happy to see in the assembly one who has never honored us with his presence before. Father Cornelius, will you please to come forward to the desk and lead us in an introductory invocation?"

"What is that?" whispered Father Cornelius to Mr. Layard.

"D'Auber wants you to pray."

Father Cornelius rose to his feet.

"Ye are too kind" to an auld man, who isn't much of a scholar, to ax him to pray, whin he isn't at all acquainted with the gods of this meetin'. Av ye were met together in the name of the Lord, now, I could strike right in onywheres; but it wouldn't be manners for the likes o' me to be prayin' to Saint Shakespeare, an' me never havin' an introduction to him."

Everybody smiled, except Mr. Layard. It was then decided to omit the "introductory invocation;" and after the transaction of some club business, the president announced as the first exercise on the program, "An Essay on the English Dramatic Prophet of the Sixteenth Century, by the Reverend Professor Limbre, of the Grand Trunk University."

The professor came forward with a voluminous manuscript, from which a few selections may be given:

"Shakespeareans, I address you as disciples of the greatest writer in the English tongue.

"There is a great diversity in religion as there also is in the forms of its manifestation. God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, doubtless spake to the English people of the sixteenth century by Shakespeare. Dryden, himself one of the greatest of English poets, says of him, 'We have in his works such a treasury of gnomie wisdom on all matters of human concernment as no other writer has ever bequeathed to the world.'

"Shakespeare, the many-sided, the inspired genius, the matchless delineator of nature, seems to contain within his single self the germs of all knowledges, the sense of all moralities, the aspirations of all religions. I have chosen to speak of this more-than-mortal-man -- aye, immortal now, in two worlds at least -- as the leading religious genius of his times.

"Every great language has been blessed with some inspired writer of it. David in Hebrew; Homer in Greek; Sankara in Sanskrit; Virgil in Latin; Ossian in Celtic; Shakespeare in English. But the Prophet of Stratford-on-Avon is more than a poet, like David or Homer; like Socrates and Moses he is a philosopher and a seer. The poetry of Homer contains the most artistic formulary of the religion of Greece; the songs of David and Isaiah were the poetic embodiment of the faith of their age and race; but the works of Shakespeare, though not nominally religious, are the dramatic projection of the moral and spiritual life of all sorts of men in all ages of the world, as well as of the English nation in the sixteenth Christian century. (Applause.) Whoever understands Shakespeare in his moral breadth, finds him rapturously at home in the kingdom to

come of the Christian life. He has the apocalyptic power of vision. I credit him with a part not second to that of any other man in the moralizing of the Anglican race... He is one of the most eloquent translators of the Bible--"

At this point in the discourse Father Cornelius turned to Mr. Layard and asked him when Mr. Shakespeare translated the Bible, and where he could find a copy of the book.

"The work is out of print," replied that learned gentleman; "but his character of Sir John Falstaff is supposed to be the Bible Samson; and his play of the 'Midsummer Night's Dream' represents a scene in the Garden of Eden before the Fall, when the animals all could talk, you know. It isn't very accurate, for Shakespeare has several other people there besides Adam and Eve, whom he calls Theseus and Hippolyta."

The Reverend Professor Limbre closed his essay with an impassioned apostrophe to the shade of his favorite author; at which, after the applause had subsided, Mrs. Mollis remarked to her friend Mrs. Foly:

"How beautiful! How Shakespearean! Don't you really think that actors, scene-shifters, supes, and other theater people might be saved by praying to Shakespeare? He is their prophet, you know, just as Professor Limbre says; and they don't ever hear much of any other. Wouldn't it be so nice and liberal in God if he would only fix it for them that way?"

The next performance was "a brief recitation" from the play of "Julius Caesar," by Colonel Horatius Puffenblow, one of the great lights of the club, and a general favorite, especially with the ladies.

He had selected the act containing those modest, patriotic, and pious utterances of "the good Brutus," as Professor Limbre had called him in his essay, wherein the character of this assassin had been held up as one of Shakespeare's chief "moralities." When he reached the words:

"As Caesar loved me. I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honor him; but, as he was ambitious, I slew him!"

Father Cornelius turned to Mr. Layard and asked in a whisper:

"Is that what Saint Shakespeare teaches for morality?"

"Wait till he gets along a little further," said his young friend.

"With this I depart; that as I slew my best lover for the good of Rome, I have the same dagger for myself when it shall please the country to need my death."

"Did Rome ask Mister Brutus to kill the man they call Julius Sayzar?" anxiously inquired Cornelius, in a hoarse whisper. "No."

"An' wasn't Mister Brutus the sheriff or the hangman: or something in that way?"

"No; he was a sort of a politician, like Puffenblow there," answered Mr. Layard. "Now attend closely to the play. There will be opportunity for questions pretty soon. and then you can ask the chairman all about it."

The grand feature of the evening was yet to come: nothing less than the reading of the best parts of "The Merchant of Venice," with D'Auber himself as Antonio, Professor Limbre as Bassanio, Puffenblow as Shylock, Leighton as Portia; the minor characters being distributed among the less distinguished members of the club.

This was also one of the Shakespearean "moralities," of which Professor Limbre had said in his essay "Nowhere in literature, sacred or secular. can there be found the equal of the noble, self-sacrificing Christian friendship of Antonio and Bassanio."

"What's all this?" asked Father Cornelius, as the characters, book in hand, took their places inside the communion-rail.

"Some more of Shakespeare's translation of the Bible," replied Layard. "Shylock there is Moses; Portia is Queen Esther; Antonio and Bassanio are David and Jonathan."

The reading was admirable. Antonio was thoughtful and resigned; Bassanio was warm and wayward; Shylock was cold and savage; Portia Was sweet and shrewd. There were some choice bits in the play which it was thought best to omit, owing to the presence of some young ladies, but the rest of that remarkable composition was given with great force and spirit. Even Father Cornelius was evidently captivated by it. That simpleminded man sat with his face shining and glowing by turns; and many a quiet chuckle was indulged in by the Shakespearians at the so easy conversion of their most stubborn opposer, and the sport they would have out of him on account of it.

When the reading was over President D'Auber resumed the chair, and announced that the usual time would be allowed for criticisms and questions.

"Now's your time," said Mr. Layard to his venerable friend, in a hoarse whisper, loud enough to be heard by every body in the room; upon which there was a general hush of expectation, and an exchange of winks and nods among the more knowing ones in view of the prospect of a speech from Father Cornelius.

Finding that the good man hesitated, Colonel Puffenblow started a call for him, which was taken up so heartily that even his Irish modesty: was overcome, and he rose to his feet with a broad smile on his weather-beaten face, which movement was greeted with vigorous applause.

"Av it wouldn't be intrudin, I'd like to ask a question or two by way of instructin' me own ignorance," said Father Cornelius.

"Go on! go on!" cried twenty voices at once.

"Well, now, av ye plaze, is it readin' Shakespeare ye are for the morals of it?"

"Certainly, that is to say, we have the Moralities this evening; another time we shall have the Philosophy; another time the Poetry; another time the Humor; and so on, of the great dramatist," answered President D'Auber.

"Thank ye, kindly, Mister D'Auber. An' will ye plaze tell me what that foine gintleman ye call Julius Sayzar had done that him ye call 'the good Brutus' should murder him; and him all the time a great friend of his?"

"He was too ambitious," said the President. "Av I take the sinse of it rightly," said Father Cornelius, beginning to warm up a little, "it's like as av that beautiful gintleman, Mister Puffenblow, there, should be tryin' to get elected to Congress next year; and I bein' a great friend of his think he is gettin' too ambishus, and put a knife into him; and come out as a candidate for Congress mesilf directly after. Is that the rights of it?"

"Quite right, quite right," said Mr. Layard, who was fearful that the sudden silence might lead to an unpleasant interruption of his venerable pupil's discourse.

"And thin," continued Cornelius, "av thim chaps with the blue coats and stars onto 'em come to arrest me, I bring out the knife with Sayzar's -- I beg pardon -- Puffenblow's blud onto it; and I say, 'Americans,' says I, 'I am a patriot. Puffenblow and I was swate friends. Heaven rest his soul! But he had a hankerin' after a sate in Congress; and I was afeared he'd get it, sure enough; and thin I put this knife into him, because I thought more of Congress nor I did of him. But don't give yourselves any trouble about me. I am kapin' the very same knife to put into me own bowels, when I feel like it, and when I think the country can spare me jist as well as not.' Thin Professor Limbre there goes and writes a foine discoorse all about me, and calls me The Good Cornelius; and all this fine company comes together in the church to study the moralities of me, with the minister to preside over the meetin'.

"Is that the true sitation of the case, av ye plaze?" "All right; go ahead," whispered Mr. Layard. "Thin there was another of them 'Moralities,' as ye call 'em; that soft-headed gintleman, Mister Antonio, what lent a big lot of money to that wild, carousin' chap they call Bassiano, and, after he'd wasted it all in riotous livin', instid of comin' to his old uncle, like the prodigal to his father, and ownin' up and tryin' to behave himsilf; he comes and wants to borrow three thousand ducats more; the brazen-faced spalpeen! Am I right, will any of yees tell me?"

Mr. Layard nodded assent, and Father Cornelius went on, giving way to his feelings rather more than was good for him.

"Antonio won't let him have any more money at first; but the young chap says, he knows a foine, young girl with a big fortin', an' he thinks he could marry her av he only had money for the coortin' expinses. Thin Antonio thinks it's his only chance for iver seein' his money agin, and so he borrows three thousand ducats more and linds them to Bassanio to help him get a rich wife.



"It's just a trick to marry that young scamp to Portia because she's rich, and divide her money 'atween 'em; the villains!

"Ah! there's many a nice girl been befooled wid just such a handsome, lyin', chatin', money-borrowin' rogue!

"Well, when he gets the girl money an' all-poor thing! instead of going back to Venice and payin' his debts like a dacint man, he lets Mister Antonio get into the clutches of the Jew; and purty soon comes a letter a-tellin' him his creditor is goin' to be carved up by old Shylock. Small doubt but the young villain was glad of it down in the bottom of his black heart, for then he wouldn't have to pay the money at all; but that beautiful Portia wouldn't let him die without tryin' to save him.

"Thin Bassanio comes into coort a swellin' and braggin', with his pockets full o' his wife's money, and offers the Jew a big pile of it; and Shylock won't have it.

"Thin he offers his own flesh and blood. He knows it's Antonio's blood Shylock wants, and that he cares no more for Bassanio's carcass than for that many pounds of pork.

"Thin he offers the Jew the world -- if he had it -- the swindlin' braggart!

"Thin he offers him his wife. Ugh! the baste!

"Fine 'moralities' them is, indade! Fine translation of the Bible!

"D'ye think av David had borrowed some money of Jonathan, and knowed he was in danger of losin' his swate life on account of it, he'd go off and stay till the time was up, coortin' a purty woman, instead of tryin' to raise the money and payin' the debt?

"Av that's Mister Shakespeare's idee of true friendship, ye can kape it ta yerselves, for all me.

"An' so thim babes are readin' Shakespeare for moralities, are they?

"Ye'd betther set 'em a-fishin' up the moon out of the water for a cheese. Av it's moralities they are after, they'll find moralities a dale more plinty in the Bible."

Father Cornelius sat down with the air of a man who had done his duty and freed his mind. No further criticisms or questions were proposed. Even Professor Limbre was silent. The chairman then, with most impressive manner, said:

"Let us close with one of Shakespeare's benedictions." At which the congregation rose, and the Reverend D'Auber recited the words from Hamlet: "Angels and ministers of grace defend us!"

\* \* \* \* \*

## 14 -- TOO MUCH SUCCESS

The remarks of Father Cornelius on the moralities of Shakespeare created no little commotion. D'Auber attempted to excuse his rudeness on the ground of his ignorance and narrow-mindedness; Professor Limbre pitied him for his want of appreciation; Mrs. Mollis and her set were furious; Mr. Layard laughed; Colonel Puffenblow swore; but to John Mark Leighton the words of the old man were like whips of scorpions. The dramatic mania had captured him, soul and body; Shakespeare was his ideal, if not his idol. His rebellious soul, fighting against duty, had taken great comfort in the moralities of the great playwright, which he tried to persuade himself would serve instead of that old-fashioned piety preached by Elder Hooper.

Professor Limbre, who for some unaccountable reason seemed to forget the teaching of the great Moralist, to the effect that "a corrupt tree can not bring forth good fruit," was never weary of pointing out the sublime religious beauty of his favorite writer, till this great dramatist, whose life was a scandal, and much of whose diction is a disgrace, came to be in the mind of young Leighton more a Psalmist than David, more a seer than Daniel.

He had never seen any of the great Shakespearean actors, and he had never cared to see those cheap sensational dramas which, for the most part, occupy the theatrical stage. Once, indeed, at the invitation of his friend Layard, he had visited a play-house "just to see what it was like," where he alternately laughed and blushed, the thought continually tormenting him, "What if my mother saw me here?"

"Your father does see you," said a voice at his side. He started and looked about him. No one had spoken; every one was intent upon the marvelous and monstrous performance of a very brilliant danseuse.

"Come, Layard," said he, seizing his hat, "I have had enough of this;" and the two young men left the "temple of art" together.

"Rather too strong for you, eh?" said one of the ushers sneeringly, observing the look on Leighton's face as he passed out. "We must put on a little catechism to suit such delicate stomachs as yours."

Leighton's passion for the stage was by no means cooled, but rather warmed by the half-concealed iniquity he had witnessed.

"It is evident the stage needs reforming," said he, as the two walked home;" but for that matter, so does almost every thing else. Perhaps I can give a lift at that point myself."

"What will you use for a lever?" asked Layard.

"Why, Shakespeare, of course. He is the great apostle of the moral drama."

Mr. Layard laughed. "My dear deluded friend," said he, "there is no need to reform the stage; it is well enough as it is. These theater people work for money, just as D'Auber preaches, or Puffenblow pleads, or Father Cornelius drives all. express wagon for motley; and they know to a dot what suits the most people in a given community. If they were to tone up the morals of the thing it would at once cease to pay; and no man in this wicked world can be expected to do a losing business from choice."

"But a reformed drama would gain patronage from good people."

"Mistaken again. Good people, when they go to the theater, go for the same reason that other people do; chiefly, all of them, because the theater gives them a chance to enjoy sin without themselves becoming sinners. For example, some people enjoy murders; but they don't want to kill any body, so they go to the theater and see the murdering done in a tragedy. So of every other kind of crime and folly which are the chief ingredients of high tragedy and low comedy. By going to the theater you can see for half a dollar more of the world, the flesh, and the devil than you would feel justified in looking at for nothing anywhere else. Actors and actresses imitate all sorts of iniquity in the name of 'art,' but every body knows it is the iniquity and not the art that theater-goers want to see.

"There is Puffenblow, now; he is all the time talking about art and moralities and aesthetics as illustrated in the drama. Stuff and nonsense! I've seen him many a time at a play which was pretty spicy, and no man took in more of the fun than he. These 'alf-and-'alf Christians who talk about reforming the drama don't want it reformed any more than we sinners do. What they want is to be able to go to the theater as it is, without losing their respectability. Now, my boy, if you can invent some way by which they can do that, your fortune is made"

This view of the case gave Leighton no little trouble, and when Father Cornelius added his comments, as above recited, the stage-struck youth was in actual distress. He had not given himself up to a life of vice and folly; he had devoted himself to 'art.' The fascination of the actor's profession was on him. He had reveled in that unnamable intoxication which always attends on impassioned oratory, and which is heightened into temporary insanity by the acting of wild, wicked, or pathetic parts. He had learned a little of the witchcraft of the drama whereby he could go out of his own life into all sorts of imaginary ones, and back again, -- a semi-mesmeric, semi-diabolic power without which no man or woman ever becomes a theatrical "star."

But opposed to this was that genuine honesty of his nature which had once been his salvation, and which still, in his view of religion, answered the place of piety. These two powers strove within him for the mastery: conscience versus art.

The storm raged for weeks together, till at length, in sheer desperation, he resolved to state the case to his minister, and seek his godly counsel.

"I do not see why the theater, with its accessories of scenery, costume, magnetism, and music, should not be captured for the use of the Church," said the Reverend Didymus D'Auber, when this anxious inquirer had opened his mind to him. "You know the apostle says, 'All things are yours.' In my judgment it is a great mistake for good people to keep this dramatic talent laid

up in a napkin, or, what is the same thing, give it wholly over to those who do not belong to the Church.

This is a work-a-day world, in which Christians need some kind of amusement as well as sinners; and if you, my dear young friend, with your brilliant talents for that very mission, could give us a theater which we all could attend without question, you would be a benefactor to your race."

"Do you then approve of my choice of the dramatic, profession?"

"Certainly -- but confidentially. There is still a great deal of prejudice among us against that profession, and I do not wish to offend any good, but narrow-minded, people; after the fashion of Father Cornelius, you know. I can think of nothing else in which you would do as well unless it be the ministry. Have you a taste for the clerical profession?"

"No; a thousand times, no!"

"Then, of course, you ought not to think of it. We must not neglect our natural tastes and aptitudes; they are the basis of success in life."

At first Leighton felt relieved by this advice of his pastor; but after a while it occurred to him that D'Auber had only spoken of the theater as a place of amusement. Should he then give his life to the task of making people laugh and cry over mere imitations of follies and crimes? He was in trouble again.

Even the philosophy of the sagacious Mr. Layard failed to raise his spirits. That gentleman, full of sympathy and friendship for his old pupil, placed at his disposal his varied stores of knowledge and experience; but all to no purpose. John, or Jack, as Layard called him, was too sick in mind to be cured by any of his prescriptions. When he succeeded in shaking off the sense of God's claim upon him it was only to encounter the vow and the prayers of his mother; and if for a little that pressure was removed, it was only that he might more clearly feel the power and presence of his father. If that had been simply the will of a living man he could have defied it, but it was the will of a dead man, who was more alive than ever. He could at times defy his Father, the Lord God Almighty, but he never ventured to trifle with his father, John Mark Leighton. The former he knew only by hearing and feeling; the latter he knew by sight. Over and over again that face looked out at him from its gilded circle, and those dear, blue eyes full of reproof and tenderness, were more terrible to him than all the Ten Commandments of his divine Father, with Calvary in the foreground and Sinai in the distance. Thus the charity of the father was wrought into salvation for his son.

Learning is a beautiful thing, even at a distance. On this account the annual Commencement of the Grand Trunk University, which signaled the entrance of that learned body of men called Seniors upon "the grand arena of life," was a great occasion to all the country round. Our worthy friends Mr. and Mrs. Zachariah Goodsmith had been accustomed to lend their sun-burned countenances to that great occasion; and now that the admirable Mr. Alexander Layard was to ascend in plain sight of common people, to the climax of college glory they

certainly would not fail to be present. Mrs. Leighton, also, who, ever since the evening when she had pushed him over the precipice of his own building in order to save her son, had felt a sorrowful interest in him and a kind of responsibility for him, determined to be present. She wished also to become better acquainted with the school to whose tender mercies she had confided her son, and to know the various influences thereabouts to which he was subjected.

Of late she had noticed in his letters sad evidences of departure from the truth, which almost always occurred in connection with some praise of the Reverend Didymus D'Auber. John often referred to him as "a progressive Christian," "a liberal-minded man," "a thinker," "a philosopher," to whom he felt under great obligations for helping him out of a perfect snarl and tangle of doctrinal troubles. Of his new passion for the stage he said nothing to his mother, even though he had fortified himself in this position by the concurrence of his spiritual adviser; but when she signified her intention of coming to Commencement he bethought himself of "A Night with Shakespeare," which the club were arranging as one of the outside attractions of that eventful week, and determined to show himself to his mother in all his tragic glory; after which it would be easier to break to her the news of his choice of the dramatic profession. Accordingly he wrote a brilliant account of the club; mentioned that the Reverend D'Auber was its President, that its members included quite a number of religious people, and closed with this sentence:

"Our minister thinks I have unusual talent in a dramatic way, and says there is plenty of good to be done on the stage as well as in the pulpit." The kind of "good" to be done on the stage he did not stop to point out.

Commencement week was an occasion for hospitality. The friends of the University, including the dwellers in every house within a mile, gave themselves up to the pleasant duty of entertaining strangers, and many were the angels they entertained unawares. As the result of his cordial reception and courteous entreaty on the part of these delightful literary people many a sturdy farmer had sold a piece of land, or raised an extra section of corn in order to "dedicate the boy" at the Grand Trunk University. Real estate in its vicinity was always more active after Commencement week, so attractive was the choice and cheery society of that region; while there were a good many pieces of paper hidden away waiting for somebody's funeral, whereon appeared the Honorable Board of Trustees and Senate of the Grand Trunk University as legatees of comfortable sums of money and valuable lands and houses; the same being due to the hospitality of those excellent people during the most interesting week of the college year.

Leighton had come to be the especial favorite with the older members of the Shakespeare Club; and when it was known that his mother was about to honor them with a visit he had his choice of half a dozen places for her entertainment. He finally concluded to bestow that honor upon his friend Colonel Puffenblow; as well on account of that gentleman's gracious way with the ladies as of the convenience of his elegant mansion to all the various points of interest. He was sure the Colonel would be delighted with his mother, and he cherished a faint hope that the influence of that distinguished Shakespearean might soften her opposition to his chosen line of life. Thus it came about, in due time, that Mrs. Leighton was set down as the guest of Colonel Puffenblow.

That distinguished gentleman had intended to be very impressive and instructive to this woman, who, coming from a small village in the country, and being, as he had understood, a person of small possessions and dependent on her own exertions for a living, would, of course, be quite overwhelmed with himself, his fine house, and every other glory of that glorious place and time; but when he came to be introduced to his rural guest he was unable to conceal his admiration and surprise. He was a judge of splendid women, was the Colonel; and Mrs. Leighton came fully up to that mark. Where could she have acquired that Unconscious grace of movement, that self-contented dignity, that perfect gentle-womanliness which distinguished her?

"Mother, this is your kind and generous host, Colonel Puffenblow. Colonel, this is Mrs. Leighton," said John, proudly.

The Colonel could hardly believe his ears or his eyes. He could not patronize that lady. Whoever she might be, or whence soever she might have come, she was the peer of any lady he had ever seen. For an instant he was thrown off his equilibrium, -- a fact which John noticed with intense delight -- but directly he found his tongue, a member whose use that gentleman very seldom lost for any great length of time.

"Welcome, madam; most welcome! Do you know that the people of our city have contended with your son and with each other for the honor of your presence? Really, my dear young friend, I must thank you over again for bringing this lady under my humble roof."

The widow responded with that leisurely grace which only a very well-bred woman can command under a shower of compliments. Her voice also agreed with her manners. It was a voice, trained and purified by a good deal of use in talking with the Lord, whom she regarded now as a personal Friend; a voice made sweet and gentle by boundless love and chastened power. The Colonel did not recognize the reason of its depth and sweetness, but its tones thrilled him. He looked at his guest till his look became almost a stare; then his accustomed impudence gave way to respectful admiration, and he almost blushed to think he had ventured to speak to such a woman as he was accustomed to speak to Mrs. Mollis and the other female Shakespearians.

After a brief exchange of civilities the Colonel excused himself to go and bring his wife.

"She's glorious!" said he to that busy little woman, who was cumbered about the much serving incident to the expected addition of six or eight Commencement people to her own ample household. "She's glorious! Such eyes! Such a voice! Such action! Why, wifey, she actually knows how to stand up and look you in the face without seeming to be thinking of herself!"

The busy little wife of Colonel Puffenblow actually smiled at his praises of the widow, for Mrs. Leighton was one of those superior mortals whose superiority did not excite envy.

"She must have the best room in the house," said the Colonel.

"She has it already," answered his wife.

There were some distinguished people to lodge at the Puffenblow mansion, and its mistress had mentally disposed them according to an imaginary scale of rank and dignity in such manner as left only the little bedroom over the hall to "that widow from the country." But when the lady arrived, first in order of all her guests, the hostess experienced that delightful emotion called love at first sight, -- a passion which usually implies the meeting of two people of opposite sexes, but which, in a way, sometimes occurs between two women of opposite, or, more properly speaking, of responsive dispositions.

Instead of sending a servant to show her the little room she suddenly changed her mind, and herself conducted her admirable guest to the large south chamber over the drawing-room. Then she contrived various little reasons for staying in her presence as long as she could, offering this and that sisterly attention with a manner so loving and child-like that the widow, who was used to having sweet little women come to bask in the sunshine of her smile, made a place for this one in her generous heart. Thus it came to pass that, before the two appeared again in the rooms below, the hostess had turned her confiding heart inside out for her guest to see how much she longed for love and sympathy, and in return had felt herself the subject of a real benediction as the widow took her bright little face between her two hands, and bent down to give her a kiss, just as a great stout husband sometimes does to his diminutive wife, or a mother does to her child.

This was no new experience to Mrs. Leighton. She was one of those women who might be called Sisters of Charity, if that name had not been captured by a Church guild. She was accustomed to have people tell her all they knew, and beg for some of her knowledge to help them out of trouble. Her head was the safe receptacle of all sorts of secrets, both happy or wretched; and her heart was a fountain of womanly tenderness which overflowed into every troubled life that placed itself within her circle of blessing. Mothers, whose sons were wild, had come to her for pity; girls, whose lovers were inconstant, had come to her to learn how to hate them; sisters, whose brothers were going astray, had come to her for counsel how to bring them back; souls in trouble because of sin had made her their mother-confessor; while numbers of happy little women and children fluttered about her as moths do about a candle, fascinated by her great deep black eyes, her glorious womanly presence, and that peculiar gentleness which comes only of conscious power.

The only real gentleness is a zephyr, which might just as well have been a hurricane.

Thus Mrs. Leighton entered at once into the best graces of her host and hostess; and ill spite of the presence of half a dozen self-important men and overdressed women, retained the place of honor till the last.

The "Night with Shakespeare" was the first of the public exercises on Commencement week, which performance Mrs. Leighton had come thus early to attend. Such an act, her own son being about to appear in one of the principal parts, seemed to indicate her sympathy with the aims and objects of the club. John had been particular to tell the Colonel that his mother was coming early for this express purpose, which left the impression on the mind of that gentleman that Mrs. Leighton was a woman after the fashion of Mrs. Mollis or Mrs. Foley or Mrs. D'Auber.

When, therefore, he found her so admirable, and apparently so learned withal -- for this hard-working woman had read the best books and knew the most important events that were going on in the world -- the colonel claimed her at once as a Shakespearean sister.

"What a Lady Macbeth she would make!" said that enthusiastic gentleman.

"She seems to me more like the mother of our Lord," said his enthusiastic little wife.

Colonel Puffenblow was a fine-looking, plausible person, a lawyer by profession, but devoting his talents mostly to politics and speculations in real estate. By the former he hoped to become famous; by the latter he had apparently become rich. He was a gentleman "of large discourse," whose head was ever swarming with schemes, and whose tongue was ever ready to render a reason for them. Always on the watch for a chance to increase his popularity, he made himself one of the most agreeable of men, -- except, perhaps, to those who were so unfortunate as to have any business relations with him that implied their right to receive any value from him in actual money.

Not that the Colonel did not pay his debts; by no means. Not that he was miserly; on the contrary, at a ladies' fair or church dedication he was liberal, both in compliments and promises. He allowed no public charity to pass without the benefit of his countenance and name; but those poor mortals whose task it is to complete the dry details of such public performances, when they came to the record of Colonel Puffenblow's name on a verbal subscription list, instinctively began to cast about them, reflecting what venerable horse, what bit of swamp lands, or other unsalable property he might at that particular time be possessed of, which they would probably be asked to accept in lieu of ready money.

On one occasion the Colonel, with much feeling and admirable grace, gave his name at a public meeting for a thousand dollars! in aid of the building fund of the proposed new telescope and observatory. This subscription was received with much applause; but when Professor Goodwill called on him for the money, the Colonel made him the following proposition:

"My dear Professor, this is a map of my new addition to the town of Feliciana." Then followed a full description of the prospects of that rising city, which was at that time under about eighteen inches of water, it being just after the Spring rains.

"Here, in this favorable location, I have marked off ten lots, of an acre each, worth a thousand dollars an acre today; and when the new Hopeville and Bubbleton Railway, which passes through the very center of my town of Feliciana, is completed, those acre lots will readily sell for double that money.

"Now, Professor, I have long desired to become a patron of natural science, and when I laid out that new town, I said to myself, Puffenblow, now is your time. So I have laid off these ten lots for science; and as I wish to do better by you than I promised, I will make you these distinct propositions:



"1. The Observatory Committee may have the ten lots for ten thousand dollars, and I will allow you two thousand dollars of the money as my subscription. Just double payment, you see. Or,

"2. I will sell the Observatory Committee nine lots for nine thousand dollars, and I will pay nineteen hundred dollars of it myself. Or,

"3. I will sell them eight lots for eight thousand dollars, and I will pay eighteen hundred dollars of it myself.

"4. Or, if you prefer, I will sell you seven lots, acre lots, for seven thousand dollars, and I will pay seventeen hundred dollars of it myself.

"5. Or, if it suits you better, give me six thousand dollars for six lots, acre lots, favorably located, and I will donate sixteen hundred dollars to the Observatory.

"6. For five thousand dollars I will give the Observatory five acre lots, paying fifteen hundred dollars myself.

"7. Still again; for four thousand dollars I will give you four choice acre lots, and I will pay fourteen hundred dollars of the money myself.

"8. Furthermore, if the Observatory Committee buy three lots for three thousand dollars, call on me for thirteen hundred dollars.

"9. And once more; I will give the Observatory two lots, acre lots, for two thousand dollars, and I will pay twelve hundred dollars, an addition, as you observe, of two hundred dollars to my original subscription.

"You had better take my first proposition, for then you get two thousand instead of one, and the Observatory will derive all the advantage accruing from the rise of values in Feliciana real estate.

"Now, my dear Professor, isn't that liberal? Which of those propositions will you do me the honor to accept?"

"I will refer them all to our committee," said the Professor, in his courteous way; and then he went home to take off an inch from the proposed diameter of the proposed telescope, and to change his specifications for the tower, by writing "wood" for "stone."

Colonel Puffenblow was one of the more prominent converts in the Reverend Didymus D'Auber's revival. Under the pastorate of Dr. Besom he declared that he felt himself rather repelled than attracted by religion. The Doctor had a way of pricking bubbles, exposing shams, and insisting on the genuineness of every thing, which chilled the Colonel's exuberance of feeling. But on the advent of D'Auber the Church became his delight. He offered himself for membership and was received, thereby securing two advantages; first, gaining a new line for the

exercise of his fine feelings and his fine words; and, second, drawing to his support in certain political aspirations a number of "the brethren," who felt it their duty to stand by one of their own persuasion in religion, not only in matters of fellowship and duty, but also in all other matters. In the estimation of these good men their Church was a kind of club, whose members were bound to discriminate against all non-members and in favor of one another in business, politics, and every other worldly relation. This view of fellowship in Christ the Colonel turned to his own account, and thereby became more potent than ever in the affairs of that learned and pious community.

Still the Colonel was a good man; he said so himself, than whom no one was supposed to know him better, unless it were his wife. She also said he was a good man, that is, an amiable man, perhaps a trifle too amiable sometimes; while with his liberal pastor and his liberal brethren he was a very liberal Christian indeed.

The church-bell duly announced that the feast of reason was spread, so leaving his busy little wife a victim to her own hospitality, as is usual in such cases, the Colonel, in his best toilet, offered his arm to Mrs. Leighton, and conducted her to the sanctuary in his most elegant manner, where he ushered her into his pew, one of the best in the house. It was early, but the church was nearly full. The stage had been constructed by extending the pulpit platform out to the communion rail; the drop curtain, borrowed from one of the small theaters, was in place, while the sacramental table, draped with garlands, was converted into a pedestal for a colossal plaster bust of Shakespeare, which usually held the place of honor overlooking the bookcase in the Colonel's library.

This was a new sight to Mrs. Leighton. In her simplicity she had always imagined that when a house was dedicated to the worship of Almighty God it thenceforth belonged to him for that purpose, and might not be used for merry-making, money-getting, or other unreligious purposes.

But Mrs. Leighton had been brought up in a slow-going community in New England, where the idea of the sacredness of things dedicated to the Deity had not been driven out by that practical idea of general utility, under the workings of which the house of God is his only when in actual use on his behalf; at all other times it belongs to the people who built it; or, if it has been put up as a real estate speculation, it is the property of the company or individual who has chosen this form of investing money with a view to substantial returns.

The entrance of the portly Colonel Puffenblow with the elegant and stately Mrs. Leighton on his arm produced a very decided impression, which that gentleman did not fail to notice. Having given the lady every possible attention, he seated himself most complacently beside her, and began to look about him to catch and return the extra number of bows and smiles which he knew would fall to his lot in view of the remarkable good fortune of being in charge of the finest lady in the room. Mrs. Mollis and her set stared at the widow with the evident intention of finding something wrong with her; the Colonel's evident pride in the lady exasperated them; but when after the most searching scrutiny they could find absolutely nothing either in her manner, her dress, her face, or her figure to complain of, they began to gossip and giggle in a very noticeable manner, by way of asserting themselves, as if they had said, "We don't care if she is

such a magnificent woman, we aren't afraid of her. The Colonel needn't feel so stuck up; there are other people in the world besides that woman."

The Colonel returned the bows and smiles of his acquaintances with interest, giving now and then a slight, graceful wave of his hand, but trying to look as if he did not feel at all elated.

It wanted half an hour of the time for the curtain to rise, which brief space of time was long enough for Mrs. Leighton to discover the whole interior of the mystery she had come to explore.

The Colonel was in his most self-satisfied mood, which signified that he was also confidential in the extreme; for when that gentleman's vanity was touched, he was ready to tell almost every thing he knew, besides a great many other things which he did not know. A few well directed questions brought out the entire history of the Reverend D'Auber; his liberal and progressive notions of theology and Church government; the revival under his ministry; the organization of the Shakespeare Club; its remarkable success, particularly in developing and directing the dramatic taste in her talented son; the opposition of the "old fogies;" and the admirable skill with which D'Auber managed the situation.

"Would he not find less difficulty with a Church wholly composed of people who hold similar views with himself?"

"My dear madam," replied the Colonel impressively, "you know there are obstructionists to be found everywhere; slow-going people who ought to have been born a century or two ago. We have such people in our Church, of course, who oppose the liberal views and policy of our popular and eloquent pastor, -- a rather strong party of them, I am sorry to say, headed by no less a person than the president of the University. But the world moves; yes, the world moves. We shall be in the majority one of these days, and then" -- here the Colonel gave a significant nod, dropping his head a little on one side, and glancing at his listener to see how she was affected.

It was the same calm, beautiful face, only he thought those black eyes were opened a little wider than usual. She was evidently interested in what he was saying; she had come a long way to attend The Night with Shakespeare; her son was going to be an actor; of course, she was on his and D'Auber's side. Thus assured, he went on.

"D'Auber is a sly dog. He knows on which side his bread is buttered. There are not a great many congregations of liberals in these parts, and for him to leave the parish just because there are some old-fashioned Christians in it would be imitating the dog in the fable, who dropped the bone he held in his jaws for the sake of getting the bigger one which he saw in the jaws of his shadow in the water.

"He has managed beautifully, has D'Auber. I don't think I could have done it better myself. Of course, what he wants is a pulpit of his own, where he can preach just what he likes; but if he were to cut loose from his orthodox relations and go over to the liberals they might not have a pulpit for him; so he stays. He has acted with consummate genius in bringing religion within the reach of many of our more elegant and wealthy people, who used to despise it, or

think of it as a far-away sort of thing; but now these people are attracted by it, and a good many of our most brilliant ladies and gentlemen have joined his Church. So we liberals are almost in the majority, and another revival such as he got up last Winter would put the whole thing into our hands."

"I suppose it would add to his influence with the body of liberal Christians if he could take a fine church edifice over with him."

"Certainly, madam. You ought to be a lawyer, you have such a fine appreciation of the real advantages in the case.

"Now this church property is worth at least fifty thousand dollars -- I am a real estate man myself, and know the value of such property at least fifty thousand dollars. Dr. Besom did a capital thing for us when he made those old fogies pay off the last of the church debts.

"D'Auber has had several calls to liberal pastorates, but they were all poor. But here he has only to be a little guarded in his preaching for a year or two, and by that time we can snap our fingers in the faces of the president and his evangelicals, as we call them; and when we get a safe majority in the board of management, so that we can control the church property, he will come out more strongly with his liberal views, and the malcontents will have nothing to do but leave."

"Have the liberal party in the Church ever invested much money in it?"

"No; oh no. It will be so much clear gain to us."

"It is a fine church, indeed," said Mrs. Leighton. "I do not wonder that such a liberal gentleman as the Reverend Mr. D'Auber should covet it."

This was said in a voice whose tones and shadings were under perfect command. With a soul full of unutterable indignation and contempt toward this mild-mannered wolf in sheep's clothing, she must not betray the slightest shadow of it, lest she might shut up the book she felt it so important to read through.

By this time the church was full, almost to suffocation. The band, stationed in the singers' seats, announced the opening of the performance with a spirited waltz, to which there was a patter of response that, in spite of the thick carpet, was quite suggestive of a dance. The second number on the program was:

"2. Prayer, by the President, Rev. Didymus D' Auber."

That gentleman now appeared from behind the scenes, and, standing close to the footlights, he delivered a prayer, so elegantly worded and so appropriate to the occasion, that, when he reached the conclusion, there was a brisk clapping of pretty hands, with here and there the thud of a heavy masculine heel.

"Is it the custom of the reverend gentleman's congregation to applaud his prayers?" asked Mrs. Leighton.

"Not on Sunday," replied the Colonel; "though I don't see why we might not. It is only another way of saying Amen."

During the prayer the widow had watched the minister, for two or three sentences she had bowed her head and closed her eyes, and tried to follow him in his pretended approach to the throne of grace; but presently her honest soul revolted at the effort. There was something in the man, in his manner, in his voice, in his spirit, that told her he was not praying to God at all; therefore, she would not help to keep up the false appearance by holding herself in the posture of prayer. Accordingly, she raised her head, opened her eyes, and looked at the man who was seeking to unite in his own person and office the prayer-house of God and the play-house of the devil; the man under whose leadership a Church of Jesus Christ, instead of being a refuge for her son, had only been a snare. Instead of approaching the altar to minister at it, John was approaching the pit to minister to it, and the man who was delivering that prayer was leading him. Shakespeare's stagy moralities and D'Auber's shoddy theology were covering her son with garments of shame. With his glorious powers of intellect and his transparent honesty of soul he was being cheated into offering himself up a living sacrifice, with nothing to achieve by it but tears for imaginary sorrows, laughter for imaginary follies, and horror for imaginary crimes. For this poor privilege he was throwing away the leadership of good men in the ways of life, and the saving of bad men from the ways of death.

As she looked at this blind leader of the blind who was using the forms of prayer, her heart almost stood still. She would not have been surprised if the crack of doom had sounded; but neither look nor motion gave the slightest indication of the honor and anguish that were chilling and burning her by turns.

Colonel Puffenblow watched her as well as he could, feeling himself obliged, for the looks of the thing, to maintain the appearance of devotion; saying to himself, meanwhile:

"What a splendid woman! but rather too irreverent. I always like to see a woman appear religious, whether she is pious or not."

So easy is it for a shallow man to err in judging a woman.

The "Night with Shakespeare" was a remarkable one. The Church shook with applause. All the characters were well presented; not with the absurd strutting and mouthing of the theater, whose boasted "real life" is so absurd that, if people off the stage were to behave as they do on ill they would be hunted as escaped bedlamites, or pitied for drunken fools. On this churchly stage the actors were reputable men and women, having some character of their own as well as those they were acting. There was behind the scenes neither the smell of vile liquor nor the sound of vile words; While these people, for their own amusement, and in the name of art and morals, were honestly endeavoring to make the best possible use of the crimes and the remorse of that wretched Thane who, forgetting the throne of judgment, climbed by foulest murder to a throne of power. If there is any morality in tragedy, here was an occasion where it might appear.

Among these amateur Shakespearians John Mark Leighton shone pre-eminent. Macbeth was the play, and Leighton was Macbeth. With a fine appreciation of that awful character he swept the whole arc from ambition to destruction; from the witch-cheated plotter to the ghost-haunted assassin. Professor Limbre had trained him in the part, on the one general principle of all successful acting; namely, the actor must be, for the time, the man he represents; and so fully did he obey this cardinal tenet of the stage that the audience were actually horrified at him. In that weird soliloquy, when they heard the stroke of the bell which said, Your drink, your victim, and your hell are ready, scores of people were weeping; and when he came back from Duncan's murder, his hands all smeared with blood and his face transformed into the visage of a devil, half frightened at the awfulness of his crimes, the sight was so tragic and the crimes so real that more than one voice screamed outright in horror, and more than one strong man was forced to hide his face till the awful scene was over.

As the play went on, his fellow-actors became afraid of him; and when, in his last fit of frenzy, he sprang upon Macduff, sword in hand, yelling his death-curse, it looked for a moment as if there were to be murder in very deed.

It was well that Macduff was no other man than Professor Hittem, whose skill in sword-play was the climax of his muscular virtues. His quick glance detected the absolute insanity in the eye of his antagonist, who, with murderous cunning not laid down in the text, kept himself between Macduff and the only exit from the stage. It was not acting now; it was a real struggle for life and death. Fast and furious flashed the broadswords, one to make good his curse and challenge, the other to save himself from being cut to pieces.

Professor Limbre, who was behind the curtain in the capacity of stage manager and prompter, saw the danger, rang down the curtain, and rushed forward with a shout so full of real alarm that, in the sudden din and confusion, the audience doubted not but one or the other of the swordsmen had been slain.

Thus ended the first lesson of this moral Shakespearean service in church.

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## 15 -- HIGH TRAGEDY VERSUS LOW COMEDY

The panic was presently quieted by the band playing one of their loudest and liveliest pieces. Nothing was said from the stage to indicate that any thing unusual had transpired; and after D'Auber had made the announcements relative to the further public exercises of Commencement week, the great audience quietly dispersed.

On their way home Colonel Puffenblow exhausted his dictionary in praising the remarkably spirited performance of Macbeth.

"You know, madam, that the first law of the dramatic art is, that the actor must be the character he acts. Your son caught the true spirit of that law; he was Macbeth, sure enough."

"Do you think John would have killed the gentleman who played Macduff?" asked Mrs. Leighton, in a voice whose calmness gave the Colonel a little shock of surprise.

"Certainly, madam; if it had been written that way, of course he would have killed him; but the play makes it his fate to be killed. We lost that part of it by the fall of the curtain before the last scene was quite finished. Your son entered into the thing right royally. I give you joy of him. If he lives, he will be such a tragedian as the world never saw."

And where was the young tragedian all this while? When he had been disarmed and led off the stage, his friend, Mr. Alexander Layard, took him under his personal protection. With that stage-fury still on him it was not safe to send him away alone. The cool night air would doubtless be good for him; therefore, hour after hour, Layard walked with him under the stars, while Leighton was acting over again those terrible scenes in which he had so fully lost himself. Once he thought he was again in that death-struggle with Macduff, and sprang upon his friend with such fury that it was all that even the strong-armed Layard could do to hold him. After a while the night air cooled his blood and brain a little, and, as the dramatic craze gave place to recollections of his real self, he began to question his companion about his acting.

"How did I do it, Layard?"

"You did it well, my boy; almost too well. How under the sun did you manage to look and act so like a real king and a real murderer?"

"Just by putting myself in his place. I kept thinking it over and over: How would Macbeth feel at such and such a point in the play? and then I tried to feel just so myself. It was all easy enough after I caught that idea. Why, Alex, I believe I could have killed a stage full of people if that number had come against me in the last scene."

"You did come near killing Hitem. It took three of us to hold you. Lucky that Limbre thought to ring down the curtain. Why, old chap, you went at that Macduff as if you meant to kill him in dead earnest."

"So I did. I never was more in earnest in all my life. It wasn't likely Macbeth went into that fight for the sake of getting himself killed. The 'business' of the play makes him die, but it makes him fight too. A man like that don't get his head split or his heart spirited without doing his best to put the death off on his enemy instead of taking it himself."

"You are right, my boy, as to the true spirit of the play; but if Hitem hadn't been a right good swordsman you might have been in jail at this moment instead of being a free man, covered all over with dramatic glory. It was a close shave for both of you. I'll bet you my sheep-skin you don't get Hitem to play Macduff to your Macbeth a second time.

"And what was the matter with you when you pretended to be so scared at Banquo's ghost? I never saw a man's face so white or his eyes so wild. You couldn't have done it better if you had seen a ghost in reality."

"Hush! I -- did -- see -- a -- ghost; but it was more -- like -- another man's -- than Banquo's," said Leighton, his voice trembling and his teeth chattering.

Layard pressed his inquiries no further. Who that apparition was he had no difficulty to determine. The words of his frightened friend brought up before his own eyes a circle of light with a man's face looking out of it which had once held him captive by its more than mortal power and glory. There were more worlds than one which took an active interest in Jack Leighton.

For a long time they strolled on in silence arm in arm. At length John burst out with the words:

"Am I a murderer then?"

"Nonsense, man; there isn't any body killed. So how can you be a murderer?"

"Whosoever -- hateth -- his -- brother -- without-a -- cause -- is -- a -- murderer," recited Leighton, slowly and solemnly, as if he were pronouncing his own doom.

"Come, come! This is altogether too solemn. You were only playing murder, you know."

"But the play demands that the actor shall enter into the character, and I did it. I fell upon that man to kill or be killed. There were a score of murders in me."

"Well, what of it? The twenty murders are all out of you now, are they not?"

"Certainly, but they must come back every time I play Macbeth; and what is to become of a man whose professional life swings like a pendulum between murder and remorse?"

"You take the thing too seriously. You know very well that the motive determines the character of an act. You have no motive to murder a man just because he plays one part in a tragedy and you another?"

"Certainly I have. If I am to be Macbeth I must have MacBeth's motives. At any rate, I did have them tonight. The only difference was they did not last so long."

The young tragedian was led home and put to bed by his good friend Layard, who, finding how fully he had lost himself in his terrible conception of Shakespeare's terrible creation, threw himself on the bed beside him to watch lest he should do himself some harm. Leighton wanted to talk; he was living over again the horrible scenes of the play, and would occasionally burst out with snatches of the text; but Layard did his best to quiet him, and at last had the satisfaction of seeing his eyes close in an uneasy slumber.

"He takes it hard," said Layard to himself. "If he can stand it he will be the greatest tragedian since Edmund Kean; but I'm afraid the boy will kill himself in learning his profession."



Then, as it was almost daylight, he concluded to take a little nap himself. The mutterings of his friend, who, in his dreams, was still engaged with his "character," kept him awake till sunrise, when he fell into a sound slumber from which he was awakened by a frightful vision. Nor did he wake a moment too soon. Leighton had risen in his sleep, dressed himself in his royal robes, and was Macbeth again. He had begun at the beginning and had reached the place where, with a drawn dagger in his hand, -- the one he had used at the church, -- he was about to murder the king, his guest. Layard lay there asleep; he would make an excellent Duncan, and Macbeth Leighton was about to do in very deed the murder he had sworn, when his intended victim woke with a start.

The blow descended, just missing his body; there had been only time for him to give one convulsive spring.

"Ha! He has escaped me!" cried the sleepwalking Macbeth. "Now his life or mine for it; he must die," cried the baffled murderer.

The youth, who was a match for half a dozen men when they were half-drunk, was no match for one man raging with the temporary madness of the stage. It had taken three stout fellows to disarm Macbeth on the boards at the church, and now he must stand against him alone. Layard was no coward; but his face grew pale, his strength failed, and for an instant he felt sure he was fainting away. That, however, he knew meant nothing less than certain and instant death. By an act of will he braced himself against the fate that was ready to overcome him, and at length the faintness passed away; but his nerve was not steady, and he knew that fighting could not save him.

He shouted to his friend by name, but he did not recognize it; he was wholly lost in his character, as the drama teaches its votaries to be. He was not Leighton but Macbeth.

The shout had one good result; it happened to be a part of the stage business, and at once the crazy man took his cue from it, and went on:

"I have done the deed. -- Didst thou not hear a noise?"

Saved for a moment, Layard studied the situation. Macbeth was sweeping on right royally with his character. The final battle in which it was evident he must be Macduff as he had been Duncan was not far off.

He was a skillful hand at fencing; but there was only one sword in the room, and that the king carried at his side.

There was one door out into the passage; but between him and it was Macbeth.

He listened for sounds of other occupants of the club-house, but it was late in the morning, and every man was out at some public exercise. He shouted with all his might:

"Help! help! There is a madman here!" Still Macbeth went on with his play. Presently he reached the banquet scene, and again the ghost of Banquo seemed to rise before him, with the face of the portrait he knew so well. This overcame him for a moment, but presently he went again through all the dire misfortunes of his stolen reign, till the hated Macduff at last appears to do for him in fair fighting what he had done for Duncan with the assassin's knife.

"Help! Help!" cried Layard again; but hearing no response, he glanced about him for some weapon wherewith to defend himself. His eye fell upon the class-cane, which was one of his senior dignities; a substantial rod of gutta percha with a loaded gold head, which he had set up in a corner when they had returned from their night stroll. It was better than nothing; it was also his only chance for life. He sprang and seized it, placed himself in the attitude of battle, and looked Macbeth in the eye.

Fast and furious fell the blows. The king was not a master of fence; he had only learned enough of the art not to be awkward in it; but his broadsword was large odds against a class-cane. Already its tough fiber had been cut half through; another such stroke would leave him weaponless.

He was beginning to think what would be a proper flame of mind in which to be thrust out of this world into the next, when the door opened suddenly, and a woman stood before him. "John! John!"

That clear, calm voice, which even at such a crisis did not lose its motherliness, caused the king to turn and look at the speaker.

"Beware, madam! He will kill you. He has gone mad in his part as Macbeth."

Quick as thought the woman began to recite the part of Lady Macbeth. She; knew a few sentences, and these were enough to fasten his attention upon her in that character, though as his mother he did not recognize her at all.

"Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be what thou art promised: -- Yet do I fear thy nature: It is too full of the milk of human kindness To catch the nearest way."

John instantly responded to this change of scene and character, laid down the sword, and assumed the proper pose for listening while his queen, that was to be, should pour her spirits in his ear.

"What thou wouldst highly, that wouldst thou Holily."

Then changing the words to suit her purpose, she went on, leading the half-crazed actor of tragedy, step by step, out of his role, till she had wholly changed the Macbeth of Shakespeare into a Macbeth of her own. Doubtless there was not so much of poetry or genius in Mrs. Leighton's Macbeth as in the other, but it had this great advantage, there was no murder in it. The Thane who was about to be a regicide, seeing the monstrous crime in the light of the mind which was gradually gaining control of him, lost his murderous fury, became at first thoughtful, then

penitent, then happy at the thought of the sin he had escaped; and at length, when this angel's blessing in place of witches' curse had fully set its seal upon him, she bade him say a prayer to God and lie down to sleep.

This time he slept with his mother's will and his mother's love instead of Shakespeare's genius to guide his dreams. She sat down by his bedside, laid her hand on his forehead, and then listened to Layard's account of the scenes of that strange night and morning.

"How came you here just in time to save me?" he asked.

"I heard you cry for help, while attending the examinations at the college."

"But the college is a long way off."

"Yes: but I have known a voice to be heard two miles in the teeth of a driving snow-storm. It does not matter how still or small or distant a voice may be if only God is in it."

When Leighton awoke an hour afterward, the dramatic craze was gone. He had no recollection of any thing which had occurred since he fell asleep with Layard watching over him; and, finding in the lateness of the hour a sufficient reason for the presence of his mother, who must have missed him from certain college duties in which she had expected to see him, he asked no questions, but simply excused himself for oversleeping.

Layard had already taken his leave. He had thanked Mrs. Leighton for saving his life, paid her a high compliment on her new rendering of Lady Macbeth, and excused himself, as he said, to attend one of his Senior examinations. In point of fact, he was a good deal jarred by the experiences of the night and morning, and nothing but a glass of strong brandy would steady him.

Finding there was a story afloat that Leighton had tried to kill the man whose stage business was to kill him, he declared it was only a piece of extraordinarily spirited acting; a view of the case which changed the current in favor of the young tragedian, and made him more than ever the pet and pride of the Shakespeare Club.

When Mrs. Leighton became satisfied that the stage-craze had wholly passed, and that her son was entirely sane and sound, she left him to his duties and his reflections. Layard had given her a great hope by telling her how the conscience of his friend had been exercised over his Shakespearean crimes; this was in his favor. If it became necessary she would throw into the scale the awful scene she had witnessed, but she was too wise and too kind to use it if any thing less terrible would open his eyes to the fatal mistake he had made in choosing a profession whose claims of service thus robbed him of himself.

The next day Mr. Alexander Layard met his young friend Leighton in the college campus.

"Hallo, Jack! Just the fellow I want. We are going to have some more Shakespeare up in the grove after the prize essays, tonight; just a final touch, my boy. Of course, you'll come. We can't get along without you!"

"What is the play?"

"Oh, selections, mostly from the comedy side of the book. You see, my boy, those D'Auber Shakespeareans are only half-doing it. Shakespeare wasn't any such old spooney as you would take him to be, by going to those dramatic conference meetings in the church; he was a jolly good fellow, fond of sport, and knowing right well how to make it, too. He enjoyed a drinking bout or a jamboree as well as if he couldn't write the finest poetry in the language.

"It is all nonsense for D'Auber and Limbre and that lot to talk about the 'many-sided Shakespeare,' and then give us only one side of him. Those Church folks have been studying his 'moralities' till I am full of them; perfect dyspepsia of morals; so we are going to study his immoralities a little; just by way of a tonic, you know.

'We have found some old copies of his plays that haven't been spoiled for the sake of adapting them to prayer-meetings and sunday-schools: the genuine old Shakespeare, in his full strength, my boy.'

"You'll come, of course."

Leighton hardly knew whether to accept or decline the invitation, so he said he would think about it. Here is what he thought:

"If I am to be a Shakespearean actor I must know all there is to him.

"But this is advertised as an immoral performance.

"Still it wilt be high art. Besides, I need a little comedy after all that tragedy.

"What kind of morality is that which can not get along without mixing itself with immorality?"

"But good and evil exist together in the actual world, so, of course, they must in the dramatic world. If Shakespeare is to be true to the world as it is, he must be immoral sometimes.

"What is the use of going to Shakespeare for immoralities? Is sin not plenty enough ill real men and women without people committing sham iniquities?"

"Ah, there is that old trouble again. Is there any such thing as a sham iniquity?"

"If I go on thinking this way it will spoil me for a great tragedian. There's no use in looking back. This way lies my career. I'll go."

The D'Auber Shakespeareans were correct and elegant; the Layard Shakespeareans were wild and wicked. All the bad brilliant men of all four of the college classes were there. When Leighton arrived, Mr. Layard as Sir John Falstaff, by the light of some torches, was in the act of reviewing his ragged regiment.

The commander was huge; he was also ridiculous and impressive by turns. His soldiers had displayed no little ingenuity in converting themselves into the veriest gang of tatterdemalions that ever was imagined. Sir John who had some little knowledge of military drill was putting them through an exercise which might be described as the broadest possible farce, based on the most elegant dress-parade, of a perversion of which his ready wit was easily capable. So absurd was his mighty dignity and so ridiculous his manual of arms that quite a number of the line had already fallen over on the ground in fits of uncontrollable laughter, while their comrades were endeavoring to carry them to the rear, an attention which they resisted with what little strength and breath the merriment had left them.

"Ground arms!" shouted Falstaff.

"What does that mean?" asked a verdant young soldier.

"It means to put your arms on the ground," savagely replied the commander; whereupon every man who was not already down, spread himself at large upon the earth.

"About face!" was the next order, at which every soldier who chanced to be lying face downwards turned suddenly over on his back, while the others revolved in the opposite direction. This evolution gave the burly commander great delight, and he repeated the order again and again, till his men were out of breath with fun and motion. A ration of half an ounce of bread and a quart of sack apiece was then distributed, upon which several of his men-at-arms made themselves quite tipsy, and all of them were visibly elated.

Second on the bill was the forest scene from "Merry Wives of Windsor," "in its full strength," and not at all "adapted to prayer-meetings and Sunday-schools." Next came one of Shakespeare's ale-house scenes; in which Sir Layard Falstaff further distinguished himself in guzzling, bragging, swearing, and lying.

Fourth was a particularly abominable selection from one of the Poems which defile every "complete edition" of Shakespeare's works. This vile production was received with frantic applause; but to Leighton it was a stench in his nostrils. Could it be that this "translator of the Bible," this "great moralizer of the Anglo-Saxon race," had been guilty of any thing so foul? What did D'Auber and Limbre mean by glorifying a man capable of writing such crimes of language in the name of poetry?

Could he with such a master and model either be an honorable man himself or help other people to be honorable?

When the revel was at its height Layard, as master of ceremonies, called for "my friend, Mr. Leighton, in his admirable character of Portia."

"That character does not seem appropriate to the occasion," answered John, who felt ashamed of himself for being in such a scene. The wit and dramatic power of the performance, in a word, the lowness of this low comedy, had fascinated him, and kept him from leaving in disgust. Now he wished he had gone.

"You are wrong there, my friend," said Mr. Layard. "It is just on such occasions as this that such little bits of morality are most likely to be relished. They are like the mourning weeds and the jeweled crosses that women-of-the-town sometimes wear, when, for some deeper deviltry, they wish to appear respectable. Decent people wouldn't have any thing to do with Shakespeare if he didn't give us here and there a peep at Cordelia and Portia and Desdemona.

"Come, young chap, react us the character which you read down there at D'Auber's 'moralities' the other night. And mind you don't stop where you did that time, but go on quite to the end. It's all in the same book, you know. 'The many-sided Shakespeare' couldn't get through with a piece of morality of that length without a touch of immorality to flavor it. Read the part quite through, my boy, and you'll find it is not so very inappropriate here."

Leighton took the book and read; but not in his usual force. His "character of mercy" was somewhat "strained;" he could not rise to the height of the argument; and when he came to that miserable mess in which even this much vaunted "morality" goes off Shakespeare's stage he stopped, first in disgust, then in despair; threw down the book, seized his hat, bade the drunken company good-night, and rushed out of the midst of the motley crowd of Shakespearians, panting for a breath of decent air.

Oaths and curses, low songs and lower jests, are no less hateful to a pure mind for any thing the genius of the great poet can do by means of them; foulness is no more sweet because it drips from Shakespeare's pen. Were D'Auber and his dramatic devotees mistaken then in thinking they could be followers of Shakespeare and of Jesus at the same time? Were the play-house and the Church on opposite sides of the line that separates hell from heaven? Was this great playwright an exception to the statement of the apostle that no fountain can send forth both salt water and fresh?

In his long walk the night before he had quoted that Scripture to his friend, but the reply of that volatile gentleman, while it was amusing, was not satisfactory to his conscience or his judgment.

"It depends," said Mr. Layard, "on what kind of a fountain it is: If it is such a fountain as the one in Puffenblow's garden, no; but if it is such a one as Puffenblow himself, yes. The case is the same with Shakespeare. He is a regular soda fountain, my boy, with all kinds of syrups on draught. Turn one faucet and you have tragedy; another, and you have comedy; here is the bacchanalian tap; there is the piety plug; you can draw bloody murder with one braid and gentle charity with the other. Why, my dear fellow, Shakespeare is the epitome of the human race. He can preach like a parson, swear like a soldier, tell the truth like a philosopher, or lie like a knave. Prodigious chap, that Shakespeare!"

But what was the value of blessings coming out of the same mouth with cursings? What was the use of morals smeared with ribaldry and soaked in sack? Was it worth his while to spend his lifetime playing such moralities, when better ones were so plenty elsewhere?

His faith in the great moralist of the theater was falling to pieces. His dramatic castle was in ruins. He could not be an actor of the bad character of other men without staining his own; he might as well think to handle fire and not be burned as to think of playing at sin and not be defiled. His love for his "art" was strong, but his sense of right was stronger; there seemed to be nothing else worth living for, but he could not deliberately go on with the perversion of his own nature.

Thus a little too much success in tragedy and a little comedy "in its full strength" had exorcised that evil spirit which is known by the name of "a passion for the stage."

Colonel Puffenblow had arranged a little tea-party at his elegant residence for the following evening, the Rev. D'Auber and John Mark Leighton being among the invited guests. The young tragedian received a shower of compliments for his spirited acting, D'Auber especially priding himself on John's success as one of the trophies of his Shakespeare Club. But while he was glorifying "the great moralizer of the Anglo-Saxon race," and prophesying a glorious career for the young actor, John astonished the company by quietly remarking that he had determined to abandon the stage. His pastor endeavored to dissuade him from this new-formed purpose, but after listening to all his arguments John replied:

"It is quite likely I shall have sins enough of my own to account for without spending the best of my life acting over again the sins of other people."

Such a sober view of this artistic question threw a dampness over the meeting, which was not altogether dispelled when the hour for the public exercises arrived. But there was one heart in that company which was full of glad thanksgiving, and when his mother gave him her hand at the garden gate he held it for a moment, as if it were a relief to him to grasp something that was certain not to fail him. Mrs. Leighton understood him, and silently returned his token of filial tenderness.

"How happy he will be!" she said, as she bade him good-night.

Now that her son was safe, at least from the ruin that threatened him most, her thoughts turned earnestly toward Layard, for whom she had prayed every day as regularly, if not as faithfully, as for her son. Her prayer had been so far answered that she had been permitted to save him from the hands of one madman, -- "Macbeth;" now it remained to save him from the hands of another madman, -- himself.

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Alexander Layard was a child of fortune, If gifts without graces could suffice he would have come to glory in two worlds. The power and genius of a dozen generations of strong men and brilliant women culminated in him; he was born with talents enough to serve for five common men; but, alas for him! there was no faith in his "Grandmother Lois," and as for Iain "Mother Eunice," she died when he was a little child. His father was a cold, proud, money-getting man, whose chief idea of fatherly duty was to pay the bills incident to the Support and education of his family; all the while assuming that his son, like himself, must make his own career and character, and follow the route of success or failure which the fates had marked out for him.

Very early in life it became apparent that nature had endowed him right royally. Even while he was an infant he was much admired for his precocious sayings and doings, and when he went to school his teachers were often in a strait betwixt whether to admire or detest him, so easily did he lead the whole school, both in lawlessness and lessons. He soon grew pert and impudent toward his elders and betters; presently he became unmanageable, and his father being closely occupied with business, and his new mother having no love for children, his life became a series of transgressions and follies, which were pardoned for the sake of his wit, or endured with the hope that years would bring him steadiness and wisdom.

Years have a great deal of this kind of work intrusted to them in spite of all the failures they make.

Years? They are nothing but names for the motion of one world around another in empty space; how should they be expected to do so much for wild, unmanageable young men?

Years? -- mere lines of time, having neither breadth nor depth, form nor substance.

Years? -- a succession of waves which seem all the time to be bringing the waters ashore, but always carrying them back again to the sea, -- how can years be expected to bring wisdom out of folly, or make a good man out of a bad boy?

Young Layard never learned the value of his wonderful gifts, but used them, just as a spendthrift uses money, for amusement or for show. He was not idle, but with all his application his mind came to be only an intellectual Old Curiosity Shop, full of "human various [sic]," but possessing small store of any useful knowledge. His conscious power often led him to take up difficult tasks just to show how readily he could master them. For instance, at the boarding-school, to which he was sent when he was about nine years old, because his father did not know what else to do with him, there was a lad who once had a Portuguese woman for his nurse, and thus had learned to talk in two languages instead of one; an accomplishment which made him the envy of the whole school. Alex listened to the praises bestowed upon the lad, noticed the airs he took in consequence and resolved to be even with him.

One week afterwards he said to that linguistic wonder:

"You needn't feel so big because you can jabber Portuguese. It is easy enough."



The lad replied in that language with a good deal of wrath thrown in. Alex answered him in the same tongue. All the boys gathered round them at once. "Go on, go on," they shouted; thinking to catch the new scholar in his own trap. Alex at once took up the conversation, and kept it up till the bell rang. He might have kept it up longer, for he had been cramming his memory with phrases out of a book, and taking secret lessons in pronunciation of the head gardener who, as he had luckily discovered, was to that manner born. He also composed such phrases as he thought he should want, and the good-natured gardener entered into the sport, and put them into Portuguese for him.

This was enough to amaze the crowd of boys and to confound his adversary; but it never did him any further service, for, instead of keeping up and adding to his knowledge of that widely spoken tongue, he threw away what had cost him so little, and his trifle of Portuguese was soon covered up with snatches of other hastily acquired and hastily abandoned knowledge.

One day a man with a harp and a small boy with a violin stopped at the play-ground gate, and gave them some music. The little chap was an especial wonder. How was it possible for such a baby to play the fiddle so well?

The next day Alex obtained permission to visit a neighboring town, and brought home a violin, which he labored with up in a little room over the coach house, where his friend the stable-boy slept, and in a short time he could play almost every tune he ever heard; an accomplishment which enabled him to outshine the little minstrel in a serenade to which he treated his school-fellows soon after.

A night at a burnt-cork concert set him off into an effort to become a clog-dancer, which distinction he was not long in achieving.

He once went to a circus, and brought home with him two ambitions; namely, to ride like a monkey and perform like a clown. These great purposes he also achieved, becoming able to ride the wildest horse, and to make the biggest fool of himself of any of the boys in the school.

It was his pride to appear to know things by instinct which cost others great labor. He was always first in his classes, but when he learned his lessons was more than any one could tell.

When he entered the Grank Trunk University he was far in advance of the requirements. This enabled him to keep up the marvel of reciting much and studying little. He would range the country for days together in search of sport and adventure, and then come back and be examined on all his back lessons, almost without making an error. He was by turns the admiration and torment of every one who had any thing to do with him. Always in danger of exposure and disgrace, he developed the perfection of cunning. He could tell more plausible and ingenious lies than a professional witness in a criminal court. There was no more truth in him than there is in a fox. It was his delight to deceive people, not only when his safety demanded it, but also when there was absolutely nothing to be saved or gained by it. He was like an Indian on the war-path, always looking for trophies of his wits, and counting the victims of his successful deceptions as the savage counts his scalps. Twice he was rusticated, several times he was on the verge of "major excommunication," as he called it; but colleges do not have so many brilliant men that

they can afford to throw one away on every provocation, therefore he was endured with much long suffering.

He had now managed to complete his course, but it had been done with a sword all the time suspended over his head. On more than one occasion his genius had served him in place of character.

"What a credit he will be to the University, if we can only bring him through respectably!" said Professor Limbre, at one of the faculty meetings, where the question of his expulsion was up.

"Perhaps he will see the error of his ways by and by. If he should develop a conscience equal to his other powers he would become one of the great men of the nation."

"Do you expect the young man to develop conscience as tadpoles develop legs?" inquired Professor Goodwill. "He is rather old for that process now."

"His tither is a wealthy and influential gentleman," continued Limbre, without noticing the question of his brother professor; and "we must conciliate such powerful friends. Layard seldom gives me any trouble, and he stands head and shoulders above any other man in his class."

"Does he never come into your recitation-room drunk?" asked the President, who was a square man, abhorred all quibbles, and called things by their right names.

"Well -- I -- can't say that he is -- always -- perfectly sober; but -- he generally manages to make a brilliant recitation." Professor Limbre then took out a note which he had received from D'Auber, giving a touching account of a recent interview with Layard. That young gentleman had called at his study under deep concern of mind, anxiously inquiring what he must do to be saved.

This was his last resort to save himself from disgrace; and since it was possible for grace to save even the chief of sinners, judgment was suspended to give him space for repentance. He, however, got on toward the kingdom of heaven only as far as to join D'Auber's Shakespeare Club, and there he stopped. His partial conversion, halting at that point, failed to start up and go on again. But he carried his point, which was, to save himself from being expelled, and being confessedly far before any other man in his class he could not reasonably be denied first honors.

Commencement Day at the Grand Trunk University was this year unusually brilliant. "The class was a good one, and Professor Orotund had paid such strict attention to their drill in speaking that little was left to be desired. The weather was brilliant, the audience was brilliant, the music was brilliant; but most brilliant of all was the "Philosophical Oration, with Valedictory Addresses," of Mr. Alexander Layard.

A slight unsteadiness of motion was noticed as he came upon the stage, and some charitable people thought that his honors had, for the moment, robbed him of his presence of

mind. He stood for a moment dazed and silent, but catching sight of his old friends Goody Zach, Aunt Charity, Mrs. Leighton, and the old pastor at Dolkins' Corners, who occupied a pew close by, he roused himself for the duty of the occasion. "The Sublimity of Human Nature as Seen in its Ruins," was the title given on the program to his philosophical oration, and more than one "heart beat quick with sympathy and sorrow at the pitiful illustration of the theme in the person of the speaker himself.

His habit of drinking had at length gained the mastery; the head that could stand liquor enough to put two men under the table was now so weak that a single glass of brandy or whisky would upset him. Strange horrors occasionally seized him, at which times he would pray and rave by turns, pouring out his wrath and his sorrow in words at once eloquent and awful. His friend Leighton, who chanced to be with him on one of these "tantrums," wrote down some of his wild ravings, and left them where he could find them when he came to his senses, in the hope that it might do him good to read when he was sober what he had said of himself when he was drunk. These words the wretched youth read with tears of shame, but not with tears of penitence. His vanity was deeply wounded, but it seemed as if he had no heart to break. He kept sober long enough to write his last oration, which, with a fine dramatic sense and great force and elegance of diction, he framed into a soliloquy of a ruined man; intending to make his appearance in that "character," as the most effective method of treating his chosen theme. But the carousal of the previous night had left him without a head; he had gone beyond his depth in sack. The Shakespearean "immoralities" had been too much for him, and when he made his appearance on the stage he was so lost to all the proprieties of the occasion that he forgot to bow either to the faculty or to the audience.

Tears stood in the eyes of the stern President as this specimen of actual ruin stood before him. To send him back again would be a disgrace too terrible; to let him go on might lead to worse disgrace. The audience, for the most part, caught the idea of the "character," and held their breath to catch the first words this poor "ruin" might speak.

Poor, lost boy! He little thought how terribly real his acting was.

For once in his life he lost his presence of mind. Not a word of his brilliant oration could he remember, while those drunken ravings which his friend had written out for him kept ringing in his ears. He waited a moment in the hope that the right words would come, and then, with a desperate resolution not to confess failure at any hazard, in a voice like the wail of the Autumn winds over the dead Summer, he began that fearful recitation, varying it according to the wild fancy of the hour. One moment his eloquence soared to the stars and the audience sat entranced; the next his cry of despair seemed to come up from the abyss.

"Is there a resurrection for dead innocence, a finding of lost years?"

"There is, there is," responded a voice in the congregation. "He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

It was his old pastor from the Corners, He knew the speaker well enough to know that the ruin was real; while the rhetoric of the thing had so overwhelmed his simple soul that he did not

doubt but the sorrow were real also; therefore he followed his instinct, without stopping to think where he was, and threw the poor lost one a promise from God's Word, just as he would have thrown him a life-buoy if he had fallen overboard at sea.

The sound of this familiar voice helped him back into his old self again. Doubtless the audience would take it all as a piece of dramatic composition. Thus reassured, he proceeded to deliver the Valedictory Addresses, which he partly recalled as written and partly extemporized for the occasion; bringing out round after round of applause as he brought out some of the fine or funny points in the characters and offices of the different gentlemen who, as he said, had been for four long years laboriously endeavoring to form him, and the other unformed masses of human nature which, under the name of Freshmen, had fallen into their hands. Then he caught sight of D'Auber, and made a digression to eulogize that reverend gentleman for his liberal views in religion; throwing out the remark, as if it were common rumor instead of a liberal secret, that, by the time the Freshmen whom he saw before him had been duly "formed," the pulpit on which he stood would, by processes now at work, be a platform broad and liberal enough to hold not only D'Auber and Shakespeare, but Colonel Puffenblow started a cheer just in time to drown the rest of the sentence. He was afraid there was going to be a scene not laid down in the bill.

The President was about to silence the orator when he turned to that officer to bid him fare, well; which compliment he paid so exquisitely that the strange medley was suffered to come to a natural end.

That night, after the President's levee was over, and the assemblage of great minds in the college town had been reduced by sleep to the level of ordinary mortals, Mrs. Leighton was startled by a loud ring at the bell, followed presently by a voice at her door.

"Madam, your son" is below. He begs you to go with him at once to see a friend who is in great distress."

"I will come," She said; and in a few minutes they were hastening together to the rooms of Mr. Alexander Layard, who had lost himself in that abyss called delirium tremens.

Among those who had come to see him in his graduation glory was his old friend Pike; who, after the exercises were over, insisted that he should go and take a drink with him in memory of the good times they had enjoyed together in Dolkins' grocery; and remembering what a steady head the young collegian used to carry, he was not at all careful of him, but plied him with glass after glass of strong liquor, which poor Layard, in memory of the same fact, was now ashamed to refuse. Thus it came to pass that, while the rest of the graduates were enjoying their honors with the distinguished company at the presidential mansion, he was suffering unutterable torments in his own room, where, just as soon as it was dark, Pike had conveyed him in a close carriage. Mr. Layard never would have a room-mate, deeming it safer for his reputation to live alone. There was, therefore, no one to take charge of him when Pike landed him half-lifeless on his own bed; so, with the brotherly love that one drunkard often feels for another, he sat by him for a long time, quieting him in his spasms, or watching over him in his fitful sleep.

An hour after midnight Layard sprang up from his bed in wild delirium. His mind had broken down at last under the unnatural strain it had carried so long, and his body seemed to be taken possession of by an evil spirit from below.

Drunkenness is, in some sort, a disease; delirium tremens is, in some sort, a demoniac possession. Men call it "the horrors," and "the blue devils," well chosen names, both of them; there is nothing horrible that its victims do not see, nothing devilish that they do not feel. One of the old Greeks defines drunkenness as "a minor madness;" delirium tremens is madness that has reached its majority. Insanity, in its milder forms, belongs wholly to this world; delirium tremens seems to be a premonition of hell. Only in mediaeval pictures of the tortures of damned souls can there be found an adequate painting of the gnawing of this worm and the burning of this fire. So wonderfully is the soul of man endowed, and so widely is he related, that even in this world he receives visits from angels and from devils; in the sweep of his immortal powers he touches, at times; both paradise and perdition!

"Ha, Beelzebub! you are come at last, are you? Give me a little time to make myself respectable before you take me down among those strangers." Layard then commenced to make an elaborate toilet, -- on which he expended all the time he dared to use.

"Now I should like to bid good-bye to the only friend I have in the world, if you are not in a hurry."

Then he sent for Leighton, whose room was not far off.

"Tell him his old teacher is going to leave for the blackness of darkness in a few minutes, and wants to see him before he goes."

Pike made haste to bring him, and when he entered the room Layard seized him eagerly, holding him with both hands, and for an instant looked into his eyes.

"It is an honest face," he said: "so different from mine!"

Then he introduced him:

"Beelzebub, this is my friend John Mark Leighton. Do they take any interest in him in your country? Shall I see him again down there?"

John's blood chilled in his veins as the wretched man repeated the fiend's reply:

"He says there are some people up yonder who have a claim on you, but at present you belong to him. He says they stole your mother from him; but he has strong hopes of holding on to you."

John tried to convince him that there was no one in the room but themselves.

Layard laughed at him. Then he apologized for their innocent discourtesy to the visitor from below.

"Don't be offended with them, Beelzebub; they mean no disrespect. They haven't taken as many eye-openers as I have; at least John hasn't; and Pike's eyes are harder to open than mine were, so of course he can't see you."

Then he began to preach his own funeral sermon, taking for his text the words, "At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder."

"My friends -- and by your leave, Beelzebub--this young man is lost.

"Do you know what that means? It means pleasure, and pride, and bad company, and liquor, and lying, till every nerve of your body and every memory of your mind has a serpent's tooth to bite you and an adder's sting to strike you. At the last it biteth; and I have come to that 'last.'" Here he stopped suddenly.

"He won't let me go on. He says it sounds too much like a temperance lecture, and he hates such things, though in a general way he doesn't care much about funeral sermons."

Then Layard came close, and whispered in John's ear:

"What other thing can I do to gain a little more time? He's getting impatient, and I should like to stay out of the pit a few minutes longer, for they say it is bottomless, and when you once get in you keep going down -- and down -- and down!"

"Resist the devil and he will flee from you," said John, thinking the text might break the spell that was on him.

Layard gave a cry.

"Help! help! He has me! His hand sinks into me like a white hot iron. Must I go? Is there nobody here who can pray?"

It was at this point that John rushed out to bring his mother. She knew how to pray.

When Mrs. Leighton entered his room the wretched man was clinging convulsively to the frame of his iron bedstead, which, as he thought, stood just at the verge of the mouth of hell, into which he was about to fall whenever his failing strength should force him to let go his hold. He was gasping for breath, being, as he believed, half-strangled by the smoke and fumes that came up in great gusts from the pit over which he was hanging. His face and muscles indicated the last extremity of exhaustion; he was so far gone that he would not use even strength enough to speak or cry, thinking that it would hasten his plunge by a second or two.

Mrs. Leighton gazed on the frightful scene an instant, lifted a prayer for help from on high, and then, laying her hand firmly on his shoulder she said to him:

"Let go! You shall not sink. I will hold you up."

He looked at her with his ghastly, bloodshot eyes, almost blind with terror, and ground out between his teeth the question, "Angel or devil?"

I am only a woman, but there is an angel with me. God has sent us to save you."

"I'll trust you," he said, and then he let go his hold. In an instant Pike and Leighton caught his insensible form in their arms and laid him in his bed.

In letting go his hold of this frail refuge he seemed to have let go of life; but presently he revived, in a dazed and wandering state of mind.

"The -- way -- of -- transgressors -- is -- hard," he recited slowly; then he went on tolling the word as if it were a bell, "hard! hard! hard!"

Mrs. Leighton sent John for a physician.

"Brain fever," said the doctor. "Are you his mother?"

"He has no mother. You may leave him in my charge."

A month from that day a pale, trembling form was carried tenderly into the house of Mrs. Leighton: it was all that was left of this gifted and brilliant Mr. Alexander Layard; scarcely more than a little child either in mind or body. His father had come to pay his bills and find a hospital for him; but when the sick man understood it he begged that he might be left with "the woman and the angel;" which being explained to this man of the world who had been too busy to attend to his son, he went away sorrowful, leaving him to the care of his three best friends: two of them in this world and one in the other.

John's long Summer vacation was chiefly occupied in the two employments of taking care of his friend and fighting off his duty. Layard recovered his strength of mind and body very slowly, while John was as tender and devoted as a brother. After he was able to leave his bed, a hammock was swung for him under a little cluster of oaks, which adorned the single acre of ground appertaining to Mrs. Leighton's cottage, and here the two young men spent the sunshiny hours of those long Summer days, each ministering to the other in his way; John being a tender-nurse to his invalid friend, and Alex doing his best to minister to a mind diseased; for John had come again face to face with his conscience and was resisting it with all the strength of his will.

By the opening of the next college year, Layard was able to walk about the pretty village of Lakeside arm in arm with his friend, his pale beautiful face winning, sympathy and admiration on every hand. The mild sensation he thus produced when he appeared on the street, or upon those who called at the cottage, gratified his vanity. He liked to have people stop and look after

him as he passed them, even though it was chiefly to pity him. Thus it was evident that his narrow escape from Beelzebub and the fever had not wrought any saving grace in him.

For a while he was so wholly taken up with thoughts of himself that he did not notice the haggard look on the face of his friend, whose mental torments began to make themselves manifest in his countenance. He would sometimes lie awake all night keeping up the controversy with his sense of duty, only to fall into a troubled sleep at dawn and dream of new arguments against himself, coming from the invisible world.

"What is the matter, old fellow?" asked Layard, one morning, as he noticed for the first time that something was wrong with his friend.

John did not reply. He had a low opinion of any help which might come from that quarter.

"Let me see; what are the things that are apt to trouble young chaps like you? Conditions? No. You passed your Freshman examination all right. Money given out? That can't be. Goody Zach has plenty of dollars left in the long stocking. It might be dyspepsia if you hadn't a constitution like a mustang pony. Really I begin to think it must be you are in love. That is a disease which is apt to trouble young fellows like you and me. Who is she, Jack? Just open up the case and I promise you all the help in my power."

"You are on the wrong track, altogether," answered John, coming out for a moment from the brown study in which he spent most of his time.

"Well, I can't think of anything else, unless it be a hard attack of religion. I've known people to be very bad with that."

John replied by quoting a bit of Oriental poetry that had troubled him a good deal.

"If the sky were a bow and the earth were the string, and all the trees of the forest were arrows; and if the Lord were to take that bow to shoot those arrows at the sons of men, where could they flee for safety?"

"That is a hard problem, my boy; leave it to D'Auber and the other speculators in theology. What is the use of bothering your brains with such nonsense? There isn't any such shooting going on; when there is it will be time enough to think about getting out of range."

"I suppose you wouldn't believe me then if I were to tell you that I am the target for worse arrows than those?"

"That is singular. I don't see how a correct young individual like you should have any such troubles. If it were me, now, it wouldn't be so strange. What is the vulnerable point with you, or do the arrows only rattle on your coat of mail."



"I have been tormented with the idea that I ought to preach the Gospel, and I won't do it. The duty stares me in the face, and I can't get rid of it night or day."

"Oh, ho! Is that all? Well, my dear boy, I can help you. All you have to do, if you want to get that notion out of you, is, just to join a regular old-fashioned theological seminary. If the first year don't do it, try the second; and if two don't cure you, the third certainly will; that is, if you are the sensible young man I take you to be."

"How do you know so much about theological seminaries," said John.

"Wasn't I born and brought up within sight of Mons Sacer, where they do a regular wholesale business at minister-making?"

"But that is just what I do not want made out of me."

"Of course you don't. The thing works differently on different subjects. Some fellows take it, and like it; but I have known lads like you to be altogether cured of the pulpit fever just by one course of lectures in dogmatics."

The conversation was here interrupted by the arrival of Goody Zach and Aunt Charity, who had come to visit their adopted grandson before his return to college, and to take their old friend "Professor" Layard home with them to finish his convalescing at the farm.

Aunt Charity fairly pounced upon the invalid; her helpfulness had found a new exercise; here was somebody to take care of, and that was to her a great delight. She recalled the time when this same young man first appeared at the Bluff, worn down with overmuch study; and how rapidly he recovered under her management. Here again was to be an era of broths and toasts and custards and broiled chickens, and every other imaginable delicacy for a weak stomach; and no one had ever bestowed such delightful compliments on her cookery as this same Mr. Alexander Layard. She had brought a large, stuffed easy-chair in the wagon in which to transport him to the farm; and when the visit was ended and a goodly sum of money had been left for the boy's second year of college bills, Mr. Layard allowed himself to be lifted into the conveyance, and languidly bade his Lakeside friends good-bye. The next day John returned to college.

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## 17 -- THE LIBERAL ARTS

The visit of Mrs. Leighton to the Grand Trunk University raised several interesting questions in her mind, among others this: "What is to hinder me from taking this course of study at home which my son is taking in college?" With this idea in view she examined the catalogue, and found that a large portion of his work consisted in reading certain books in the Greek and Latin languages, which books she also found in plain English in the University library; so taking a catalogue with her, she went to the principal book-store in town and asked for English editions of all the Greek and Latin authors named therein. The proprietor stared at her in silent wonder.

"Give me also the other text-books used in the full classical course in the University."

"Whom are they for?" asked the shop-man, with that professional impertinence which women often encounter in shop-men of an inquiring turn of mind.

Mrs. Leighton took no notice of the question, and finding the questioner was too much interfered in her business to attend properly to his own, she said abruptly:

"If you do not sell these books will you be kind enough to tell me where I can find them?"

This brought the shop-man to his senses, and presently the entire list lay before her on the counter. These she purchased, and ordered them sent to her at the residence of Colonel Puffenblow, where she arranged for their transportation home in such a manner as not to attract the notice of her son.

When John was gone back to his college Mrs. Leighton brought out the little books which, under the name of Classics, have filled so many simple minds with awe, and devoted her leisure time to reading them through. She was blessed with a good memory as well as a fine taste in literature, and before her son had finished a single book she had made herself mistress of them all, being able not only to give the outline of the history or plot, but also to quote many of the most striking passages in the words of the excellent translations she had used.

One day her pastor, who in his youth had seen the inside of a college, and was quite proud of the fact, though very little of what he found there had been retained, was looking over the volumes in her ample book-case, and was not a little surprised at seeing the works of Homer, Virgil, Sophocles, Livy, Xenophon, Plato, etc., standing cheek by jowl with Clarke's "Commentary," bound volumes of the "Repository," Fenelon's "Christian Counsel," and Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress."

"I see John is traveling through his classics on horseback," said he, with that jealous care for the honor of those old historians and poets which every one feels who has grubbed his way through portions of them with lexicon and grammar.

"No, sir; those are my books. John has never seen them, and does not know that I have them. It seemed to be my duty to know what my son was filling his head with at college, so I have read all the books named in the catalogue of the University as belonging to his Greek and Latin course; no great task, either."

"You do not seem to appreciate the immortal works of antiquity, madam," said the old man, bristling up at the idea of a woman with the cares of a house and a shop on her hands beating her son out of sight, who was grinding out Homer and Livy, line by line, in a first-class university, after the regular orthodox fashion.

"I said nothing in their dispraise."

"But you said they were no great task. We who have read those works in the original tongues have found it a work of much time and toil."

"Why, then, did you not read them in English, and save your extra time and toil for something else?"

"Oh, reading them in a translation amounts to nothing. One must read them in the original in order to get their full force and beauty."

"Did you not translate them into English in order to get their force and beauty?"

"Certainly."

"Then your knowledge of them is, after all, expressed in your own tongue. The only difference I see is that you and John and the rest of the classical students make such English as you can out of the Greek and Latin, and I take the English already made. Now, if the man who made my translation has done his work as well as you did yours, I have just as much of the force and beauty of the original as you have."

The old gentleman was silent for a moment. This was a woman's view of the great question of classical study, and as such was quite new to him. At length he returned to the charge.

"But, madam, the learned world has agreed that there is no other mental training equal to the study of the classics in their original tongues."

"Yes; that is to say, a certain small number of men who have devoted themselves to that line of study all agree in calling themselves the only liberally educated people in the world."

The old man winced at this piece of plain English, but at length he found words to say:

"Well, madam, you can not deny their vast superiority over all modern literature."

"Superiority in what?"

"Why, in spirit and fire, and -- and -- and in the sweep of their poetic genius," said the old man, recalling with a desperate effort of memory a remark of his old tutor on the subject.

"What do you mean by those words, 'spirit' and 'fire,' and by that phrase, 'sweep of poetic genius?'"

"Well, the heroic element, and -- the supernatural element. What heroes are equal to those in the classics? And then there are all the gods of Olympus"--

At this point the old pastor's classical memory broke down; the cares of his circuits and of his family had somewhat effaced their image from his soul.

"Is there any soldier in the classics whose fabled exploits equal the actual ones of Frederick the Great or the first Napoleon? There is Aeneas, Virgil's hero, who sailed a few hundred miles in the: Mediterranean Sea, seeking 'the ever-receding shores of Italy.' What is that Compared to the voyage of Columbus? Virgil calls him 'Pious Aeneas,' but the principal evidence of his piety seems to be that he carried off his old father, Anchises, from a burning house in Troy. There are dozens of firemen in our great cities who have done far more remarkable things than that, but very few people would think of calling them 'pious,' or insist that no man was 'liberally educated' unless he had read all about them. They had the Olympic Games, too. We call such things horse-races and prize-fights, but we do not call them 'classical,' and insist that no one is 'liberally educated' unless he has studied the records of them.

"Then there are the classical gods; considered as gods every one of them is a failure; the best of them amounts to less than a respectable man or a cultivated woman. Their Olympus is very much like a low Dutch beer-garden; but no one calls that 'classical,' or insists that one must be familiar with the quarrelsome, drunken crew who waste their time at such places before he can claim to be 'liberally educated.' If one of our American poets were to set about inventing and describing a god or goddess, and should produce such a creature as Jupiter or Apollo or Pluto or Venus or Diana, do you suppose his book could find a publisher? or, if it did, would People in any considerable numbers spend time and money to buy and read it?"

The old man stared at this literary heresy. Still it was easier to stare at the woman than to answer her. All at once a bright thought struck him, and he returned to the charge.

"But the study of the Greek and Latin languages is useful to show the derivation of our own."

"Yes; but the science" of etymology can be studied to much greater advantage in Webster's Dictionary. There you can find just what word history you want, and just when you want it, without spending the best part of seven years in studying words to be forgotten as soon as one is out of sight of a college."

"But you seem to forget that the classics are, by universal consent, the final test of scholarship. A man who is ignorant of them is not admitted into the ranks of scholars in any Christian country."

"Yes; and that is one of the curious things about you scholarly Christians. You have planned the course of study in your colleges very much as the old heathens would have done who never heard of Christianity. You teach our sons far more about Jupiter and Olympus than you do about Jehovah and heaven. I have heard some of your classical people make sport of the convent-schools because they require the girls to read the 'Lives of the Saints,' but at the same time you insist on our sons in Protestant colleges reading the lives of all sorts of unsaintly gods, goddesses, nymphs, satyrs, etc., and that you call 'the only liberal learning!' Now, for my part, I would far rather our sons and daughters should spend three or four years in reading, in good

English, how St. Christopher carried the Christ Child over the swollen river, or how King Gondoferus had a palace built for him in heaven by the priest who distributed so much of his money among the poor, or how St. Patrick banished the snakes and toads from Ireland, than to have them spend the same length of time in studying the infamous performances of Greek and Latin deities, whose monstrous crimes would consign them to a jail or a halter or a mad-house if they were to appear among us in human form and attempt to repeat them. Christian scholarship, indeed! Where does Christ tell his scholars to study any such things? He tells us to search the Scriptures, and to study his works of creation, but I have never found any precept of his that tells us to study the false religions which he came on purpose to destroy. And yet the records of those abominations, which comprise the soul, and the biggest part of the body, of 'The Classics,' are persistently trumpeted in the catalogues of our Christian colleges as the highest and most honorable course of study! What fashion was ever more absurd?

"I can imagine Jesus Christ come back again as a professor of Natural History; giving lectures on the lilies of the field, the birds of the air, the mountains on which he prayed, and the sea on which he walked; but I can not conceive of him as a professor of 'The Classics.' He taught us by his apostle to shun profane and vain babblings and old wives' fables.

"As I see it, the Classics are the only parts of our boasted 'liberal education' which are not and can not be Christian. This keeping his false gods on exhibition in our high-schools and colleges, after they have been driven out of our Churches and our homes, is one of the cunningest devices of the devil. Scholars give them the place of honor after the rest of mankind have cast them away!

"The honor of other works consists for the most part in their usefulness; but what useful things have the teachers of 'The Classics' ever done to entitle their department in our schools to the highest honor? If the entire product of their work were suddenly to disappear, no one outside of their own particular class would lose any thing that he would miss six months afterward."

The old gentleman, finding that "The Classics" could not be defended on Christian grounds, swung over into another argument.

"What would you have our young men study to ennoble their spirit and cultivate their imagination and taste?"

"History, poetry, science, art; most of all, the Bible; and, if they must have the ancient languages, let them read the Bible in its original tongues."

The old gentleman laughed.

"The idea of so common a book as the Bible taking the place of the ancient classics amuses me."

"And what is to hinder Homer or Sophocles or Virgil or Livy from being as common as Moses and David and Isaiah and Paul? We have them both in our own tongue. It seems to me greatly to the credit of the Bible that it is so common; for that is the same as saying that a great

many people value it enough to buy the translation of it and read it. You can buy a translation of any of the 'ancient classics' for the price of a Bible, and if there is something so wonderful and useful in them, why don't people buy them and read them, and so make them common? The very fact that these boasted works are not common proves that, outside of a small guild of men who make their living out of them, these 'ancient classics' are of very little account.

"I have understood, also, that classical scholars claim great superiority over the men of science. Is it then more honorable and scholarly to study the works of the old Greeks and Romans than to study the works of God?"

The old gentleman arose, put on his hat, and bade the widow good day. In his time "the classics," as they are called, comprised the major part of liberal learning, and it went sorely against his grain to have those venerable traditions treated so rudely. Worse too, these traditions were scouted by a woman! Worst of all, by a woman who, using the odds and ends of time, in a single quarter, had come to know more of the classics than he.

On the mind of young Leighton the study of the ancient authors produced a very different effect. His effort to sail in the wind's eye allowed him no chance of motion except tossing upon the waves and drifting farther and farther away from where he wished to go. Somehow every thing seemed to take shape from its real or supposed relation to the holy office. For instance: D'Auber, whose nice arrangements were a good deal disturbed by Layard's attempted compliment in his Commencement speech, found it to be his duty to accept a call to the pastorate of "The Voltaire Memorial Church" in a distant city. This was a sort of atheistical debating club who had erected a lecture hall, which they named in honor of that infidel whose disloyalty to God was atoned for in their eyes by his loyalty to liberty; the word "church" being added to give the thing a flavor of respectability. Of course this was none of Leighton's business, but he allowed it to trouble him a good deal; first, by trying to use D'Auber's apostasy as an argument against the Christian religion, and afterward as an evidence of the uselessness of the ministry. This old and flimsy device of the devil, however, did not long shut out the sight of his duty. If D'Auber and Puffenblow were frauds, there were Elder Hooper and the President, and father Cornelius, and, above all, his mother, who were genuine. The vote was against him. Then there arose a quarrel in the College Church over D'Auber's successor, the orthodox party supporting him, and the liberal party opposing him chiefly for that reason. The man was a good, quiet, sweet-spirited pastor, whose chief anxiety was to keep out of all quarrels, while the turbulent spirits on both wings were bent on forcing him into them.

"Such a Church does not deserve a ministry," said Leighton; and then, rushing from the particular to the general, he declared that "Churches were all alike, and no man of any sense would suffer himself to be tormented by them. The minister's life was a dog's life; continually in jeopardy of his independence on the one hand, and of his living on the other. The quarrels of believers inside the Church had made more martyrs than the persecutions of the heathen outside. The most of what passed for religion was simply the result Of differing degrees of ignorance amongst believers. It was worse than a waste of one's life to try to teach such masses or messes of people as were usually thrown together in a Church."

Still all this false reasoning did not help him any. There was the Son of God who sacrificed himself in that very same way, and if he could afford to do it, could not John Mark Leighton?

The struggle for his capture on the basis of classical literature was longer and stronger, and for a while promised complete success. For a time he was in the toils of the adversary, whose conquest seemed less difficult because his intended victim wished to give over the struggle. Not that Leighton preferred to be a bad man; by no means; he was simply determined to be a good man in his own way.

Professor Septimus Mummifier occupied the chair of the Greek language and literature in the Grand Trunk University; a walking encyclopedia of all matters pertaining to that mighty race of men who, more than any other heathens of antiquity, stamped their impress on the literature of the world. He could not, indeed, recite the names of the twenty thousand gods which his venerated Athenians used to worship, but he could come as near to it as any other professor of the Greek language and literature. He was a square, stout, solid little man, with a great bald head, sharp gray eyes that twinkled merrily or scowled ferociously; a nose that seemed to have been fixed to his face by one end instead of by one side, so determinedly did it thrust itself out; a red nose, too, standing like a sentinel in scarlet coat to warn off all undue familiarity with that mummified face. He was the senior member of the Faculty; "had always been there," so the boys said, and no doubt always would be, so tenaciously did he cling to every thing he could get hold of, life included. He looked as if he might have been at Thermopylae with Leonidas, so completely had he passed through and by all things that make any difference in a man's age. His body was constructed like a Greek temple, to stand for ages; his opinions were formed like the Greek language, to stand forever. His recitation hall was the Acropolis over again; so completely had he transformed it that the very atmosphere thereof took on the Socratic method or arranged itself into hexameter verse with the least possible agitation. There was an odor of ambrosia about the professor's desk and platform, as if the Olympian gods had been holding a feast there; a smell which had an astonishing resemblance to that of strong tobacco, so the boys said; but as tobacco is a modern and not a classical herb, there must have been some mistake about it.

It was generally understood that the professor did his thinking in Attic Greek on account of the unequalled purity of that language; the purity of the Greek no doubt offsetting the impurity of some of the uses he made of it. He used the expurgated editions of the classics, out of deference to the views of the President, who insisted that a sentence must have a respectable meaning in order to be respectable, no matter if it were expressed in the language of Pericles and Plato; but lest the young men should lose the true flavor of the satire or the poetry "old Mummifier," as he was familiarly called, would give them, verbally, the unpurified text, and grin out of his broad mouth like a satyr, as he saw his pupils taking in the classic force of the vile original. He was a stern and bitter opponent of the modern notion of admitting ladies into colleges; assigning as one reason that "no woman could with propriety read the ancient classics in a mixed company without having the passages culled for her." This was, to him, a conclusive argument, not against the books, but against the women.

There was one cross which the professor was forced to take up; namely, to hear his class recite in New Testament Greek every Monday morning.

New Testament Greek was his special abomination, on account of its "impurity;" nothing but the classic Greek would answer for him. One morning, by way of showing the immense superiority of the classic over the New Testament Greek, he read some passages from the Sermon on the Mount; criticizing the idiom and pointing out the corruptions of the language; and then turning to his favorite author he read them the classic "Ode to the Victor in a Race of Chariots drawn by Mules," rolling the spirited lines on his tongue by way of illustrating the way the chariot-wheels rolled along the race course, and working himself up into a fine enthusiasm over the "spirit of the composition."

One of John's classmates, who was the son of a clergyman, and who had been taught the Greek language out of the writings of St. Chrysostom, once ventured to ask why Christian Greek was not sometimes read in that Christian college.

"Because there is no Christian Greek worth reading," sharply replied Professor Mummifier.

"You would make an exception in favor of the Gospel by Luke and the Epistle to the Romans, would you not?" asked the student.

"No; I make no exceptions. When you read for religion, the New Testament and the Fathers will do well enough, but when you read for Greek, you must have something better."

From this remark John drew these inferences: "The difference between the literature of heathenism and of Christianity is here regarded as of less importance than the difference between the earlier and later forms of the Greek language.

"Classical scholarship is first; Christian scholarship is second, in this so-called Christian school.

"D'Auber was right when he said 'Socrates, the prophet of Athens, was more of a philosopher than Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth.'

"In the judgment of the learned men who found and teach and govern our Christian schools the Greek language is the highest branch of learning; and they ought to know.

"Theology is not reckoned as 'learning' at all, unless it be some other theology than that which is taught in the Bible. In this college we recite ten hours a week in Greek and Latin heathenism, and one hour a week in Christianity; therefore, heathen literature is ten times more 'learned' than the Christian religion. Ten hours with Jason and the Argonauts to one hour with Jesus and the apostles!

"A religion must be on the decline when scholars discriminate against it in its own schools."

From all these considerations he arrived at this resolution--



"I will devote myself to the study and teaching of the Greek language and literature."

Thus the course of study in this Christian college furnished him with arguments for rejecting the Christian religion, and for refusing his call to its ministry. It was true that all the professors were believers in the Gospel of Christ; some of them, indeed, were doctors of divinity; but they followed the fashion in liberal learning, and taught no religion in the recitation-room except such as Christianity had overthrown. As a scholarly acquirement, dead falsehood outranked living truth; as an historical study, the labors of Hercules outranked the miracles of prophets and apostles; the Sixth Book of Virgil outranked the Apocalypse; the vestal virgins outranked the Virgin Mary; Zeus outranked Jesus; therefore he would give himself to the task of keeping alive in the minds of Christian youth that form of civilization, that style of literature, and that system of religion which was the glory of all the unChristian ages; or, failing to find employment in that he would fall back upon Latin.

With this high ambition John Mark Leighton passed his Sophomore, Junior, and Senior years, taking high rank in all his studies, but excelling most in the classics. Professor Mummifier declared that he possessed the true heroic spirit, and as an instance to prove it, related how the young man had once studied a whole week to discover who it was that first contrived the plan of writing iota subscript. He practiced on the Greek character till he could write it faster than a school-boy can print English with a pen. He made himself familiar with all the various Homeric forms which differ from pure Attic Greek; he committed long portions of the heroic poems to memory, and delighted himself with the sonorous ring and the wonderful measure of the words and verse. He studied Athens till he could draw with a piece of chalk on a blackboard the outline of every temple it is known to have contained. He could give the genealogy of all the gods and goddesses, besides that of a large number of the demi-gods and not a few of the naiads and nymphs. He became familiar with the Greek drama, and read all the plays in that language. He could describe minutely the Olympic games, and even knew the names of quite a number of the victors who had ridden faster or hit harder than any one else at a given race or fight; this last subject he studied with great attention as being of prime importance, since these games formed the basis of the almanacs of that mighty nation of heroes, whose superior civilization and spirit led them to measure off their time from one great set of fights and races to another, dating all their documents from the first great prize-fight of the Greek nation, as we unheroic people date our documents from the birth of Christ. All these great knowledges, and many others of equal classical importance he would teach in some college or university, and by digging deeper among the bones and ashes of this wonderful people, and mastering their forms of speech more perfectly than any other teacher in his profession, he would become, at least in the estimation of four or five hundred other Greek and Latin professors, a very great scholar and a very great man.

Professor Mummifier was almost as fond of him as if he had been an authentic chip of marble from the Parthenon. "To have sent forth one such man, so learned as to the great language and nation of all the ages, is worth all the money so grudgingly given for the founding of the Grand Trunk University." So said Professor Mummifier of his favorite pupil, John Mark Leighton.

In nothing did John more fully sympathize with his learned instructor than in his contempt for the Greek of post-classical times, more especially that of the New Testament and of the Christian Fathers. Mummifier despised it for want of linguistic elegance; Leighton hated it because of what was written therein. He could not read that Greek without feeling, now and then, a twinge of conscience; but in the classical Greek he could completely lose himself, and live for the time in the wonderful age of Pericles and the imaginary republic of Plato, in neither of which was there any suggestion of the Gospel, or of his duty to preach it.

During these three years Mrs. Leighton also was a student, though she said little about it to her son. At first she felt a kind of shyness about her unusual course of reading; and, regarding it as her duty to keep her English translations of the classic out of sight when John was at home, she had never found occasion to talk with him very freely about the learning she was acquiring. In God's good providence she was now far above the need of toiling as she had done in Poverty Lane, or in the first years at Lakeside, and, instead of using her success in business as a means of achieving more business success, she gave to others, less fortunate than herself, the chance to earn money from her as well as for her, and devoted her ample leisure to charity, devotion, and learning.

She held it to be her duty to improve her own mind.

"Are will not be pleased to have me come to him, after all these years, with no more knowledge in my head and no more power in my heart than when he went away; he will expect to find me improved; but if I give myself up to the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, I shall be ashamed of myself when I go to him again, and he will be ashamed of me and blush for me when he has to introduce me to his friends. I owe it to my husband, and to my Father also, to learn something in this primary school, which by mistake we call 'the' world. It is only a world, and a very little one at that."

With this reflection, Mrs. Leighton read all the text-books she had brought from the college bookstore; and then, with a view of finding out what other books there were in the world, she procured a Dictionary of Authors, and studied it attentively. By this means she discovered that the great departments of human knowledge had been condensed and classified into dictionaries, cyclopedias, and hand-books, by the use of which it is possible to obtain a fair understanding of the assured and substantial results of the labors of learned men in every line of useful knowledge, just as one gains a general view of a country by studying it on an atlas. The dictionary of authors gave her a view of the world of books. From a biographical dictionary she caught the idea of comparing historic characters, so as to come at their relative importance. Those men and women who had done the great things she looked up still further, and fixed their record in her memory. By this means she was not long in acquiring a comprehensive idea of the history of mankind. All books which were mere statements of opinions she passed by; so, by necessity, all books in foreign languages. But this did not grieve her much; for she was sure that if the book had been of any importance it could not have escaped a translation into English, and, with Emerson, she would as soon have thought of swimming a river where there was a bridge as of learning to read a book in a foreign language that she might read in her own. She read enough of history to know what nations and persons God has made any special use of; enough of metaphysics to be satisfied to leave the rest to the metaphysicians; enough of religious

controversy to see how little religion there is in it, enough of fiction to know a real book from an imitation; enough of poetry to tell an inspired poem from a manufactured one; enough of the rudiments of all the natural sciences to know where to look for more whenever she wanted it; enough of art to know a live statue or picture from a dead one; and enough of the Book of books to climb by it toward heaven, as the angels climbed the ladder in Jacob's dream. All this she accomplished during her son's course in college, and, though she had done it in a very commonplace and unprofessional manner, she was much the better scholar of the two.

When John's turn came to graduate there were the same glorious sayings and doings over again, of which mention has already been made in these pages, though without the delirium of the drama. or the bottle. The Shakespeare Club had "lagged superfluous" for a time, and then made its exit; and there were no more such "brilliant" young men in this college class as was Mr. Alexander Layard.

Mrs. Leighton and the dear old people from Bluffton were present to behold this young Solomon in all his graduating glory, but they were sadly disappointed at his performance. In order to signify his great success in classical studies he was honored with the appointment to deliver an oration in Greek, -- a work which covered him with scholarly glory in the eyes of Professor Mummifier -- there was not another person in the hall who understood him -- while the rest of his auditors went to sleep, or wished they could, under this classical infliction.

"I s'pose it's all right; boy," said Goody Zach to his adopted grandson, after the affair was over, "I s'pose it's all right; but it's agin' Scriptur' that Aunt Charity and me, who occupy the seat of the unlearned, should git any good out on't. Why didn't ye put a man up behind ye to talk it to us in English while ye were clattering it off in that outlandish Greek?"

John could not help smiling at the ridiculous figure he would have made on Goody Zach's plan, but scarcely knew how to reply, so Mrs. Leighton came to his rescue.

"Mr. Goodsmith, John has been working night and day to learn that 'outlandish Greek,' as you call it. It is the language of scholars; it stands at the head of all the liberal arts."

Goody Zach blushed, and was silent; but his discourseful wife, seeing his discomfiture, took up the case with much spirit.

"They call that sort of thing 'liberal,' do they? I don't believe there was half a dozen folks in the house who could get any share of it; mighty stingy, it seems to me, for the boy to stand up there and pretend to be giving us some information about that Mister Homer, and then keep it to himself, after all. If he had any thing worth hearing, why on airth didn't he say it so folks could understand it, instid o' skulking off into that Greek so nobody could tell whether he was talking sense or nonsense? Mebby it was so smart he couldn't say it in his own mother-tongue."

"Our Lord himself spoke that language, or one very much like it, when he was on earth," replied Mrs. Leighton, trying to soften the blows a little which were falling on the head of her classical son.

"Did he? Wal, I s'pose that was his mother tongue. The Bible says the common people heard him gladly, so they must have talked Greek, too. Now, I always reckoned that Jesus Christ was the smartest man, let alone his being the Son of God, that ever trod this airth, and he didn't have no sich fureign langwidges and liberal arts; if he had he didn't use 'em to show off his larnin'. That Greek is one of the arts these colleges make bachelors on, ain't it?"

"Yes, Aunt Charity."

"I thought so; and a regular, dried-up, old bachelor art it is. There ain't a mite of human natur' in it."

"I am sorry you have so poor an opinion of the Greek language, Aunt Charity. I have made up my mind to spend my life studying and teaching it," said John.

"What! With this great country full of folks talking English, you shut yourself up in that Greek! What has happened to ye, boy? I should think ye must have been disappointed in love or sunthin'. Going to be such another larned, useless old man as that Professor Mummifier, are ye? Wal, I should think the Lord would be sorry for wasting so much brains and talents on ye just to make such a mummy on."

Aunt Charity had taken a particular dislike to Professor Mummifier. She had seen him every year at the Commencement exercises, and the only idea she had of a Greek professor was inseparably associated with his round, bald head and parchment face; therefore the thought that her glorious young idol was to be made over into such an image and likeness was too much, both for her nerves and her temper.

"You advised me to take all I could get at college. Have you forgotten that?"

"No, boy, I haven't; and if ye had taken my advice in the true spirit, ye wouldn't have spent so much time a fussin' over that Greek when there was so many other things to get that would do ye so much more good."

"What, for instance?"

"Wal, almost anything, I should think. Can ye talk German as well as ye can Greek?"

"No; German is one of the modern languages. We make very little account of them in college."

"There's heaps of Germans round here; but I never heerd of any Greeks. Have ye ever read the life of Ginerel Washington? My grandfather was one of his body-guard, and I allus think the young men ought to study Ginerel Washington."

"Oh, we don't read such common books in the college course. We can read them at any time."

"I s'pose ye study about Martin Luther in college, don't ye?"

"No; that belongs to Church history. They study that in theological seminaries."

"Do ye read the works of John Bunyan?"

"No; they are only Sunday-school books."

"There is him they call Bonnypart; poor Mr. Layard used to talk a good deal about him. Do ye study about his great doin's in college?"

"No; he is a modern character. We study the ancient heroes, chiefly."

"Moses and Joshua and David, I s'pose. They are the ancientest heroes I ever heerd on."

"Oh, no; those are characters in the Hebrew Scriptures."

"Wal, there is Paul. You study him, of course; he used to speak Greek. He was in Athens once, and found the city wholly given to idolatry; but he must have converted them from being such heathens, or else these college folks wouldn't call themselves Athenians."

"No; we study the Athens of a time long before Paul's visit; the heathen Athens, as you call it; and as for the Greek of Paul's epistles, it does not compare with that of Sophocles."

"Soffyclees, who was he?"

"The greatest dramatic poet in the Greek language."

"Dramatic? That means that he wrote plays for a theater, don't it?"

"Yes."

"And you study the works of this Soffyclees, written for a heathen play-house, instid of studyin' the works of the Apostle Paul, written for the Church of Jesus Christ?"

"Certainly. Classical learning has nothing to do with Christ and the apostles, or with any of their works."

"Wal, then, I advise ye to git all that classical stuff out of ye as quick as ye can; for it is pretty certain to be one of the things that the Lord will make short work of when he comes back to this airth, as he promised he would."

"Liberal! Indeed! No General Washington--no Martin Luther -- no John Bunyan -- no Bonnypart -- no Moses -- no Joshua -- no David -- no Paul -- no Jesus Christ! Come, Goody, let's go home. We've made a great mistake."

And from that day Goody Zach and Aunt Charity went no more to the Commencements of the Grand Trunk University.

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## 18 -- A DESPERATE REMEDY

My college days are over now, and it is time for me to begin to do something," said Leighton to his mother one day after some weeks of rest from the heavy work of his Senior year. "Here is a letter I have written, asking for a situation as tutor in Greek in the Northwestern Classical Institute. Professor Mummifier has certified to my fitness for the place, and I fully expect to get it."

"Have you asked your father what he thinks about it?"

"Why do you say that? I have no father on earth."

"Are his opinions of any less value because they are formed in the light of the upper world, where they can see all around these earthly questions by looking down on them?"

"Certainly not. But how am I to know his opinions? He died before I was born."

"So did all these Greeks and Romans whose opinions you have been studying these seven years past."

"Oh. that is a different thing. Those men left their writings behind them."

"Did Homer ever write out his poetry?"

"No, I suppose not; but it was written by people who heard him recite it."

"Very well. I have heard your father recite his opinions concerning the heaven-appointed mission of his child if it should be a son. Besides, he has kept me constantly informed of his views for you ever since you were born. I will write them out for you if you desire it."

"You really can not be serious in what you say. That sounds like superstition."

"And pray what is to hinder me from having my oracle and consulting it, as well as your precious Greeks? You believe in their oracles; I have better reasons for believing in mine."

This was coming at the question in a way he did not like. He knew full well that his friends in heaven were opposed to his classical notions, but the way in which his mother had come to his aid in the discussion with his simple-minded patron and patroness had given him a faint hope that she had changed her mind, and would give her consent to his plans. That was,

however, only a flash of motherly pride, which did not like to have the really great performance of her son treated with ridicule and contempt. At length he said:

"I did not show you my letter to have you inquire of people in the other world about it, but to hear your own views on the subject."

"I can give you my views in a few words. For a man of your talents and acquirements to devote himself to teaching the Classics is to throw away nine-tenths of himself and misuse the other tenth. There is nothing in those writings which entitles them to such a sacrifice in their honor as you propose to make."

"How do you know that?"

"I have read them; all of them. I never did so much hard work for such poor pay in all my life; but I am glad to have done it now, for it helps me to judge of this matter intelligently. He set me to do it, and now I know why."

John could hardly believe his ears. Was it possible that his mother had outstripped him in the race for learning?

"You look incredulous, my son. Please examine me on any of the classical authors you have been studying in college."

John started for his text-books, in order to put her to the test.

"No, sir. A Bachelor of Arts ought to be able to question his untutored mother without the help of his books."

Thus challenged, John proceeded with his questions, and, to his great surprise, found that she was not only able to answer them, but to tell him a good many things, and give her authority for them, which had escaped his own attention. In a word, his mother knew a great deal more of the Classics than he did. This was mortifying in the extreme. At last he bethought himself of testing her knowledge of the original tongues.

"Please to translate this passage from Plato's dialogue, 'The Republic.'"

"Why should I read from your book when I can do it so much easier and better from mine?" asked Mrs. Leighton, producing the English edition of the Greek book he brought her.

"Oh, I see it now," said John triumphantly. "That is nothing. Anyone can do that."

"Exactly so. I have read these books in the best translations, and you say it is nothing. You have read them in your own translation, and therefore are a great scholar! The principal difference that I see between my work and yours is, that I have done it in the easiest way, and you have done it in the hardest way; so, of course, I have been able to do more of it than you. You Grecians and Latinists have only just so long a distance to take us over; the Classics are

finished; they never grow any. You trudge along through a tangle of roots and bushes; I go over the same distance by a well-made road. But you laugh at me for my journey, and say it is nothing; yet you propose to spend your life teaching people to do in a hard way what, by your own showing, is not worth doing in an easy way! Isn't that rather small business for the son of John Mark Leighton?"

John felt the arrow strike through him. It began to seem doubtful whether it was such a wise thing, after all, to grind for years at the Classics on a plan which would be ridiculous if applied to any thing else. Still he would not yield the point.

"You forget, my dear scholarly mamma, that there is an inspiration in studying these great books in the original which does not come by reading them in the vernacular."

"No, I do not forget it, my Classical Bachelor. I know there is a spirit in those books that gets into those who read them. The sorcery of Elymas was not more bewitching. St. Paul had a very low opinion of that kind of inspiration, but our Classical colleges take great pride in it."

"Why, you surely would not say that the spirit of the Classics is the same as those evil spirits we read about in the Acts of the Apostles?"

"Why not? The Classics are chiefly concentrated paganism; and in your study of them you do your best to bring up again from the dead the men and monsters of heathen ages. We read that the good Spirit helps men to learn the things of Christ; but you do not imagine for a moment that any good spirit, either saintly, angelic, or divine, would devote himself to the work of taking of the things of Jupiter or Venus or Diana or Apollo, and showing them unto us. If not, then the spirit of the Classics, with a few notable exceptions, must be an evil spirit."

This was too much. To have the 'classical spirits "proved" in that fashion brought him up face to face with the eternal worlds. In the glamour of college life that department of learning had seemed highest and most honorable; but now he began to see that in the light of the Word of God it was the least honorable of all.

Mrs. Leighton saw her advantage, and took one step more.

"Aunt Charity gave you a hint the other day well worth remembering. Just imagine our Lord returning to set up his kingdom among men, bringing your father and your sister with him, and finding you in Professor Mummifier's chair, having spent your life-time teaching small classes of young men how to pick their way through a Greek sentence or pull out a Greek root! Ten talents wrapped up in that antiquated napkin!

"Don't forget that the kingdom of Christ is the Stone cut out of the mountain without hands, that is to fill the whole earth; and the capital of that kingdom is not to be the new Athens or the new Rome, but the New Jerusalem. In that kingdom a man of your power ought to be ruler over ten cities; but you will never come to any of those thrones and dominions by teaching the literature of heathen groves and theaters, or even by the spirit of the Olympic gods and games. Eternal glory does not lie along that road."



Poor boy! The old battle was set in order again. He had come up against his duty, which began to take on the force of destiny. He was full of arguments in defense of his chosen profession; but none of them were aimed high enough to strike down the opposition which his mother invoked against him. For days together he was in some such condition as the maniac boy who was only put into greater torments by the bungling efforts of the nine apostles to cast the demon out of him. His mother had invoked the Holy Name over him; but the classical demon and the demon of self-will, joining forces, strove against the Spirit of God and the voice of duty, till he was almost wild with spiritual torments.

One day, in the darkest gloom of his soul, the strange advice of his friend Layard occurred to him: "All you have to do to get that notion out of you is to go to a regular old-fashioned theological seminary." It seemed like a desperate remedy; but everyone he could think of had failed; and, unless this would help him, he felt that he would have to yield or die. These alternatives were about equally hateful to him; therefore, as a last resort, he resolved to go to Mons Sacer, and so surfeit himself with its theology that he would never have the least tendency to it again.

Mrs. Leighton could hardly trust her ears when John told her of his changed purpose. It was almost too good to be true; but when he mentioned Mons Sacer her joy was very much chastened. To her thought that was a den of theological lions, with sharp teeth and savage claws. Some of that same savage breed had come near being the death of her in her early days, and she was fearful that John might not have the nerve or the grace to face them down, as she had been compelled to do, because of the late arrival of the angel whose business it is to shut their mouths or draw their teeth.

The Grand Trunk University had a theological attachment whose doctrines were much more to Mrs. Leighton's mind; but John could not be shaken in his determination to take this professional specialty at Mons Sacer. Still, this was a safer road than certain others he had tried to take; therefore she sent him away with her blessing, not dreaming how little he deserved it.

When John had made up his mind to try this singular means of escape from his duty he wrote to his old friend Layard, whose home was, as will be remembered, within sight of Mons Sacer. The poor young man had come to be such a wreck that, through fear of his meeting a violent and disgraceful death abroad, his father, the honorable Demas Layard, had insisted on his remaining at home. Here that busy gentleman had before him all the time, the bitter results of trusting to "the years" to make a steady man of this neglected and ungoverned boy. The father had made his fortune, but he had lost his son. In his elegant mansion, with its ample, well-kept grounds, there was a haunted chamber, where a poor victim of too much liberty and too little love could at times be found in a drunken stupor; and where, sometimes, he could be heard moaning with pain, or screaming with fright in the horrors of delirium tremens.

In his sober moments, if Mr. Alexander Layard could properly be said to have any sober moments, he was still brilliant, though his talents seemed to have become of a lower order, from having been continually put to low uses. Advice, entreaty, and threats had all failed to keep him out of the power of the tempter; and now he was a scourge to the sides and a thorn in the eyes of

his eminently respectable father, and an object of intense dislike to the woman who years ago had taken the place of his mother.

When the Hon. Mr. Layard heard of John's intention of studying theology at Mons Sacer, he wrote him a long, sorrowful letter, earnestly entreating him to come and take up his residence at his house. The letter closed with this pitiful appeal:

"He has always loved you, I think, ever since he taught that little school where you were his favorite pupil; and if you love him well enough to come and live in my sorrow-stricken home during your theological course, and take a brother's place beside him, it may be that your presence will keep alive the only memory that seems to have any power over him; and perhaps, through your self-denying love and care, a blessing may come at last to my poor lost boy."

John showed this letter to his mother, and asked her opinion of it.

"I think it is from the Lord, my son. You are called to his ministry; here is a parish already. If ever there was a lost sheep that needed some good shepherd to go and bring him home, it is this poor Alexander Layard. His father asks you to come and be a brother to him. That is the true idea of the Gospel ministry."

If Mrs. Leighton had based her opinion on any other view of the case, John would have been more willing to accept it; but here, at the very outset of his course, he was asked to bind himself to the fate he shunned by a tie which might not be so easily broken. What if this new complication should spoil the effect of the remedy he was about to try? Already there was a sacred charm upon his spirit as he thought of the love of his old friend, and of the power to help him which that love conferred. It was certainly a good thing to try and save poor Alex, but his stubborn heart rebelled at the idea of doing it as a Gospel ministry. He half resolved to change his course, and stay away from Mons Sacer; but a sense of shame at such cowardly conduct kept him to his duty. It could be nothing less than a crime to throw away this possible chance of saving his old friend; he would forever despise himself for such baseness. Thus the providence and the grace of God were weaving a net in which to take him, not for destruction, but from it.

Presently he began to feel the pressure of unseen influences urging him on.

"It must be he wants me to go," said John to himself; and John Mark Leighton, though he dared to defy Jehovah, was afraid to disobey his father. Accordingly, he wrote a tender and affectionate note to Alex, and a letter full of respectful interest in his son to the Hon. Demas Layard, accepting his proposal, and appointing the day on which he would arrive.

His reception by the Layards, both senior and junior, was all that he could desire. Alex was overjoyed at the idea of having him for a companion once more; and the Hon. Demas pressed his hand with a long, earnest grasp, which spoke louder than words, and by virtue of which John felt at once that the most confidential relations were established between them. As for Mrs. Layard, she received him politely enough, as a fashionable lady ought to do, but in her heart she wished he were a thousand miles away, and her troublesome step-son with him.

His quarters were pleasant, and even luxurious. His study had been fitted up Under the personal directions of Alex, who spared neither his own ingenuity nor his father's money in the business. There was nothing for show, but every thing for substantial comfort; including a set of library furniture in oak and leather; a study-table of ample size, and with every appliance a student could wish for; an elegant book-case, also in carved oak, large enough to contain twice as many books as John ever expected to own; and some really excellent paintings and engravings on the walls, in which the artistic taste of the junior Layard was apparent.

There were two broad, low windows, looking out on a well-shaded lawn; and, in addition to the register for furnace-heat, there was an ample fireplace, with great brass-headed fire-dogs to hold the black birch or hickory for the only kind of a fire that is fit to write sermons by.

There was a large sleeping-room opening off the study, also fitted up according to the notions of Alex, and which communicated with the room he called his "den."

John's quick eye caught the idea of this singular den at once. The carpet was of the most substantial velvet, thickly underlaid with some soft substance, giving him who walked on it the impression of walking on a bed of moss. The furniture was of the heaviest and plainest design, the most of it fastened securely in its place like the furniture of a ship's cabin. There was no open fire-place, and the registers, instead of being in the floor, were set midway up the walls. There were no sharp points or corners to the finishing or furnishing of the room; no glass except in the windows, and they were protected with a strong wire netting on the inside. A private staircase, thickly carpeted, led to a side door which opened out on the lawn, across which there was a well-trodden path, not paved, leading to a gate that gave admittance to the grounds from the alley in their rear.

"There is no use trying to deceive you," said Alex, after he had taken his friend through this portion of the elegant mansion. "You find me somewhat of an invalid, and obliged to be taken care of very tenderly at times. I hope you will not be too much troubled by my misfortunes.

"But how does it happen that you are taking the road to the pulpit? I thought the apostolic succession had no charms for you."

John was ashamed to tell him the real reason, and so replied that he still held the same views on that subject as when they last met; but that every thing else was shut up, and he had consented to study theology as a part of his education, just as he might afterward study law and medicine for the same reason."

"Well, my boy, if you really wanted to be a parson, I was going to advise you to keep away from Mons Sacer; but, if you are just going to take theology as one of the liberal arts, this is just the place for you. There is any amount of art in the Mons Sacer theology."

"And how do you happen to know so much about the Mons Sacer theology?" replied Leighton, who felt bound to defend the school in which he was to be a scholar.

"Ah! you didn't hear of my intention of taking theologicals myself, did you? You remember I came pretty near being converted into D'Auber's Church in my Senior year. Well, after I got through the course, and was used up for a civil engineer, I remembered his great success in the minister business, and concluded to try it. It didn't agree with me very well, so I gave it up; but I got along There were two broad, low windows, looking out on a well-shaded lawn; and, in addition to the register for furnace-heat, there was an ample fireplace, with great brass-headed fire-dogs to hold the black birch or hickory for the only kind of a fire that is fit to write sermons by.

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gave it up; but I got along far enough to make the acquaintance of all the learned gentlemen who invent and compose theology up there. Nice individuals, I assure you. They have a weakness for their own opinions that keeps them most of the time quarreling among themselves; but that is rather a help to the boys, if they are smart enough to take advantage of it."

At this point the call for dinner sounded. John was seated opposite his old friend, whose trembling nerves were painfully apparent, He was, indeed, a wreck; but there was enough of him left to make a more than ordinary man, if only a little conscience could be found in him somewhere, and brought to the head of affairs.

After dinner, Alex volunteered to take his friend up to Mons Sacer, and introduce him to the doctors. John was rather doubtful about putting in his first appearance under such auspices, but did not like to decline the offer; so the two young men ascended the theological eminence, arm in arm, after the fashion of their college days.

"Dr. Pondrus allow me to introduce my friend John Mark Leighton, Bachelor of Arts; a recent graduate of the Grand Trunk University. He has heard, through me, the fame of Mons Sacer and its Senior Professor, and comes here, in preference to all the seminaries of his own Church. He is no such uncertain individual as myself, but a genuine specimen of the Lord's anointed. His mother is a lady, and his father is an angel, so you will have both heaven and earth to aid you in malting him into a regular doctor of divinity.

"Jack, this is the eminent Doctor Pondrus, whose views on the Abrahamic Covenant you have heard me mention with such interest and approval."

John bowed low in the presence of this father-superior, while the doctor looked him over with evident approbation. And no wonder; for John was a student to be proud of. Rarely had his equal in mental power or manly beauty appeared in the halls of Mons Sacer. Something creditable to the institution could, doubtless, be made out of him.

"We are glad to have you place yourself under our instruction," said the great man. "The Honorable Demas Layard has spoken to us of you. That gentleman is one of our most distinguished patrons. Any thing we can do to make your life among us agreeable and profitable, we shall be happy to do for his sake, as well as for your own."

Next they went to the study of Dr. Muhlenberg, to whom Alex introduced him; taking occasion to say how much he had enjoyed the doctor's recent theological treatise in refutation of the views of Dr. Pondrus on "The Abrahamic Covenant."

"I want to commit my friend especially to you, my dear Dr. Muhlenberg. You know in what danger he will be from the erroneous views taught by the opposing theological faction. Do not let him fall into their hands, I beg of you."

"We will look well to it that he has an opportunity of learning the truth which we have endeavored to set forth and defend," replied the learned doctor. "I should be sorry to have such a promising young man as your friend imbibe the errors of the Pondrusiters."

After attending to all the preliminaries incident to his entrance at Mons Sacer, John and his friend went down again from the mountain to prepare for his first theological duties; thinking within himself that he had certainly come to the right place to be cured of his call to the ministry.

\* \* \* \* \*

## 19 -- MONS SACER

You seem to be on rather familiar terms with those learned doctors, for a young man of the world," said Leighton to his friend, as they sat together in Alex's den, watching the sunset clouds and the coming out of the stars.

"Rather so, my boy; and, as you are about to become a theologian, it may be well for me to give you a hint or two how to get on the warm side of them. You see those dear, delightful dogmatizers have shut themselves up from the world so long that they have rather lost the run of it. All they know or care about a man is his opinions. If those are sound, which is the same thing as saying, if he agrees with them, they like him; if not, not; so all you have to do is, to accept their say so as law and Gospel, and they will regard you as a young gentleman of excellent parts and great promise."

"What are those views of Dr. Pondrus which Dr. Muhlenberg warned me of?"

"Oh, something about the Abrahamic Covenant. They have been quarreling over it ever since they have been here. Pondrus wrote a book, in three volumes quarto, in defense of his views; and Muhlenberg wrote one, in five volumes octavo, on the other side; but neither could find a publisher who would print the books unless they paid him in advance. Lucky, wasn't it? However, there is one point now on which the two men are agreed. They think there are no book-publishers included in the Abrahamic Covenant, but that the whole race of them are reprobates, and will go to perdition, where they belong."

"If these men are so pugnacious, how did it happen that they were elected to these chairs, where their bad example must do so much harm?" inquired John, with real surprise.

"The case was something like this. Dr. Pondrus was pastor of a wealthy and conservative Church, but he got to be so profound that they couldn't stand it any longer; so some of his men clubbed together and endowed a chair in Mons Sacer for him, where he could be as profound as he liked for the rest of his days, and at the same time be rather out of the way. Then Muhlenberg, who didn't like the Pondrus theology, was afraid the young ministers would be led into error; so he gave his rich friends no peace till they had endowed another chair for him."

"Were all the chairs filled in that way?"

"Oh, no. There is Dr. De Lally -- Dr. Mellifluous De Lally -- who has the chair of ministerial clinics; a most amiable gentleman, who knows a little of every thing except how to take care of a parish. About ten years ago one of our ancient maidens died, a devout old female

of some eighty Summers, and in her will she left twenty thousand dollars to found the chair of pastoral theology. When it came election time there were two leading candidates; -- one a stiff Pondrusiter, and the other a fierce Muhlenberger. If either one were elected the two factions would fight worse than ever; so the shrewd President of the Board of Trustees bethought himself that the dear old lady had a nephew who spelled his name with R-e-v., and him he presented as a compromise candidate. Nobody had ever heard of him before, so he was elected.

"Poor fellow! I guess he got enough of it. First Pondrus claimed him; then Muhlenberg claimed him; then both factions claimed him, till they nearly worried the life out of him. We all thought he would resign in disgust and go away, but probably he hadn't anywhere to go."

"Come, now; we have had enough of the doctrinal side of this thing. Suppose you give me a few facts."

"Facts? There are no facts at Mons Sacer; it is all theology; top, bottom, middle, inside, outside, all over, and clear through. A man who believes in facts has no business there. They had one once, but he didn't stay long. He got himself into trouble the very first thing, by suggesting that the facts of the material universe do not teach total depravity. He said things and people were all the while appearing with certain admirable qualities, which looked as if the world and the race were gradually recovering from the effects of the fall, and were now only partially depraved.

"It would have delighted you to hear the great Dr. Pondrus rave when he heard of it:

"Downright heresy! A blow at the very heart of the Mons Sacer theology! Impudent! Insufferable! Sin is an infinite evil; one sin is enough to damn a universe forever.'

"Then he clinched the thing with a text from David: 'There is none that doeth good; no, not one.'

"I happened to be present that day, and while he was pouring out his wrath and his theology another text popped into my head; so I put up the man who sat next me to ask a question. Up he jumps and says:

"The Psalmist could hardly have been speaking of the entire human race, for he elsewhere bids us, 'Mark the perfect man.' Now, if there is no such man, how can you mark him?'

"What a storm it raised! After that the poor fellow with the facts had no peace of his life. They tormented him so he couldn't stand it, and had to resign and go back into the pastorate; where, I understand, he so far modified his views of the doctrine of total depravity as to admit that, however it might be elsewhere, at Mons Sacer it was undoubtedly correct."

"Who was that man we met coming out of the library? By his looks he might have been the Wandering Jew."

"That was Dunderberg, the Professor of Chronology; a very learned gentleman the trustees imported from Germany at great expense, not for any teaching he could do, but for the attraction of his eminent name. You will hardly ever see him; he is busy with a book on Inferential Antiquities."

"What may that be?"

"As near as I can find out, it is an attempt to produce a complete history of the antediluvian world by means of inferences from ancient traditions; just as Pondrus produces the secret will of God in past eternity by means of inferences from the works of the Fathers. Nice book for you to read for recreation when you have a big parish on your hands."

"How much of all this do you expect me to believe?" said John.

"All of it, to be sure. What would be the use of my lying to you?"

"Well, tell me something cheerful and practical about Mons Sacer; I have heard enough of this sort of thing."

"Cheering and practical, is it? Let me see."

"Oh, yes; there is brother Crozier; he is the Professor of Religion."

"Of what?"

"Of religion, I said. He is, however, on rather thin ice at present, that not being, a very popular branch of study. Something went wrong with the Professor of Pulpit Rhetoric, and he had to be sent off to Europe for his health; so they gave him a vacation of a couple of years, continuing his salary of course, and hunted up a cheap hand to take his work while he was away. That's how brother Crozier happens to be there. He is an excellent young man, but he has the troublesome notion that a theological seminary ought to be a school of piety as well as of doctrine. He organized a praying band, and a class for singing sacred music; used to advise the embryo parsons to teach in mission Sunday-schools, hold cottage prayermeetings, and so on. The old doctors didn't like it; and, when he went so far as to propose a Sunday-morning meeting, to read the Bible and pray over the portions they were going to use during the day, Doctor Pondrus incontinently put his foot on it.

"Brother Crozier meekly inquired what harm it would do for theological students to study the Word of God together for actual use.

"It is a disrespectful reflection on our system of ministerial training,' said the Doctor. 'The next thing we shall hear of will be your forming a class for the study of religion!'

"Poor brother Crozier was so overwhelmed that he subsided into his Sacred Rhetoric, and never ventured to do any thing afterward that wasn't laid down in the regular course. But the name sticks to him yet, -- we always call him the Professor of Religion."



"What do they do to fill up the time for three years?"

"Lectures, my boy, lectures; more than I can tell you. There are lectures on the Ministerial Tone, lectures on Pulpit Diction, lectures on Clerical Manners, lectures on Church Order, lectures on Sacred Art, lectures on Apostolic Succession, lectures on the History of Heresy, lectures on Comparative Philology, -- why, my dear fellow, they will fairly inundate you with lectures."

"And what else?"

"Else, man! Isn't that enough? You must be very unreasonable."

"But where is the study of the Bible all this while? I supposed that was the principal textbook at a school of this kind."

"Wrong; all wrong, my boy. The Word of God cuts rather an insignificant figure in this course of study. For the most part it is used merely as a book of reference, though they do sometimes have an exercise in what they call 'Biblical Criticism.' Pondrus is heavy at that. It would do you good to see the feathers fly when he gets hold of a piece of Scripture. I was present on one such occasion, and the only thing I could think of was old Molly Flannigan, back here in the alley, picking her geese.

"You see, the Bible isn't a very big book, and to stick very close to that would spoil the business. You can study the Bible anywhere; but theology is different."

"What, then, is theology?"

"Inferences, my boy. Theology is chiefly made up of inferences; at least the Mons Sacer theology is. There is the same difference between revealed religion and dogmatic theology that there is between physics and metaphysics. You can find religion by studying the Bible, just as you find the laws of nature by studying the world; but theology is something you can't find anywhere. It is purely artificial, and has to be made. That is why they have theological seminaries.

"In order to understand theology you must study the 'authorities;' that is to say, the inferences of men who have put their notions into books."

"Well, Sir Critic, if theology is of no more consequence than that, how does it happen that all the Churches require their pastors to study it?"

"They don't. It is the ministers who have studied theology themselves who insist on all the young men studying it. They set the theological fashions, and the Churches follow them. Why, bless you! look at the men who come down off this mountain of holiness. There isn't one of them who ever succeeds in the business for which they pretend to fit him till he cuts loose from the life and the teachings of his seminary, and goes to work on the principles that prevail

outside. In the seminary he is all the time associated with dead books and dead men, while in the world he meets with live books and live men. I tell you what it is, my boy, we sinners know the quality of a minister better than the saints do; just as sick people, who have to take the physic, know the real merits of the doctors better than people in sound health. These theological doctors are all the time mixing up doses and trying them on well people, -- pious young men, ministerial associations, and such like; then they send out the young doctors with a nice assortment of those prescriptions, and they begin to try them on us poor sinners, -- and they don't work. Sometimes they get mad and scold us for not improving under their treatment, and sometimes they throw away their seminary recipes and begin to study their patients, and to find out how other people have been cured. If a young chap has sense enough to do that, he amounts to something as a minister of religion; if not, not. Now, what is the use of a system that fails to do the very work for which it claims to exist? Do you imagine a fellow would spend three years in a school of technics where he couldn't find out how to use the mechanical powers?"

"Modest young man you are, to be sure!" said John, "setting up your opinion against the judgment of so many eminent divines!"

"Modesty is a fine thing, Jack, a very fine thing; but it isn't one of the things a fellow learns at a theological seminary. They mostly take to the manufacture of theology, and disputing over it, just as young ducks take to the water. Almost every one of them becomes an 'authority' before he has been at Mons Sacer three months.

"But there is one thing in your favor. You will find the work very light, compared with what we used to have at the Grand Trunk. They put you on short rations of study, and let you make it up in digestion."

This John found to be strictly true. For instance: in Greek Exegesis it took the class three weeks to examine the particle *eis*; then three weeks more to examine the particle *en*; then a month on the relation of the Greek of the New Testament to the Greek of the classics; then another month on the characteristic styles of composition of the different Gospels, Epistles, and the Apocalypse; the remainder of the seminary year being spent in criticism -- i. e., in examining the passages of King James' version of the Greek Scriptures which Dr. Pondrus said were incorrectly translated, and inquiring into the reasons why they should have been translated differently.

All this did not help them much in the line of the Gospel ministry, but it was sufficient to give the class that learned and critical air by which Mons Sacer's theological students could always be picked out of a crowd. Besides, it put them on their guard against thinking too highly of the letter of the Word, and opened the way for that free handling of certain texts of Scripture which was required by some points of the Mons Sacer creed.

The Hebrew, under Dr. Muhlenberg, was charming. John reveled in those grand old poems which were ancient before the days of Hesiod and Homer, and which, for diction and spirit, as well as for antiquity, are the real classics of the Church. By the close of the first year he had read all the Hebrew Scriptures through, some of them many times over; not in the class, however. There the work was mostly critical and theological; almost never devotional or poetic.

Dr. Muhlenberg, though a fine Hebraist, never could forget that he was a theologian. All his selections had a close relation to his theological system, the doctrinal bearing of which passages he was always careful to explain. Thus, for every line of David or Isaiah or Moses or Ezra, the class had whole pages of Muhlenberg; for every word of Jehovah they had a large tract, if not a small book, of inferences thereon. This, again, did not fit the young men very rapidly for leading souls to the Savior, but it taught them the art of deducing the various points of the Mons Sacer theology from the writings of men who would, no doubt, be surprised if they should ever discover what strange things lay hidden under their simple words.

There were recitations in Ecclesiastical History; but, like almost all other history, this had been written from a dogmatic standpoint. It seemed to have been designed as a kind of buttress to the structure of the Mons Sacer system; and John was not long in discovering that the history of religious controversy was no whit better than the controversies themselves. He waded through some of them, but they only served to disgust him. Why the religious learning of the present should consist in the study of ancient religious folly, any more than the virtue of the present should consist in the knowledge of ancient vices, was something he could not understand.

"Have we nothing better to do than fight those old battles over and over?" he asked, one day, after the class had been for nearly two months reviewing the minutest phases of the homoousian and the homoiousian controversy.

"What can be more important?" answered the professor, testily. "Do you not see that the presence or absence of that iota in the Confession of Faith was the very hinge on which the ages turned toward a divine Savior?"

"No, sir. I see in it only a form of statement of the opinions of that age. But suppose we had never heard of Arius or Athanasius, as a great many of our people have not, would it make any difference with our faith in the Son of God? We do not go back to those ages for science, or governments, or manners, or morals; why, then, should we go back to them for theology? If We are to go back at all, why not go back to the days of the Bible itself, and so get the genuine thing?"

The Professor stared at the rash young man in blank amazement. Then he answered:

"Theology consists largely in the records of the religious thought of the Christian Fathers and of the leading minds of the Middle Ages, who wrought out these great theological problems for us."

"So much the worse for theology, then. What better opportunity had those men, after the apostolic age, than we have, of settling theological questions? And how does it happen that these 'settled' questions have to be stirred up so often? Geographers do not spend their time over the old controversies about the rotundity of the earth, or chemists in rehearsing the old quarrels over the elixir of life and the philosopher's stone. Those questions are settled too, and the scientists let them alone, and go on to the next thing. Why, then, should we spend our time disproving those old heresies? Have we nothing before us, that we are all the time looking behind us?"

This was John Mark Leighton's first revolt from the traditions of the elders at Mons Sacer, but it was by no means the last. Having given himself into the hands of these doctors with the secret hope that they would cure him of his call to the ministry, he felt it his duty to allow the experiment to be fairly tried; therefore he honestly sought to avoid falling into the habit of fault-finding, and endeavored to reach the natural result of the seminary course. His presence was evidently a means of grace to Alex, not so much by what he said to him as by what he was to him; and this sense of being helpful gave him a quiet joy which served to keep him at his irksome task.

One of his difficulties was with the Mons Sacer Homiletics.

The regular professor had returned from his two years' vacation, more dogmatic and rhetorical than ever. He was a man who might be described as a combination of voice, gesture, introductions, firstlies, secondlies, thirdlies, and conclusions. He held certain exact notions of what a sermon should be, which he was sure were destined to over-run the entire theological world. He was, in his own estimation, a great master in his department, though he had never in all his life preached a sermon that awakened a sinner or brought him to Christ, -- a fact which had not been thought of any great importance in determining his fitness for his office, since he was confessedly well up in form and manner, whereof sacred rhetoric was held largely to consist.

One day after he had set forth his theory at large, from which an unprejudiced listener would have inferred that the sole end and object of the ministry was the production and delivery of elaborately constructed discourses, John startled him with the question:

"Professor, what is the matter with our sacred rhetoric? People listen to a political harangue for an hour and a half, but if a sermon lasts over thirty minutes they take out their watches and begin to yawn."

"The carnal mind is enmity against God," said the professor, with the air of a man who had settled a great question once for all.

"But the persons who yawn in Church are not all carnally minded. I have seen the deacons and elders do it."

The professor was not prepared for this reply; so to escape from his confusion he asked John to state his own views on the subject.

"There is an auction-shop down town," said John, "where I have taken some lessons in rhetoric. It is kept by a big man with a bald head, a pair of sharp gray eyes, and a wide mouth, who is the greatest master of rhetoric I know of. He will persuade men to buy cheap jewelry and brass watches for real gold, when they know, before they go into the room, that it is a disreputable place. I made the man's acquaintance for the sake of asking him how he did it.

"'Oh,' said he, 'it is easy enough. I make 'em think the thing is good; and then I make 'em want it.'

"But how is it possible to make them want it?"

"Well, by talking right to 'em. I am up there to sell the goods anyhow; that is the first thing. Then I know what sort of talk such chaps like to hear; so I give 'em a little story now and then, or a bit of poetry, -- not too much, or they will take the story and the poetry instead of buying the goods. I am all the time thinking how to sell the goods, you see. It won't do to forget that for half a minute. Whatever I am saying, it's all selling the goods.

"Then, I keep at 'em. If it don't do to tell 'em a thing fifty times, I tell it to 'em seventy-five times. By and by, they begin to believe it; and just as quick as a chap believes, why then the goods are sold; that is, if he's got any money about him.'

"I thanked him, and asked what he would take to come up to Mons Sacer one evening in a week, and lecture to us theologues on rhetoric.

"Rhetoric? What's that?"

"The art of persuasion,' I replied.

"He thought over the question a minute, and then said:

"I'll tell you what I'll do. You theology fellers may come down here one night in the week, if you like, and hear me sell; but I don't: think I could do any thing with you up there at Mons Sacer, unless you would let me bring along a box of assorted jewelry.

"You see I must have the game right in my eye, or I can't shoot to kill.'

"So my idea is, that the politicians and the and the auctioneers have the advantage of lawyers the dealers in sacred rhetoric, because they all 'shoot to kill,' while the preachers are apt to shoot just to let people hear the noise of the gun."

The professor smiled a mournful smile at the thought of intruding such common things into the region of sacred rhetoric; but the incident was evidently not lost upon the class; for, before long, almost every man in it was wearing a showy piece of brass jewelry, as the practical result of his study of rhetoric in the school of the persuasive auctioneer.

But Leighton's great and final difficulty, which bade fair to effect the cure he sought, occurred in the class in dogmatics.

Professor Slayman was a new accession to the faculty; a snail who had distinguished himself by his clear-cut logic and his absolute abandonment of himself to its results. He was a slight, sharp-faced, near-sighted man, of rather youthful appearance, whose bodily presence was weak, but who ceased to be contemptible the moment he opened his mouth. He seemed to possess neither heart nor "bowels," on which account he was all the better adapted to the chair of dogmatic theology at Mons Sacer. He had the genuine old Inquisitorial spirit: no opponent of the system which he taught could have any part in the covenant of grace, but was doubtless reserved, like the angels that kept not their first estate, in the darkness of judicial blindness and the chains

of predestined death. He was a man deeply learned in the traditions of the elders, and willing to die, or to kill other people, for the defense of the faith which they had handed down.

His brethren in the neighboring parishes had found it impossible to live in peace with him on account of the espionage which he kept up on all their ministerial acts and utterances; so in order to get rid of him they secured his election to the chair of dogmatics at Mons Sacer, where he divided his attentions between the small classes of young theologues which sprinkled his lecture room, and the ministers of the Churches of his order in the region round about; who he appeared to think were somehow placed under his spectacled eyes to be watched, warned, and punished, as occasion might require.

This man's theology was like himself, -- every man's theology is, -- logical, dogmatic, inexorable. To his thought, Jehovah was, first of all, a Sovereign; whose subjects had no rights which he was bound to respect. They were so many. pieces on a chess-board, -- kings, queens, bishops, knights, and pawns, -- all of which he moved about, without the slightest reference to their wishes or comfort, solely for the purpose of pleasing himself. Sin was one of the things with which this most dread Sovereign worked out his eternal decrees. Sitting on his great white throne, he watched the transgressions and woes of the wicked, and the obedience and blessedness of the righteous, which equally served his purpose, and carried out his plan.

This dogmatic doctor was one day laboring to fix in the minds of the young men before him that essential dogma, the federal headship of Adam, and the cognate doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ; quoting a text and throwing in a phrase of his own, thus: "'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all' -- that is, all the elect -- 'be made alive.'"

"What is the ground for limiting one side of this text and not the other?" asked John.

"The doctrine of election," answered the Professor.

"Did Christ not die for all men?"

"No."

"But is he not an infinite being, and is there not, then, an infinite value in his death?"

"Yes."

"Then surely that is enough to outweigh all the sins of finite souls."

"The efficacy of the atonement is limited to those whom God, from all eternity, has chosen to eternal life," said the Professor.

"That is to say, lest the death of his Son should redeem all men, God puts forth his power to prevent it?"

"Yes."

"Is not God, then, immediately and directly responsible for the sin of the unredeemed?"

"Yes; and for their damnation, also."

"But how is it their fault that they are sinners, if they are cursed in Adam and not blessed in Christ?"

"It is not their fault; they are vessels of wrath fitted for destruction."

"Who fitted them?"

"God."

"Why?"

"Because he intended to destroy them."

"Why did he want to destroy them?"

"To maintain his government and display his power."

The Professor, in order to settle the point beyond all doubt, took up a volume of Emmons' Works, and read as follows:

"It appears from the divine conduct towards Pharaoh that the doctrine of reprobation is true. God determined from all eternity to make him finally miserable. This determination he eventually carried into effect.

"Again: 'But if God did actually reprobate Pharaoh, we may justly conclude that he reprobated all others whom he did not choose to eternal life.'

"Again: 'If God is to be justified in his treatment of Pharaoh, and of all the rest of the non-elect, then it is absolutely necessary to approve of the doctrine of reprobation in order to be saved.'

"Again: 'My theory is, that God causes moral evil in the act of willing it. He has decreed the character and condition of all moral agents from eternity.'

"Again: 'We know that one part of the business of the blessed is to celebrate the doctrine of reprobation. It concerns, therefore, expectants of heaven to anticipate this trying scene [that is, witnessing the torments of the damned], and to ask their hearts whether they are on the Lord's side, and can praise him for his reprobating as well as his electing love. This doctrine cannot be preached too plainly. It ought to be represented as God's eternal and effective purpose to destroy the non-elect.'

"Again: 'And when the work of redemption is finished... Where will lost men be able to turn their eyes without being struck with the sovereignty of God in giving them an existence, offering them mercy, and leaving them to perish in their sins forever?'"

"Once more: 'Special grace makes men willing to be saved; common grace never produces that effect.'"

"Is that a fair presentation of God's moral government?" asked John.

"Yes. Doctor Emmons is one of the great authorities."

"And it is necessary to approve of that government in order to be saved?"

"Yes."

"Very well. The salvation any god could give me, who is capable of treating his children like that, would not be worth having."

The class were frightened. They all looked at Leighton with opened-mouthed horror; but the Professor merely said:

"You are wasting your time, sir, in preparing for the ministry."

A few days after this, John applied for the usual papers of honorable dismissal.

"Why do you leave us, Mr. Leighton?" asked Doctor Pondrus.

"Because I have secured all I came for."

"But your work is not yet finished."

"Sufficiently so for my purpose."

"What, then, was your purpose in taking a theological course?"

"To be cured of a call to the ministry."

"And how has Mon Sacer effected that?"

"By showing me that your god is not fit to have a ministry."

"What a blasphemous speech! Do you know, young man, that you are in danger of his wrath for holding such sentiments?"



"Yes; but I can not help thinking that there must be another Spirit, somewhere in the universe, bigger and better than this Mons Sacer god. If there is, I should like to preach Him, just to help drive the other one out of the thoughts of mankind."

\* \* \* \* \*

## 20 -- THE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN

Although John had shaken off his call to the ministry, he could not shake off his one wretched parishioner, who clung to him as his only hope for this world, if not for the world to come. Alex had visibly improved. The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak; and, in spite of his good resolutions, his master passion would occasionally overwhelm him in those awful horrors which had made it needful to fit up for him that singular "den." The poor boy begged him to stay with him a little while for old acquaintance' sake, during which time Leighton received a piece of intelligence that bade fair to change the whole course of his life. His early friend, Dr. Dosor, who had grown rich in his old age, in consequence of the building of a railway village on a portion of his lands, had died, and left him heir to half of his ample estate.

The quaint old doctor had buried old Sukey, pensioned off old Susan, and turned his patients over to the tender mercies of a less tender man, giving himself up, during his last few years, to the care of his property, its final bestowment, his memories of love, and the duties of religion.

One of his favorite employments was writing his will. Every time he sold a house-lot, or in any other way added a snug sum to his accumulations of money, he would write a last testament; cudgeling his old brains for better forms of words in which to express himself; whereby he acquired much skill in that sort of composition. By the time he had written his thirtieth or fortieth "Last Will and Testament," the dear old man died; and when the document was read in the presence of his neighbors -- he had neither kith nor kin remaining -- it was found that he had succeeded in doing something rather unusual in that way, which was alike creditable to his hard old head and his soft old heart.

After making proper provisions for the expenses which might attend his sickness, death, and burial, he wrote:

"It is my will that the first one-half of my estate, remaining after all rightful debts are discharged, be given to John Mark Leighton in trust for the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose grace I live, and in whose faith I expect to die.

"The second one-half of my estate I give and bequeath to John Mark Leighton, only son of Grace Leighton, formerly Grace Beaubien. It is also my will that the said John Mark Leighton be the sole administrator of my estate; but if Elder Hooper, as he was called, shall then be living, I desire that his advice may be taken concerning the disposition of the Lord's money."

Here was a fresh embarrassment. John was still to be a minister of Christ, in spite of himself. Before he could be free from his duty to his one poor parishioner here was another sacred trust, to be administered in the name of the Lord Jesus.

"What are you going to do with yourself and your fortune?" asked his mother, on their homeward journey from the old familiar scenes, which they had visited together.

"I don't know. The first thing, of course, is to find Elder Hooper. When that matter is off my hands there will be time enough to decide."

In answer to his letter to Alex, giving full accounts of his good fortune, of the singular duty which had befallen him, and of his intention of going out to the mountains, where he understood Elder Hooper had permanently settled, he received a reply containing the most hearty congratulations, but written in a tone of despondency, as if being left to himself was but the prelude to his utter destruction. This touched John's heart so deeply that, little as he could wish it for his own sake, he invited Alex to accompany him on his journey; which invitation was eagerly accepted, and in a few days the two young men set off together.

"It was so kind of you, Jack, to let me come with you," said Alex. "I seemed to be climbing out of my pit while you were with us, but when you went away there was no longer any hand reached down to help me up."

Such a confession from that man was reward enough for all his sacrifice. He was so glad he had not cast off this ministry along with the other. There was no one by to tell him that the warm, sweet thrill which shot through his heart at those words was some of the self-same joy which even the Son of God was glad to purchase at the price of the cross; sacrifice, calling forth gratitude, trust, and love. Without knowing it John was basking his chilled soul in the rays of the Divine blessedness, and by his care of his lost brother was bringing himself into the very center of the Sacred Heart that once was broken for us all.

If he had been an officer in charge of a prisoner his duty would have been less severe, for then the criminal would have had shackles on him; but poor Alex must be held by bonds of a more delicate texture; and these were often put to the heaviest strain by the sights and smells of his old master and enemy, which everywhere beset the traveler, and coax him to greater indulgence because he is in a place where he is not known. Over and over again did John find him wild or helpless after a few moments out of his sight; more than once did he leave the train to watch by the side of his prisoner, whose fearful ravings frightened all strangers away.

"Why do you never get out of Patience with me, and ship me back home again?" asked Alex, one day, after he had broken their journey at a miserable little frontier town, where he had lain in a drunken craze for nearly a week, during all of which time John had been both physician and nurse.

"If you saw a blind man stumbling along a dangerous mountain trail, would you push him over the precipice?"

Alex was silent. The answer was a larger one than he had expected.

The travelers came to the end of the railway, and of all the means of public conveyance, long before they came to the end of their journey. They had no very accurate information of the whereabouts of the man they were seeking, though they understood he had a little ranch somewhere near the head-waters of the Colorado River. He had become too old, or at least too old-fashioned, for the pulpits of the ambitious little towns of the frontier; and, not wishing to be a burden to his brethren, but being at the same time bent on preaching as long as he lived, he had sought and obtained an appointment as "traveling missionary," to go where he pleased, and do all the good he could, provided he did not interfere with any of the regular circuits and stations. "Turned out to die," was what some of his friends called it; but to Father Hooper it was the most attractive work off earth.

At Georgetown and Empire City, those outposts of the line of civilization, they began to inquire for the object of their search; but no one appeared to know any thing of him. At length a hunter, who had come over the Berthoud Pass with a load of game, told them of an old ranchman over at the foot of the Snowy Range who was called The Old man of the Mountain, who answered very well to their description, and whose other name he believed was Hooper.

"You see, stranger, there's a great, splendid face on one of the granite cliffs, over the other side of Clear Creek, that has allus been called by that name; and the Injuns -- he is a great friend to the Injuns -- thought he looked like that, so they named him after it in their lingo, and it wasn't long afore we all got in the way of callin' him The Old man of the Mountain. And a fine old man he is, I tell you; knows how to do every thing; looks like Peter and John and Nicodemus and Lazarus, and all the rest of the good apostles, rolled into one.

"He's got a little park up there all to himself, where he and his smart old wife have done more in ten years to civilize these wild regions than a dozen of them high-toned parsons could do in a life-time. We had some on 'em out here once, sent out by some mishunery company or other; nice chaps enough, but awfully out of their latitude here. I was guide to one on 'em once; and I reckon he was the igneruntest chap I ever see.

"You come out here to these mountains to run a Gospel shop, did ye?' says I.

"Yis,' says he, 'figgeratively speaking.'

"Are you good at figgers?' says I. 'If ye are, there is a government surveyor over in Middle Park will give ye five dollars a day, and rations, to figger for him.'

"No, he could talk figgers, but he couldn't do very much else with 'em.

"Can ye shoot?' says I. No, he couldn't shoot.

"Can ye handle a birch?'

"I'll be hanged if the feller didn't think I meant, was he a schoolmaster?'

"Do ye know how to pack a mule?"

"What do you pack him into?' says he.

"Mebby ye don't know how to foller a blind trail?"

"A blind rail!" says he. "I never seed no rails that warn't blind."

"Wal, sir, a chap that didn't know no more nor that about travelin' through this world, how do ye s'pose he's goin' to show us the right trail to glory?"

John and Alex both admitted that such dense ignorance of the commonest ways of life in the mountains did not argue much in favor of spiritual wisdom. Then they engaged the hunter to pilot them over the range to the ranch of The Old Man of the Mountain, Such a trip required a saddle-mule for each man, and provisions, blankets, tent, kettles, etc., enough to load two pack-mules; all of which John directed the guide to purchase, and have in readiness for an early start next morning. But during the night Alex disappeared, and it was noon of the next day before he was discovered, lying in a deserted cabin, in one of his worst attacks of delirium. John ordered the expedition to wait for the poor fellow to recover, if, indeed, he ever would recover, but the guide advised that they pack him.

"He won't take no harm, strapped on to a good stiddy mule. The fresh air will be a heap better for him nor the air of this shanty; and The Old Man of the Mountain will take them shakes out of him in short order, if we can only get him to him."

"How will he do that?"

"He'll pray 'em out; and, better yet, he'll fix 'em so they won't come back enny more. You look as if you didn't b'lieve it, stranger; but it is jest as I tell ye. He did that thing for me more 'n ten year ago, and them devils never come nigh me no more."

These arguments prevailed. Poor Alex, who was wild and unmanageable, was taken by force and mounted on the animal that was to carry him; his feet were lashed together under the mule's body, and his hands were tied, not too tightly, but so as to prevent his doing any mischief. The guide led the way, the pack-mules followed, then came the wretched prisoner, while Leighton brought up the rear. It cost him no little shame and sorrow to take up his line of march as the rear-guard to such a train, but it was the best thing that could be done; and before long they were well up on the trail, where the shouts and cries of the madman disturbed only the echoes in those silent, solemn mountains.

John could not help thinking he was chief mourner at a funeral; but the glories of nature, among and over which they passed, lifted him above the mental depression which would otherwise have weighed him down. Day after day they threaded the paths through the forests, forded swift torrents, or wound their way round dizzy heights, with sheer ascents and descents on either band, sometimes half a thousand feet in height and depth. From some of the peaks

which they climbed they could look down on vast groups of ridges and spurs of mountains; some green with forests, others brown with the wind-swept soil, on which nothing but moss and a few tiny wild flowers would grow; others, again, were bold crags of sandstone, of the colors of orange, purple, green, and gray, as if, by being steeped in morning mists and sunset glories, the rocks had taken on their lights and shades. Those glowing peaks looked as if they might have been the originals after which the Autumn foliage of the foot-hills was colored. Away to the northwest the vast white masses of the Snowy Range lifted themselves into the sky, so grand and pure and majestic that they might have served as thrones for the principalities and powers of the unseen worlds. Up among those glittering domes and pinnacles, on whose dazzling heights no mortal ever stood, there seemed to be a place where the Great Creator himself had pitched his tabernacle; for at sunrise there were the pillars of cloud, and at sunset the pillars of fire. John forgot all about the Mons Sacer god, and lifted up his soul, in his first act of worship, to Him, whoever he might be, whose hands formed the earth and stretched the heavens above it; to the God of the mountains, where the pure winds sweep and the white snows shine, Summer and Winter, age after age; to the God whose rippled thought took shape in these awful heights and depths, and who did not forget to leave one blessing on the earth so high up that it never could be reached and spoiled by the pride or the power of men.

There was something in these natural glories that reached even the tortured soul of poor Alex. When the trail ascended, he was eager to climb. "Faster! faster!" he would cry; "do you not see them coming? Faster! They dare not come in sight of the city of pearl and gold." Then, as he caught a glimpse of the white summits against the sky, he would clap his hands and shout; or turn in his saddle, as far as his lashings would let him, and grind his teeth and shake his fists and howl at the fiends behind and below, who, as he imagined, dared not follow him above a certain height.

But when the trail descended his terror was heart-rending. Down, down, into the depths of hell, as he thought, where all hateful and horrible creatures were waiting for him!

When they forded a stream he cried out in agony; and if, perchance, his strong animal tripped amongst the great stones in the swift current and dashed the water up against him, he yelled like a wild Indian, thinking the spray of the river of fire was about to kindle on his body.

There were frequent storms, which were another terror to Alex. He thought the noise of the thunder, as it reverberated from peak to peak, was made by the Cyclopes of his classics, blowing up the crust of the earth with gunpowder that they might capture the human race.

It was Saturday in the afternoon, after a five days' march, that the guide pointed out the ranch of The Old Man of the Mountain. The ample, well-built cabin nestled in a group of trees that skirted a bright mountain stream, a few rods from where it leaped into a crystal lakelet having an area of two or three square miles. There was every indication of comfort, as well as order and good taste, about this home of "all the good apostles rolled into one." Many a mail would gladly live forever in such a mountain paradise, rather than take his chances of finding one that was better. The narrow, fertile valley, or "park," was inclosed by two low ranges of hills, thrust out like huge buttresses; on which was a fine growth of cedar. Above were the foot-hills; some crowned with forests, others rising in vast grassy swells like the English

"downs;" while back against the sky, sometimes seeming to form a part of it, towered the Snowy Range, whose glorious summits were in plain sight from the little valley over which they kept eternal watch and ward, and toward which the dwellers there were wont to turn their faces when they prayed, just as some people turn toward Mecca or Jerusalem. The air of the place was electric, and there was that quiet intensity of life pervading it that tells, in different language, the same story as a barometer when it marks an elevation of ten thousand feet above the level of the sea.

"Where is The Old Man of the Mountain?" asked the guide of a gentlemanly looking person, who came out to greet them and offer them the hospitality of the ranch for the night and the Sabbath.

"Gone up the trail about twenty miles, to see a sick miner."

"When will he return?"

"Nobody knows. It depends on how he has found the sick man, and how many other patients and new settlers he stumbles on to. You see he is doctor, minister, ranchman, guide, nurse, -- every thing that any one needs in the way of help for this world or the other. Sometimes he is away for weeks at a time, when he makes the whole circuit of his parish."

"How large is his parish?" inquired Leighton. "I don't know exactly. It includes every living soul he can reach in a saddle or a canoe, who can't be come at in any more civilized way. He don't have much to do with people who live in villages or on the regular stage routes, but just with the scattered ranchmen and miners that have no other highway than a lake or a trail."

Leighton and the guide dismounted, leaving Alex still in his saddle until the tent could be pitched and blankets spread for his reception. The young man pointed out a spot, a few rods back from the shore of the little lake, where the grass was soft and thick; and, by the time a city gentleman would have had the lashings of the pack-saddles in a beautiful tangle, the mules were unpacked, the tent was pitched, Alex deposited under it, the animals picketed, a fire kindled, coffee coming to a boil, and a very tempting supper laid out on the clean side of a gum-blanket, which, being spread on the grass, served at once for cloth and table.

Just then the voice of singing was heard a little way up the trail, and presently the owner of the voice appeared, mounted on one of the smallest and toughest of Indian ponies. How such a little beast could carry such a big man was an instant wonder to Leighton, but the guide informed him that this breed of horses would carry almost their own weight in any thing that could be made to ride; and travel at a good pace with an Indian, a squaw, and two or three papooses on their backs.

The next wonder was the man himself. The first sight of his broad, generous, sunburned face; his long, snowy beard, and hair of the same absolute whiteness, that streamed out from under his broad-brimmed wool hat; his powerful frame, and evident abundance of life, in spite of the years that had passed over him, together with a certain spiritual glow that seemed to dwell in him, were enough to, satisfy Leighton that the guide had not overstated the case in saying that

The Old Man of the Mountain looked as if he might be "Peter, John, Nicodemus, Lazarus, and all the other good apostles, rolled into one."

At sight of the little camp the old man took off his Quaker hat, which covered one of the grandest of heads, whose crown of glory fairly shone in the sunlight, giving the man almost a supernatural dignity and beauty. Then he saluted them:

"Grace be unto you, and peace, from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

John felt as if he had seen and heard a revelation from heaven, for there was something in the old man's tone and manner that spoke a real blessing to his troubled soul. Here was a man who was on such familiar terms with the Deity that he could dispense actual as well as verbal benedictions in his name.

"Joseph, my son," he continued, addressing the guide, "those drunken habits of yours cast you into the pit, but the Lord lifted you out by my hand. You haven't fallen in again, I hope."

"They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which can not be removed, but abideth forever," answered the guide; at which a glad smile lighted up the old man's face, for this was the text he had given the reconstructed man to hold on by. Then Joseph presented the strangers.

"This is Mr. Leighton, from the States; and this poor boy is his friend, Mr. Layard, who needs a hand to pull him out of the same pit I used to be in."

At the "word "Leighton" Father Hooper gave him a searching look, and at once inquired if his baptismal name was John Mark; then, finding it was the very man whom, as babe, and boy, he had already carried in his bosom, he opened his arms to him once more, and kissed him in true patriarchal fashion.

There was something about the old-man's welcome that seemed to pervade John's whole being. It crept into his heart and warmed it; it crept into his eyes and filled them with tears; it flowed along his tired nerves and rested them; it swept the chords of his memory and awoke its earliest songs. He felt for a moment as if he were a child again, and now, after so long a time of fighting and struggling, he wished he could lay his head down on the old man's shoulder and go to sleep, just as he had done years and years ago.

"Have you honored the holy vows of your mother on your behalf, and has God called you into the ministry?"

Poor John did not know how to answer such questions without confessing a greater impiety than he wished to be thought guilty of, and, as this was no time for lengthy explanations, he took refuge from the reproof he feared by saying he had about, half-finished the course at a theological seminary.

"I don't know nothin' about that theology business," interrupted the guide, "but he is jest the right sort of minister to that poor fellow in the tent, or I ain't a judge. Why, he is as tender of him as if he was his mother. The lad got to Georgetown all right, but that sly old enemy of his jumped up and caught him as a spider does a fly. Mister Leighton wanted to wait for him to come round agin, but I told him the mountains was wholesomer for him than a town; so we packed him over the trail, the blue devils a-follerin' him all the way, only jest when we was in sight of the snow peaks. I b'lieve the lad thinks the Snowy Range is heaven."

John was grateful for this diversion of the guide, which brought Alex into the foreground instead of himself. The poor boy was lying on the pile of blankets that had been spread for him, where he could look out of the tent door and see "the city of pearl and gold." He was therefore safe for the present from the fiends and monsters that pursued him, and, now that he could trust himself to do it, he had given over his terrible vigil, and, for the first time in all that terrible five days' march, had fallen sound asleep. The Old Man of the Mountain knelt down beside him to study his case and pray for help to manage it. John Could see by the way he went to work that healing the sick was one of his apostolic gifts, but the cloud that came over his fatherly face gave him a sense of coming sorrow.

"He is soon to leave us," said Father Hooper, at length. "There is more than delirium the matter with him. We can't do better than let him sleep awhile, but mind you lose no time in pointing him to Christ when he wakes up. If he can catch a glimpse of the Cross there will be some hope for him in the next life, but there isn't any in this. I have an appointment at Pulpit Rock tomorrow; and shall need to start by daylight, but I dare say you know enough of the Gospel to show this poor boy the way to be saved. What seminary is it where you are learning the cure of souls?"

"Mons Sacer," answered John, thinking how little of that sort of learning there seemed to be on that theological mountain, and wishing with all his heart that he knew enough of something -- of any thing, no matter what -- to help his poor friend in his last struggle. But of this he said nothing.

After supper they sat by the tent door till far into the night, watching the moon as it waded the lake and climbed the sky, talking of Alex and their mournful march, of what the Lord had already clone for lost souls and bodies amongst those mountains, and of what he might be expected to do in this case, if only the poor boy could wake up in his sober senses long enough to pray, "Lord, remember me." The treasures that seemed to be lodged in the heart and head of The Old Man of the Mountain had evidently been drawn from original sources; from the Lord himself, from his Word, and from his worlds.

There was nothing artificial about the man or his theology. He seemed to be on affectionate and intimate terms with the Lord, and was, therefore, a man through whom to find out a good deal about him; so, without opening his own heart history, John asked him such questions as would bring out something of his long and rich experience; beginning distantly, with things temporal, but doubting not that he would presently come to things spiritual and eternal.



"What brought you out to this wilderness in your old age? Most people like to spend their last days with the friends of their youth."

"Just what I am doing, my son. The Lord is here: he is the earliest friend I ever had and the best. I seem to get closer and closer to him every day up here. It's a good thing for a man to climb, even as much as ten thousand feet, toward heaven, where he can look down on that common life of the world, that mostly sits down by the rivers or the sea, and looks along its low level instead of looking up toward the sky. Then my good wife; she is the other best friend of my youth, God bless her! And with two such old friends as that close by, you don't think it is lonesome for me, do you?"

"Ah, well, I was getting rather old-fashioned; at any rate I try to follow the fashions set by One who died and rose again more than eighteen hundred years ago -- He was accused of being old-fashioned too; going back to Moses and the prophets, and to his eternal Father, when the Scribes and Pharisees wanted him to be more modern, and keep the traditions of the elders: -- so I asked for a roving commission, and came out to these mountains, where the most of the fashions are as old as the world. I had money enough to buy a camp outfit, three animals, and stores to carry us through the first Winter; then I had an ax, a good rifle, and a few carpenter's tools, which would be sure to put a good roof over our heads and game oft our table anywhere among the timber."

"How did you manage to find this little paradise?" said John.

"I found the directions in this old book," said Father Hopper, producing his Pocket Bible.

John looked surprised, and asked to see the directions, whereupon the old man opened the book and pointed out these words: "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass."

"I had no doubt but the Lord knew where the best place was for the ranch of his old servant, so I asked him to show me. That very day, after we had started up the trail, we found a man lying drunk beside it. He had fallen out of the saddle and cut his head badly, and lay there insensible, with his horse standing beside him.

"Here beginneth the first lesson,' said my wife; so we camped right there for three days, brought him to, doctored him up till he was fit to go about his business, and, best of all, we showed the poor fellow how to get rid of his enemy. You know the grace of God can save a man from drunkenness just as easy as from any other sin; and, when I told him so, he broke out with such cries and prayers as you never heard, begging the Lord to make a man of him again, and promising to be his friend and speak well of him all the rest of his life, if he could only give him power over his liking for liquor. Of course, the Lord couldn't fail to hear such praying as that; and it wasn't long before the man jumped up off his knees and began to dance and shout and clap his hands, crying 'I've got it! I've got it!'

"What have you got?' says I.

"New legs! New nerves! New stomach! New liver! New head!" shouted he. 'Glory to God! Drunken Joe is a man once more! A new man all over! Hallelujah!'

"I suppose if he had been more familiar with the Scripture he would have said he had got 'a new heart,' but he stated his case as well as he knew how; and wife and I understood it all the same."

"That must have been our guide, to whom you gave that 'first lesson.' He told us of a similar experience as we were coming over the trail."

"Yes, and he was our guide too. When he found out who we were, and what we were looking for, he said he knew just the place for us, and brought us here. There wasn't even a blaze into this little valley then; but it was only a matter of five miles or so from one of the Indian trails between the foothills and the great Middle and South Parks, and Joseph said there were several ranches and miners' cabins within a circuit of fifty miles. It was the Promised Land to us, sure enough, so we made ourselves at home in it right away. This little stream we named the Jordan; this lake, where the catching of a hundred and fifty-three splendid trout of a morning would be no miracle at all, we called Gennesaret; that high hill yonder we named the Mount of Olives. The Snowy Range I wanted to call Lebanon; but my wife said it was like the city in the Revelation, built all of gold and pearls and precious stones, so we christened it, 'The New Jerusalem.'

"We pitched our tent and made ourselves comfortable, but Joseph wouldn't leave us till we were all ready for the Winter. That cedar swamp, just up the trail, seemed to have been planted out just to make our cabin of. There were thousands of trees as strait as an arrow, some of 'em big enough to hew timber out of, eight inches square and twenty feet long. I was rather particular about the job, for I thought a nice cabin, with clean-cut corners, well-fitted joints, plumb sides, a tight roof, and every thing snug and workmanlike, would go a long way toward civilizing this wild country, besides having a good moral influence on every white man or Injun that might happen to see it. It was the only house I ever owned or ever expected to in all my life, and I wanted the Lord to come and see us in it often; so for his sake I took every pains with it, that he need not be ashamed of the house of his old servant."

"Do you think the Lord takes more pleasure in your cabin than he would if it were built of rough logs, and had twisted sides and crooked corners."

"Most certainly, I do. He knows all about architecture; and of course he has the very best possible taste. Just read the directions he gave Moses about the tabernacle. Don't that show that he likes to see a nice, neat camp, or a well-built house or cabin, better than a miserable, botched-up affair that looks as if it had been thrown together by a lot of slovenly heathens?"

"Well, as I was saying, Joseph" helped me to build the cabin, and showed me so many things about the habits of the deer, and the bear, and the mountain sheep, and the beavers, and the Injuns, and other wild creeters, that I came to feel quite at home among 'em."

"Did the Indians give you no trouble?"

"Not in the least. Somehow they came to understand that I wasn't trying to make any money out of 'em, and always after that they treated me with the greatest respect. There are several Utes and Arrapahoes and a few of the Brule Sioux that I have preached the Gospel to till they have come to be quite civilized and respectable."

"You did not begin by preaching the Gospel to them, I presume?"

"Certainly I did. That's the way to begin if you want to civilize Injuns, or white men either. I know some people have an idee you must begin with soap and water, and trousers and spellingbooks, but that is all lost time. Let an Injun once get a clear idee of Jesus Christ into his head, and he won't be long in washing his face and making himself respectable, and learning to make an honest living.

"Then they found out I was quite a medicine man. That is apostolic, you know. 'Heal the sick,' was part of Christ's commission, as well as 'Cast out devils.' I sometimes think a man has no business to be a physician unless he is called of God, just as he ought to be to do any other Gospel work. All the healing there is in the world is through the grace and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Disease and death would have swept the world bare long ago, if it wasn't for the Great Physician. Some people have hard work to believe the miracles of healings that we read about in the Gospels, but it seems to me those were just a few specimens of the cures he is doing all the time, only we don't often hear him say anything about 'em.

"That's my junior preacher, -- it was he that met you when you first came; he has just started off on a six weeks' round of appointments, -- he is a good illustration of what I mean. After a few years there came to be so many people hereabouts that one man couldn't get round to 'em all, so I began to ask the Lord to send me a man to help me. I knew it wasn't any use to write back to the States for a preacher: nobody would be looking for a parish in such a wilderness as this, where we have to preach the Gospel 'from house to house,' or rather from cabin to cabin; so I began looking for a sound, straight-grained young fellow, with a good head on him; used to the trail, and not afraid of any thing, from a catamount to a gang of Comanche Injuns. I had an idee that I could pick out the man, and the Lord could convert him, and then we should have about what was wanted.

"One day a man was brought over the Range in a blanket, all doubled up with rheumatism, plumb full of diseases; and, by the way he howled and swore, I thought he must have a legion of devils in him besides. Hows'ever, something seemed to say to me, 'There's your man;' so I went to work at him.

"Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?' says I.

"What has that to do with the case?' growled the man. 'I didn't come here to be converted, as you parsons call it, but to be cured. If you can help me, just get right about it, and don't waste much time either.'

"The case of the man our Lord cured of the palsy came up to my mind so strong that I hadn't any doubt but it was for special directions; so I followed 'em.

"You are beginning at the wrong place, my friend,' says I. 'Your body is bad enough, but your soul is the sickest patient of the two. All healing comes from the Lord: hadn't you better ask him to help me cure you?'

"I am not much acquainted with him,' said the man, rather solemn like.

"Just tell me who you are and what you are, and I'll introduce you,' says" I.

"So he told me his name, and a good deal about his life. He had a godly mother down in Massachusetts; had run away from home to be a soldier in the Mexican war; then he came out to fight Injuns; after that he was a bushwhacker for a couple of years; finally, he got to be a three-card-monte man, and worked at that trade till he broke down into a heap of ruins, and four of his old pats brought him here. They said it was his particular request to be carried to the ranch of The Old Man of the Mountain, dead or alive.

"He grew a good deal tenderer, and didn't put in any curses while he was telling me his story, and I thought that was a good sign; so I told the Lord about him, just as he had told me, confessing his sins for him as well as I could; and after I had got through I said; 'Here he is, O Lord; and I'll let him speak for himself. Amen.'

"The poor man's heart was all broken to pieces. He couldn't speak a word for weeping. After a while he says:

"Do you think the Lord would accept what is left of me if I would give it to him.'

"To be sure he would,' says I. He has often taken poorer property than you are for debt, and made large profits out of it too.'

"Well, then, I wish he would take me.' "'He never takes a man unless he gets the offer of him,' says I. You know there isn't much difference in sinners so long as they are impenitent; none of 'em are of the least use to the Lord, unless it is to make him trouble. But the minute a sinner repents God sets more store by him than all the stars of heaven.

"Do you think the Lord could patch me up and make a decent man of me?' says the poor fellow.

"Not at all,' says I. 'That isn't his way. Repairs won't do; you must have a new creation.'

"Then I read him a few words out of the Prophet Ezekiel: 'A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.'

"That's just what I want,' says he.

"'Ask for it, then,' says I. 'What isn't worth asking for isn't worth having.'

"So he began to pray. Oh, it would have done you good to hear him! He choked and broke down pretty often; but I helped him along the best I could, putting in little bits of Scripture that I thought would fit his case; and, sure enough, it wasn't long before he broke out praising God, in spite of the awful twinges of pain. I really think he was the happiest mortal I ever saw.

"The next day we took him down to the Pool of Bethesda; -- that's what I call it, though I believe it is mostly called the Great Sulphur Spring, -- and in about a week we had soaked all the rheumatism out of him; but the man was still sick enough to die. It was the settlings of his vices, you see.

"I heered old Doctor Dosor say once that a medical man was sometimes gifted with a strange power to see right into the body of his patients, so he could tell just what was the matter with 'em. It wasn't any more strange than plenty of things I have seen in my ministry, and I believe it. So I told the Lord that I had done all I could for the man, but still he wasn't cured; and asked him to take up the case and go on with it, or else show me how to do it. Just after that the poor man's body seemed to grow transparent. I could see his heart and his lungs and his liver, and so on, just as plain as if they had been taken out and held up before me. I found out just where the main difficulty was, and in about a month the man was fit to mount a pony and go off to preach at Pulpit Rock."

"What did he do for a theological training?" asked Leighton.

"His own experience was the chief thing, to begin with. I heered his first sermon. He took for his text Psalm lxvi, 16; studied up all David says about what God had done for his soul, so he could give it in his own words. Then he went on to tell them what God had done for Ms soul, and finished up by suggesting what his hearers most likely needed to have done for their souls. It was the Gospel personally illustrated. He seemed to know just what was the matter with every man's soul before him, and every time he drew up he shot to kill. You may judge it was a right good sermon, for three of those rough fellows came forward for prayers after it, and every one of 'em found the Lord before he got off his knees."

It was now far on towards the Sabbath, and The Old Man of the Mountain bade them commit themselves to Him who "giveth his beloved sleep." "Do it for us, father," said the guide; whereupon they all knelt down beside the couch on which poor Alex was sleeping, and Father Hooper opened his heart to the Lord on their behalf; praying for them each by name, as if they all were members of his household, and claiming heavenly blessings for them on the ground that they were members of God's household too.

John thought at first of the vast difference between such praying as this and the elegant addresses to the Throne of Grace which were taught, under the head of Sacred Rhetoric, at Mons Sacer; but presently there came over him such a sense of the Divine Presence that he was half in doubt for an instant whether he had not suddenly died, and was just about to appear face to face before the King of kings.

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## 21 -- THE KING COMES TO HIS OWN

The next morning, Leighton awoke with a sense of a new life. The air of the mountains was electric, the scenery was entrancing; he had found the man he was seeking; and, above all, he had brought his poor parishioner safely over the trail, to a place where a new, strange hope had been held out for his salvation. He knew enough of the Gospels to remember that different sorts of devils had been cast out by the Lord and his apostles; but, like certain teachers of religion who ought to know better, he believed that the days of miracles were past. When, therefore, the guide related his experience of having the alcohol devil cast out of his body by the spiritual power which seemed to come in answer to Father Hooper's prayers, it opened up a new world to his half-blinded faith. The Mons Sacer god did not do such things; at least, if he did, they never mentioned it on that theological mountain; but that was no reason why the God of these mountains might not be in the habit of going a few steps out of his way sometimes to help a poor mortal in trouble. Much as he hated the deity which the Mons Sacer doctors had evolved from their own theological system, he could not help feeling the deepest reverence for the God who could build such mountains and paint such skies, and at the same time was not above stooping to pull out a poor vagabond who had fallen into the pit of drunkenness, and was too much bruised and weakened to climb out by himself. If he could come to know this God, it would be quite a different thing to be his minister from the ministry that he had all his life imagined and repelled.

Long before sunrise on this Sabbath morning, The Old Man of the Mountain and the other ranchman, who, the guide said, was a sort of lay helper on the great circuit, had started on their ride to the different places where they were to read, preach, and pray; and the guide, after the breakfast was eaten, the animals cared for, and the camp put to rights, followed on their trail. He would at least be in time for afternoon service at Pulpit Rock, and enjoy the homeward ride with his old benefactor. Thus Leighton was left alone with his charge, who, as he thought, was making up for his fearful vigils of the past five days and nights by sleeping straight on through the night and day. John drew aside the tent curtains, so that he might catch sight of the Snowy Range the instant he awoke, which, if the delirium were still on him, would be sure to calm his terrors. But he did not wake. All day long, John sat by his side so fully occupied with his own thoughts that the hours flew by almost like swift-winged dreams. Once or twice, as he looked at the sleeping face beside him, he thought it wore a pallor which was something worse than weariness or disease; but he knew of nothing better for the poor lad than sleep, and so he did not try to wake him. Sometimes the sleeping man would moan, like one in great pain; then he appeared to be weeping, like one in great sorrow; then a low murmur was heard, as of a distant voice in earnest prayer, in the midst of which he would suddenly cry out, as if in agony of fright. But still he slept.

When Father Hooper and the guide returned, it was far on towards midnight. Black clouds shut out the light of moon and stars, and they had to make the last five miles in darkness so thick that they could not see the horses under them. But this was nothing new to The Old Man of the Mountain; his pony had traveled that trail in the dark too often to mistake it, and the horse

of the guide had nothing to do but follow. At length a couple of lights were seen; one from the window of the ranch, and the other shining through the canvas of the tent. To the latter went both the men; for a candle in a mountain camp at midnight is apt to be a signal of distress.

Alex was still sleeping, if such a fierce struggle with the powers of unseen worlds can be called sleep. In his dreams he was flying from the fiends again; trembling with terror as he thought himself going down, down, down, into the depth of a mountain gorge, where the devils were holding high carnival in honor of his approach. John had made every effort to wake him, but in vain. When the wretched dreamer tried to pray, the fiends would choke him; when he tried to turn and ascend the trail, they massed their force above him to drive him down again. All this appeared from his half-spoken words of prayer and his muttered cries for help.

Father Hooper took in the full sense of the situation at a glance. The wretched man was dying with that acute disease of the brain which sometimes snatches away the victims of alcohol. Years of drunkenness were too much even for the health-giving breezes of the mountains, and now the poor boy's last debauch was acting the parts of witness, judge, jury, and executioner. It was evident that whatever was done for him must be done quickly, for before sunrise he would be out of the reach of mortal aid. The old man called him by his name, but he did not hear; he tried other means of arousing him, but all to no purpose.

"We must pray God to awaken him, since we cannot."

Then he knelt down by the side of the dying man, put one hand on his head, and, raising the other to heaven, he prayed:

"O Lord, here is another poor soul whom I should like to see snatched out of the clutches of the enemy; but Satan has him fast. Thou art not willing that any should perish; but how can we preach thy blessed Gospel to him unless thou wilt wake him up, and give him a few rational minutes in which to repent and believe? It looks as if he were going to die before morning, but there is plenty of time for thee to save him. O Lord, make another just such piece of work out of him as thou didst out of the penitent thief, who died on a cross beside thine own. Why not?" Then, turning to the guide, he said:

"Joseph, pray. Sometimes God will give two people more than he will one; but mind you ask for just the thing we want. This is no time for ceremony; and I think God is just as much in a hurry to have him saved as we are."

Joseph began to pray, and, as he did so, poor Alex began to cry out in agony:

"Faster! faster! We have been going down, down, down, so long! Faster! for God's sake, faster!"

When the guide had finished his prayer, Father Hooper called on Leighton to pray.

"You can pray for him better than the rest of us, because you have worked for him more."

Alas for John! He was on the worst possible terms with the only god he knew, and that was the god of Mons Sacer. But he must have help from Heaven for his poor dying parishioner. Perhaps his father could show him a way out of his trouble.

"Faster! faster!" cried the dying man, in tones that almost made his heart stand still.

"Father," said John, in a low voice, with an awful sense of the bending heavens, "how shall I pray?" And a voice by his side, heard only by himself, seemed to answer, "Pray to the God of the Mountains." Then, as the cries of poor Alex grew more agonizing, because more feeble, John opened his mouth in prayer, for the first time since that last night in the little cottage in Poverty Lane:

"Oh, thou God of the Mountains -- show him-the Snowy Range!" Then he broke down.

"Amen!" responded Father Hooper and the guide.

Then they began to watch for the answer to their prayers. The strength of the dying man was failing fast; his pulse became fluttering and unsteady; the burning fever in his brain gave place to the chill of approaching death. His eyes were open but he saw nothing about him. On his face was that eager, anxious look which it had worn on the march, when, as they climbed out of some deep valley, he watched for the first glimpse of the snow-capped mountains. All at once a smile lit up his haggard countenance, and his lips moved.

John bent down close, and caught the whispered words, -- "There it is, the city of pearl and gold. There are three crosses on one of the snowy mountains, on the middle one is Jesus and I think -- the poor man on the cross at his right hand looks a little like -- me."

The next instant poor Alexander Layard was dead.

Father Hooper looked at the still face, for a few minutes, in silence. Then he spoke:

"When we are sound asleep to this world, we may be widest awake to the other. There is no telling how far the poor lad got on ahead of us all in that long nap. If the angel of the Lord came to wrestle with him and conquer him, and give him a new name and a new nature, it wouldn't be the first time he has done the like to a man asleep. I have seen the Snowy Range myself when it looked like a ladder of mountains reaching from earth to heaven."

During the next day, Father Hooper and his young friend held long conferences together as to what should be done with the Lord's money. It proved to be a difficult problem, whose solution does not so much concern us as do certain smaller ones under the same rule. Meanwhile The Old Man of the Mountain was anxious to know what disposition his young friend was making of himself; and, in spite of John's persistent reticence and evasions, he became convinced that there was the same old spirit of rebellion in him which had once inspired his mother to defy the Lord. Still, he had only, just left the halls of Mons Sacer, and why should he have been in such a place unless he meant to be obedient to his heavenly calling? It was a mystery he could not solve alone, and the young man was too wary to help him.



On the third day they made a grave for poor Alex on the top of the Mount of Olives. John knew very well that there was no one in the mansion of the Layards who would care to have it otherwise.

"It is the first death among us," said Father Hooper, "so we will consecrate the spot, and lay his body where we expect to be laid ourselves, my old wife and I. You know the Mount of Olives was the last place where our Lord was seen, and it is to be the first place he visits when he returns. That is why we think the name befits the place of graves. It seems to tell the Lord that we want to catch the very first glimpse of him when he comes back."

Very unlike most burial services was that in use by The Old Man of the Mountain. To his mind, death was not the end of mortal life, but rather a new beginning; therefore, instead of halting his prayers at the grave, and looking backward, he marched straight on over the dead body to talk with the Lord about the living soul.

"I see you believe in prayers for the dead," said John, after the burial was over, and the two men lingered together beside the grave, watching the play of sunset colors on "the city of pearl and gold."

"Not at all, my son."

"But you prayed for poor Alex, just if he were alive."

"Well, he is alive. I told the Lord about him just as I would if he had come after him himself, instead of sending death to fetch him. It don't look reasonable that he who once gave his ministers power to bring the dead back again, should regard it as an impertinence in us to beg a kind reception for them when they go to stay. 'Whatsoever ye desire,' is the rule for praying, and I am sure we desired what we asked on behalf of poor Alex. This idea of letting go of our friends when they die, is part of the Sadduceeism of these last days. A great many good men, who ought to know better, are trying their best to keep these two worlds apart; but the Lord is all the time trying to bring them together, and I must help him all I can."

John reflected on these curious notions, for a while, and then started a new topic.

"Do you think there is any reason to hope that Alex was one of the elect?"

"Elect to what?"

"Why, to eternal life, I suppose. I used the word as they do at Mons Sacer."

"Ah, yes. The Mons Sacer use of that word has made no end of mischief. Those doctors who teach that Christ died only for a select number are just the Scribes and Pharisees over again; they think the world's Messiah came to do a very small business at salvation, just as the Jews thought he would come to be the king of the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of nobody else. Hows'ever, that idee didn't suit our Lord at all, for when he gave his disciples their

commission, he told 'em to go into all the world and preach his Gospel to every creature; and I don't think he has changed his mind about it since. The Jews didn't gain any thing by their exclusiveness, and I never heard as the Mons Sacer people do. If those Scribes and Pharisees had all turned in and helped the Lord to save the whole world, instead of thing to keep every thing for 'the elect,' it would have been a good deal better for 'em, in my way of thinking."

"Then you do not believe in the Mons Sacer deity?"

"No. That is nothing but a theological god. Those doctors, or others like them, have manufactured him out of inferences and logic; but he is a false god, all the same as if they had carved him out of wood or stone. The only difference is, one is the work of men's heads, and the other of their hands."

"Who, then, is your God?"

"The adorable and blessed Trinity, revealed to us in the Scriptures as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; revealed in nature in an infinite variety of works; revealed also to every man's conscience by special and personal inspirations. For instance, you prayed to him as the God of the Mountains.

"God of the Mountains! Seems to me that is a very good name for him. God of Mount Ararat, of Mount Sinai, of Mount Carmel, of Mount Calvary, of Mount Olivet, and Mount Zion! And how glad the poor boy was to catch a glimpse of the Snowy Range that night, when it was so dark no mortal man could see his hand before him! My dear old wife must be right about the name, for the dying man called it 'the city of pearl and gold,' which is, being interpreted, the New Jerusalem."

John had been brought up within sight of all the holy mountains, but his rebellious heart had turned his eyes away from them; then, again, the smoke of the sacrifices on Mons Sacer had blinded him, and it was not till he caught sight of the shining glory of the Snowy Range that the idea of the true God ever entered his soul. His faith could take hold of the God of the Mountains, for he had spoken to him and obtained a reply. Thus his heart was opened for a saving faith in our Heavenly Father, our Heavenly Brother, and our Heavenly Comforter.

For a long time after all the rest were gone, Father Hooper and his young friend lingered on the "Mount of Olives," watching in silence the play of the sunset glories on "The New Jerusalem," John was thinking of his long rebellion, and of his awful oath, "Go to hell I can; preach the Gospel, I never will." Again he was watching his poor parishioner in his last moments, and hearing his heart-breaking cry, "Faster! faster! We have been going down, down, down, so long." That seemed to be true in his own case, also. Again the whispered words of the dying man came back, "I see three crosses," and he thought what his own place in that vision might have been. He, too, was being crucified; the sorrows of death were compassing him, the pains of hell were getting hold of him; and still, like the impenitent thief, he had been holding out against the Lord.

But how could he refuse his heart's homage to Him by whose death he was redeemed, and by whose life he might live forever? How could he fight against that love divine, which, with patient gentleness, would watch for a chance to save a penitent gambler in his ruins, a penitent drunkard in delirium, or a penitent thief on the cross? It were no loss of liberty to be the subject of such a Sovereign; no loss of honor to be the captive of such a King.

For a long time the struggle went on. At length he said:

"Father Hooper I have been a rebel. I have tried to do everything for the Lord except to obey. He has been calling me for years, and I refused to come. I did not go to Mons Sacer to prepare for his ministry, but to find more reasons for rejecting it, and, till the day I came to these mountains, I thought I had rejected it forever. But now the Lord seems so different from what I have imagined him. Just think of his helping poor Alex to climb out of the valley of the shadow of death far enough to see the Snowy Range! It's too much! I have defied his judgments, but I cannot resist his mercy. I don't know how to pray, but if you will introduce me to the Lord, as you did the junior preacher, I will tell him I surrender. I am ready to obey."

They knelt together beside the new-made grave, and as The Old Man of the Mountain tried to pray there was a strange, warm feeling at his heart, as he lived over again that stormy night, so long ago, when he had brought that dying infant back to life, after giving him to God in holy baptism. It did not seem to be needful to introduce this man to the Lord as he had the other. So, putting his strong arms once more about him, Father Hooper consecrated him over again, thus, -- "Here Lord, I bring thee back thine own!"

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#### ENDNOTES

1 See Dr. Emmons' Sermon at the funeral of Deacon Gilmore.

2 See Dr. Emmons' Sermon on Romans ix, 17, 18.

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THE END